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Interviews with the Leaders Of Mexico's Three Main Parties

The Reform of the State

Francisco Valdés-Ugalde

Fox's First Two Years A Balance Sheet

Alejandro Hope

Searching for the Truth About Mexico's "Dirty War"

Mexican Multinationals In the United States

Leopoldo Eggers

Tlaxcala: Murals, Franciscans and Fiestas

www.unam.mx/voices

NUMBER 61 OCTOBER • DECEMBER 2002 MEXICO $40 USA $9.00 CANADA $11.70

VOICES of Mexico™

ISSN 0186 • 9418

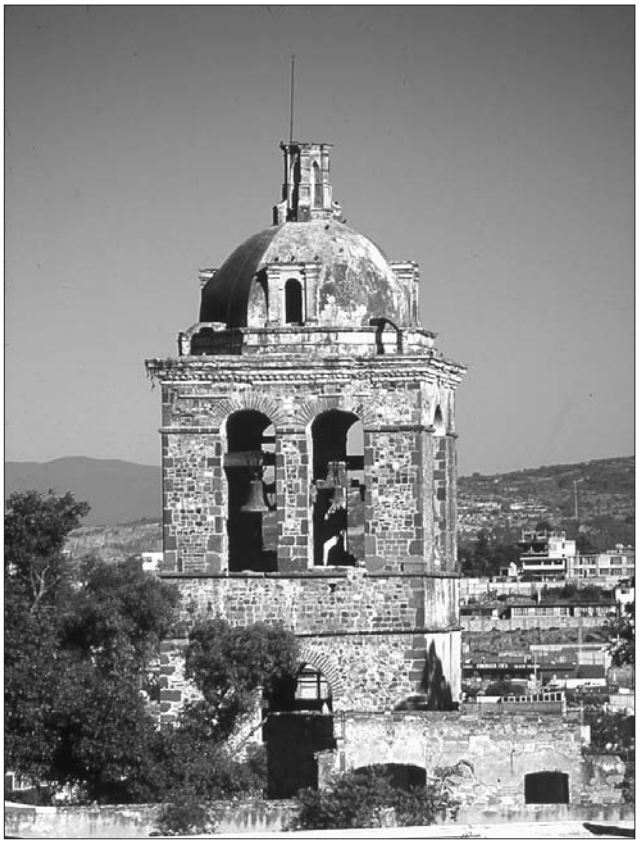
Voices of Mexico is published by
El Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, CISAN (Center for Research on North America),
of the Office of the Coordinator of Humanities, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, UNAM
(National Autonomous University of Mexico).

Address letters, advertising and subscription correspondence to: **Voices of Mexico**, Canadá 203, Col. San Lucas, Coyoacán, 04030 México, D.F. Tel: 5336-36-01, 5336-35-95 and 5336-35-96. Electronic mail: voicesmx@servidor.unam.mx. Web site: http://www.unam.mx/voices. Annual subscription rates: Mexico Mex$150; USA U.S.$34; Canadá CAN$44.80; other countries U.S.$68.50, prepaid in U.S. currency to **UNAM**. **Opinions expressed by the authors do not necessarily represent the views of Voices of Mexico**.

Publicación trimestral, año dieciséis, número 61, octubre-diciembre de 2002. ISSN 0186-9418. Certificado de Licitud de Contenido No. 2930 y Certificado de Licitud de Título No. 3340, expedidos por la Comisión Calificadora de Publicaciones y Revistas Ilustradas. Reserva al uso exclusivo del título No. 04-2002-060413383000-102, expedida por el Instituto Nacional del Derecho de Autor. Correspondencia nacional de segunda clase. Registro 0851292. Características 220261212. Correspondencia internacional de segunda clase. Registro Cri D F 002-92. Preprensa: Ediciones de Buena Tinta, S.A. de C.V., Insurgentes Sur 1700, 6o. piso, Col. Florida, Álvaro Obregón, 01030 México, D.F. Tels. 5661-66-07, 5662-28-3. Impresa por Editorial Offset, S.A. de C.V., Durazno No. 1, Col. Las Peritas, Tepepan, Xochimilco, México, D.F.

VOICES of Mexico™

Number 61 October • December 2002



Cover
Susana Alfaro, *Homage to Efraín Huerta*, 29 x 24 cm, no date (etching and aquatint).

Back Cover
Susana Alfaro, *Comets*, 120 x 90 cm, 1993 (acrylic on canvas).

Contents

Errata

In *Voices of Mexico* 60, in Dr. Alejandro Chanona's article "Mexico, Modern Diplomacy and the European Union," on page 51, second column, third paragraph, "Finally, in his last European tour from May 14 to 18, **President Zedillo** inaugurated a program…" should read, "Finally, on his last European tour from May 14 to 18, 2002, **President Fox** inaugurated a program…"

In addition, the complete name of the author of "Ten Years of NAFTA. A Mexican Perspective," p. 56, is Antonio Ortiz Mena L. N.

We apologize to our readers for these errors.

Our Voice

A year after the September 11 terrorist attacks, a reflection on their different implications and the state of the world as a result of those tragic events is obligatory. As we have already said in previous editorials, in a single stroke, the attacks caused the highest number of civilian casualties in the recent history of international terrorism. This fact alone gives us the idea that the ultimate objective of world terrorism (now presumably headed up by Al Qaeda) is to escalate the offensive and directly attack the crucial points of its declared Western enemies, among whom the United States is the central one. While this ill-fated act of terrorism does have precedents in colonial memory and the disorder inherited from the end of the Cold War, it is also true that it has significantly damaged the precarious post-Cold War world order.

In addition to pointing out that international, national, transborder, land and aviation security as well as other matters in which the most important actor (and victim) is international civil society have been the most acutely affected by the terrorist attacks, five other fronts have felt the impact: 1) the nature and integrity of the democratic political regimen, both worldwide and locally have been damaged; 2) the urgently needed economic arrangement that would allow an alternative distribution of wealth to compete with the unfortunate saga of globalization has been delayed even more; 3) significant indications about the psychological and emotional impact among parts of civil society —mainly Americans— who have been exposed to unprecedented risks and instability because of the role both the state and non-state actors are now playing have begun to come to light; 4) international consensuses have seriously deteriorated, mainly among the European Union allies, from the very moment the decision was made to attack Afghanistan; and, last, but not least, 5) it has become clear that Washington has re-initiated a "no policy" period vis-à-vis Latin America, which has already had significant implications in the economic and social life of the hemisphere.

In international relations theory, there is an analogy that links international and local society. In any case, today more than ever, it is becoming clear that the persistent trend of world events with an influence on the nature of international relations affects and will continue to profoundly affect the life of national societies. Just as much as global economic and financial trends or the pressures of international crime —to mention just a couple of these phenomena— today, terrorism intensely disturbs the life of nations. National societies have been harshly exposed to the economic, political and social factors from "the exterior," understanding "the exterior" to mean mainly the United States. This means that the inevitable U.S. influence, today expressed in an increasingly unilateral, total fight against terrorism, involves broad sectors of the national. The fact is that the United States has not been calm since September 11; this means that the world surrounding it —that is, the entire reality and all the international actors who have been interconnected one way or another with U.S. interests— has been put at risk in an unprecedented fashion by virtue of the fact that it is a relationship completely lacking in minimal equilibria or counterweights that can give coherence (beyond the defense of its national security) and moderation to Washington's decisions.

Today, the possibility of an attack on Irak and the escalation of a conflict of unknown consequences is a matter of major importance. Clearly, in Washington there is an intense discussion about the suitability of orienting the response to the September 11 attacks in this way. In this debate, the hard-line group of President George W. Bush's national security cabinet seems to have the upper hand. Both the United Nations Security Council and the European Union countries, as real factors of power in the world concert, together with Washington, must be those who resolve a conflict (organized terrorism, whether it be on the part of private, nongovernmental groups or of nation states that promote it) that corresponds to the entire world community and cannot have a single country as its custodian.

If this balance in the decisions about a comprehensive fight against international terrorism is not achieved in the coming weeks, there will be a risk of dangerously erasing the consensuses necessary up until now for dealing with many other issues on the world agenda that unfortunately have been postponed.

Among them are the recurring economic crises in some Latin American countries; in part, they are explained by the assault on their societies and economies by the unjust effects of globalization that have so idly fostered the most recalcitrant interests of the world economic system, many of which are based in the West's most important financial capitals. Also among the many issues that require the immediate attention of Washington and its Western allies and that keep the world community on the brink of aggravated world insecurity already gravely challenged by international terrorism are the environmental crisis, widespread poverty and the dangers that the ever-increasing number of the world's migrants face every day.[1]

* * *

December 1 is the second anniversary of the Fox administration, the first non-Institutional Revolutionary Party government in more than 70 years. The new administration has walked a difficult path marked by a political situation unprecedented in Mexico's history: the different branches of government are divided, with an executive that has not been able to forge the necessary agreements with the political forces represented in Congress and the other parties in order to make headway in governing.

The July 2003 federal legislative elections will be crucial for defining the country's way forward, which is oscillating between a reactivation of the reforms needed to consolidate the democratic regimen and the lack of governability. It is in this context that we decided to interview the leaders of Mexico's three main political parties, Luis Felipe Bravo Mena of the National Action Party, Roberto Madrazo Pintado from the Institutional Revolutionary Party and Rosario Robles Berlanga of the Party of the Democratic Revolution, asking for their opinions about issues we consider key for the country's immediate development, both politically and electorally, and with regard to the economy and international relations.

The interviews are complemented by two excellent articles analyzing the last two years. UNAM scholar and, until recently promotor and participant in the discussions about the reform of the state in his role as director of the Institute for Historical Studies of the Mexican Revolution, Francisco Valdés-Ugalde describes the reasons why the regimen and the political forces have been unable to advance the reforms required for the consolidation of democracy. Political scientist Alejandro Hope Pinsón explains why, in his opinion, until now President Vicente Fox has not been able to keep all the campaign promises he made or preserve people's hope for change and, as a result, maintain the high popularity ratings he enjoyed early in his administration.

One of the things that remains to be done to achieve a full transition to democracy in Mexico is the clarification of what happened during the 1968 and 1971 student massacres and what has been called the "dirty war," when innumerable violations of human rights were committed during the government's fight against guerrilla movements in the 1970s and early 1980s. Without any intention of carrying out a witch hunt, the declassification of all the files in the hands of Mexican state and army, as well as the trial of those responsible and still living can no longer be postponed if we want to forever eliminate the practices of impunity that were characteristic of the authoritarian regime that has been left behind. Well-known political analyst Adolfo Sánchez Rebolledo and two participants in those events, former guerrilla Gustavo Hirales and ex-student leader Roberto Escudero, write in our "Society" section about this undoubtedly correct initiative of the Fox administration and its importance for Mexico's incipient democracy.

Has the economic recession ended in the United States? Has recovery begun? In the "Economy" section, specialist Elaine Levine answers these two questions in her article, offering us an analysis from the Mexican perspective.

In "United States Affairs," we continue with the analysis of Hispanics' purchasing power and consumer habits in the United States, this time with an article by Brenda Méndez about the South, including useful data for Mexican investors and companies. In this section, we also include a detailed article by journalist and business editor Leopoldo Eggers about a rather *sui generis* phenomenon: the successful penetration of

[1] About these issues, see the recent analysis by José Luis Valdés-Ugalde and Diego Valadés, comp., *Globalidad y conflicto. Estados Unidos y la crisis de septiembre* (Mexico City: UNAM-CISAN-IIJ, 2002).

the U.S. market by fifteen Mexican companies that have become multinationals based on their understanding of the new rules that the North American Free Trade Agreement and globalization have brought into play. The "Canadian Issues" section deals with the study of the consequences of NAFTA in intraprovincial Canadian trade in an article in which Delia Montero also takes a detailed look at the implementation of policies and strategies linked to creating "intelligent borders" between the United States and Canada.

* * *

The "Art and Culture" section brings us three Mexican artists: Susana Alfaro, Mariana Yampolsky and Maribel Portela. Susana, a disciple of painter Luis Nishizawa, with studies in music and painting, shows in her work the fruits of years dedicated to constructing ambiances based on the use of concepts common to both artistic endeavors: scale and tone. *Voices of Mexico* dedicates part of this section to a posthumous homage to the passionate lens of Mariana Yampolsky, born in the United States and naturalized Mexican, whose undeniable love for this country, particularly for the Mexico of the dispossessed, resulted in an archive of hundreds of images, invaluable both for their testimonial wealth and their aesthetic discoveries. Lastly, sculptor Maribel Portela presents us her mythological beings and gods, larger-than-life clay figures that form part of the world of the gatherers of dreams and objects.

In this issue, "The Splendor of Mexico" visits the state of Tlaxcala, whose cultural abundance covers centuries of our country's history. We begin with Cacaxtla, the enigmatic pre-Hispanic site whose main attraction are its murals, restored and in excellent condition. The origin and meaning of these murals have been the object of many studies and interpretations such as the one presented here by researcher Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo, who reflects mainly about the allegory of what is known as the Mural of the Battle, and archeologist Andrés Santana, who comments on Element "C" or the "blue eyebrow" in the murals' representations of mythological animals. The Franciscans' presence was determinant for the Spaniards' spiritual conquest of the Tlaxcaltec population. Milena Koprivitza writes about the close link between the first Franciscans and the indigenous people who submitted to their teachings and the mutual benefits that came from that integration. Lastly, we take a brief tour of the state's main festivities, Tlaxcala's carnival, that involves hundreds of splendid, ingenious masked and costumed participants in traditional dances.

The Museo Nacional del Títere (National Puppet Museum), unique in Latin America, takes us to a world of characters that exists thanks to the imagination and skill of artisans from the world over, and is a well-deserved homage to the Rosete Aranda family, which kept the puppet tradition alive for a century in the city of Huamantla, Tlaxcala.

The alliance of the Tlaxcaltec people 500 years ago with the Spanish conquistadors to defeat the powerful Mexica army has been interpreted by several generations of Mexicans as a betrayal of the pre-Hispanic world and a determining factor in sealing the fate of the indigenous peoples under Spanish domination. In our "History" section, Carolina Figueroa questions this position by interpreting the alliance as just another military strategy, common to the period, and describing the benefits it brought to the Tlaxcaltec people for several centuries.

In "Literature" we continue with Graciela Martínez-Zalce's contributions about promising women in Mexican literature. In this issue, we include poet Cristina Rivera-Garza and short story writer Carolina Luna.

Lastly, we dedicate our "In Memoriam" section to outstanding Dutch-Mexican university professor and researcher, prestigious jurist and erudite law historian, Don Guillermo Floris Margadant, who recently died.

José Luis Valdés-Ugalde

Visions of Mexico's Future
Interview with the Presidents Of the Three Main Parties

Susana Navarrete/Cuartoscuro

The three party presidents discussing the nation.

Voices of Mexico interviewed the presidents of the three most important national political parties about different issues that we consider vitally important for Mexico's political and economic development, as well as for the viability of the recently established democratic regimen.

Although the interviews were done separately, we have merged them here to facilitate comparison of the party leaders' positions on the issues. The order in which we print each answer, as well as the photographs and bullets, follow the criteria used by Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute for arranging the parties' emblems and candidates' names on the ballots and electoral documents: the order in which they were registered as political parties. This mechanism has the stamp of approval of the parties themselves and aims to maintain impartiality. The National Action Party (PAN) has had official registration the longest, followed by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD).

Imagenlatina

Luis Felipe Bravo Mena (PAN).

"The National Action Party is working hard toward the upcoming elections to get important political and legislative results that may refresh the process of change and speed up all the structural reforms our country needs."

VOICES OF MEXICO: Poverty, and above all extreme poverty, has been an unresolved problem in Mexico for decades. It may be the most important one for the future and the viability of any political project. What strategies and policies is your party planning to deal with this problem?

LUIS FELIPE BRAVO MENA: Resolving the problem of poverty in Mexico involves different issues. In the very first place, our democracy must be based on the rule of law. A country whose institutions and community life are not strictly ruled by the law has a very difficult time creating conditions of justice for the whole society. So, the first basis for solving this kind of problem is the rule of law.

Second, economic development. We need an economic policy that will enhance our country's economic growth and productivity, as well as increase the opportunities for development that will help us become more competitive among all nations.

The third aspect is precisely equal opportunities, which are linked to educational policy. This is the center and the very soul of any profound, substantive strategy for fighting poverty. That is why it is important to create the possibilities for Mexicans to get trained and well educated.

Regarding extreme poverty, the country needs new social policies, like the ones proposed by President Vicente Fox, which discard paternalism and the patronage system, the main problems that keep people in poverty. What is required is a social policy that will create ways out, fostering self-sufficiency, independence and self-realization as the main objectives that help reduce poverty.

ROBERTO MADRAZO: We propose a competitive economy with social responsibility based on a fiscal reform to foster growth and link up to productive chains so Mexico can create jobs, and the benefits will trickle down to the country's population and enter into their homes.

This economic policy, closely tied to a clear industrial policy, a consolidated mortgage market and reactivated, strengthened domestic savings, will achieve an average economic growth of at least 5 percent a year.

We will concentrate our efforts on the three levels of government (federal, state and municipal), instrumenting the ideal programs and mechanisms to create a million jobs a year and on ensuring that the majority of Mexicans have access to public education on the secondary, technical, undergraduate and graduate levels.

This strategy is fundamental because jobs and fair wages are decisive for overcoming poverty, and edu-

cation and training guarantee that the social inequality of the market economy be counterbalanced.

We will fight in Congress for the federal, state and municipal governments to earmark more resources to satisfy the demands of the neediest sectors of the population: jobs, real opportunities in intense regional and micro-regional development; the transfer of technology; and the expansion of the domestic market. Our proposal emphasizes particularly the reactivation of the countryside: renovating irrigation infrastructure and integrating production, industrialization and marketing of agricultural activities.

ROSARIO ROBLES: The PRD has always said that the best way to fight poverty is through employment, to provide a decent income that will let people cover their basic needs.

We do not agree that the inequality and enormous economic and social polarization that prevails in Mexico can be overcome by distributing crumbs to just manage poverty.

That is why our agenda has always included priority issues like job creation, the fight for a decent wage, economic recovery, fostering productive activities, support for our small and medium-sized industries that create employment and support for the Mexican countryside to guarantee stability, since it is in rural areas that the greatest poverty is concentrated. For this reason, we fight for full rights for everyone, as a constitutional right, not like up until now when rights have been seen as perks for a political clientele.

VOICES OF MEXICO: Mexico participates in the North American Free Trade Agreement, recently signed the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union and is part of the negotiations for the future Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). What is your party's position regarding trade regionalization?

LUIS FELIPE BRAVO MENA: Mexico has taken important steps for diversifying its economy considering that our country's vocation is varied. Just as we are partners in NAFTA and are committed to taking advantage of the opportunities brought by free trade, Mexico also has historic and cultural relations with the European Union. That is why these agreements will let us optimize our geographic position not only toward Europe and North America but also toward Latin America.

The upcoming FTAA has been talked about a great deal, but it seems quite remote. Currently, basic elements for its viability do not exist, starting with the situation in the United States itself and also with the political instability among Latin American nations. But, in any case, whenever it becomes a viable and serious project, Mexico will surely have outstanding participation in the FTAA.

Regionalization is a stage of globalization in which the regions optimize their advantages and capabilities by an internal union and association. In this scheme of things, I think Mexico is doing pretty well.

ROBERTO MADRAZO: We accept multinational trade blocs because, if we know how to take advantage of them, they can regionalize important economic cycles so Mexico can move forward. But we reject limiting ourselves to an economic policy that disregards the issues of redistribution and greater equality of opportunities.

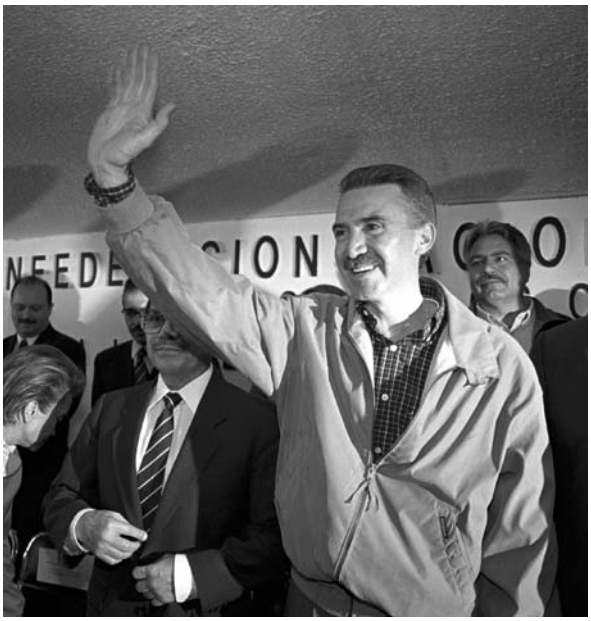
Our position is not against globalization but against being globalized. We must turn globalization into an opportunity, controlling its risks and dangers to achieve the greatest advantages possible and find the instruments that will make our project of a just nation viable.

Thus, we will give economic globality its national, human dimension, which means finding local solutions to global problems.

The market requires freedom to assign productive resources and investment, but the distribution of the benefits of economic growth demands public policies with a long-term state social vision, as much as specific mechanisms that avert third party interference in internal matters and the temptation of extraterritorially applying the laws of any other country, unilateral criteria and any attempts at subjection or submission.

The fundamental characteristic of twenty-first-century Mexico must be that inequality not turn into injustice or a source of humiliation; that social development correspond with the place our economy has gained in the world.

ROSARIO ROBLES: We promote multilateral relations and the consolidation of regional development plans, but very different and alternative to those fostered until



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Roberto Madrazo (PRI).

"The market requires freedom to assign productive resources and investment, but the distribution of the benefits of economic growth demands public policies with a long-term state social vision."

today, which are basically models for integration in conditions of profound inequality. The free trade agreement with the United States and Canada has not benefitted Mexico; on the contrary, it has given rise to considerable losses, for example in the case of agriculture and transportation, and the dismantling of other productive sectors.

The world context we face today is one in which great powers argue for free trade and integration, but at the end of the day, are the first to protect and subsidize their producers.

Given this situation, we propose forms of regional development, global development, but based on totally alternative proposals using criteria of equity and justice that would make it possible to create a solid basis that includes respect for the rights of communities and citizens and the sovereignty of nations.

VOICES OF MEXICO: The first parliamentary elections after alternation in the presidency, to take place in July 2003, will be key because they will define the viability of a system that is still presidentialist but with a divided government. What are your party's strategies and expectations for the 2003 federal elections?

LUIS FELIPE BRAVO MENA: Our party is working to make the 2003 elections an opportunity for having more room for maneuvering in the context of the current political change. Mexico has gone through a difficult process of change; it has not been easy and this 2003 election must push it forward.

The National Action Party is working hard toward these upcoming elections to get important political and legislative results that may refresh the process of change and speed up all the structural reforms that our country needs.

ROBERTO MADRAZO: We are delineating a new architecture for power for the twenty-first century. With it, we will win in 2003 and recover the federal executive in 2006. We will invigorate change with direction —today the country lacks this direction— and clarify the kind of country we all want, rooted in diversity and plurality.

We know that no victory is final and no defeat is eternal. Reality teaches that the PAN has not learned to live with the president and the PRI must learn to live without the presidency. The odds are on our side.

The profound democratization of the PRI includes opening ourselves up to Mexican society, synchronizing and joining with it, showing that we are key for the transition to democracy and indispensable for the governability of this country. In the 2003 elections we will run in the country's 300 districts. Taking into con-

sideration the deputies elected by proportional representation, we are aiming for at least 287 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Currently we have 208 seats: 132 of the 300 elected by district and 76 elected proportionally.

In the July 2003 gubernatorial elections, we will be reelected in San Luis Potosí, Sonora, Campeche and Colima and win back Querétaro and Nuevo León, just as we did in Chihuahua. The PRI currently occupies 17 of the country's 31 state houses. We will run in Mexico City's Federal District's 16 wards and in 564 mayor's races. This will allow us to keep a majority where we already have one and recover those we had lost. We already have an electoral strategy structured to this end.

ROSARIO ROBLES: Our goal is to remain one of the country's three most important political forces. We are going for the largest third. We have an entire strategy linked to making a priority of the areas in which we are most competitive, where we have the best chances of winning.

We want to position our party as the only distinctive party, the only one that can represent real change because the Institutional Revolutionary Party and the National Action Party in many ways propose the same policies. For example, at different times, both have proposed levying VAT on food and medicine. Under Ernesto Zedillo, the PRI attempted to privatize the electricity sector as the PAN is now trying under Vicente Fox.

Given this situation, the PRD is the party today that can offer a real alternative, besides the fact that it is not mixed up in scandals like that of the Mexican oil company, Pemex, and its possible financing of the PRI [presidential] candidate, or the matter of the Friends of Fox, involving alleged participation of foreign companies in presidential campaign funding.

We have great possibilities as an ordered, organized party, with clear positions, an identity and a project for the nation that speaks to people in terms of their real needs and aspirations, a party that speaks to people on the issues that concern them (employment, wages, education, health, social security, public safety and job security), that puts the citizenry's issues at the center of its agenda.

All of this makes me very optimistic about the PRD's showing in 2003 and, based on that, about preparations for the 2006 presidential elections.

VOICES OF MEXICO: The events of 9/11 produced, among other things, the strengthening of the perception in the international community that the United States is assuming and acting the role of a single international power. What does your party think of the Fox administration's foreign policy of greater alignment with the United States?

LUIS FELIPE BRAVO MENA: I think President Vicente Fox's administration is operating on the basis of political realism and with strategic vision. If our main partner, our main neighbor and our main field of action for both migration and other issues is the United States, we have to give it a privileged place in our foreign relations.

I think it is correct for President Fox to extend and reinforce the bilateral agenda, as well as facing problems constructively, not in a confrontational way based on views from the past, but with an accurate vision of the future. That is correct.

At the same time it is important to strength our participation in multilateral fora in the context of globalization. In this way, we can find alternative support for a single power scenario, where the international community's multilateral organizations might become an important counterweight to the United States' strength. In this sense, an organized international community can grow faster for the well being of our institutions, as long as we all observe international law.

This means that the dual strategy of maintaining a privileged relationship with the United States and promoting an international approach toward other regions like the European Union, the Pacific Basin and Latin America is the correct policy that Mexico must continue to follow.

ROBERTO MADRAZO: We are subjected to an intense relationship between unequal economies. We do more than 80 percent of our trade with the United States and sell it most of our oil, on which the Mexican economy is dependent in large part. The partial solution to this interdependence lies in trade diversification.

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Rosario Robles (PRD).

"The free trade agreement with the United States and Canada has not benefitted Mexico; on the contrary, it has given rise to considerable losses, for example in the cases of agriculture and transportation."

The advance of globalization makes it difficult for states to exercise absolute sovereignty: the processes of trade integration and free circulation of capital and investment seem to erase borders and nationalism. However, the basic principles of Mexican foreign policy must remain in place because they continue to respond to the need to safeguard the identity and viability of the national project.

The Constitution establishes the principles of self-determination of all peoples, non-intervention, the peaceful solution of controversies, the banning of threats or the use of force in international relations, legal equality of all states, international cooperation for development and the fight for peace. These are and must continue to be the crosscutting themes that guide Mexico's relations with the United States and the rest of the world.

Mexico's foreign policy must defend our sovereignty, effectively advance our national interests and establish a balance between association, trade or cooperation agreements and the sovereign right to make public decisions in the framework of democratic institutions that respond exclusively to our national interests.

ROSARIO ROBLES: The PRD has emphasized that relations with the United States are central to what we are experiencing every day. But obviously we are totally against the foreign policy that the current administration has followed, aligning us with the U. S. Much of Mexico's strength lies in its multilateral relations, in its ability to become the spokesperson for Latin America vis-à-vis the United States and not the reverse, as is the policy's aim, being the spokesperson for the United States vis-à-vis our sister countries in Latin America. We do not share the view of wanting to be included in a project of North America —or all of the Americas— following the dynamic of the U.S. government. Neither do we share the Mexican administration's relatively uncritical position of the war in Afghanistan or other [U.S. policies].

We have a different opinion in these matters. The PRD has put forward the idea that foreign policy must be a state policy [not merely a matter for each administration], and with that in mind, it must be discussed and defined by the Mexican people so that it is not subject to fluctuations every six years, but rather that it correspond to the country's interests and placement in the international concert.

Our foreign policy should reinforce Mexico's international position as an actor on basic issues such as equality, security, peace and the self-determination of peoples, all of which are values that we Mexicans should defend. VM

The Reform of the State
Chronicle of an Impossibility

Francisco Valdés-Ugalde*

Susana Navarrete/Cuartoscuro

Minister of the Interior Santiago Creel (third from the left) and the leaders of the three main parties.

Vicente Fox's electoral campaign and first few months as president were profuse in promises and encouragement for the reform of the state, a condition, it was said, for democracy not to be limited to alternation in office but to consolidate into a completely transformed political regimen. Almost two years into the Fox administration, an overall, coherent legislative proposal to reform the state has not been presented either by the administration itself or the legislature. Its appearance and disappearance in public debate according to the needs of the political moment constitute a "chronicle of an impossibility."

The imagined objectives presuppose an arduous task. Seventy years of Institutional Revolutionary Party administrations based on a presidentialist political system with an almost total predominance of the hegemonic party forged a political regime that subordinated the rule of law to the exercise of power.

Little by little, human, civil and social rights, the municipality, state legislatures, the state governments, the federal government, Congress and the courts were carved in the image of the presidents and governing groups surrounding them. Taking the 1917 Constitution that came out of the Mexican Revolution as the starting point, we can see that, 83 years later, the results of the evolution of the political regimen are stamped on more than 400 amendments to that document. What in the republican and democratic framework of the Constitution could have given rise to a democratic state, instead led to the authoritarian evolution in which the president, based first on the army and then on the corporate organization of society by the regime itself, became the only power capable of giving form to and controlling political and legal norms. In other words, presidential authority was placed above state norms and adapted them to the

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needs of the governing group and, above all, to the requirements of the discretional exercise of political power.

It has not been by chance that over the last 20 years, political life has been marked by political actors' continual reference to the incongruities and adjustments needed in the Constitution. As new alternatives in the form of groups, movements and parties made their appearance and became stronger, the model organized around the centralist axis of presidentialism began to yield diminishing returns until it ended by offering up unsatisfactory results from the point of view of maintaining political stability and producing other public goods.

Thus, to the concerns about everyday politics was added an excess of matters linked to the organization of power and the effectiveness of state institutions. Political actors' growing unhappiness with the latter rarified the atmosphere for solving day-to-day problems, little by little forcing up the costs of political negotiation. As often happens in situations like this, the absence of spontaneous coordination by important political actors, derived from (non)conformity with the systems of decision-making rules, means that decisions become more difficult to make and discord about their meaning and legitimacy grows until it reaches the point where the consensus needed to govern has to be created *ad hoc*, case by case, since the system does not have a structure of equilibria that can *per se* produce the necessary agreement or acquiescence to the government's course.

In this situation, three basic questions emerge: What reforms are needed to achieve the required equilibria? How feasible is it that they be made? And, what effects would the current stagnation or a change in the rules have on the political process?

The Necessary Reforms

The answer to the question of what reforms are needed will depend on your understanding of the situation.

If you see government inefficiency as the main problem, you will tend to propose reforms that attempt to guarantee effective government and rapid decision making. Once "effective suffrage" is a reality, the challenge is "effective government" (which will not necessarily be "effectively democratic"). If, by contrast, your analysis emphasizes deficiencies in the state's democratic functioning, your answers will tend to guarantee the extension of civil rights, the distribution of power and the creation of alternative mechanisms for strengthening representation. In addition to effective suffrage, an effective democratic government is considered necessary.

A perfect example of the first perspective is the proposal by renowned Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori in the postscript of the latest, 2001 edition of his classic *Comparative Constitutional Engineering: An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*: with small variations, returning to the letter of law on government organization as laid out in the 1917 Constitution. For Sartori, constitutions are instruments of government, not programs for action. Their objective is to produce effective government and their main indicator for success will be the system's governability. For that reason, it should not be surprising that he proposes four reforms as the solution for the problems in the Mexican constitutional design: a) returning to the 1917 Constitution to avoid inconsistencies; b) allowing for reelection of deputies; c) instituting a second round of elections for deputies to eliminate small, non-representative parties; and d) limiting and reinforcing the powers of the presidency over those of Congress and establishing the presidential veto on legislative decisions. If the main obstacle to Mexico's government's effectiveness today is the imbalance in the relationship between the president and Congress, the solution is to make the changes needed for that relationship to function effectively with a divided government or a government that does not enjoy an overwhelming majority.

A profound review of the 1917 Constitution in order to adjust the institutional design of government is needed to deepen the democratic political process.

The main difficulty with this proposal is that it does not break with the *authoritarian legacy of the past*. In order to not overload the agenda with a profound constitutional reform that would make day-to-day decisions difficult or slow them down, it does not move forward with the reforms needed to break

with some institutional practices that have proved inoperative when the aim is to govern democratically.

With regard to the second perspective, combatting the deficiencies of the democratic functioning of the state, a position I subscribe to, the alternative is a profound review of the 1917 Constitution in order to adjust the institutional design of government as well as the declaration of rights and guarantees to deepen the democratic political process without losing sight of government effectiveness.

The achievement of this objective requires:

1. *A review of the declaration of rights and guarantees*, systematizing and making explicit unrestricted respect for human rights, bringing social rights up to date and incorporating so-called third generation rights: those of minorities, environmental rights, etc.
2. *An improved equilibrium among the branches of the federal government*, first by establishing rules that provide incentives for cooperation between Congress and the executive in order to avoid stalemates that delay measures the country needs.[1] Secondly, permitting reelection for the legislature, which would result in greater professionalism and specialization among legislators and would be an incentive for greater communication between representatives and the citizenry. Thirdly, improving the administration of justice by making a clear distinction between those who bring charges and those who judge. And fourthly, strengthening the judicial branch's attributions of judicial review to reduce the other branches' involvement in decisions that should be reserved to the judiciary.
3. *Broadening federalism* by giving the states the right to establish the internal regimen they deem appropriate, limited only by the Constitution; returning to them the powers usurped by the federal government and reorganizing the powers of the three levels of government, creating incentives for cooperation.
4. *Completing the democratic electoral reform* with rules favoring a greater inclusion of political parties in all levels of public life, as well as broadening out the channels for public representation through the authorization of regulated independent candidacies.[2]
5. *Redefining the state's economic function* through rules that combine the guarantee of an open economy with clarity about the state's compliance with its social and economic obligations.
6. *Setting up procedures for constitutional reform* through rules that establish the steps needed to make a change of political regimen.

Beyond trust in existing electoral mechanisms, there is no shared idea about the bases of good democratic government.

Regardless of whether there is agreement on the measures outlined, the second question that must be answered is the feasibility of achieving the political cooperation needed for an integral review of the Constitution.

The Feasibility of the Reforms

A reading out of context of the discourse of the main political parties and important actors would surprise observers, since they all argue the need for constitutional reforms. Nevertheless, their proposals differ with regard to the depth of the reform they think is necessary. It can be argued, however, that it is these differences in degree that cripple the reform.

A bad habit left over from the past is a tendency to aspire to totalizing consensuses, conditioning the reform to "totally" agreeing on all issues. A consensus of this kind is probably a useless passion.

The pluralism of democratic political processes is, by definition, opposed to this kind of total consensus. Reaching an agreement of this kind would be the equivalent to the end of democratic politics, the negation of the possibility of changing norms through a discussion of the best possible options when society's dynamic demands it.

One alternative to this "totalizing consensus" is seeking a "substantive but limited consensus," a consensus about the basic issues of the reform of the state, about the rules for processing different social interests rather than on every single issue of political life.

Nevertheless, the possibility for this kind of consensus implies the preferences of each of the important actors. Logic indicates that, since current electoral rules make political alternation possible, each of the political actors should have an interest in cooperating to achieve a more appropriate institutional design for decision making. The possibility of being in office and being subjected to the aforementioned paralysis is a reality that should be a positive motivation for reform.

In that context, the absence of a consensus of this kind shows two things: first, that beyond trust in existing electoral mechanisms, there is no shared idea about the bases of good democratic government. The second thing —more serious than the first— is that for some important actors, a reform that jibes with the principle of alternation is not desirable.

These two probabilities would explain why simple, inclusive reform mechanisms have not been considered, for example, like those proposed by the Study Commission for the State Reform: forming a bicameral commission of deputies and senators based on Congress's current powers, to review the Constitution in a reasonable period, carrying out all the relevant consultations and subjecting the results to the plenary of both the deputies and senators, who, after their debate, would process them according to Article 135 and then put them to the vote as a referendum.[3]

Clearly, there are two options: maintaining the Constitution as it is, or, in the best of cases, camouflaging it; or, on the other hand, an overall review of the Constitution to bring it into line with the requirements of democratic government. I will now briefly analyze the consequences of each of these options.

The Consequences Of The Options

As the neo-institutionalist current of economics and political science has demonstrated, the social results that guarantee the greatest benefits for all depend on the institutions that articulate the interactions of the different actors.

Based on that premise, maintaining the current constitutional framework or making minimal modifications to it would not generate significant changes in the relationships of the actors and the social results of the institutions. The mechanism for achieving power through clean, competitive elections would function, but the state would not be transformed in the sense of deepening the democratic forms of decision making. The imbalances among the branches of government would continue, as would the limits on human rights, the deficiencies of federalism, etc. In the best of cases, changes would lead to quicker decision making (following the approach proposed by Sartori), and in the worst of cases, we would find ourselves facing a situation wherein people would attain public office through effective suffrage but the executive, judicial and legislative branches would not cooperate and government would be paralyzed. The consequence of the first option would be a more effective regimen, though not necessarily a more democratic one. The consequence of the second would be a paralyzed —and therefore weak— government which in the medium term would be de-legitimized.

Once "effective suffrage" is a reality, the challenge is "effective government."

From the premise of an integral review of the Constitution, the most achievable possibility is deepening democratic government. This would not only guarantee and surpass effective suffrage, but, in seeking an appropriate balance among the different branches, between the state and society and between the state and the economy, it would also create the mechanisms for a democratically effective government.

The options and their possibilities are clear and it is for Mexicans to choose among them. Effective suffrage or effective suffrage with effective democratic government. The first option accepts the inheritance of a great deal of institutional authoritarianism and is satisfied with respect for existing institutions, regardless of the consequences of the paralysis. The second option opens a window to the future. The question is whether Mexico's political elite is up to carrying it out. VM

Notes

[1] In this sense, the possibility of adopting a parliamentary or semi-parliamentary government might be an appropriate way of solving the problem.

[2] This means establishing prerequisites for this kind of candidacies.

[3] Article 135 of Mexico's Constitution refers to the mechanisms for proposing and effecting amendments to the Constitution itself. [Editor's Note.]

Did We Really Win? A Balance Sheet of Fox's First Two Years

Alejandro Hope*

Courtesy of the President's Press Office

President Fox delivering his second annual report to the nation, September 1, 2002.

You might not remember, but around August 2000, in those heady days of the transition period, Vicente Fox made a speech that contained the ominous warning, "If I fail, I will be the most detested of Mexican presidents." Unfortunately for Fox, his followers and Mexican society, this stylistic bon mot, inserted on the fly by one of the numerous speech writers of the then-president-elect, has become a telling comment on the present.

Vicente Fox does not yet incite hatred, but disillusionment is the order of the day. The extraordinary approval ratings of the first months of his administration are no longer anything but memory, a cruel memento of how much has been lost (see graph). And, although the president's popularity has recovered somewhat (GEA-ISA's last national poll reported a 13-point recovery in Fox's approval ratings since June),[1] undeniable public disenchantment can be seen in a thousand ways: everyday conversations, press diatribes, the complaints and recriminations to be found in solidly "Foxista" milieus, etc.

The scathing national mood is not the Fox administration's only sign of failure. Even more significant is the lack of transformations. Without underestimating substantial advances, like the Transparency Law or the financial reform, the absence of great achievements or even anything remarkable by the self-styled "government of change" are notable. Undeniably, the obstructionism of the legislative opposition and budget restrictions have hindered many of Fox's major projects, but even on the issues that fall exclusively within the sphere of executive decision and do not require congressional approval

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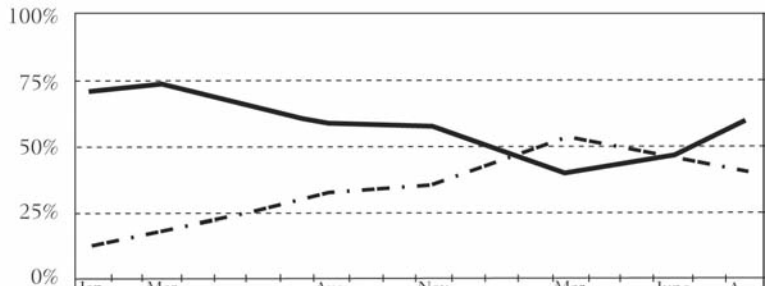
PRESIDENT FOX'S APPROVAL RATING 2001-2002

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job Vicente Fox has done as president?



	Jan.	Mar.	Aug.	Nov.	Mar.	June	Aug.
Approve	72%	73%	59%	57%	39%	45%	58%
Disapprove	13%	17%	32%	35%	52%	45%	39%
Don't Know	15%	10%	9%	8%	9%	10%	3%
	2001				2002		

Source: GEA-ISA national surveys.

or immense financial resources (the fight against corruption, for instance), the results are slim.

Given this panorama, most analysts ask a politically relevant —though intellectually, frankly boring— question: How can Fox change the current situation? The answer is always the same, though in differing degrees: cabinet changes, agreements with the opposition, winning the mid-term elections, social pacts, etc. I do not underestimate the importance of this debate about the future, but neither do I have the vocation of an oracle, nor do I wish to have to rectify my "visionary" analysis in just a few months time.

Therefore, this article, more than a list of prescriptions, is a rather disordered collection of intuitions about the question that keeps me up at night: What happened to Fox? Why did he waste a historic opportunity for changing the country? I warn the reader from the outset that he or she will not find here a compact, rigorous argument, but rather only a few hypotheses, constructed in the light of chats, reading and leisure time over a period of 18 months. As my hypothetical readers will soon see, they are preliminary thoughts about a very complex, very recent issue that may not resist the test of time and the emergence of additional information, but may serve to provoke additional thinking about our immediate past.

FIRST HYPOTHESIS: FOX GOT THE AGENDA WRONG

When he took office, Vicente Fox was in the perfect position to be able to push forward an agenda for change: his legitimacy was unquestionable; his popularity was sky high; the opposition was demoralized and divided. And yet, after fewer than six months of government, he had lost the political initiative and found himself under siege, on the defensive. At the time, this catastrophic start-up was put down to inexperience or the lack of political savvy. Although these explanations contain a grain of truth, they are insufficient for understanding the deterioration of those first few months: the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) administrations were overflowing with experience and, despite that, they could not control the political agenda after 1997 or avert a crushing electoral defeat in 2000.

The key is not so much in tactical decisions as in strategic definitions. Let me explain: the greatest restriction that the Fox administration faced was the institutional design inherited from the PRI regime. Mexico's long transition, with its fast-forwards and reverses, left an explosive institutional cocktail: a presidentialist regime combined with a multi-partisan system, a high level of discipline inside the party organizations and a *sui generis* brand of federalism. In short, a system designed for paralysis, deprived of incentives for collaboration and instruments for breaking deadlocks.

Given this context, the very first, not-to-be-postponed task of the new administration was the political reform, an objective that not only had intellectual back-up, but could have found allies in the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) and some sectors of the PRI. However, instead of pursuing an attainable, high-yield transformation, the indispensable prologue to other structural reforms, President Fox and his political operators picked a rockier road, that would of necessity lead to massive resistance: fiscal reform.

This terrible decision was based on a fallacy: the idea taken on board and spread by the government itself that President Fox's success or failure should be measured by his ability to foster a series of economic reforms that were highly polemical and would created multi-faceted resistance. When he

launched the most unpopular of all these reforms as the first big project of his administration, Fox fell into an airtight trap: the fiscal reform would not only allow the PRI and the PRD to maintain their opposition status with low political costs, but it would also make the executive a hostage of Congress and of the internal equilibria of the opposition parties.

Lacking the instruments that would facilitate opposition collaboration and with its prestige at stake, the administration launched an unsuccessful negotiation that lasted eight months and bled the president of political capital. Everyone knows the outcome: a fiscal reform, irrelevant in terms of revenues, that put a large part of the private sector on guard in addition to seriously bruising the presidential image and tensing relations between the administration and the opposition.

After this debacle, the Fox government found itself without an agenda or allies, the rest of the structural reforms under fire and betting its future on gaining a legislative majority in the 2003 elections, an aim that at this point it seems very doubtful will be achieved. And, of course, all this without a political reform or any indication of an agreement for moving toward one.

Second Hypothesis: Fox Overestimated the Political Effects of His Popularity

As the graph shows, Vicente Fox touched the clouds in the first months of his mandate: in March 2001, three out of every four Mexicans approved of his performance as president. This produced the government's fantasy of the Fox groundswell: all obstacles would be swept aside by presidential popularity. For this reason, time and again, Fox used direct communication with the population —shunting the parties and Congress to one side— to promote his agenda and, in particular, the fiscal reform. However, he missed the mark: the president's televised messages not only did not crush the resistance of the opposition parties; they strengthened it.

Vicente Fox paid a high price for learning a fundamental axiom of Mexican politics: during non-electoral periods, the president's popularity is politically irrelevant. In our unfinished democracy, there are no mechanisms for translating approval or disapproval of the chief executive's performance into concrete political results. Without immediate legislative re-election, the political future of a deputy or senator depends on party bureaucracies, not on state or district constituencies. Without the possibility of a plebiscite or referendum, a popular president does not carry the big stick of direct recourse to the population to facilitate the collaboration of opposition parties. Without the possibility of dissolving Congress and calling new elections (like in parliamentary or semi-presidential systems), obstructionism has few costs for legislators.

Presidential popularity only has an impact on politicians' behavior as federal elections approach: the president's approval rating will have a powerful (although not automatic or mechanical) impact on electoral preferences for his political party. This correlation, however, reduces legislative activity as election day approaches. The president's popularity may, therefore, determine an electoral outcome, but turns into wet gunpowder as soon as the elections are over. This inevitable truth of our political life turns the presidency into a weak institution, despite its image of omnipotence and the paraphernalia of the head of state. Given this contradiction, it was almost inevitable that Fox's popularity would suffer the damage it did: nothing disillusions and disconcerts as much as the image of impotent power.

> The extraordinary approval ratings of the first months of Fox's administration are nothing but a memory, a cruel memento of how much has been lost.

Third Hypothesis: Fox Underestimated the Mexican State's Lack of Legitimacy

During the debate on the fiscal reform, GEA measured public opinion time and again on issues of revenues and taxes. Rejection of the government's proposal was systematic: more than 90 percent of the population (as was to be expected) opposed levying value added tax on food and medicine. But this was not the most interesting piece of polling data. I think it was much more revealing to see that two-thirds of all

Mexicans considered that the government spent too much and that more than 30 percent thought that government would function worse if it had more resources. We should underline that these results were constant over an entire year; they were not statistical anomalies.

These figures are a graphic, brutal sample of the lack of structural legitimacy of public action in Mexico. In other words, they indicate that the population only barely puts up with the Mexican state, no matter who heads it up. Unlike developed nations, there are no generally accepted public programs: not a peso is spent that is not questioned nor is any public office widely respected. Vicente Fox is without a doubt a legitimate office-holder given that he is there by the grace of majority consent. However, in the eyes of most Mexicans, the structure he presides over is something like an occupation army. Under these conditions, asking the population to make a bigger tax effort was the equivalent of running his head against a brick wall.

The root of this phenomenon can probably be found in the tradition of the Mexican state whereby office-holders consider public resources under their aegis to be their own personal property to be dealt with as they see fit. This is too broad a debate to deal with here, but it is undeniable that this lack of legitimacy severely limits the manoeuvering room for any government and must be faced by any project for change.

This aim implies two simultaneous tasks: first, it is indispensable to not only reduce corruption levels in state institutions, but also —and this is much more difficult— to convince the population that corrupt individuals will not go unpunished. In the second place, state legitimation requires its institutions to become more effective. This means, undoubtedly, assuring that public spending effect concrete, perceptible benefits for the population, but also that the institutions respond to the population's preferences. In other words, it demands a broad political and administrative reform of the state.

Vicente Fox paid a high price for learning a fundamental axiom of Mexican politics: during non-electoral periods, the president's popularity is politically irrelevant.

Until now, Fox has not undertaken this task, perhaps because he underestimates the unpopular nature of the machinery he is heading up. Regardless of his reasons, the fight against corruption has been drowned in the unfruitful search for big fish, and political-administrative reforms (or the reform of the state, or whatever you want to call it) have been postponed for a better moment. There may be valid reasons for this postponement, but the country will not stand for any more delays. It is not by chance that people have made machetes a political tool, kidnapping public officials to show their discontentment.[2]

Conclusion

Speaking of the Fox "failure" may be excessive and premature. After all, the president's popularity seems to be experiencing a recovery. What is more, it is not completely improbable that he will achieve a majority in the Chamber of Deputies next year. However, the last two years' experience cannot help but leave a bitter taste in our mouths. In my opinion Vicente Fox missed a historic, one-of-a-kind opportunity for changing the country, for healing some of its ancestral sores, for making it a little more just and a little less unhappy. It was not necessary, as many supposed, to keep each and every one of his campaign promises. No politician in any country in the world is able to perform such a feat. But it was necessary to put his priorities in order and correct above all the country's political fetters. In this administration's remaining years, regardless of the mid-term election results, it will be much more difficult to carry out this task successfully because Fox has lost a precious asset in these erratic months: the feeling of possibilities that came with his taking office. VM

Notes

[1] GEA-ISA is one of Mexico's most prestigious consulting groups. [Editor's Note.]

[2] The author is referring to events in July and August 2002, when there was an incipient rebellion of peasants and inhabitants of San Mateo Atenco, a town in the State of Mexico, against the expropriation of their land to build the new Mexico City airport. This rebellion caused the project to be cancelled, a step backward by the president and the administration, who had supported it against all opposition. [Editor's Note.]

Why Rub Salt in the Wound? Finding Out the Truth about 1968 And the Dirty War

Adolfo Sánchez Rebolledo*

Manuel Gutiérrez Paredes' Archive, CESU/UNAM-Historic Archive

I. Opening up the secret files on repression, including the ones about the 1968 student movement, the events of June 10, 1971, and the period of the so-called dirty war that lasted into the beginning of the 1980s,[1] is the most important step by any Mexican government toward clarifying this dark period in our recent history. In addition, the government has created the (incredibly named) "Special Prosecutor's Office for the Investigation of Events that Were Probably Federal Crimes Committed Directly or Indirectly by Public Servants Against Persons Linked to Social and Political Movements of the Past." This office will be assisted in its efforts by a "Citizens' Committee to Support the Prosecutor," in which former student activists and guerrillas will participate, as well as an "Interdisciplinary Committee," that, according to the Ministry of the Interior, will be "in charge of studying, analyzing and presenting the proposals for determining procedures and terms in which reparations are to be made."[2]

It should be underlined that these measures are the result of decades of efforts by successive independent committees of victims' family members who never gave up in the face of the silence or cynicism of judicial, political or military authorities who for years denied the facts or validated the decisions by kangaroo courts totally divorced from any rule of law. It is thanks to the tenacity of people like Rosario Ibarra de Piedra and their insistent, irrefutable denunciations, considered by many to be inopportune or politically incorrect, that the issue of human rights violations is now on the national agenda and has become key to the democratic development of the republic.

To these efforts should be added those carried out by some of the 1968 movement leaders themselves, who after being jailed and exiled started a long political and legal road back to make the judicial branch act professionally and legally rectify abuses by magistrates and judges who, under direct orders from the executive branch and without due process, had charged and sentenced citizens for alleged crimes committed in the course of their open political struggle or as part of clandestine armed action. Definitely, if the judicial branch aspires to becoming the independent branch that democracy requires, it must begin by cleaning house.

2. Clearly, as many have said, these measures in and of themselves will not

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automatically clear up the truth and bring justice to those wronged, but it must be recognized that the government has cleared institutional obstacles out of the way —although there continue to be some with regard to the armed forces— so that today Mexican society has an arsenal of instruments and sources available as never before. In no way do they resemble, as some have said, a "smoke screen" to gloss over the facts, and they do have the intention of punishing those responsible for the violations of human rights wherever and whenever the law allows. Much less does it seem what others have called, a useless exercise because it is too late, an exercise that can only bring division to our society, a mere act of retroactive vengeance that is of no interest to new generations who know very little about the historic facts in question.

Delving deeply into the underworld of official, secret repression contained in the files recently handed over to the public will reveal the *modus operandi* of the authoritarian state, the codes of impunity, the networks of complicity woven between security forces and the judicial apparatus to cover up the commission of extremely grave crimes. It will paint a painful picture of violence and irrationality, of pain and stupidity: the death figures that, for reasons of political and moral health, must be revealed without hesitation.

The clarification of the methods and the tragic numbers of repression meets a first condition for beginning to bring to light a very important part of the historic truth. However, a great deal is left to be done if we are to: 1) situate Mexican state policies in their possible relationships with the anti-communist counterinsurgency strategies of the Cold War implemented in Latin America since the victory of the Cuban Revolution; and 2) know the concrete history of the guerrilla movement in Mexico, both the rural movement under the command of Genaro Vázquez and Lucio Cabañas and the urban guerrillas concentrated mainly but not exclusively in the September 23 Communist League,[3] sidestepping mythical simplifications. A precise idea of the extent of the so-called "dirty war" has still to be established, since there are those who see continuity running from October 2, through the *halcones* to the repression of the White Brigade,[4] which sowed terror and death for almost two decades. Others, by contrast, think that the continuity begins when the disappearance of detainees became a systematic state practice, immediately after businessman Eugenio Garza Sada was murdered by the guerrillas in 1973. This is no trivial matter if we take into account that for juridical effects, it is important to situate the duration in time of certain kinds of behavior and the commonalities to their victims.

3. People too easily recognize the need to clarify the facts so that "the violence is not repeated," at the same time saying that it is not a good idea to apply the law to events that "no longer matter." This is false. They also come up with legal arguments about the statute of limitations having run out and the supposed lack of interest in the events among the new generations of citizens. However, some opinion polls show that a sizeable number of Mexicans know what happened and recognize the responsibility of the governments of the time.

In that sense, a poll done by the Parametría company for television's National Polytechnic Institute's Channel 11[5] concluded that 62 percent of those

Imagenlatina

Demonstration of former 1968 students demanding those responsible for the October 2 massacre be tried.

Imagenlatina

Luis Echeverría, president of Mexico from 1970 to 1976, arrives at the prosecutor's office to make a statement about his responsibility in the crimes of 1968 and 1971.

Esther Montero Collection, CESU/UNAM-Historic Archive

A poster of the time highlights those responsible for the repression. The third figure from the left is former President Echeverría.

surveyed knew what had happened October 2, 1968, a very high figure if we take into account that for the last 35 years only scant and marginal information has been available about those events, information generally limited to left milieus. It is also important to note that "72 percent of those who know what happened October 2, 1968 and June 10, 1971, and who know who Luis Echeverría is, think that the former president is responsible for both events; 69 percent think that he should be charged and tried, while 16 percent think that these events should be left in the past to avoid division of Mexicans today. On the other hand, 43 percent of those polled think that the emergence of the issue today is an attempt to divert attention from [current] national problems, while 45 percent think that [the government] really does intend to see justice done with regard to the events of 1968 and 1971."[6] According to this survey, Mexicans think that "even though the events are in the past, the former president should be prosecuted."[7]

A precise idea of the extent of the so-called "dirty war" has still to be established.

4. We need to know the truth not only because of an ethical imperative, the urgency of rationally coexisting based on tolerance and respect for the law, but also because of the necessity of drawing the lines of demarcation between the methods for preserving the state, even if they passed over the rule of law, and what must be a political regimen based in the rule of law. In other words, delving into these tragic, violent events is valuable if it is useful in eliminating from our social conscience and the political culture inherited from an authoritarian regime the idea that the "raison d'état," interpreted in a discretionary manner by governments without any control by society, can protect itself through the suppression of its adversaries. Nothing condemns an authoritarian regime more than the description of the atrocities committed in the name of the law and national unity by those who should have protected the constitutional rights of all citizens, even those who at one time or another committed crimes. The recognition that that other history is real and not the product of a subversive imagination is a warning against the common idea that any social problem that can cause disturbances and threaten stability can only be explained by an external conspiracy or as the result of a shameful plot. In the past, impunity and repression went along with the paradigms of the so-called Cold War that the Mexican government —political specificities aside— accepted completely.

Anyone examining early 1970s publications will find, with very few exceptions, a determination to present Mexico as an exceptional island of stability and peace, particularly compared to the violence that plagued a convulsive Latin America. Mexico was different, said the propaganda; nothing was going on here despite the fact that very shortly before, on October 2, 1968, the world had witnessed a cruel massacre of students by army troops and plainclothes police who acted behind the civic, democratic facade of the presidentialist regime. The state, which considered itself the heir of a revolutionary movement, maintained political control thanks to a single party without apparently placing too much importance on the subversive activities of small, isolated organizations that had risen up in arms. But this was not the case. The silence about the bloody events of October 2, 1968, and

Manuel Gutiérrez Paredes' Archive, CESU/UNAM-Historic Archive

Detainees in University City during the 1968 student movement.

later, the impunity of the perpetrators of the June 10, 1971 massacre, under the administration of Luis Echeverría, was due precisely to the authoritarian logic of not recognizing dissidence, which in the end was the justification for the armed movement. Anyone who tries to study and understand the roots of democratic change in Mexico will find in this gap between the dominant ideological illusions and the conflictive reality that no one dares talk about one of its original sources.

I will never tire of saying that the 1968 student movement was the first large modern protest of the second half of the century in Mexico whose broad, democratic demands could not be dealt with by the authoritarian state. The government's tragedy was that it could not summon up a minimum of flexibility to face a protest that turned around questioning the "principle of authority" that was the basis for the political system's normalcy. Even today some essential files about the period are kept under lock and key.

Delving into these events is useful in eliminating the political culture inherited from an authoritarian regime.

With their actions, the students proved that the regime preferred to sink into the swamp of repression than to concede even an insignificant amount in the monopolistic exercise of power. That is why the 1968 crisis marked the course of history in a way that other equally tragic events in this extremely long transition did not.

5. The October 2 repression crushed the student movement, but the massacre became the justification for a violent armed confrontation that was objectively fed by the lack of political freedoms and the excesses of the security forces employed to curb the growing democratic demands of a society that no longer fit in the straightjacket of a regime unable to satisfy them. Of course the guerrilla movement is a response that has particular social, political and even ideological causes according to the individuals that promote it, the stage they act upon and the means they practice to achieve their ends, but it is difficult to say that it was the continuation of the student movement "by other means."

It is true that underlying the attitude of the guerrillas was a direct and emotional spring born of the experiences of 1968 and 1971 that was marked by repression. Subjectively, the guerrillas borrowed their ideas from "foco-ist" theory, based on a rudimentary, dogmatic Marxism that was barely enough to "theoretically" justify armed actions. However, in the words of a former member of the September 23 Communist League, Manuel Anzaldo Meneses, "The reality was that they didn't leave us any alternative. The persecution, the massacres in the streets were everyday events. If you went to a normal demonstration you were shot at, massacred, murdered; the *porros*,[8] the white guards simply executed you and threw you into an alley. In the morning you appeared knifed or shot by police, riot police, soldiers."[9]

Was there really no other alternative, as the guerrillas said? That issue must be addressed if we wish to learn from the past. In other words, the Truth —capitalized— will not be known as long as we do not have a general history of the armed movement, not just as

a victim of repression, but as the expression of a political proposal whose aim was taking power through revolution and whose evaluation, particularly by left thinkers, is far from having begun. Regarding this point, we lack a minimal history that would allow us to move from accepted generalities to real comprehension of an inexplicably little understood period. We must go beyond the —absolutely necessary— description of the atrocities of repression and move toward the analysis of the conception of the state and revolution that the left shared and then abandoned but without the self-critical look that the issue and the political tasks demanded. Unfortunately, there is no balance sheet on hand despite the fact that for more than 30 years the need to discuss the political and ideological implications of the armed road has been on the table and that the current question of whether all forms of struggle are legitimate simply because they confront an oppressive state has not been answered. VM

Notes

[1] On October 2, 1968, the Mexican government ended a student movement for democratic reforms with a massacre in which hundreds were probably killed. Many others were jailed or exiled. This was known as the massacre of Tlatelolco. On June 10, 1971, a student demonstration was repressed by government forces, resulting in dozens of dead and wounded and an indeterminate number of disappeared. [Editor's Note.]

[2] Secretaría de Gobernación, *Informe de la Secretaría de Gobernación sobre Derechos Humanos* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Gobernación, 2002).

[3] Both Vázquez and Cabañas were guerrilla leaders in the state of Guerrero in the early 1970s, while the September 23 Communist League was the most active of the urban guerrilla groups. [Editor's Note.]

[4] The *halcones* were the paramilitary group that massacred students on June 10, 1971. The White Brigade was the armed branch of the government office in charge of repression, the Federal Security Office. [Editor's Note.]

[5] Channel 11 is a public television station that belongs to the National Polytechnic Institute, one of the academic institutions whose students, researchers and teachers suffered most in the repression of 1968 and the "dirty war." [Editor's Note.]

[6] http://oncetv-ipn.net/noticias, consulted on 17 September 2002.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Groups of fake students that the authorities hired to break up demonstrations and carry out repression. [Editor's Note.]

[9] Forum to Commemorate the Attack on the Madera Barracks, Mexico City, 23 September 1995. The attack on the military installation at Madera in the state of Chihuahua was the first "revolutionary" action of the guerrillas of the 1960s and 1970s. [Editor's Note.]

The Files of the Secret War

Gustavo Hirales*

Manuel Gutiérrez Paredes' Archive, CESU/UNAM-Historic Archive

What does the opening of the files of the Federal Security Office, safeguarded by the Center for Intelligence and National Security (CISEN), mean?[1] As a result of my own experience, I think it is a political and historic event of the first magnitude. Contrary to what has been said and written to the effect that "there is nothing important in the files," or that the files had already been cleaned up (opinions I shared before I had seen them myself), the truth is that they contain a series of pieces of information that make them a singular reference point and testimony about what happened in our country during what have been called "the dirty years." Of course, you have to know how to look.

The first indication I had of the value of the Federal Security Office (DFS) files was references by researchers like Sergio Aguayo who were the first to penetrate this *terra incognita*.[2] Later I had access to substantial parts of the investigation done by the National Human Rights Commission in the files due to the "Special Report on Forced Disappearances in the 1970s and Early 1980s," which gave me a clear sign that the files were fundamentally intact, that is, that they had not been "cleaned up" or destroyed.

What is the main criterion that led me to think that the files had not been tampered with? First, in the prominent cases (Jesús Piedra Ibarra or Ignacio Salas Obregón, for example),[3] the fundamental information was there: that they were detained; when they were detained and under what circumstances; who participated in the detentions; what police forces their captors belonged to; where they were interrogated; what they stated in the first interrogation session, etc. The fact that together with this basic information, eventually, other pieces of information aimed at countering the first reports (for example, denying the detentions altogether and attempting to make people believe the version that Piedra Ibarra and Salas Obregón died in "clashes", etc.) does nothing but confirm the legitimacy of the first information, even if only because of the methodological fact that the first information is much more elaborate, with more references and precise details, than the second.

* Writer and former member of the 1970s guerrilla movement.

Second, everything seems to indicate that when the profoundly degenerated DFS disappeared, there was no one to make the decisions about destroying the information. On the contrary, influential people inside the national security apparatus itself (see, for example, Jorge Carrillo Olea in his unrefuted public testimony) took energetic measures to ensure that the files continued to include that information and that "historic truth."[4]

In the third place, it seems that neither those who wanted to doctor the files nor those who wanted to preserve them in their original state thought about the possibility of alternation in office for the presidency and therefore about the possibility that the files would fall into other hands. They (we) were all surprised by history.

Why would such compromising files be kept? For one basic reason: they were the record of the tasks that the head of the supreme power of the nation (the president) charged the national security apparatus with during a "particularly historic" period, and the fundamental proof of how that apparatus carried out those tasks. It could not simply burn "the historic record" of how these forces, civilian and military bosses, agents, soldiers, *madrinas*,[5] etc., contributed to a job that, from their point of view, was not only necessary, but highly patriotic or even heroic. They broke some laws along the way and violated a few basic constitutional rights? As some of the persecutors of that time have said now, "You can't make an omelette without breaking a few eggs." Or, as the "historic" chief of the political police, Miguel Nazar Haro, said in December 1973, "When national security is at stake, no Constitution or law matters a fucking good goddamn."

What is special about the DFS files? From a certain point of view, they are bureaucratic, boring, probably repetitive, but extremely symptomatic. Behind the uniform police jargon that notes that "on the eighth of this month" so-and-so and so-and-so "of the September 23 Communist League were detained by this Federal Security Office," is the historic drama of significant numbers of a young generation. This generation, blinded by the poverty and authoritarianism of Mexican political life and dazzled by the redemptionist dreams of a pure and intransigent Marxism (which was actually dogmatic, elementary and semi-illiterate), cracked its head against the wall of the well trained, tough political police and the fraction of the Mexican military that dedicated itself to anti-subversive activities, with their —we must recognize— high combat morale.

The secret police files shed light on what really happened.

With regard to the disappeared, the files' information is very important because they contain details (the complete original statements) about such well known figures of the armed struggle as Ignacio Salas Obregón (the historic leader of the September 23 Communist League), Jesús Piedra Ibarra, Alicia de los Ríos Merino, several members of the Tecla Parra family, etc.

I found clues to the extra-legal executions of Salvador Corral García and Ignacio Olivares Torres, both national leaders of the September 23 Communist League. It is public knowledge that Salvador Corral's body was found in mid-February 1974 in Monterrey, Nuevo León, near the residence of relatives of Eugenio Garza Sada. Ignacio Olivares Torres met the same fate, but his body was disposed of near the house of the Aranguren family in Guadalajara. They were both bloody tribute from the political police (that is, the presidency) to the families of the businessmen who had been murdered by league members.

However, at that time the DFS bluffed, saying it did not know the identity of the bodies and DFS agents even went to several prisons to ask imprisoned guerrillas "if they didn't know who this person was." Beyond these kinds of smoke screens, the files are very clear: the record states that on January 31, 1974, "In Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Salvador Corral García and José Ignacio Olivares Torres, both members of the Political Bureau of the leadership of this league [sic] were detained. They have been sent to the DFS for interrogation." In the corresponding file, dated January 30, 1974, it says, "The Federal Judicial Police detained in the city of Mazatlán two men who identified themselves as Salvador Corral García and Raúl Gómez Armendáriz," who turned out to be "José Ignacio Olivares Torres (a) 'Sebas', a prominent member of the Political Bureau of the leadership of the September 23 Communist League, who was in charge of the state of Jalisco." The note is signed "very respectfully" by "Captain Luis de la Barreda Moreno, Director of the Federal Security Office."

On February 11, 1974, the following brief notation is all that is included in the DFS file: "The body of José Ignacio Olivares appeared in Guada-

lajara, and the body of Salvador Corral García appeared in Monterrey." As though they had not reported just ten days before that they, the Federal Security Office, had both detainees and were interrogating them! As though someone outside the DFS had committed the two murders!

Another piece of information interesting because it is symptomatic, is the DFS "analysis" of the death of Eugenio Garza Sada in mid-1975, which, at the end, includes a list of those implicated in the attack. Next to the name of Elías Orozco Salazar is the note, "subject to trial in the Nuevo León penitentiary." Next to the name of Anselmo Herrera Chávez is the note, "killed in a kidnapping attempt." But, next to the name Jesús Piedra Ibarra, there is no note. It does not say "detained" or "escaped" or "killed". This silence is understandable: they could not write down the words "disappeared" or "in custody."

I am sure that, if we work rigorously, with perseverance, intuition and knowledge, many interesting things will come out of these ultra-secret files of the Mexican political police, which will undoubtedly contribute to what we need to know about our recent past. VM

NOTES

[1] The files contain information about government action against the 1968 student movement that concluded with the Tlatelolco massacre, as well as what has been called the "dirty war", including torture and a significant number of forced disappearances, against the urban and rural guerrilla movements of the 1970s. [Editor's Note.]

[2] The Federal Security Office (DFS), under the aegis of the Ministry of the Interior, was the body responsible for planning and carrying out repression and the majority of the actions of the dirty war from 1960 to the beginning of the 1980s. [Editor's Note.]

[3] Both were victims of forced political disappearance as reprisals for the attack against Monterrey businessman Eugenio Garza Sada in the early 1970s. Since then, the mother of Piedra Ibarra, Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, has demanded her son be returned alive and for three decades has been an undisputed, untiring political and moral leader in her fight for respect for human rights in Mexico. She founded and has led, among others, the Eureka Group, the Mexican version of Argentina's Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. [Editor's Note.]

[4] Jorge Carrillo Olea had a high post in the Mexican state's intelligence apparatus. He was the governor of the state of Morelos for the Institutional Revolutionary Party and resigned in the wake of accusations of corruption. [Editor's Note.]

[5] *Madrina* is a Mexican political slang word meaning "professional thugs." [Editor's Note.]

1968, Human Rights And Mexican Democracy

Roberto Escudero*

University Colleton, CESU/UNAM-Historic Archive

Demonstration at the university. The large placard on the right says, "The monkey [President] Díaz Ordaz."

Manuel Gutiérrez Paredes' Archive, CESU/UNAM-Historic Archive

Students being arrested on the university campus.

In 1968 during Mexico's student movement and even after the October 2 genocide, no one ever talked about human rights despite their clear violation and its impact on Mexican society. Despite the fact that the government committed illegal atrocities to fight two armed rural guerrilla groups that emerged in the state of Guerrero, headed by Genaro Vázquez Rojas and Lucio Cabañas,[1] and the urban guerrilla movements that surfaced in the 1970s, headed by different groups of armed youths, the most important of which was the September 23 Communist League, nobody talked about human rights either.

Actually, the concept of "human rights" did not become common in our country until well into the 1980s. From that time on, practically everyone knows to some degree what human rights are without the need for a significant background in law, history or philosophy.

Why? Because, in addition to the cases mentioned above that were widely disseminated by the media and therefore known by the general public, and to a lesser degree to the international public, many Mexicans have been the victim of some form of abuse by private individuals or government agents, abuse that in one way or another has violated their human rights.

Little by little, but increasingly rapidly, the country became aware that the abuses and atrocities that Mexicans and some foreigners were often victim of had a specific name: the violation of human rights, perpetrated by an authoritarian regime that governed us for more than 70 years.

It was very natural, then, that with Vicente Fox's victory on July 2, 2000, and alternation in office, one of the populace's most frequent and constant demands was the defense and updating of human rights, something which people have known for years was one of the country's legal and political priorities.

All of this went along with what was happening throughout the world: the universalization of human rights is one of the most distinctive characteristics of our era, precisely because, as many scholars from different countries have pointed out, they are the result of loathsome collective crimes

* Former 1968 student leader, professor and researcher at the Autonomous Metropolitan University, Iztapalapa campus.

that have been committed in many parts of the world.[2] Today there are only two or three other legal-political concepts that have the same universal standing as human rights.

Mexico's new administration has responded to the severe problem put to it by different social groups, nongovernmental organizations and individuals relatively rapidly, for reasons that seem obvious to me: Vicente Fox's party was not stained with victims' blood. On the contrary, the National Action Party (PAN) had also suffered from repression, while not as constantly and systematically as the left parties and movements, despite the fact —we should emphasize— that its opposition activities were always legal and it also had always condemned violence. Another reason closely linked to this one is that with regard to this momentous issue, the Fox government uses every possible means to separate itself from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Not only that, it also tries to differentiate itself from the PRI by righting its wrongs. The last reason is that today one of the most solid criteria for deciding on the quality of a liberal democracy is respect for human rights.

Thus, a few months ago the government created a special prosecutor's office to investigate those responsible for the human rights violations of the past, significantly, those against the participants in the 1968 student movement and the guerrillas active in the 1970s. The office's aim is also to clarify all the major arbitrary actions taken against other social movements also subjected to repression and brutal assassinations.

Special Prosecutor Ignacio Carrillo Prieto's revelations about the violations committed in Guerrero, the state where both Genaro Vázquez Rojas and Lucio Cabañas operated, cannot be classified as anything but atrocious: illegal mass graves of guerrillas in what are now buildings; cowardly shootings of youths —some almost children—, adults and old men in small towns as vengeance by the army because they had not found what they were seeking: guerrillas. And the height of cruelty: the day after the massacres, the army would return to give "aid" in solidarity with the town that had suffered the visit of the "guerrillas." This was all told to the special prosecutor by relatives of the victims of almost 30 years ago and by other eye witnesses.

This single example makes it possible to say that if the new administration does not clear up these and similar actions, the "government of change" will always carry with it the burden of the PRI government human rights deficit.

I am one of several former student leaders who brought a suit before federal Attorney General Jorge Madrazo Cuéllar exactly on the thirtieth anniversary of the October 2, 1968 genocide. We filed the suit a few hours before 6:10 p.m., the time when those of us present remember that the aggression against the students and general public began. I would like to take a few lines here and say something about this suit, which illustrates in more than one way the permanent importance of human rights. What did we demand? That more than a dozen individuals be punished, beginning with then-President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and his Minister of the Interior Luis Echeverría Álvarez; including General Crisóforo Mazón Pineda, the commander of the troops present that day at the Three Cultures Plaza, the place the genocide was perpetrated; and Colonel Ernesto Gómez Tagle, commander of the Olympia Battalion which began the shooting. We also accused the head of the president's general staff, General Luis Gutiérrez Oropeza, one of the clumsiest, cruelest leaders who acted that day.

What did we accuse them of? Of "acts that may constitute the crimes of genocide, illegal arrest, abuse of authority and any and all that emerge against the undersigned" (p. 1 of the suit).

Of all these crimes, perhaps the least understood is "genocide" because of its little-known meaning and, more importantly, because it has only recently been defined as a concept.

While human rights have been respected for a long period, dating back to the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, and were updated by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on December 10, 1948, the concept of genocide is of more recent origin, making it worthwhile to review it succinctly.

The term, as used worldwide today, was coined by Rafael Lemkin when he heard of Turkish leader Talaat Pasha's

> On October 2, 1968, there was an attempt to partially destroy a national group perfectly identifiable by its permanent interests and objectives: students. Therefore, the crime committed was genocide.

University Collection, CESU-UNAM-Historic Archive

Professors and university authorities supported the 1968 student movement.

murder of 80,000 Armenians. In 1944, Lemkin, horrified by this massacre and the impunity of people like Pasha, and later by the Jewish holocaust, which Winston Churchill called "a crime without a name," formulated an appropriate name for these crimes against humanity: genocide.

From that time on, the definition of the crime of genocide has remained practically the same and has been stipulated as such in all the criminal codes that include it, such as Mexico's. In our suit, we quoted part of Article 149 bis of Mexico's criminal code, which states, "The crime of genocide is committed by any person who, with the aim of totally or partially destroying one or more national groups or ethnic, racial or religious groups, perpetrates by any means crimes against the life of members of such groups or imposes mass sterilization with the intention of impeding the reproduction of the group."

For those of us who participated actively in the 1968 student movement and who brought the suit, as well as for our attorneys, it is obvious that this law leaves no room for doubt: on October 2, 1968, there was an attempt to partially destroy a national group perfectly identifiable by its permanent interests and objectives: students.

Therefore, the crime committed was genocide. The magnitude of the crime indicates that it was all a conscious, calculated plan.

Before we brought the suit and until today, we have insisted that the files not only of the different police forces that operated in Mexico in 1968, but also of the Ministries of National Defense and the Interior, be opened. At that time, the Ministry of the Interior exercised the police functions directed against dissidents and was the stepping stone for both Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverría Álvarez to the nation's presidency. Opening up these files will make it possible to see the sequence of events and the exact chain of orders that were given that ended so tragically in 1968.

I would like to conclude with a couple of statements that leave no room for doubt about the origin of the orders to perpetrate the genocide. One is the special prosecutor's statement a few weeks ago that events of the magnitude of October 2 could not be ignored by the highest authorities of the land. This is a major step forward in clearing up the facts and establishing responsibilities, just as we requested in our petitions 34 years ago.

The other declaration is contained in the next-to-the-last paragraph of the "Denunciation of Facts," the suit I have been referring to:

> The surprise attack by the army, the participation of shock troops like the Olympia Battalion, the existence of police and military corps, the large number of dead and wounded, the high number of arrests, the immediate police control of civilian hospitals, the swiftness with which political censorship functioned, the celerity with which the district attorneys' offices functioned and the extraordinary coordination by all the government agencies that intervened directly (the Ministry of National Defense, the prosecutors' offices, the Ministry of the Interior, etc.) show that the government had prepared the final blow to the movement. VM

Notes

[1] Leaders of the National Revolutionary Civic Association (ACNR) and the Party of the Poor, respectively. Both were killed by the Mexican army in 1974. [Editor's Note.]

[2] In this debate my personal position is for the universality of human rights, although for reasons of space I cannot develop this issue here.

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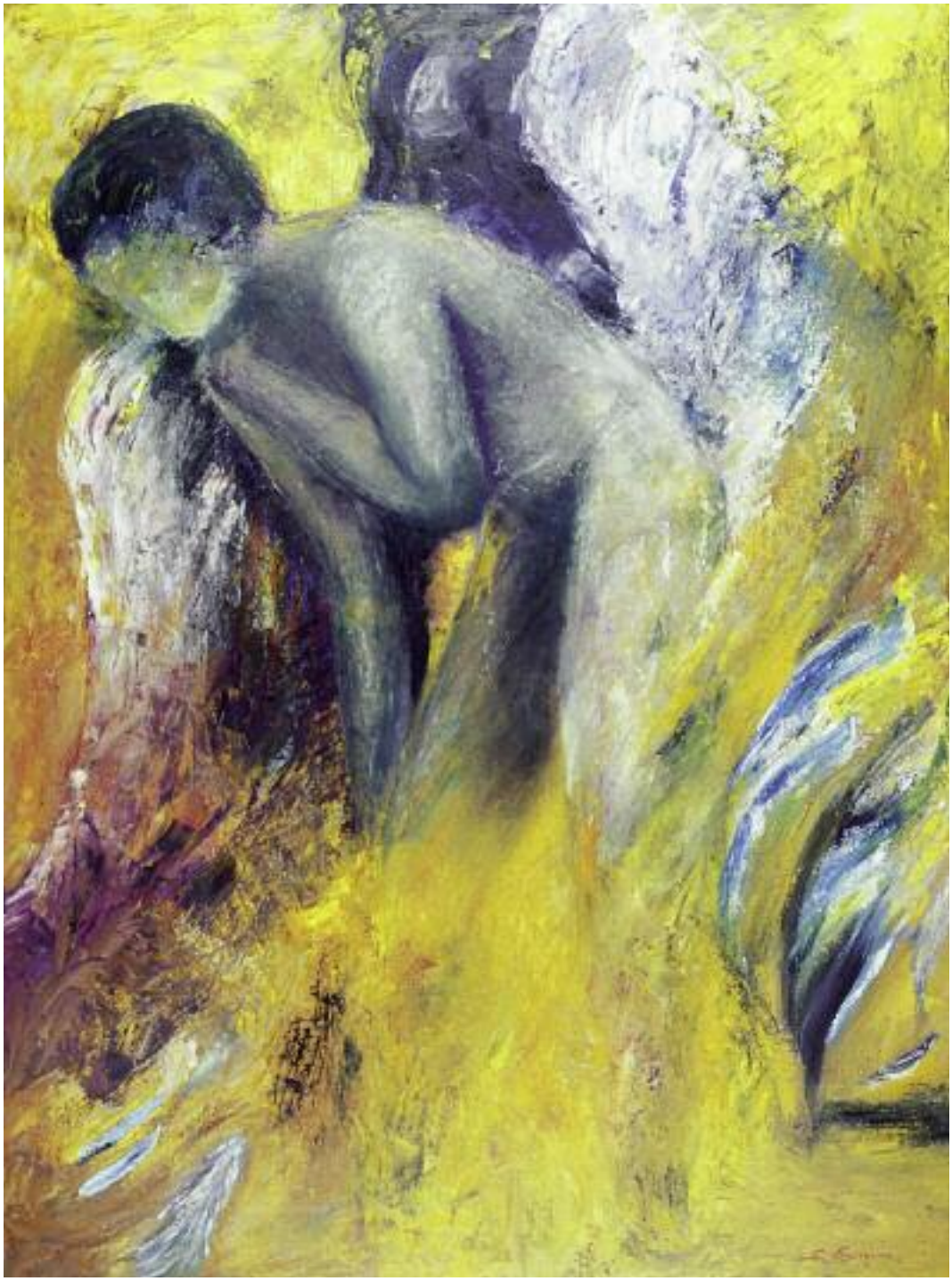


Susana Alfaro's Tonal Painting

Aureliano Sánchez Tejeda*

It is very difficult to talk about Latin American painting without mentioning regionalism. There may be a global aesthetic that assigns attributes to the painting from each part of the world; that way we have a predetermined vision for each nation's art. But that is not Susan Alfaro's case. Her work stamps her as a citizen of the world, and not only because she is an untiring traveler.

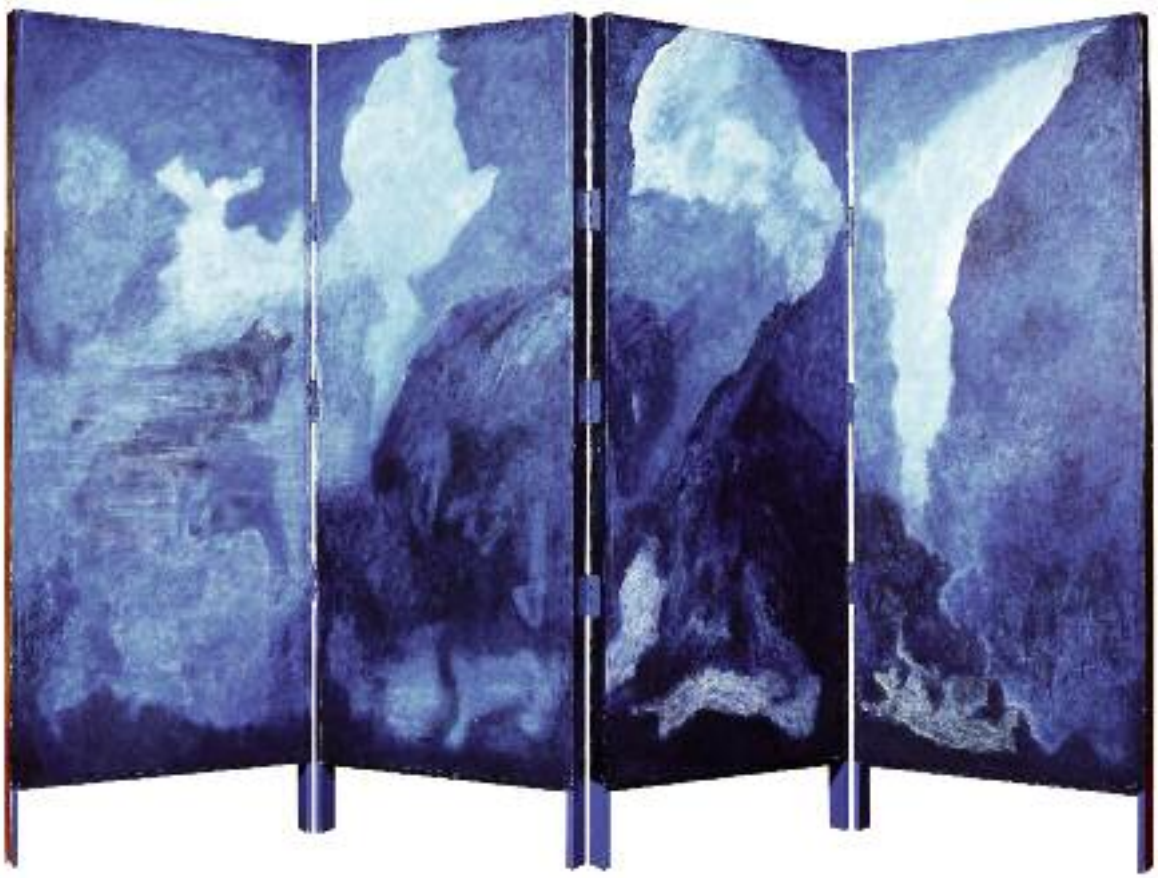
Her painting becomes universal art because the theoretical and formal concerns underlying her images are those of contemporary painting without borders. They are paintings of Space, Time and Atmosphere. The written discourse must expand the painted work, not make its poetic. It is important to say that Alfaro's images transcend "chromatic folk art regionalism." She goes far beyond obstreperous local color, substituting it with a structure of chromatic composition. She turns her painting into a field of mental action, as Leonardo da Vinci said more than 500 years ago. It is not primitive or naive painting. On the contrary, it is painting of elaborate strategies of meaning.

Susana has spent many years researching composition in music and the visual arts. This has been no trivial matter: her professional training in both disciplines has allowed her to develop projects that relate to the possible interpenetration of both languages. The essays and theses she has written in this field are very interesting, and we find in them the origin of the idea of tonal base as a structuring concept in her painting. Tonality and the scale are concepts common to both music and painting. Using them makes it possible to construct ambiances and atmospheres. That is why her works combine playful strategies in crafting them, but are based on a mature reflection about the structuring concept. Again, that is why they evoke spaces of vast dimensions that stretch beyond their format.

* Painter, researcher and professor at the UNAM National Visual Arts School and the La Esmeralda school of painting.

◀ **Previous page:** *The Broken Wing*, 120 x 90 cm, 1994 (oil on canvas).

In a Garden…, 90 x 120 cm, ▶ 1993-1994 (oil and tempera on canvas).



▲ *Two-Sided Folding Screen,* 180 x 240 cm, 1992-1993 (encaustic, tempera).

The painting, in this case, seems to hide the conceptual elements that structure it. This is due to the freshness with which it is created. Any painter who subjects him or herself to the rigors of art knows that atmospheric unity can only be achieved through a correct grading of tonal contrast. In her works, Susana Alfaro applies the breadth of the scales of chromatic values and hues. The painter's well-educated eye knows that it is more difficult to paint the difference in light in shadows and half-tones without resorting to the high contrasts that easily capture the viewer. This is not painting of simultaneous contrasts nor of chromatic dissonances. It is of images achieved in chromatic and tonal harmonies. On the other hand, for Alfaro, each canvas, each surface is a "field." In it, there is a debate between a possible total abstraction or the recovery of the world through representation of object references. This is one of her internal demons.

Each of Susana's works is like an event. It implies a temporality, but not one of time as a represented theoretical figure. Painting, from mannerism to romanticism and even impressionism, captures time associated with the representation of the scene. The temporality in Alfaro's paintings is not that of a mythological scene, nor that of the real or the virtual of "cinetic art." Her concept of temporality alludes to the moment of execution: again, music and painting transmit their essences. We speak of time-execution that is expe-

▼ *The Wait*, 120 x 90 cm, 1998 (oil on canvas).

▲ *The Dream*, 115 x 175 cm, 1994 (acrylic on paper).

◀ *Music…Woman?*, 60 x 40 cm, 1988 (oil on paper).

rience, the experiential plane and reflexive action: this is what time is like in Susana's painting, more than a definition of a perennial event, which is only recovered by memory based on the painting-image. Thus, music and its execution penetrates these images, even if the influence remains distant from the viewer.

The "generation of the break" appeared in Mexican visual arts in the 1960s. It was a group of painters and sculptors whose proposal was a break with the nationalism expressed in the "nopal curtain."[1] Our artistic history and aesthetic expression paid the price of the loss of the artistic sense that brought us together as a Mexican nation in the twentieth century.

The best legacy of contemporary Mexican art breathes in Susana's sim-

▲ …*The City When It Rains*, 12.5 x 19 cm, no date (color etching).

ple paintings, its direct descendent. Silvestre Revueltas, Carlos Blas Galindo, José Clemente Orozco, Rufino Tamayo, Alfonso Reyes, Julián Carrillo, Manuel Enríquez.

Susana's work, together with that of those who give Mexican art its visage, achieves the maxim of the great Cuban writer, Alejo Carpentier: "We only reach the universal from our specificity." VM

Polyphonic Reflections, 60 x 40 cm, ▶ 1988 (oil on paper).

Note

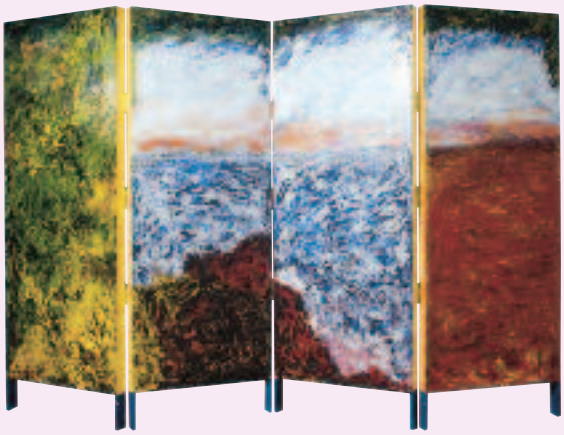
[1] The nopal is a Mexican cactus that nationalist painters, among them the muralists, adopted as a symbol, and that therefore is frequently found in their work. [Editor's Note.]

Susana in the Eyes of Other Artists

Susana Alfaro, with her vast cultural knowledge and solid technical training, continues her pilgrimage through the world of painting, a world in which she who speaks the least is the most eloquent. I feel that her route is excellent, even though external voices push her to audacity but not to her truth. She knows this and tenaciously struggles to remain alone and be able to freely pour into her painting the accumulation of dreams nesting in her heart. The road is a long one since it is very difficult to be oneself and not the reflection of nothing. Along that road will be all the anxieties possible, but also all the joys. I have faith in her vocation and hope that it will take her very far; this is one of my fondest desires.

Luis Nishizawa

▲ *Female,* 100 x 80 cm, 1998 (acrylic on wood and canvas).



▲ *Two-Sided Folding Screen*, 180 x 240 cm, 1992-1993 (encaustic, tempera).

Susana Alfaro stops time in her etched atmospheres, in her insinuated landscapes, in her delicate textures. Everything is stopped, quiet; nothing alters that apparent calm, an instant, a glorious instant, half a sigh, that moment is sufficient for Susana to perpetuate time. Now I understand the medieval alchemists a little more; she uses etching technique mysteriously and achieves her purposes: resin here, soft-ground there and her firm determination to contribute something discovering and discovering herself, showing us through her efforts what her work and her talent contribute to our rich graphic legacy. Total silence and time stopped, integrating harmoniously into art.

Jesús Martínez Álvarez

▲ *Massacre,* 80 x 110 cm, 1998 (oil on canvas).

Texts on this page were taken from the catalogue, "Lo orgánico por sí mismo" (The Organic in and of Itself), Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Galería Luis Nishizawa, México City, 1992.

▲ *Homage to Manuel Enríquez*, 80 x 100 cm, 1999 (mixed techniques on canvas and wood).

Individual Showings

2001 "Portrait of a Composer," Homage to Manuel Enríquez, Seminar of Mexican Culture, Mexico City.
1998 "Painting Exhibition, Fourth Festival of Visual Arts, ENEP-Acatlán," State of Mexico.
1996 "Graphic Works, Homage to the Poet Jaime Sabines," Jaime Sabines House of Culture, Mexico City.
1996 "Gathered Images, Graphic Works," Study of Elena Martín, Madrid.
1994 "Painting Exhibition," Domecq Cultural Institute, Mexico City.
1994 "Homage to Manuel Enríquez," Rufino Tamayo Gallery, Oaxaca House of Culture, Oaxaca.
1992 "The Organic in and of Itself," Luis Nishizawa Gallery, National School of Visual Arts, UNAM, Mexico City.
1990 "Painting-Installation," Concert Hall, University of Northridge, Northridge, California, U.S.
1989 "Sonorous Atmospheres," La Salle University, Mexico City.
1988 "Color Monoprints," Domecq Cultural Institute, Mexico City.

Selection of Collective Exhibits

1999 "At Risk. 25 Visual Artists," San Ángel Cultural Center, Mexico City.
1998 "Art and Spirit," Oia Gallery, Santorini, Greece.
1998 "Nishizawa and His Students," Topete Gallery, Mexico City.
1997 "Century-End Images," Historic Center Festival, Mexico City.
1997 International Miniprint, Cadaqués, Spain.
1996 Second University Art Fair, University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUCA), Mexico City.
1996 Cadaqués International Miniprint, exhibits in Japan, England, France and Spain.
1994 Homage to Luis Nishizawa, Mining Palace, Mexico City.
1992 "Fresh Paint: Young Latin American Painters," André Malraux Gallery, Yerres, France.

Untitled, Tlacotalpan, Veracruz, no date.

Mariana Yampolsky
An Impassioned Eye

Elizabeth Ferrer*

Mariana Yampolsky's photographs are steeped in an emotional intimacy and intensity that is startling to behold.[1] Throughout my long friendship with the artist, I struggled to come to terms with the seeming dissonance between the difficult lives of the rural poor she photographed and the raw beauty suffusing much of her imagery. This is not to say that Yampolsky aestheticized poverty; quite to the contrary, she could be strident in criticizing the deep social and economic inequities in Mexico. Yampolsky herself found poignancy in the fact that she found beauty in unexpected realms, among marginalized people who make do with so little and in the stark environments which frame their daily existence. In bearing witness to these realities, Yampolsky gave to the world eloquent images of elemental truths —impassioned and utterly honest in what they say about the human condition.

Yampolsky's artistic practice was inextricably bound to an ethos that guided her daily life, one in which superficial differences like economic class and social standing mattered little in judging a person's true worth. She was motivated, rather, by a profound respect and concern for people who others ignore, and by the camera's ability to validate and inform. Her photographs became captured moments of transcendence, revealing in everyday lives a sense of beauty that may be all but invisible to a less discerning eye.

Born in 1925 in Chicago, Illinois, Mariana graduated from the University of Chicago in 1948. She arrived in Mexico in 1944 after being introduced to the work of the Popular Graphics Workshop and becoming intrigued by its revolutionary idealism and innovative working methods. Its members were engaged in the carefully aligned goals of producing images that compellingly responded to the most urgent concerns

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The Apron, 1988. San Simón de la Laguna, State of Mexico.

Charnel-house, 1973. Dangú, Hidalgo.

Cone Granery, no date. La Trinidad Hacienda, San Luis Potosí.

Mariana was motivated by a profound respect and concern for people who others ignore, and by the camera's ability to validate and inform.

Orange Stand, no date. Axochiapan, Morelos.

Child Pulque *Seller*, 1979. Soyaltepec, Tlaxcala.

of the rural poor and other underprivileged people in Mexico, and of distributing their work to these very communities by way of inexpensively produced graphics. Yampolsky's work as a printmaker and curator with the group became fundamental to her artistic and political formation. Through it, she developed an understanding of art as essentially social in purpose and as a powerful tool of communication and persuasion.

Yampolsky began experimenting with the camera early in her career, in the late 1940s, when she had the good fortune to enroll in photography classes at the San Carlos Academy taught by Lola Álvarez Bravo. She began to use the camera sporadically during her tenure with the workshop, producing photographic records of her travels. She pursued her first sustained project with the medium much later, in the mid-1960s, photographing popular traditions in many parts of the country for a seminal work on Mexican folk art, *Lo efímero y lo eterno del arte popular mexicano*[2] (The Ephemeral and the Eternal in Mexican Folk Art). These photographs were to guide the direction her work was to take in the 1980s and 1990s, the decades of artistic production for which she ultimately became best known. As she evolved as a photographer, Yampolsky was consistently drawn to two primary subjects: people, the Mexican people whom she profoundly loved, and architecture, a less appreciated but equally significant aspect of her work.

The formal rigor with which Yampolsky approached the photographic medium might best be observed in those compositions without people, in her architectural images as well as in her elegant studies of maguey plants and other aspects of the rural landscape. In ap-

The Beast, 1988. Suchiatepec, State of Mexico.

The formal rigor with which Yampolsky approached the photographic medium might best be observed in those compositions without people.

Flowery Bread, no date. San Pablito, Puebla.

proaching architecture, the artist constantly animated the inanimate and uncovered beauty in unexpected realms. But it is people, those whose faces have been made memorable through Yampolsky's photographs, who have the most enduring place in her oeuvre. Perhaps her most concentrated body of work involved photographs of impoverished Mazahua women from the State of Mexico. Yampolsky's images of these women are exceptional for a number of reasons, one being that she gave them a substantial role in the creation of their own image. Often when photographing people, she worked in relative anonymity, calling little attention to herself as she captured fleeting passages of time, moments of spiritual intensity, or the random gaze of passersby. In her work with the Mazahuas, however, Yampolsky's subjects were keenly aware of her presence, and her photographs of them mark intimate encounters shared equally by photographer and subject.

For Mariana Yampolsky, the photographic medium also maintained special value because it could amply reveal the complex struggle between tradition and modernity that lay at the heart of contemporary Mexican life, urban and rural. So much of Yampolsky's imagery portrays communities striving to maintain traditions even as they integrate aspects of a global, commodity-driven culture into their worlds. Tradition, as photographed by Mariana, is seen as part of a continuum that necessarily embraces the past *and* present. Rather than seeking to portray an idealized version of Mexico, especially later in her life, she saw the need to photograph the country (especially the countryside), as it underwent radical, even violent change. In an age when the veracity of photographic imagery was being broadly questioned (as it still is), Yampolsky remained firm in her reliance upon the camera —and in the unmanipulated black-and-white print— not only for its unique expressive capabilities, but for its ability to impart truth.

Notes

[1] This text was adapted from "Mariana Yampolsky: Una Mirada Apasionada/An Impassioned Eye," in *Mariana Yampolsky: Imagen-Memoria/Image-Memory.* Mexico City: Centro de la Imagen, 1999.

[2] *Lo efímero y lo eterno del arte popular mexicano* (Mexico City: Fondo Editorial de la Plástica Mexicana, 1971).

The Exterminating Angel, 1991. Tlaxcala.

Carlos Alarcón

Myth Gatherers
The Sculptures of Maribel Portela

Agustín Arteaga*

Jesús Sánchez Uribe

◀ *Hunters and Gatherers,* 2000.

Previous page: *Group of Goddesses*, 2002 (ceramics and *engobe* technique).

Down through the history of Man, myths have been built day to day: some reflect man's traditions in terms of his daily life, others capture his aspirations, desires or fantasies. The latter create a world parallel to reality, as important or more for the fulfillment of life's cycles.

Maribel Portela is one of the few people who in her daily life consciously recognizes all rituals as a part of her, from the moment she opens her eyes until she closes them again at the end of the day.

In the same way that, in ancient times, nomads lived by hunting and gathering, today we all are gatherers and nomads. We journey endlessly within an enormous universe that, though perhaps limited physically to our immediate surroundings, because of technology, we can wander through television or surfing the Internet. Otherwise, we are gatherers of things as diverse as match boxes, photographs, dreams, or works of art and —why not?— money.

Whatever our weakness for accumulation may be, it will be reflected in our way of life, building our own rituals.

With her cheerful, intense, overflowing nature, Maribel Portela reveals to us a world she is a part of, the world of gatherers of dreams and objects. As if in an act of contrition, as a sculptress, she brings to light a never-ending series of characters who can be identified by

Carlos Alarcón

▲ *Goddess of the Heart,* detail, 167 x 48 x 43 cm, 2002 (clay and metal, *engobe* technique).

* Mexican art critic.

Carlos Alarcón

Jesús Sánchez Uribe

▲ **Right:** *Gatherer of the Future* 177 x 65 x 48 cm, and *Hunter of Glances,* 158 x 56 x 40 cm, 2001 (clay and *engobe* technique).

◀ *Goddess of Abundance,* 85 x 29 x 32 cm, 2002 (clay and *engobe* technique).

Maribel Portela
reveals to us a world she is a part of,
the world of gatherers of dreams and objects.

▲ *Landscape,* 20 cm, 2001 (gourd and wood).

their dress or symbols with the activities of the spirit. Her beings emerge from a distant past but are immediate presences. She looks for human continuity in the primogenial, linking archaism with modernity; it is difficult to place her surprisingly simple terra cotta creations in time.

Maribel's latest work shows that she has matured, or should I say become aware of what in previous stages was a magic world inhabited by an infinity of small sized characters. Then it was a mirror of the crowded contemporary metropolis, and in general, of this over-populated world, leaving to each one the possibility of playing the role of the dramatically expressive anonymity of being part of an amorphous mass.

Today, her works have grown considerably in size, multiplying the expressiveness that the small format provides. It is not just a matter of mere monumental transference, but of magnified introspection. As her characters reach an average height similar to that of many human beings (1.60 meters), they attain the possibility of facing a reflection on an altered mirror. In them, what lies on the other side of us is re-

Carlos Alarcón

▲ *Goddess of Strength,* 179 x 53 x 57 cm, 2002 (clay, seeds and *engobe* technique).

Jesús Sánchez Uribe

▲ *Cat,* 54 x 24 x 18 cm, 2001 (ceramics and clay *engobe* technique).

▲ *Circle of Life,* 60 cm, 2000 (wood).

flected, the being that is primitive, spontaneous, natural, full of symbols and myths, fears and anxieties, dreams and desires.

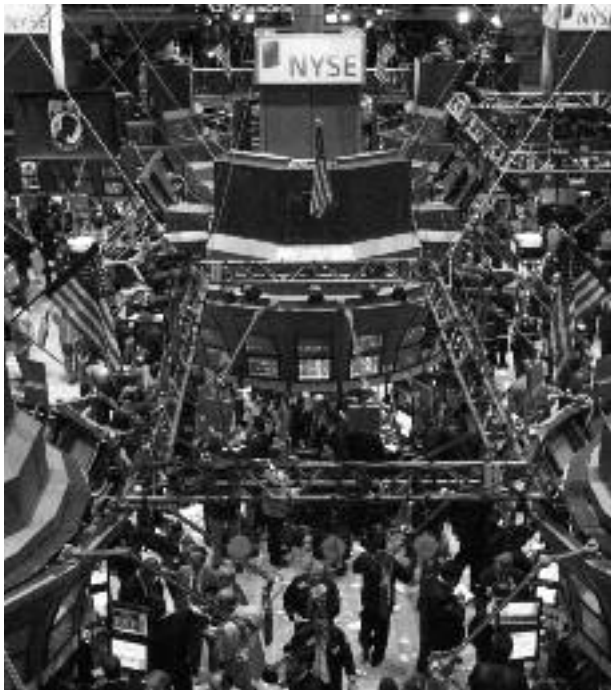
Maribel Portela resolves naturally the creation of Man. Technically, her pieces are impeccable, based on the premise of purity and honesty. They are what they are, clay constructions that register the gesticulation of their creation; simple, straightforward, self-sustainable, a return to the greatness of mother cultures. Ancestral echoes are captured in her pieces, reflecting sparkles of the Middle East and the West, of Mesoamerica or Mesopotamia. Before firing, she adds the oxides that make volume another aspect of creation; paint is not added, it is integrated and indivisible, but this does not deprive it of its own impact.

Compositions that alternate line and point rhythmically shape organized textures, cadences that account for private rituals. Clay skin turns into codex skin, into map paper, into an individual, human cartography.

Maribel Portela's magical world gives us the opportunity of recovering our lost memory of the everyday, of identifying ourselves with an essential part of the chain of life, so as to recover our deprived fantasy, integrating it into the collective mystique. VM

How the U.S. Economy Looks from Here

Elaine Levine*



Chip East/Reuters

On more than one occasion over the past few months, after President Bush insisted publicly that the U.S. economy is well on the road to recovery, the stock market has responded with a significant drop the following day, as if to prove him wrong. In mid-July, *Washington Post* staff writers noted, "For the second time in as many weeks, President Bush offered reassuring words today about the nation's economy. And for the second time investors drove stock prices steeply down just after his address."[1] Throughout the spring and summer the White House tried to convey optimism about the course of the nation's economy. Some overenthusiasts in Washington went so far as to doubt that a recession had even occurred since, according to initial data, the gross domestic product (GDP) had only contracted for a single trimester in 2001. Near the end of July, Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neil said on NBC-TV's *Meet the Press*, "If people count as a recession one quarter of negative growth, God bless them. I don't care."[2]

In early June, the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) pinpointed "sometime in March" 2001 as the peak of the economic expansion that began in March 1991, and hence the beginning of a recession. They cited four key indicators for determining whether or not "a significant decline in activity" —their definition of a recession— has taken place: 1) employment; 2) industrial production; 3) manufacturing and wholesale-retail sales volumes; and 4) real personal income minus transfers. "Most of the recessions identified by our procedures do consist of two or more quarters of declining real GDP, but not all of them," the NBER affirmed, adding, "The present recession may be an example that lacks two quarters of decline."[3] At that time the bureau did not identify a trough date, i.e., a turn-

* Researcher at CISAN.

ing point that would indicate the end of the recession. In fact, as they themselves stated, the bureau's Business Cycle Dating Committee "waits for many months after an apparent trough to make its decision, because of data revisions and the possibility that the contraction would resume."[4]

Data revisions released at the end of July did indeed raise new uncertainties about the current and future course of the U.S. economy. They also dispelled any doubts about whether or not a recession had occurred. The Commerce Department "revised its GDP data back to the start of 1999, revealing that national economic output contracted for three straight quarters during the first nine months of 2001, handily surpassing a rule-of-thumb definition that two quarters or more of declining output is a recession."[5] Although first quarter growth —originally reported at 5.8 percent and subsequently 6.1 percent— was revised downward to 5.0 percent, surely the most disappointing news was that in the second quarter of this year output only grew at a 1.1 percent seasonally adjusted annual rate —that is, "half the 2.2 percent rate estimated by Wall Street economists."[6]

It now seems that the decline in economic activity was a bit longer and deeper than originally estimated (a decrease of 0.8 percent rather that a rise of merely 0.1 percent) and yet mild when compared to other downturns. In spite of all the time and energy spent making predictions and all the paper and ink used to print them, the questions remaining unanswered thus far are: "Is it over?" "How bad was it, really?" and "What long term effects will it have?"

Although economics has made enormous strides since the days of Adam Smith, the business cycle, while seemingly still inevitable, is nonetheless a highly unpredictable phenomenon in terms of its precise timing, exact magnitude and overall impact. Only the advantage of hindsight allows us to fully explain the often erratic behavior of certain economic indicators and even then experts do not always agree in their interpretations of the economic events observed and their underlying causes.

The 2001 recession is an excellent example of how difficult it is at times for economists to make reliable predictions in spite of all the information to which they now have almost instantaneous access.

While the experience of the past two decades may indicate that the cycle has been tamed somewhat —judging by the magnitude of the fluctuations in GDP– it definitely has not been eliminated. Furthermore, the ostensibly mild recession in 1990-91, for example, had a much stronger and longer lasting impact than initially expected. According to David Brauer the subsequent recovery and expansion's lack of momentum, after the recession trough was reached, is without precedent in the entire postwar period. Both GDP and industrial output took over two years to reach their previous peaks. Private sector employment fell continuously for 19 months (until February 1992) and as late as July 1993 had not recuperated its pre-recession level.[7]

Nevertheless, the long lingering effects of that recession were finally dimmed by the economy's surprisingly strong performance during the second half of the 1990s. In spite of the president's public and private scandals, which cast their shadows over Clinton's White House years, and the numerous defeats he suffered in Congress, the Clinton administration can claim several important accomplishments in the economic domain, such as lowering unemployment, eliminating the fiscal deficit and sustaining GDP growth for eight years. After the first trimester of 1998, the unemployment level reached a 28-year low. The fiscal deficit was eliminated more rapidly than expected and, for the first time in 30 years, there was a budget surplus in 1999.

It was mainly consumer spending
that got the economy back on track
in the fourth quarter of 2001 and fueled its surge
at the beginning of 2002.

Midway into Clinton's second term his Council of Economic Advisers assured that there were no indications the existing economic expansion was in danger of winding down yet.

They pointed out that there were no inflationary pressures, nor build-up of inventories and no evidence of financial disequilibrium.

They highlighted the fact that investment had been growing since 1993 and productivity and salaries had been on the rise since 1996. However they also recognized that personal sav-

ings were extremely low and household debt continued to climb. They showed caution in warning that "the recent achievements do not mean an end to inflation or that the cycle has been defeated nor a permanent reversal of the secular tendencies of low productivity growth and increasing inequality in the income distribution."[8] Continuously high growth rates in GDP and productivity from 1996 to 2000 surpassed even the most optimistic projections. The favorable coincidence of low unemployment rates, low inflation and high rates of growth achieved during those years was just as surprising as the reverse phenomena of high inflation rates, high unemployment rates and almost negligable growth rates for output and productivity —referred to then as "stagflation"— which had caused so much concern at the end of the 1970s. According to the Clinton administration, this favorable combination of circumstances was due to the positive interaction of 1) great progress in information technology and telecomunications that in turn had an impact on many other sectors; 2) changes in business organization and practices that enhanced competitiveness; and 3) public policies which created a favorable climate for innovations and investment —particularly fiscal discipline to convert the deficit into a surplus, thereby allowing for lower interest rates, which encouraged private investment.[9]

In spite of all the Clinton administration's rhetoric about the "new economy," the spectre of a recession had been haunting the horizon for quite some time before September 11. Investment growth proceeded at a much slower pace after 1998 and actually began to wane in the third quarter of 2000, continuing to do so throughout 2001. Manufacturing employment began slipping in the second semester of 2000 as did employment in general after March 2001. Nevertheless the "r" word was not openly or widely used until after the terrorist attacks. Up to that point, the Bush administration had been hoping that Fed chairman Alan Greenspan would be able to commandeer a "soft landing."

An ominous sign is that even though the twin towers have not been replaced yet, the twin deficits —the trade deficit and the fiscal deficit— have reappeared.

As is to be expected, the White House was reluctant to admit that a recession was underway and a bit hasty, perhaps, in proclaiming it over. Once the initial shock effects of September 11 had subsided, consumers responded quite well to all the overt exhortations —many assert that there were subliminal ones also— that it was their patriotic duty to go out and spend. It was mainly consumer spending that got the economy back on track in the fourth quarter of 2001 and fueled its surge at the beginning of 2002. Later on it seems that the patriotic spending impulse was severely dampened by all the news of corporate scandals that plagued the economy throughout the spring and summer months.

The revised data released at the end of July and the continuously erratic behavior of the stock market have belied the administration's upbeat discourse. The president now finds himself faced with the dilemma of either appearing to be absurdly overly optimistic —and thus not sufficiently concerned about the immediate future of the economy and those most affected by hard times— or too pessimistic —possibly setting into motion a self-fulfilling prophecy of imminent further decline. With an eye to the upcoming midterm elections the Republicans are hoping to strike a proper balance. Around the middle of August, about a week after the economic forum he convened in Texas, Bush announced to the press that he was in the process of considering additional measures to help stimulate the economy. "That's one of the things that came out of the meeting, that some have urged us to think about additional measures to help growth, so I'm thinking about it," the president said.[10]

Just a few days before Bush's statement about considering a package of new steps to help out the economy, the Federal Reserve decided to leave interest rates unchanged. At the same time, it "downgraded its view of the economy and signaled that it would consider cutting rates if the recovery from last year's recession continued to lose steam."[11] By mid-August both the Fed and the President were sounding less optimistic than they had only a month earlier. Another ominous sign is that even though the twin towers have not been replaced yet, the twin deficits —the trade deficit and the fiscal deficit— have reappeared.

Currently a V-shaped recession —a brusk dip followed by a quick upswing— seems much less likely that it did some months ago. It now appears much more likely that the recession has assumed a U shape —an apparently mild decline followed by a rather slow, sluggish recovery. However it is still too soon to discard the possibility of a W-shaped, or double-dip, recession. Regardless of the form the U.S. recession assumes, the only thing certain for the Mexican economy is that the negative impact will probably be even stronger and last even longer here than in the U.S. It has been shown time and time again that in terms of economic health, when the U.S. sneezes, Mexico gets a cold, and if the U.S. gets a cold, Mexico comes down with pneumonia. VM

NOTES

[1] "Market Ignores Bush's Bullishness," *The Washington Post*, 15 July 2002, http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A10058-2002Jul15

[2] "O'Neil, Lindsay Laud Strength of Economy," *The Washington Post*, 29 July 2002, http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A13926-2002Jul28

[3] Business Cycle Dating Committee, "The NBER's Business-Cycle Dating Procedure," National Bureau of Economic Research, 7 June 2002, www.nber.org/cycles/recessions.html.

[4] Ibid.

[5] "Economy Grew Only 1.1% in 2nd Quarter, Less Than Expected," *The New York Times on the web*, 31 July 2002.

[6] Ibid.

[7] David Brauer, "A Historical Perspective on the 1989-92 Slow Growth Period," *Federal Reserve Bank of New York Quarterly Review* (summer 1993), pp. 3-5.

[8] *Economic Report of the President 1997* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office 1997) Chapters 1 and 2; *Economic Report of the President 1998* (Washington, D. C.: USGPO, 1998), Chapters 1 and 2 and p. 42.

[9] *Economic Report of the President 2001* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2001).

[10] "Bush Considers New Measures in a Bid to Boost the Economy," *The New York Times*, 17 August 2002, wysiwyg://38/http://www.nytimes.com/2002

[11] "No Cut in Rates as Fed Lowers Its Assessment of the Economy," *The New York Times*, 14 August 2002, wysiwyg://37/ http://www.nytimes.com/2002

Mexamerica, Inc.
Mexican Multinationals In The United States

Leopoldo Eggers*

Germán Romero/Cuartoscuro

Victoria Valtierra/Cuartoscuro

Carlos Slim (CompUSA), left, Roberto González Barrera (MASECA), center, and Lorenzo Zambrano (Cemex), right: three of the most successful Mexican business leaders in the United States.

When negotiations began for the North American Free Trade Agreement, many thought that the treaty would be a one-way street in terms of foreign direct investment and that the business possibilities for Mexican companies would focus on exporting goods and services. And it was no wonder: the flood of U.S. investment between 1991 and 1994 surpassed the total for the previous 100 years, and Mexican companies' scant response seemed to confirm the first impression.

Analysts also argued that the U.S. and Canadian markets were the world's most open even before the negotiations, and if Mexican companies did not invest in them under conditions of trade protection, what would point them North under conditions of free trade?

With this limited viewpoint, the argument about Mexican investment generating jobs in the United States was never used to counter the pressure and lobbying against NAFTA by U.S. unions.

Fortunately, eight years after it came into effect, on the NAFTA horizon there is a clear, not-to-be overlooked impact of direct investment by Mexican companies in the U.S. and Canadian markets (heretofore to be called "NAFTA markets").

Currently, about 30 Mexican groups and companies have direct investment and an important level of operations in NAFTA markets. For this article, I have picked the 15 most important from the point of view of the size of their industrial or commercial businesses, their revenues, assets and investments from 1994 on and the weight of their NAFTA operations in comparison to their whole business.

Another criterion for selection was the possession and control of stocks in the businesses located in the NAFTA region, excluding the groups that participate in them as minority partners through strategic associations and joint ventures.

This small but select club of 15 companies that I have dubbed Mexamerica, Inc. is representative and serves to illustrate the beginning of a current of investment and positioning of Mexican companies in NAFTA markets that will expand to a hundred before 2010 and, of course, will have a much more important participation in business in North America.

By no means does this signify that their current participation amounts to nothing more than a hill of beans: in 2001 the subsidiaries of Mexamerica, Inc. reported earnings of almost U.S.$17 billion, assets of over U.S.$18 billion and an accumulated investment in their NAFTA operations of around U.S.$15 billion. In 2001 alone, Mexamerica, Inc.'s new investment surpassed U.S.$3

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THE FIXTEEN LARGEST MEXICAN COMPANIES OPERATING IN THE UNITED STATES

No.	Company or Group	Revenues Portion Operating Subsidiaries in the U.S. and Canada	Net Profit Assets Sector	Accumulated 2001	Var. % 2001/2000	No. of Employees of Total Revenues (%)	Profit 2001	Profit 2000
1	Grupo Slim E-commerce 822	US Comercial (CompUSA) Tenedora US and Condumex, Inc.	Retail, systems and computer equipment	4,129.7	2.0	15.5[1]	(123.3)	40.2
2	Grupo México*	American Mining Company and Asarco, Inc.	Mining and metal working	2,435.0	25.4	80.5	23.3	311.7
3	Cemex*	Cemex, Inc.	Cement and concrete	1,872.5	143.6	29.0	351.1	183.1
4	Vitro*	VVP América, Vitro Packaging and Crisa Corporation	Construction glass, containers and auto	1,568.7	18.9	52.3	34.5	nd
5	Grupo Bimbo*	Bimbo USA	Bread and pastry	1,284.5	na	30.3	(4.9)	(8.0)
6	Grupo Alfa	Alpek and Nemak	Petrochemicals and autoparts	1,204.0	42.2	24.2	50.0	nd
7	Gruma	Gruma Corporation	Food: flour and packaged tortillas	894.8	4.0	45.8	57.6	41.4
8	Grupo Imsa	Glass Steel, VP Buildins and Ges America	Covered steel and metal products	692.8	38.3	30.1	15.7	10.4
9	Savia*	Seminis Inc. Bionova Holding Corp.	Agricultural biotechnology	672.6	(3.1)	95.8	(53.8)	(74.1)
10	IUSA*	Cambridge Lee Holding and United Copper Industries	Metal products and electrical equipment	518.9	(16.8)	60.3	5.0	24.5
11	América Móvil	TracFone	Mobil telephone services	472.6	26.7	10.4	(347.4)	(213.4)
12	Corporación Durango*	Durango and McKinley Paper	Paper and packing	385.6	(25.0)	36.7	nd	22.2
13	Grupo Accel	Elamex, Inc., Tropical Sportswear International, Flankin Connection	Textiles, garment and candy	179.3	(17.7)	81.7	nd	nd
14	Grupo Cementos de Chihuahua*	GCC of America, Inc.	Cement and concrete	157.4	33.6	41.6	21.1	2.3
15	Interceramic*	Interceramic, Inc.	Ceramic products	113.6	(0.4)	39.2	nd	nd

Numbers in millions of U.S. dollars except employment figures and business units.

Source: Direct reports, company quarterly and yearly reports and other public documents.

Research: Leopoldo Eggers Muñoz, Antonia Arellano Benítez and Raúl Olmedo Gutiérrez.

billion, a much higher figure than the annual investment in many small nations in Central or South America or the Caribbean.

In terms of employment, the figures are no less impressive if we consider that Mexamerica, Inc.'s 55,000 direct jobs generate about 400,000 indirect jobs related to these Mexican-owned companies.

SURVIVAL OR NAFTA

It is worth asking what spurred these groups to accept the challenge to go into the competitive U.S. markets? Some NAFTA experts think that the treaty was not the direct cause of the impulse to invest from South to North, but they admit that its effects on the economic environment in the short and medium term did create institutional and macroeconomic conditions that encouraged the com-

2001	2000	2001	Var. % 2001/2000	Investment 1994-2001	2001	Var. % 2001/2000	Business Units/Coverage
(26.0)	(66.3)	2,268.7	14.8	2,300.0	14,721	(28.9)	221 stores
(195.1)	348.8	3,587.8	0.7	2,939.0	3,280	nd	10 plants
nd	nd	4,827.4	14.9	2,970.0	5,273	28.6	nd
nd	nd	296.5	nd	350.0	3,280	0.1	16 plants 226 service and dist. centers
nd	nd	1,147.8	166.6	1,156.0	9,276	nd	22 plants
nd	nd	635.0	nd	454.2	3,000	87.5	5 plants
11.3	9.2	738.7	0.0	363.1	5,030	nd	18 plants 3 dist. centers
nd	nd	663.7	33.6	491.0	4,398	nd	nd
(152.8)	(89.4)	835.4	(16.3)	1,019.8	2,750	nd	70 laboratories 560 patents
(2.0)	8.6	223.2	1.5	110.0	830	nd	nd
nd	nd	2,630.4	233.6	1,536.0	940	(42.0)	1,913,000 subscribers
5.4	nd	374.0	(4.5)	306.8	1,301	3.2	nd
2.1	17.5	133.4	(23.6)	156.0	310	nd	nd
nd	na	332.1	194.4	407.0	269	nd	11 plants 6 dist. centers
0.7	(74.9)	69.9	1.4	55.0	606	0.0	nd

NOTE: * Includes revenues from U.S. and Canadian subsidiaries and exports to U.S. and Canada.
[1] Portion of total revenues vis-à-vis all companies controlled by the Slim family.

KEY
na = non-applicable nd = no data available

panies to begin their NAFTA adventure. Of the 15 groups selected for this article, Grupo Maseca (Gruma), Cemex, Grupo Accel, Interceramic and Grupo Vitro made their move before NAFTA was negotiated and signed. Grupo Savia, Cementos Chihuahua (GCC), Grupo Bimbo, Grupo IUSA and IMSA arrived in the first years after it came into effect. Corporación Durango, Grupo Alfa, Grupo México and the Slim family companies (U.S. Comercial and América Móvil) arrived in the final years of the last decade and the first of the current one.

Other Mexican companies with a direct stake in NAFTA territory are Grupo Industrial Saltillo, Grupo Desc, Televisa, TV Azteca, Grupo Lamosa, Grupo Gigante, Famsa, Del Valle, Transportación Marítima Mexicana, Grupo Posadas, CIE and Softek, but their operations are very recent, and until now, they represent only a small or marginal portion of the mother companies' total business.

Success Stories

Among the pioneering companies, the most notable cases are Gruma and Cemex.

The Universal Tortilla

Roberto González Barrera's business acumen and vision has allowed him to see the enormous potential of the Hispanic-Mexican market for the consumption of corn flour, tortillas and other similar products like *tostadas* and *totopos*. That vision took him to the United States in 1977, 18 years before NAFTA. His company, that took the name Gruma Corporation, had everything it needed to be a winner: a profound knowledge of the importance of corn consumption in the cultural profile of Hispano-Mexicans and a complete command of its own innovative technology for making corn flour, tortillas and other supplementary products.

History proved him right. Today, the U.S. market for tortillas and derivatives is valued at an estimated U.S.$1.9 billion; Gruma's share of that market is 25 percent, and it has achieved an 80 percent share of the corn flour market in the last two years.

Gruma Corporation is the world's largest producer of tortillas; it is Gruma's most important business and one of the most consolidated and profitable. Among its strengths is the projection and positioning of its brand names Maseca, Misión and Guerrero, all leaders in the U.S. market. Its importance for the group is such that it is in charge of expansion into the European market, which it began a year ago when it set up a tortilla plant in Coventry, England.

Cybernetic Cement

Cemex's entry into the U.S. market in 1985 coincided with Mexico's entry into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and, above all, with another visionary, Lorenzo Zambrano, coming on board at the company. Under his leadership, Cemex restructured and began its impressive international expansion, which has made it the world's third cement producer, perhaps the most respected and admired of all.

But Cemex is much more than that. It is the most spectacular example of how, even in a commodities industry, enormous amounts of value added can be generated: Cemex's contribution to its sector has consisted of transforming cement into an industry of solutions: operational, financial, technological, logistical and commercial.

Its initial steps into the NAFTA markets started with the need to attend to the enormous U.S. market from the inside because of the high anti-dumping tariffs the government levied on Mexican cement in the 1980s and that continue in effect today. With a current production capacity of 13.2 million tons, plus what it adds this year, Cemex, Inc. is already the largest cement company in the United States and the Americas.

With Caution

The slow expansion of Mexican companies toward the NAFTA markets is closely related to how very difficult they are. They are enormous, very competitive markets; their consumers demand quality, low prices and service; they have low brand-name loyalty and are highly sensitive to technological advances and permanent innovation in design, materials and creative publicity strategies.

Broken Glass

Mexican investors still remember a few spectacular failures like Grupo Vitro's early 1990s acquisition of Anchor Glass Container, which went bankrupt in 1996 after losing the market for bottling carbonated drinks to the blossoming PET resin industry.

The losses and bankruptcy of Anchor Glass were a harsh blow to Vitro, which was barely able to recover and reformulate an expansion strategy in the NAFTA markets, although, of course with a business plan much more focused on manufacturing and selling glass products for construction and automobile glass in segments that require greater specialization, value added in their products and client service.

Political Risks

Another case that illustrates NAFTA markets risks is the Grupo Savia experience with their division of agricultural biotechnology products headed up by Séminis and Bionova, Inc. It is common knowledge that well-known businessman Alfonso Romo bet a veritable for-

Currently, about 30 Mexican groups and companies have direct investment and an important level of operations in NAFTA markets.

tune on his acquisition of an enormous global network of research laboratories that developed vegetable seeds; in a few years, it had become the world's number one producer of modified vegetable seeds.

Grupo Savia's problem was that it did not foresee the strong resistance these products would encounter from environmentalist organizations opposed to the use of genetically modified seeds. These groups' activities have been forceful enough to stop the expansion of modified seed use, and this has severely limited Grupo Savia's business potential and viability.

In Aztlán, Even King Midas Trips...

The NAFTA markets are the supreme test for even the most far-sighted and decided Mexican entrepreneurial spirit. Recently, even Carlos Slim, with all his experience and analytical capability, has encountered some difficulties in expanding and making the CompUSA retail chain profitable. He bought it in 2000, but it has already suffered losses and fines to the tune of millions of dollars.

From Tiny Markets to Huge Markets

The NAFTA markets' challenge has also been levied at the most proven of the business and trade models, Grupo Bimbo. One of Mexico's most widely recognized family businesses, it has also had some difficulties in replicating the business model that it has successfully implemented at home and in other Latin American countries.

Little by little, Bimbo has had to learn that in the NAFTA markets, because of their size and competitiveness, unlike in Latin America, the key to success is not in having wide distribution capabilities, economies of scale or buying companies and brands easily identified by local consumers.

For Bimbo, the real challenge of the NAFTA markets will be in being highly innovative, developing new products and creating a marketing strategy that targets a much wider population than first- and second-generation Hispanics. Only then will Bimbo's baker-bear NAFTA operation chalk up black numbers on its financial balance sheet.

With a current production capacity of 13.2 million tons, Cemex, Inc. (Cementos Mexicanos) is already the largest cement company in the United States and the Americas.

Watch Out for the Business Cycle

With the acquisition of Asarco, Inc., one of the United States largest mining-metalworking companies and in turn owner of the Southern Peru Copper Corporation, Grupo México became the world's third largest copper producer. The importance of its productive enclave, headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, in the heart of the world's most important metal market, led it to set up the American Mining Company (AMC) there, the corporate head of a mining business with revenues more than U.S.$2.4 billion in 2001 (not including its Mexican division's earnings), with mining and exploration operations on the five continents.

AMC's problem is mining's high sensitivity to the cyclical nature of international industrial markets for metals like copper (its main product), lead, zinc and precious metals. Cycles are key in this business since financial results are subject to the fluctuations of international prices and investments are huge, financed by debt emissions of several hundreds of millions of dollars.

Doing a Good Job

The case that shows a true NAFTA vocation is Corporación Durango, Latin America's largest producer of packing paper. From the early 1990s, Corporación Durango set its NAFTA business focus by specializing in making packaging for use by exporters and the universe of maquiladora plants that operate along the Mexico-U.S. border. Later, with the audacity and determination that characterize the Rincón family, it acquired McKinley Paper Company in 1997 and Gillman Paper in 2000 to satisfy from both sides of the border the demand for packing materials for export and import along the main industrial and commercial corridors that move trade between Mexico and the United States.

Having organized its NAFTA operation under the aegis of Durango International, the results have been satisfactory up until now. Nevertheless, the threat of a recession is now its main challenge: in 2001 its U.S. revenues dropped 25 percent and its net profits slumped to only U.S.$5 million.

The Myth of High Wages

Other cases worthy of special mention are the Grupo IUSA and Grupo Accel,

who have used their experience in the field of manufacturing and the development of industrial solutions to position themselves in the NAFTA markets in businesses as disparate as metal working, candy, textiles and apparel.

Thus, while in Mexico the immense majority of entrepreneurs in apparel complain of the increase in real wages and the over-valued peso, putting them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the "powerful" economies of Haiti, El Salvador, Trinidad Tobago, Malaysia and Vietnam, Grupo Accel, through its Tropical Sportswear International, designs, manufactures, develops brand names and sells apparel from its Tampa, Florida base of operations. It has registered several million dollars on the right side of its balance sheet despite U.S. wage levels, which are seven to eight times what they are in Mexico.

For its part, despite the fact that the 2001 recession complicated its NAFTA business performance, headed up by Cambridge Lee Holding, Grupo IUSA also had positive results from its copper tubing and wiring manufacturing operations.

Some Lessons

The experience of the Mexican corporations that have dared to set up shop in NAFTA territory can in general be termed positive, both from the point of view of their financial results and of the learning curve that will allow them to avoid mistakes and perform in highly competitive markets.

Even though profits are glaringly absent in the majority of cases, it is also fair to say that most Mexican businesses in NAFTA territory are still consolidating.

The fact that most of the businesses of Mexamerica, Inc. were established by purchasing already existing companies with entrepreneurial cultures that would be difficult to transform and that have often been overvalued means that Mexican corporate executives who want to expand into the NAFTA markets must refine their business sense. They have to learn to not make bad acquisitions of companies with scant vocation for change and profitability or companies in sectors threatened by substitution or technological obsolescence. VM

Southern U.S. Markets A New Niche for Mexican Exports

Brenda Méndez*

According to the 2000 census, the second largest number of Hispanic inhabitants in the United States, 11.6 million (32.8 percent), live in the South.

Traditionally, most economic activities of Hispano-Americans in the United States have been carried out in the West, in states like California, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado, where the largest number of Hispanics reside.[1] However, we should not underestimate the growth potential developing in the South's Hispanic market, which boasts annual sales of more than U.S.$86 billion and the highest number of Hispanic businesses in the country.

Geographic proximity, the different levels of economic development, sociocultural diversity and trade agreements, among other factors, have favored both migration and trade between the southern United States and Mexico. To analyze this trend, the Mexican-American Solidarity Foundation prepared a series of studies about the Hispanic market in four regions of the United States. This article presents some of the demographic and economic traits of the southern states, as well as a projection of the area's demographic and economic development.

The Dynamic Hispanic Market

Hispanics make up 12.5 percent of the U.S. population; numbering 35.3 million, they are the largest ethnic minority. At least 23.6 million of them are of Mexican origin. This community constitutes an ethnic market with almost

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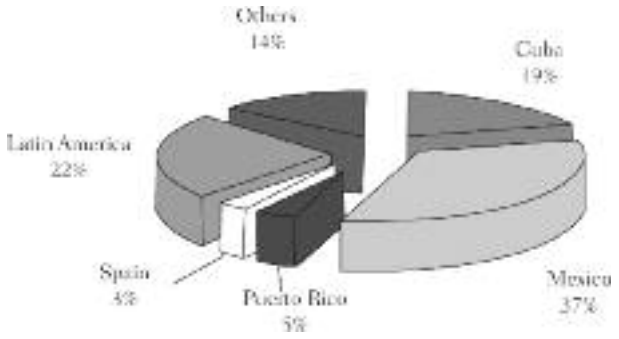
Hispanic Businesses in the South by Country of Origin



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanic, 1997. *Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, Company Statistics Series*, EC97CS-4.

U.S.$500 billion annually in buying power.[2] This equals the size of the Mexico's economy each year.

The Hispanic market is a natural bridge to the rest of U.S. society, but above all it implies an extremely important business niche for both nations. Hispanics, and particularly Mexican Hispanics, have adapted to a new way of social and economic life in their host country, but they also maintain their customs, traditions and language. This is why they are the most important targets for exports from Mexico, above all those who reside in the southern states, who have significant purchasing power.

The U.S. South is made up of 16 states and the District of Columbia. Today, 11.6 million Hispanics are distributed throughout this area, 32.8 percent of all Hispanics in the United States. They are highly concentrated in Texas, where 57.6 percent live (6.7 million people) and in Florida, where 23.2 percent live (2.7 million). Together, the two states make up 80.8 percent of all Hispanics in the South. In nine southern states, Hispanics do not even make up 1 percent of the total population.

Distribution of the Hispanic Population in the South

Mexicans are the dominant group in the region, making up 56 percent of the Hispanic population. The second largest group is made up of what the Census Bureau calls "other Hispanics," that is, people mainly from Central and South America, who total 29 percent. Cubans represent 8 percent and Puerto Ricans, 7 percent. Florida concentrates 90 percent of all the Cubans in the South and 74.2 percent of all Cubans in the United States.

Even though they represent much smaller markets than those of Texas and Florida, the importance of Mexican consumers in Oklahoma, Arkansas, North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee should not be underestimated. In those states, Mexicans make up more than 60 percent of Latinos.[3]

In the last decade, Arkansas and North Carolina registered the largest growth in Hispanics' buying power in the region, which indicates its growing potential. Other markets like Georgia and Tennessee are developing and may be attractive above all for Mexican investors. In these states, more than 25 percent of Hispanic businesses are owned by Mexicans.

Texas also concentrates the largest number of people of Mexican origin, with 5.1 million, surpassed nationally only by California.[4] One indicator of the growing importance of the Hispanic market in Texas is that in the 1990s alone, Hispanics represented 56.6 percent of its total population growth.

Florida is the South's second largest state in terms of Hispanic population: 23 percent of all its residents are Hispanic and it is fourth in the country, with 2.7 million, after California, Texas and New York. Despite being a predominantly Cuban market, this state has the South's second largest Mexican community, with 364,000 inhabitants.

The Hispanic market is a natural bridge to the rest of U.S. society, but above all it implies an extremely important business niche for both nations.

Texas will probably continue for a long time to be the state with the greatest number of Hispanic consumers in the south, reaching 11.6 million in 2025. Nevertheless, demographic projections show that the Hispanic population will grow the most in the states with the

fewest Latinos, at the same time that more Hispanic businesses will open there. This is the case of Arkansas and Oklahoma.[5]

Growth of The Hispanic Population

In the 1990s alone, the Hispanic population grew 57.9 percent, increasing from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000, compared to a 13.2 percent increase overall in the United States.

This dynamic growth will continue. U.S. Census Bureau projections indicate that the Hispanic population in the South will expand 84 percent by 2025, increasing from 11.6 million to 21.3 million. Hispanics will continue to grow at a much higher rate than the general population.

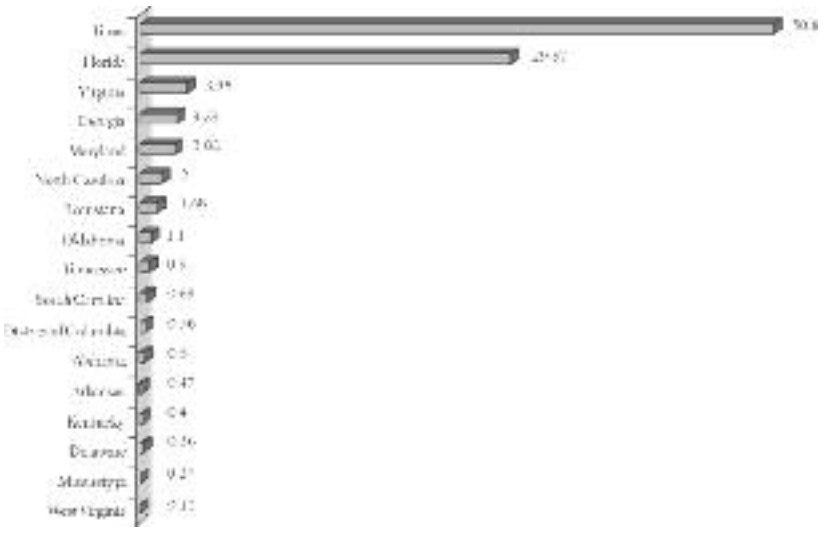
By 2025, Florida will also have a 5.5 million Hispanic population and Georgia, 796,000. It is estimated that at least Florida, Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas and the District of Columbia will double their Hispanic population.

Fourteen of the 38 metropolitan areas (almost 37 percent) with the highest Hispanic population in the U.S. are located in the South. Four of these have over a million inhabitants, making them important markets.[6]

Of the South's 11.6 million Hispanic consumers, 6.6 million, or 57 percent, live in these 14 metropolitan areas. Texas is home to nine of the 14, followed by Florida with four, and the fourteenth is spread over parts of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

The Miami-Fort Lauderdale metropolitan area is the third largest ethnic market in the United States, the South's largest, with 3.5 million Hispanics.[7] Laredo, McAllen-Edinburg-Mission and El Paso are the areas with the highest proportion of Hispanics, with 95 percent, 87 percent and 74 percent, respectively.

Hispanics' Purchasing Power in the South (percent)



Source: Terry College of Business, "Buying Power at the Beginning of a New Century: Projections for 2000 and 2001," *Georgia Business and Economic Conditions* (July-August 2000).

Hispanics are the ethnic minority that has the largest number and variety of media in their language, built around their culture.

Other Socioeconomic Indicators

The 2000 census showed that the average age of the U.S. population is 35; however, while for Anglo-Saxons it is 36, for Hispanics, it is only 26. Among the latter, Mexicans are the youngest group, with an average age of 24.

Of all the United States' Hispanics, 14.5 million (41 percent) were born abroad. They are older on the average (35) than U.S.-born Latinos (26). Forty-one percent arrived in the United States after 1990; 93 percent have jobs, but are part of the lowest-income group in the country.

All this has significant implications for anyone interested in accessing this market, since the simple demographic weight of the foreign-born determines a great deal about how the market works, particularly with regard to language, life style, consumer patterns and the demand for certain goods and services.

PROJECTION OF HISPANIC POPULATION FOR 2025

STATE	HISPANIC POPULATION		GROWTH (PERCENT)
	2000	2025	
Texas	6,669,666	11,605,218	74
Florida	2,682,715	5,526,392	106
Georgia	435,227	796,465	83
North Carolina	378,963	655,606	73
Virginia	329,540	659,080	100
Maryland	227,916	464,948	104
Oklahoma	179,304	353,228	97
Tennessee	123,838	225,385	82
Louisiana	107,738	204,702	90
South Carolina	95,076	182,545	92
Arkansas	86,866	176,337	103
Alabama	75,830	128,911	70
Kentucky	59,939	102,496	71
District of Columbia	44,953	89,906	100
Mississippi	39,569	73,203	85
Delaware	37,277	71,572	92
West Virginia	12,279	26,768	118
Total South	11,586,696	21,342,762	84

Source: U.S. Bureau, *Projections for States by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: 1995-2025*, 1996, P25-1130.

For example, Hispanics born abroad prefer to speak Spanish. As a group, they tend to rent housing instead of buying; they are more likely to send remittances to their countries of origin; and they usually live in homes with larger families.[8]

A vast majority consume Mexican products and make their purchases in cash, despite the fact that they use bank services and have lived in the U.S. for several years.[9]

The Spanish-language media has played a fundamental role. Hispanics are the ethnic minority that has the largest number and variety of media in their language, built around their culture. Two television networks, Univisión and Telemundo, have more than 95 stations; about 638 radio stations broadcast in Spanish; 26 newspapers and 490 periodicals publish a total of 12 million copies; and 268 magazines in Spanish are currently available.

GROWING HISPANIC FREE ENTERPRISE

The last "economic census," done in 1997, put Hispanic-owned businesses at 5.8 percent of all U.S. companies. Mexicans owned 39 percent (472,033) of the 1.2 million Hispanic businesses in the country. Central and South Americans were next with 24 percent, while Cubans —who have the highest income level of all the sub-groups— owned 10 percent, despite only representing 3.5 percent of the total Hispanic population. Overall, Hispanic businesses employed 13 million people in 1997 and had earnings of U.S.$186.3 billion.[10]

The South has half a million Hispanic businesses, the largest number of any region in the United States, as well as the highest level of annual sales. This is even more significant if we consider that the West has the largest Hispanic population, with 3.4 million more than in the South.[11]

According to *Hispanic Business* magazine, the 20 most important Hispanic businesses in the South are among the 35 largest nationwide; 13 of these are in Florida. The largest Hispanic business in the country, MasTec, Inc., a telecommunications company, is headquartered in Miami. Texas is home to four, among which is the nation's fourth, an

auto sales and services company. Georgia has two, in the same sector. Oklahoma has one, the nineteenth largest, a meat derivatives manufacturer.

Miami-Fort Lauderdale, Florida, has the largest number of businesses in the South, with 140,150 companies. The second largest metropolitan area is Houston-Galveston, with 95,518. In the three most important metropolitan areas, there is a direct correlation between the number of businesses and the size of the Hispanic population. However, the case of Dallas-Fort Worth shows that this is not always the case: it is fourth in population size while five other metropolitan areas have more Hispanic businesses.[12]

Buying Power And Consumer Habits

Generally speaking, the income of the Hispanic population in the 1990s increased continually. In 1993, the average annual income in Hispanic homes was U.S.$26,919; by 2000, it had reached U.S.$33,447, an increase of 24.3 percent in seven years. From 1999 to 2000 alone, it increased 5.3 percent. This change may be related, among other factors, to the economic boom that the United States experienced after the 1990-1991 recession.[13]

In the South, Hispanic household income was U.S.$33,584, slightly higher than the national average. Compared to the nation's other three regions, the South is in third place, surpassing only the Northeast.

According to data from the Selig Center for Economic Growth, Texas ranks second nationwide, after California, in terms of Hispanic buying power, with U.S.$75 billion a year; Florida comes in third with U.S.$44.1 billion. Virginia ranks tenth. Of the ten states with the highest increase of Hispanic buying power between 1990 and 2001, Arkansas is first, with an impressive 316.6 percent hike; North Carolina is third with 255.2 percent; and Georgia, fourth, with 250.6 percent. These states have relatively small but flourishing Hispanic markets.

With regard to consumer habits, Hispanics, particularly Mexican-Americans and Mexicans, have preserved cultural patterns, customs and traditions from their countries of origin, as well as their language. These characteristics remain vibrant because of the constant migration to the United States, giving this population particular characteristics, needs and consumer habits.[14]

Hispanics also show more brand loyalty and more stable consumer habits than non-Hispanics. Thus, there is a high demand for our products and a growing presence of Mexican companies in that market.[15]

The Hispanic market in the South displays vigorous buying power and consumers are avid for products with which they can identify culturally. This is a great opportunity for producers who are able to satisfy those needs. VM

Notes

[1] Mónica Bellizia, *Medio Oeste*, Serie de Estudios sobre el Mercado Hispano de EUA, vol. 1 (Mexico City: Fundación Solidaridad Mexicano-Americana, May 2001).

[2] Esther González and Erika González, *Oeste*, Serie de Estudios sobre el Mercado Hispano de EUA, vol. 2 (Mexico City: Fundación Solidaridad Mexicano-Americana, November 2001).

[3] U.S. Census Bureau, *Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 1990* and U.S. Census Bureau, *Profile of General Demographic Characteristics 2000* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990 and 2000).

[4] By "Mexicans" we mean everyone of Mexican origin who lives in the United States, including both Mexican-Americans and people born in Mexico.

[5] Betsy Gusmán, *The Hispanic Population. Census 2000 Brief* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, May 2001), at http://www.census. gov

[6] U.S. Census Bureau, "Metropolitan Areas with Large Numbers of Selected Racial Groups and of Hispanic Origin Population: 1997," *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999*, no. 45, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999).

[7] Carmen De Navas-Walt, Robert W. Cleveland and Marc O. Roemer, "Money Income in the United States: 2000," *Current Population Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001), pp. 60-213, at http://www.census.gov

[8] The Mexican-American Solidarity Foundation used Gallup-Mexico methodology to do a survey about the consumer habits of Mexican residents in the U.S. With help from the Mexican Telephone Company, they conducted 3,600 phone interviews with Mexicans over 15 who had resided more than three years in the United States.

[9] Carmen de Navas-Walt et al., op. cit.

[10] Melissa Therrin and Roberto Ramírez, "The Hispanic Population in the United States," *Current Population Reports* at http://www. censu.gov/population/www/socdem/hispanic.html

[11] Ibid.

[12] Pedro Pulgar, "Dólares latinos," *La Opinión* (Los Angeles), 11 December 2001.

[13] U.S. Census Bureau, "Buying Power and Projections for 2025" (Washington, D.C.: n/p, 1990).

[14] BANCOMEXT, *Estados Unidos, perfil del mercado hispano* (Mexico City: BANCOMEXT, 2000).

[15] See Leopoldo Eggers' article about the most successful Mexican companies in the United States in this issue of *Voices of Mexico*, pp. 53-61.

Intraprovincial Trade And Intelligent Borders in Canada

Delia Montero*

Jim Young/Reuters

Some Canadian premiers are concerned about the significant drop in intraprovincial trade brought by NAFTA.

Intraprovincial trade in Canada has changed over the last 20 years, particularly since the modifications in economic policy implemented in the mid-1980s that led to trade and financial opening.

Canada had traditionally maintained greater protection for its investments and trade until the mid-1980s. However, it gradually became completely in step with the new form of trade relations in the world: globalization. This implied greater openness, which can be clearly observed recently not only in its deeper trade and financial ties to the United States, but also in its provincial trade, which has changed destination.

It is important to answer the questions: Why have international exports grown significantly while Canada's internal trade has dropped, and what is the short-term impact of this?

My answer is that globalization has linked Canada's provinces more to the United States than among themselves. This erodes trade relations within the federation and, more than characteristic of development, I see it as a medium-term problem, for several reasons. The first is that the world economy has not yet been able to recover from

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the economic slow-down demonstrated in a drop in global trade and investments; secondly, the United States is only very slowly recovering from its recent recession and its trade with and foreign investment in Canada have dropped significantly. Thirdly, this has postponed the Canadian national project of strengthening the domestic economy in light of the greater linkage to a market that may not respond to trade expectations, particularly since the events of September 11. This process, that makes for greater outward integration, may have enormous consequences, and not necessarily positive ones, particularly since the globalization model is increasingly coming into question and does not bode well for a rapid recovery of trade and investment in the world economy in the short run.

The Canadian Economy

The enormous growth of the U.S. economy in the 1990s, with very low inflation and unemployment levels, had its effect on Canada. The most important impact was the strengthening of the discourse about the blessings of the free market system and the insuperable benefits of U.S. capitalism. This can be observed in the different economic opening policies that Canada implemented since then. Another effect of the United States' impressive economic performance in that period is the undoubted increase in Canada's dependence on it, particularly with regard to trade and investment. The strong U.S. economic expansion in the 1990s increased the two countries' tendency to greater economic integration.

In that decade, the differences between the Canadian and the U.S. economies were seriously accentuated, particularly with regard to productivity and employment, indicators that were lower in Canada. These trends were also reflected in an unprecedented drop in the exchange rate, which showed uncertainty during the whole decade, in contrast with the economic upturn in the United States.

Nevertheless, the recent performance of the U.S. economy is different. The economic recession, openly recognized by the administration, and the very slow recovery, in addition to the events of September 11, have had an impact on trade between the two countries. A constant concern for Canadians has been their growing dependence on trade with their southern neighbor, which has increased since the terrorist attacks.

Since the bilateral Free Trade Agreement came into effect, the volume of Canadian exports to the United States increased spectacularly to 80 percent of all exports. Between 1989 and 1998, total trade volume with the United States increased 140 percent. Exports went from 27 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1988 to more than 40 percent in 1999. Canadian exports are mainly raw materials, auto products, other goods like electrical machinery and services.

Parallel to this increase in international trade, intraprovincial trade in Canada has dropped from 27 percent of GDP in 1988 to less than 19 percent in 1999. It can therefore be said that Canada is evolving into being part of a group of regional economies that turn north-south around the U.S. axis, to the detriment of the east-east axis of trade among its own provinces.

General Trends Of Intraprovincial Trade

Until 1984, the Canadian economy, despite its always having been highly integrated into the U.S. economy, maintained large intraprovincial trade and a very well integrated domestic market.

> The changes in intraprovincial trade, which translate into a greater integration with the U.S. economy, are evidence of a structural transformation in Canadian trade.

This situation has changed for several reasons, among them the reduction of Canadian tariffs, weak GDP growth and weak growth of intraprovincial exports.

Among the general policies dictated by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Free Trade Agreement was the drop in tariffs, which went from an average of about 3.75 percent in 1981 to 0.93 percent in 1996. This has put intraprovincial exports more at the mercy of foreign competition.

In 1996, trade among the provinces represented 20 percent of Canadian GDP and in some provinces, like New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and Alberta, more than 25 per-

cent. Because of its vast territory, trade flows between neighboring provinces are considerable: that is, distance is an important aspect of trade relations within Canada.

If we look at the trade between the most industrialized provinces and those that contribute most to GDP, we find very interesting figures. For example, in 1996, 11.5 percent of Quebec's GDP came from its exports to Ontario, its next-door neighbor. For its part, 8 percent of Ontario's GDP came from its sales to Quebec. Also, more than 5 percent of British Columbia's GDP comes from its sales to neighboring Alberta province.[1]

The service industry, one of the country's most important, is the biggest contributor to Canada's domestic trade. It should be noted that 75 percent of jobs are in the service sector and the remainder in manufacturing. Four provinces (Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia) concentrate 85 percent of all service provision.[2]

In fact, of Canada's 10 main industries that trade domestically, five belong to the service sector. Other very important industries for intraprovincial trade are automobile and truck producers, the food industry and mining, which all together tripled their internal trade from 1984 to 1996. Processed foods and mineral fuels are also involved in intraprovincial trade.

Nevertheless, the economic importance of Canadian intraprovincial trade has dropped since 1984. Interprovincial exports compared to GDP have fallen in all provinces except New Brunswick, where they have remained fairly stable. Oil-rich Alberta's intraprovincial exports have also fallen in absolute terms due to fuel sales being diverted to international markets.

While intraprovincial exports dropped, international exports more than doubled in the same period. The increase in foreign trade was particularly important between 1991 and 1996, with a 17 percent mean annual growth rate in exports, a much higher figure than the 4 percent mean annual growth rate for intraprovincial trade in the same years. Until 1991, intraprovincial and foreign exports had grown more or less at the same rate, diverging from that year on.

Import performance has been similar. On an average, imports from abroad have increased 150 percent and intraprovincial, 48 percent in the same period. This shows how, with the passage of time, the Canadian economy has become increasingly more dependent on international trade.

This trend coincides with the investment policy Canada implemented from the 1980s on that centered on three basic stages: the first, when the Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA) was replaced by Investment Canada under Brian Mulroney's government, which came into office in 1984 and had a more liberal trade and investment policy. This new policy had a new mandate: stimulating both the entry and outflow of investment and foreign trade, which is why Investment Canada opened the doors to foreign investment and foreign trade, albeit maintaining heavy protection for the biotechnology and cultural industries.

The second stage began with the signing of the first free trade agreement between the United States and Canada in 1989, which resulted in greater investment and trade both ways. The third stage was consolidated with the coming into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. Since then there has been a firm tendency toward foreign trade and a sizeable flow of foreign direct investment (FDI). Between 1985 and 1992, Canadian FDI grew an average of 9 percent a year.

These economic transformations also coincide with the reduction in U.S. tariffs, which dropped from 2.58 percent in 1981 to 1.91 percent in 1996, as well as the changes in labor costs per employee in the United States compared to Canada, which have gone up and down, and the constant fluctuation and instability of Canada's exchange rate.

A constant concern for Canadians has been their growing dependence on trade with their southern neighbor, which has increased since the terrorist attacks.

All the provinces, with the exception of Prince Edward Island, depended more on international than intraprovincial trade in 1996. However, there were appreciable differences among them as to the degree of economic dependence.

If we disaggregate GDP information by province for the same year, we can see that some oriented a significant part of their trade abroad, among them: the Yukon Territories (25 percent), Alberta (38 percent), Ontario (46 percent)

and Quebec (35 percent). Ontario was the province most dependent on foreign exports in 1996.

All the provinces except Ontario had a deficit in their intraprovincial trade balance in 1996. For some, this deficit was important in comparison to their provincial GDP. For others like Quebec and Manitoba, intraprovincial exports and imports were almost balanced.

In 1996, more than 40 percent of Canada's intraprovincial commerce came from Ontario, the leading province in domestic trade. That year, it was the largest market for most of the other provinces, and it was also an important intraprovincial exporter. However, the most significant trade relationship in Canada is the one between Ontario and Quebec, which represents 22 percent of the total value of all domestic trade. The export of products and services to Ontario represents more than 11 percent of Quebec's GDP, while that of Ontario to Quebec represents 8 percent of the former's GDP. These two provinces, plus British Columbia, concentrate 75 percent of Canada's population and 87 percent of its GDP.[3]

And Since September 11?

The changes in intraprovincial trade, which translate into a greater integration with the U.S. economy, particularly of the most dynamic provinces, are evidence of a structural change in Canadian trade. This transformation occurred under particular conditions, geographically, by sector and by degree of intraindustrial specialization.

Seemingly the Canadian government, far from being concerned about this structural change and creating the conditions to turn around its trade relations, considers that the September crisis constituted an opportunity for building what has been called "an intelligent border" to avoid, among other things, the enormous lines at the border, reduce waiting and facilitate "just-in-time" shipments.[4]

With its intelligent borders project, Canada seeks to strengthen its model of outward insertion and reinforce the concentration of its trade with the United States.

An intelligent border aims mainly at getting goods across the border more efficiently, as well as a safer flow of individuals. Ensuring this requires better infrastructure and more efficient exchange of information.

The project includes a series of controls at Canada's large production plants, constituting a kind of pre-customs check system for the approximately 700 large factories that dominate trade. It also would provide for U.S. customs agents to be stationed at Canadian airports to pre-check merchandise before it actually arrives in the United States.

These sorts of measures, far from propitiating Canada's trade diversification abroad and strengthening domestic trade, would create greater dependency vis-à-vis the United States and erode intraprovincial trade. They would also promote the concentration of controls, mainly for large corporations, while medium-sized and small companies would continue going through the traditional customs checks or would be absorbed by the large companies.

With the intelligent borders project, Canada seeks to strengthen its model of outward insertion and reinforce the concentration of its trade with the United States, which could make for grave consequences for its economy, particularly since there are no clear signs of the U.S. economy recovering rapidly. At the same time, the dynamism of north-south integration not only translates into a visible decrease in east-west trade, but in a greater concentration of foreign trade in few provinces, few industries and few sectors, which in the short term may have important repercussions —and not necessarily positive ones— for the Canadian economy. VM

Notes

[1] Patrick Grady and Kathleen Macmillan, *Une analyse des fleux du commerce interprovincial de 1984 a 1996* (Ottawa: Industrie Canada, 1998).

[2] *Annuaire du Canada 2001* (Ottawa, 2002), p. 499.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Cristhie Keith, speech delivered at the "Fronteras reales/fronteras simbólicas" seminar in Mexico City, 25-27 February 2002.

Tlaxcala
In Defense of Its Past

Carolina Figueroa Torres*

Drawing by Rossana Bohórquez

The Tlaxcaltecs arrived in this tiny part of Mexico's territory —about 0.2 percent— covered with small valleys, mountains, hills and its great volcano, Matlalcuéyetl or Malinche, about the year 1100. They were part of the vast migrant group known as the Teochichimecs. Like other peoples who settled in Mexico's central highlands, the Tlaxcaltecs began their trip at Chicomoztoc, "The Place of the Seven Caves," a site that down through the years became almost mythical, which history books have located somewhere in the northeast.

The long years of wandering and coexisting with more developed cultures like the Toltec and Teotihuacan civilizations allowed the Tlaxcaltecs to polish their forms of socioeconomic, cultural and religious organization. To establish themselves in the Puebla-Tlaxcaltec valley, they had to subdue other peoples settled there like the Otomí and the Olmec-Xicalancas, the creators of the splendor that is Cacaxtla.

Both historical sources and archeological exploration have contributed information to clarify the foundation of the Tlaxcaltec settlements and their evolution. The first known settlement was Tepetícpac, meaning "Between the Hills," founded by Culhuatecuhtli Quanez in around the twelfth century.

The second settlement was Ocotelulco, or "In the Place of the Pines," which originated with the population and land that the Lord of Tepetícpac gave to his brother Teyohualminqui. Power struggles among the Ocotelulcas led to the assassination of the governing family and put a Cholultec group at the head of the fief. Under these circumstances, a group led by Tzompane decided to leave Ocotelulco and establish themselves in Teotlalpan. After more bloodshed, like the assassination of ruler Xayacamachan, a group of Tlaxcaltecs left and founded the fief of Tizatlán, "Place of the

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White Stone," the third largest fief. After some years, a new group of Teochichimecs asked the Tlaxcaltecs to be allowed to settle in the land under their rule, leading to the building of Quiahuiztlán.

When the Spaniards arrived in Tlaxcaltec lands in 1519, the four aforementioned fiefs were the most important in the region, despite the existence of other important communities like Chiautempan, Atlihuetzía, Tepeyanco and Hueyotlipan.

Generally speaking it was the *tecuhtli* who topped the pyramid of Tlaxcaltec political organization. Even when his decision making was supported by a council of elders, the final choice was in his hands.

In the long struggle by the Tlaxcaltecs to consolidate and preserve their territory, they had to face and stop the expansionism of cities like Cholula, Huejotzingo, Tezcoco and Tenochtitlan.

The rivalry among these peoples, despite its depth, was not very old. Historical sources refer to the constant coexistence among members of the governing elites of Tlaxcala, Tenochtitlan and Tezcoco, in addition to the important trade that the Tlaxcaltecs did with the peoples of the Valley of Mexico and the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico until the mid-fourteenth century.

We should, then, try to clarify how intercultural relations between the Mexicas and the Tlaxcaltecs became as strained as what the Spaniards found on their arrival. This would put the alliance or military agreement between Spaniards and Tlaxcaltecs into its historical context.

About 1454, given the bad harvests caused by a drought that affected a large geographical area, some rulers and their councilors agreed to program armed clashes, attributing the lack of rain to the anger of their gods. In addition to appeasing the gods, some of these pacts to do combat served as training and education for Mexica, Tezcocan, Tlaxcaltec and Cholultec warriors, as well as those from all the cities who accepted participating in the "flowery wars." Some chroniclers, like Friar Diego de Durán, took down what these wars consisted of and the protocol that regulated them, in addition to noting the disputes and enmities that rose out of the clashes and some of the consequences that tainted relations among the peoples, such as the death of Tlacahuepatzin, the son of Moctezuma, *tlatoani* of Tenochtitlan.

The Mexicas began to block the flow of goods from Tlaxcaltec traders. The blockade went as far as to ban their traveling certain routes under the control of the *pochtecas*, or Mexica merchants, making it impossible for them to trade with the peoples of the Gulf of Mexico and the Valley of Mexico.

With time, this blockade strengthened the Tlaxcaltecs' character and independence; they learned to live without products like salt or cotton, and in other cases, they took initiatives to try to substitute them. Also, the defense of their territory in the face of continual threats from neighboring peoples became vital for later generations.

Circumstances like those described contribute to explaining why it was relatively easy for the Tlaxcaltecs to make a pact with the Spanish expedition commanded by Hernán Cortés, but there are also other factors. Initially, the Tlaxcaltecs interpreted the Spanish incursion as a new threat to their territorial integrity, thinking the Spanish were emissaries or allies of the Mexica emperor Moctezuma Xocoyotzin. They had decided to fight the new invaders with the resources at their disposal, charging the Otomís living on their lands and serving as "border guards" with fighting the strangers and if possible, preventing them from entering. Defending the territory was a task that the Tlaxcaltec troops joined in. During the battles, the defenders practiced all kinds of strategies: for example, night fighting, given their supposition that the sunlight favored the foreigners. After a series of armed encounters in September 1519 in which the Spaniards' combat superiority was clear —they had steel, gunpowder and horses— the Tlaxcaltecs decided to receive them in peace.

Cortés took advantage of his stay in Tlaxcala to explain to the lords of that land the principles supposedly underlying his expedition: discovering new territories and spreading the Catholic religion among their inhabitants, putting them under the aegis of the One True God and Emperor Carlos V. Achieving these aims, particularly appearing before the powerful Moctezuma in Tenochtitlan, required the support of the Tlaxcaltecs in the form of men, arms and foodstuffs.

The council discussed the question of supporting the Spaniards in their enterprise. There were those who predicted the danger that, once the Mexicas had been beaten, the Spaniards would refuse to recognize the independence of Tlaxcaltec society and would try to subject it by imposing authorities or demanding tribute. Xicohténcatl Axayacatzin, the warrior son of Xicohténcatl the Elder, lord of Tizatlán, who only a few days earlier had distinguished himself in the defense against the Spaniards, was one of the most tenacious exponents of this point of view.

Nevertheless, the prevailing opinion, held by Maxixcatzin, lord of Ocotelulco, was to offer the aid requested.

Several events symbolically sealed the Spanish-Tlaxcaltec alliance. One was the acceptance of the Spanish god by the main lords, who were even baptized and given Christian names.[1] This sacrament was the beginning of the acceptance of the Spaniards as representatives of a different culture, another power and its symbols.

The alliance was strengthened by the offering of a group of maidens of good lineage, in whom a new seed, new blood would germinate. The Spaniards, for their part, knew how to take full advantage of the Tlaxcaltec aid and, overcoming difficulties and setbacks —we must not forget The Sad Night—[2] achieved their purpose August 13, 1521.

An alliance between indigenous and Spaniards? It was not the first, nor the only one, nor was it to be the last. The Tlaxcaltec lords were neither the first nor the only ones to negotiate with the Spaniards the terms under which they would march together to conquer Tenochtitlan. Over the years, many have pointed to this alliance by the Tlaxcaltecs with the Spanish invaders as "treason." From the strictly historical point of view, the Tlaxcaltecs, like the Cempoaltecs before them or the Xochimilcas after them, limited themselves to weighing the advantages and disadvantages in joining in a conquest by a technologically more advanced army like the Spaniards' against a regime, like the Mexica regime, that had done everything to try to subdue them.

From that same point of view, it should be remembered that pre-Hispanic political and military history has numerous examples of alliances made to conquer peoples and territories. Thus, following the custom of the time, the Tlaxcaltecs allied with the Spaniards pursuing the same military objective. The notions of nationality or sovereignty did not figure in the equation; these concepts were used to refer to the physical area dominated by a particular culture through language, economic-political forms, cultural creation and a specific world view.

The big difference for the Tlaxcaltecs is the advantage they were able to extract from this alliance. This advantage was not merely momentary, but lasted for years or even centuries.

In addition to their participation in the conquest of Tenochtitlan, the Tlaxcaltecs gave very important aid to the Spaniards during the conquest and pacification of New Spain. They participated in the battalions that conquered and pacified the lands to the north, all the way to New Galicia, and to the south all the way to Central America.

Tlaxcaltec participation in this process defined an exceptional relationship to the Spanish Crown and gave them tangible benefits, like the right to reorganize their structure of government, taking some elements from their pre-Hispanic political tradition; for example, the distribution of the land by fiefs and the ability to name a representative of each fief in the new government, as well as the right to name an indigenous governor. With the years, the Tlaxcaltecs would enjoy other prerogatives like their lands being excluded from the distribution of land grants to Spaniards or their inhabitants being exempt from the payment of some tributes.

Around 1535, the Tlaxcaltecs requested that the Spanish Crown formally recognize their alliance during the conquest of these lands; this petition was resolved by granting Tlaxcala the title of "Loyal City," modified 50 years later by Felipe II, who broadened the definition to "Distinguished, Most Noble and Very Loyal City."

A decade before the end of the sixteenth century, a new project for expanding the territory would once again call the Tlaxcaltecs to cooperate with the Spanish Crown. After the discovery of rich veins of precious metal, particularly silver, the Spanish tried to impose themselves and their economy on the vast lands north of Mexico City. However, continual Chichimec rebellions forced the use of a large part of the human and material resources earmarked for working the mines to protect the nascent Spanish towns and the caravans that transported foodstuffs, clothing, tools or precious metals.[3]

After several failed attempts to subdue the rebels forcibly or send missionaries and gifts, another solution was found: moving Christianized indigenous families to the Great Chichimec area to contribute to the pacification

The Tlaxcaltecs limited themselves to joining in a conquest against a regime that had done everything to try to subdue them.

and indoctrination of the Chichimecs, in addition to teaching them to "live in good order," as the different pacification initiatives emphasized. The Tlaxcaltecs, of course, were the chosen ones. Although this proposal has been attributed to several people —the viceroys the Marquis of Villamanrique and his successor Luis de Velasco II, the Spanish monarch Felipe II and Captain Miguel Caldera— it may be the latter who originated the idea. Of Spanish father and Guachichil indigenous mother, Captain Caldera may have himself experienced the advantages and disadvantages of having both indigenous and Spanish blood.

In any event, after arduous negotiations between Luis de Velasco II and the Tlaxcatec municipal council, and thanks to the good offices of the Franciscans Jerónimo de Mendieta and Jerónimo Zárate, a caravan of 400 families was finally formed that left Tlaxcala en route to the Great Chichimec between June 6 and 9, 1591. The caravan was protected by the Spanish authorities and had a series of benefits like the right to found towns separate from the Spanish settlements and the right to use the noble title "Don" before the names of the males, the exemption from taxes for a certain period, water rights, etc.[4]

For the 300 years of Spanish government, the Tlaxcaltecs were able to maintain certain independence vis-à-vis the viceregal authorities since it was firmly established that their council had the right to audience with the Spanish monarch. However, this did not mean, of course, that the right to maintain government with slight but defined Spanish participation was complied with in all cases to the letter.

Upon the imposition of the Bourbonic reforms in the last third of the eighteenth century, the new administrative organization for New Spain implied subjecting Tlaxcala to the intendancy of Puebla. This led the Tlaxcaltecs to defend their autonomy yet again, arguing —as was to be expected— their historical role as allies. After the presentation of royal letters and arguments by the Tlaxcaltec council, interviews with the viceroy and petitions to the Spanish court, Carlos IV finally ordered that Tlaxcala be separated from Puebla, assigning it a military governor answerable to the viceroy.

After the independence of New Spain, well into the nineteenth century, many attempted to use the study of history to unify or create a national consciousness. For those beginning historians, many of them staunch anti-Spaniards, the Tlaxcaltecs were to be situated with the invaders, naturally described as traitors to their own race and blood.

The great national histories and even twentieth-century Ministry of Education textbooks maintained this idea. Fortunately, the objective, scientific study of pre-Hispanic cultures has made it possible to discard the ominous ideas —or better said, prejudices— about Tlaxcaltec treachery. The task of reformulating the role and weight of the Tlaxcaltecs in our history could be termed titanic. It is certainly a job that implies different levels of participation, knowledge and analysis. But, Rome was not built in a day. Some decisions to orient our historical road have already been made; it is up to this and future generations to review and repair the errors of interpretation that still cloud our vision of the past; and if history is also the root that unites and strengthens, why not nourish it with better elements every day? MM

Reformulating the role the Tlaxcaltecs play in our history is a job that implies different levels of participation, knowledge and analysis.

NOTES

[1] Friar Juan de Torquemada states in his *Monarquía indiana* (Indian Monarchy) that Xicohténcatl was baptized Vicente; Maxixcatzin, Lorenzo; Tlehuexolotzin de Tepeticpac, Gonzalo; and Citlalpopocatl de Quiahuiztlán, Bartolomé. *Monarquía indiana* vol. 3 (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1986), p. 169.

[2] The Sad Night is the name commonly given in Mexico to the episode before his final victory when Hernán Cortés broke down and wept after hundreds of his men and thousands of Tlaxcaltecs perished during a retreat from the Mexica capital, Tenochtitlan. [Editor's Note.]

[3] "Chichimec" was the generic name given to Cazcans, Guachichiles, Copuces and Pames, among other inhabitants of the territory known as the Great Chichimec or the Great Tunal, because of the abundance of cacti and *tuna*, or prickly pears.

[4] The results of this initiative are a contrast with the 1560 failure promoted by Viceroy Luis Velasco senior when there was an attempt to take Tlaxcaltec colonizers to reinforce the Spanish towns or build new ones; this proposal was rejected outright by the Tlaxcaltec municipal council.

65 enero • marzo 2002

- Paisajes embriológicos y genes
- La diversidad de las formas vegetales
- Los genes homeóticos y el desarrollo de la mosca de la fruta
- La homeosis y la macroevolución
- La cuadratura del círculo y otros problemas de geometría
- Cómo escribir una tesis
- La mesa de juego de Mendeleiev

66 abril • junio 2002

- Redescubriendo a Alexander von Humboldt
- Metafísica experimental y mecánica cuántica
- Políticas científicas y tecnológicas: guerras, ética y participación pública
- Del ojo. Ciencia y representación
- Morbilidad psiquiátrica entre los profesionales de la salud
- Cusares
- La divulgación de la ciencia como objeto de investigación

67 julio • septiembre 2002

- Historia del principio de la inercia
- Nuevos paradigmas y fronteras en ecología
- El concepto de escala y la teoría de las jerarquías en ecología
- El paisaje en ecología
- Un vistazo a la teoría de las gráficas
- La evolución de los objetos
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Allegory in the Cacaxtla Murals

Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo*

The first thing that surprises you when you look at the Cacaxtla murals is the sensation that you are seeing something that belongs somewhere else: these paintings' formal language, theme and enormous number of iconographic details come from the Mayan tradition. And although this observation does not suffice, nor is it enough to explain the meaning of the work, it is important not to disregard it. Good arguments have been made for the idea that the groups responsible for Cacaxtla's rise belonged to that variety of multi-ethnic league —simultaneously warriors and traders— that the literature calls Olmec-Xicalanca (made up of Mixtecs, Popolocs, southern Nahuas and perhaps another ethnic group). But even if the Olmec-Xicalancas were the largest group in the Cacaxtla fief during its golden age, the artists who produced the palace paintings must have been trained within the Mayan sphere of influence. Perhaps the Xicalanca component of the league, which seemingly came from Tabasco, was responsible for bringing with it secrets of the artistic tradition centered in the Usumacinta basin.

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The Cacaxtla murals (the one of the battle on the talud of Building B, and the images of isolated individuals on the portico of Building A) were painted between A.D. 650 and A.D. 750, which explains a great deal about their appearance. Right at that time, Teotihuacan stopped being the indisputable power that dominated a large part of Mesoamerica; and the "peripheral" cultures, as the Mayan culture had been considered in relation to the Teotihuacan system, began to have an impact on the central highlands and left very clear signs of their iconographic and stylistic preferences. In Xochicalco, in what is now the state of Morelos, a city whose zenith was contemporary with that of Cacaxtla, we can appreciate the stamp of several cultural traditions. A series of priests are seated on the talud of the Quetzalcóatl pyramid in Xochicalco; their style reflects not only clear Mayan origin, but particularly, a certain link to the city of Copán.

Cacaxtla and Xochicalco together express very well the ebb of the contraction of the Teotihuacan system. However, an important difference exists between the two sites: while Xochicalco is a mosaic of eclecticism, Cacaxtla has a strong Mayan personality to which other elements of different origin adapt subordinately. The Mayan personality of the Cacaxtla murals is seen in the naturalism of the scenes: the soft contours, the anatomical proportions, the superposition of the figures, which gives the scenes depth. The individuals' gestures, the dramatic portrayal of pain, the emphasis on the adversary's being physically subdued, as well as the clothing, headdresses, arms and ornaments are all typically Mayan. Also, we should note another important feature of Cacaxtla's paintings: while in Teotihuacan —and no less in Xochicalco— we find the monotonous repetition of identical figures that parade in what are apparently processions, in Cacaxtla, we see the

The Cacaxtla "battle" could be understood as an allegory of the struggle between opposites, or the allegory of the cosmic conflict.

Christa Cowrie/Sectur Tlaxcala

The Mural of the Battle, detail. Artists were using more the language of allegory than of history.

magnificent deployment of a series of figures that are all distinct and doing different things. In other words, when we observe the Teotihuacan murals, we have the feeling that something is being prayed or sung; in Cacaxtla, we feel that something is being narrated. This is the Mayan legacy.

The Allegory

Some authors who have written about Cacaxtla state that the mural of the battle relates a specific clash; they see this magnificent painting as historic testimony of a specific victory of the Olmec-Xicalancas over the Mayas that they imagine took place. The dramatic realism of the warriors who bend over in pain spilling their intestines outside their bodies and who, exhausted, let their heads loll, easily leads the viewer to the conclusion that it is a real event. However, the idea that the painting commemorates a specific battle has no basis in fact.

The scene's apparent realism is immediately mitigated by the improbably simultaneousness of the actions depicted. We can see warriors who attack with dart-blowers, a weapon useful for combat at a distance, together with others who are thrusting their lances into the chests of their adversaries; some are binding the arms of their captives with cords while others are cutting their victims with sacrificial knives. One of the "sacrificers" is barely touching a fallen adversary's chest with the point of his flint knife, which is enough for a stream of blood to burst forth at heart level. The artists may be depicting wounds and forms of attack that really occurred in the wars of the time, but when they bring them all together in a single scene, they are using more the language of allegory than that of history. More than depicting a concrete battle, they seem to be allud-

More than depicting a specific clash,
the Mural of the Battle seems to be alluding
to war as a whole.

Vicente Guijosa/Sectur Tlaxcala

The Mural of the Battle, detail. The Mayan character is seen in the naturalism of the scenes.

The north wall painting represents the feminine part of the cosmos.

ing to war as a whole, from the initial approach of the armies, with their dart-blowers, to the outcome, with the sacrifice of captives.

Showing the intestines of the vanquished, which for us is an upsetting detail, should be read in terms of the Mesoamerican religious tradition as a form of exalting human sacrifice, in the same fashion as the tablets of Monte Albán's so-called "dancers." The symbolic emphasis on sacrifice can also be seen in details such as the depiction of a fleshless shin-bone (a trophy that victorious warriors used to keep after the sacrifice), the placing of a *chalchihuite*, or jade bead, on the warrior's wound and the representation at several places in the mural of the glyph known as the bleeding heart.

The Opponents

And in this allegory of war and sacrifice, who are the opponents? In the first place, we should say that this is not a battle with losses on both sides, which, once again, removes us further from a historical account. All the figures dressed as birds are the vanquished, the wounded, the defeated; and all those who wear skins, claws or jaguar trophy heads are the victors, subjecting the others. The birds have long feathers and the pointed beaks of rapacious species; they seem to be a hybrid between an eagle and a quetzal. Birds versus felines: we could say very little about this struggle if we did not know that it was one of the most common symbolic formulations of the Mesoamerican Postclassical period. It expressed the indigenous peoples' conviction that the cosmos was animated by the constant struggle between opposing forces: the masculine, sky, sun, the force of the bird, usually exemplified by the eagle; and the feminine, earth, water, moon, that of the feline, generally represented by the jaguar.

On a second level of understanding, the Cacaxtla "battle" could be understood as an allegory of the struggle between opposites, or the allegory of the cosmic conflict, of war *par excellence*. The paintings on the portico of what has been called Building A, situated on the highest level of Cacaxtla's palace complex, reinforces the idea that this evocation of cosmic opposition was a central concern for the elite and local artists. The painting on the north wall (an area associated with the underworld and death, the feminine part of the cosmos) represents a man dressed in a jaguar skin standing on the body of a large serpent, also covered in jaguar skin. This figure is accompanied by a calendar "date": 9-reptile eye. On the south wall (an area associated with the sky and life, the masculine sector of the cosmos), we see a figure disguised as an eagle standing on a plumed serpent and accompanied by the "date" 13-eagle feather. Not only is the clothing of both the men and the serpents related to the two cosmic extremes, but the calendar-type references are also significant: in Mesoamerica something we could call a visual synecdoche (a deer antler is used to allude to the deer and the practice of running long distances, or a jaguar claw is used to allude to the jaguar and its ferociousness). A reptile eye can be read as a metaphor for the terrestrial world; the eagle feather as a metaphor for the celestial world; the number nine coincides with the num-

ber of levels of the underworld, while the number 13 corresponds to the number of celestial levels or layers.

If we accept the thesis of the cosmic opposition, we would still need to ask ourselves why in the mural of the battle, one of the two forces triumphs over the other. Are not both forces necessary, just as are man and woman, day and night? In one part of this mural is a majestic figure with a cloak of stars, who is uninjured although his hands may be tied. Surrounded by dark threatening forces, this figure with his elegant bird clothing remains standing. In the same way, at midnight, the army that accompanied the sun toward dusk has been defeated, but the sun survives. After this temporary defeat, the sun emerges victorious in the next morning's dawn, gaining strength as it rises, and vanquishes its enemies until it reaches its zenith.

This is the way that the struggle of opposites seems to have been conceived and expressed in Mesoamerican thought and art: a struggle that is never tied because a tie would be a quietus. It is a struggle that always progresses. Only for a few seconds, at dawn and at dusk, the forces seem to balance each other: moments of anguish. An instant later one force grows until it subjects the other, but as soon as the moment of excessive domination arrives, the opposite force begins to recover ground.

Is the mural of the battle, then, an allegory for the nocturnal sky at midnight? I believe so, but it could also be understood as an allegory of the apogee of the nocturnal —and therefore, humid— forces. Several of the feline figures are facing a mask of Tlaloc, the god of rain, and both on the upper portico walls and on the door-jambs, we can observe receptacles, streams of water and the effigy of the god of rain himself. Was the idea to celebrate the abundance of water or to pray for rain in the most burning part of a prolonged drought? We must look for the answers and continue to deepen our understanding of this exceptional work. VM

UNAM Institute for Aesthetic Research Photo Archive

The Mural of the Battle, detail. The warriors' pain is depicted with dramatic realism.

The Blue Eyebrow In the Cacaxtla Murals

Andrés Santana Sandoval*

Unless otherwise specified photos courtesy of Sectur Tlaxcala

Red Temple, detail.

The Cacaxtla murals are of great value in studying pre-Hispanic Tlaxcala because of their colors, state of preservation and the symbols they depict. Though they belong to a single period and culture, they have contradictions; that, together with partial interpretations, leads to conclusions that are far from their true meaning. This article contends that the society that created them already had a notion of an omnipresent, abstract god, the recipient and origin of all minor gods, some of them very old.

The series of monuments that concern us, close to the colonial sanctuary of San Miguel Arcángel (Archangel Saint Michael), have been studied since 1975 when the first mural was discovered.

Immediately after their discovery, scholars precipitately assumed the truth of the link that historian Diego Muñoz Camargo had made in 1576 between this place and the Olmec-Xicalancas group, attributed with being tri-ethnic. Historic sources from Cholula, Tlaxcala and central Mexico in general are quoted abundantly in reference to this group; so, scissors and glue in hand, people have pasted together a history about the place based on granting these texts absolute credibility.

My point of view is different, since, when these facts are examined and compared among themselves as well as with those discovered in excavations at the site and its surrounding areas, important contradictions emerge.[1] While this issue has been dealt with in other articles, I refer to it because several authors base themselves on them to explain the history of Cacaxtla and the symbolism of its paintings.

Cacaxtla's buildings contain several groups of mural paintings: the group of five murals in Building A; the mural of the battle, formed by two sections of the same scene; the two murals in the Room of the Stairs; the two murals and the banquet painted in the Red Temple; the painted pillars of the Temple of Venus; the borders of the "Hall of the Serpents"; and the Chimalli mural.

Numerous fragments of other murals and multicolored reliefs have also been recovered, showing us extensive production over a long period; therefore, in the future, we may find other examples of this religious expression.

The murals were painted between A.D. 744 and A.D. 800 approximately, although the territory was inhabited both before and after by other dwellers.

Detailed observation of the paintings brought to my attention the repeated presence of a symbol, the "Blue Eyebrow."

When trying to characterize this element in Cacaxtla, the first thing that became clear is that it is not exactly an eyebrow; while it does occupy the place an eyebrow would be on a face, it does not look like an eyebrow or the hair that an eyebrow would have. That is why I call it "Element C" or the "Blue Eyebrow."

During the Post-classical period in central Mexico, human beings' eyebrows were part of the spiritual center that was the eye, closely linked to the acquisition of knowledge and the perception of its surroundings.[2]

People in the pre-Hispanic world did not perceive a radical difference between Man and animals. Proof of it is the contemporary belief in *nagualles*, sorcerers who turn into animals. For this reason we suppose that the eye had the same function and value in animals. An example of this is the amulet of the eye of a deer used today.

The eye and eyebrow in Cacaxtla's representation of non-humans are conventional and symbolic, which implies a social convention to be understood.

While the blue eyebrow is linked in meaning to water and the jaguar, the concept represented is much broader and richer than has been supposed.

In the first place, it is exclusively associated to zoomorphic representations, and, in one exception in a face that, while formally anthropomorphic (the mask of Tlaloc in the receptacle held by a figure on the northern door-jamb in Building A), it is actually the symbol that distinguishes the god.

Also, the blue eyebrow is present in the mythical animals and in clothing made of animal skins.

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The old man's mask and spiraled eye make him impersonal. Red Temple, east mural.

The concept represented by
the blue eyebrow is much broader and richer
than has been supposed.

While formally the skin of an animal used as clothing is a dead, inert animal, in the case of the representations I am referring to, it is an active element in the meaning, and is even the central motif of the image, since the figures wearing the clothing are immersed in the symbolism of the whole.

This is the case of the figure in the northern mural in Building A, whose features are insufficient to identify him or differentiate him from any other figure in the murals, just as happens with the old man depicted in the east mural of the Red Temple, whose mask and spiraled eye make him impersonal.

In point of fact, the individuals are invested by the clothing they wear to personify the deity; on the other hand, the paintings do not narrate feats of famous men, since the individuals represented are only vehicles for the divinity to manifest itself. The mark we are dealing with is found on animals who our Western taxonomic system places in different zoological orders (birds of prey and birds of precious feathers, carnivorous and herbivorous mammals, mollusks, crustaceans, snakes, chelonia, batrachia and fishes). At the same time, the Mesoamerican religion linked these animals to different aspects of the divinities, to different moments of the agricultural cycle, to the higher levels of the cosmos, the underworld and to several stars, among other things.

As with the human figure, the animals are not only naturalistic representations that illustrate a predominantly aquatic environment, since in addition to the blue eyebrow, they all have in common a protective covering or abode from where they exit

Red Temple, detail.

In Cacaxtla, the omnipresent God
is represented by the blue eyebrow, which never appears
on the human faces.

UNAM Institute for Aesthetic Research Photo Archive

Southern door-jamb of Building A.

UNAM Institute for Aesthetic Research Photo Archive

Northern door-jamb of the same building.

or "are born", such as the scales on the fishes and serpents, the plumes on the birds, the shell of the tortoises and the shells of the mollusks and crabs.

In this regard, a human figure that is exiting from inside a Strombus shell held by a priest painted on the southern door-jamb of Building A is especially important since this puts the human figure on the same iconographic plane as the rest of the animals depicted.

On its counterpart, the northern door-jamb, we can see two other births: the water that is coming out of a vessel with the face of Tláloc, which the figure carries in his arms next to a cloud serpent, and a flowering plant that is born from the navel of God, who with his ocelot clothing represents the earth.

The murals' creators had already developed the concept of a God that ordered all existence. This god, although present in the night and its stars, symbolized by the skin of the ocelot; in the daytime sky, represented by the diurnal birds; in the world of the dead in the paintings of the Red Temple: in the fish, tortoises and herons, and in the clothing of men and women who represent the planet Venus, could not or should not be shown in a single form.

This deity whose name we do not know manifested among the people as the god of the rain, of the sun, of each of the stars, of death, etc., in each case with different clothing, which, when reproduced for use by the priests in their ceremonies, conferred on them the supernatural qualities of that particular minor god.

In the Cacaxtla paintings, the omnipresent God is represented by the blue eyebrow, which never appears on the human faces, but is always on the mythical animals, in the clothing, in the dates and symbols represented there and even in the names of the characters. VM

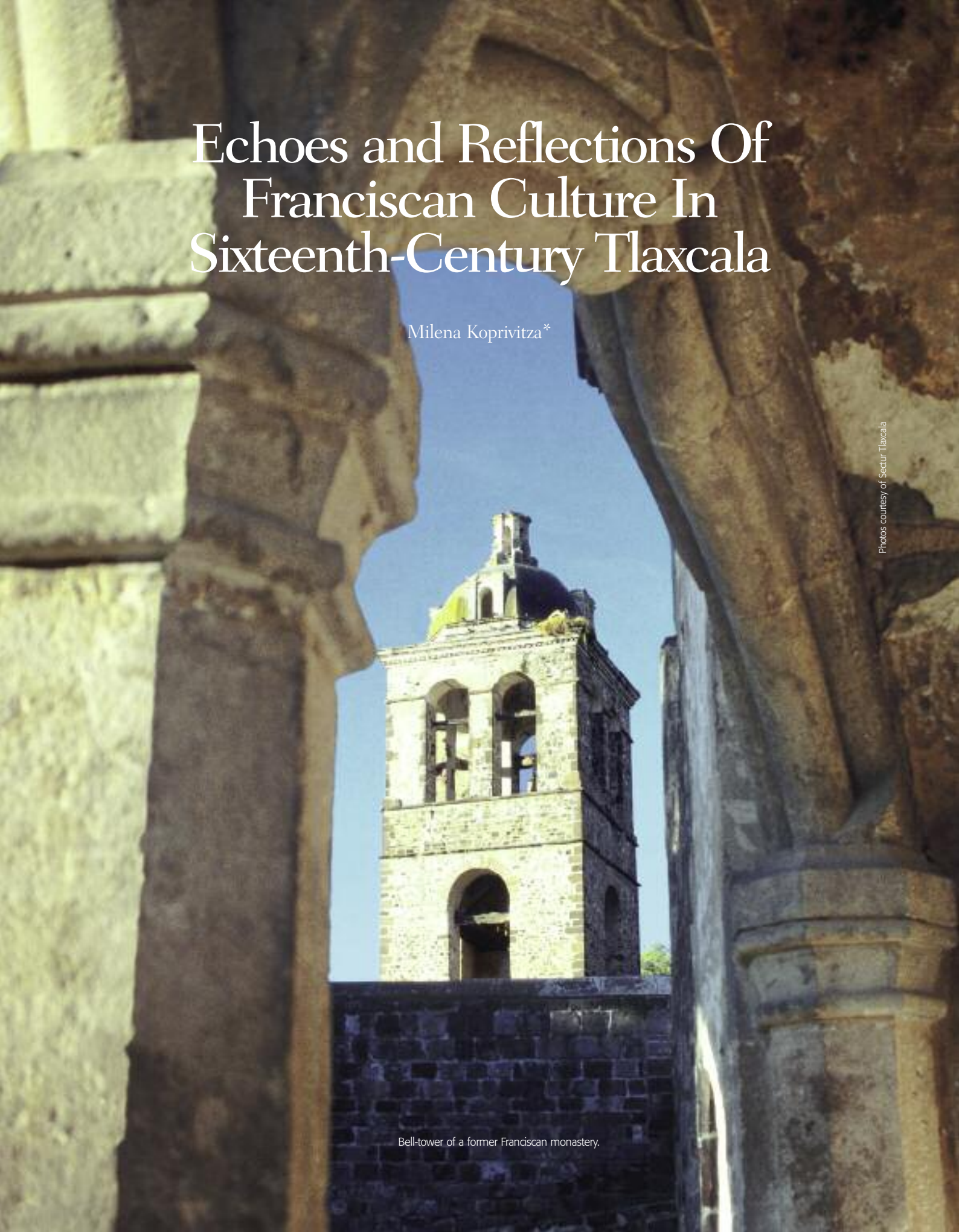
Notes

[1] Andrés Santana Sandoval, "La identidad de los habitantes de Cacaxtla," "Ubicación cronológica del Gran Basamento y sus pinturas" and "La Ceja Azul en las pinturas murales y su significado," *Cacaxtla. Proyecto de investigación y conservación* (Tlaxcala, Mexico: INAH-Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1990).

[2] Alfredo López Austin, *Cuerpo humano e ideología* vols. 1 and 2 (Mexico City: UNAM, 1984).

Echoes and Reflections Of Franciscan Culture In Sixteenth-Century Tlaxcala

Milena Koprivitza*



Photos courtesy of Sectur Tlaxcala

Bell-tower of a former Franciscan monastery.

"Tlaxcala is the living bread with which Christ gives us..." These words illuminate the lines of the character Faith as the intermediary for Understanding and Strength in the *auto sacramental*, or one-act religious allegory, also known as the colloquium of the Count of Coruña. In addition to the literal allusion to Tlaxcala as the land of bread made of corn, its meaning is a clear example of the spiritual place that Tlaxcala and its inhabitants occupied in the profound emotions of the sixteenth-century missionaries.

Sixteenth-century chronicler Father Mendieta states that the Spaniards saw the aid of the Tlaxcaltecs as a divine gift. The Tlaxcaltecs opened up the way for the true spiritual conquest of Mexico: in addition to the strategies imposed by the military treaty, they facilitated the Spaniards the use of local languages and the interpretation of events in an unprecedented scenario.

In Tlaxcala, from 1524 on, the Franciscan friars took upon themselves the arduous task of

Franciscans learned to admire the indigenous ability in working stone, ceramics, wood and vegetable fibers.

Tlaxcala's cathedral and open chapel, the combination of Franciscan austerity and indigenous carving.

While the military and political alliance of New Spain was the work of Carlos V and the spiritual conquest that of Felipe II, both are responsible for the formation of the resulting culture. This endures as part of history because of both institutional and human works and ideas. In Tlaxcala, these factors are crystallized in the essential combination of faith and language with converting the populace to Christianity and using another language to impart instruction about other ways of understanding life.

According to the enthusiastic accounts of Motolinía, Sahagún, Mendieta and Torquemada, the admirable expression of Tlaxcaltec Christianity was due to the extraordinary reciprocal charisma of the relationship between the friars and the converted people. Their conversion was organized upon the arrival of 12 Franciscan mis-

* Director of the Tlaxcala Regional Museum.

sionaries who chose as their first residence the houses offered them by Maxicatzin, the Lord of Ocotelulco.

The missionaries were inspired by the stamp and splendor of their predecessors, whom Don Artemio del Valle Arizpe called "The Three Lilies of Flanders." Of all of them, it was the teachings of Friar Pedro de Gante, a defender of the indigenous people, apostle of the Gospel and the first educator of the Americas, that spurred his brothers in Tlaxcala to continue imparting Christian doctrine. Understanding the indigenous' facility for learning, they taught them the Spaniards' skills and arts at the same time that the friars learned to admire their extraordinary ability in working stone, ceramics, feathers, wood and vegetable fibers, some of which —like maguey fibers— after working, were as soft as silk.

In this exchange of knowledge, the cultivation of Tlaxcala's land, eroded and poor, yielded its maximum results thanks to the wisdom with which it was worked. The opening of canals and the management of the sluices to distribute the water sent by the gods combined perfectly with the terrace system on the mountain sides.

The mingling of knowledge was also seen in medicinal herbalism, in raising the *huexolotl* (turkeys) and other fowl in exchange for cattle.

The results of this process can be seen in the sixteenth-century constructions of the monasteries, open chapels, and visiting churches, in which Franciscan austerity is joined to the splendor of the stones carved by Tlaxcaltecs, with which they did inlays of Mudéjar wainscots, carved Gothic ribs, Renaissance rose-windows, Tuscan capitals, Roman voussoirs, heraldic coats-of-arms and emblems of Christianity they used to decorate the walls and coverings hastily erected over the old ceremonial places of idolatry.[1]

Although much of the success of the mission was due to the personality of Friar Martín de Valencia, who headed up the group, the missionaries immediately won the admiration and respect of the multitudes when word was spread

In Tlaxcala, from 1524 on, the Franciscan friars took upon themselves the task of converting the populace to Christianity.

Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows. A vestige of Franciscan influence in the state.

Banner with the state emblem.

among the indigenous population that Hernán Cortés had welcomed them kneeling in the dust. Also, since their arrival in Veracruz, the Spanish and indigenous nobles had all been seen gathered to kiss the hand of Friar Martín.[2]

Friar Martín de Valencia taught the alphabet and Latin to indigenous children and adults in the high atrium of the monastery dedicated to Our Lady of the Ascension. He also destroyed the idols of the temple to Camaxtli on top of Matlacuéyatl mountain, where he founded a chapel dedicated to Saint Bartholemew.

It was Friar Toribio de Benavente (called Motolinía, the Poor, by the Tlaxcaltecs) who celebrated the first mass in the city of Tlaxcala in 1530. His chronicles tell us that the open chapel was painted with murals and that when mass was said, multitudes congregated in the low atrium. On these occasions the indigenous singers and instrumentalists sang and played flutes and flageolets, oboes and citherns just as solemnly and musically as in many cathedrals in Spain.

Motolinía's story culminates around 1540 when events led to the zenith of the mingling of the Franciscans and the converted, revealed in the description of the collective acts of the Catholic liturgy, from baptism to the processions of Lent. Suffice it to picture the night of torches celebrated on Thursday of Holy Week, when each penitent lashed the back of the penitent in front of him.

Around 1538 and 1539, a series of festivities stemming from the previous decade were performed in the monastery's high atrium; at the same time they are the proud origin of theater in the Americas. To this day, the presentation of the *autos sacramentales The Fall of Adam and Eve* and *The Conquest of Jerusalem* continue to amaze the public.

Taking into account the vivacity and tradition of Tlaxcala's fiestas today, it is not difficult to imagine how the processions of indigenous in lines with candles, torches, crosses and images parsimoniously made their way through a thousand flower arches, simulating the form of an enormous three-nave church. Adam and Eve's home was paradise, fashioned from flowers and fruit and other figures made of different sized plumes from owls, birds of prey, small birds and parrots. Motolinía wrote,

> In a single tree, I counted 14 parrots, large and small. The rabbits and hares were so plentiful that everything was full of them...
>
> Adam and Eve showed their misgivings going back and forth from the serpent to the forbidden tree three or four times in front of the audience. Eve begged and bothered Adam saying that she thought he did not love her very much and that her love for him was greater than his for her; and, sitting in his lap, she begged him so much that he went with her to the tree. Adam gave in and they both

ate, as we all know, of the forbidden fruit. Recognizing the serpent's guilt, the angels hung down clothed in the skins of animals to cover the shame of those who had won their expulsion from Paradise.

The most interesting thing, says Motolinía,

was to watch them leave, exiled and weeping: three angels bore Adam and another three bore Eve.... This was so well played that no one who saw it but wept very hard; only a cherubim was left guarding the doors of Paradise, sword in hand.

The audience's despair was so great that they took great time in dispersing and when they did, they left with faces mortified by gloom, singing a villancico under their breaths

Why did she eat,
The first married woman
Why did she eat the forbidden fruit.
She and her husband
Have brought God to a poor resting place
For having eaten
The forbidden fruit.

Motolinía's account is moving in that it shows that their catechismal zeal allowed the Franciscan missionaries to touch the deepest feelings in the souls of the indigenous. When they did, they discovered the chords of human pain and of divine love and with them awakened the desire to discover themselves in the others, the barefoot, the compassionate and the exiled. They exchanged knowledge with the fascination of the illogical, which in the end would converge with respect for nature where primitive simplicity made way for creative contemplation. The spirit of Renaissance humanism had reached land in the heart of New Spain. MM

Notes

[1] The conversion's solid building euphoria lasted until 1553, a date that is chiseled on a door-jamb of the monastery's high cloister perhaps to mark the end of the original construction. Later, two other stages mark the time between the splendor and the decline of Franciscan activity. One is the transfer of the Tlaxcala cathedral to the neighboring city of Puebla; for the building involved, Tlaxcalan labor was used. The second is the contradictions that emerged with the arrival of the secular clergy and to a certain extent the notorious lack of interest on the part of the friars who replaced the first Franciscans. While they carried out their work, they had lost the extraordinary spiritual drive and humanist involvement that their predecessors had vis-à-vis the indigenous population.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, demoralization increased because nature's droughts and pests together with political mistakes led to the loss of the privileges that had been won.

[2] The Franciscans founded three monasteries: the first at Ocotelulco, which was made the headquarters for the Tlaxcala bishopric; the second on a site called Cuitlixco; and the third on a hill that had springs south of the banks of the Zahuapan River where there was a long-venerated cross and an indigenous chapel.

The San Francisco Cathedral. The magnificent carved, panelled ceiling and its altarpieces are its main attractions.

All photos are courtesy of Sectur Tlaxcala

Carnival Fiestas in Tlaxcala

Carnival is one of the state of Tlaxcala's most attractive, traditional fiestas, both because of its origins and because each year it brings together folk artists who dedicate their efforts to preserving a centuries-old tradition.

As a festival of relaxation and escape in the ancient Greek and Roman tradition, the celebration of carnival was unknown in pre-Hispanic Mexico. Like in most of Mesoamerica, the ancient inhabitants of Tlaxcala performed ceremonial, religious dances to honor their gods. Particularly noteworthy were those celebrated in the Ocotelulco fief, at the temple dedicated to the god Camaxtli, the main deity of Tlaxcallan. At that time masks were used to frighten away evil spirits.

With the arrival of the Spaniards and the so-called Hispanic-Tlaxcaltec alliance, both the meaning and the concrete manifestations of these celebrations changed, with the spread of Christianity playing a central role. The Franciscans, the predominant order in the state, repudiated the traditional fiestas and ceremonial dances dedicated to Camaxtli, which were gradually lost.

It is said that the way carnival is celebrated today is rooted in rebellion and sarcasm. The hacienda system began to be imposed in the state in the sev-

Los Charros headdresses, a display of color.

Tlaxcala's carnival fiestas include different kinds of celebrations, but it is the dances from more than 50 towns that are the most attractive and popular.

enteenth century. Hacienda owners, Spaniards who missed Europe's life of luxury and splendor, organized sumptuous fiestas and dances to which they, of course, did not invite their peons or indigenous servants. In response, the poor went into the streets and plazas extravagantly dressed, covering their faces with white-skinned, blue-eyed masks and danced with strange movements, sarcastically imitating their landlords. Despite the anger of the hacienda owners, who asked the governor to prohibit these celebrations, the popular dances and their mockery continued. With time, music was added, interpreted on folk instruments, and each town developed its own distinctive dances. The meaning, costumes and masks also changed so that each region took on its own characteristic touch.

A Centuries-Old Tradition

Today, Tlaxcala's carnival fiestas include different kinds of celebrations, but it is the more than 50 towns' dances that are the most attractive and popular. Carnival is celebrated on the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. To open the way for joy, the Friday before there is a ceremony to burn "the Bad Mood," which consists of setting

Los Catrines' customs are the finest and most enigmatic.

The *Las Cintas* dance is one of the most colorful.

The dancers, or *huehues*, are the fiesta's main participants. Thanks to these folk artists, the tradition has not died out.

Different phases of mask making.

fire to a paper figure and the "coffin of sadness, rancor and anger."

Voluntary labor —part of the pre-Hispanic community organizational tradition that survives in many places in Mexico— before the fiesta is fundamental: men, women and children participate in organizing, raising money house to house for the music, embroidering costumes, putting on rehearsals, choosing who will be in charge of serving *mole* and tamales to the dancers and the general public, etc.

The dancers, or *huehues*, are the fiesta's main participants. Thanks to these folk artists, the tradition has not died out. The *huehues*, organized in groups of 20 to 40, form a band; each band is given a specific name in accordance with the region, costume and the dances they perform.

The most representative performances and costumes of the state of Tlaxcala are *Los Charros* (The Horsemen), *Los Chivarrudos* (The Rough Goats), *Los Catrines* (The Swells), *Las Cuadrillas* (The Quadrille), *Las Cintas* (The Ribbons), *La Danza de los Cuchillos* (The Dance of the Knives) and the play *The Kidnapping of the Magistrate's Daughter*.[1]

The dances can be veritable plays distinguished by their region of origin, their meaning and the costumes and masks of the participating *huehues*. For example, the dance of the snake interpreted by *Los Charros*, has its origin in the legend of a beautiful, frivolous woman who sparks the passions of the region's young men. The people then pray to the gods to free them from her, and the gods, hearing their plea, make the maiden disappear amid thunder and smoke; but when the air clears, in her place is a disgusting snake that torments local inhabitants. The only way to appease it is a dance that uses long whips imitating the reptile's movements. *Los Catrines* is a reminder of the sarcastic

Ocotoxco *huehue* dancer.

Huehue couple.

Charro horseman's mask from Papalotla, Tlaxcala.

name used for the aristocrats who owned most of the land. Their costumes and masks are the finest and most enigmatic. *Las Cintas* is spectacularly colorful: the *huehues*, adorned with kerchiefs, serapes and multicolored hats, dance around a post festooned with as many ribbons as there are members of the band.

The *Las Cuadrillas* dancers from San Dionisio Yauhquemecan are particularly outstanding because of the number of *huehues*, their magnificent costumes and their fine, multicolored masks. Women do not participate in the *Los Cuchillos* dance, and so the men add braids to their headdresses to play the women's parts, and their costumes are different from the rest of the bands in Tlaxcala.

The most surprising thing is that the passing of the centuries has not buried a tradition that, despite having lost much of its social and critical content, continues to be a factor of community cohesion and pride. VM

The dances can be distinguished by their region of origin, their meaning and the costumes and masks of the participating *huehues*.

Painting a mask.

Note

[1] The dances are performed in the following towns: *Los Charros* in San Francisco Papalotla, San Cosme Mazatecochco, Santa María Acuitlapilco, San Pablo del Monte and San Francisco Tepeyanco; *Los Chivarrudos* in Santa Inés Zacatelco; *Los Catrines* in San Bernardino and San Miguel Contla, San Bernabé Amaxac de Guerrero, San Nicolás Panotla and Santa Cruz Tlaxcala; *Las Cuadrillas* in San Pablo Apetatitlán, Santa Anita Huiloac, San Antonio Cuaxomulco, Santa María Atlihuetzía, San Dionisio Yauhquemecan and San Salvador Tzompantepec; *Las Cintas* in San Juan Totolac and Santa María Tocatlán; *La Danza de los Cuchillos* in Toluca de Guadalupe and San Nicolás Terrenate; and the play, *The Kidnapping of the Magistrate's Daughter*, in Santa María Nativitas.

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Photos by Daniel Mungula

England's famous Punch and Judy.

The National Puppet Museum

A beautiful lady, whose almond-shaped eyes and wrap-around costume announce her birth in a far-off land; exotic figures that project their shadows on a white curtain; a tiny army in perfect formation; a circus, complete with fierce lion and brave lion-tamer; the "Catrina" on a bicycle; and many other figures that have been the delight of children of several generations and countries: this is what the Museo Nacional del Títere (National Puppet Museum) holds. Its location in the city of Huamantla in the state of Tlaxcala is not arbitrary: it was there that for more than 100 years the country's most extraordinary puppets were created.

The Reasons

The museum, unique in Mexico and Latin America, was born in August 1991 to honor the most famous, illustrious company of puppeteers in the history of our country, "La Compañía de Autómatas de los Hermanos Rosete Aranda" (The Rosete Aranda Brothers' Company of Automotons). They were not the first to make puppets in Mexico; but, for more than 100 years, different members of this family delighted thousands of Mexicans with their figures' expressive faces and bodies animated with as many strings as needed to create the most audacious movement.

The Aranda brothers and sister (Julián, Hermenegildo, Ventura and María de la Luz) learned the art of puppet-making from an Italian puppet master living in Huamantla around 1830. In 1835, they founded the National Company of Automotons with puppets they had made. After the first two brothers died, Ventura and María de la Luz, together with the latter's husband, Antonio Rosete, continued performing, first in a corral and then in the city's first theater. More than four generations continued and perfected the family's puppeteering tradition, turning their company into Mexico's most famous, a favorite of children and adults, of poets and writers, whose tours included Mexico City, several other cities throughout the country, the United States and Central America. If anything distinguished the Rosete Aranda performances, it was the immense variety of puppets in each show, whether in their classical repertory, opera, zarzuela, or a circus, a *palenque*,[1] a bullfight, or the commemoration of the September 16 Independence Day parade, performing with real scenery and accompanied by orchestra music.

In their heyday, the Rosete Arandas had a collection of more than 5,000 wooden pieces, whose expressive faces and detailed costumes made them worthy of everyone's admiration. Some marionettes had up to 19 strings that, when ably handled, made their movements precise and meticulous. The theater that could be disassembled, with its three bridges for handling the puppets, gave the performances depth and made it possible to have a great many marionettes on stage at the same time. The company also had its own printing press that produced its tickets, programs and the dialogue used in its acts, sold for only six cents. One of the most famous, "The Speech of Vale Coyote," was the inspiration for actor Mario Moreno to develop his character "Cantinflas." In the early 1940s, more than 100 years after its foundation, the company closed its doors. Later, the puppets were sold to collectors and museums. However, some have been recovered and are on display at the museum together with original scenery, trunks, programs, tickets and other memorabilia of their golden age. Among the most valuable puppet characters in the museum collection are Vale Coyote, Doña Pascarroncita and Pilluelo Dinamita, although they are not on display. Madame Gloppier, Mr. Bell (named in honor of a famous English clown who settled in Mexico) and Mr. Orrins, the last two indispensable characters from the Rosete Aranda cast, are on display, however.

The Rooms

The museum has eight permanent exhibition rooms that show puppets from around the world. Each room has a description of the puppets' main characteristics, the way they are handled and

Room 1. Shadow puppets from faraway lands.

Doña Pascarroncita still wears her original costume.

the use they were given, whether religious, educational or recreational. Room 1 shows puppets from Asia and Indonesia, with their centuries of puppeteering tradition. Some figures are made of leather or parchment and are to be used as shadow puppets; and there are other tri-dimensional and flat puppets. Room 2 boasts representatives of the history of puppeteering in the West; outstanding among them are ancient European puppets like Maccus and Neuropastas, dating from the third century before Christ, and reproductions of England's famous Punch and Judy. A display shows engravings and brief texts about puppets from around the world and, across from it is a map that at a touch of a button shows the country they are from. Clay figures with moveable parts found in Cacaxtla are part of the collection in Room 3. Rooms 4, 5 and 6 pay homage to the different stages of the Rosete Aranda company. Room 7 holds a small collection of puppets

In their heyday, the Rosete Arandas had a collection of more than 5,000 wooden pieces, whose expressive faces and detailed costumes made them worthy of admiration.

Rooms 4 and 5 exhibit the creations of the Rosete Aranda family.

used in what were called the Cultural Missions, which traveled throughout the country teaching people to read in the 1930s. Room 8 is dedicated to the golden age of Mexican Guignol Theater, while the temporary exhibition in Room 9 shows both marionettes and hand puppets created by Donald Codry, an American born in the early twentieth century who knew and loved Mexico's indigenous cultures and their folk expressions, like masks.

Services

The museum offers guided tours to schools and groups that request them; each tour ends with a puppet show. It also offers lectures, a documentation center and a library specialized in puppet theaters, advisory services, workshops for making and handling puppets, as well as puppet shows. In August, Huamantla celebrates the international festival of puppet theater, with the participation of puppeteers from the world over. The museum will shortly offer a virtual tour through a multi-media package that will give a general idea in color images of the content of its nine rooms and data about the different puppets either on display or in its warehouses.

Elsie Montiel
Editor

Mr. Orrins, an indispensable character in the Rosete Aranda cast.

The entrance to the museum.

Note

[1] In Mexico, a *palenque* is a musical sporting event that includes singers of *ranchera* songs, cockfights and betting. [Translator's Note.]

Museo Nacional del Títere
(National Puppet Museum)
Parque Juárez 15, Centro
Huamantla, Tlaxcala
Open Tuesday to Saturday
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

CISAN

publications

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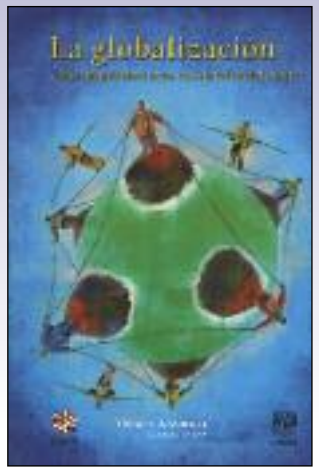
José Luis Valdés Ugalde and Diego Valadés, comp.

The events of September 11, 2001 have prompted the concepts of security and globalization to be posed in different ways and have given them new meaning. This book is the first Spanish-language academic publication in which specialists from different fields analyze these issues.



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Las relaciones de México con Estados Unidos y Canadá: una mirada al nuevo milenio

Rosío Vargas Suárez, Remedios Gómez Arnau and Julián Castro Rea, compilers

This work seeks to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about the future of the three countries' relations by delving into both current and historical issues: trade integration, drug trafficking and migration, as well as other topics more recently included on the agenda like human rights, democracy and national security.

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p u b l i c a t i o n s

Desde el Sur. Visiones de Estados Unidos y Canadá desde América Latina a principios del siglo XXI, vol. 1

Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla, Germán Pérez Fernández del Castillo and Remedios Gómez Arnau, compilers

In this volume, Latin American specialists bring their own perspective to a broad spectrum of theoretical, political, social, economic and cultural issues in the United States, including federalism, foreign policy, national defense and security, the environment and the impact of globalization.

Los nuevos pobres de Estados Unidos: los hispanos

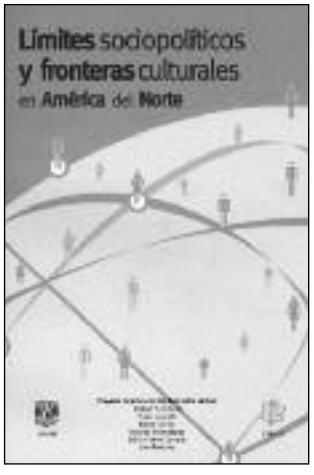
Elaine Levine

Since the 1980s, Hispanics in the United States, compared with other groups, have dropped back socio-economically in three overall areas: the labor market, the educational system and social security. This book looks at and analyzes this deterioration and its underlying causes.

El color de la tierra. Las minorías en México y Estados Unidos

Barbara Driscoll de Alvarado and Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla, compilers.

This work looks at diversity from different perspectives: in particular, it deals with the construction of the Afro-American identity and the struggles of this group, the implementation of public policies in support of minority groups and the obstacles to their equal integration into all facets of life in Mexico and the U.S.



Límites sociopolíticos y fronteras culturales en América del Norte

Barbara A. Driscoll, Claire Joysmith, Elaine Levine, Antonio Rivera and Mónica Verea, compilers.

A multidisciplinary group of Mexican and foreign specialists study the growing presence of the Latino community in the economic, political, social and cultural life of the United States.

Forthcoming:

Las políticas exteriores de Estados Unidos, Canadá y México en el umbral del siglo XXI.
Desde el sur. Visiones sobre Estados Unidos y Canadá desde América Latina, vols. 2 y 3.
East Los Angeles. Historia de un barrio.

Women Writers of Tierra Adentro Publishers

Part II

Graciela Martínez Zalce*

Among the many short story collections published by the Fondo Editorial Tierra Adentro (Inland Publishing Fund), which seeks to promote the best young men and women writers of Mexico today, some are noticeably the product of a workshop. Almost all of them are fresh, although the desire to surprise the reader with an unexpected ending in many cases subtracts from their effectiveness. Nevertheless, among those that maintain a constant level of quality is *Prefiero los funerales* (I Prefer Funerals) by Yucatan native Carolina Luna. Despite its being her first effort, her writing shows maturity. Something in the ambiance of some of this collection's stories evokes echoes of two mid-twentieth-century writers, Juan García Ponce and Inés Arredondo.[1]

Prefiero los funerales has seven stories, among them the title story, in which the author uses irony (a device she uses throughout) to refer to her pious mother's custom of always keeping up with the pain and troubles of relatives, friends and even acquaintances and taking her along to hospitals, funerals and burials. The stories vary in length and topic: some are very brief like the title story or "Secreto a voces" (Well-Known Secret) that narrates the tiring, frustrating routine of a housewife and mother whose worst nightmare is reality itself. Others are very long like "Isolina," which tells a story within a story —Isolina's— using italics, or "Vecinos" (Neighbors), which in eight chapters tells us the story of a love triangle between the narrator and a neighbor couple. Reality mixes with dreams, fantasy; the everyday life of the main characters is invaded by daydreams or wishes. The seven stories have a leitmotif: the presence of the body, whether a cadaver, central to "Prefiero los funerales," the yearned-for object in "La búsqueda" (The Search), or the desired, attained, utilized object in "Vecinos" and "La avidez" (Avidity), a tale in which the characters' traditional roles are reversed, with the woman going out to hunt, seduce and then throw away her prey.

In part one of this article (*Voices of Mexico* no. 60), I pointed out that poetry was the genre most favored by Tierra Adentro authors. *La más mía* (The Most Mine) by Cristina Rivera-Garza is an exception example in several ways. First, the author is known for her non-autobiographical, historical novels, so this Tierra Adentro volume is an exception. In the second place, in the context of the collection, the narrative poem is also outstanding for its quality, for the intensity that it manages to transmit through a structure in which the cold descriptions of a hospital alternate with the intimate demands of the poetic voice to the dying mother. Of all of Rivera's work, *La más mía* is the best written. It tells the story of the illness and death of the poet's mother in a lyrical voice that builds images of the terrible cruelty of the diagnosis, the desolation of public hospital waiting rooms, the interminable monologue-like dialogues carried on with the unconscious terminally ill.

Precise words, complaints, pain; in *La más mía*, a voice complains while the reader does not know if anyone listens; love, loss of love, lack of recognition; *La más mía*, the most mine, ends up being the least hers because the narrator is someone the mother either does not recognize or recognizes and has not wanted to accept. That is why this beautiful, moving poem is so hard to read, because as readers we situate ourselves as spectators in an intimacy that was not desired but imposed by illness, an intimacy between mother and daughter, between the dying and the one who has lived in her shadow, between she who is no longer there and the one who has come to settle accounts and say good-bye.

These two examples confirm that women's literary production in Mexico goes beyond any publishing or publicity fad. VM

* Researcher at CISAN.

NOTE

[1] Two of the twentieth century's most important Mexican writers, Juan García Ponce is from Mérida, Yucatán, and Inés Arredondo, from Sinaloa (Editor's Note).

I Prefer Funerals

by Carolina Luna

And death and I meet so very often.
Diane Wakoski

I don't know. Maybe the thing is that my family is large or it's just that people die all the time. And it seems that with my adolescence, I acquired a right I hadn't sought: the right to go back and forth with my mother on visits to hospitals, funeral parlors and burials.

Funerals are less bothersome: there's coffee and guilt acknowledged. But the hospitals...

Maybe it's that today I'm upset and that makes it impossible for me to stop crying. This week I have already visited I-don't-know-whose daughter with leukemia and dealt with Aunt Bertha's liver transplant. The first clinic wasn't bad; the second sold inedible hero sandwiches.

I don't like crying uncontrollably although, frankly, I have my reasons for being like this, being furious; this is my mother's second suicide attempt in less than a year. The next time, we'll see who calls the doctor, because I won't.

It was better when Daddy was alive. He never let Mom take me to her do's. We used to stay home watching movies. We liked the ones about psychotic murderers a lot.

We both used to try to guess how they would kill the next victim. I suspect that Daddy cheated in the game and had already seen all the movies because he always won.

The day Daddy died my mother was happy. I mean, not happy-happy, but more like fulfilled on the one hand and sad on the other. Her life was consoling the relatives of the ill, the wounded, the

dead, and that day, everyone returned the favor right away. Not even at the parties my Daddy gave did I see as many people as at his burial. Even though most of the people were Mom's acquaintances.

Sometimes at night I hear her come into my room. She takes my pulse, checks my breathing, sighs and leaves.

Most people would have a bad feeling about her attitude —somehow I'm her only chance of being consoled again— but I'm healthy. Thanks to her, no disease threatens me. I know that the sigh is of relief and that's why I'm confident.

Maybe Mom would have preferred that I call somebody to put her in the hospital, but who knows? Since the last time we avoided the issue, I didn't want to risk it. I don't know how to organize these things. The truth is, they bore me; I'm not like her. I go with her on her rounds more out of habit than because I like it. I repeat, given the choice, I prefer funerals. Also, I look good in black and Mom doesn't mind if I dress in style as long as I pick black. It was my cousin who told me that I look good in black, at his father's wake. We went into the back of the little house, and I consoled him in my own way, to good results.

My arms hurt. Mom is thin, but I think people weigh more when they're asleep. There was nothing for it: I had to carry her and wait for the ambulance to arrive. Also, the neighbors...

Jorge is taking a long time. He is the doctor in the family. Mom always torments him with imaginary diseases and he tolerates her. I say they're imaginary because my mother has only needed hospitalization when she has tried to kill herself. Poor thing: that must be frustrating.

Finally Jorge comes in with a bad expression on his face.

"I think this time she's gone too far," he says to me.

I'm quiet. I stop crying.

"I couldn't do anything," he apologizes.

Surprise confuses me. What was I going to do without her? That is, I don't know how to organize these things and I hate strangers hugging and depositing slobbering kisses on me, with their moist faces, their black clothes that smell of mothballs. And the whole business of the funeral parlor: telephone calls, flowers. My god, the obituaries![1]

"Do you want to go in and see her?"

I answer that I don't, and, not paying any attention to something he's trying to tell me, I move toward the exit. Then I decide to escape, run away, and come back in three days when everything's over. VM

Notes

[1] In Mexico, tradition dictates that condolences be expressed in paid advertisements in the newspapers called "*esquelas*". The closest approximation in English would be "obituaries". [Translator's Note.]

Short story taken from Carolina Luna's book *Prefiero los funerales* (Mexico City: Fondo Editorial Tierra Adentro, 1996), pp. 9-11.

The Search

by Carolina Luna

In homage to Kansas,
for vindicating me in uncertain hope.

Sometimes, when I smoke marijuana, I can see all of her: she appears —as always when I manage to visualize her face— dressed as Pierrot. The straight hair pulled back into a long pony-tail, sturdy and shining; the very white face with a black stylized drop, held on her cheek; the eyebrows, lines of fine pencil marking an expression of sad questioning or absurd doubt in a neutral expression.

Thus, her image, like a razor's edge, rips the darkness of my closed eyelids. I could say that I almost feel the odor given off by her skin beneath the white silk of the murmuring suit.

My friends say she doesn't exist, that it is the totally imbecilic excuse I give so I don't have to get involved with anyone, that maybe I'm in the closet and what I see is a transvestite and I wear black leather to attract faggots.

I say let them think what they want. At bottom they're pissed because I get more women than they do when that's where it's at. And faggots never dare dress like that because they're afraid to, and they don't have the wherewithal. They never think that women like it; or maybe they don't have a good reason to do it like I do, since I dress for her and every time I see myself in the mirror before going out with the jeans or the leather tight around me holding me in, I think of her hands and her thighs between mine.

They say I really am jacking off big time. Well, so what? Who is it hurting? José, who's a better buddy, doesn't take me seriously, but at least he doesn't fuck with me. Condescendingly, he listens to my delusions. He knows I don't need to smoke to see her.

The other day while I was shaving, I could swear that I saw her in the mirror, sitting on the edge of the bed, waiting. But, when I turned around, she was gone.

José has been with me several times when I think I've seen her in the street, always turning a corner, just the quick flash of her hair at night, the unmistakable silence of her footsteps.

Sometimes I only feel her there: José and I exchange looks with tacit agreement and cut short our friends or whoever we're with; I start up the motorbike and we go looking for her. He wants to meet her too. I've told him that she is very unhappy. I know it. In my dreams I make her despair my own: I have seen her in the sea, scratching the water on the surface; or huddled in a corner of an enormous room, sur-

rounded by invisible rats. I have seen her bleeding to death with her wrists held up damning the sky: her hands of crystal, like trees, are born in the center of my body, reverberating, infinite, like the echo of her scream.

One dream especially obsesses me since it is the only one where I can participate. With her back to me, I see her at the end of a melancholic hallway, looking at the afternoon, one of her hands on the glass of a large window. I go toward her slowly; I arrive, put out my hand and call her over her shoulder. Invariably, when she turns her head, I wake up.

I have never been able to see her face without the make-up of the costume. Her hair hides it. Besides being an obstacle, it is also the object of confusion. If I see someone on the street with hair like hers, I go up to her and call to her from the back; she turns to look at me... and nothing. Nothing happens. It might sound stupid, but I'm convinced that when I touch her, I will know her name. I will know that it's she. I only need a touch, a visual contact and I'll be certain.

Time is short. She also hallucinates silhouettes, faces in shadow. But her desperation is greater because she doesn't manage to fill the vacuum with the search. She doesn't have faith. Perhaps she hasn't been as close to me as I have been to her; perhaps, deadened by routine, she doesn't perceive the intensity of my desire; perhaps...

Little faith, unnecessary, anachronistic idealism. Sometimes, also, when I smoke, the blackness inhabits my brain. Then I open my eyes and allow other sensations, different from her absence, to attack me. And then I open a couple of beers, sing boleros, weep and feel that no particle of my body, that no breath of my immateriality makes any sense. That's why when she's not there, I prefer not to do anything. It's better to sleep: I work asleep, just like I eat asleep, I sleep asleep.

Depression, they call it. This incites José into lugging me like a package to the theater tonight.

"What better place," he smiles, "to find a Pierrot, of whatever sex?"

And I agree, with that minuscule, disagreeable, boring worm of the depressed, hope, crawling up my chest. A couple of heads of straight hair among those present and, of course, the cocktail party after the opening, finally convince me.

The play trundles on; it doesn't interest me. But it was sufficient for the recognizable figure to appear to get me on my feet from a sudden rush of adrenaline: the white mask of feigned dark weeping looked at me even before I stood up.

Muttering and my friend's hand brought me back down to my seat.

"She saw me!"

"Shhh!" says José.

I lower my voice. "It's her. She looked at me!"

I see her frown.

"It's part of the play. She has to look at the audience."

"But..."

"Wait for the party, would you?"

The waiting: unknown arrhythmia. I'm in a cold sweat.

It's even worse when the play is over and a few minutes later I see the actors gradually come out. José greets and talks to some acquaintances. I try to do the same. A straight-haired blonde watches me. I cannot manage to be perceptive. I sweep the room with my glance; I see Pierrot and, at that moment... I don't know what to do. José sends me a questioning look; I don't know if I'm pale or flag red because waves of blood seesaw up and down my face.

"Be right back," I say and I advance three steps toward the ghost. That's as far as I go, and then I'm paralyzed again. I turn back to look at José: a bit annoyed by my indecision, he encourages me to continue. With her back to me, Pierrot talks to two people; one of them has already seen me and is observing, perplexed, rather discretely.

The waiter passes and I take a moist glass. I want to dry my hands on the black leather pants and can't manage it.

"Is this attitude normal in me?" I think. No. Is it the signal. Yes.

I walk, decided, or resolved to meet with another disappointment.

As naturally as possible, extremely agitated, in a total paradox, I put the index, middle and ring fingers of my left hand on Pierrot's shoulder when, at the same time my lips open to say,

"Ana," and the ghost turns around.

Knowing. They say that knowledge is pain.

When we looked at each other, we knew.

She tries to say something but can't. I watch her go dumb, or is it that suddenly everything around me became a concrete silence.

I think I take seconds to react, another few in introducing myself, putting down the drink, asking permission and taking her hand so vigorously that she murmurs a soft cry. I cannot, I repeat to myself, cannot, under any circumstances and despite everything, lose her now.

At the motorbike, she refuses to get on.

"Please," I beg. She looks at the ground, avoiding my eyes. "Please, Ana."

She finally gets on. The weight of her body on the machine is barely perceptible. Her hands... the times I had imagined the warmth of her fingers on my waist.

I won't stop until I get to the beach.

I start up and accelerate. Again, time is short, but in a different way.

At some point on the way she comes closer to me and her breasts brush my back. Contradictory sense of reality-unreality. Quiet and movement. The oncoming lights on the highway when we leave the city force me to stay sober.

I park near the sea. I don't move so as to not stop feeling her body holding mine; I don't even want to breathe. The sea, full of night, bursts phosphorescences on its edge.

She loosens her hold a little. The odor of her body under the perfumed fabric comes to me mixed with the breeze.

Her voice comes as though it was again faceless; the timbre, only slightly lower than I remembered.

"Nobody really knew why you left that afternoon. Everyone thought that it had just been too much for you." Silence. "Only Emilia, because she saw me trying to get the stains out of the sheets. Only she. Her age and my guilt gave her the right to slap me. You would have been far away by then."

I lower my head.

"I'm sorry."

"She said something. She said, 'It's no good running away. You're damned.'"

Ana's voice becomes inaudible. Then, she lets go of me and walks to the sea. I follow her. I watch her untie her hair. I never imagined such agony on seeing the image yearned for for years.

Nevertheless, together with Ana I recover my meaning, my place on this surface plagued with arbitrary reliefs. Next to her I assume myself in life and in pain with no rebellion, since in them we gave ourselves a beginning.

The high moon shines on the mask more beloved by me than by anyone. And Ana's features, almost divined, when she turns her head to look at me with her black weeping, sparkling with translucent tears, are the most venerated features in my memory.

"I have dreamed about you, Bernardo. I haven't slept in peace a single day."

"And I? What can I say?" I respond, faithful to a sudden irony for myself alone.

She murmurs, "I can't," two or three times before I can bite her lips, lick her mouth, quiet my hands' eagerness for her body.

Afterwards, I hear us in the anxiousness of feeling ourselves.

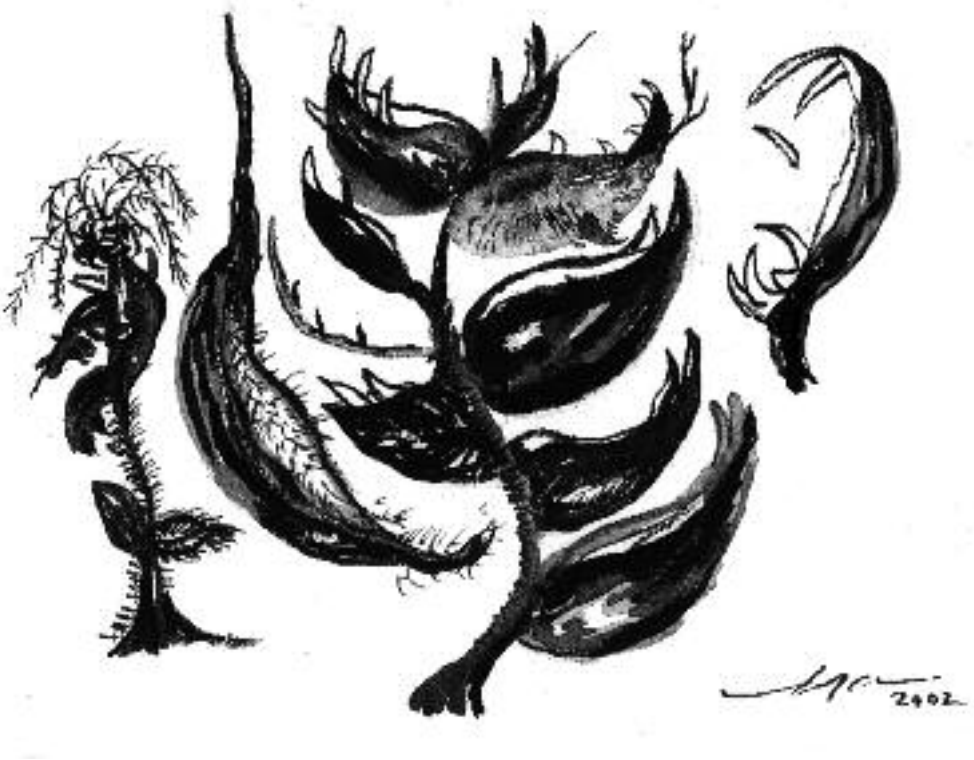
The reflection of her light hairs reminds me of that afternoon, yellow and cold, when, hours after our mother's burial, amidst the weeping of what was still stupefaction, we made love while I remembered *Dust in the Wind* by Kansas. I was 15 and something ordered me, telling me I had to leave. Something that was not her pale body, surprised and almost adolescent. Perhaps her eyes, perhaps the weeping repressed in her pupils, her tear ducts dry...

That same contradictory voice today tells me as Ana moans under my weight that in her belly I find answers, from her answers, balms; and the secret daily life we choose to live will definitively relieve the emptiness of feeling ourselves —or knowing ourselves— to be apart, even if we are damned. VM

Short story taken from Carolina Luna's book *Prefiero los funerales* (Mexico City: Fondo Editorial Tierra Adentro, 1996), pp. 12-18.

The Most Mine Fragments*

by Cristina Rivera Garza
translated by Jen Hofer



4

[Now is the time to speak]

The most mine is prostrate inside her body.
Beneath the vault of her cranium
in the magnificent flower, gelatinous and rosaceous,
    of her brain
with the exact symmetry of its left side
    and its right side
at the root of the solitary stem, perfect and vertical
where the veins tangle together and the tips
    of the system of nerves explode
my mother is a petal inside the box of her body.
The giver of life
the above all other things giver of this life
fell inside herself.

Now is the time to speak.

There are the days, the many days and years past,
    in the beginning, when I didn't love you.
The days when growing into a woman was a senseless
    and malignant judgment.
The days when your strength as a woman only increased
    my weakness as a woman.
The days and the many years when your world
    of knickknacks and smiles and precise times
could offer me nothing to drive away
    the boredom of growing into a woman.

Then followed the many years and the ever so many days
beneath the face of damage.
Because in order to bend to your world without angles,
to your world of tides and spume
to the world in which the ultimate and lifelong
sentence was to grow into a woman
I had to find the tiny mechanism
of the splinter in the palm of your hand
the exact fracture in your Achilles heel
and all the other heels of all your feet
salt fist that makes your eyes blink
from blazing.

Within the days when the damage was a pinpoint of light
that could arouse the innocent to sleeplessness
are the hours, the infinite hours
of the strategic promiscuity of bodies
are the nights when this war between you and me
forced open the sexes of men
and of women
intertwined on beds of alcohol
and amphetamines
on the vast and acrid surface of arms
that open only to close.
There are the dawns that chained
each of my extremities
and each of yours.

The months of flight toward the Pacific and speed
and the unpeopled esplanade of cocaine
where hurry went flying with wings of lime
among reality's grey monuments.
There are the many seconds shaded
by the bruises poetry makes.

And when the damage finished manufacturing
my solitude of a woman my own
my armor of a woman only my own
I returned home to meet you.
I had come from the treadmill, from days and more days
without bathing or food
escaping the wheel of fortune and the wheel
of misfortune.
Then began other days, many days
and more years and more
in which I loved you as if I'd never known you
before.
With fury
with the discretion fear and shyness provoke
I hurled the animal of my love against your round table
set for eight
against your curtainless windows and the incessant
heat left on in your surroundings
against your strength as a woman above all other things
that are implacable and dissimilar.

There are the days and the many years when that animal
discovered calm within your hands.

And my solitude as a woman and my armor as a woman
could be weak
and could escape in their defenselessness
from their solitude and their armor
to be blood of your blood
bread of your bread
body of your body within which you're inside
as much mine as yours and more mine than yours
in these many days, some months
we've spent prostrate before the flower, gelatinous
and rosaceous
the nuclear flower
the imperfect flower of our brain.

8

[The man who was the devil of desire]

The man you dreamed up for me arrived with the wrong
skin, which was red
arrived giving off the indistinguishable smell
of the sulphur of his land beneath this land
arrived with his goat's hooves and his blind
man's eyes.
The man I feared from before he existed
was your desire
and he was my nightmare.
He was going to open my knees and yank from my sex
the son you wanted.
He was going to tighten my bridle and tame my
anxieties with the discipline of love
with the bitter obedience of love.
The man you desired for me
was more powerful than I was.

He was going to romp in my bed and drink my blood
night after night and during the day.
He was going to endow me with the paleness and the
weakness and the prudence
of what is sweet and is dead.
He was going to unfold me like a map and plant
the flags of his conquest on my breasts
on my navel, inside my sex
and on all my bones.
He was going to take me to his house and build me
a world like yours.
But the man who was the devil of desire
who you wanted for me
here inside my sex
mastering me with pleasure and shutting me up
with the damp tongue of his kisses
had to measure his strength against mine.
He had to give me his blood night after night
and during the day.
He had to feel the pole of my flags
on his eyes, his arms, his sex.
He had to recognize himself pale and weak and prudent
like something that is loved and sweet and is dead.
He had to live in the house I built.
And just like me before he existed in me
he feared me and he cursed me
and he cursed love, the ferocious discipline of love
the injustice and inequality of all love.

Then

without knowing
without even noticing it
she arrived, the woman you never dreamed up for me.

* Fragments taken from Cristina Rivera Garza's book of poetry, *La más mía* (The Most Mine) (Mexico City: Fondo Editorial Tierra Adentro/Conaculta, 1998).

Guillermo Floris Margadant Law Scholar

Beatriz Bernal*

Photos courtesy of Nahim Margadant

Guillermo Floris Margadant was born in The Hague, Holland, in February 1924. His father, mathematician by profession and philologist by choice, was, according to his son, "a typical *Privatgelehrter*, a scholar without an official job, happily dedicated to his own research." Margadant died in Toluca, in the State of Mexico, in March 2002, professor emeritus of the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He had received innumerable honors, prizes and decorations as the result of being, like his father, a scholar happily dedicated to research and teaching, except, in his case, with the highest possible university position and multiple acknowledgments. To what was all this owed? To having produced a broad and constant body of work, to having had a professional attitude that coincided with the motto on his *Ex Libris*: "It is the task that preserves our vitality." And by God, Guillermo F. Margadant —attacks of gout and other physical ailments notwithstanding— was an example of vitality in the human endeavor as long as he lived. And also an example of intelligence, a sense of humor and dedication to the intellectual tasks he carried out day to day, supporting himself with a cane toward the end, and always in a dozen languages ("little windows to the world" he called them) that allowed him to delve into a multitude of branches of human knowledge, his instruments for satisfying his insatiable curiosity for understanding the cosmos.

* Professor at the Complutense University in Madrid.

I met Margadant 36 years ago. I was his student in the courses on Roman law for teachers at the UNAM Law School in 1965. From that time on I shared with him different types of relationships. From being his student, I went to being his collaborator, then an editor of some of his works, a co-author of others, a joint lecturer and organizer of colloquia, symposia, seminars and congresses on this side and that of the ocean, to having one of his last books dedicated to me (*Los sistemas jurídicos contemporáneos* [Contemporary Legal Systems]), and accompanying him on many academic and pleasure trips. And above all, I became a friend. That is why I write these lines dedicated to the work he, my teacher and friend, did at the UNAM (both in the Law School and the Institute for Legal Research) in the area of teaching and legal research in general, and particularly in the specialties of Roman law, the history of law and comparative law.

In the field of Roman law, it is to Margadant that we owe the most important book published in Mexico in the last half century: *Derecho Romano Privado* (Private Roman Law), first published in 1960 and reprinted more than 25 times since then. I also think Margadant has enriched the tradition of Roman law with two other outstanding works: *El significado del derecho romano dentro de la enseñanza jurídica contemporánea* (The Meaning of Roman Law in Contemporary Legal Teaching), his doctoral thesis, and *Segunda vida del derecho romano* (The Second Life of Roman Law). Both these volumes are dedicated to the reception of Roman law in the West. With regard to the history of law, he penned a *Historia universal del derecho* (Universal History of Law) and *Historia del derecho mexicano* (History of Mexican Law), both of which when published filled vacuums in the existing literature on these topics in our country's law schools. He also wrote historical-legal monographs, such as those dedicated to colonial law and the relationship between state and Church from the colonial period to the Salinas administration. With regard to comparative law, his books on the historical evolution of Japanese and Soviet law —the result of sabbaticals spent in those countries— are fundamental. His last book, published posthumously, was about the law after Russia's 1991 revolut[illegible]following the collapse

Reviews

El nuevo norteamericano: integración continental, cultura e identidad nacional
(The New North American: Continental Integration, Culture and National Identity)
Lawrence Douglas Taylor
CISAN-UNAM/El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Mexico City, 2001, 309 pp.

Mexico and Canada Implications of Continental Integration In Culture and Identity

The implications and consequences of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the region's three countries have been widely examined from different angles. Among these studies, political and economic analyses have taken up considerable space while themes linked to culture and national identity have been fairly marginal. This is particularly the case of Mexico.

Of the three countries, Canada has paid most attention to these issues. Both the Canadian government and civil society have shown persistent concern about the dangers of the process of cultural Americanization and economic continentalization for their nation.

In Mexico, this concern has received scant attention. Both public officials linked to these issues and NAFTA negotiators expressed certain skepticism about the Canadian proposal to include cultural industries among the exceptions to the treaty. The apparent lack of interest by Mexican officials revealed a certain ignorance about the defense of cultural industries and showed a dearth of sensitivity about an important issue —even though it was not a trade issue— as well as the existing discrepancies about the meaning of cultural industries in each of the three countries.

Mexico was the country least familiar with the idea and treatment of culture as an industry and a good, while Canada demonstrated important experience in this area, based in its historical struggle to preserve its national identity. Canada has a greater tradition in managing conflicts linked to protecting culture and language, including cases of U.S. companies, like Time Warner in 1995 that came before the World Trade Organization tribunal in 1997.

During the 1990-1992 NAFTA negotiations, the Mexican representatives had other priorities and preferred not to wear themselves out with a trilateral discussion about protection of cultural industries. The Canadians, for their part, did unilaterally introduce an exception clause about their cultural industries, preserving the clause they had inserted in the 1988 bilateral Free Trade Agreement with the United States.

Thinking of culture as an industry and as such negotiating it as part of a free trade agreement was uncommon and set a precedent, introducing an important discussion about the effects that a free trade agreement can have on issues apparently unrelated to trade and the economy. At the same time, this precedent made it possible for other social matters, like the parallel agreements on labor and environmental questions, to become part of the NAFTA agenda and that of future trade agreements, like the Free Trade Accord of the Americas (FTAA), currently being negotiated.

The book *El nuevo norteamericano: integración continental, cultura e identidad nacional* (The New North American: Continental Integration, Culture and National Identity) by Canadian Lawrence Douglas Taylor, a researcher at the Northern Border College in Tijuana, proposes precisely to analyze this theme based on a detailed examination of the history of relations between Canada and the United States, on the one hand, and Mexico and the United States, on the other.

In contrast with other work published in Canada and Mexico on this topic, Taylor's book is a valuable effort to

analyze the situation that stems from relations with the United States from a trilateral perspective. This makes it possible to discover an important number of parallels and similarities between Mexico and Canada that were little known due to the lack of comparative historical studies that seek to explain how these two countries have dealt with, negotiated with and resolved their proximity to the United States.

Taylor focuses his analysis on demonstrating what distinguishes Canadians and Americans. Thanks to a detailed account of historical events, he manages to present a very evocative vision about what he thinks are the main determinants of Canadian national identity: U.S. territorial expansionism; economic integrationism; the Americanization of Canadian society; and Quebec's separatism. He dedicates a good part of his efforts to the study of these phenomena.

One of the most interesting topics is the analysis about how through the years Canada and Mexico have build mechanisms to resist their neighbor's expansionism. This is particularly important given the fact that Mexicans have always tended to think that nineteenth-century U.S. expansionist actions vis-à-vis Mexico were unique. Taylor points out that Canada was also invaded by its neighbor from 1775 to 1783 and was subjected to a war with the clear aim of annexation from 1812 to 1814. He also explains how several times Canada's current territory was considered payment in kind that first France and later England should make to the United States as reparations for the various wars they had carried out against it.

Throughout the text, Taylor reiterates that the United States has been the factor that has most contributed to the consolidation of Canadian identity. Although its influence in the lives of Canadians is undeniable, I think that the author underestimates certain factors that in fact contradict the idea that Canada is a nation whose unification is due practically to the U.S. threat: "The resistance of Canadians to the United States —a historic struggle that continues even today— is what truly defines them culturally as a people." (p. 228)

In contrast with Taylor, who thinks that the central issue that prompted the foundation of Canada in 1867 with the British North America Act was U.S. expansionism, I think it was not the only factor for political unification. Events such as the cancellation of the 1854 Reciprocity Accord, the Manifesto of the Annexation of Montreal to the United States (1849) and Louis Riel's rebellion in Manitoba (1869-1870) alerted the populace of the British North American colonies about the danger in continuing to function as autonomous governments and economies in the New World, even if they all belonged politically to the British Empire. The decision to organize as a dominion, without breaking with the English homeland, was made by Canada's founding fathers, figures like George Brown, Alexander Galt and John Macdonald. The authors of the British North America Act and the Canadian confederation naturally took into consideration the threats of U.S. expansionism, but they were also profoundly motivated by economic necessities. The fact that several of the colonies —notably Quebec— considered relations with the United States more lucrative than those with the rest of the colonies, leading them to favorably consider a possible annexation of territory, undoubtedly pushed the founding fathers to speed up discussions about unification. On the other hand, the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865), together with the 1854 commercial accord, had created a certain economic boom in the British colonies, who lost considerable economic advantages with the cancellation of the accord and the end of the civil war and the loss of that market.

In my opinion, while the 1867 unification was an act of self-protection from annexation, it also clearly aimed at catching U.S. interest and negotiating a free trade agreement. That agreement was not signed until 1911, although it was never put into practice because it was challenged by the Canadian Parliament, and Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier's government was brought down, accused of negotiations the Canadian people violently disapproved of, a rejection that has gone down in Americans' historic memory as an insult.

Taylor's book, although it does not openly admit it, aims implicitly to explain to a non-Canadian reader the reasons and motivations Canadian society and different governments have historically expressed about the reaffirmation of Canada's identity. The author dedicates both the introduction and the first two chapters to this question. So, for 111 pages, the reader discovers an innumerable list of facts, dates and details that allow him/her to understand more fully the roots of Canada's —and also Mexico's— fears with regard to its relations with the U.S.

The analysis of Canada is more profound than that of Mexico, which is limited to repeating the better known episodes of U.S. expansionism, particularly the annexation of Texas and the 1846-1847 war. I also think that the book's second chapter would have been clearer if the author had

included maps explaining the way the northern and southern U.S. borders were drawn and how that affected Mexico and Canada.

Although Taylor amply explains the origins of Canada's identity struggle with regard to Americanization, he does not go deeply into the contradiction that it has manifested historically with regard to its relationship with the United States. While the defense of its identity has had a prominent place in national concerns, it is also the case that the government and a sizeable number of entrepreneurs, investors and businessmen have always tended to favor economic and trade relations with the United States.

This has been repeated since 1867. However, there have been exceptions, moments in which resistance movements to Canada's continentalization have surfaced. Among them is the period in the 1960s and 1970s known as "Canadianization," which resulted in a process of the creation of greater awareness in Canadian society about the degree of foreign alienation of its economy and natural resources. However, until today, as the book shows, an enormous dichotomy persists between public policies that support cultural and linguistic nationalism and a clear strategy of the political and economic elites aimed at giving the head to pro-continentalist positions.

One of this book's achievements is undoubtedly the analysis of Mexico's and Canada's borders with the United States, particularly in the light of the important changes since September 11, 2001. The issue of border relations is even more important given the fact that for the first time there is a discussion about instrumenting a common border policy within the so-called U.S. security perimeter.

This book dedicates a large number of its pages to analyzing Canada's federal and provincial policies for protecting national culture and identity. Nevertheless, despite the wealth of information in those chapters, it is surprising that the author makes no mention of one of the Ministry of External Affairs and International Trade's International Cultural Relations Bureau's most important projects: the promotion of Canadian studies in the world as an instrument to reaffirm Canadian identity from abroad.

In this writer's opinion, this deserves an important place in the book, because the author did interview two of the bureau's officials, Alan Dudoit and Jean Labrie (p. 175), but makes no reference to its work, involving one of the most important public projects aimed at contributing to Canada's identity by forming a critical mass of foreign intellectuals who could contribute to it. Professor Taylor does not mention the work of several Canadian foundations, either, like the Brofman Foundation, which for decades has been funding academic projects inside Canada that contribute to consolidating Canadian identity, such as the Center for Canadian Studies at McGill University in Montreal. In short, the preservation of Canadian cultural industries and identity is an issue whose importance means it touches on different sectors of government and civil society.

Lastly, although the book is a significant Spanish-language contribution to the study of Canadian culture and identity and opens up important research sources that will undoubtedly contribute to writing other works, at no time does the author define what the "new North American" of the title is.

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Inclán. Reading their work over the years has prompted the use of a profusion of pen and ink but only occasionally do we meet up with pro-active evaluations, free from easy parallels and sterile reflection.

In *Bandidos, héroes y corruptos o nunca es bueno robar una miseria* (Bandits, Heroes and the Corrupt, or It Is Never Good to Steal a Pittance), Juan Antonio Rosado presents us with an interesting reading of three of these authors' representative novels: *El Zarco* (Blue Eyes) by Altamirano, *Los bandidos de Río Frío* (The Bandits of Río Frío), by Payno, and *Astucia, el jefe de los Hermanos de la Hoja o los Charros contrabandistas de la rama* (Astute, the Head of the Brothers of the Blade, or the Smuggler Horsemen of the Branch), by Inclán. The young writer and academic —recipient of a "Young Creators" grant from the National Fund for Culture and the Arts, classified by writer Adolfo Castañón as one of the generation of young essayists who seek to "season history so their stories will be neither aesthetically nor intellectually insipid"— brings these novels face to face with their own times and realities which, despite the historic distance that separates us from them, have not lost their timeliness for Mexico in the twenty-first century.

In his essay's three chapters, Juan Antonio, who argues for eliminating old quarrels between history and literature, develops a reading that pays homage to three aspects: the social, the ideological and the mythical.

At the beginning, Rosado says, "Studying the nineteenth-century Mexican novel is more than attempting to better understand the history of our literature; it also means approaching our historical and social past from a viewpoint interested in characters and situations taken from real life."

That past is what makes way for the reading Rosado proposes. "From Reality to the Novel" is the title of the essay's first chapter. Here, Rosado presents Payno's, Altamirano's and Inclán's works, which he says possess great social sensitivity in the historical context of nineteenth-century Mexico. They are novelists who wrote in the midst of a nation going through the paroxysms of social and political chaos. That historical reality is the leitmotif upon which the different strands of their thinking, their ideals, denunciations and criticisms are woven.

That is how the young essayist puts it, and, in the third chapter, entitled "Civilization and Barbarism," he broadens the literary spectrum under a lens that looks into the ideological positions and social proposals linked to a national project. With that, he discards the possibility of adopting a position that isolates artistic expression from the exterior world. Our author observes, "Yearning for autonomy in art in all aspects may be the result of a non-thinking and even unconscious attempt to mutilate it....It would definitely be an attack on the spirit of art itself, against heterogeneity and plurality; it would be to limit it to a mere aesthetic or 'aestheticizing' function."

The second chapter -—which I have deliberately left until the end— is entitled "The Generous Offended One." The existence of a common horizon from which the three novels make their start implies the existence of points of convergence inside them. One of these meeting points is the figure of the bandit hero, a character who in his actions becomes an instrument of social demands. It is these social bandoliers who became what they are because of injuries they received, who personify the ideological expectations, the concerns and the judgments that Altamirano, Payno and Inclán expressed about their time. In them, thanks to a process of social mythmaking, the mechanisms of the hero who achieves justice, protection and order for the community, and social mechanisms that recognize and give validity to the hero's actions despite official condemnation, all come together. They form the bridge between "reality and the novel" and "civilization and barbarism."

Rosado's thesis goes beyond anecdotal comparison and the speculative games among forms. By centering on the social, ideological and mythical universe in which each of these three novels —or rather, as he calls them, modern national epics— develops, he makes us look at nineteenth-century Mexico with new eyes.

What are Altamirano's, Payno's and Inclán's concerns in a society wavering between chaos and order? What ideologies oil the wheels of their criticisms, evaluations and proposals? How and on what basis is the idea of the social hero constructed? With what shades of grey is the figure of the bandit portrayed?

All these questions, previously shunted to one side in favor of aesthetic evaluation and historical precisions, find an interesting voice in *Bandidos, héroes y corruptos*, an essay in which Juan Antonio Rosado paints the profiles of nineteenth-century Mexico with the invariably passionate brushes of letters.

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