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# voices **of MEXICO**

News, Commentary and Documents on Current Events in Mexico and Latin America

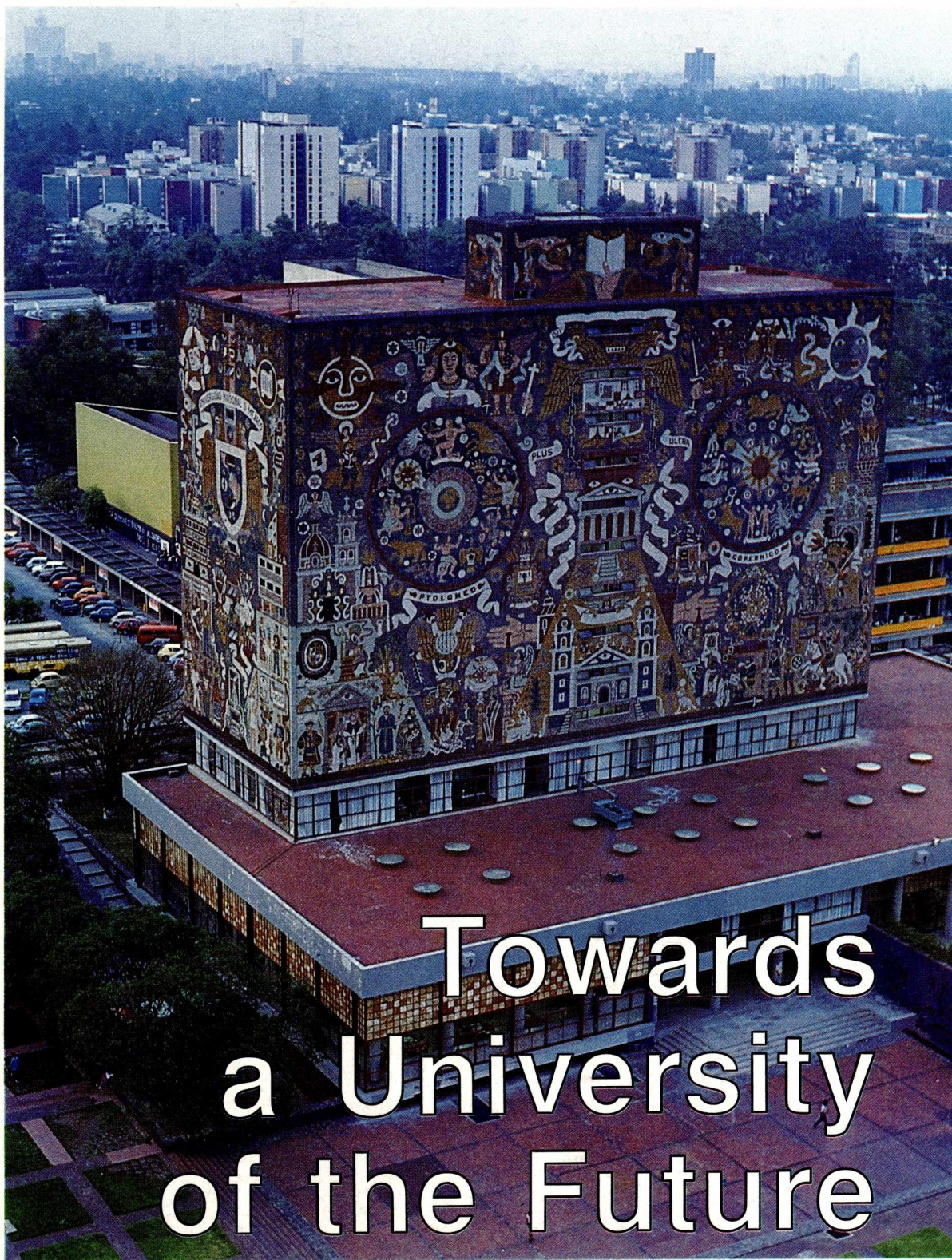
**Rapprochement  
between Mexico  
and Guatemala**

**Brazil  
Challenges the  
International  
Banking System**

**Special Report:  
the Amazon to  
the Caribbean  
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**Music and Verse  
from Mexican  
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**New Hope for  
Victims of  
Parkinson's  
Disease**



**Towards  
a University  
of the Future**

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GUANAJUATO



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Cover photo by Rafael Bonilla

Juan O'Gorman mural at the UNAM Central Library.

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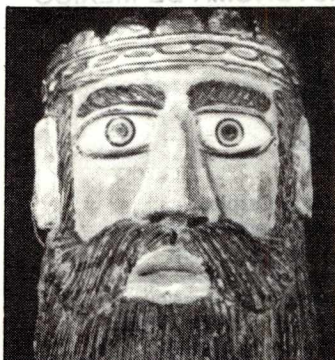
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# voices of MEXICO

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JUNE - AUGUST 1987 NUMBER 4

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In this fourth issue of *Voices*, we deal with some of the most important recent events in Mexico and Latin America, in hopes of providing new insights and promoting a better understanding of the realities of our countries.

In *The Nation* we've focused on the internal situation in Mexican political parties as they prepare for the upcoming, July 1988 presidential elections. We've also included notes on the labor movement and on the controversial Simpson-Rodino Law that went into effect on May 5. In foreign policy matters, the Mexican government's recent new accords with Guatemala and Peru were especially important as they re-affirmed our nation's vocation for Latin American unity.

The section devoted to the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) also merits special mention. Since late 1986, the country's most important center of higher learning has been involved in a reform process that will have one of its culminating moments in the University Congress, scheduled to be held at the end of the year. Given the importance of this process, we've run articles by distinguished scholars and members of the University community, expressing their views on such issues as the present and future role of the UNAM in Mexican society and the challenges in teaching, research and cultural extension, among others.

Our Latin American Issues section is focused on the Southern Cone this time. Pope John Paul II's tour, the Brazilian position on the foreign debt and the military threat to Raúl Alfonsín's government are just some of the current elements of the particularly complex political situation in that region.

We've also included a *Special Report* on a unique expedition by Latin American scientists who plan to make the trip by canoe from the heart of the Amazon to the Caribbean island where Christopher Columbus first touched ground in 1492.

Mariclaire Acosta

All editorial correspondence should be sent to VOICES OF MEXICO, Filosofía y Letras No. 88, Col. Copilco-Universidad, 04360 México D.F. Tels. (905) 658-5853 and (905) 658-7279. Allow 2 weeks for delivery.

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# Rapprochement between Mexico and Guatemala

## High-ranking Mexican delegation visits Guatemala

Over the last fifteen months, Mexican diplomats have been engaged in bringing about a rapprochement with neighboring Guatemala. After decades of strained relations, marked by Guatemalan mistrust of Mexico, important agreements have been reached signifying closer ties between the two countries.

Mexico and Guatemala share a 700 mile-long common border and Indian ancestors for whom the Spanish-inherited national divisions did not exist. Nevertheless, for many years the two were hardly on speaking terms. The outbreak of serious political and military conflicts in the Central American area, however, seems to have made the Mexican government reassess not only the importance of its relations with its Central American neighbors, but also the attention paid to socioeconomic development in its own south-east, a region which, in its economic and social structures, bears a closer resemblance to Central America than to the rest of the country.

### The Need for Rapprochement

In the early eighties, Guatemala's internal conflict breached its border with Mexico. Tens of thousands of Indian peasants from its western highlands crossed as refugees into Mexico's southern state of Chiapas. No fewer than six times in the period 1982-1985, armed men — claimed by the refugees to be members of the Guatemalan army — also crossed the Mexico-Guatemala border in their pursuit.



President de la Madrid and wife arriving at Guatemala.

In view of these incursions into its territory, it comes as no surprise that Mexico welcomed Guatemala's 1985 return to a constitutional regime and civilian government. Especially as the new administration's foreign policy on the Central American conflict is in many respects similar to Mexico's own.

Signs of interest in rapprochement had also been evident on the Guatemalan side: Even during the last military government, Guatemala was beginning to develop a foreign policy based on the principle of neutrality, and in this context Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid met with then Guatemalan Head of State General Humberto Mejía Víctores in the border town of Tapachula in October 1985.

With Christian Democrat Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo in power in Guatemala, contacts increased, culminating in two presidential summits, the first in Mexico City in July 1986, and the second in Guatemala City from April 8 to 10 this year.

De la Madrid's April visit to Guatemala was preceded by a ministerial-level first Binational Encounter where Mexico's interest in renewing friendly relations and supporting the civilian regime was clearly shown. The Mexican cabinet migrated virtually en masse to Guatemala for this meeting. No fewer than nine ministers took part, signing nine treaties and cooperation agreements with their Guatemalan counterparts in the most varied areas of government activity.

### A Door to Central America

Mexico's rapprochement with Guatemala has been prompted not only by its general foreign policy concerns but also by domestic economic, political and social issues.

There are many matters whose resolution requires minimally cordial relations between the two countries — for example, the problem of Guatemalan immigrant farm laborers, who cross into Mexico's south-east, particularly into Chiapas, at harvest time; the eventual return of the Guatemalan refugees, mainly settled at present in the Mexican state of Campeche; the development of common water resources; and joint campaigns to eradicate pests affecting crops on either side of the border.

### Nine treaties were signed in the most varied areas of government activity

In the search for solutions to such problems, the end to the tense relations of the early eighties is a significant achievement.

On the other hand, from an economic viewpoint, Guatemala may represent Mexico's best entry port to the Central American region, providing not only a market for the export of industrial goods, but also investment opportunities. Even in the most tension-ridden years, Mexican exports to Central America grew, doubling between the years 1980-1981 and maintaining a level since then of over \$U.S. 450 million per year.

It is true that oil accounts for the bulk of Mexican exports to Central America, and it is also true that Mexico provides only 10% of the region's total imports. Nevertheless, this is in itself an indication of the area's immense potential as a market for Mexican production. And it is Guatemala which holds most promise in this sense, since it represents, despite the crisis, Central America's strongest economy and biggest market, in both present and potential terms. It is no accident that Guatemala is the destination of over 40% of Mexico's current Central American exports.

The credits, oil deals, and tariff arrangements agreed to at the April summit are measures intended to back the Cerezo government's economic recovery program and, at the same



time, to produce a long-term increase in trade, the balance of which, at this moment, strongly favors Mexico.

Meanwhile, any success Guatemala may have in achieving economic, social and political stability is likely to have a favorable impact on Mexico's south-eastern states, particularly Chiapas and Oaxaca. In a certain sense, Guatemala might act as a buffer cushioning Mexico against the conflict presently raging in Central America. Mexican officials have often stated that the aim

of Mexican foreign policy is to prevent the adverse effects of the Central American crisis from spreading and multiplying, and thus threatening Mexico's own security and development. Hence the strategic redefinition of its ties with Guatemala, on the basis of the conditions brought about by the civilian regime and its policy of active neutrality.

Cerezo's stand backs Mexico's on the Central American crisis, favoring negotiated solutions among the parties involved and opposing intervention by extra-regional powers.

### Results of the Summit

In terms of Central American diplomacy, then, Mexico has gained an important ally. Guatemala, for its part, has obtained firm backing for its aspirations to leadership in the Central American area. The mutual benefits of rapprochement were clearly revealed in the Joint Communique issued by de la Madrid and Cerezo on April 10, at the conclusion of the Guatemala City summit.

The communique endorses Contadora and its support group; the rights and interests of the peoples of Central America; and a solution of the regional crisis in strict accordance with the principles of international coexistence. At the same time, it condemns support for armed groups acting to destabilize legitimately constituted governments. This allusion to the U.S. position, particularly in relation to the Nicaraguan contras, was made explicit by both presidents in the press conference immediately following the communique.

A further aspect of the communique was the direct support for Cerezo expressed by De la Madrid in his praise for Guatemala's active neutrality as "of enormous political significance" and "a factor favoring the stability of the region."

Finally, as has been commented in government and press circles here, Mexico's diplomatic success on its southern border helps strengthen its northern one. ★

Edgar Celada  
De la agencia Acen-Siag

### Both countries endorsed the principles of international coexistence



Presidents Miguel de la Madrid and Vinicio Cerezo at press conference after signing joint communique.

Photo from unomásguno archive.



Guatemalan refugee, Campeche.

Photo by Sergio Dorantes.

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## POLITICA EXTERIOR

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that leave trace of Mexico's international behavior as well as the most relevant aspects of its foreign policy, through essays, notes and reports, book reviews, chronological news, speeches and documents.

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# Mexican Workers Face the Crisis

## Strikes and negotiations to defend wages

According to Labor Congress figures, real wages in Mexico have been halved since 1982. The economic crisis is currently the main cause of current labor disputes. In the period January 1983-May 1987, 61,000 cases were formally submitted for initial arbitration to the Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, and 956 strikes occurred. According to university researchers, there were 13,969 labor disputes in 1986, 2.5 times the 1985 figure. Only 1.6% of these involved strike action, though

some 85% were submitted to the Arbitration Commission. So far this year, the Arbitration Commission reports 2,500 cases formally submitted, a little over half the 1986 figure.

Earlier this year, labor agitation reached a high point with strikes called by two of Mexico's most important unions: the electricians and the telephonists.

The Mexican Electrician's Union (SME) went on strike on February 27 for a 23% wage raise and other benefits. The action involved 36 thousand workers in 400 plants located

in Mexico City and the states of Hidalgo, Puebla, Morelos and Mexico.

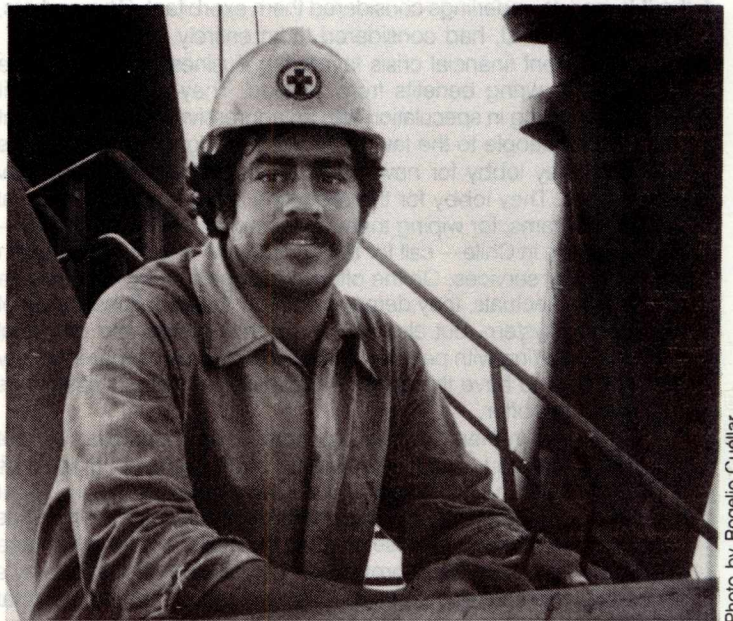
The government immediately took over electricity plants to prevent suspension of power services. Shortly afterwards, the Labor Ministry declared the strike invalid, arguing that the company's profit margin was not as great as workers claimed.

The SME strike was called off only five days after it start-

ed. The electricians had, however, mobilized a solidarity movement involving 200 thousand workers, neighborhood residents and students.

Six weeks later, the Mexican Telephonist's Union (STRM) went on strike, also seeking a 23% wage hike. Once again, the government took over the plants. After intense negotiations, the STRM had to accept a wage increase of only 18%.

Both the SME and the



Steel worker.

Photo by Rogelio Cuéllar.



SME rally, Mexico City Main Plaza.

STRM belong to the Labor Congress (CT), a government-aligned national union confederation composed of 33 unions and union federations, incorporating an estimated 90% of Mexican trade union membership. CT figures cite a total membership of 8 million, but other studies have disputed this claim, affirming that numbers could not exceed 4,700,000.

The remaining 10% of Mexican unionists belong to independent unions. One such organization is the Union Coordinating Board, made up of over 100 independent unions, which maintains a position critical of government economic policy. The Board's chief criticism is aimed at the foreign debt: while substantial wage hikes are denied, 56% of the national budget is earmarked for foreign debt payments.★

Jorge Luis Sierra

Photo by Antonio Ortuño.



## Democracy in Times of Crisis

The De la Madrid Administration came into office in the midst of an extremely severe financial crisis that threatened to shortly turn into a complete national collapse. Like its predecessors, the De la Madrid Administration accepted and applied International Monetary Fund policies up to a certain limit: it would not break with the massive grassroots organizations that make up the base of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). To prevent the break, government and organizations hammered out compromises. The agreements reached with worker organizations, however, are in limbo: the IMF and its underlings considered them exorbitant. (The workers, on the other hand, had considered them entirely inadequate.)

The current financial crisis favors big businessmen, who have been able to wring benefits from inflation. They even stimulate it directly, engaging in speculation with an aggressiveness that is meant to accustom people to the law of the jungle: Might makes right. As exporters, they lobby for new devaluations; as importers, for new concessions. They lobby for the reduction and elimination of social welfare programs, for wiping them out completely. Their theorists — like Pinochet's in Chile — call for the privatization of education, health and municipal services. On the offensive, egged on by mass media and their intellectuals, they demand not only the denationalization of the banking system, but also of the nation's energy and industrial resources, starting with petroleum. They claim to be prepared to buy up them all, and have the cheek to pose as the nation's saviors as they make the offer.

State involvement in the economy has occurred without grassroots support, and sometimes even against grassroots opposition. This kind of involvement is now in crisis, due to the great benefits derived from it by private enterprise. It is this crisis which has enabled the right-wing, representing big business, to take advantage of the woes it has itself provoked, demanding the economy's privatization and denationalization and even more freedom than that currently enjoyed.

Meanwhile, confusion reigns in left-wing and progressive ranks. Instead of demanding more say for popular representatives in the management of State-owned and State-run enterprises, many of their

leaders have capitulated to neoliberal and neoconservative Minimal State theories. Neoliberal and neoconservative ideology prevails. It has surfaced not only in Washington, but also among Central American oligarchies. Neoliberalism and terrorist State supporters (who claim to back authoritarianism against totalitarianism) form an international club with members in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador ...and Mexico. The new ideological climate prevails not only in extreme right-wing circles, and some "left-wing" ones, but also in the government.

At the same time, the working class is under great economic and social pressure. Real wages have gone down, services and fringe benefits are threatened. Workers are not taken into account in the economic decision-making process. Their leaders and organizations are attacked as irresponsible and immoral, or are forced to accept compromises that alienate their rank-and-file support.

The right-wing offensive has not yet produced a split between the administration and the mass organizations; but it is always on the scene as a possibility. It could be said that many "technocrats" are determined to take the risks of breaking "the Mexican Revolution's social commitments", those products of Mexico's own peculiar brand of social democracy contained in the "pact" between the State and its grassroots organizations. Such a break would end the State's economic and political concessions to the mass organizations and their leaders.

The situation is much more serious than at any time previously, for it simultaneously affects peasants, industrial workers, students, professional people, white-collar workers, and small and medium property-owners. Furthermore, it brings into question the constitutional government's capacity for managing the State and points in the direction of the development of a new kind of State.

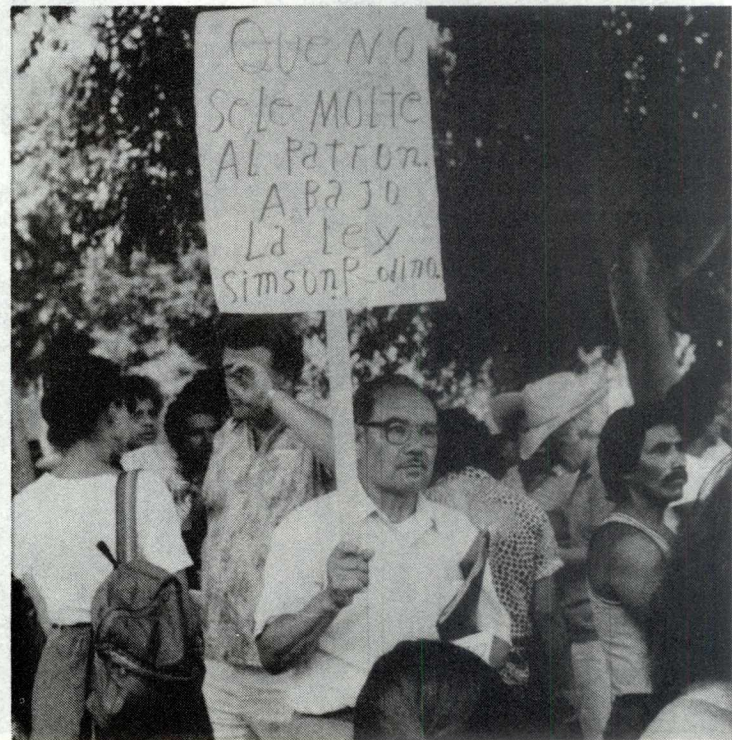
Pablo González Casanova

From the book *Las elecciones en México: evolución y perspectivas* (Elections in Mexico: Evolution and Perspectives) Mexico City, Siglo XXI, 1985.

## New Immigration Law Moves Migrant Workers

The Simpson-Rodino Law threatens access to legal and medical aid for a new underclass of legalized migrant workers

The controversial Simpson-Rodino Law, which came into effect on May 5, has caused strong reactions in Mexican political circles. Its short and long term effects have been widely discussed in forums, speeches, and the press. Afraid of becoming its victims, hundreds of Mexicans living in the United



Demonstration against the Simpson-Rodino Law in Los Angeles.

Photo by Antonio Ortuño



States have begun returning home.

The Simpson-Rodino legislation is the most recent attempt to amend the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Law. It was introduced in March 1982, and passed on November 6, 1986. In general terms, the new law means stricter deportation measures for all undocumented foreigners who entered the United States after January 1, 1982.

According to UNAM Law School professor Víctor García Moreno, there is no completely reliable statistical method for determining either the number of undocumented foreigners or the number of undocumented Mexicans at present working in the United States. This is because, states García Moreno, the U.S. government manipulates statistics for political ends.

Nevertheless, it has been estimated that there are some six



"Mexican workers produce US wealth"

million undocumented foreigners in the United States. Of these, between 800 thousand and 2 million are Mexicans. The broad fluctuation in the figures is due to the seasonal nature of Mexican migration.

Complementing the Simpson-Rodino legislation, the Reagan Administration has earmarked more funds for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and especially for the Border Patrol. The Service's 1987 budget is \$422 million, with \$419 programmed for 1988. This represents a 50% increase over the 1986 figure. Chicano and human rights organizations have described the measures as outright militarization of the Mexico-U.S. border.

The Administration argues that undocumented Mexicans constitute a social burden for the U.S. system and the U.S. taxpayer. García Moreno claims that this argument is "at best political and at worst racist, for it's been shown that undocumented Mexicans pay out in taxes and social security five or six times what they obtain from social welfare programs."

One of the most controversial Simpson-Rodino clauses is the one referring to legalization. According to this clause, legal papers can be issued to all undocumented foreigners who have been living *continuously* in the United States since before January 1, 1982. This is surely the clause that has shattered the hopes of many undocumented Mexicans, a great number of whom, according to García Moreno, are seasonal workers

with families in Mexico, who cross the border periodically to earn money and then return home.

The legalization clause stipulates that in case of necessity the Labor Department can authorize farm laborers to enter the country. These laborers may apply for permanent residence after an 18-month residence in the U.S., provided that they have lived continuously in the country during that period and have been employed in farm work for a minimum of 90 days per year.

However, those granted permanent residence may not, during a period of five years, receive any public assistance or welfare benefits, with the exception of emergency medical aid and assistance to invalids, elderly or blind. García Moreno considers that this constitutes a violation of U.S. domestic law and international human rights declarations, since it establishes an ominous discrimination against one sector of the population on the basis of migratory status.

A 1982 report (1) on the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill, predecessor of the Simpson-Rodino, states that "the important thing is not so much how many undocumented Mexicans qualify for permanent residence in (the United States), but their living conditions once they gain it." In fact, so the report claims, the law seeks "to establish an underclass of immigrant Mexican workers ... (who) would be obliged to pay taxes and social security contributions, without enjoying their benefits." One of the rights annulled is access to free legal defense. "Mexicans are stripped of any protection against abuses by employers or authorities." In summary, what the law proposes is to create "an available work force with reduced human rights and labor rights."

"The phenomenon of migration is neither a criminal matter nor a national sovereignty ISSUE, and thus cannot be resolved with violence or with stronger border controls... A stronger Border Patrol may mean worse treatment for detained and deported Mexicans, but it will never stem the flow of Mexican workers into the United States... U.S. legislators have not realized what is behind the phenomenon: the law of supply and demand in the work market. Obviously, if there were no employment demand in the United States, undocumented Mexicans would not head there to work. The U.S. economy, particularly in the South-West, needs Mexican workers, and according to expert predictions, this demand is on the increase."

"According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mexicans account for 80% of the United State's 1,200,000 rural laborers, and work some 100 million acres of U.S. farm land. It has also been estimated that 40% of undocumented Mexicans are farm hands, the rest being employed in light industry, the service sector or as domestics."

The report concludes that the new law will exacerbate existing problems, giving "new and legal license to violate the undocumented Mexican's rights and to carry out raids and deportations with increased violence... Inside or outside the law, undocumented Mexicans will be discriminated against, and their standart of living will go down."

García Moreno argues that the Simpson-Rodino is basically an attempt to scapegoat the undocumented worker for the current U.S. economic crisis, characterized by high unemployment. "Historically," he states, "U.S. attempts to control Mexican undocumented immigration have always coincided with periods of economic difficulty in the country."

It would be premature, at this stage, to reach conclusions as to the Simpson-Rodinos' effects on Mexico. Of chief concern is returnee's impact on Mexico's current economic crisis. Nonetheless, researchers are also interested in analyzing the measure's consequences in political, social and cultural terms.

(1) Informe: relaciones México-Estados Unidos. "Evolución del Proyecto Simpson-Mazzoli" (Report on Mexico-United States Relations: Development of the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill), Centro de Estudios Económicos y Sociales del Tercer Mundo Vol.1, No.3, Mexico City, July-December, 1982. ★



## Political Parties Prepare their Electoral Strategies

President Miguel de la Madrid has rightly called 1987 a "political year". From January on, all the officially-registered parties have been gathering their forces for the 1988 Presidential elections. Eight of them are getting ready to take part: the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), National Action Party (PAN), Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), Revolutionary Worker's Party (PRT), Mexican Democrat Party (PDM), Socialist Worker's Party (PST), Popular Socialist Party (PPS) and the Authentic Mexican Revolution Party (PARM).

The governing PRI adopted its election policy at its March National Assembly, which was attended by two ex-presidents, Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo. The so-called PRI Democratizing Tendency has called for changes in the party's presidential candidate selection procedures.

The PAN, chief right-wing opposition party, will elect its presidential candidate at its

October national convention. The approach of the elections has unleashed severe faction-fighting in PAN ranks, with challenges offered to the legitimacy of newly-elected party president Luis H. Alvarez, ex-mayor of Chihuahua

City.

On the left, a new party, the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), is in the process of formation, product of the amalgamation of two registered parties, the United Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM) and the Mexican Worker's Party (PMT), with three unregistered organizations, the Left Communist Union (UIC), the Patriotic Revolutionary Party (PPR) and the People's Revolutionary Movement (MRP). The fusion was announced at the end of March, and the new party plans to hold its constituent congress in October. It remains to be seen whether the Trotskyite PRT will form an electoral coalition with the PMS or run its own presidential candidate.

Among other parties, only the PST has shown signs of change, but not precisely on electoral issues. The party is locked in a power struggle involving two factions mutually accusing each other of "betraying founding principles". Neither the PPS nor the PARM has made important announcements over the past few months. Probably they will not contest the presidential election, opting, as usual, to support the PRI candidate. Meanwhile, the right-wing PDM has recently ratified as leader ex-presidential candidate Ignacio González Gollaz. No changes there, either.★

Arturo Cano

## Parties Select their Presidential Candidates

With presidential elections coming up in July 1988, Mexican political parties are not only drafting strategy and programs, but also picking candidates. By September or October, both governing PRI and its two main opponents, PAN and PMS, will have made their choices.

According to the Mexican press, possible PRI precandidates are, among others, Manuel Bartlett, Interior Minister; Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Planning and Budget Minister; Alfredo del Mazo, Minister for Energy Resources, Mining, and Parastate Industry; and Miguel González Avelar, Education Minister.

In the PAN, the choice is thought to lie between business leader Manuel Clouthier, ex Sinaloa gubernatorial contender; Adalberto Rosas, form-

er Sonora gubernatorial candidate; and Fernando Canales Clariond, another business leader and ex-gubernatorial candidate, this time in the state of Nuevo León. Another name worth mentioning is that of Francisco Barrio, ex-mayor of Ciudad Juárez, considered by many PAN supporters the only leader prepared to "go all out" if nominated.

The PMS is likely to launch one of the leaders of its merging organizations, such as PMT veteran Heberto Castillo; Chihuahua PSUM leader Antonio Becerra Gaytán; or UIC General Secretary Manuel Terrazas. Pablo González Casanova, noted intellectual and ex UNAM rector, has also been suggested as a possible PMS candidate.

A.C.

## Voting Patterns in Mexico

One well-known fact about Mexican electoral behavior is the high percentage of votes obtained by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). In presidential elections, for example, there have been only two occasions since the PRI's founding in 1929 that the opposition has gained even 25% of ballots cast.

In five of the ten last presidential elections, the PRI won 90% or more of the votes cast; in 1946, 1964, and 1970, it received over 75%. Only in two elections were the figures lower: 74% in 1952 and 71% in 1982.

High abstentionism rates is another feature of Mexican elections. Eligible voters fail to register; registered voters do not attend polls. This second kind of abstentionism has become more important in

recent years. In the 1952 presidential elections, the percentage of registered voters who did not cast ballots was 26%. This figure rose to 28% in 1958, to 30.6% in 1964, and to 35% in 1970. It went down again in 1976 and 1982, however, when abstentionism rates of 31% and 25.2%, respectively, were registered.

These aspects of electoral behavior are not uniform throughout the country. While at a national level the PRI's strength is overwhelming, opposition parties are in some cases important at the state level. By the same token, abstentionism also varies among the 31 states making up the Mexican federation.

Rogelio Ramos Oranday



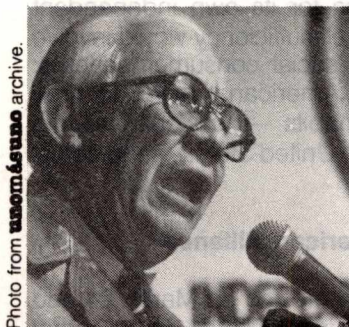
## Legislative Elections

PARTY	1973		1976		1979		1982	
	VOTES	%	VOTES	%	VOTES	%	VOTES	%
PAN (National Action Party)	2,207,069	14.70	1,359,384	8.47	1,490,486	10.73	3,631,660	17.53
PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party)	10,458,618	69.67	12,869,058	80.19	9,699,445	69.83	14,350,021	69.27
PPS (Popular Socialist Party)	541,833	3.61	493,590	3.07	357,500	2.57	393,227	1.90
PARM (Authentic Mexican Revolution Party)	272,339	1.82	405,640	2.52	251,627	1.81	282,229	1.36
PCM-PSUM (Mexican Communist Party United Socialist Party of Mexico)					690,537	4.97	905,058	4.37
PST (Socialist Worker's Party)					294,732	2.12	370,244	1.79
PDM (Mexican Democrat Party)					284,104	2.04	473,362	2.07
PRT (Revolutionary Worker's Party)							264,153	1.27
PSD (Social Democrat Party)							38,994	0.19
Others	36,858	0.25	46,121	0.28	9,500	0.06	53	0.04
Informal	1,493,267	9.95	872,928	5.43	810,572	5.83	8,359	
TOTAL	15,009,984	100.00	16,046,721	100.00	13,888,513	100	20,717,360	100.00

From the book *Las elecciones en México: evolución y perspectivas*.



President Miguel de la Madrid addressing PRI's thirteenth National Assembly in March.



Heberto Castillo, Mexican Workers' Party leader.



Luis H. Alvarez, PAN president.

### Votes for the PRI and Other Parties in Presidential Elections

YEAR	PRI VOTES (MILLIONS)		OTHER PARTIES (MILLIONS)	
	(MILLIONS)	%	(MILLIONS)	%
1964	8.40	89.0	1.0	11.0
1970	11.90	85.8	2.0	14.2
1976	16.77	93.6	1.1	6.4
1982	16.75	71.0	6.8	29.0

From the book *Las elecciones en México: evolución y perspectivas*

### Abstention Rates in Mexican Presidential Elections 1964-1982

YEAR	GENERAL ABSTENTIONISM		REAL ABSTENTIONISM	
	ABSOLUTE (MILLIONS)	RELATIVE %	ABSOLUTE (MILLIONS)	REAL %
1964	8.0	46.0	4.2	30.6
1970	8.7	38.3	7.6	35.0
1976	9.9	35.5	8.0	31.0
1982	12.1	33.9	7.9	25.2



# Peruvian President Calls For Latin American Unity

## Alan García is warmly received in Mexico

During his visit to Mexico in March, President Alan García of Peru put forth the revolutionary idea that Latin America is capable of developing on the basis of its own resources and without the help of foreign credit; a revolutionary thesis that has probably been present in the thoughts of Latin Americans during the five centuries since colonial empires changed the population and customs of the continent.

It is revolutionary because Alan García dares tell Latin Americans that foreign credit is not essential for their well-being. He insists that the continent's southern hemisphere has sufficient agricultural and mineral resources for its own independent development. This move towards self-sufficiency would involve radical changes in personal and social consumer patterns: García emphasized that Latin Americans have to free themselves of foreign consumer habits—must quit imitating patterns from Japan, Europe or the United States—and adjust to their own local conditions.

### Towards a Latin American Alliance

The Peruvian president was in Mexico on March 24 and 25 for meetings with Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado. They issued a joint statement defending non-intervention and self-determination for all nations, and reaffirming the commitment of Mexico and Peru to dedicate maximum efforts to achieve peace in Central America through Contadora and its Support Group.

The presidents declared that the foreign debt problem is a result of the prevailing international economic order, and that dealing with it requires national decisions, long-term international solutions and political dialog based on the acceptance of co-responsibility by both debtors and creditors.

They stated their belief that the formation of the Latin American community is imperative and declared their support for such organizations as the Latin American Parliament, the Group of Eight and the SELA (Latin American Economic System.)

De la Madrid and García also called for a reversal of the protectionist trade policies by the industrialized nations and for an end to the current trend of net capital transfers from developing nations towards the industrialized ones.

Finally, the two condemned the arms race and called for the suspension of nuclear tests, the reduction of atomic arsenals and the prevention of the arms race in space.

During a press conference held in Los Pinos, the presidential residence in Mexico City, Alan García outlined his policies on Peru's foreign debt. García's views are not as radical as Cuban leader Fidel Castro's, who has declared on several occasions that Latin America is really a creditor and not a debtor, and thus is not morally obliged to repay debts negotiated with

capitalist banks.

But President García does have an ethical justification for not laying out exorbitant amounts of foreign currency in debt repayments, and for investing this money at home. He says that even if something goes awry in the application of his economic proposals, "the people will have eaten well for some years, and that is historically significant."

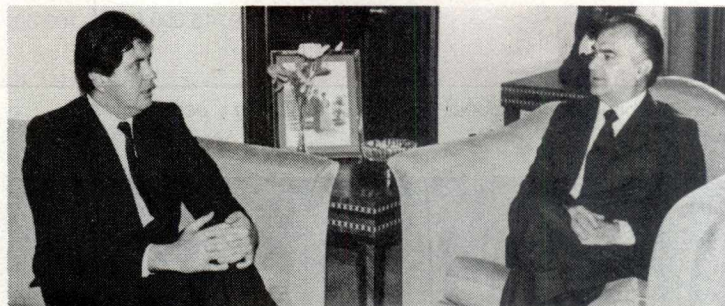
Alan García became president of Peru at the end of July 1985, when his party, the Popular Revolutionary American Alliance, APRA, came to power for the first time in its 60 years of existence. His government inherited a critical economic situation and a foreign debt of some \$14 billion.

In 1984 Peru (led by President Belaunde Terry) was paying—or was expected to pay—35% of its export earnings to the

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**During his visit to Mexico, Alan García talked about ethical values, about living austerely and adopting non-consumerist habits**

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Presidents Alan García and Miguel de la Madrid.

foreign banks in debt payments. Unable to sustain this rate, the government announced in May 1984 that it could no longer pay. In his inaugural speech more than a year later, Alan García announced that Peru would pay no more than 10% of its export earnings toward servicing the debt. The next day, the United States government decreed the suspension of economic and military aid to the Andean country, in reprisal for the de-facto moratorium.

The Peruvian economy responded well to the new government's policies, with an increase of 4% in the Gross National Product in 1985, of 8% in 1986 and a forecast 6% for 1987. For Alan García, the most significant effect of the economy's reactivation is that "the people are eating more, they are eating better, and they are educating themselves."

He told the press that in 1985 Peru earned some \$3 billion from exports and paid \$300 million to service the debt. The country's main exports are crude oil, copper and other metals, petroleum products and coffee.

President García also outlined possible ways of resolving the foreign debt crisis. In the first place, he proposed bilateral negotiations between debtor countries and financial institutions.

Secondly, and if the first fails, unilateral action such as that taken by Peru and Brazil. Then he proposed joint action by Latin American countries to stimulate economic growth, together with changes in consumer patterns.

While he called for a joint continental solution to the problem of Latin America's debt—which stands at nearly \$400 billion—he said he did not mean to export the Peruvian model, that the foreign debt has political and ethical implications, and that each country has its own solution, which Peru respects. This was a deferential reference to the host country, Mexico, which has consistently announced that it intends to fulfill its obligations with



foreign banks, and which in fact continues its bilateral negotiations with these banks and the International Monetary Fund.

### Strain Between Civilians and the Military

Asked about terrorism in Peru, President García replied that his government has to be "very clear and very serious" in its measures in response to the wave of violence currently plaguing the country. He said that over a thousand members of the government's security forces have been killed in the line of duty during his administration.

Nobody at the press conference mentioned the mutiny at the prisons of Lurigancho, El Frontón and Santa Bárbara in June

"invasion" of three university campuses last February, apparently with a clear conscience. He stated that his government is a defender of university freedoms and that the schools (San Marcos, La Cantuta and the National University of Engineering) were neither invaded nor occupied, but raided at night and during vacations, in the presence of journalists and civil authorities, in search of arms and subversive material. Newspaper reports of the events say that some 4,000 police were involved in the operation and that there were close to 800 arrests. Of these, 200 people were still being detained at the end of March.

The president had a nationalist answer for a key question posed at the press conference, regarding the guerrilla group Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso): Who did he think provided

### Alan García and Miguel de la Madrid defended the principles of non-intervention and self-determination of all nations

1986, where some 350 prisoners were killed, including 124 who had already surrendered—with nobody certain of García's role in the tragedy. The incident could well have been an indicator of strain between the civilian government and the military—tensions that are growing this year with Mr. García's attempts to create a single Ministry of Defense to incorporate and command the three branches of the military, the army, navy and air force. This move is strongly opposed by the military, especially by the Air Force.

President García did answer a question about the



President Alan García with Mexican Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepúlveda.

Photo from Novedades archive.

the money and arms for the organization? He answered that the Peruvian government has no evidence of foreign support for the group and he presumes that Shining Path is internally motivated, financed and armed.

Alan García has an imposing appearance and a lively style. He is tall, good-looking, young—for a president—at 38, witty and clever with the press, a friend of bohemians and intellectuals alike, eager to mix with the people and break through security provisions. Several times during his visit to Mexico he caused extra worries and work for security forces when he disregarded their rules and regulations.

He is a singer who doesn't let the presidency stand in the way of a good time: he visited Mexico's most famous outdoor night-spot, the Plaza Garibaldi, and sang with the mariachis. Mexico City newspapers carried front page photos of the Peruvian head of state singing—accompanied by a marimba—outside City Hall after he was declared a Distinguished Guest of the city.

During his visit to Mexico, Alan García talked about ethical values, about living austere and adopting new non-consumerist habits, but he did not mention adopting "austerity programs." He talked about the common history of Mexico and Peru, their Aztec and Inca pasts and shared colonial heritage. He recognized the impact of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 on the formation of his own political party, founded in 1926 by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

And he told reporters that he has proposed, together with President De la Madrid, a meeting of the presidents of the Group of Eight, that is, of the four member nations of Contadora (Mexico, Colombia, Panama and Venezuela) and its Support Group (Peru, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay) in order to strengthen their efforts to achieve peace in Central America. ★

Jacqueline Buswell

## Leopoldo Zea: Mexico and Peru Share Common History

Alan García is a man willing to undertake the project of Latin American integration, respect for the right to self-determination of the Latin American peoples and the problem of the foreign debt. This is the conclusion reached by Leopoldo Zea, distinguished Mexican philosopher and Director of the Coordination and Distribution Center for Latin American Studies of the UNAM, after a meeting with the Peruvian President during the latter's recent visit to Mexico (see story).

García's commitment to Latin American integration, states Zea, is based on a recognition that the countries of the region "share a common origin, were united for three centuries under Spanish domination, then neo-colonialism and now have a

common problem with the debt."

The Mexican philosopher highlighted the participation of García's government in the Contadora Support group. In Zea's view, Peru considers that "Mexico's stand in international affairs has been very clear."

On García's meeting with Mexican counterpart Miguel de la Madrid, Zea stated that the United States had watched the encounter closely, "given that the U.S. has accused both countries of supporting Nicaragua for ideological reasons."

Finally, Zea stressed that in Mexico there exists great good feeling towards the Peruvian people and Alan García's government, for both countries have many problems and interests in common.



# Towards a University of the Future

**The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) is the nation's most important center of higher education. Currently in the midst of a period of reform, the UNAM is trying to make changes that will allow it to meet Mexico's new needs as we move towards the close of the century. There is no lack of variety in the opinions about exactly what changes the University should make. Thus, *Voices* presents this series of articles by outstanding scholars and members of the University community. They are meant to explain some of the basic facts about this great University, its current role in Mexican society, the student protests on campuses during late 1986 and the first months of 1987, as well as ideas on the future of teaching and research**

## Important Dates in the University's History

- 1551 Sept. 21: Foundation of the Royal Pontifical University of Mexico.
- 1823: Establishment of the National Pontifical University.
- 1910: Opening of the National University of Mexico, through the efforts of the distinguished historian, educator and sociologist Don Justo Sierra.
- 1929 July 22: University autonomy granted; the National University becomes the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).
- 1953: The UNAM takes up residence in its present main campus site of University City, located in the south of Mexico City.
- 1970: Establishment of the first Sciences and Humanities High School (CCH).<sup>1</sup>

## UNAM, One of the Oldest Universities in the Americas

The National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) goes back to 1551, when the Royal Pontifical University of Mexico was founded. This makes it, along with the University of Peru, the oldest institute of higher learning in the Americas.

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the University was governed by the Spanish colonial administration. With independence, it became involved in the power struggles of the different factions seeking to gain the upper hand in the new nation's politics.

The 1867 Liberal Party triumph meant important reforms for national education. Especially significant was the boost given to high school education with the founding of the National Preparatory School. During this period, programs and teaching methods at both Prepa and undergraduate level were based on the precepts of French positivist philosopher Auguste Comte. In 1910, the Prepa and the undergraduate schools were combined to form the National University of Mexico.

In 1929, The University was granted autonomy, after a long struggle that had begun

at the time of its foundation. Autonomy guarantees non-intervention by the State, political parties or outside interests, and hence has permitted ideological pluralism in teaching, research and cultural extension.

In 1944, the Autonomous National University of Mexico Law was passed, and is still in effect today. This law defines the University as a national, autonomous institution, a decentralized State body, whose functions are to offer higher education to train professionals, researchers, university professors and technicians who will serve society; to carry out research, especially on Mexican problems and conditions; and to make the benefits of culture widely available. The law also guarantees academic freedom in teaching and research and the free analysis and discussion of ideas.

The autonomy granted in 1929—and subsequently incorporated into the Mexican Constitution in 1980—empowers the University to govern itself; that is, to name its own authorities, draw up its own internal regulations, design its own programs and curricula and determine its own hiring procedures for academic and administrative staff.



## Today's Statistics

1.- UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS AND DIVISIONS Undergraduate level (Academic Year 1985-1986) Graduate level (1st Semester 1986)	23 20 Total 43
2. UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL MAJORS Professional Technical	63 7 Total 70
3. STUDENT ENROLLMENT (Academic Year 1985-1986) Senior High School <sup>1</sup> Technical <sup>2</sup> Undergraduate Graduate (1st Semester 1986)	120,243 4,469 136,870 11,655 Total 273,237
4. PROFESSORS AND RESEARCHERS Professors and Assistant Professors Researchers and Assistant Researchers Academic Technicians Others <sup>3</sup>	31,111 1,527 2,436 581 Total 35,655
5. RESEARCH CENTERS AND INSTITUTES Humanities Sciences	17 14 Total 31

<sup>1</sup> Including freshman enrollment.

<sup>2</sup> Includes high school and undergraduate level technical students.

<sup>3</sup> Includes, among others, untenured and part-time teachers and researchers, and visiting professors. (Information from the *Agenda Estadística 1986*, National Autonomous University of Mexico UNAM), Department of Planning, Mexico City, 1986.

The UNAM's governing structure is made up of the Board of Governors, the University Council, the Technical Councils, the Internal Councils and the University Finance Board. Ultimate decision-making is in the hands of the University Council, composed of University authorities and faculty, worker and student representatives.

The UNAM has a four-level education system, incorporating high school, technical education, undergraduate and graduate levels.

At the high school level, students may choose between the Prepas and the Sciences and Humanities High Schools (CCHs). There are, at present, 120,243 students enrolled in the 14 Prepas and CCHs located around Mexico City (UNAM Statistics Assistance, 1986).

There are 136,870 students enrolled in the UNAM at the undergraduate level. In addition to the 17 undergraduate schools located on the UNAM's main campus at University City, there are five Schools of Professional Studies (ENEPS) situated in different parts of the metropolitan area, offering a variety of different majors. The ENEPS were established to decentralize the UNAM.

In graduate studies, the UNAM offers 109 postgraduate diplomas, 129 master's programs and 57 doctoral programs. Currently, the UNAM accounts for 31% of Mexico's graduate students.

The UNAM has several research centers

and institutes attached to either the Humanities Coordination or the Scientific Research Coordination. Research is also carried out in its different schools. The UNAM leads the Mexican research field in terms of financial resources, equipment, personnel, variety of fields of study and training. Hence it plays a vital role in Mexico's scientific, technological and cultural development. In some fields, the UNAM accounts for some 60 to 90% of the research being carried out nation-wide.

The UNAM's third basic function is university extension services. University extension takes the form of academic and cultural activities both on and off campus. On-campus activities provide students, professors and researchers with the opportunity to gain practical training and broaden their professional specializations. Off-campus extension activities enable the University to keep in touch with the world outside, and to publicize and share advances in scientific knowledge and the humanities. The University also promotes the arts, sponsoring theatrical productions, dance, musical performances, painting, sculpture and film.★

Lorea San Martín

Editorial Programming Secretary, UNAM Humanities Coordination

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**The UNAM plays a vital role in Mexico's scientific, technological and cultural development**

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**1972:** Open University System created.

**1974:** First step taken in the decentralization of undergraduate level teaching with the establishment of the Cuautitlán National School of Professional Studies, (ENEP), first of nine ENEPS now operating in the metropolitan area.

**1975:** Establishment of the Scientific Research Center on University City campus.

**1976:** Inauguration of the University Cultural Center with the opening of the Nezahualcóyotl Concert Hall.

**1979:** 50th anniversary of university autonomy.

**1985:** 75th anniversary of the university's national character.

**1985 August:** Inauguration of the UNAM Research Center in Cuernavaca, State of Morelos.

<sup>1</sup> A highschool system designed along the lines of so-called "active learning" to allow students to combine work and study.

(Information from the *Agenda Estadística 1986*, National Autonomous University of Mexico UNAM), Department of Planning, Mexico City, 1986



# Five Months of Change

Jorge Carpizo began his rectorship with a declaration of his commitment to university reform. At his inauguration, he stated that problems left unsolved for years were causing the University to slide from excellence to mediocrity and from mediocrity towards academic disaster. Thus he took up the concern already existing in university circles over the institution's low academic standards, and expressed his determination to tackle these problems and solve them. The new rector emphasized that this task should involve the university community as a whole and he invited everyone to participate.

Accordingly, Dr. Carpizo included in his 1986 work program the performance of a truthful diagnostic study of the state of the university. This study was submitted to the University Council on April 16 last year, in a document entitled "UNAM Strengths and Weaknesses". In this unprecedented self-critical exercise, the UNAM recognized shortcomings in many different areas.

Among the problems listed in the Rector's study were the low academic standards of first-year students, both at senior high school and university level; UNAM alumni's poor professional performance; failure of teachers to fulfill obligations; lack of proper assessment of professors, classroom and research performance; irregularities in academic staff hiring practices; backwardness in the application of modern educational techniques; tenured staff's low salaries; separation between teaching and research; and poor organization in University administration.

The presentation of "UNAM Strengths and

Weaknesses" concluded with an invitation to the community to express its points of view and suggest solutions. The result was a process of open consultation throughout the University. Forums and seminars were organized; surveys were made; proposals were put forward by collegiate bodies, other organized groups, and individuals.

Out of this process came 1,760 position papers. At the end of the consultation period, the Rector's Office drew up a first list of university reform measures, largely based on these analyses and proposals. This list of measures was submitted to the Planning Council, and then placed before the full assembly of the University Council at its session celebrated on September 11 and 12, 1986.

At this session, the Council accepted the measures proposed by the Rector's Office. It repealed the Regulation for the election of staff and student representatives to school Technical Councils, and introduced substantial modifications into the General University Statute, the Academic Staff Statute, the University Council's own regulations, the Internal Regulations of the University Finance Board, and the General Regulations governing exams, enrollment, fees, and graduate studies.

Other equally important measures were announced in the same session, however. The Council decided for the preparation of self-teaching and self-assessment materials, study skills courses, and basic reading lists in every subject, to be handed out to students at the beginning of each course. Adequate supplies

## Chronology of the Student Movement 1986-87

*April 16: Rector Jorge Carpizo presents University Council with a document entitled —UNAM Strengths and Weaknesses—, an analysis of the University's academic problems. University reform process begins with a period of open consultation.*  
*April-September: 1760 papers on university issues produced by members of the UNAM community, working*



CEU rally outside Administration Building.

Photo from unomásano archive.



of books were to be guaranteed for University libraries and vocational guidance services bolstered. Intensive updating and educational method courses for University teachers were included in the measures, as was a massive anthology publication program. Course sequence, and where necessary programs and curricula, would be revised and updated.

"Ghost" faculty members, who collect salaries though they do no work, would be struck off the payroll. Professors would be obliged to work their stipulated hours. Technical Councils would assess academics' work reports and programs thoroughly; researchers would take on their corresponding teaching load; UNAM research policies would be defined; broader communication would be sought with society's productive sector.

Some weeks after the approval of these measures, a sector of the University community rose up in protest against the modifications made to the regulations governing enrollment, exams, and fees. Thus the University Student Council (CEU) was formed. The CEU quickly gained strength, and made its presence felt through demonstrations and marches.

Carpizo's commitment to dialog has been consistently present since the beginning of his rectorship. His first response to the student mobilization was to seek conciliation. The Rector's Office opened talks with the CEU, offering to make the regulation measures more flexible. Discussions between CEU and Rector's Office representatives were even broadcast over the University radio station, Radio UNAM.

The CEU, however, maintained its initial demand for annulment of the modifications, and even adopted new demands, such as the annulment of the modifications to the regulation governing graduate studies, and the holding of a University Congress with decision-making

powers. While openminded and flexible, the Rector has always respected and defended the UNAM's legal framework. The Congress demand, as originally proposed, was at odds with the University's established legal order and the authority held by the University Council. Nevertheless, the Rector's Office never wanted the strike, took several steps to avoid it, and deplored the CEU's attitude to it, as an ideal means to achieve its ends.

On February 10 this year, the University Council met in exceptional circumstances and premises different from its usual ones, due to the occupation of the University by the CEU. Rector Carpizo, in his characteristic spirit of conciliation, proposed the holding of a University Congress with the pluralist and democratic participation of all sectors of UNAM community. The University Council would commit itself to adopt the resolutions emanating from this Congress. The Council accepted this proposal, and also passed a motion setting up and Organization Committee for the Congress composed of representatives of the University Council, students, academic staff, the University workers' union STUNAM and the Rector's Office.

As well, the Council suspended the implementation of the controversial September regulation modifications. These measures would now be referred to the University Congress. In suspending these measures, it should be noted, the Council was in no way denying their potential beneficialness. However, it recognized that they had been rendered inviable by the strength of student opposition to them. Their suspension would, moreover, clear the way for a resumption of normal activities in the UNAM.

In a communique published on February 16, the CEU announced its decision to end the strike. As conditions, the CEU demanded several concessions, including the annulment of

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**Carpizo's  
commitment to  
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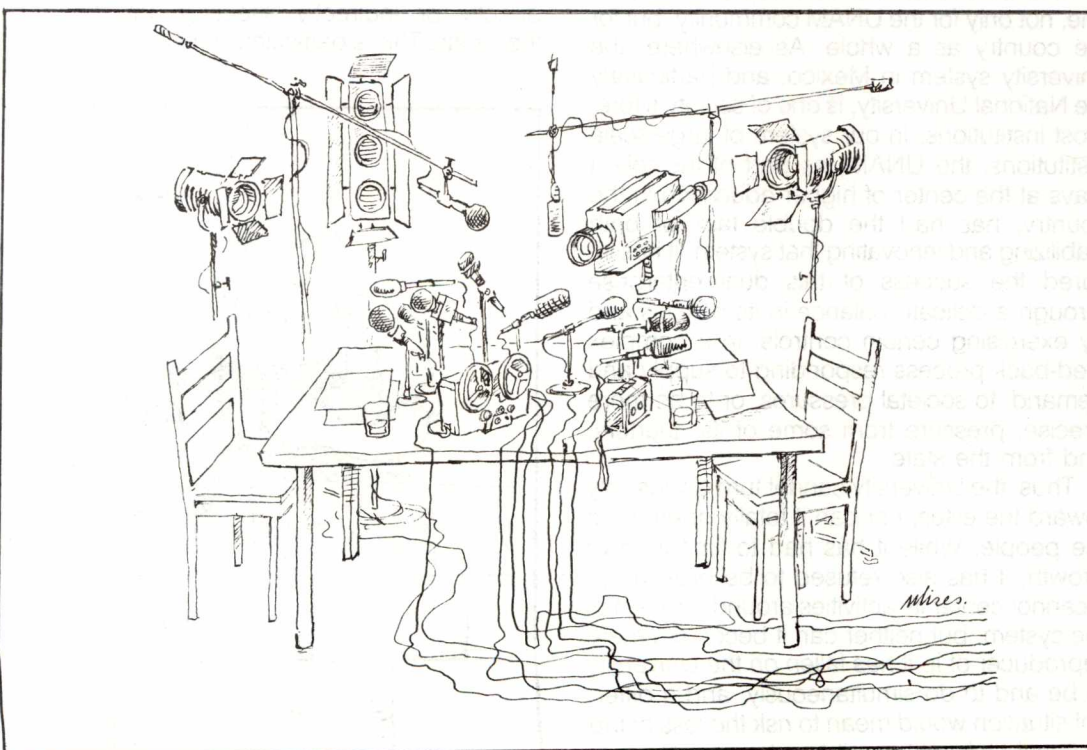
*both individually and collectively, and published in the University Gazette. The papers are of many different kinds: analyses, proposals, arguments, etc.*

**September 2:** End of the consultation period. Start of vacations.

**September 5:** Draft reform proposal, drawn up with results of consultation, is submitted by Rector's Office to the different University Council sub-committees.

**September 9:** Same document is submitted to all Council members.

**September 11 y 12:** University Council session to consider draft. Council adopts Rector's proposed Reform Project, modifying the General University Statute and the General Regulations governing exams, enrollment, fees and graduate studies. Twelve student council members challenge the legality of the session and of





off-campus classes given during the strike; the acceptance by authorities of responsibility for material "removed" from campus on the eve of the strike; and allocation to the CEU of on-campus office space, cafeterias, and infrastructure. The students also demanded the dropping of charges laid against strikers, and no further charges or reprisals.

The Rector's Office counterproposal offered to lengthen the school year, take no reprisals against CEU members or sympathizers, and lay no responsibility on students for materials and utensils removed by Department heads at the strike's start. The CEU accepted the Rector's Office proposal and ended the strike.

Dr. Carpizo's rectorship has thus introduced new practices into University administration. Consistently rejecting authoritarianism, intolerance and arbitrary behavior, he has made dis-

cussion, conciliation and interchange of ideas the University's instruments for solving controversies. He has, moreover, stimulated change and initiated the transformation of the University. In short, Carpizo has proved an exception among UNAM rectors for democratic attitudes and practices. With him at the helm, and with the dynamism demonstrated by the University community as a whole, the UNAM offers a promising prospect for the future. The intelligence, maturity, and will to change shown by the University allow us to entertain high hopes of it.★

Mario Ruiz Massieu  
UNAM Assistant General Secretary

(The Spanish original of this article was published in the magazine **Universidad de México**)

## Towards a University of the Future

Visualizing the University's future is difficult, when for decades the institution has neither been analyzed or discussed, and its development has been strongly shaped by improvisation, leading to its current, problem-laden situation. Outlining a project for the University is further complicated by the times, when our project as a nation, beyond the ups and downs of electoral politics, is threatened and daily suffers disfiguring setbacks.

It's a difficult task, for sure, but an important one, not only for the UNAM community, but for the country as a whole. As elsewhere, the university system in Mexico, and particularly the National University, is one of society's foremost institutions, the UNAM, as part of the role it plays at the center of higher education in the country, has had the double task of both stabilizing and innovating that system. It has insured the success of this dual enterprise through a delicate balance in its policies and by exercising certain controls, in a complex feed-back process responding to supply and demand, to societal pressures, or to be more precise, pressure from some of its quarters, and from the state.

Thus, the University cannot turn exclusively toward the elites, nor can it totally open up to the people. While it has had to limit its own growth, it has also refused to be broken up; it cannot center its activities around criticism of the system, but neither can it become a mere reproducer of it. It has fallen on the University to be and to do simultaneously, and a different situation would mean to risk the loss of the National University as it has been until now.

We should say that for the time being, and

dictionaries aside since they don't register this curious habit of ours, we will continue to speak of "University" when we really mean the UNAM. We know it's not the only university, but nonetheless the destiny of our whole system of higher learning is inter-twined with the UNAM, if only because of its gargantuan size.

It's only natural that this multiplicity of facets and functions should cause tension and upsets within the University, tension that explodes at the first attempt to implement any kind of change directly or indirectly affecting any one of the facets. This is particularly so if the proposed



the draft reform proposal.  
**September 24:** Student council members hold a meeting in the School of Philosophy and Letters. Some 500 students come out against the amendments.  
**October 20-25:** Classes resume. Student meetings held on different UNAM campuses to analyze the amendments.  
**October 25-30:** In Prepas and Sciences and Humanities High Schools (CCHs), students organize for a General Student Assembly called for Oct. 31. On October 27, a mass rally is held on esplanade outside Administration Building. Students demand repeal of amendments to the regulations governing enrollment, exams, and fees. No objection is raised to the other resolutions taken by the University Council.  
**October 31:** Formation of the University Student Council



change is aimed precisely at the least favored sectors of our complicated and heterogeneous community. Events in the University over these last months clearly show that we have different conceptions and visions, sometimes at odds with one another, concerning the University, what it is and what it should be. The urgency of debating, confronting, defending, correcting and enriching these different visions has also become obvious. And it is also clear that the University must pause to review its prospects and its tasks.

But there is another, equally important lesson we have learned throughout this process:

University capable of meeting the demands of the future, teachers, on the other hand, wish to introduce changes, but only in moderation so that the institution doesn't become totally foreign to them.

Thus we tend to develop constraints beyond the concrete limitations imposed on us by our surroundings and by external factors. Tradition, inertia, special interests, prejudice, personal experience, among others, seem to force us into this. How easily we forget that we're up against the task of building the University for future generations. To use Ortega y Gasset's words, we forget that education is preparing, in the



Talks between Rector's Office and CEU representatives.

that discussion allows us to identify common goals and reach points of agreement, at least among those of us who want changes in the University. Starting with the protagonists, and later joined by the spectators who have slowly become a part of the process, everyone has shown a common determination to examine the University. This shared platform of purpose was what made it possible to sit down together last January and confront discrepancies; and it will allow us to continue the debate in the University Congress.

It should be clear, nonetheless, that this initial process will only acquire its full meaning if it leads to the development of a solid philosophy for the University, one capable of guiding its activity and its path to the future, of helping us design new and different alternatives. This demands the intelligence and audacity of the whole community and requires a special effort on the part of academics. While on the one hand youth strives to create a new

present, for future lives. It's time to cast off all ties, to discard prejudice and fears, to turn toward the young who are crying out for real change in the University and to join with them in this collective effort.

In order to reach in-depth agreements concerning the type of University we want, we will first have to agree on a diagnosis of today's university and its conditioning factors. We must also discuss how we see our society's future and how we would want it to be, since the University must contribute to shaping that society while at the same time being a part of it.

Inevitably, our diagnosis must consider the country's growing economic and industrial dependency, a process which is also manifest in education, science, technology and general culture. In response to this situation, an attempt has been made to apply a development model which has actually strengthened the ties of dependency while purportedly seeking to "modernize so we are not left behind." Since

**The University must contribute to shaping our society while at the same time being a part of it**



Administration Building Tower

(CEU), representing student bodies on 25 UNAM campuses. CEU resolves to fight for repeal of regulation amendments.

**November 6:** CEU's first off-campus rally. Students march to Administration Building from near-by suburb of San Angel. CEU calls on Rector to engage in a public debate to be held November 11.

**November 10:** Rector Carpizo appoints a first commission to study CEU demands.

**November 12:** Meeting between CEU and Rector's Office representatives. Students of CCH No. 6, acting of their own accord, hold a nine-hour sit-in at Administration Building.

**November 13:** One-day general UNAM shut-down called by CEU. Shut-down complete on 26 campuses, partial on others.

**November 18:** First negotiating offers made by



this "reflex modernization" needs no other science and technology than what it imports from abroad, it constitutes a serious obstacle to generating home-grown scientific knowledge; it makes creativity and innovation superfluous.

In education we find a gradual encroachment of passive, rote-style learning and increased numbers of technical and professional specialists trained to function within the framework of dependency, and basically in the tertiary sector. And incidentally, these tasks demand little in terms of money and academic resources.

masses are further marginalized from access to culture.

The University's troubled situation inevitably generates tension and contradictions that must be overcome sooner or later either through policies that seek to conciliate the differences or by making a well-grounded choice among the contradictory positions at stake. Our tradition would seem clearly to point in a certain direction: when the arena for the debate is called neither Justo Sierra (its official name) nor Che Guevara (its student-given name), but rather is solomonically referred to as the Auditorium of the School of Philosophy and Let-

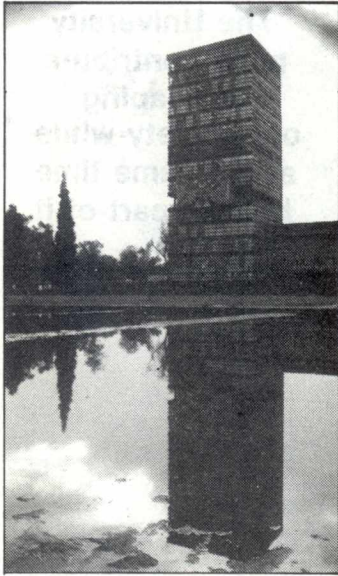
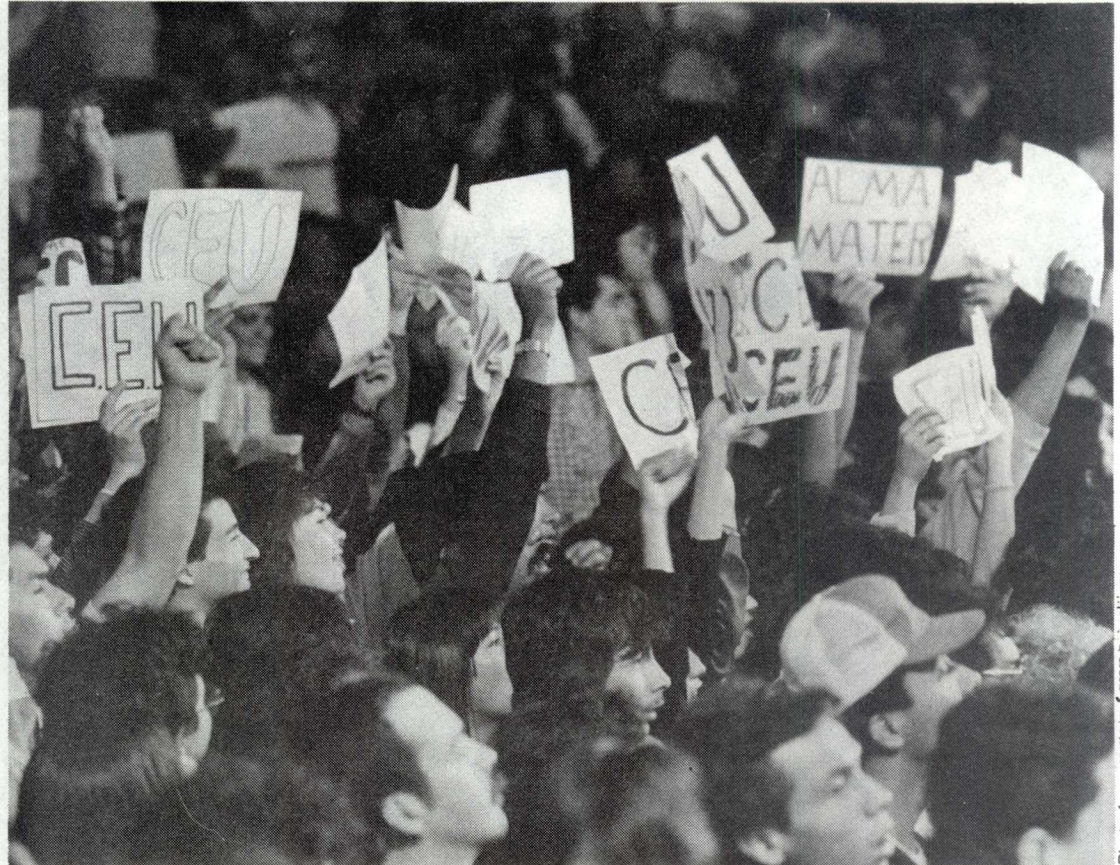


Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

Administration Building Tower.



Public at talks between Rector's Office and CEU reps.

Photo from unomásuno archive.

University authorities to the CEU, especially as regards undergraduate level admission qualifications. CEU rejects the overtures.

**November 24:** Formation of Committee to Promote the Parents' Participation.

**November 25:** March from Hundido Park to Administration Building. Thousands of members of the University community take part.

**November 26-30:** In Science and Economics Schools, forums are held in favor of the democratic transformation of the UNAM. Meetings between CEU and Rector's Office representatives still failing to achieve concrete results.

**December 5:** CEU begins to propose the strike as a pressure tactic to achieve demands. First mention of the proposal which will later become student movement's key demand: the holding of a

To this we must add our country's enormous lag in education and cultural affairs, as well as the clear insufficiency of our system of higher education, even on a Latin American scale. Much has been said, especially in recent times, about the UNAM being a university for the masses. It is no doubt true that the notorious increase in enrollment—which at any rate was slowed a decade ago—led to a certain broadening of the socio-economic and cultural spectrum in the student body. But if the deficiencies inherent in a more heterogeneous student body are not dealt with adequately, then the increase in numbers is neither a sign of greater democracy nor of increased opportunities. Rather, established filters tend to take over and de-massify the university. Even more so than in other Latin American countries, in Mexico the masses are outside the university walls and at present are growing much faster than the institution itself. As the University moves increasingly beyond their reach, the

ters, or with a touch of humor, Che Sierra, we realize that in the best of cases, the effort will be made to conciliate differences. Yet we run the risk of ending up stranded at the half-way mark, forced to sweep our unresolved contradictions under the rug, using the broom of discourse.

At the heart of the debate and in the midst of this sea of contradictions we find the ambivalence that afflicts the University because of its dual nature as an institution at the service of society while at the same time housing critical thought on social issues. Given Mexico's social crisis, this is probably the most serious dilemma facing the University. Because of the very nature of its responsibilities and the way it carries out its assigned role, the University can either work to further dependency or to free the country from it; it can serve certain sectors of society or place itself in the service of society as a whole. The answer to this dilemma will to a great extent determine the Univer-



sity's tasks, its future and its influence on the development of new generations and on a new society.

This is the great challenge facing the University community. Leopoldo Zea said that, "A liberating culture begins at the precise moment when we become conscious of the domination and manipulation our peoples are subjected to." This is the chance to begin a collective process of de-alienating the University so that we can all autonomously contribute to the generation of culture and to social liberation. It is the opportunity to imbue our academic activity with a sense of political purpose, chang-

even come to mind— may become feasible through collective effort. And this is precisely what it's all about, since we are clearly not going to sit down and discuss the obvious, such as whether students need to study more, whether researchers should be represented in the University Council, or if the administration should be less bureaucratic or the University should improve its academic standing.

Within the framework of shared goals and the characteristics of our University project, we will have to analyze the type of education students need and the possible methodologies for providing it; the role of research amongst the



At University Council session: UNAM General Secretary José Narro, Rector Jorge Carpizo and ex-Administrative Secretary Manuel Covarrubias presiding.

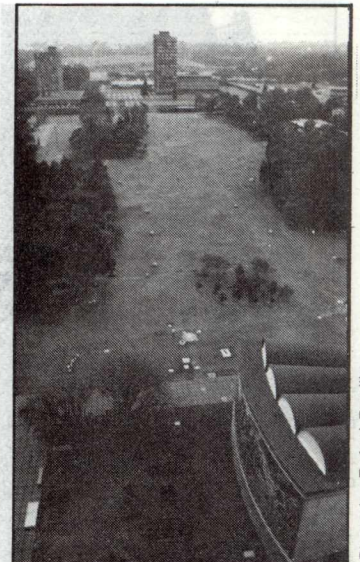


Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

University City campus from the Humanities Tower.

ing it into an activity that struggles against backwardness and dependency.

This is a moment when we must search for our own scientific style, yet without losing touch with science world-wide; a time to chart our own paths in technological research; a time to recover and to build our own culture, within the framework of universal culture; a time to take up the mutual commitment to work toward a nation-project that is just and independent.

This process of building collective awareness and a commitment to directing our efforts in the directions we've been discussing could well be the first step—and probably the most difficult one—in our discussions leading up to the University Congress. At the same time, it could well provide a solid basis for developing specific proposals for change and a frame of reference for our new University project.

The depth and range of the proposed changes are difficult to foresee because solutions that seem impossible today—or that don't

University's tasks and the necessary reorganization this will require; the mechanism for increasing democracy in the institution's daily life and the precise boundaries for the workings of its governing bodies; the specific mechanisms through which the University will be part of society and in touch with the national situation, and so on.

Rigorous and profound analysis will lead to more creative and innovative solutions and, above all, to solutions that better contribute to forging the University the country needs, thus helping to build the nation-project demanded by our youth.★

Ana María Cetto  
Researcher, UNAM Physics Institute

(The Spanish original of this article was published in the magazine **Universidad de México**)

University Congress.  
**December 11:** Student march from Venados Park to Administration Building. CEU gives University Council a January 12 deadline to repeal measures, announces it will call a University-wide strike if deadline not met.  
**December 12:** Rector's Office Commission sends proposal to CEU suggesting a public debate to be held from January 6 to April 15 1987, involving representatives of the CEU, the UNAM Workers' Union (STUNAM), the Autonomous Academic Staff Associations (AAPAUNAM) and University authorities. The CEU gives a January 12 deadline for reaching an agreement.  
**December 15:** CEU and Rector's Office reps reach agreement on a public debate to be broadcast on the UNAM radio station, *Radio Universidad*. The CEU-Rector's Office Special



# Teaching and Research in the Social Sciences

University teaching and research structures suffer universal problems, affecting both humanities and sciences. Here we will deal with some of those related to the social sciences in Latin America. While our observations may be applicable to other parts of the world, this region is the starting point of our discussion.

There is much empirical data to support the argument that current university teaching and research structures unnecessarily slow down the process of learning research skills. In Latin America and many other parts of the world, there is a certain prejudice against teaching research skills before students reach the graduate level. This prejudice is firmly entrenched even in the very field of research teaching. When research skills are taught, the amount of non-professional work assigned to students is much greater than what is strictly necessary. A student's capacity for professional production is underutilized. Preparatory exercises are not kept to an indispensable minimum. The performance of professional standard work is artificially postponed. Learning objectives are set and practised at a sub-professional level. Research seminars, to take one example, do not attempt to assign, in an ascending order of difficulties, professional tasks such as the composition of professional standard book reviews; reports on research trends; reports on field work or exercises; articles for specialized journals; analytical bibliog-

raphies; monographs; or summaries.

University research and teaching structures suffer other problems which should also be pointed out. They hinder the combination of different fields of knowledge which have been separated through division of intellectual labor; and they artificially curtail any possible contact between university students and productive and service industry centers. In other words: university research and teaching structures have no explicit commitment either to relating different fields of knowledge, or to linking study with work. Thus, in the real world to be confronted later, students' possibilities of work and struggle are lessened. Between the two extremes of country converted into university and university isolated from the country, there exists an enormous range of combinations which have not been sufficiently imagined, studied, or put into practice.

There are also problems to do with the theoretical models prevailing in the university. These problems also have to do with the contemporary crisis. The problem of the theoretical models is related to the problem of power. The crisis of theory is related to the crisis of power and the social sectors supporting it.

Insofar as the university offers the opportunity for ideological struggle, there are academic issues which have not been given their due importance. These have to do not only with the crisis of capitalism, with the threat of war, with

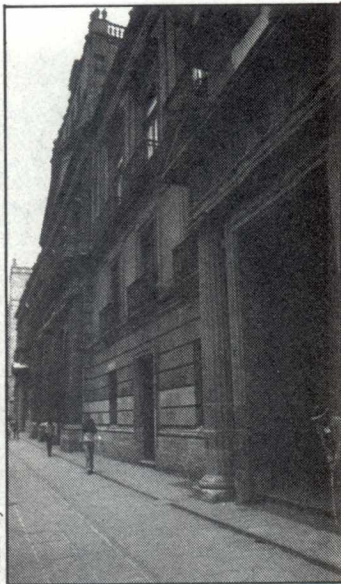


Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

Palacio de Minería (formerly Engineering College), downtown Mexico.

Commission to deal with issues January 6-12, with decisions to be ratified by the University Council on January 28. From January 12 to 28, the commission is to deal with "material conditions for study". After the 28th, the commission is to establish procedures for accomplishing thoroughgoing university reform.  
**December 18:** End of year vacations start.

1987

**January 5:** Classes resume.  
**January 6:** Negotiations between CEU and Rector's Office reps resume.  
**January 7-9:** Public debate continues.  
**January 10:** Rector's commission presents a ten-point proposal, offering to repeal amendments regarding fees: extend to four years the period for completing high school:



Law School: classes resume after the strike.

Photo from [www.igmp.com](http://www.igmp.com) archive.



"internal wars" and class struggle, with the processes of evolution and revolution, with the processes of liberation and of transition to democracy and socialism. They also have to do with what Anouar Abdel Malek has called the "project of civilization". These issues, vital to both scientific and humanistic culture, are classed as taboo in the theoretical models prevailing in university teaching and research. Some cause immediate mistrust or outbursts of passion, others a kind of academic scepticism towards what is regarded as grandiose. The codified structures of academia are constructed to make one think that serious problems are not serious. And at times this phenomenon occurs even in universities where objective conditions do exist for tackling these kinds of issues. From a lack of consciousness that criticism of the system is seriousness, prejudices are never confronted about what is not really serious, but is believed to be; about what is "non-demagogical" or "non-rhetorical". That is, prejudices about what is in the final analysis apology for the empire and for capitalism.

Among the theoretical models which have also become a kind of administrative and academic structure replete with prohibitions and taboos are those having to do with the history of classes and dominant power blocks in regions with a history of colonialism. Our universities still retain many aspects of what may be described as the University of the "Spiritual Conquest", of the theologian, of the professional guilds, of the monetarist technocrats; the Third World "Dependent University", the exclusive one of its oligarchies. In universities of this kind, real issues are rarely brought up in ideological debate. Concrete and current "colonial" problems do not appear in their curricula, nor in the organization of their work programs. The teaching and research structure in the social sciences does not give due importance to the problem of the culture of conquest within the University, that culture

which has lasted from the days of royal tribute till now, when 50% of the Gross National Product is earmarked for the International Monetary Fund. Nor does it deal sufficiently with the problem of colonial man's "syncretism", or his successor aspiring to be a carbon copy of the Harvard or MIT scholar. Nor with the serious problem of the relationship colonialism-class, people-workers: the ABC of the social sciences in Latin America.

As part of the heritage from the theologian's University, our curricula and programs still emphasize problems of "interpretation", of text "exegesis", of "citing of authorities". From the professional guild University, we have inherited a conception of academic excellence as something corporative, exclusive; we have also inherited problems of relating to the analysis of the historical process as a judicial process. From the technocratic university comes the arrogant current fad of using the "technical" and "scientific" to legitimize policies imposed by multinational capital. The technocrat rules out all research, analysis, or interpretation undertaken from a democratic, popular, and national standpoint.

This legacy and the current fads have not been sufficiently taken into account in analyses of teaching and research programs, methods, and techniques. Moreover, many critics do not study contemporary reactionary thought; they neither understand its techniques nor seek to understand them, but are content with criticizing 19th century political economy. They refuse to learn anything of 20th century systems and models; and thus are incapable of criticizing the political economy, society and culture of what will shortly be the 21st century.

In all militarist and neo-fascist states, university teaching and research structures are plunged into crisis and practically destroyed. The social sciences constitute the chief target for attack. In several Latin American countries, social science departments have been closed down, the books burned, the teachers per-

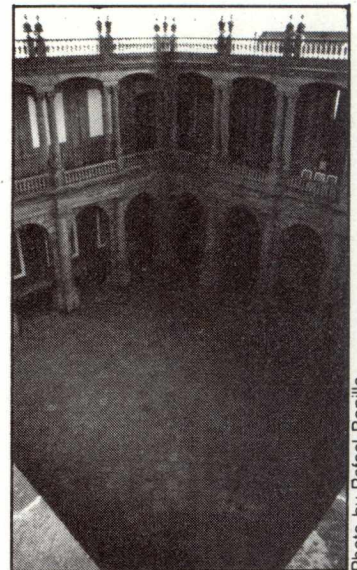


Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

Interior, Palacio de Minería.



Rector's Office commission.

lower high school graduation score to 7 on a ten-point scale; and grant more supplementary exams to pass University courses.  
**January 12:** CEU rally, with significant attendance of STUNAM members, both staff and workers. Strike deadline ratified for January 28.  
**January 12-15:** CEU assemblies to discuss January 10 Rector's Office proposal.  
**January 15:** On the basis of 44 assemblies held on different UNAM campuses, CEU rejects Rector's proposal and issues counterproposal. CEU maintains demand for repeal of all September amendments. March on Mexico City Main Plaza called for January 21.  
**January 16:** The Special Commission resumes discussions. CEU reiterates its rejection of Rector's



secuted. This situation has given the universities a dream-like atmosphere, with teachers and subjects disappeared. Real issues are no longer raised there. But where universities still survive and where it is possible to raise issues, considerations such as those put forward in this article have not been dealt with consistently or clearly. Moreover, considerations along these lines have not been accompanied by another component of vital importance: the development of a culture based on dialog, ideological pluralism, a new distancing and objectivity achieved through committed intellectual activity which is not locked into one doctrine, school

or party to the exclusion of all others, but which is open to all humanist currents of thought, aspiring to make connections between the formal and the informal, between politics, ethics, and power, to achieve a new democratic hegemony of working people and the vast majority of the population.★

**Pablo González Casanova**

Director of the Center for Humanities Interdisciplinary Research, ex-Rector of the UNAM

(The Spanish original of this article was published in the magazine **Universidad de México**)

## The 1986 Budget

	AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
1. Teaching	\$88,906,474,471 pesos \$U.S. 238,355,159	63.97%
2. Research	\$24,523,087,174 pesos \$U.S. 65,745,542	17.64%
3. University Extension Services	\$8,206,545,295 pesos \$U.S. 22,001,461	5.90%
4. Administration	\$17,351,959,519 pesos \$U.S. 46,519,998	12.49%
TOTAL	\$138,988,066,459 pesos \$U.S. 372,622,162	100%

<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of 1986, the peso's rate of exchange was 373.00 per U.S. dollar; during the year, it underwent a devaluation of approximately 127.3%

(Information from the *Agenda Estadística 1986*, National Autonomous University of Mexico UNAM), Department of Planning, Mexico City, 1986.

# The Challenge: To Renovate University Education

The university's hopes and aspirations must be analyzed in the context of autonomy which, according to Ezequiel A. Chávez, "...results from the university's very nature, from the role the institution is expected to play in society, by the nature of its work... (which is) the fruit... of historic forces that cannot be disdained,... (but that) does not and cannot mean an absurd rending of the University from the society it forms part of, a ridiculous pretension of sovereignty, a monstrous estrangement from the very society in which it finds its own worth."<sup>1</sup>

The problems framing the debate around higher education also set the limits for analyses on the subject. In the first place, planning in higher education must take into account the

University's specific conditions, since any attempt to confront current university problems, stripping them of their historic and even political origins, implies danger, foreshadowed in our institution's recent experience with leaving aside either the search for academic excellence or its social commitment. However contradictory they may seem, these factors are not mutually exclusive. To the contrary, our strong democratic roots should always be present in the university classroom, as well as in the rigorous practice of teaching and research. Unless this last idea is taken into account it will be impossible for higher education to go beyond the endless monolog of cloistered ideologies.

This idea is clearly present in the training of

proposal. Rector's reps, on their part, reject CEU counterproposal. Discussions are broken off.  
**January 20:** Rector Carpizo addresses University community in televised broadcast. Rector's Commission refers to University Council the two proposals on which Rector's Office and CEU had been unable to reach agreement.  
**January 21:** Thousands-strong CEU march to Mexico City Main Plaza. That morning, a smaller rally is held in support of Rector's Office position.  
**January 22:** CEU and STUNAM sign solidarity pact.  
**January 23:** Resumption of public discussion between reps of CEU and Rector's Office.  
**January 24-27:** Rector's Office commission agrees to holding of a University Congress, but refuses to accept that such a Congress



professionals, and it is also tremendously important in the case of scientific and technological research which should be geared toward clearly defined social goals and adapted to the country's problems. It must also contribute to the development of a national consciousness of how scientific practice generates new options and of how their application implies changing productive and social practices. Yet at the same time we must understand that science and technology cannot take the place of historical change in the society as a whole.<sup>2</sup> It would seem equally wrong to assume that the way to improve higher education is through even greater emphasis on technical or administrative measures, over political conditions and academic projects. On the other hand, it is incorrect to believe that these kinds of more technical measures can be ignored and that in itself the demand for democratic and mass-oriented higher education, lacking in serious academic projects, can achieve changes that guarantee a commitment to the poor.

Keeping history in mind, the great challenge is to find the ways to sculpt a vision of the university we will need tomorrow. In the process, we should recognize that the search for truth and knowledge must move forward freely, hand in hand with the criticism of prejudices, delusions and ideologies. Criticism must be part of the unobjectionable core of university activity, which should in turn transcend its own conditioning factors to guarantee responsibility in relation to its own values and the social commitment essential to the Mexican university.<sup>3</sup>

The reform-minded renovation of higher education is increasingly necessary, and it must answer both to current conditions and to the future. This slow and difficult process of change cannot emerge from the narrow point of view that regards training professionals as the university's essential, substantive function, thus limiting research, the generation of new knowledge and cultural expressions and their extension to benefit the population. To proceed without recognizing that all of this requires the

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**Science and technology cannot take the place of historical change in the society as a whole**

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Science School assembly discussing end to strike.

should have decision-making powers, as demanded by the CEU. The two parties to the negotiation fail to reach agreement. On the 26th, the CEU declares a pre-strike alert.

**January 29:** Strike begins. Students occupy campuses and close down activities. Law, Dentistry, Medicine, and Engineering Schools call on students to attend classes off-campus. CEU organizes pickets.

**February 5:** CEU calls for day of protest in defense of the UNAM. Three-day National Student Congress starts.

**February 6:** Formation of the University Academic Council, in a meeting of academic staff members. The new body announces its solidarity with CEU.

**February 9:** CEU organizes a second march on Main Plaza. Thousands participate, including academic staff and



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**The challenge is to develop a University in which democracy, the needs of the majority, academic excellence and rigor in every-day tasks are all combined**

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responsibility and efforts of the university community, is to make the same mistake that has been made in other Latin American universities and which can only contribute to their further degradation.

The challenge is to develop a university in which democracy, the needs of the majority, academic excellence and rigor in every-day tasks are all combined. The best legacy the Mexican university received from 1968 (the year of large-scale student protests) was the practice of criticism and of questioning a social process which was actually ushering in today's crisis. This was done not only on the basis of a youthful passion for freedom, but also through the imaginative and creative use of intelligence and the search for knowledge useful to society as a whole.

In order for the university to contribute to the nation's scientific and technological capacity (as part of a richer national culture and to further Mexico's possibilities to determine the path of its own development), these principles must be transmitted as part of a scientific practice aimed at improving people's welfare. This determines the democratic character of such a process. The great challenge of transforming the university must be linked to a scientific and cultural practice that permits us to develop our own capacity for generating knowledge and making it available to the population as a whole, both as a means for producing and appropriating wealth, as well as for assuring the constant critique of the use of science and culture.

As an additional factor in this challenge, I'd like to recall the words of Alfonso Reyes, relevant to the University's situation today: "I want leftists to take Latin because I see no sense in loosing previous conquests."... "Refrain from entering if you don't know geometry: Plato used to say of the Academy."<sup>4</sup>

Geometry and Latin are but two examples. Mathematics and the roots of our language, basic science and the humanities, transforming nature and philosophical speculation —along with our ties to the nation's problems— will all continue to be the tasks that nobody studying in our classrooms, involved in the University's daily life, should ever forget.

**Arturo Azuela**

Director of the School of Philosophy and Letters

<sup>1</sup> Ezequiel A. Chávez, *Obras IV*, UNAM, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Enrique Leff. "Dependencia científico-tecnológica y desarrollo económico". En González Casanova, P., y Florescano, E. *México hoy*. México, Siglo XXI, 1979, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Ricoeur. "Perspectivas de la Universidad contemporánea para 1980". *Deslinde, cuadernos de cultura universitaria*. México, UNAM, Núm. 7, 1972, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Alfonso Reyes. *Universidad, política y pueblo*. México, UNAM/IPN, Textos de Humanidades, Colección Educadores Mexicanos, 1985, p. 43.

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## University Research To Serve Society

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For many years, I have been following closely the development of scientific research in the UNAM. Since the end of the fifties, when the first computer was installed at the University, till now, when any researcher who so desires has his or her own personal computer, I have been observing the vicissitudes of University science. During the sixties, there were only a few dozen scientists at the UNAM interested in doing serious work. Their discussions, carried on with praiseworthy conviction, took place in the context of an uncomprehending society, and even of an uncomprehending University. Then came the years of abundance, of suitable salaries, of major equipment purchases, floods of scientific visitors. Institutes and schools sprang up, the number of researchers increased; and by 1980 the UNAM had become, together with the Sao Paulo University in Brazil, the chief scientific center in Latin America.

During this quarter century, and in spite of the obvious progress made in university

research, there is one question that has never ceased to trouble me: Whom does my scientific work serve? And if I obtain results from it, whom do they serve? I believe that this terrible question affects all who are doing, or trying to do, scientific work in the Third World. It is a problem that has nothing to do with the lack of funds or financial support, or with economic or technical problems. It is, rather, a deeply-felt emotion affecting all scientists working anywhere outside the great centers which dictate scientific fashions. It is, to a certain extent, a sense of guilt stimulated by government and academic authorities, by some of our students, by colleagues who lay claim to a social conscience, and even by our own family and friends: Who are you working for? Our researchers cannot produce a pat answer to this question, and end up becoming inefficient, losing interest in their work; in many cases, this feeling forces them to shift to other activities, and even to other countries.

In what follows, I would like to propose a

students' parents.  
**February 10:** University Council meets off-campus. Rector Carpizo proposes holding forums in all UNAM schools: holding a University Congress whose resolutions would be adopted by the University Council; and forming an organizing committee for said Congress, to be composed of staff, student, worker, University Council, and Rector's Office representatives. Council members propose suspension of Sept. 11-12 amendments. Both motions are passed.  
**February 12:** In CEU campus-by-campus votes, 29 are against ending the strike, and 11 in favor.  
**February 15:** CEU Plenary session decides to end strike. The CEU invites Rector's Office representatives to meet February 16 to discuss conditions for handing back campuses to University



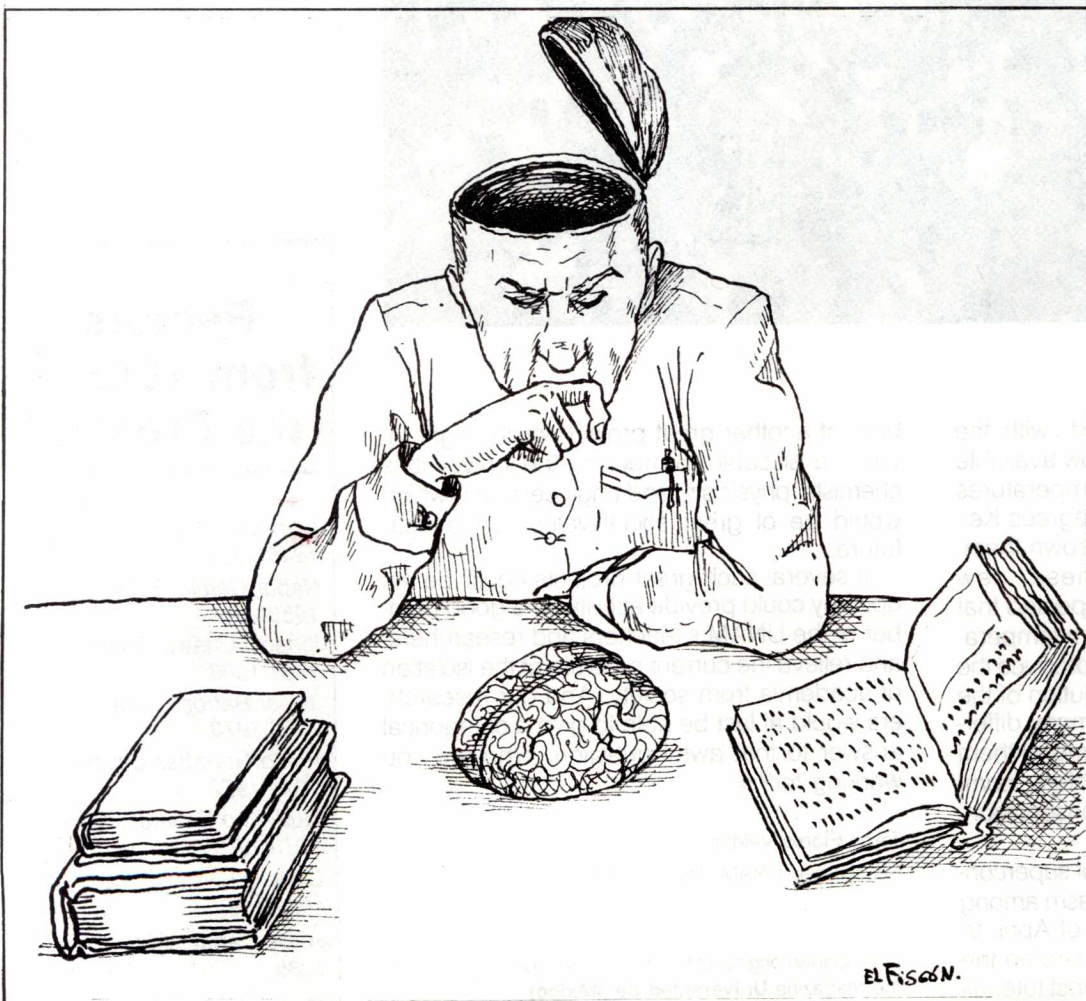
possible line of action which could, perhaps, offer an answer to these problems. My proposal is based on my own observations of how a good deal of scientific work is carried out in the industrialized countries. There, researchers are aware of the importance of their work and do not underestimate it. Nor, by the same token, do they make too much of it. They know themselves to be a part, a cog — usually a small one — in a big machine operating with more or less clearly defined objectives. They know of the existence of industry, eager for new technology, always willing to stimulate scientific research, even research in the most basic fields, apparently the farthest removed from applications which might yield prompt economic benefits. Therefore, even if only intuitively, scientists in the industrialized countries know who they work for.

How might UNAM researchers achieve a similar consciousness? What's needed is to define a complete research project, with clearly stated ends and means, and an evident potential beneficiary. Thus, a first step in the project would be to define and analyze a problem of particular — or perhaps unique — importance to Mexico, Mexico City, or Mexican society. The problem, of course, would have to be expressed in scientific terms, covering the whole research range from basic to applied, involving the development of new technologies, and the training of new researchers and professional people. As a spin-off, the project would serve to bring research and teaching closer together.

Given this precondition, the project referred to could not be a small one. It would have to be a GREAT PROJECT, requiring the participation of specialists from many different disciplines, the involvement of a large number of students, and, naturally, generous economic and administrative backing. Nevertheless, if the great project could be defined, none of this would prove a hindrance. If the project were to take on a problem concerning the whole of society, then it would have no trouble in attracting researchers, the best and most ambitious students, or public and private funding agencies to back it.

Examples of great projects abound. Mexico City, home to the UNAM, is located in a lake basin prone to earthquakes. A great university project on earthquake effects in the Valley of Mexico would involve engineers, physicists, mathematicians, geologists, sociologists and economists. The investigation could include a diversity of aspects: wave transmission in Mexico City's complicated subsoil; most suitable architectural designs; economic and social consequences of earthquakes; a historical study of effects of earthquakes in previous centuries. It would also be necessary to design new experimental equipment and formulate new mathematical models for the Valley of Mexico. Several different kinds of field work, especially in geology, would have to be carried out. The results and possible applications of the study would be of enormous interest to federal and local government, construction and

**The new discoveries in the field of superconductivity have caused great enthusiasm among UNAM scientists**



authorities.  
**February 16:** The Rector's Office agrees to four of the guarantees demanded by the CEU: no reprisals, extension of the academic year, formal handing-over of the campuses, and the assumption of responsibility by University authorities for material removed from campuses on the eve of the strike. Rector's Office rejects two other demands, refusing to accept permanent CEU occupation of premises taken over during the strike, or to declare null and void the off-campus classes given. A CEU Assembly votes, by 200 to 16, to accept the Rector's Office proposal.  
**February 17:** At 12:30, the CEU returns campuses to University authorities. The ball is set in motion for holding the University Congress.



## point of view

insurance companies, as well as to Mexico City dwellers in general.

Great projects in research and teaching might also be undertaken, when a favorable breakthrough in scientific or technological research occurs. One such current breakthrough is the discovery of high-temperature superconductors. Superconductors are materials which carry electrical current without resistance and can be used to generate intense magnetic fields. Until a few months ago, the transition to the superconductor phase had only been observed at very low temperatures. But just a few weeks ago, a marked rise in this

packed with a highly attentive public. And at present there are five or six teams working on superconductors, not only at the UNAM but also at the Autonomous University of Puebla and at the Advanced Research and Studies Center. The UNAM Materials Research Institute has already succeeded in producing superconductor ceramics. The reason for such intense activity here in Mexico is that there has never before been a scientific and technological development of such importance that could be taken advantage of by a country with an intermediate standard scientific infrastructure, such as Mexico's. Here we have, then, the em-

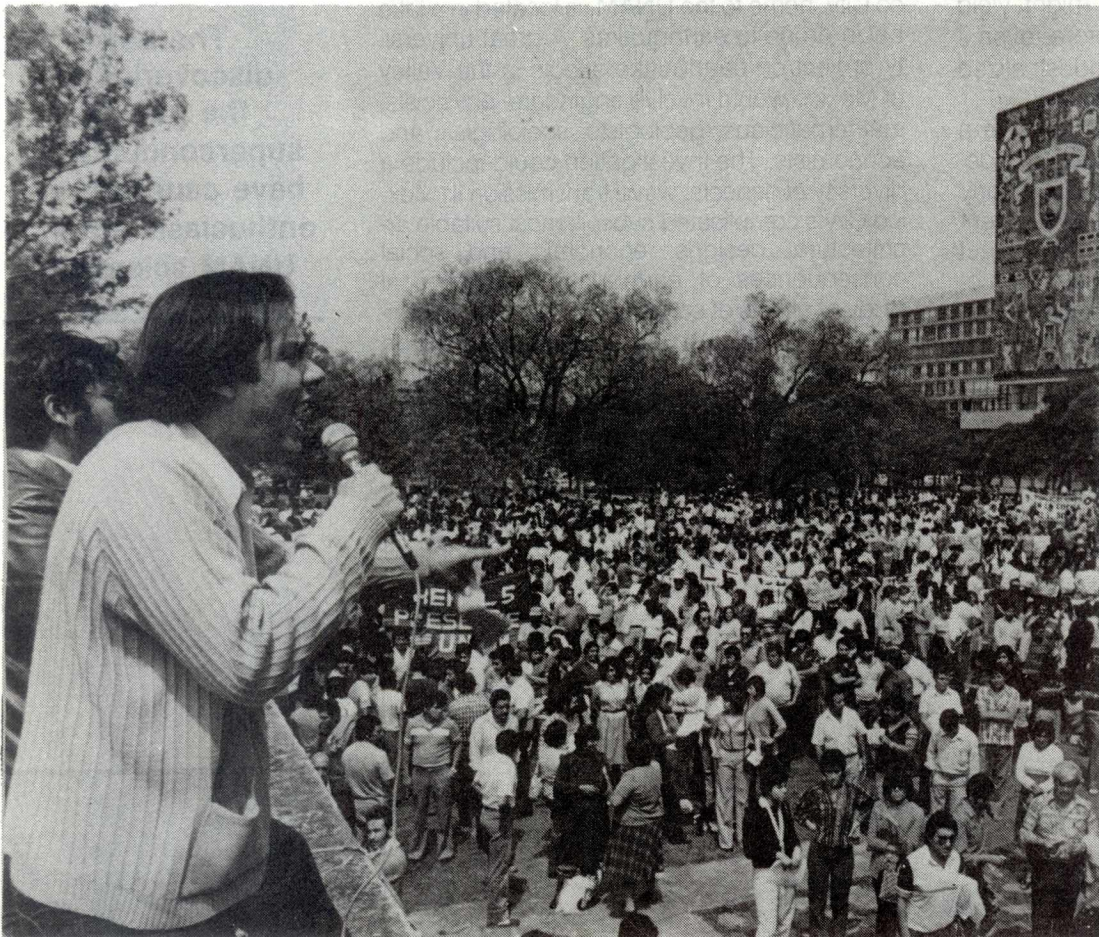


Photo from unomásuno archive.

STUNAM rally, University City.

critical temperature was achieved, with the result that ceramic materials are now available which are superconductors at temperatures above that of liquid nitrogen, 77 degrees Kelvin. Many research teams have thrown themselves into the study of these new superconductors, and it is to be expected that before too long we might have room temperature ones. This would undoubtedly produce the most important technological revolution of the end of the 20th century, affecting many different aspects of our everyday life, among them telecommunications, transport, motors, computers, energy transmission and conservation, and the petroleum industry.

The new discoveries in the field of superconductivity have caused great enthusiasm among UNAM scientists. In the first week of April, to give just one indication, four seminars on the subject were given at the Physics Institute, all

bryo of another great project which might involve a sizeable number of the university's chemists, physicists, and engineers, and which would be of great social value in the near future.

If several such great projects could be set up, they could provide activity for a good number of the UNAM's teachers and researchers, and relieve the current problem of the isolation of academia from society. And our researchers would at last be able to give a categorical answer to that awful question: Who are you working for?★

**Jorge Flores Valdés**

Researcher, UNAM Physics Institute

(The Spanish original of this article was published in the magazine **Universidad de México**)

## Rectors from 1948 to the Present

*Luis Garrido Díaz*  
1948-1953

*Nabor Carrillo Flores*  
1953-1961

*Ignacio Chávez Sánchez*  
1961-1966

*Javier Barros Sierra*  
1966-1970

*Pablo González Casanova*  
1970-1972

*Guillermo Soberón Acevedo*  
1973-1981

*Octavio Rivero Serrano*  
1981-1985

*Jorge Carpizo Mac Gregor*  
1985



# The Pope Tours Uruguay, Chile and Argentina

He addresses crowds of more than half a million people

In his 33rd trip abroad since he became Pope nine years ago, Karol Wojtyla visited Uruguay, Chile and Argentina for two weeks early in April.

In his pastoral addresses to mass gatherings, Pope John Paul II called upon trade unionists to defend their legitimate rights, while he asked businessmen to see themselves as brothers, not enemies, of the working class. He asked women in Chile to dedicate their tenderness to rebuilding community spirit among all Chileans, and told the indigenous Mapuches to fight against injustice, without allowing themselves to be trapped either by passive conformism or by violence.

The Pope called upon Argentinians to receive migrants

in their country (thousands of Chileans, Bolivians and Paraguayans who have fled political repression or economic duress in their countries) with an open heart, and he stated that migratory currents are "intimately a part of the plans of God."

Pope John Paul II visited Montevideo, capital of Uruguay; Santiago, Concepción, Temuco, La Serena, Punta Arenas, Puerto Montt and Antofagasta in Chile; and Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Mendoza, Paraná, Córdoba, Tucumán, Salta and Viedma in Argentina.

## "Torture Dishonors Its Perpetrators"

Of all his activities in the southern cone of America, the

most noteworthy was John Paul II's meeting with General Augusto Pinochet, dictator responsible for nearly 14 years of brutal repression in Chile, who personally met the Pope in Santiago's airport when he arrived, and personally saw him off when he left. Pinochet obviously saw fit to justify his regime, for he received the Pope with the words: "You know well, and can appreciate as few can in all its dimension, the very serious aggression and seige that Chile has suffered and is still suffering, due to the foreign expansionist actions of the most extreme materialistic ideology that humanity has ever known."

## Human rights groups condemned the blessing the Pope gave dictator Pinochet

The Pope's visit to Chile, his public handshakes with dictator Pinochet, his 40-minute long, private audience with the General in the National Palace (known as La Moneda, where President Salvador Allende died in September 1973 defending his socialist government against Pinochet's coup d'etat), were acts repudiated and condemned by human rights groups and left political parties. On the grounds that the

General is responsible for the deaths and suffering of many thousands of Chileans, these groups condemned the blessing the Pope gave the dictator.

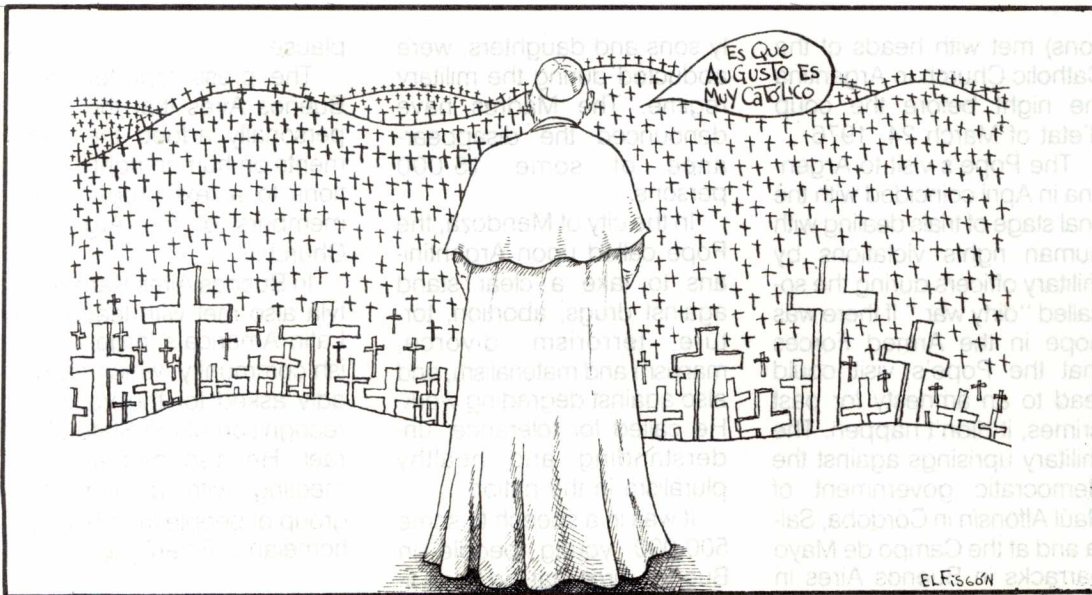
As befits a well behaved guest, Karol Wojtyla did not publicly condemn human rights violations in Chile. He witnessed a scene of violent repression during a mass he officiated in Santiago's O'Higgins Park on April 3rd, where one person died, 600 were wounded and 42 arrested; the Pope himself felt the effects of the tear gas used by security forces against part of the crowd.

The pontiff met briefly with Carmen Quintana, a young

student who was doused in gasoline and set on fire by police in Santiago last year, during anti-government demonstrations and whose companion died in the same incident. He also listened to descriptions of poverty and repression among the working class and the unemployed in the shanty towns around Santiago, and saw huge banners denouncing "Pinochet murderer" raised by the crowd during rallies. Members of the Chilean Church announced late in April that Luisa Riveros, the woman who dared relate her life conditions to the Pope, has since received anonymous death threats.

During his visit to Chile, Pope John Paul II also met with opposition political leaders and with members of the Vicaría de la Solidaridad (the Solidarity Vicariate), a Church-related human rights organization. However, he later denounced the so-called Popular Church, which he said is "not of Christ."

The Pope visited cities in the north and south of Chile, travelling as far as Punta Arenas, the world's southernmost city, and it was here that he



A Country Full of Crosses: "Pinochet's a very devout Catholic."



## latin american issues

denounced torture, moral or physical, as degrading for civilization. He declared that torture dishonors its perpetrators more than it does its victims.

denounced that the principal conspirators in the 1976 coup, General Videla and Admiral Massera (both now in prison for human rights violations during their administra-

Papal visit, could indeed indicate that such a hope had existed; the rebellious soldiers' main demand was amnesty for Armed Forces members of all ranks for crimes committed during the dictatorship.

As Pérez Esquivel pointed out, Karol Wojtyla did not meet with any human rights group in Argentina, not even with the famous *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*, a group of women whose relatives, most-

rights violations: "that there be no more kidnappings nor disappearances, that there be no more place for hate and violence, and that human dignity be respected always." In an oblique reference to Argentina's recent past, the Pope asked the youths "to overcome the painful experiences of your country." The Papal recognition of past violence was greeted by the crowd with thunderous ap-

### The Pope came out against human rights violations in Argentina

This is not a very radical statement in a country where human rights groups have denounced the disappearance of some 2,500 persons, the torture and death of some 30,000 for political reasons and the existence of concentration camps, clandestine prisons and detention centers where more than a million people have been imprisoned during Pinochet's regime.

#### No More Disappearances

While Chile has progressive Catholic Church officials, sympathetic to the dictatorship's victims, this is not the case in Argentina. While in Chile there are Bishops who are outspoken opponents of the military regime, the Church hierarchy in Argentina is accused of complicity with the past military dictatorship. 1980 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, told the press that the Church hierarchy in Argentina blocked every possibility of an interview between the Pope and human rights organizations during the Papal visit. Pérez Esquivel said that Church officials in Argentina planned "a beautiful tourist trip, not a pastoral visit."

The Spanish newspaper *El País* was quoted in press reports from Buenos Aires during the Papal visit as saying: "The Argentine Church will tolerate just about anything pertaining to the dealings of men, so as not to compromise its social power...The power of the Argentine Catholic Church is overwhelming, comparable only to that of the Armed Forces." The newspaper also



Protests.

tions) met with heads of the Catholic Church in Argentina the night before the coup d'etat of March 24, 1976.

The Pope's visit to Argentina in April coincided with the final stage of trials dealing with human rights violations by military officers during the so-called "dirty war." If there was hope in the Armed Forces that the Pope's visit could lead to an amnesty for past crimes, it didn't happen. The military uprisings against the democratic government of Raúl Alfonsín in Córdoba, Salta and at the Campo de Mayo barracks in Buenos Aires in the fortnight following the

ly sons and daughters, were abducted during the military regime. The Madres have denounced the disappearance of some 15,000 persons.

In the city of Mendoza, the Pope called upon Argentini-ans to take a clear stand against drugs, abortion, torture, terrorism, divorce, marxism and materialism, and also against degrading work. He called for tolerance, understanding and healthy pluralism in the nation.

It was in a speech to some 500,000 young people in Buenos Aires that the Pope finally came out against human

plause.

The press reported from Buenos Aires that the Pope personally added the comments on human rights violations to a text prepared by members of the Argentine Church.

In Buenos Aires Karol Wojtyla also met with leaders of Latin America's largest Jewish community, which reportedly asked for the Vatican's recognition of the State of Israel. He also had a warm meeting with a numerous group of people from his own homeland, Poland. ★

J.B.



# Brazil Challenges the International Banking System

Brazil suspends its debt payments ...and both creditors and debtors take note

In February this year, Brazil, Latin America's major debtor, declared a technical moratorium on its foreign debt. Its decision was seconded, though on a lesser scale, by Ecuador, and in declarations by Argentina, Venezuela, and other Latin American countries. The action points to the slow but sure development of a response by debtor nations to the international financial system, which, in turn, has had to make adjustments and adopt new policies to deal with this new stage of the foreign debt crisis.

According to official figures, Brazil's foreign debt stood at \$U.S.108 billion in 1986, having risen from a 1970 figure of \$5.6 billion. (A 1982 increase of \$U.S. 25 billion was due to stepped-up interest rates.) Over those seventeen years, Brazil has had to pay out \$U.S. 157 billion just in service fees.

Brazil does not only have the largest debt in Latin America. It also has its strongest industrial plant and export economy, and the world's third highest trade surplus (after Japan and West Germany). But it also has one of Latin America's highest poverty levels, and its economy is, moreover, only just recovering from inflation rates that had reached over 500%.

This recovery is largely due to the government economic program the Cruzado Plan, which reduced inflation 70% in 1986, stepped up economic growth, and brought about



President José Sarney.

a drop in urban unemployment to 3.8% from a 1984 figure of 7.1. Despite these modest successes, however, the Cruzado Plan was never meant to deal with the enormous problem of the foreign debt; and some commentators have interpreted the moratorium as a declaration of the Plan's failure to fully reverse the Brazilian economy's negative trends.

"We cannot pay the debt if it means that our people will go hungry," stated Brazilian President José Sarney, announcing the moratorium. Thus Sarney recognized that Brazil could not continue absorbing foreign debt payments without provoking a devastating crisis in the near future. Moreover, faced with the alternative of paying the debt or encouraging economic growth, Sarney was opting

for the latter—a recognition that the first alternative would imply no growth, and hence, in the long run, no possibility of paying the debt back either.

## Brazil's Demands

Brazil's specific demand on its creditors is the reduction of the percentage of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) assigned to debt servicing from 5 to 2.5%. This would mean a drop in 1987 payments from \$U.S. 12 billion to six or seven billion. The difference would go to aid economic growth and also, of course, to avoid the contraction of new loans for the same amount.

In presenting the demand, Brazil offered its creditors firm guarantees: the promise to deposit payments in creditor banks, and authorize their

of economic recession as a solution to the debt, and an insistence on the vital need for new loans. It is a demonstration that creditors lack a clear stand on developing a joint strategy, together with debtor nations, for resolving the problem. It has shown up international financing mechanisms as "slow and delayed", and requested their streamlining. It is an appeal to creditor nations for support and for an effective response to the needs of underdeveloped nations. Finally, it is a demand for the adoption of new solutions, on the grounds that those proposed to date have simply been ways of living with the crisis, rather than ways of overcoming it.

The repercussions of Brazil's declaration, and more generally of the Latin American debt crisis, reflect the bitter conflict affecting the entire



Metallurgy workers' strike in San Bernardo del Campo, San Pablo.

**"We cannot pay the debt if it means that our people will go hungry"**

release upon the conclusion of agreements meeting Brazil's demands. For this reason, the U.S. newspaper *The Financial Times* described Brazil's action as a "conciliatory moratorium", aimed at renegotiation rather than direct confrontation.

However, the Brazilian move has important implications. It represents a rejection

international finance system and the U.S. foreign trade structure in particular. Since the end of last year, a debate has been raging in U.S. financial and administrative circles over proposals designed to minimize damage to that country's economic and financial structures. At least three tendencies have emerged from this debate.



## latin american issues

One of them, adopted by the big banks led by Citicorp, would maintain the situation in force since 1982, opposing both renegotiation of the debt and the granting of new loans.

The second tendency is that advocated by the Reagan Administration — particularly by Treasury head James Baker — which seeks to maintain the current IMF-inspired program of structural adjustments, recommending new loans to debtor nations to allow minimum economic growth, with consequent punctual payment of loan interests. The third tendency is grouped round the Democrat Party's Bradley Plan, which calls for a modification of the current economic deal in favor of more flexible repayment terms, enabling Latin American economic growth to take place and with it an expansion of U.S. commerce in the region. This proposal, which basically seeks to promote U.S. trade protectionism, has been well-received by some Republicans, industrialists, and small bankers. As well, it might prove attractive to the governments and banks of Western Europe and Japan. Its only drawback is that the Democrats lack the power to implement it.

### The Need for a New Formula

Thus, the Latin American foreign debt crisis has spread beyond its regional boundaries; it is on the way to becoming a destabilizing factor in the structure of U.S. trade. Its resolution necessarily involves an adjustment favoring internal economic growth in Latin American countries, which would in turn determine their future import capacity for U.S. goods. In a certain sense, Brazil's moratorium rests upon this realization, and also on the possibility of achieving a better deal from the group of creditors who lack an overall view of the problem. As well, it comes at a moment when the rest of Latin America is also beginning to take advantage of the modest opportunities available for renegotiating better repayment conditions.

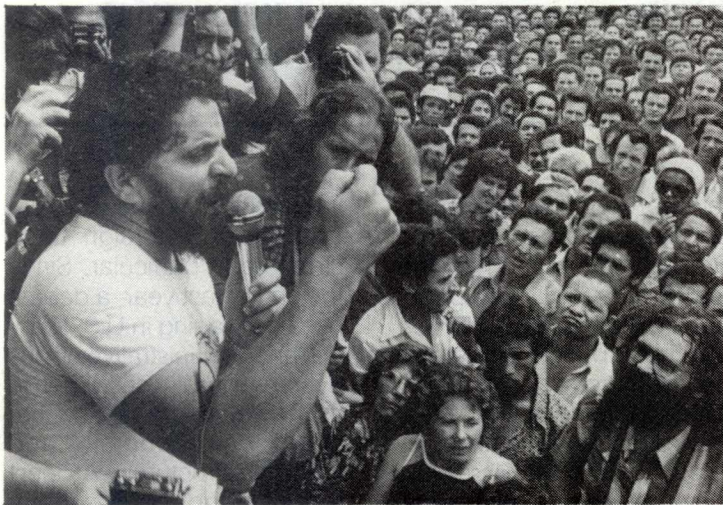
With a total foreign debt estimated by CEPAL at over \$US382,080 million, the nations of Latin America seem to be taking the first steps towards developing joint solutions aimed at achieving economic sovereignty. Almost at the same time as Brazil's decision, Argentina warned that it too might declare a moratorium if new loans were not forthcoming. Shortly after-

wards, Venezuela stated that it would not pay its debts if the United States imposed a tax on its petroleum. In March, it was Ecuador's turn, announcing that it would not pay unless its debt was renegotiated. As for Mexico, President Miguel de la Madrid, in an interview in *The Wall Street Journal*, warned of an urgent need for a "new formula", involving further financing, for dealing with the debt.

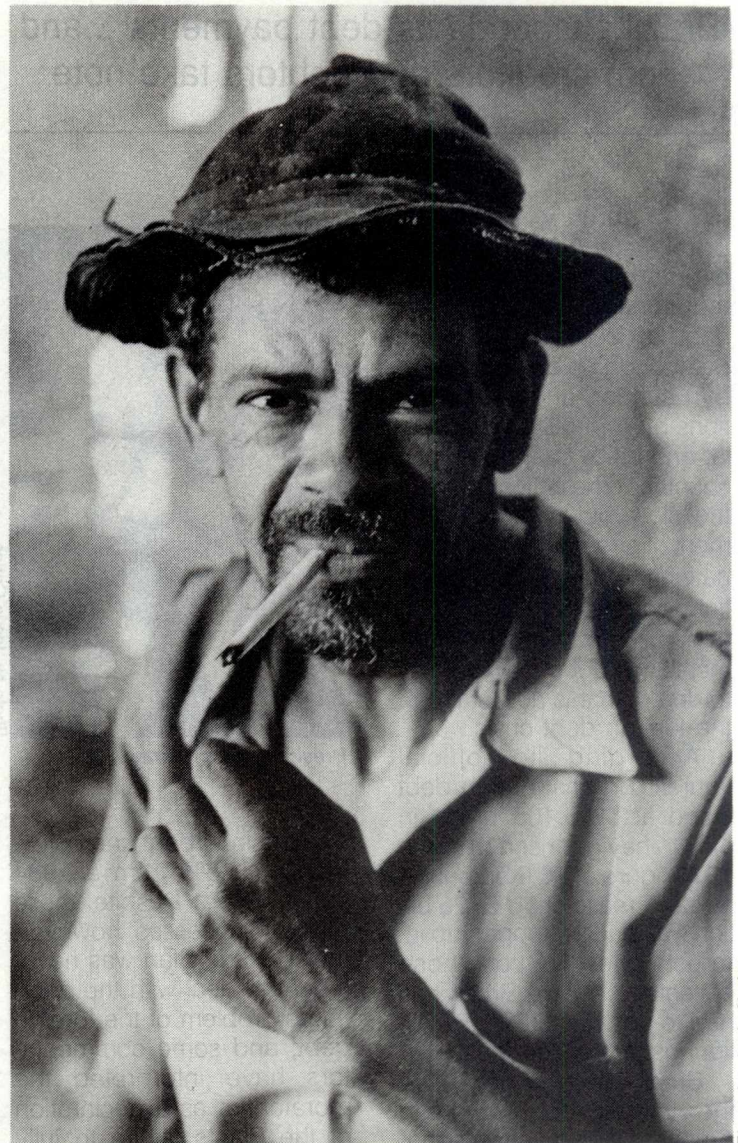
and poor ones — in the search for a new international economic order.

In what the press has taken to calling a kind of "compulsive consciousness-raising", the international banks have had to assimilate these Latin American initiatives. Events have now escaped the control of their unilaterally-imposed structures. It is not surprising, therefore, to hear Antonio Ortiz Mena, President of the

### The relationship between rich countries and poor ones must be changed



Luis Ignacio de Silva (Lula), Workers' Party leader.



Peasant in Brazil's North-East.

This assertiveness, and this coincidence in actions undertaken independently, indicate the formation of a new consensus among Latin American nations which could well give rise to measures which, while perhaps not so dramatic as Brazil's, would effect substantial modifications in the relationship between creditors and debtors — which is to say, between rich countries

Inter-American Development Bank, and David Knox, Vice-President of the World Bank, both calling for a reversal of "the situation in which debtor countries transfer funds to the developed ones. It should be the other way round, in order to stimulate development in debtor nations."★

Haroldo Shetemul



## Treasurer Dilson Funaro Resigns

Dilson Funaro, author of Brazil's controversial Cruzado Plan and its technical moratorium on debt payments, was forced to resign as finance minister at the end of April. He had been under strong criticism from many quarters, including fellow officials in José Sarney's government. The likelihood of his resignation had been rumored since late last year. Funaro's departure brings to a close a period of unprecedented economic growth, which at the same time presaged falling hopes for this year.

Detractors of the *Plan Cruzado* believed it was incapable of mobilizing the nation's resources against inflation, and the policy was not supported by the powerful business sector, which eventually boycotted it. Pressure was also exerted by the international banking community in the belief that Funaro was an obstacle to reaching an agreement with the Sarney government to end the technical moratorium. Yet despite the heavy criticism, International Monetary Fund sources have said Funaro "was one of the best finance ministers Brazil ever had." These sources emphasized the importance of an 8% economic growth rate in the last two years and how thanks to Brazil's moratorium the banks made unprecedented concessions to other Latin American debtors, especially to Argentina.

Despite Funaro's removal, new minister Luis Castro Bresser is expected to continue to carry out the current economic strategy with only slight changes. And the final outcome of this episode—whose political overtones clearly outweigh its economic reasons—is no doubt the further erosion of the Sarney government. Some analysts believe that a weakened government tends to strengthen the movement toward early presidential elections, which if they are held in 1988 would shorten Sarney's presidential term from six to four years.

H.S.

## Easter Mutiny in Argentina

Rebellions in the military barracks threaten the civilian government of Raúl Alfonsín

The recent military rebellion in Argentina has demonstrated one undeniable fact: the young democracy in that country, scarcely three and a

half years old, has to coexist with an army which has shown signs of recuperating its vitality. The so-called "Easter crisis" has given President Raúl

Alfonsín a stern reminder that the Armed Forces have the power to alter the political situation when their interests are endangered. The military mutiny caused widespread shock among Argentinians, and awakened fears of a new breakdown in the constitutional order, such as occurred in 1976.

The insurrection began on the night of April 14, when Army Major Ernesto Barreiro informed his superiors that he would not appear before the civilian court to answer charges of human rights violations—kidnappings, tortures, and assassinations of left-wing political leaders—committed during the period of bloodshed and repression known as the "dirty war" (1976-1982). Next day, Barreiro took over the airborne regiment officers' club in the city of Córdoba, approximately 465 miles northeast of capital Buenos Aires, where he succeeded in gaining the support of several fellow Army officers.

Alfonsín's response was to dismiss Barreiro for insubordination, declaring that "democracy is not negotiable" and that "the time of military coups is over". In Buenos Aires, thousands of Argentinians took to the streets to protest the insurrection and support Alfonsín.

Faced with the overwhelming popular support for the government, Barreiro abandoned his occupation of the officers' club and headed for parts unknown. However, his example of insubordination was followed by Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico and a group of some 67 troopers,

who took over the Campo de Mayo infantry school in Buenos Aires. These new rebels, with bold effrontery, paraded publicly carrying rifles, in jungle combat camouflage uniforms and bulletproof vests, with their faces painted black.

The infantry school occupants, however, sought not a coup so much as the replacement of the heads of the Armed Forces by officers involved in the "dirty war" and the Malvinas (Falkand Islands) conflict. Other demands were the resignation of General Héctor Ríos Ereñu, military Head of Staff, and an amnesty or political solution for those charged with human rights violations in civilian courts.

On Saturday April 18, troops and tanks belonging to Army units loyal to Alfonsín advanced on Campo de Mayo. The original order was to obtain the rebels' surrender, with or without bloodshed. But something went wrong. The forces loyal to the government stopped some 37 miles from the infantry school and went no further.

Meanwhile, a light tank in the power of the rebels pointed threateningly at the thousands of demonstrators who had gathered outside Campo de Mayo, singing the national anthem and demanding the surrender of its occupants. This aggressiveness was a true reflection of the mood of the rebels, who knew that no matter how great the popular opposition to their stand, the real forces involved, the troops loyal to the civilian regime, would not join combat against them. As Rico announced to the press: "We have support in all Army units. Among those sent to evict us, there are hundreds of our comrades, of officers who share our point of view."

Next day, Alfonsín announced to a cheering crowd that "in order to avoid bloodshed", he had sent the order not to attack the rebels, and that he himself would go to seek their surrender. After 45 minutes of "dialog", Alfonsín returned in the same helicopter that had taken him to Campo de Mayo, to tell the

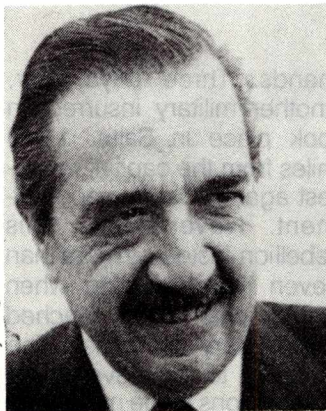


Photo by Rogelio Cuéllar

Argentinian President Alfonsín



## latin american issues

crowd gathered in Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo that they could now go home, since the rebels had surrendered and democracy been saved.

Alfonsín denied having negotiated with the rebels, and the image projected was that of a leader who had risked his life for the sake of democracy. But the arrogance of the ex-rebels, described by Alfonsín as "heroes of the Malvinas," as they drank vic-

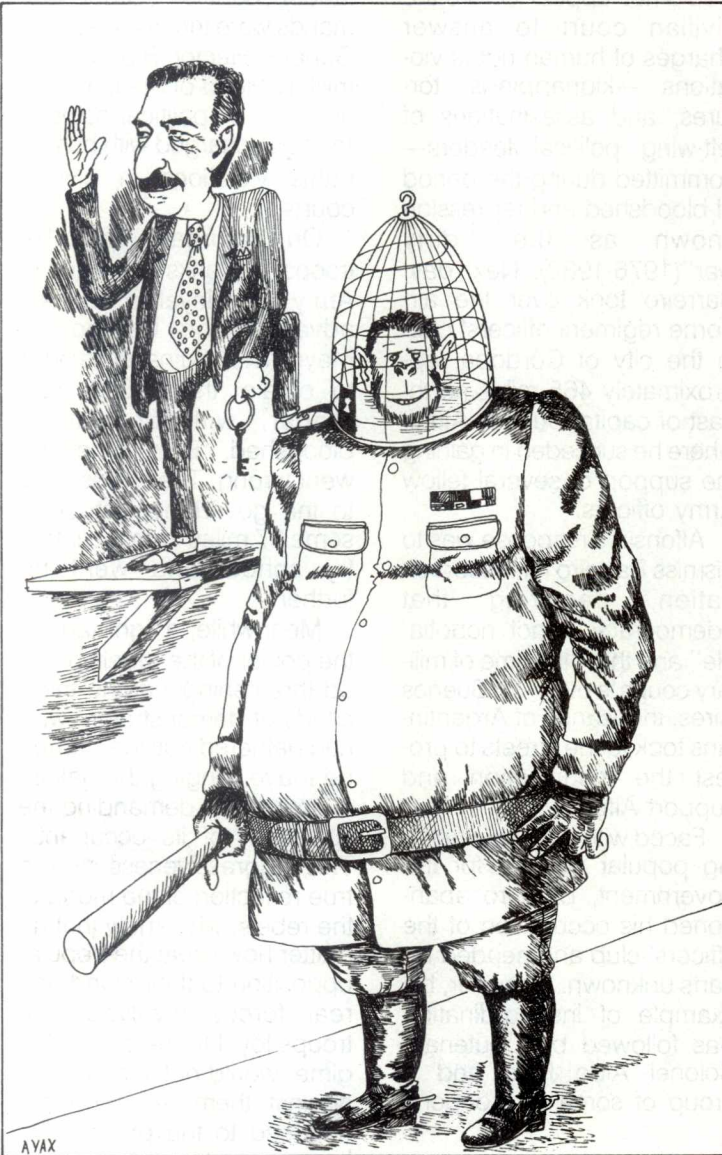
iceberg, Alfonsín may have opted to prevent the insurrection from spreading to other sectors of the Armed Forces and putting to the test the fragile foundations of the constitutional regime. On Monday April 20, only one day after the "agreement" between rebels and government, Ríos Ereñu was replaced as Head of Staff by José Segundo Caridi, thus putting into effect one of the Campo de Mayo de-

retirement of fourteen generals and the Supreme Court decision to grant a jurisprudence definition to the principle of "due obedience", thus providing an out for members of the Armed Forces involved in human rights violations.

So oil was thrown on troubled waters; though there are those who would maintain that the waters have remained somewhat clouded. The bloodless episode of the

Easter crisis demonstrated that popular mobilizations have become democracy's best defense in Argentina. But at the same time, it revealed that the Armed Forces, up till then believed weakened or even in full retreat, are still capable of reviving and wringing concessions from democracy when they see fit to do so. ★

H.S.



tory toasts in champagne, made it clear that the triumph had not exactly been democracy's. Rico told the press that "we reached an agreement with the President, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. We are satisfied; we fulfilled our aims; our demands have been met."

Aware that the 68 rebels really were only the tip of an

mands. Three days later, another military insurrection took place in Salta, 1070 miles from the capital, in protest against Caridi's appointment. Nevertheless, this rebellion lasted no more than seven hours, ending when agreements were reached with military authorities. The corollary to the government concessions to the military rebels came with the enforced

## Tall Ships Need Bigger Canal in Panama

Private negotiations are being held to plan a new interoceanic waterway

The Panama Canal and negotiations surrounding its use and administration have had significant effects on the country's political and economic development. The Carter-Torrijos Treaties which were finally approved in September 1977 after being amended and conditioned by what was a Democrat-controlled Congress, stipulate conditions that are undoubtedly more favorable to Panama than previously existing ones were.

At the time, Senator Jesse Helms, outspoken new-right figure who has also been an open supporter of President Reagan's aggressive foreign policy, stated on television that, "the United States must recover the Panama Canal and under no circumstances should it be handed over to Panama in the year 2,000 ..."

The same treaties that Helms condemned for handing over too much to Panama also stated that no other canal could be built in the country as long as the treaties were in force. This meant not until

noon on December 31, 1999, unless both parties previously agreed on different terms.

### A New Canal For Whom

The project for a new canal contemplates joining the Atlantic and Pacific oceans through a huge channel, constructed in such a way as to level the heights of the two seas without the use of locks or floodgates. In theory such a project should benefit Panama's economy and overall development, but in fact it is conceived in terms that mainly favor the United States and go against Panamanian interests, as has been the case with the existing waterway.

One of the clauses referring to the construction of a new canal states that, "As long as this Treaty is in force the United States will be primarily responsible for protecting and defending the Canal" (Article IV, Numeral 2). In other words, this clause entails the U.S.' right to intervene in Panama to "guarantee" continuous



operation of the Canal. This posture is absurd and unfair in view of the fact that the legal principle governing interoceanic waterways is neutrality, which guarantees mutual respect between nations and holds true both in time of peace and of war.

This interventionist stance undermines what trust may exist in terms of agreeing to a new division of Panamanian territory, for now it is not only Panama and the U.S. who are involved, but also another world power, Japan.

**Negotiations on the Side**

At present an airtight silence surrounds negotiations for a new interoceanic, single-level canal. The press says nothing. Yet following the sixth meeting of its kind, held in Tokyo on December 2, 1984, the \$26 billion project is being debated by a trilateral commission made up of Japan, the United States and Panama. This body is expected to produce a feasibility study some time before the end of 1991 which will probably cost close to \$42 million. A report containing details of the project was announced two years ago, but it has yet to be released to either the Panamanian people, who are really the most concerned, or to the press. One of the very few details of the project made public thus far is that it would be located some 9 miles west of the existing canal.

The construction of this new interoceanic waterway also faces certain impediments

that seem not to have been made public, such as the fact that Article XII of the Carter-Torrijos Treaties expressly forbids excavation using nuclear technology. But estimates drawn up by the United States indicate that dredging through conventional means would increase costs by some \$5 to \$10 billion, meaning that proposed tolls would have to be increased; many countries would thus be unable to cover the fees. This practically means there would be one canal for ships from developing countries and another for the rulers of world trade.

Rapid changes in ship-building technology have made the existing canal, with its locks and floodgates, obsolete, as the size of ships has increased considerably. Yet construction of a new canal capable of handling today's larger ships would benefit neither Panama nor other developing countries.

**Panama and a New Canal**

Talk of negotiations for a new canal refers us to Panama's internal situation and to the fact that much depends on the U.S.' willingness to comply with existing agreements. The links between these two aspects is obvious when we take into account that this small Central American nation is an extremely important financial and banking center. Since the death of General Omar Torrijos in 1981, five different figures have revolved through the presidency, unable to achieve the necessary economic streamlining and stabilization. Panama's balance of trade was \$860 million in the red in 1985; economic growth has slowed to an unsatisfactory 1.5%; the foreign debt stands at some \$5 billion and unemployment is increasing at an alarming rate.

The importance and positive aspects for Panama of an interoceanic canal through its territory would seem to be obvious. Unfortunately, experience shows this is not the case. Since it was built in 1903, the existing waterway

has been geared toward consolidating the world trade of the United States rather than to other purposes. In addition, construction of the new canal could have serious effects both on the overall ecosystem and on the climate. Another foreseeable effect is on employment levels because the more modern canal would be heavily automated and require fewer than half the workers currently employed by

ment's position on this situation, have been stepped up.

At present the most controversial issues are the increase of Panamanian personnel in management positions in the Canal Administration (the U.S. currently holds 67% of such positions); the distribution of this year's surplus of \$11.7 million, which current management apparently intends to dwindle away in superfluous expenditures;

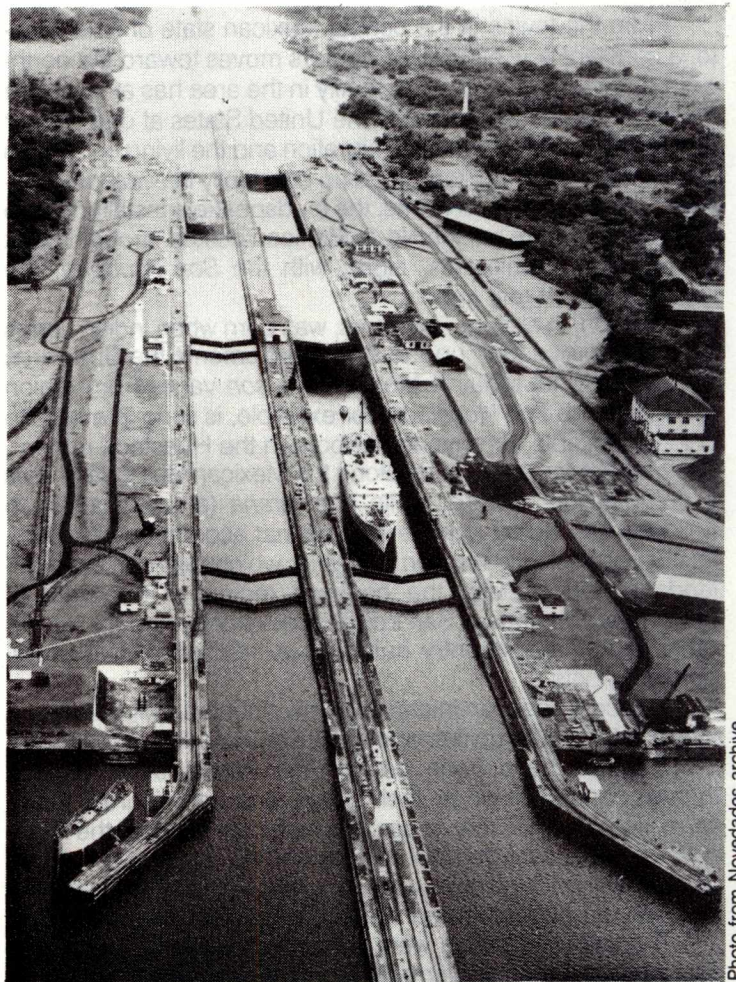


Photo from Novedades archive.

Canal floodgates at Gatún, Atlantic end.

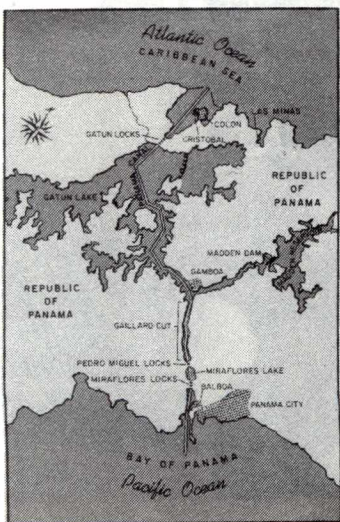
the canal in service, which would also lose business to its nearby competitor and thus employ fewer people.

There is obviously a direct relationship between Panama's internal situation and the project for a new canal, and both relate to compliance with the Carter-Torrijos Treaties and the Panamanian people's legitimate aspiration to exercise complete sovereignty over their own territory. Thus, discussion in the Canal Commission surrounding U.S. lack of compliance with the treaties and the Panamanian govern-

ment's position on this situation, have been stepped up. At present the most controversial issues are the increase of Panamanian personnel in management positions in the Canal Administration (the U.S. currently holds 67% of such positions); the distribution of this year's surplus of \$11.7 million, which current management apparently intends to dwindle away in superfluous expenditures;

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Ramsés Ramírez





## Music and Verse from Mexican Migrant Workers

From the towns of the central Mexican state of Guanajuato, a constant flow of migrant workers moves toward the northern border. Just about every family in the area has at least one member who has migrated to the United States at one time or another. Thus, the subject of migration and the living conditions of undocumented workers crops up constantly in every day conversation. And in small towns, the loudspeakers installed in the main square blare out the North Mexican polkas, brought back by returning immigrants, along with the *Son Arribeño*, the region's typical folk music.

The *son*, in all its varied forms, was born when Indian hands and sensibilities took up the string instruments the Spaniards brought to what today is Mexico. The *son* varies from region to region. The *Son Huasteco*, for example, is sung in a falsetto voice, inimitable for anyone not born in the Huasteca region<sup>1</sup>. The *Son Veracruzano*, sung along the Mexican Gulf Coast, uses a combination of harp, violin and *jarana* (a small guitar) to produce cascading bell-like sounds that accompany lively salacious verses. And the *Son Arribeño*, which reigns in the highlands of Guanajuato, the northern region of the state of Querétaro and parts of San Luis Potosí, excels in poetic art. No other part of the country has such a tradition of folk poets, peasant poets.

In recent years an interesting new phenomenon has developed in the communities where the *Son Arribeño* is practiced. Troubadours have gone beyond the traditional songs and themes handed down by their elders, and now address themselves to contemporary issues: the high cost of living, the financial crisis, the foreign debt — here and now subjects that are of common concern. Naturally, migration to the north and the situation of undocumented workers are dealt with extensively.

The following songs were written by Guillermo Velázquez and the *Leones de la Sierra de Xichú*, who together with other poets and musicians in the region have formed the *Taller de Huapango<sup>2</sup> y Poesía Campesina* (The Huapango and Peasant Poetry Workshop). The Workshop functions in the small Guanajuato town of Xichú, but its influence is felt throughout a vast region.

These songs help shed light on the thinking of Mexican peasants concerning their work as wetbacks and the adventure of going north.

<sup>1</sup> The area encompassing parts of San Luis Potosí, Hidalgo, Tamaulipas and Veracruz, inhabited by *huasteca* indians.

<sup>2</sup> From the indian word *huapango*, meaning to dance on a stand or platform. ★

## Duel of Poets

People come to a *Son Arribeño fiesta* not only to dance, but also to listen to the poets who are part of each musical group. In what amounts to poetic dueling, the poet-musicians take turns displaying their art. The traditional *fiesta* always has two clearly defined parts to it. One is a face to face match between two well-known poets, in what is called a *Topada de Fundamento*. For several hours they will exchange verses on serious matters, while at the same time welcoming the guests and singing songs suited to the occasion: if it's an Independence Day celebration, for example, they will sing of history, but at a wedding the poets may sing of the mysteries of birth and creation and of the difficulties the new couple will encounter. After midnight two younger poets take the place of their more expert elders and match off against each other with lighter verse, loaded with

double entendre, making fun of each other as they entertain the party-goers.

The *fiesta* lasts all night and usually ends at nine or ten o'clock the next morning. The poet who has shown the most physical stamina and the greatest capacity to improvise in verse is acclaimed by the public, chosen the winner and showered with gifts and applause, while his sparring partner is whistled off the stage. On rare occasions the duel may be carried on beyond the party, but usually both poets and musicians are asked to breakfast by their hosts in order to discuss and review the night's musical session.

Making people happy is what it's all about, and throughout the region these traditional *fiestas* are still preferred to more modern ones with bands that play urban-style music, which also exist in the area.



Son Arribeño musicians' stage, Guanajuato.



## The United States

Its prosperous dollar and its satisfaction the stream of inventions in the U.S.A. are due mostly to the great exploitation of our dominated countries today.

Today's gringos have not always been on the lands they are living on now from Europe they came many years ago and this history books tell us so. They were immigrants, people from elsewhere, who came seeking new living conditions, and the Sioux and Cherokee the Navajo and Comanche were the natives who lived here long ago.

Through astuteness and sheer bloody wars the Saxons did put down their roots with their rifles they kill as they shoot native Indians beyond any count.

Through the forces of fraud and of violence they took over all of that extension and once masters of the situation they began the work of development. Everything has roots and a meaning:

For all the things that had to be done a workforce was what was needed so they picked a piece out of Africa and brought over thousands of slaves. Thus millions of blacks came to be the support of the whites in production.

Throughout the endless cotton fields the blacks sought relief from their suffering singing sad songs that sprang from their souls.

And after the blacks came the Chinese as the new wave of suffering cheap labor. By the 1900's, the story goes, there were Yugoslavs, Turks and Filipinos Italians, Persians and Latinos. All gave their effort to the nation and I say this without even a mention of our countries that at this very moment are enslaved to this imperialism.

In eighteen hundred forty seven when they stole so much of our land many Mexicans, evidently changed nations because of that stand. But it was early on in the age of rockets that our migration did start; revolution broke out and spread many peasants set out for the north and since then we all go back and forth.

This was when those gringos up there realized that for picking and watering right next door there were many strong arms so they made us a part of their work force. Thank the dollar and our sweat for the region's great productivity. Now they want to slam the door in our face with Congress' Simpson-Rodino. This is the time to bring all this to mind.

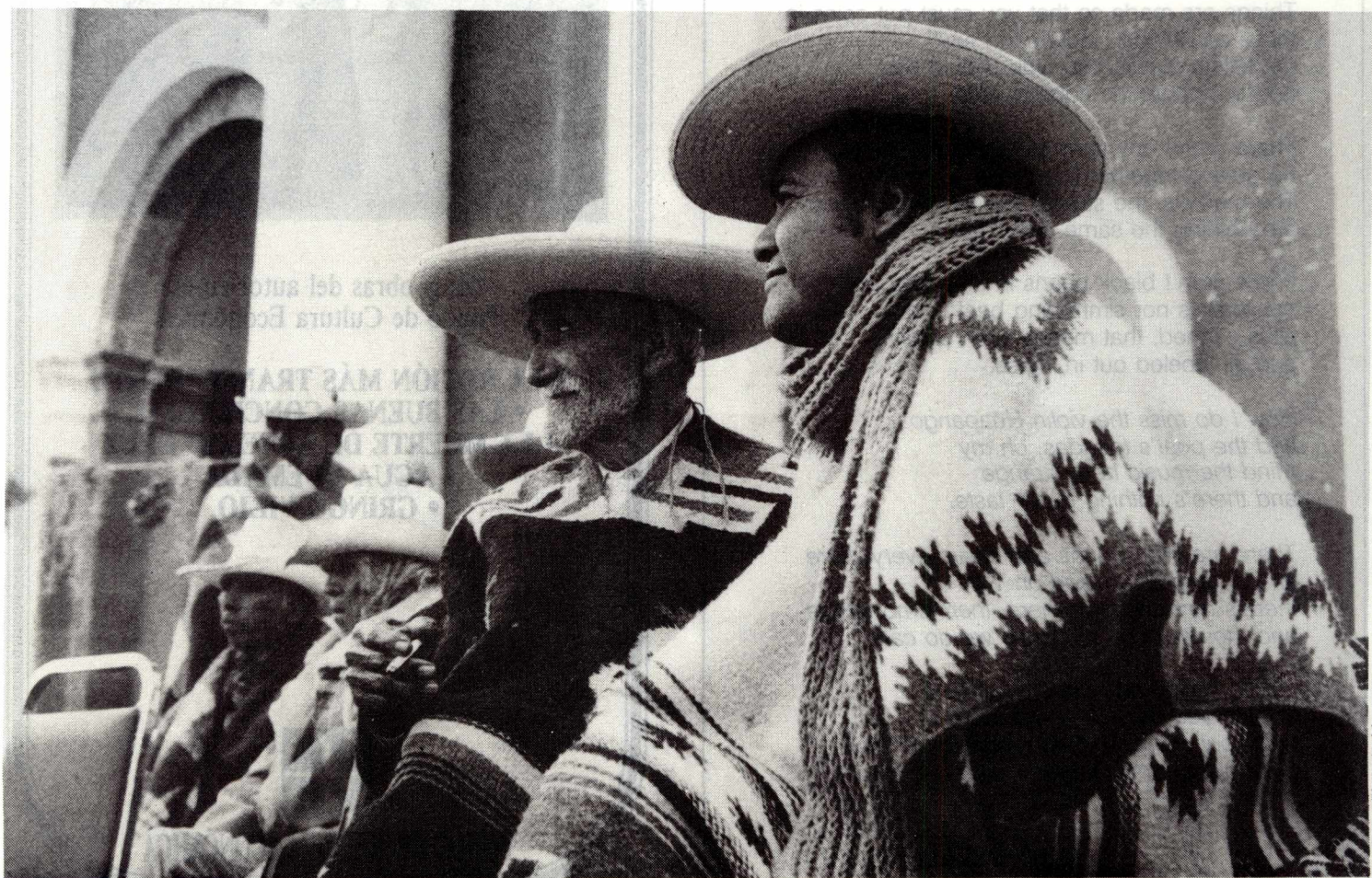


Photo by Ricardo Montejano.

Poet Francisco Berrones with composer Guillermo Velázquez in Xichú, Guanajuato.



### A Letter From Petra

Mommy dearest, I send you this letter hoping that it may find you all well, my brothers and sisters, my father. I, thank God, find myself in good health.

I'm not yet used to this situation and it's only a month since I came. All day long I must try to ignore jokes and talking in English, a shame:

My employers are really good people of them I can have no complaint. But as soon as I think of our *rancho* tears start flowing without a restraint.

How I miss my milieu and my hills, miss my home and the land that surrounds it, with its hens and its chickens and dogs and the mornings I'd go off awashing.

Everything around here is so different and entirely a sight to be seen how the people walk around like crazy full of anguish in their shopping spree.

Things up here are really quite lovely, but really, Ma, nothing compares to going to the well to fetch water, how I do miss my life back there:

Things are made so that you must put coins in these are things... how can I say! out falls a plastic cup, you should see and out pours the coke or *café*.

There aren't any stalls to buy sodas no getting together like there. The markets, the streets and the playgrounds are nothing the same, Ma, I swear:

There aren't black beans in their clay pot nor tortillas nor simmering beef broth all is canned, that means even onions, and all labeled out in *inglés*.

*How I do miss the violin Huapango and the poet's topadas, oh my I find the music here strange and there's nothing to my taste.*

*There are Woolworths and Sears everywhere and people all hooked on TV there's no dances up here, there's no fiestas and though poor, for those we do care.*

*I'm enclosing one hundred dollars to help you out somehow, mamá and your Petra who will never forget you is saying goodby to you now.*

## CARLOS FUENTES CRISTÓBAL NONATO

Crónica imaginaria y feroz del futuro tiempo mexicano, *Cristóbal Nonato* es una muestra mayor de la consistencia que con Carlos Fuentes han alcanzado las letras mexicanas.



Otras obras del autor en el Fondo de Cultura Económica

- LA REGIÓN MÁS TRANSPARENTE
- LAS BUENAS CONCIENCIAS
- LA MUERTE DE ARTEMIO CRUZ
  - AGUA QUEMADA
  - GRINGO VIEJO



FONDO DE CULTURA ECONÓMICA



# From the Amazon to the Caribbean in Canoe

**Forty Latin American scientists left Misahuallí in Ecuador last March, with the aim of re-exploring America five centuries after the arrival of Christopher Columbus. Their plan is to cross the southern continent, in four canoes, navigating the Rivers Napo, Amazon, Negro, Casiquare and Orinoco, and then crossing the Caribbean Sea to Guahanáí. The group is led by the Cuban Vice-Minister of Culture Antonio Núñez Jiménez, who has already visited the Arctic and the Antarctic. Argentinian journalist José Steinsleger prepared this special report for Voices after witnessing the expedition set out**

The idea of a canoe expedition from the Amazon to the Caribbean was first put forward by Cuban Vice-Minister of Culture Antonio Núñez Jiménez at the first World Symposium on Cave Art, held in Havana, Cuba in January 1986. The proposal gained

the enthusiastic support of UNESCO Chairman Mathar M'Bow, and four months later was endorsed by the 23 countries participating in the *Fourth Iberoamerican Conference of Fifth Centennial Committees*, organized to coordinate activities marking the five

hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus' 1492 landing at the Bahaman island of Guahananí, or San Salvador, as the explorer named it.

The expedition's organization required the efforts of heads of state, heads of governments, Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Education and Culture, universities, Indian communities, religious missions in the Amazon and Orinoco regions, and many different scientific institutes. Thus, the project of reaching the Caribbean in canoe via the Amazon and Orinoco Rivers has become an important step towards Latin American integration.

We know absolutely everything about the European discovery of the Caribbean, right from Columbus' first appearance at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella in search of sponsors. But what of the pre-Columbian discovery of America and the Caribbean, by American and Caribbean peoples? With the exception of a few isolated items of information, little or nothing is known of these epic odysseys.

With the aim of increasing this knowledge, 40 Latin American scientists set out downriver on March 2, 1987 from the Ecuadoran village of Misahuallí, situated in the Amazon region, some 200 miles east of the capital Quito. The expedition members are geographers, cartographers, meteorologists, zoologists, archeologists, botanists, sociologists, ethnologists and architects from many different Latin American countries. Working in relays, they will row their four canoes a distance of over 5,580 miles. The expedition hopes to enter the Orinoco River by mid-September, after rowing down the Napo, Amazon, Negro and Casiquare Rivers. That will be the half-way mark on the journey. In Venezuela, they will wait till mid-November for the cyclone season to end and will then make for the sea, stopping at Trinidad-Tobago and continuing from there over the open sea to journey's end at the island of



Antonio Núñez Jiménez, expedition leader.



## special report

Guahananí.

The chief aim of Núñez Jiménez' expedition is to prove that the first discoverers of the West Indies were the natives of the Amazon basin, a journey which the Caribbean natives also undertook, in the opposite direction, 200 years before the lookout gave the cry of "Land ho!" from the crow's nest of Columbus' flagship the *Santa María*.

### A Don Quixote in Charge of the Expedition

At 63, most people are caught up in the problems of old age and in reflecting on what they've done or can't do any more. But 63-year-old Antonio Nuñez Jiménez has undertaken what must be one of the most strenuous scientific adventures in the world. And in his Quixotic face there's nothing to indicate that this will be the last.

What were his thoughts as the time for departure approached? What is the deep significance of this journey for Latin America?

Says Núñez Jiménez: "The main thing I was thinking to myself was that we had taken a whole year to get to Misahuallí, and now we were setting off. Now more than ever, I can say that the expedition is going forward of its own accord. It's not just a project any more. It's a reality. A Latin American reality. Here we are at the foot of the Andes, involved in a joint effort: Ecuadorans and Peruvians, Colombians and Brazilians and Cubans. There are other Latin American colleagues who will be joining in later. Simón Bolívar's dream of a united Latin America is coming



Photo by José Steinsleger.

One of the expedition's four canoes.

true! It is an extraordinary political event. Not in the narrow sense, but as a demonstration of deep Latin American brotherhood."

In 1940, at the age of 17, Núñez Jiménez founded the Cuban Speleological Society. Expert in cave art, he has written a number of works on the subject; his most important work, however, is *Cuba: Nature and Man*, shortly to publish its seventeenth volume. Another of his intellectual concerns, the syncretism of African and Spanish cultures in Cuba,

other areas of study, for example patterns of pre-Columbian settlement from the Amazon to the Caribbean. We will be collecting the evidence that will be of use to us in archeological terms. We will be bringing together three basins — the Amazon, the Orinoco and the Caribbean — which have hitherto been studied in isolation from one another. Now we will be studying them as a unified whole, combining the scientific aspects which come under our scrutiny. Up till now, there have been no international



The Simón Bolívar sets out.

Photo by José Steinsleger.

prompted his biography of the great Cuban surrealist painter Wilfredo Lam.

Politician, historian, revolutionary, descendent of Spanish and Italian peasants, Núñez Jiménez was one of the leaders of the Cuban revolutionary movement and fought in the Sierra Madre with Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. In 1972, he took part in the nineteenth Soviet Arctic expedition and in 1982 he led the first Cuban scientific expedition to the Antarctic.

He is also recognized as one of the important figures of the "new archeology", which seeks to incorporate social issues into the methodology of historical research.

In this river, sea and jungle adventure, Núñez Jiménez aims to deepen the search for our roots and identity as Latin Americans: "It's no accident that the expedition starts off in Ecuador, meeting-place of various pre-Columbian cultures and southern frontier of the area of Caribbean cultural influence." "We don't intend to study whatever we come across in our travels," Núñez states. "The work plan consists in gathering material that will help throw light on

scientific projects in this area. This is an important point. With all humility, I think this is the beginning of a new approach to the great and complex problems of nature and humanity on earth."

Núñez Jiménez considers that one of the first positive results of the expedition has been the enthusiasm and cooperation of the peoples of the different countries involved:

"Everyone with any degree of consciousness has cooperated: Indians and mestizos in the construction of the canoes, the Armed Forces of various countries, government officials, scientific institutions. How wonderful it is to be able to say all this! It's an objective demonstration that when we set out to do something that's really based on broad criteria rather than on small-minded or sectarian interests, we can get it done no matter what the obstacles. And everyone who's worked in this has done it disinterestedly. People of all kinds — of many different ideologies, philosophies and religions, members of the Armed Forces of many different



countries. Which means that when there's a high-minded, a pure idea, it's promoted and cherished by everybody."

Adventure, exploration of the world, passionate love of nature and humanity: these are the multiple signs governing the life of Antonio Núñez Jiménez, committed to the enterprise of providing American and world culture with a work of many facets, deeply humanistic in its significance.

### Age-Old Wisdom and Appropriate Technologies

"But look, it's straight, it's thick," says Lenin Ortiz, the expedition's international advisor.

"It's no good," pronounces canoe-builder Alonso Andilicuy.

"Why isn't it any good?" asks Ortiz. "It's around a hundred feet high and it has a base diameter of fifteen feet."

"It's no good," repeats Alonso. "The yellow leaves show that the tree's no good."

Ortiz scratches his head. "Yellow? But ALL the leaves on ALL the trees are yellow!"

"Yes," agrees Alonso; "but not THAT shade of yellow."

Exhausted, the international expert gives in resignedly:

"Okay, so it can't be THAT shade of yellow."

Alonso Andilicuy's scientific knowledge, inherited from a centuries-old tradition, has not only saved the voluntary workers a lot of work. It has also meant that a tree will not be felled for nothing. It is a social contribution from people who know their environment thoroughly and accept nature's gifts and messages.

The slight variation in shades of yellow in the leaves of the chuncho tree indicate if the tree is diseased or not, if its core is sound or eaten away by wasps or termites. Just a spot or a mark, and Alonso knows if the tree can be used to build a canoe.

Chuncho timber has a crosswise fiber that withstands jolts against rocks in the river. These trees, natives of the Ecuadorian Amazon region, have been found in Cuba, in the form of canoes. How did they get there, unless they were brought there by Amazon Indians?

Without Andilicuy's knowledge, the expedition canoes could not have been built. Once a suitable tree is found, the next step is to decide which way it is to fall, because if there's a slope or an irregularity in the terrain, the trunk will split. For felling the tree and fashioning the canoe, the implements have changed (axes, iron machetes), but the lore has not.

Canoe-building is learned collectively and socially. Children are present and working; as well as elderly men, giving advice. One of the workers claims to have built 50 or 60 canoes, but he says he gains his livelihood growing manioc.

Once the canoe has been dug out and finished off, the wood must be dried and stabilized, so that when the canoe is launched it will not soak up water. This is done by smoking. Women and children fill joins and cracks with clay so that they will not widen with the heat. Then they gather piles of palm fronds, the kinds known to produce plenty of heat and smoke.

No nails are used for caulking. A mixture of ground snailshells and molten beeswax is poured into cracks. As the mixture cools, it hardens into a

most effective sealant.

Once the canoe is ready, it has to be transported to the river some three miles away. In this case there were four canoes, all fifty-footers. Those who carried them sank up to their knees in the clayey earth at every step. It was a communal labor involving Alonso Andilicuy's entire community. The price per canoe, \$800, was scarcely more than a token payment. It could not cover the great effort made by the Indians, or their many weeks of work.

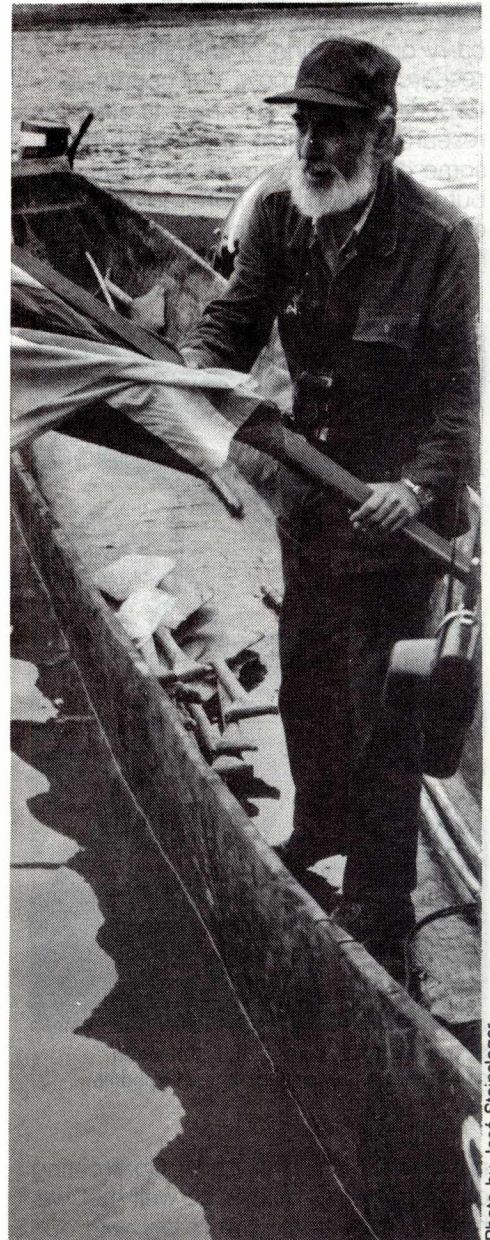


Photo by José Steinsleger.

Núñez Jiménez unfurls expedition standard designed by Ecuadorian painter Guayasamín.

"This technology," says Alonso Andilicuy, "comes from an Indian architect who used his own system of measurement, without ruler or pencils, calculating with nothing but his head."

Lenin Ortiz describes the expedition members as "transdisciplinary", something which



Expedition departure point Misahuallí, in Ecuador's Amazon region.



## special report

in his opinion does not always exist in isolated or interdisciplinary research projects of the positivist school. Thus, sociologists and economists will study the way of life, productive activity and settlement patterns of river dwellers, both Indian and mestizo, as well as the impact of other factors such as petroleum drilling, the African oil palm (an ecological threat to the jungle) and the timber industry. In the ethnographical part of the project, studies will be made of traditional medicine and the current state of medicine in the region.

"I believe," states Ortiz, "that Latin Americans are at last able to carry out this kind of scientific research. Up till now, our countries' dependency has also had its effect on research. Of course, there have been some great Latin American scientists, but they have been honorable exceptions. In general, those who have investigated this continent have



Photo by José Steinsieger.

Scientists from several Latin American countries are taking part in the expedition.

not been Latin Americans. Confronting our own issues means as well that we have to investigate our reality with our own scientific methodologies. The Indians have much to contribute to science. From sixteenth century documents, we know, for example, of the navigational ability of the Quijos, who for centuries traveled down the Napo River to salt mines located on the upper Amazon, just before it takes on the name of Marañón."

By the same token, Western history has never given due importance to the Indian contribution

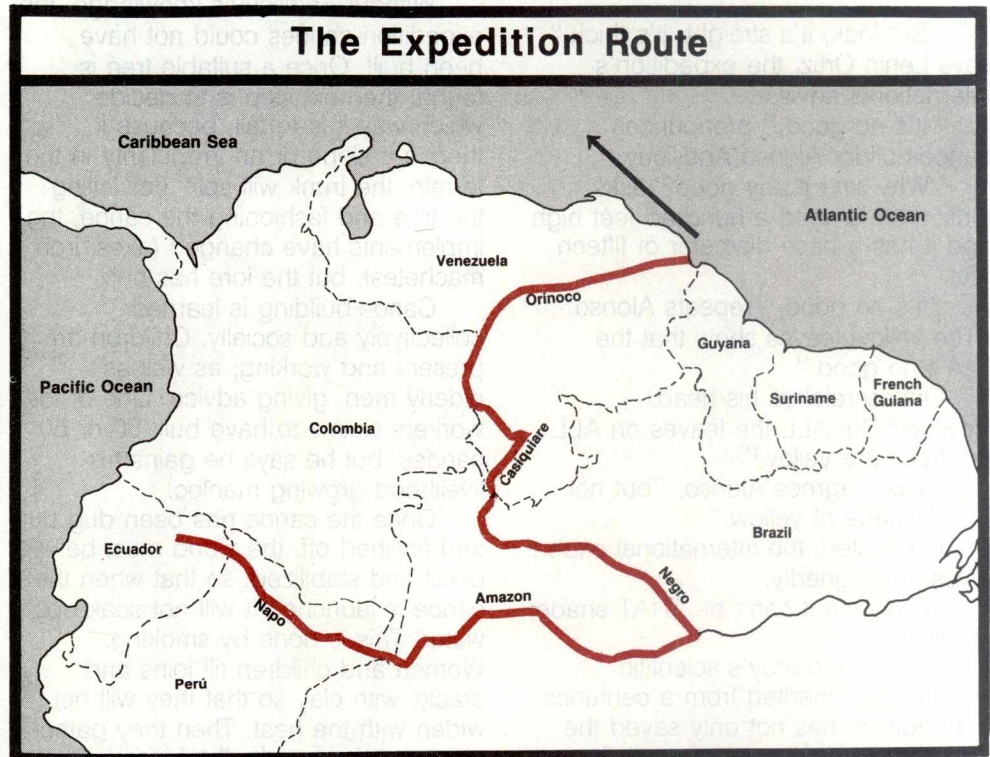
to what is called the "discovery" of America. For while no detractor is meant from the achievements of the Spanish conquistador Orellana and his men (the first Europeans to travel down the Amazon), the truth is that they would have accomplished nothing without their Indian guides and crewmen.

### Departure

At mid-stream on the Napo River, its Andes-fed waters flow with a

village's inhabitants. A dog grows exasperated because the monkey it was playing with has climbed up a tree and started making faces at it from the foliage. There is a never-ending passenger traffic in the canoes. A number of U.S. tourists are waiting to be taken to the region's few hotels.

"I heard about it a few days ago," a Peruvian archeologist tells me. "I left everything and came. My friends will help my family out till I get back. I hope they give traveling expenses ..." A zoologist



powerful current. You have to cross with the utmost care: one look down at that hypnotizing torrent and you could lose your balance and be lost forever. Laboriously, a father and his two sons row upstream, close to the bank. Further on they set their humble fishing boat for the middle of the river, and in the blink of an eye they have been dragged some 800 yards in a huge Z to the opposite bank. Thus they have crossed the river for generations, several times a day, every day of their lives. They are the Napo dwellers, genuine admirals who venerate the deities of the water.

Perhaps, with all the secrets they are privy to, the residents of Misahuallí regard the expedition members as unlikely to get very far. Still, maybe they will. For they aspire to a sublime madness: to strengthen the cause of Latin American integration, increase scientific and political knowledge ... by canoe.

On Misahuallí beach, a breeze is blowing, a breeze as gentle as the

speaks of her two children, left behind in Havana. An architect expresses concern about some work he left half-finished. Another archeologist is still in the process of getting official leave from the high school where he gives classes. Only a few minutes left before departure. A group of flag-waving supporters arrive from Quito to see the expedition off. They distribute fruit among the members, who slowly start boarding the canoes and making themselves comfortable in orange-colored folding chairs. Núñez Jiménez raises the expedition standard, designed by Ecuadorean painter Osvaldo Guayasamin. "I want to leave — right now!" shouts this modern Don Quixote, laughing and blowing kisses at the spectators.

And suddenly, for a moment, we onlookers all feel like participants in this great adventure. Because now it doesn't matter that our shoes and pants get wet. We want to hug these people who, today, have made us happy. ★



# Mexico: Land of Pyramids, Kaleidoscope of Mysteries

**This country has attracted large numbers of foreigners, many of whom remain here, fascinated by the history, the culture and the contradictions of Mexico. Colombian writer Eduardo García Aguilar asserts that Mexico is an endless source of inspiration for both national and foreign artists, as well as a means towards understanding the modern world.**



Mexican muralist Diego Rivera.

Mexico is, for artists, one of the most attractive and inspiring countries in the world. With its ancient mysteries and contemporary contradictions, it has provided astonishingly exotic raw material for novelists, poets, sculptors, film-makers, and musicians. No best-seller stand in the world would be complete at the moment without journalist Alan Riding's *Distant Neighbors*, Gary Jennings's *Aztec*, Carlos Castaneda's mystical adventures, or some representative of the current spate of biographies of painter Frida Kahlo.

A whole galaxy of foreigners of various nationalities — photographers, painters, musicians, writers and politicians—, has helped disseminate Mexico's mysteries throughout the world. The idea commonly held of Mexico is of a country closed in upon itself, xenophobic even; yet B. Traven and Carlo Coccioli, Garcia Márquez and Luis Cardoza y Aragón, Paul Westheim and Jacques Soustelle, are only some of the names that give this idea the lie. Mexico has won the hearts of the world's adventurers, and the journalist or artist who has never been here has missed more than she or he will ever know. Even at the risk of losing oneself, like Ambrose Bierce, Mexico is an experience necessary for understanding the contemporary world.

## An Assembly of Pyramids

For a foreigner, Mexico's first attraction is, without a doubt, the energy emanating from its pre-Columbian cultures. Throughout the length and breadth of Mexico, the traces of an age-old human activity, solid and diversified, emerge out of the depths of land and jungle. Only a small percentage of the cities, temples, and art of Mexico's native peoples has been discovered. And nevertheless, nobody can ignore this culture, such is its beauty and its significance. Post-Conquest European literature contains hundreds of memoirs and works of art to do with Mexico. Humboldt wrote of New Spain's archeological treasures and stood in wonder before Teotihuacan and the colossal figures of Tula. Those European missionaries who traveled south until they penetrated the secret cities of the Mayas kept readers in their native countries on tenderhooks with unforgettable tales of fantasy.

The two main Mexican cultures to inspire world-wide interest are the Aztec, of the central tableland, and the Mayan, which developed in the thick southern jungles. The richness of the Aztec culture derives from the variety of its ancestors: old Teotihuacan, colossal Tula, and the cultures of the South. The identification of all these different strands is a life-long task for the scholars engaged in it. The Aztecs excelled in the creation of monumental stone sculpture: their culture was militarist and war-like, their art at times terrifying. The statue of the goddess Coatlicue, for example, in the National Anthropology Museum, is an awesome figure arrayed in serpents, which fully conveys the goddess' fearful power over life and death.

The Mayas, on the other hand, built ornate battlements and covered the walls of their gay temples with vivid stucco murals. This was the culture of peaceful people, devoted to the pursuit of the arts and sciences and to the contemplation of their exuberant natural environment. Nineteenth century travelers were the first to become caught in the webs of this culture, whose enchantment lies in its luxuriance and complexity.

**Foreigners of various nationalities have helped disseminate Mexico's mysteries throughout the world**

In the present age of freeways and space flights, the voice of these unknown artists calls us even more imperatively. The pilgrimages to these temples from all over the world provide convincing proof of their strange vitality. Mircea Eliade, for example, the great French student of religion, wrote a number of works relating his journey into the Mayan and Aztec past; he regretted not having been able to stay there longer, to give free rein to the doubts and questions that besieged his brain during his sojourn amongst the serpents and the pyramid steps.



## life and culture

Soustelle, the French specialist in pre-Columbian Mexico, also wrote a book in which he recounts his first arrival in Mexico, and the growth of that attraction which in the end made him decide to devote his life to the infinite kaleidoscope of its symbols.

### The Acapulco Tradeship and the Adventurers of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec

New Spain—as Mexico was known in colonial times—constituted the most aristocratic Spanish colony in the New World. It was here that the most powerful families chose to settle, and it was here that the most complex bureaucratic and religious colonial world was forged. Undoubtedly, the chief reasons for this were the vastness and richness of the territory, and the impressive size of its native population. Mexican journalist and historian Fernando Benítez has chronicled this world in several books. A city dotted with convents and churches, agitated by the ceremonies and burnings of the Inquisition, Mexico City—or “the City of the Palaces”—was the metropolis of the New World. The paintings from the period on display at Mexico City’s Colonial Art Museum demonstrate the vigor of the schools of art and sculpture that flourished during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And in the Museum of San Carlos are extraordinary European art works, which undoubtedly once graced the drawing-rooms of the Spanish-born aristocracy.

Colonial art and architecture were stimulated by travelers who, in search of the exotic, fell headlong into the webs of this world of syncretisms. Unlike other lands less endowed with native population, in Mexico a syncretic art could emerge. Even today, in certain celebrations such as the Day of the Dead, this art still flourishes with all the vitality of the centuries. Skulls of sugar and chocolate; *fiestas* in the cemeteries; bells ringing throughout the nights of November; Altars of the Dead in village houses. Soviet film-maker Sergei Eisenstein, in his Mexican footage, captured this exciting autochthonous art where pagan roots mingle with Catholic ones.

Certain religious ceremonies and the *pastorelas* performed at Christmas are creations of this autochthonous imagination. Biblical passages come to life as they are acted out by people who could well have emerged from the Middle East or from

provincial Spain. In the feast-day dances outside the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City, pagan figures blend together in a kind of witches’ Sabbath; and for hours, groups come streaming into the plaza out of the depths of Mexico. Eisenstein’s footage renders that mysterious atmosphere which has attracted to Mexico the world’s artists, students of culture and social scientists. Crucible and crossroads of the races, age-old alchemy that changes the nowadays into the ancestral and plays havoc with the march of time.

For centuries, there were two sites that constituted focal points for this encounter of different worlds.

One was Acapulco, to which the tradeship of the same name brought the exotic products of the Orient, returning thence laden with the merchandise of New Spain. The other was the

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### An autochthonous art where pagan roots mingle with Catholic ones

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narrow Isthmus of Tehuantepec, between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. European commerce passed across this Isthmus, leaving its traces in the lands of the ancient Olmecs, Zapotecs, Mayas, and Mixtecs. On the Gulf side of the isthmus, countless travelers, merchants, and adventurers settled down on the banks of the Coatzacoalcos River to found families of mixed race.

On the opposite side is the present-day state of Oaxaca—a country within a country, dominated by the majestic ruins of Monte Alban. Its deep-rooted traditions take one by surprise: the women of Tehuantepec, in their colorful costumes and braids, dancing proudly to the music that enlivens the *fiesta* of the *Guelaguetza*; the tasty, complex, strange-smelling meals to be found in the market of the state capital; an art characterized by variegated syncretism. The baroque churches of Santo Domingo and San Felipe Neri; La Soledad, with masses where the old art of the Indians hides behind the incense; vividly-



Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

Chac Mool, Mayan Salon, National Anthropology Museum.



colored flower garlands; religious vestments resembling the folk dress of the region; and centuries-old saints fashioned by the heirs of a culture that has withstood civilization's onslaughts. Oaxaca —land of Vasconcelos, Porfirio Diaz and Benito Juárez— has produced two of Mexico's most important contemporary artists: Rufino Tamayo and Francisco Toledo.

**The Twentieth Century in Mexico: Crossroads of Contemporary Art**

With the revolution, Mexico became an even more impressive presence on the world scene. The images of revolutionary leaders Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa, and of the hosts of men and women who followed them through mountain and desert, were seen around the world, and are still as vivid today as they were half a century ago. The *corridos* and other songs of the revolution have lost none of their appeal either. The song *Adelita* is the *leitmotiv* of this adventurous era. Hollywood created, through countless movies, the image of a violent, cruel Mexico, whose temperament attracted seekers after the exotic.

With the consolidation of the revolution during the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), Mexico became the meeting place for the vanguard of the international art world. Extraordinary things were included in a recent exhibition of surrealism in Mexico, held in the imposing National Museum — just a few blocks away from the Great Temple. There were photographs of the enormous and mysterious surrealist city built in the depths of the jungle by English millionaire aristocrat Ed-

glishmen, Armenians... The new-comers' cultural contribution to contemporary Mexico was to be invaluable. Many of these exiles' Mexican-born sons and daughters are more nationalistic than their compatriots of criollo or Indian ancestry. Film-maker Paul Leduc, one of these first generation Mexicans, has attempted, in his recent film *Frida*, to capture the feel of that Mexico of the thirties and forties, so crowded with the exiles and dreamers, the dissenters and defeated of the entire world. Writers Elena Poniatowska and Margo Glantz, both of European parentage, devote their literary efforts to unraveling that strange new Mexico they first saw through children's eyes. That metropolitan Mexico in which there flourished publishing houses such as the *Fondo de Cultura Económica* and where the literary group *Los contemporáneos*, led by Salvador Novo, Xavier Villarrutia, Jorge



Photo by Rogelio Cuéllar.  
Poet Octavio Paz.

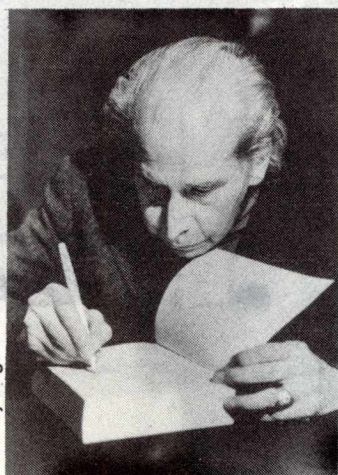


Photo by Rogelio Cuéllar.  
Writer Luis Cardoza y Aragón.

ward James, with no other purpose than that of entwining it with the exuberant vegetation; photographs of the delirious Antonin Artaud, peyote-seeker and chronicler of the Tarahumaras; dream paintings by Remedios Varo and Frida Kahlo; the volcanic landscapes of the mysterious Mexican painter Dr. Atl; poems from Peruvian César Moro's *La tortuga ecuestre* (The Equestrian Turtle); works by Guatemalan poet Luis Cardoza y Aragón; paintings from the easel of Diego Rivera; texts by Octavio Paz and his excellent essay *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. Just a small sample of the prolific artistic activity of the time.

While the surrealists met to present their irreverences, Malcolm Lowry was writing one of the century's most important novels and perhaps the most intense text ever written about Mexico: *Under the Volcano*. John Huston has adapted it for the screen with impressive authenticity: in legendary Cuernavaca, an English consul —alcoholic and, needless to say, delirious— undergoes a personal crisis which blends into the catastrophic winds of the world.

From a Europe devastated by the Spanish Civil War and then by the Second World War, floods of immigrants arrived in Mexico. There were Germans, Russians, Jews, Spaniards, En-



Photo by Rogelio Cuéllar.

Film-maker Luis Buñuel.

Cuesta, and others, opened its windows to the world, under the attacks of a nationalism that was sometimes blind.

Out of the tension between the muralism of Rivera, Siqueiros and Orozco, and the contemporary art movement, something new emerged: a Mexico which has kept its roots, but which is also open to the world. It would be virtually impossible to map out so abundant a cultural activity as that which Mexico has inspired. Apart from those already mentioned, we would have to include D.H. Lawrence, John Reed and photographer Tina Modotti; Mayakowsky and Breton; English sculptor Henry Moore's *chac mool*; Luis Buñuel's *Los olvidados* (The Forgotten); stridentism as well as surrealism; the exile of the Venezuelan novelist Romulo Gallegos and the Mexican memoirs of Valle Inclán. We would also have to mention that it was here that Trotsky spent his last days of exile; that Gabriel García Márquez wrote *One Hundred Years of Solitude*; and that the great Spanish poet Luis Cernuda created *La realidad y el deseo* (Reality and Desire), one of the masterpieces of contemporary poetry. And to these, we would have to add the hundreds from South and Central America and other regions of the world who have produced some important creative work during their exile in Mexico.

What is the mysterious force in Mexico which stimulates such rich creative activity? Like a sphinx whose oracles are indecipherable, Mexico denies all possibility of certainty. And it is there, in the mystery, in the contemplation of the indecipherable and the ancient, that artists find themselves stimulated to relate the inexpressible. Nobody can explain Mexico. Its facets are countless; its abysses, bottomless. A better environment for creativity could not exist. Perplexity is the mother of great works of art, and for any foreigner life in Mexico is a never-ending kaleidoscope of questions without answer and of answers that have no question.★



## Good Friday in Ixtapalapa

**During Easter or Holy Week, processions and ceremonies take place in many parts of Mexico.**

**Interesting events can be seen in Chiapas, Oaxaca, Jalisco, Veracruz, Guanajuato as well as in the metropolitan area. In some places, the story of Jesus Christ is performed with carved figures representing the actors, while in other places, real life actors reenact the Passion story.**

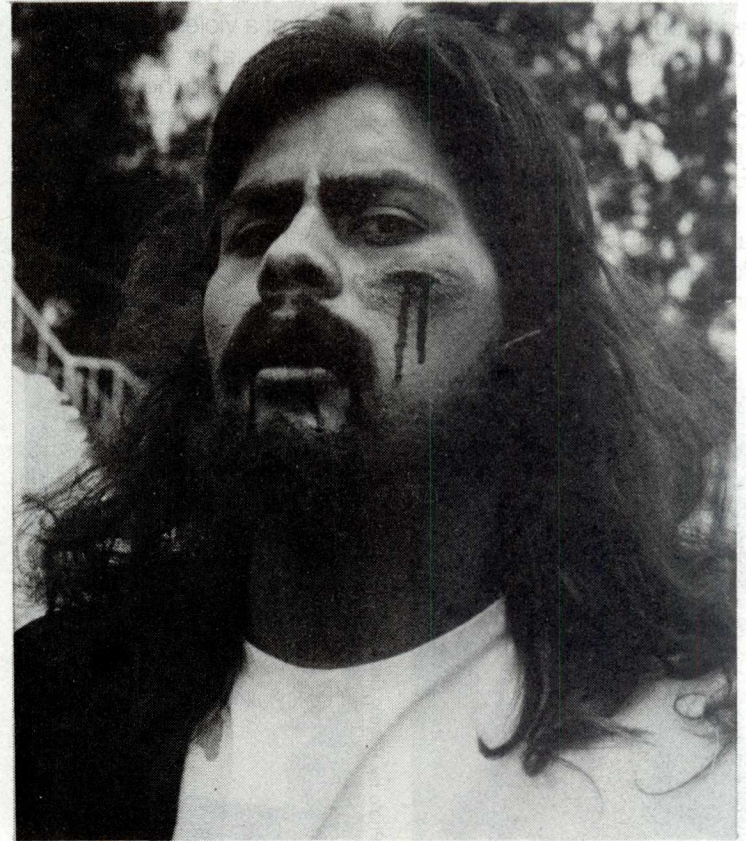
**Within Mexico City, huge crowds attend the reenactment performed in Ixtapalapa. Voices photographer Rafael Bonilla and reporter Jackie Buswell visited Ixtapalapa on Good Friday.**

More than 2 million people attend the re-enactment of the passion and crucifixion of Jesus Christ in the area of Ixtapalapa, in eastern Mexico City. The people of Ixtapalapa have acted out this story each Easter for 144 years, and today the event is planned by the Ixtapalapa Easter Week Organizing Commission, together with the local government.

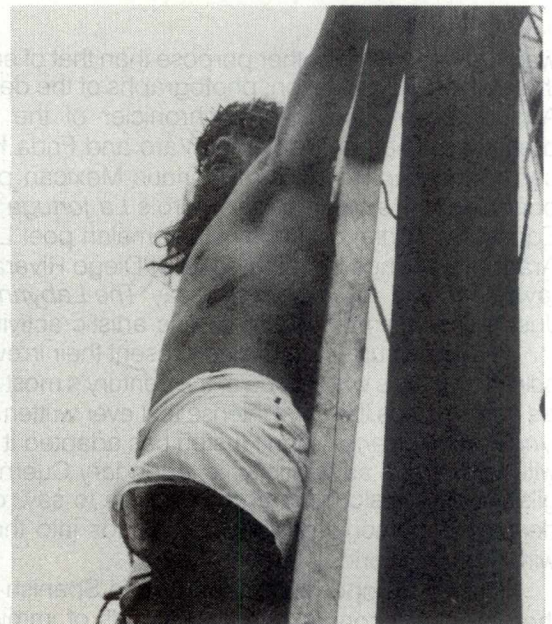
On Good Friday at 10 in the morning, crowds are beginning to gather, while the apostles and friends of the man from Nazareth, the ladies of Herod's court, the Roman soldiers and the priests and Pharisees are calmly preparing for the day's activities.

In spite of the crowds filling the house, the actors and actresses talk quietly among themselves as they paint their faces, spray their hair, and in the case of Herod's ladies, arrange their jewels. Impressive wounds and bruises are painted on Jesus Christ and Judas Iscariot. Meanwhile, a file of women and girls wash dishes and prepare food, and a group of men attend to the journalists and photographers.

Outside, the street is lined with some five thousand men and boys dressed as humble citizens of Nazareth who will carry their own crosses this day. The younger boys carry weights of some 45 pounds, while a notice advises that the maximum weight of the cross should be no more than 90 pounds. But Jesus himself, 23 year-old engineering student Hugo Valdez, has his own specially-made cross for the occasion, a mere 160 pounds.



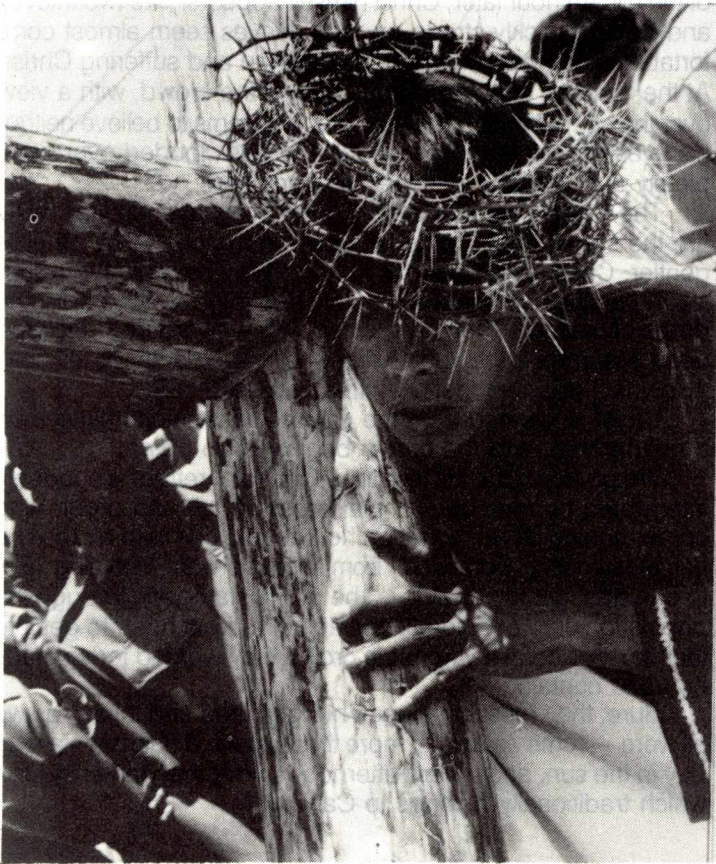
Christ on the way to crucifixion.





A procession of the penitents —each with his crown of thorns— moves off around 11 a.m., accompanied by family and friends from Nazareth and Ixtapalapa. Their route to Calvary includes 2.5 miles through the surrounding streets before they return to the Plaza Cuitláhuac where a huge crowd awaits them, and where the trial of Jesus Christ, carpenter of Nazareth, is about to take place.

As the penitents enter the plaza, it seems some of them have reached that "other state" suffering is said to provoke. Those who carry crosses too heavy for them and those who go barefoot, are the ones who suffer most. Health and rescue units are on hand to aid anyone who faints and to treat the blistered, bleeding feet of others.



Iztapalapa penitent.

### Family and friends of Jesus Christ

The Garden of Cuitláhuac has been transformed in the few hours since we walked across it this morning. By now it is filled —as are all the surrounding streets— with thousands of small-time vendors who sell everything from traditional arts and crafts to modern plastic artefacts, fruits, tacos, oysters and junk food.

The streets have also been occupied by the forces of law and order, around two thousand police: some men, some women, some with hats, some with helmets, some on horseback, some in cars, most on foot. They physically cordon off the Plaza to prevent people from moving onto the square, which is reserved for actors and the press.

Plaza Cuitláhuac is a big space, although the presence of some 500 police makes it seem smaller now. The square is rapidly filled with the penitents from Nazareth, who stand with their crosses, and the other actors who now enter the scene: the priests and Pharisees, Pontius Pilate and his court, the apostles, family and friends of Jesus Christ, the court of Herod, and Judas Iscariot, who acts magnificently, half mad, half bad, shaking the bag of money he earned when he betrayed Jesus to the priests and Pharisees.

Now we all suffer in the mid-day sun: the penitents, the police-women in their tight-fitting nylon uniforms, the photographers carrying their equipment and the onlookers who have been standing waiting for hours.

The priests and Pharisees begin their part, demanding the execution of Jesus Christ, "seditious young man who has been provoking the population, who says he is the son of God." While this is going on, the police are pushing back part of the crowd that wants to enter the plaza, the atmosphere is tense, but lines are re-established.

The play continues: Pontius Pilate demands to see the prisoner, who is then brought on stage by the Roman soldiers. Pilate says that the priests and Pharisees are "false and envious" while "the beauty of Christ's soul can be seen in his face." Unable to resolve the case to the priests' satisfaction, Pilate sends the prisoner to Herod, whose court is on the other side of the plaza. Christ, who has talked with Pontius Pilate, refuses to talk to Herod, who is scornful and abusive. He declares that Christ is guilty and sends him back to Pilate for sentencing. Barabbas, a common prisoner accused of murder, is freed, while Christ —a political prisoner— is sent off to be whipped and crucified, at the insistence of the priests and Pharisees.

Two fat and solid men, dressed in animal skins, have been seen in the Plaza for some hours: they are the whippers. They



Virgin Mary weeping.





## life and culture

have carried about, with much show, huge bundles of thorns, but at the last moment they change their instrument, and Christ is whipped with a bunch of thornless herbs.

After this, the actors, the procession of penitents and the crowd all move off to Calvary, in this case, El Cerro de la Estrella, Star Mountain. This is a dusty hill not completely cleared of rubbish. All around it, a waiting throng is surrounded and contained by police on foot and on horseback. The streets leading up the hill are likewise filled by the crowd.

### The Ethic Of Suffering

The people have been standing in the sun and dust for



Judas.

some three or four hours, occasionally struggling with the police in the midst of stamping horses and restless children. A member of the organizing committee who said he once acted as a Roman soldier, tells me the police forces are necessary for the safety of the crowd. This message was constantly repeated over the loudspeaker system by a paternalistic voice.

Why the people themselves, many with young children, choose to stand in these conditions for so many hours during their Easter holiday, is one of the mysteries in this ethic of suffering. Those who carried crosses said they did it because "God has given me a lot" or because they are repenting for their sins. This was another mystery: that young boys, eight or 14-years old, should have such an intimate sense of repentance, and such a will to suffer so as to feel "satisfied at the end."

The penitents with their crosses begin to arrive at the top of the hill. An hour later, Christ himself appears. The two thieves and he are quickly strung up. The thieves seem almost comfortable in comparison with the stretched and suffering Christ. At the moment of being raised up over the crowd, with a view over the city of Mexico, the young actor seems to believe neither his eyes nor his fate. By now the sky has clouded over completely and the whole scene has darkened.

The theater goes on slowly. One thief says, "If you really are the son of God, get us all down from here." The other is gentler. Christ calls upon his father: "Why have you forsaken me?" He cries out that he is thirsty and is given the traditional drops of vinegar. Then he's tested with a sword and declared dead. Meanwhile, the Virgin Mary weeps and demands to know: "How is it possible that they treat you like this?"

Christ is lowered from the cross, Judas hangs himself on a nearby tree, and the crowd begins to go home.

We go down the hill together. Our calm retreat is suddenly interrupted by members of the forces of law and order, who come running down, some on horseback, one with a cross he has presumably "borrowed" from some penitent. Shouting "Get to one side, get to one side," the police stampede through the population onto Avenida Ixtapalapa in a great hurry to get into their buses and away from the crowd they worked for so many hours to contain.

Sure, they must have been hungry, tired and thirsty, as we all were —some assuredly more than others. It had been a long day in the sun, and a hard afternoon under that darkening sky which traditionally belongs to Calvary.★





# New Hope for Victims of Parkinson's Disease

## Mexican doctors perform transplants from suprarenal gland to the brain

Samuel Rosales Cenicerros, 55, suffered from uncontrollable shaking in several parts of his body. For eleven years he had been unable to write his name or draw a line or a circle. Mr. Rosales had Parkinson's disease. His doctors offered him a possible hope: a cerebral gland transplant. Thirty-three days after the operation, Mr. Rosales was able to draw and write. Mrs. Maria Antonieta Silva, 51, had suffered from the same disease for over twelve years. She had serious difficulty walking and talking. Six days after the gland transplant, she could respond to her doctor's instructions and raise her legs without any signs of Parkinson's disease symptoms.

These two cases represent the most important breakthrough in years in the treatment of Parkinson's disease, a progressive degeneration of the nervous system affecting mainly the elderly, and whose characteristic symptom is uncontrollable trembling in parts of the body. Sufferers from the disease are incapable of carrying out a number of ordinary, everyday activities. Some cannot even walk without assistance. Almost all have trouble writing or speaking. Sufferers' faces are generally expressionless. Drugs such as Cinemet can control the shaking, enabling sufferers to perform some of their normal activities; but after a time these medicines become ineffectual. In advanced

stages of the disease, patients become total invalids.

Parkinson's disease is caused by lack of Dopamine, a chemical substance found in the brain which has the

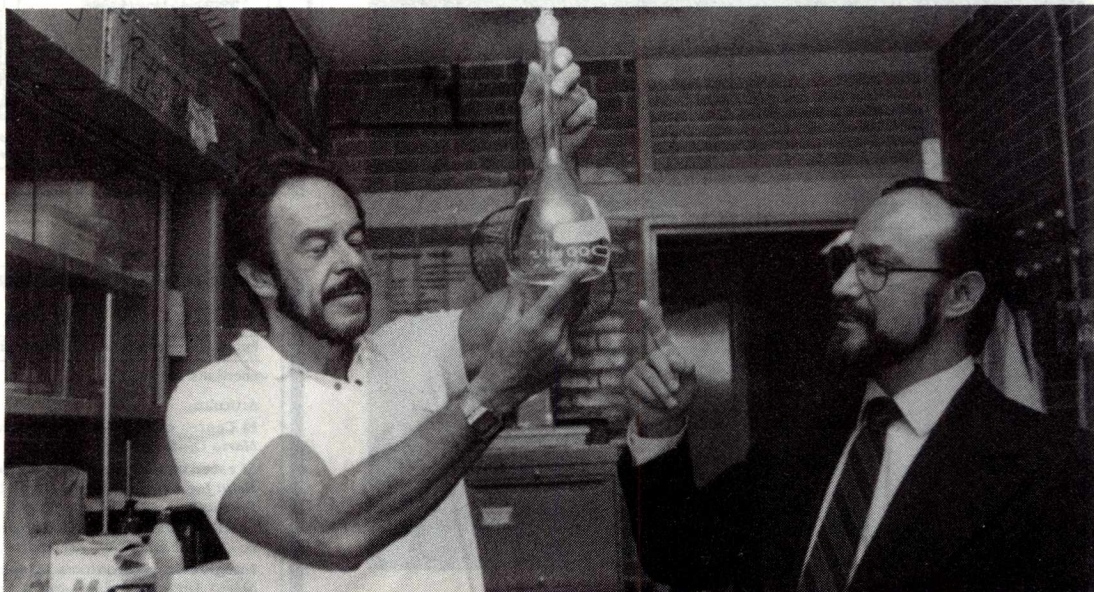
function of sending messages between neurons. The fact that Dopamine is also produced in the suprarenal glands has inspired researchers seeking a cure for Parkinson's disease. Animal experiments had already shown that the nervous system is capable of accepting transplants from other organs to regenerate some of its functions.

The first suprarenal gland transplants to the human brain were performed in Sweden in 1982. The results, however, were negative: after a short period of improvement, the patients' condition

deteriorated once again. Success has, however, crowned the more recent efforts of a Mexican team led by Drs. Ignacio Madrazo (Head of the Neurosurgery Department of the La Raza Specialist Hospital) and René Drucker Colín (Head of the Neurosciences Department of the Cell Physiology Institute at the National Autonomous University).

The Mexican specialists technique consists in the introduction of the medulla of the suprarenal gland into the caudate nucleus, situated in the cerebral ventricle cavity. The caudate nucleus is surrounded by the cerebrospinal

## In advanced stages of the disease, patients become total invalids



Checking Dopamine.

Photo by Sergio Dorantes

## Pioneering doctors receive award for their work from the Mexican President

On May 19 this year, President Miguel de la Madrid awarded Drs. Ignacio Madrazo and René Drucker a medal of recognition for their work on Parkinson's disease. Also present on the occasion of the award were Ricardo García Sáiz, Director of the Mexican Social Welfare Institute (IMSS), and Jorge Carpizo, Rector of the National Autonomous University (UNAM).

Madrazo and Drucker presented the President with a brief account of their experiments and extended their thanks to the IMSS and the UNAM for

providing facilities that made possible this important medical breakthrough. The IMSS and UNAM representatives gave assurances of their continued support for future research on the disease.

De la Madrid expressed the satisfaction felt by government and public for the successful results of the transplant experiments, which, he said, had placed Mexican medical science in a "foremost position in the world."

R.C.

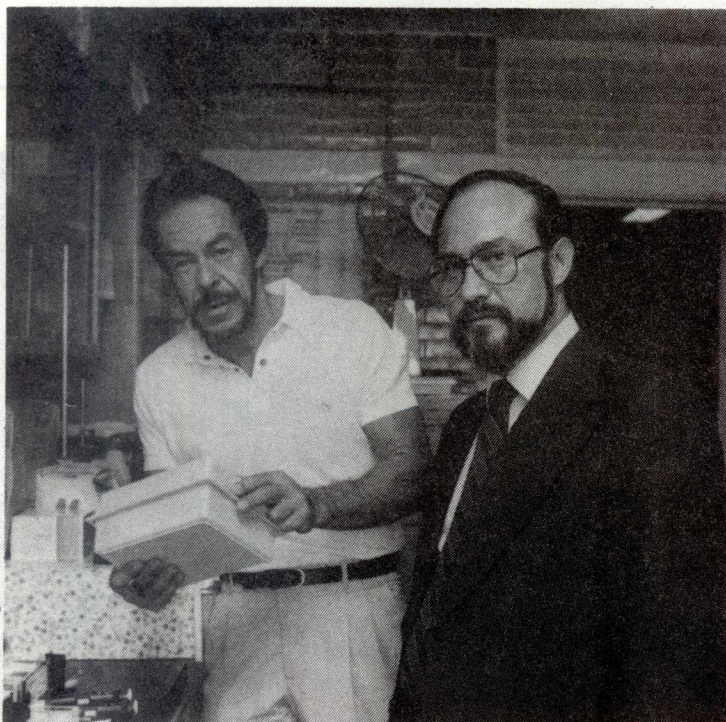


## science

fluid, which provides the transplanted tissue with the nutrients necessary for its conservation. The key to the Mexican success probably lies in the direct relation between the transplanted medulla and the cerebrospinal fluid. The operation is carried out in two stages: first, a team of urologists extract the gland, and then another team performs the transplant to the brain. The success of the new tech-

plains that for the first few days after the operation, the transplanted medulla produces unusually high levels of Dopamine, causing trembling and body stiffness to disappear completely. Dopamine production drops to a more normal level, however, as the medulla adapts to its new environment, resulting in the reappearance of slight trembling in certain parts of the body. But

### The new technique opens the way for transplants from other parts of the body to the brain



Doctors Ignacio Madrazo and Drucker Colín.

nique opens the way for transplants to the brain of organs from other parts of the body, thus offering hope for people with other neurological disorders.

Mr. Rosales and Mrs. Silva are two of ten patients who have undergone the operation. To date, their recovery has been satisfactory. Muscular stiffness has practically disappeared; trembling in fingers and legs is so slight as to be almost unnoticeable. Mrs. Silva can now speak clearly, and her daily dose of Cinemet has dropped from over seven lb. to 1.5 oz. Dr. Madrazo ex-

even this, in Dr. Madrazo's estimation, will stop in time.

Mr. Rosales and Mrs. Silva are still under observation and are expected to achieve complete recovery in two or three years. In that period, the Drucker-Madrazo team hope to carry out nine further gland transplant operations, with the aim of acquiring the experience necessary to consolidate this important breakthrough in medical science.★

R.C.

## narrativa grijalbo

**LOS COLORES OCULTOS**  
*Aline Pettersson*

**CIUDADES DESIERTAS**  
*José Agustín*

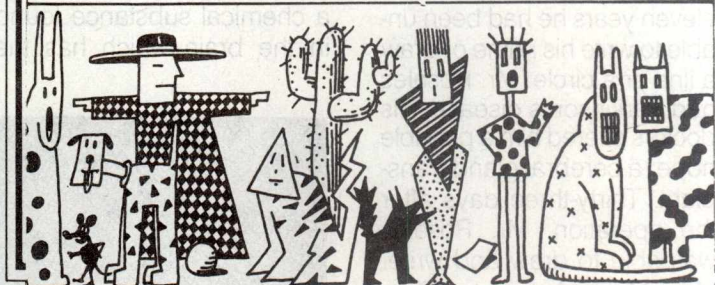
**EL TAÑIDO DE UNA FLAUTA**  
*Sergio Pitol*

**LA VIDA NO VALE NADA**  
*Agustín Ramos*

**OTILIA RAUDA**  
*Sergio Galindo*

**DÉJAME QUE TE CUENTE**  
*Rafael Gaona*

**ELÍAS NANDINO**  
*una vida no/velada*  
*Enrique Aguilar*



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# Birds Die in Winter Smog

Intense pollution during winter months affects migratory species

In Mexico City, pollution always poses a serious problem. The geographical features of the area, a valley surrounded by mountains, and the direction of the prevailing winds, hinder the dispersal of pollutants. Nevertheless, pollution becomes worse with the arrival of winter, due to the meteorological phenomenon known as "thermal inversion", in which cold air becomes trapped beneath a layer of warm air. Thermal inversions, which have been becoming more frequent in recent Mexico City winters, are dangerous because they prevent pollutants from rising and dispersing into the upper atmosphere.

At the beginning of February this year, in the midst of widespread concern over the effects of pollution, the national press reported the death of an enormous number of birds in Mexico City. Nobody has determined the exact total of bird deaths, though it is known that most of them were Canadian goldfinches (*Bombus cedrorum*), a migratory species whose route begins in Canada and the northern United States, crosses Mexico and ends in its southern regions or even farther south.

The Mexican Ecological Movement was quick to attribute the birds' deaths to the pollution level, and warned of danger to children and the elderly. In the period immediately prior to the deaths, pol-

lution had reached its most critical levels of the winter. The Ministry of Urban Development and Ecology (SEDUE) maintains a daily monitoring network which registers amount and type of pollutants, reporting its findings in the Metropolitan Air Quality Index (IMECA). The IMECA scale goes from 0 to 500, with 200 indicating emergency level. On the days immediately before the dead birds appeared, pollution had been at 270 on the scale, with ozone, nitrogen dioxide and suspended particles accounting for most of it.

Interviewed on the subject, Dr. Miguel Yacamán, of the UNAM Physics Institute, reported that the phenome-

non of dead birds in winter is not entirely new: it also occurred at the end of January 1985, when 50 dead birds were collected from different parts of Mexico City and examined at the UNAM Veterinary School. While it was impossible to reach definite conclusions as to the cause of death in these birds, the amounts of lead and cadmium found in their lungs and livers were double the quantities considered non-toxic for living organisms.

The inhalation of cadmium affects the respiratory system and the kidneys. Many lead compounds cause lung and kidney cancer and destroy red blood cells; they are quickly absorbed by inhalation.

At the beginning of 1986, their concern aroused by the death of the birds, a Physics Institute research team carried out a series of studies designed to determine the level of heavy metal contamination in the human population of Mexico City. The level of metals in the bloodstream can be determined through chemical analysis of hair samples. The results of these analyses as performed on a sample of 100 residents of Mexico City revealed an average lead level double the clinically accepted toxicity point.

"Even if the birds did not die from metal poisoning,"

states Dr. Yacamán, "the findings were still very alarming, because they showed that the birds had as high a concentration of metals in their organisms as has been found in humans. In birds, resistance, absorption time, and response to poisoning are all lower than in humans. Since Mexico City is the most lead-contaminated city in the world, the birds probably absorbed the lead here, though we cannot positively affirm that that was the cause of their death."

Even before the death of the Canadian goldfinches, SEDUE had announced one hundred anti-pollution measures, among the most important of which was the signing of an agreement with the Mexican Automobile Manufacturers' Association, obliging auto-makers to include antipollution devices in their 1988 models. These devices should mean a significant reduction in automobile-produced nitrogen monoxide and carbon monoxide, and hence a decrease in ozone and other harmful compounds. If such devices are also installed in used cars, the effort to reduce the pollution caused by Mexico City's almost three million motor vehicles will be complete.

As for lead pollution control, a first step has been the recent introduction of low-lead gasoline by the Mexican Petroleum Company (PEMEX).

Nevertheless, Mexico City pollution is a much larger problem than this. Mexican Ecological Movement researchers report that 728 thousand tons of particles are annually produced by 30 thousand industrial plants in the city, and that 308 thousand tons of dust blow in annually from the 22 thousand hectares (about nine thousand acres) of stripped land round the city's rim. The magnitude of the problem indicates that there is still much to be done. The results of the measures announced by SEDUE will be seen in years to come.★

Luz Guerrero Cruz



Photo from Novedades archive.

Ecological Alliance march protesting threat posed to Mexico City residents by pollution.



## Exhibits

### Adventures of a Reader in the International Book Fair

The Eighth International Book Fair brought with it the world's latest and increasingly costly certainties. Once again the Palacio de Minería in downtown Mexico City was host to the miracle of myriads of books all on display together, and gazed upon by hungry eyes.

To the rich harmonies of paper-bound ideas, the Fair arrived on a Saturday and left town on a Sunday; its music played from February 28 through March 8, 1987. Fifteen hundred publishers from 43 countries took up stands in this event sponsored by the National Autonomous University of Mexico, its School of Engineering, Humanities' Coordinating Center and University Cultural Extension, along with the Mexican National Chamber of Publishers.

As in other years, once again the Fair made us grateful for the sound of rustling pages, and allowed us to breathe the scent of glittering book covers and listen to the hum of browsing book-lovers. All in all, over a million people came to the Palace, a 65% increase in attendance over 1986.

As I ventured through the halls of Minería and felt the blessings of books rain down on me, I realized how out of reach the books closest to us really are. Georges Duby's work, *Tiempo de Catedrales. El arte y la sociedad 980-1420* (The Age of Cathedrals. Society and Art, 980-1420), was selling for fifty dollars, practically a quarter of a university professor's monthly salary: I could only touch and caress the book, and put it back in its sanctuary, on its stand. Raymond Aron's *Memorias*

(Memoirs) was selling for the same price... No way I could afford it: And I could only gaze sadly at Carl Sandburg's *The Complete Works* of Jorge Luis Borges...

The highest priced book cost almost \$2,000; but it was comforting to know there were also books going for fifty cents. And despite the fact that most of the books were way beyond our reach, the Fair did allow us to enjoy an endless variety of genres and topics, including poetry, fiction, agriculture, ecology, nutrition and psychology. The endless adventure continued on into philosophy, physics, cybernetics, languages, music, history, children's literature, gardening, mathematics, business management, biography, and more.

We strolled through the Fair's 420 stands in a leisurely fashion, only quickening our pace when we reached the Iranian section, presided over by a fierce-looking poster of Khomeini. Hurrying on, we reached the Argentine section, where we settled down to rejoice and suffer through a video called *Outings with Borges*.

Following a day at the Fair, from twelve noon until nine at night, we headed for home enveloped in the aroma of books and the sound of the fading crowd, leaving behind us the reflection of book covers, those voices from distant worlds. Yet we returned, the next day and the next and the one after; repeating the ceremony over and over again.

Now that the *Palacio de Minería* has returned to its habitual silence and solitude, it seems fair to remember one outstanding book-launching that took place during it: the presentation of a book that tells the adventures and misfortunes of a Portuguese poet: *Vida y obra de Fernando Pessoa. Historia de una generación* (The Life and Work of Fernando Pessoa. The History of a Generation), written by Joao Gaspar Simoes. This book was launched on the first Saturday night at the Fair, with commentaries by writers Alvaro Mutis, Francisco Cervantes and Octavio Paz, who said: "Throughout the Twentieth Century the history of the intellectual class, with very few exceptions, has been the history of our civilization's sins and errors. The mistakes of our century's great leaders and politicians have surely been worse and far more bloody than those made by poor Pessoa."

And now that the Fair has come and gone, it's also fair to quote the testimony of its passing as it was recorded in those old birds of ill omen, better known as

newspapers:

Close to 400,000 books were sold during the Eighth International Book Fair. The most successful publishers in terms of sales were Mexico's Fondo de Cultura Económica, SEP (Ministry of Education) and UNAM.

The books on display occupied some 30,000 square feet of space and the cost per square foot was around \$26. It is estimated that double this year's space will be required for next year's Ninth Fair.

The Fair encompassed some 300 different activities, including conferences, forums, exhibits, concerts, theater, round table discussions, films, and Aztec,

Chinese, Korean, and Israeli folk-dances.

Two thousand people attended some 40 lectures; seven thousand attended 70 book-launchings. Some 80 meetings took place between Mexican and foreign publishers and book-sellers, to discuss arrangements for book sales, distribution and copyright exchanges.

Now that the Fair has left until next year, with its ink and paper music, I'm all set to return and repeat the ceremony of reviewing the latest and not always costly certainties. I'll be all set to renew the adventure.★

Luis Perdomo Orellana



International Book Fair stands, Palacio de Minería.

Photo from unoméano archive.



## Jewish Presence in Mexico

"Jewish Presence in Mexico" was the name given a series of cultural events held between May 11 and June 4 in different university forums to explore and disseminate information about the development of today's Mexican-Jewish community. The activities were organized by the UNAM's cultural outreach department, together with the *Tribuna Israelita* and the *Multibanco Mercantil de México*.

The series was inaugurated by UNAM Rector Jorge Carpizo and covered the gamut of Mexico's Jewish community's cultural and

artistic expressions, including theater, film, music, dance, literature, photography and panel discussions on scientific and intellectual topics.

"Jewish Presence" was organized as part of the activities to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, which also meant the arrival of the first Jews on the continent. Among the artistic talents present were film-makers Arturo Ripstein and Sergio Olhovich, theater director Abraham Oceransky and writers Sandro Cohen and Esther Seligson.

## Jorge Luis Borges

**One of the greatest writers of the twentieth century, JLB was born on 24 August 1899 in Buenos Aires. Poet, short story writer and essayist, he was awarded (along with Samuel Beckett) the International Literature Prize in 1961. His first book of poems was published in 1923, and in spite of his loss of sight he continued to live in the world of books until his death last year in Geneva, Switzerland.**

He was born a month early and was called Jorge after his father, Francisco after his paternal grandfather, Isidoro after his maternal grandfather and Luis after an uncle who was a legal expert. Spanish and English were the languages spoken at home, a home at the center of which was a cistern with a turtle in it, since in those days people believed that turtles purified water. He did translations and wrote poems, short stories, essays, songs and kisses of death. He was a friend of learned Mexican writer Alfonso Reyes, whose work he rescued from oblivion. He used to read on the streetcar on his way to work at the municipal library. But he was fired from the library, and later became Chicken, Hen, and Rabbit Inspector. He resigned and started lecturing on literature. His mother was put under house arrest for several days for singing the National Anthem on the street, and his sister landed in jail. Later, he was named Director of the National Library. One day the doctors forbade him to do any further reading or writing. So he began reading with his ears and writing with his breath. He would later say: The color of my blindness is not black, it is like the blaze of blue and yellow nebulae. He received awards, doctorates and other tributes, as well as insults. He stated that the native land is but a bad habit and that thus, he considered himself a citizen of many: Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Austin and Geneva, for example. He went through marriage and divorce, and then marriage again. Like any other human being, he was by no means exempt from contradictions. He once confessed: "I have committed the worst of sins a man can commit: I have not been happy. May the merciless glaciers of oblivion carry me away and lose me. I have let them down. I was not happy." But on a different occasion he stated that "Happily, I have often been happy." When asked about revenge and forgiveness he answered: "Forgetting is the only revenge and the only forgiveness. Do not hate your enemy, for if you do you are somehow his slave. Your hatred will never be better than your peace." He spent the years and they in turn spent him. They say his name was Jorge Luis Borges and he would have been 88 years old on August 24.

L.P.O.

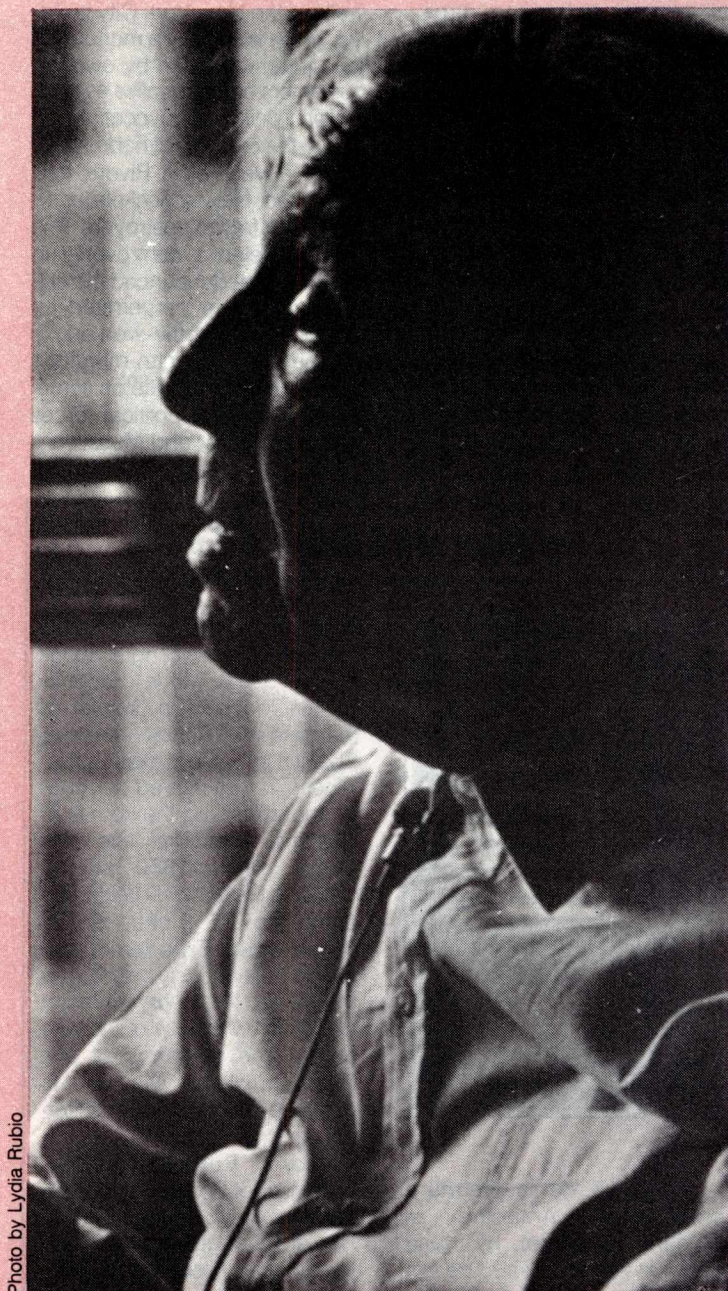


Photo by Lydia Rubio



Books

Diego Rivera in New York

Irene Herner de Larrea y otros: *Diego Rivera, Paraiso perdido en el Rockefeller Center*. FCPS de la UNAM-EDIPUCES, S.A. de C.V. %131 ilustraciones y hemerografía\*. México, 1986, 216 pp.)

This book was prepared by the UNAM's School of Social and Political Science to commemorate the centennial of Diego Rivera's birth, a tribute to the painter's vitality. Rivera's artistic genius and revolutionary nature are both set in the historical perspective of his time, and the so-

cial message of his work is contrasted with contemporary ideas in an attempt to rescue the value and importance of popular culture.

*Paradise Lost in Rockefeller Center* bears witness to the rediscovery of Rivera's "Americanist" identity in the midst of his complex Marxist ideology. Author Irene Herner de Larrea and her team plunged into the period between the two world wars to examine the political and ideological effects of Rivera's work through one of the most important moments in his development: his work in the foyer of Rockefeller Center. Rivera was forced to come down off his painter's platform and stop work on the mural he had been engaged to paint: painting Lenin's image as a symbol of labor leadership on the walls of the New York City building which is virtually a monument to capital, was seen by owners, customers and allies alike as a socialistic political provocation.

On the morning of February 9, 1934, a year after Rivera had been fired, Nelson Rockefeller ordered the fresco destroyed. This in turn fueled a controversy in which Rivera denounced the cultural vandalism perpetrated by "the enemies of the workers."

Thus, the Mexican muralist's work in the United States somehow mirrors the political forces that pitted Hitler and Mussolini's

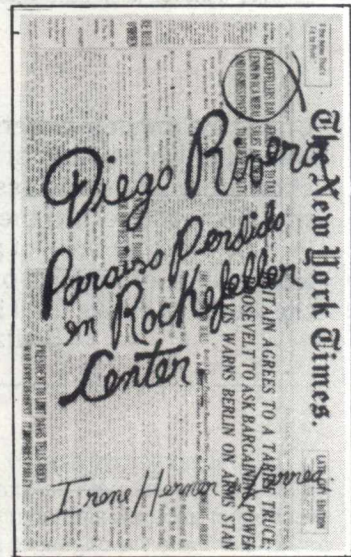
fascism, the socialism of Stalin and the scientific-technical-industrial take-off of North America against one another. Rivera's period in the U.S. also synthesizes his own pictorial school, developing since his return to Mexico in 1921, following 10 years of dialogue with European painting.

The diversity of form and color recaptured from Mexican and American culture, as opposed to the traditional European style, led to the combination of cubist and futurist features in "an intellectual movement that sought to develop those aspects most characteristic of Mexico," and to redeem the exotic, in order to return to the oppressed the culture that had been denied them.

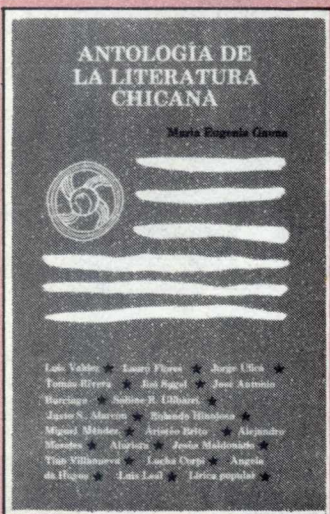
In the face of the 1910 (Mexican) and 1917 (Russian) revolutions, Rivera joined the Mexican Communist Party in 1922. He shared the mystical structure of the hero figure, the "Marxist missionary." While he was incapable of really going beyond the malinchismo\* deeply-rooted in the national consciousness, in his art he took up the utopian defense of a paradise that combined the pre-Columbian and the modern, the Indian and the proletariat.

Up until the 30's, Rivera developed his artistic career, while at the same time living through the ups and downs in his life as a

party member, motivated less by the in-depth study of Marxist theory than by his eclectic genius, keeping his distance from Stalinist cultural policy and his own party's line on the matter, while at the same time speaking out in favor of Leninism and being openly sympathetic to Trotsky's ideas. The importance he attributed to mass propaganda, freedom for artistic creativity and his belief in the political nature of art, all led Rivera to muralism. These views also contributed to his expulsion from the Party in 1929, while other muralistas, such as David Alfaro Siqueiros and Xavier Guerrero, decided to go into politics full-time.



Anthology of Chicano Texts



*Antología de la literatura chicana* (An Anthology of Chicano Literature), by María Eugenia Gaona. *Centro de Enseñanza para Extranjeros*, UNAM, 1986.

In order to help Mexican-

American students overcome their difficulty in writing in Spanish, in 1979 María Eugenia Gaona devised a series of teaching materials for learning Spanish as a second language.

These in turn served as a basis for organizing the course in Chicano Literature she has taught since 1980 at the UNAM's Center for Foreign Students (the CEE, Centro de Enseñanza para Extranjeros), and which continuously yields new insight into the theory, criticism and literary traditions of Chicano origin. The demands of Ms. Gaona's course led her to produce this anthology of literary texts.

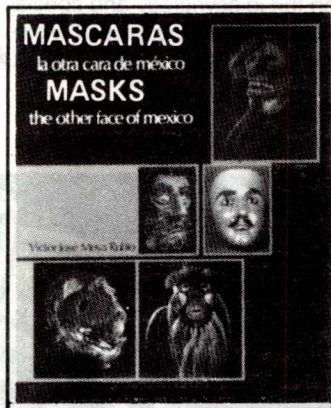
María Eugenia Gaona, professor of Spanish and Literature at the CEE, majored in Hispanic Language and Literature and has specialized in Mexican Literature. She is also a literary critic and has published numerous articles on the subject.





## Bilingual Edition on Mexican Masks

**Máscaras: La otra cara de México** (*Masks: Mexico's Other Face*), by Victor José Moya Rubio. Third bilingual edition (Spanish-English), UNAM, Mexico, 1986.



That other face, the mask, has existed as a cultural expression throughout time. There are masks of all sorts: ceremonial, ritual, for funerals, for war, for use in magic as practiced by the peoples of Africa, India, Polynesia and by American Indians, including Mexicans.

"The look that looks and doesn't see," as Mexican writer Octavio Paz described masks, has been used as a symbol by man to transform himself and as a magical instrument to help him achieve his desires.

*Masks: Mexico's Other Face* was put together by Victor José Moya using his own magnificent collection, acquired over the years, from all parts of Mexico, and which forms part of his assemblage of masks from five con-

tinents. A sample of the complete collection consisting of 750 masks, was exhibited in museums in Mexico, the United States, England, Germany, France, Poland and Japan, among other countries.

This bilingual edition is illustrated with black and white and color photographs and includes an interesting study on the subject of masks. Overall, it presents an excellent description of Mexican masks, covering several different regions, peoples and traditions, providing valuable insight into the wealth and peculiarities of the nation's culture.

We have here the history of masks from pre-Hispanic times to the present, both in graphics and in text. We learn that in pre-Hispanic times masks carried special importance, and both their social and artistic implications have been extended and superimposed among the practices of contemporary ethnic groups.

Throughout history and today, masks have been an important factor in the lives of Mexicans. They are used in dances, carnivals and religious *fiestas*, and in addition to their symbolic quality, masks are an art form practiced by people of all ages.

Sacred dances appeared among the earliest inhabitants of what today is Mexico, and were dedicated to the Moon and Sun. The martial, mystical and ritual dances that are still enacted today in many religious *fiestas*, developed at later dates. In all of them masks are an important component of the costume. Among the dances carried out in different parts of the country we can cite the *Archareros*, or archers. This is a variation of the Moors and Christians dance developed during the colonial period, and three types of masks are used: Señor Santiago, Captain Savario and the *Archers*, who represent the heretics. In the

weighted down by the "resonance of disenchantment," at a time when the "red hope has become a reality that has little to do with the illusion of paradise," and "the proletarian paradise is collapsing."

Yet the sources cited throughout this essay reveal that rather than being skeptical about the individual's subjective role in life, she aims to bring out a demand being voiced strongly in Mexico today: autonomy for popular cultural expression *vis a vis* the State, even though officialdom has made such extensive use of Rivera.

Diego Rivera lost a legal battle at Rockefeller Center, but the point is that the infringement of an artist's rights cannot be forgotten, nor is the past or present supremacy of monopoly over the artist admissible, says the author, since the artist can exert his moral right to create, complete and protect his work.

It was impossible to silence the Rockefeller affair. The Detroit Institute of Art houses a mural painted during those same years

Irene Herner believes that when Rivera arrived in the United States in 1930 he saw himself as the artist with a redemptive mission. This in turn made him influential among U.S. intellectuals anxious to find the popular artistic forms that went with "America for the Americans."

Once in the United States, the Mexican muralist proved "capable, in the first place, of surrounding himself with people who, even in a time of world crisis, could pay for and promote the creation and sale of works of art," and this despite the criticism of his communist detractors. Rivera moved into this world to express the beauty of industrial progress through "a human dream that was more mythical than political and historical." Diego Rivera's artistic authority survived the controversy with the Rockefellers, bolstered by defense committees set up by North American students and painters and by political groups who shared his concept of art.

The author recognizes Rivera's skill at mass propagand-

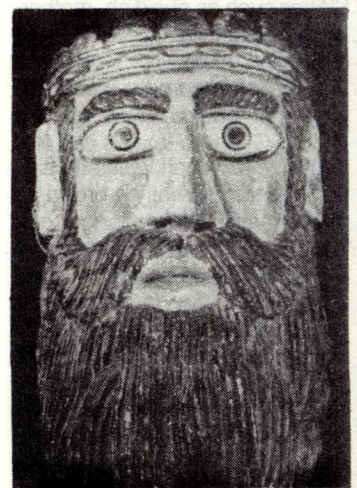


and was also hounded for political reasons. And Rivera conquered a space for another mural on the same theme, this one in Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes.\*\* What did prove impossible, though, was to settle the differences between his committed school of art and the pictorial current of so-called pure art, defended against Rivera mainly by French painter Henri Matisse.

\* Rejecting what is national and admiring all that is foreign.

\*\* Palace of Fine Arts.★

Tania Palencia





## odds and ends

Nayar mountains, dancers cover their faces with masks representing deer, bulls, wild boars, iguanas and lizards, in designs that combine monstrous and human features.

Masks are a central feature, sometimes even the most important one, in religious fiestas honoring patron saints, virgins or other Christian holidays, as well as in regional and patriotic celebrations. Children also don masks that turn them into scary devils, happy clowns or traditional Mexican *Calaveras*, the gaily decorated skulls and skeletons typical of All Saints' Day celebrations. Such is the case of the widely used masks of Celaya, Guanajuato, made of pressed



cardboard, shaped and moulded by hand.

Because of Mexico's vast cultural and climatic mosaic, the materials used to make masks vary greatly. Sometimes soft pine wood is used, while others employ hard woods; the wood can be natural, polished, polychromed or covered with fabric and painted with oils, as is the custom in the state of Guerrero. Stones such as obsidian, mother-of-pearl and turquoise are broadly used in some areas, whereas in Jalisco, for example, masks are made of cooked and painted clay. In Guerrero, masks can also be made of woven, painted palm.

There is currently a broad array of masks that no longer correspond to the characters traditionally portrayed in rites, ceremonies and dances. This is mostly due to the fact that mask-makers, whose Indian communities used to be quite isolated, are now being influenced by mass media. The ancient masks and their ritual force are losing ground and becoming han-

dicrafts made out of industrial materials such as rubber. Even though these masks are mainly for decorative purposes, they're made with great skill and imagination. The Linares family of mask-makers in Mexico City, for example, produce fantastic animal figures made of wire and paper called *alebrijes* ("ugly things"), which are famous world-wide.

This book on masks is a valuable work for anyone interested in the surviving expressions of age-old myths and in understanding the idiosyncrasy and special features of the peoples of Mexico, another face of our identity.★

R.C.



## The Artist Who Loves Cooking

Martha Chapa: *La cocina mexicana y su arte*. Editorial Everest Mexicana, S.A., Leon España, 1983.

Mexican Cookery and Its Art (*La cocina mexicana y su arte*) is no ordinary recipe book. Its author Martha Chapa is a well-known painter, and *Mexican Cookery* is a synthesis of both her callings: cuisine and art. Martha says she dreams of recipes and paintings. For her, cookery

serves as effectively as painting to express her inner being and the myths that nourish it: Eve; the serpent; and the coveted apple which constitutes the obsessive subject-matter of her art and which she has depicted in a variety of astonishing representations — with butterfly wings; enclosed in a shell, bearer of the secrets and the moisture of the sea; with serpent's skin, eye open to desire.

In cookery as in painting, Martha is concerned with texture, with unity of color and taste, with harmony of spaces and colors, with the search for the word that will express such harmony. According to Faustino Gordon, so Martha tells us, "Cookery illumi-



nated the word". The poets and painters who have been guests at her dinner table have expressed their delight in poems and sketches which the author jealously saved for inclusion in her book. Thus Javier Wimer's *La carta* (The Menu), Andrés Henestrosa's *El prólogo* (The Prolog), Alejandro Córdova's *La interpretación del Tótem y Tabú* (The Interpretation of Totem and Tabu), Horacio Cerutti's *La utopía por la cocina* (Utopia Through Cookery) and Salvador Elizondo's *El antojo* (The Craving), all retain a flavor of those dinner conversations in which Martha, surrounded by beloved objects, has been photographed by Paulina Lavista.

In *Mexican Cookery*, the recipes are not remote, impersonal lists of instructions. Martha writes in the first person: "The first thing I do is chop up the onion, fry it in oil, and then add the flowers, which I've already cleaned and cooked in their own juice." To Martha, her dishes are as harmonious, and as much her

## Art and Psychoanalysis

Teresa del Conde. *Las ideas estéticas de Freud* (The Aesthetic Ideas of Freud).

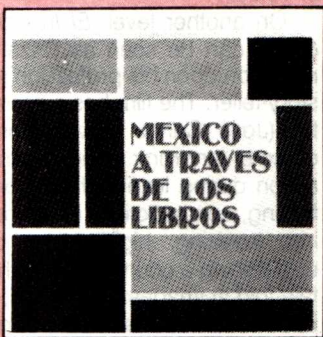
Editorial Grijalbo S.A.; Mexico, 1986, 258 pp.



This is probably one of the first works by a Latin American to deal specifically with Sigmund Freud's commentary and analysis of art, creativity and literature. Its great contribution lies in having brought together materials scattered throughout Freud's works and organized them by topics and chapters. The study critically reviews ideas by other authors on Freud, develops his artistic vision through a continuum, and most importantly, tries to provide the reader with a complete knowledge of Freud's thinking on art.



## Latest University Publications



Mexico a través de los libros (Mexico Through Books), Bilingual Spanish-English edition. UNAM, Mexico, 1987.

For centuries Mexico's great natural and cultural wealth has attracted the interest of specialists from around the world who have attempted to understand and explain the country's cultural expressions.

The same interest has guided the efforts of artists, writers and researchers at the UNAM, backed by the institution's publishing department, whose task it is to make a wide variety of subjects available to the broad public. The topics include demographic history, the social relationships developed through language, legend, myth and artistic expressions such as dance or visual arts; the combination of pre-Hispanic roots and Spanish influence during colonial times, etc.

These are some of the topics covered in the collection *Mexico Through Books*, put out by the UNAM. This new publishing guide offered by the UNAM to people interested in Mexican culture covers information on over 200 titles, organized by subject for easier and quicker reference.

-style duck *à l'orange*; she serves up the sophisticated lobster as *enchilada* filling.

Flowers and fruits, the gifts of the earth, are appreciated in all their range of possibilities. The aim is to understand and bring out their essence through their flavors. The pumpkin is changed, not into a coach as in Cinderella, but into a tureen holding a soup made with its own flower. Purple or yellow sweet potato is combined with sherry, its vivid colors providing an enlivening entrée. Imagination and beauty have come at Martha Chapa's call to express the infinite possibilities of what we see every day. In her art, everyday objects and ordinary kitchen herbs are redeemed in the whole range of their gastronomic and esthetic possibilities.

Martha has not locked herself up in her kitchen. On the contrary, she has thrown it wide open to us, endowed us with its multiple fantasy, helped us to discover the possibility of changing the familiar, of transforming old flavors. *Mexican Cookery* is an invitation to get back to the sources of things, to the place where the word is illuminated; to the birthplace of culture, where humanity learned to transform its first need — food — into an esthetic taste. A fusion of dreams and desires: that is the menu Martha Chapa shares with us in *Mexican Cookery and Its Art*.

Emma Rizo.

## Cinema

### Film: The Three of Hearts

#### New film by Mexican director Felipe Cazals

Film-maker Felipe Cazals possesses his own distinctive cinematographic style. This style was still developing in his 1982 *Bajo la metralla* (Under the Shrapnel); in the controversial *Los motivos de Luz* (The Motives of Luz), 1985, however, it was already fully established.

Both of these movies, whatever their faults, were very ambitious works. But Cazal's most recent offering, *El tres de copas* (*The Three of Hearts*), was conceived with the deliberate intention of being no more than a minor piece — a pot-boiler, — albeit an honest and decently-made one. It was shot in three weeks at Mexico City's Churubusco Studios and on a few locations close to the city. A film-maker's lot in Mexico at the moment is difficult, unstable and

## odds and ends

haphazard, even for a director of such well-established credentials as Cazals. *El tres de copas* was undertaken to provide support for future projects of a more significant nature.

For his purpose, Cazals took up a script written some years ago by Xavier Robles, freely inspired by a Jorge Luis Borges short story, *La trusa* (*The Drawers*). Borges' fans will, however, recognize the original work only at the film's beginning. In its development, *El tres de copas* differs substantially from *La trusa*. Cazals, in his many substantial modifications of the script, has done away with several characters and situations, and has even introduced a new character of great importance to the plot.

*El tres de copas* tells the story of two brothers, Damián (Humberto Zurita) and Pedro (Alejandro Camacho). Damián and Pedro are comrades-in-arms and foster-brothers — first departure from Borges' tale, in which they are blood brothers — whose father (or fathers?) belonged to the St. Patrick Battalion, a group of U.S. Army Irishmen who fought on the Mexican side in the U.S.- Mexican War of 1847.

The movie starts as Pedro and Damián are drinking, gambling and wenching their way home to Nochistlán, Zacatecas, after the war against the 1862-64 French intervention. In one of their stops, Pedro takes up with Casilda (Gabriela Roel), and she comes on to Nochistlán as well, where the brothers intend setting up a business. Pedro loves Casilda; Damián gambles, drinks, dreams of Casilda and listens to her making love in the next room. The triangle, or the trio, has been established; and from that point



Gabriela Roel and Humberto Zurita.

Photo by Incine.



## odds and ends

on, the cards will be changed or mixed up in a variety of ways. Using card-game terms, Cazals gives us the following explanation of his film: "It opens with a pair of twos. Three is the discard. But in matters of the heart, there's always some card left over."

*El tres de copas* is concerned with Fate, both in its "objective" sense and as chance; and with the myth of the *femme fatale*, time-honored favorite in Mexican film, song, and other cultural expressions. The main theme, though, is the triangle. Even such apparently unrelated interludes as the episode of Cipriano Melquisador (a splendidly truculent Pedro Armendáriz) are introduced with the purpose of reinforcing it. The triangle motif is sustained right to the movie's end—an ending which, incidentally, is both tongue-in-cheek and deliberately misogynist.

*El tres de copas* has been accused of being phallogocentric by certain diehard feminists, who have yet to forgive Cazals for *Los motivos de Luz*. In a certain sense this is true, though the intention is ironic. But if these critics were capable of really seeing the movie, they would understand that the driving force behind the action is not the phallus. Cazals is too good a film-maker to reveal his film's driving force through dialog, statements or abuse of general ideas. He uses other, less concrete means.

When Pedro first takes Casilda to live with him, the camera dwells upon her rear. At first, this is an objective point of view: the shot states and highlights forthcoming action. Shortly afterwards, however, it becomes subjective; it is Damián's viewpoint, and thus the film's driving force is fueled by the obsession of one of its characters. The same shot of Casilda's rear—this time naked—will occur again later, at the moment when Damián final-

ly manages to crystallize his obsession. Logically, here the point of view is simultaneously both subjective and objective.

In formal terms, stylization is the principle at play in *El tres de copas*. Cazal's Nochistlán is reduced to a few archetypal elements: a street, housefronts, typical village gossips, the usual figures to be found in taverns and other such meeting places. Camera work consistently employs long focus and short timing,

brilliant work on Arturo Ripstein's *El imperio de la fortuna* (*Fortune's Dominion*), reviewed in last issue of *Voices*.

On another level, *El tres de copas* can be seen as Cazal's reflection upon his profession as story-teller. The film has a narrator (José Carlos Ruiz) whose commentary runs alongside the action during its first third, confirming, contradicting, announcing, ironizing, highlighting, or establishing a counterpoint to the tale told in images. In the end, it is the narrator's tale which dominates.

Along with the formal principle of stylization, it is the narrator who establishes *El tres* calculated tone of unreality. One aspect of this is the characters' longevity. Strongman Ponciano (Enrique Lucero), for example, is hanged by revolutionaries in 1910; if at his first appearance (around 1870) he is about sixty, he must be a hundred by the time he dies. The narrator tells us that Casilda—by that stage Doña Casilda—dies in 1926, at a very ripe old age indeed. The narrator himself shares this characteristic. He speaks from a contemporary viewpoint, making reference to plane travel, for example; yet he claims to have known characters in the story personally. From a strictly realist angle, he transcends the limits of what is humanly possible.

The narrator intervenes constantly (if passively) in his fiction. He is omnipotent and omnipresent. His manipulation of the protagonists is such that it amounts to a refusal to let them live. His is something more than the recreation or retelling of an experience. It is the imposition carried out by all creators of fiction. By its very form, the film refuses to let us approach it as an experience retold.

In the narrator, Cazals presents himself—a little derisive god manipulating the characters he has created, an arbitrary maker of shams and artifices, taking materials from reality and converting them into pure fiction ruled by codes of its own. In *El tres de copas*, there is no confrontation between reality and fiction: right from the first shot, it is clear that reality has been sacrificed to fiction. Thus we are treated to a Pirandello-like speculation on the subject of characters as their author's doubles.

In this vision of the film-maker as creator of fictions, as falsifier, we see a Cazals stripped of all solemnity and capable of self-derision.★

### ***El Tres de Copas* is concerned with Fate, both in its "objective" sense and as a chance**



not only with interior and false exterior sets, but also on outdoor locations, very beautiful footage, incidentally, filmed on Mount Ajusco, just south of Mexico City. Through systematic use of this lens, indoor backgrounds are reduced to blurry masses of grays and blacks. This effect is an application of the stylization principle; at the same time, it is an intelligent solution to the problem of how to deal with the shabbiness and inauthenticity of the Churubusco sets. *El tres de copas* is the second triumph in the space of a few months for cameraman Angel Goded, who also did

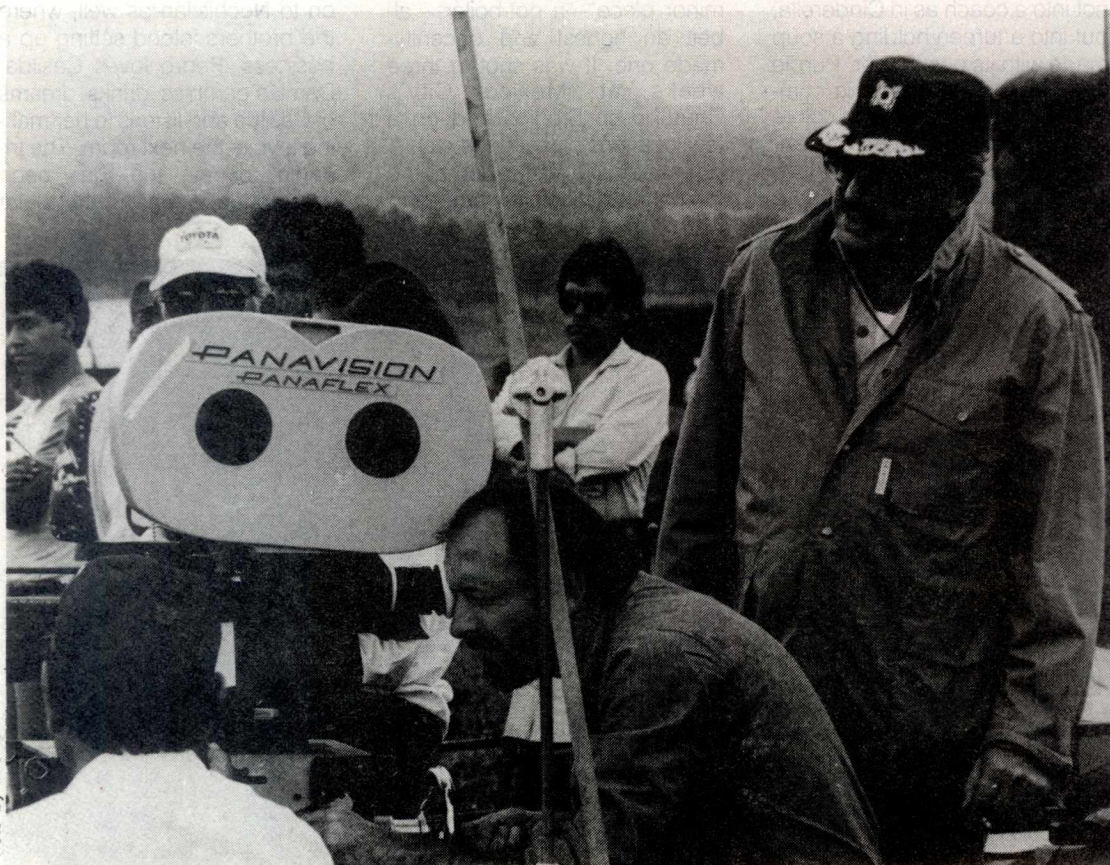


Photo by Imcine.

Felipe Cazals, *Tres de Copas* director.

Tomás Pérez Turrent



Music

population at large. For the third consecutive year, a group of individuals, government agencies and business firms got together to organize a festival to take place in and around some of the most important churches and buildings of the city's past. Although there was dance, theater and exhibits, it was mainly a music festival, and some very interesting things were heard during eleven exhilarating days. Opening night was a dance

gala, but music stole the show. The National Dance Company performed two pieces, one set to French baroque music, the other to Mexican composer Mario Kuri Aldana's score especially written for a ballet based on one of Diego Rivera's famous mural paintings. These pieces were a good warm-up for the main course, a strong performance of Igor Stravinsky's great score *Les Noces* (The Wedding Feast), with original choreography by Bronislawa Nijinska. As it should be, the

music was live, and the performance was a great opportunity to come closer to one of Stravinsky's masterpieces. Four vocal soloists, mixed choir, four pianos and percussion ensemble brought the score to life with strength and precision, and Stravinsky's ritual, almost hypnotic setting of the words was a perfect match for a choreography with the authentic ring of the 1920's. The musical effort was anchored by the National University Percussion Orchestra, and

Music for a Great City

That is, of course, the title of a piece written in 1964 by the great American composer Aaron Copland, but it's also the spirit in which an arts festival took place in Mexico City during the last days of March. The festivity's main purpose was to promote awareness of the astonishing riches found in the downtown section of the nation's capital. Many buildings dating from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century have been rescued from disrepair, restored and put into service for the benefit not only of those who work and live in downtown Mexico City, but for the



Santo Domingo Plaza, nineteenth century.

Photo from Salvat archive.



September 16th Avenue at turn of the century.

the whole ensemble was demanding led by the orchestra's music director, Julio Viguera.

Mexican composers, both old and new, were very much in the forefront of the festival. The organizers commissioned three new pieces to be premiered during the festival, from three of Mexico's most respected contemporary composers: Mario Lavista, Manuel Enríquez and Joaquín Gutiérrez Heras. Originally conceived as a string quartet and later transcribed for string orchestra, Lavista's *Reflejos de la noche* (Night Reflections) is a very refined study in the use of harmonics in string instruments, and in it the composer does not eschew the natural attraction of certain tonal centers of gravity.

Manuel Enríquez offered the third piece in a series he started back in 1969. *Díptico III* (Diptych III) is a very austere, highly organized dialog between one percussion player and a string ensemble, in which the main traits of Enríquez' musical thought were clearly evident, especially his deep knowledge of the string



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instruments, garnered throughout a long career as a violinist-composer. For his part, Joaquín Gutiérrez Heras contributed a fine *Postludio* (Postlude) for strings, a three-section, single-movement piece, conceived mainly along the lines of clarity and lightness of texture. In the piece, the composer's knowledge of Renaissance polyphony and the ancient modes was very much in evidence, though the composition is in no way archaic or old-fashioned. On the contrary, the composer succeeded in blending that knowledge into a very contemporary soundscape, touched with a tinge of the contemplative.

The two concerts at which these pieces were premiered also featured some works of Mexican colonial music by composers such as Hernando Franco, Juan de Lienas, Joseph de Torres, Manuel de Zumaya as well as anonymous compositions. These works, originally written for organ and voice, were transcribed for string orchestra by Mexican contemporary musicians. The performances were by the Fine Arts Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Manuel de Elías and Armando Zayas.

Mexican colonial music, in its original form, was also featured in a vocal concert given by the Convivium Musicum Choir, led by Frika Kubacsek at the Regina Coelli Temple. This concert featured sacred and secular music from old manuscripts found in Mexico City and Oaxaca, recently edited in modern versions. Although many of these composers were natives of Spain or Portugal, the music was written in Mexico, most of it for use in church services. A small orchestra of violins, trumpet, trombones, bass and organ, joined the choir in some of the pieces, and the night's highlight was a spicy, mischievous *villancico* (Christmas carol) sung *a capella* and with gusto by tenors Ignacio Clapés and Flavio Becerra.

As he did for the 1986 festival, Mexican conductor Eduardo Mata put together an ensemble of top performers for a concert of old music, played and sung according to truly authentic musical practice. First, the choir led by Jorge Medina sang sacred music by Palestrina, and a *chanson* by Guillaume Costeley, in a performance that led credence to the theory that ancient music should be approached with small musical forces to achieve the best results. Eight voices were more than enough to convey the mystic mood of Palestrina's *Kyrie*, *Christe*, *Kyrie* and the playful lines of Costeley's *Mignone*.

Next was Bach's first orchestral suite, played by a small group of soloists instead of the huge forces used according to nineteenth century whims. Eduardo Mata approached the performance in the same spirit he applied last year to Bach's six *Brandenburg Concertos*, trying to conform as much as possible to baroque musical art. String instruments were furnished with gut strings instead of the modern ones made of contemporary materials, and the bows were

strung a bit loosely to achieve a mellow sound quality. *Vibrato* was ruled out, and the phrasing made each instrumental line stand out clearly in the ensemble. The string section was anchored by the members of the Latin American String Quartet, with Luisa Durón at the harpsichord, and a very sharp woodwind trio with bassoonist Juan Bosco Corroero and oboists Roberto Kolb and Allyson Caldwell.

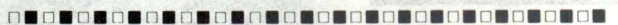
The program ended on a high note with a splendid performance

of Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's masterful *Stabat Mater*. His setting of the text on the Virgin Mary's vigil by the Cross is by far the best ever composed, and it was played and sung with the same outlook as Bach's suite. There were many very moving moments in this performance, in which soprano Lourdes Ambriz and mezzosoprano Encarnación Vázquez gave a beautifully balanced reading of the original Latin text.

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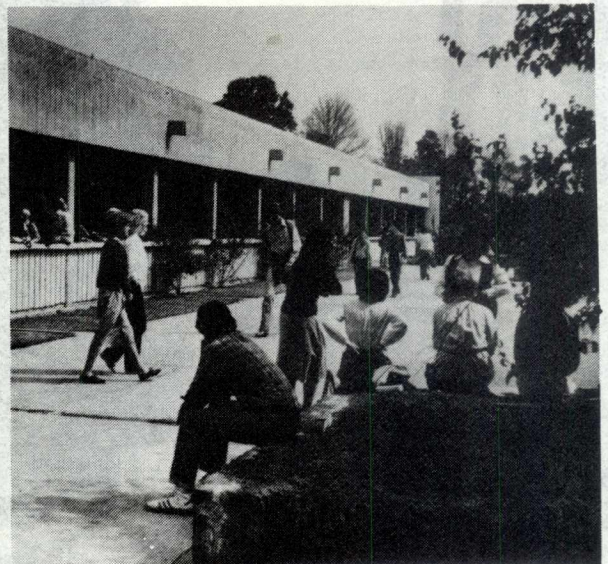
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Cathedral was the site for a spectacular musical evening, a multimedia premiere of a sacred opera on Saint John's Book of Revelations. The work was written for the festival by Felipe Ramírez, organist, composer and musicologist who has been responsible for a lot of research into Mexican colonial music.

The piece was conceived especially for performance at the Cathedral and called for a very special array of forces: a narrator, mixed choir, boys choir, two trumpets, two sets of tympani and the two splendid organs at the Cathedral. Light and darkness were also used for dramatic effect, and these, coupled with the

Cathedral's acoustics, made for some eerie moments during the performance led by the powerful voice of Mexican actor Claudio Obregón.

Leading into the premiere of Ramírez' sacred opera, the program started with his performance of a *Batalla* (Battle) for organ by Joseph de Torres y Vergara, an eighteenth century Mexican composer who was also dean and music master at the Cathedral, followed by a series of pieces for trumpet and organ by Domenico Gabrieli and Jean Philippe Rameau, expertly played by trumpeters Christopher Thompson and Mark Bennett.

A couple of days later, the fes-

tival premiered a trio of cantatas conceived as a single work, by Mexican composer Federico Ibarra. Called *Loa para la ciudad que espera* (Paeon for a Waiting City), the work is no secular cantata based on ancient forms. Actually, it resembles more an *auto-da-fe* straight out of Medieval lore. The text, written by Mexican poet José Ramón Enriquez, is a sober, dramatic song for a city that has been repeatedly raped by man and by nature, a city that once was great but now is only big, Mexico City.

The work is written for soprano, mezzosoprano, contralto, mixed choir, two trumpets, organ, harp and percussion, and

some of its vocal parts were conceived to be spoken by actors rather than sung. Composer Federico Ibarra has written several cantatas before and, as far as vocal music is concerned, he is at the forefront of Mexican contemporary music. His distinctive harmonic language and forceful musical expression were amply evident in the performance of the cantatas, undoubtedly the most powerful event of the festival.

Finally, we should mention a very satisfactory concert, conceived along classical lines, featuring works by three fine European composers. The Latin String Quartet opened with a limpid performance of Mendelssohn's *Andante and Scherzo*, Opus 81, a work that bears more than a passing resemblance to the composer's utterance in his music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Then the quartet was joined by violinist Jorge Risi, originally a founding member of the group, for a solid version of Mozart's rich, sometimes somber string quintet K. 516, played with authority by the five musicians.

The evening was capped by a surprisingly exciting reading of a masterpiece of chamber music, Ernest Chausson's unique concerto for violin, piano and string quartet. For this work the Latin American String Quartet and Mr. Risi were joined by pianist Edison Quintana, and there was never a more compact sextet to bring forth Chausson's harmonic mastery, present in the beautifully conceived, soaring melodies that never lapse into the commonplace sentimentality of less gifted composers. The ensemble playing of these six musicians was really first class all along.

Finally, we should note that with the exception of the opening night dance gala, none of these performances was given at a traditional theater or concert hall. Churches, museums, palaces, squares, courtyards and streets in downtown Mexico City became ideal places in which to listen to good music and learn something about the history of those sites, and of the efforts being made to preserve them for present and future generations. At the close of the Third Spring Festival of Mexico City's Historical Center, the work done so far was evident in the sites selected for the performances. Even so, much remains to be done, and hopefully, repeated editions of this Festival will help in bringing Mexico City and its inhabitants a little closer to each other.★

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Metropolitan Cathedral.





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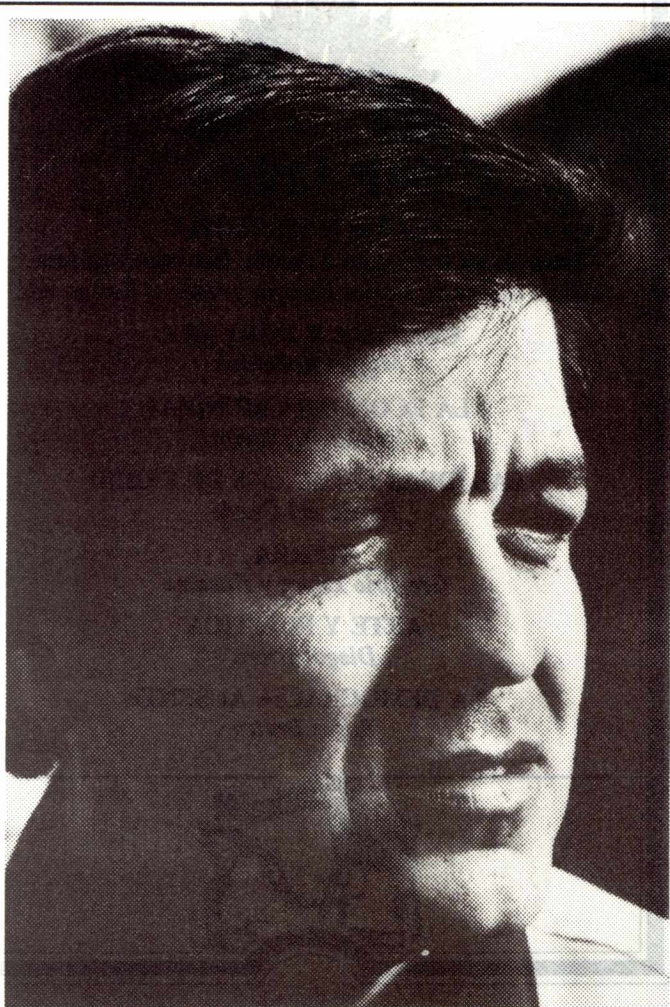
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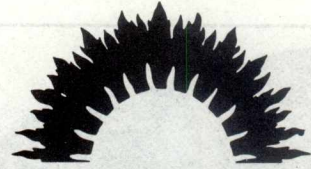
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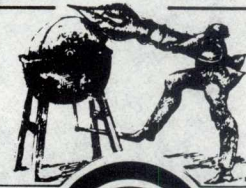
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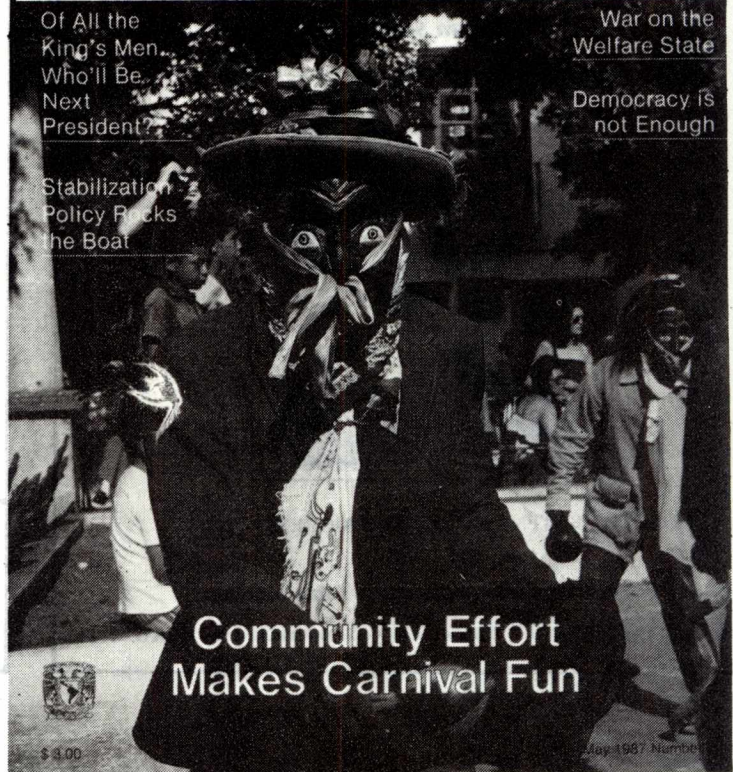
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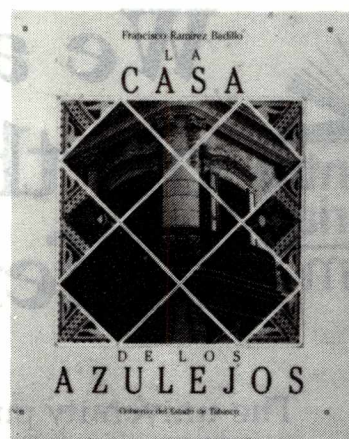
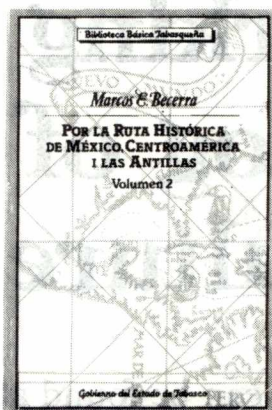


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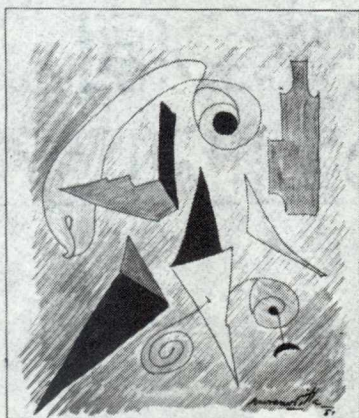
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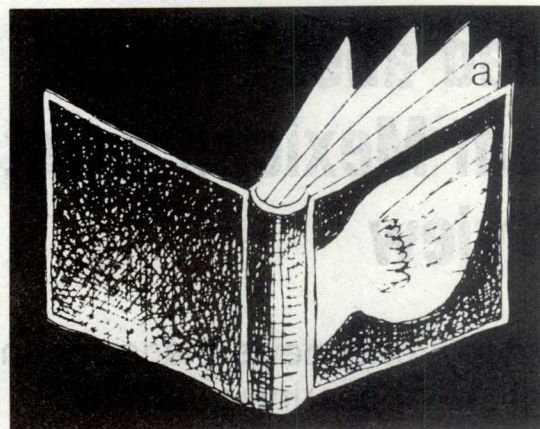
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