MÉXICO
68/18

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Our Voice

October 2

On the night of October 1, the esplanade in front of University City's Central Administration Building was dressed in mourning, and the iconic structure revealed its grandeur with a moving, impressive light show: a peace dove, stabbed, injured, and bleeding was pictured together with the Olympic Games logo and the forceful phrase, "Never Again."

October 2, 2018 was an autumn morning on which, as only infrequently is the case nowadays, Mexico City was still the most transparent region. At a solemn session of the Chamber of Deputies, the gold-letter inscription on the Wall of Honor of the Legislative Palace was unveiled, with the National University of Mexico (UNAM) and National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) communities as witnesses. It reads, "To the 1968 Student Movement." The ceremony, an act of commemoration and vindication, takes place in a university and polytechnic atmosphere: you could hear the traditional cries of "Goya!" (UNAM) and "Huelum!" (IPN). But, from 1 to 43, other students are remembered as the crowd shouts out the numbers of the missing Ayotzinapa students, thus joining the past to the present.

Joining the past to the present. The first to speak, 68 Committee representative Félix Hernández Gamundi says that some demands continue to be current. In a single voice, like a chorus, the young people shout, "For a Mexico of equals in democracy. October 2 shall not be forgotten." In his address, Dr. Enrique Graue Wiechers says that their voices continue to be heard in Mexican society, which the movement provided with greater awareness, and that its cry of rebellion against state authoritarianism is reflected today in society's freedom of expression and transformation.

In "Tlatelolco," a poem Hernández Gamundi mentions in his speech, Jaime Sabines begins mournfully: "No one knows the exact number of dead, / not even their murderers, / not even the criminal, . . . / they were women and children, / students, / youngsters of 15, / a girl on her way to the movies, / an infant in its mother's belly, / all wiped out, unerringly riddled with bullets / by the machine gun of Order and Social Justice." The poem, biting and painful, criticizes the silence of the media, the distortion of the truth to consolidate the idea of a progressive country developing in an acceptable way, a hypocritical society willing to forget in order to have a false, but effective peace. "The women, in pink, / the men, in sky blue, / the Mexicans parade in the glorious unity/ that constitutes the homeland of our dreams."

In the diversity of its essays and creative texts, this issue of *Voices of Mexico* asks both about that machine gun and that dream homeland the students demanded. Their content is precisely that linkage of the past to the present, in which, by reflecting on the former, the latter is explained. The voices of members of the university community, headed by the rector, who kindly gave us an interview; the voices of social actors; the voices and hands of artists who, in this issue, give us original material for the magazine in the form of an illustrated chronology. With this volume, the voice of the CISAN, through *Voices*, contributes to the impetus of a full year of commemorations organized by the university a half century after the events, in the hope that they never happen again.

Graciela Martínez-Zalce Sánchez
Director of CISAN
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Diego Simón Sánchez / Cuartoscuro.com

Leonardo Curzio*

The University, 50 Years after the 1968 Student Movement

Interview with UNAM Rector Dr. Enrique Graue

LEONARDO CURZIO: Thank you very much, Rector Graue, for giving this interview to *Voices of Mexico*. Let me begin the conversation with a very specific question about what 1968 meant to the university. Fifty years later, it is clear that for the university community, its students, and its rector, the UNAM played a central role on two levels: its defense of freedoms and its constructive safeguarding of autonomy. What is the importance of these two issues in the construction of today's Mexico?

ENRIQUE GRAUE: We must remember first that '68 was a year that had a huge impact not only on the university, but on the whole country. We also have to remember the cost to institutions of higher learning like the National Polytechnic Institute. And what's more, we cannot forget that it was a year in which young people the world over sought greater freedom, spaces for expression, and less government interference in private lives.

In this context, it's natural that young people responded to police repression. They also did so with an enormous capacity for organization and mobilization that sought not only to put an end to authoritarianism by a state with absolutely rigid structures, but also to guarantee greater freedoms for all. In that sense, '68 was not a purely defensive movement.

With regard to the National University as an institution, the obvious violation of its autonomy put it in a very delicate position. However, it also meant that the authorities, headed by UNAM Rector Barros Sierra, and the mobilized

* Researcher at CISAN, UNAM, and journalist; curzio@unam.mx.

students identified with each other. If the bazooka attack on the colonial door of the San Ildefonso [school] caused enormous indignation, the army's entry into University City made more and more people join the movement and empathize with the students.

In the face of the state's attacks on the university, Rector Barros Sierra behaved in a way that should be acknowledged, just as has been the case over the last 50 years. On the one hand, he was able to read the magnitude of the threat to the UNAM and understand the absolute necessity of remaining firm in his defense of its autonomy. But he also clearly identified with the reasons that had made the student movement grow. These are not unrelated issues: a national, autonomous university must guarantee its students complete rights and freedoms, rights and freedoms that were being violated.

'68 was a movement that involved important social and political issues and that transformed the way the citizenry understood our country. This has a natural impact on the way in which we understand rights and freedoms, and how we conceive the relationship between the citizenry and the government. After '68, this changed forever. Starting in '68, the rigid structure of a hegemonic-party regime changed and in the long run would end by collapsing, opening up spaces for political participation from other spheres of society.

I think autonomy was crucial at that time and it continues to be now. The autonomy of an institution like the university guarantees the education of critical, free citizens; they are the ones who pushed through the changes in those years and they continue to do it now; they are the ones who demand more freedoms and rights and who make the state structures and the forms of exercising power flexible.

LC: Please tell us about the activities planned by the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center, which is itself the emblematic site of that turbulent year.

The UNAM Cultural Dissemination Coordinating Office and the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center developed a series of activities to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1968 student movement. Last March, we launched a program that includes more than a hundred events in different venues that will conclude in January next year.

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The activities range from exhibits of visual art, concerts, dance performances, radio documentaries, a publishing project, and an architectural tour, to book launches, lectures, courses, and workshops.

The venues are also diverse: the House on the Lake, the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center, the Echo Experimental Museum, the El Chopo University Museum, the University Contemporary Art Museum, and the Nezahualcóyotl Hall, among others.

I want to emphasize two events: first of all, the exhibition "Citizenries in Movement," a digital collection of documents, images, and recordings about the social, political, and cultural movements from 1968 until today that have fostered the recognition of rights in Mexico. This is slated for October. The other was in the last week of September: the International Colloquium M-68. Citizenries in Movement hosted outstanding academics, intellectuals, and creators to think critically together with different protagonists of the movement and young students about the 1968 student movement.

LC: I have seen that during this 50-year celebration an attempt has been made to ensure that our university does not overshadow what was happening at other educational institutions. I understand that a consortium of universities has been formed that has been working on this all year. What is your assessment of this inter-institutional dialogue?

It seems to me that all the young people who actively participated in the movement must be recognized equally. Naturally, the UNAM and Polytechnic students receive the most mentions because they were the first to organize and because violence took place on our campuses. But students from other institutions also played an equally important role. In that sense, '68 belongs to that entire generation of students. It is also true that the University City became a refuge for many and was the place where a large number of assemblies were held, pamphlets were written . . . in short, it operated as a center for organization until it was taken over by the army.

From the start, we knew that commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of '68 should be a joint effort and the result has been very positive. When so many institutions work together with a common goal, not only is the offering in terms of events enriched, but also, many pieces of history and experiences of '68 are recovered. Personally, for me it has been an extraordinary experience.

On the other hand, the institutions of higher learning are better when they work together toward a common goal. The result has been an extremely varied program that includes lectures, the visual arts, dance, theater, and film, just to mention some of the cultural activities, and a program designed for people to see the multiple aspects of a series of events that undoubtedly transformed the relationship between government and society, with an irreversible impact on the country.

LC: An enormous dispute still exists even 50 years later about the history, about the assignation of responsibilities, and I suppose that an investigation is still pending. At the UNAM, we have specialized centers and researchers who've studied that year from different angles. Could we say that today it is a historical event and that, therefore, we can look at it with the serenity of someone analyzing the nineteenth-century Reform Laws, for example? Or does it continue to be a political event that still sparks animosity?

I think it has always been a historical event. That is, any event that transforms the life of a country, that opens up spaces, that changes the way people exercise rights and freedoms, is a historical event in and of itself and deserves to be studied, as you say, from different angles.

I also think that not having concluded an investigation that clearly assigned responsibility means that a part of the story is incomplete; and that's why it's still cause for a great deal of debate. There is a huge volume of literature, photographic material, film, and magazine articles that make it possible to reconstruct the events up to a certain point. But only a profound legal investigation could have provided certainty about what happened then. In that sense, for many people, justice has not been served.

LC: I would ask you to share with our readers the possible links or intellectual activities that can come out of remembering these 50 years with some universities in the United States and Canada. I'm asking you this because in Mexico, we tend to see history exclusively in our own terms, and as though things had only happened in our country. But it is well known that that pro-civil rights, anti-racist, and peace movements also existed in U.S. universities.

It seems to me that what I mentioned about young people in a previous answer also responds to this question. Everywhere in the world, young people try to broaden freedoms and question the validity of the rules and their relationship with those in authority, including that of the state. In that sense, there's an implicit identification that goes beyond the content of the movements. For example, those who have seen the raised fists of Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Olympics feel one of those forms of identification with them and their cause. The vast majority of young university students reject impositions and mandates that have not been sufficiently backed up with arguments. This is similar in the United States, Canada, or any other country; and, in that sense, I don't agree that we see history exclusively in our own terms; at least young people don't.

LC: Finally, Rector Graue, I would like to ask you what university autonomy means 50 years later in a completely different context.

Autonomy continues to be a way of defining the relationship between the university and the state; it marks the limits of what the government can do inside the university. Also, autonomy guarantees that decisions about university management and education are made exclusively by those who are familiar with and experience the university day-to-day.

In addition, autonomy guarantees a unique space for exercising freedom of expression, which helps in guaranteeing the education of critical, reflective citizens, capable of understanding the nation's most urgent problems. It implies giving students a universal, tolerant, diverse education that provides them with the competencies needed for dealing with changing situations. Autonomy also means self-organization with social commitment, transparency, and being accountable to society.

LC: Thank you very much for talking to *Voices of Mexico*. VM

Libor Hajsky/ REUTERS

Mario Ojeda Revah*

From the Youth Revolt to The Restoration of the Outmoded

(Or, as Robert Graves said, "Goodbye to all that")

If any credit can be given to the theory of the pendulum applied to politics, which would imply that human societies continually oscillate between conservatism and liberalism,[1] it would have to be accepted that the twentieth century witnessed swings of this type. Thus, the crazy, "roaring" 1920s, called the "Jazz Age," characterized, at least according to the topic addressed, by their hedonism and abandon, produced by economic bonanza, would be followed by the dark 1930s, devastated by the Great Depression and the rise of totalitarianisms.

According to this logic, the 1960s would have been a predictable reaction to the preceding decade. The 1950s were a time of marked economic growth, but also a period of political and social conservatism. The Cold War and its paranoia imposed ferocious anti-communism, while conformism, the Protestant ethic, and priggishness created an asphyxiating climate of repression, taboos, and censorship in customs, at least in the United States.

To the contrary, the 1960s were distinguished by the frontal rejection of the materialism of consumer society, interest in the environment, and non-violent anarchism. These positions coincided in a youth revolt and a counterculture, whose most notable legacies were the miniskirt; the universalization of the use of pants by both sexes; hippies; the end of reverence among generations; the decline in patriarchal authority and the establishment —a term so dear to the hearts of that generation's counterculture—; the use of foul language and plebian clothing (blue jeans, until then associated with the working class); the universalization of rock as the pop music of the young; free love and sexual liberation fostered by the generalized use of contraceptives; and experimentation with

* Researcher at the UNAM Institute for Historical Research; morevah@unam.mx.

recreational use of drugs for achieving a new state of consciousness.

Paradoxically, this was the wealthiest generation ever, the beneficiaries of the post-war capitalist boom. The French called this phase "Les trente glorieuses" (The Thirty Glorious [years]);[2] the British called it "The Golden Years," when, according to Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, "You never had it so good."[3] It was this generation that would head the revolt against that boom and its corresponding materialism.

If the 1960s was an earth-shaking decade, in more than one sense, 1968 marked its zenith. It was a year that, despite its radical inventiveness, with the perspective gained by the half century since then, seems remote and alien.

To start, we should mention many countries that no longer exist: Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, North Vietnam. This confers on that era an almost legendary air. It also seems no small thing that our time, characterized by unashamed racism and unbridled conservatism, is the perfect reverse image of all of that, or that many of the most prominent figures that today populate the so called "alt right" come, precisely, from that generation and are exactly what they fought against a half century ago.

1968 opened with the January election of Slovak Alexander Dubček as leader of the Czech Communist Party. He would head the attempted socialist democratization in a country where Stalinism had achieved its most violent extremes. On the other side of the world, Vietcong guerrillas and the People's Army of North Vietnam were beginning the Tet Offensive, which would put the U.S. forces stationed in South Vietnam in check.

The prodigious iconography of that very photogenic year offered one of its first fruits with the harsh image of a Vietcong being executed by a South Vietnamese police chief, a crude testimony of a ferocious war. Even before the era of Internet, this moment, frozen in time by U.S. photographer Eddie Adams, would go "viral," earning him the Pulitzer Prize for that year.[4]

That same month, Highway Patrol officers perpetrated the Orangeburg massacre on the South Carolina State College campus when they fired on a civil rights demonstration against segregation, mainly made up of African-Americans, killing 3 and injuring 27. This shows the terrible reality that community was facing.

In March, security forces violently suppressed a series of student protests in Poland. The repression of dissidence and a virulent anti-Zionist campaign —soon to be unmasked as open anti-Semitism on the part of the Ministry of the Interior, with the support of top leader Wladyslaw Gomulka— would end in the massive emigration of most of the few Polish Jews remaining in the country after the Holocaust.[5]

The movement's slogans, a veritable explosion of idealism and imagination, reflected its festive, playful character.

Of all the youth revolts that shook the world in 1968, the one that stands out most is that of Paris in May. This is perhaps because it was the one that seemed to come closest to its aim, none other than bringing down General Charles de Gaulle in what was certainly a challenge to established power.

What began as students being ticked off about a ban on access to the girls' dorms on university campuses would end up as one of the greatest upheavals in French society since the Commune of 1871. The movement's slogans, a veritable explosion of idealism and imagination, reflected its festive, playful character: "Under the paving stones, the beach!"; "Be realistic: ask the impossible"; "Forbidden to forbid"; "Freedom, Equality, Sexuality."[6]

On March 18, an extreme left, clandestine student commando crossed the Seine to the Right Bank in Paris with small explosive charges to blow up the offices of the Chase Manhattan Bank, the Bank of America, and Trans World Airlines to protest the war in Vietnam. The next night was American Express's turn. The occupation of the University of Nanterre followed.

By May 6, the students had taken the initiative. Conventional French politicians, even those on the left, had no idea what was happening. The protests increased as the demonstrators raised barricades in the streets of the Latin Quarter.

On May 13, one million demonstrators paraded through the streets of Paris shouting, "We are a tiny group!" waving red and black flags. The movement seemed to have won by gaining the support of the intellectuals for their cause (Jean-Paul Sartre, Alain Touraine, Jean-Luc Goddard, Simone de Beauvoir, among others), and, more importantly, the backing of unions that joined in, declaring a national strike involving nine million workers.

If pacifism was one of the outstanding features of the 1960s youth movement, political violence would be another.

The students took over the Sorbonne and turned it into a self-organized commune, while workers' control began to be implemented in factories, transportation, and communications. There was a true vacuum of power, aggravated by President De Gaulle's absence when he traveled to Germany and threatened to bring home French troops stationed there to put down the revolt.

Nevertheless, by the end of the month, the uprising evaporated as swiftly and dizzily as it had begun: the Georges Pompidou government conceded an emergency wage hike, putting an end to the general strike; De Gaulle managed to bring together half a million demonstrators, ranging from old Petain supporters to the Gaullist left, all united against the "communist threat," in a countermarch along the Champs Elysées.[7]

On the other side of the world in the People's Republic of China, another student revolt was fueling up against the "bourgeois" and the "counter-revolutionary traitors." In contrast with the Parisian outcry, this disturbance was incited from the heights of power by Mao Zedong himself, so admired by the French students, in an unvoiced attempt to take over the Chinese Communist Party.

In Czechoslovakia, Dubček carried out a series of liberal reforms. Without questioning his country's belonging to the Soviet bloc or refuting the socialist model of state control of the economy, they aimed at implementing a non-totalitarian form of socialism by legalizing parties and unions, promoting freedom of speech, the press, and association, as well as the right to strike. This project, dedicated to democratizing the state and party internal structures, was called the Prague Spring and was enthusiastically supported by a large part of the Czech population.

The attempt known as "socialism in freedom" or "communism with a human face" would be crushed by the invasion of Czechoslovakia by 250 000 soldiers, 6 500 tanks, and 800 planes by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. The only exception was Nicolae Ceaucescu's Rumania, which roundly refused to be part of the invasion.[8]

Dubček and five other members of the Communist Party Presidium were detained by the Soviet occupation forces and taken to Moscow where they were "persuaded to come to their senses."[9] When he was finally allowed to return to Prague, Dubček was demoted to being a forest ranger in the woodland province of Bratislava.

If pacifism was one of the outstanding features of the 1960s youth movement, political violence would be another. One of the distinctive marks of 1968 was assassination. Cleric and leader of the civil rights movement Martin Luther King was assassinated in a motel in Memphis, Tennessee by escaped convict James Earl Ray on April 4. This was one day after making his last speech, "I've Been to the Mountaintop," which would become his famous political epitaph, and two days after a district judge had issued a restraining order to prevent King from heading a huge demonstration there.

Only two months later, on June 6, Democratic presidential hopeful Robert Kennedy was also assassinated. The brother of President John F. Kennedy, assassinated five years earlier, was cut down by Christian Jordanian immigrant Sirhan Sirhan in the Los Angeles Ambassador Hotel.

Both crimes, never completely solved, eliminated civil rights champions who opposed segregation in the United States. Fifty years later, this cause continues to be current, despite the passing of the Civil Rights Act, presented by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The assassination of King sparked a series of civil disturbances, known as the Holy Week Uprising, in Baltimore, Chicago, Kansas City, and Washington, D.C. that continued for four days and raked up a death toll of 12. This was the biggest wave of civil unrest in the United States since the Civil War.[10]

The spread of the euphoria of the youth reached all the corners of the planet, even places as unimaginable and diverse as the Soviet Union, South Africa, or Yugoslavia. On August 25, a group of demonstrators came together in Moscow's Red Square to protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia. They carried signs reading "For your freedom and ours," but were violently dispersed by KGB intelligence agents, earning their organizers Pavel Litvinov and Larisa Bogoraz long prison terms.[11]

That same month, almost 600 students and academics occupied the University of Cape Town campus for nine days in protest over the firing of anthropologist and senior lecturer Archie Mafeje, in accordance with the odious apartheid laws. In one sense, the movement was a failure: Mafeje was not restored to the post and never re-

ceived the university's recognition in his lifetime. He died, bitterly disappointed, in his exile at Cambridge University. However, on another level, it can be said to have been a success, since it marked the beginning of the civil disobedience that put an end to that country's institutionalized racial segregation.

The echoes of the international youth revolt also reached Latin America, particularly Mexico, where a fight between two rival high schools rapidly became a considerable student movement. The reaction of the administration of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz was, from the start, clumsy and intolerant, accusing the movement of obeying the orders of foreign ideologies.

Very rapidly, that rigidity would become violent. Only 10 days before the inauguration of the nineteenth Olympic Games, the massacre of Tlatelolco would take place. A student demonstration in Mexico City's Three Cultures Plaza was violently repressed, concluding in a bloodbath in which an indeterminate number of people lost their lives.[12] The causes and consequences of this episode have never been completely clarified and are still awaiting a historic, dispassionate, unbiased version. Just as happened with a large part of that year's protests, the main beneficiaries of the economic miracle, in this case Mexico's stabilizing development, rose up against it. The massacre would mark the beginning of the end of the regime that emerged from the Mexican Revolution.

The year of emancipation and freedom *par excellence* ended, paradoxically, with the election of veteran politician Richard M. Nixon, a representative of the most conservative wing of the Republican Party, as the United States' thirty-seventh president, and the defeat of Democratic hopeful Hubert Humphrey. Taking into account his close ties to Senator Joseph McCarthy's rabid anti-communism, Nixon seemed to roll back the United States to its darkest hour of 1950s conservatism; he emerged victorious in an election in which he benefitted from the profound popular dissatisfaction with the War in Vietnam and the sharp differences inside the Democratic Party.[13]

While Nixon easily won the Electoral College vote, with 301 of the 538 total votes, the popular vote was much closer: his 31 783 783 votes (43.1 percent) vs. 31 271 839 (42.7 percent) for Humphrey. Ominously, the ultraconservative, racist governor of Alabama, George Wallace, would garner almost 10 million votes (13.5 percent) as an independent. This indicates the size of the tendencies among an important segment of U.S. society in favor of returning to the past.

In short, the winds of freedom would blow away dizzyingly, just as they had arrived. The next three years would see remnants of the rebellion, such as the Woodstock Festival in summer 1969. However, the break-up of the Beatles only a few months later and the premature, tragic deaths of Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and Jim Morrison seemed to augur a return to more priggish times. As John Lennon would say in his December 1970 song *God*, "The dream is over." VM

Notes

1 Arthur M. Schlesinger, "Tides of National Politics," *Yale Review* no. 9, December 1939, pp. 217-230.

2 Jean Fourastié, *Les Trente Glorieuses, ou la révolution invisible de 1946 à 1975* (Paris: Fayard, 2014).

3 Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had It So Good: A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London: Hachette, 2015).

4 "Saigon Execution," in "The Most Influential Images of All Time," *Time Magazine*, http://100photos.time.com/photos/eddie-adams-saigon-execution.

5 Estimates put Jewish emigration from Poland between 1968 and 1970 at about 25 000; most of them had been secularized for a long time before that. This left a population of only about 5 000 Polish Jews remaining in the country. Dariusz Stola, "Anti-Zionism as a Multi-Purpose Policy: The Anti-Zionist Campaign in Poland, 1967-1968," in Jeffrey Herf, *Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective: Convergence and Divergence* (London: Routledge, 2013).

6 Julien Besançon, *Los muros tienen la palabra. Mayo de 68* (Mexico City: Extemporáneos, 1970).

7 Patrick Seale and Maureen McConville, *French Revolution 1968* (London: Penguin, 1968).

8 Dennis Deletant, "'Taunting the Bear': Romania and the Warsaw Pact, 1963–89," in *Cold War History* vol. 7, no. 4, 2007, pp. 495-507, DOI: 10.1080/14682740701621796.

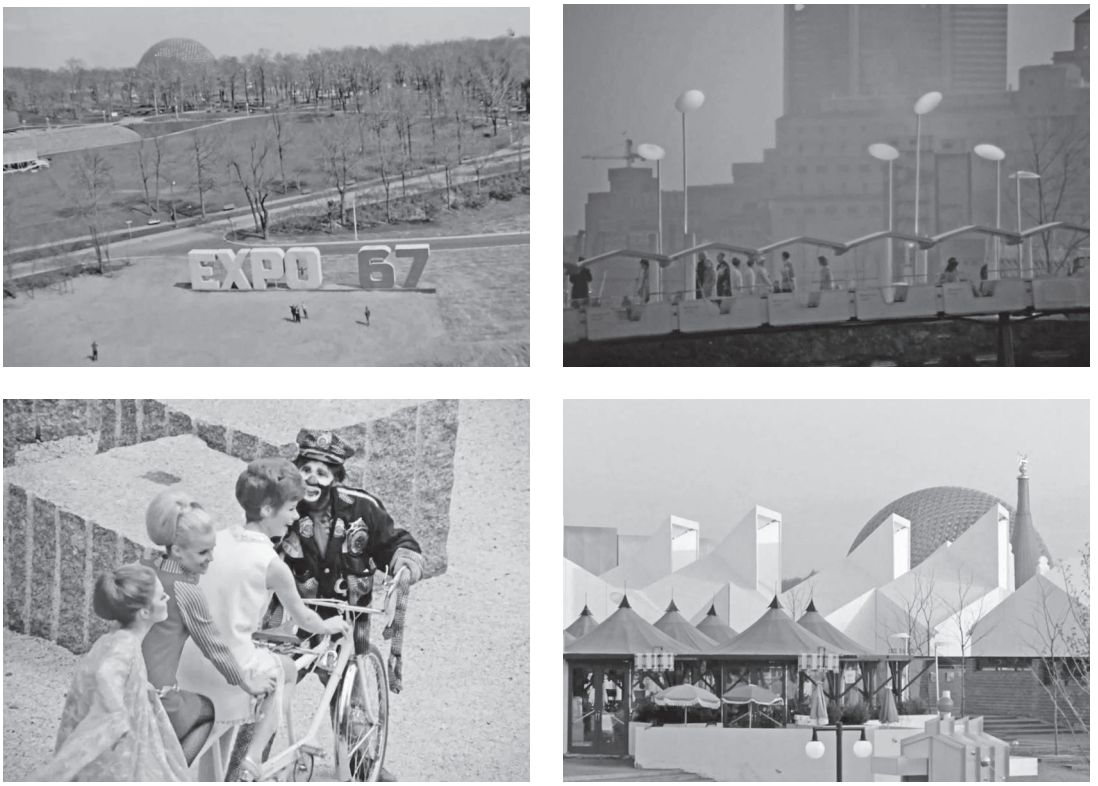
9 Günter Bischof, Stefan Karner, and Peter Ruggenthaler, *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968* (New York: Lexington Books, 2011), pp. 169-171.

10 Ben W. Gilbert and the *Washington Post* staff, *Ten Blocks from the White House: Anatomy of the Washington Riots of 1968* (Washington, D.C.: Praeger, 1968).

11 Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, eds., *1968, The World Transformed* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 449.

12 The official figures presented by the Mexican press of the time spoke of 28 dead. British sports reporter John Rodda (1930-2009), sent to cover the Olympics, talked about between 350 and 400 victims. The reporter's 2009 obituary published by his newspaper, *The Guardian*, said that his report, "bordering on the hallucinatory," was the only firsthand report to appear in a British newspaper. This figure was seen as truthful for many years. "Olympic Games to go ahead in spite of Mexican rioting," *The Guardian* (Manchester), October 4, 1968.

13 Michael A. Cohen, *American Maelstrom: The 1968 Election and the Politics of Division* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).



Expo 67, The National Film Board of Canada.

Graciela Martínez-Zalce Sánchez*

The Canadian Scene

1967 was an important year in Canadian history in general and for Montreal in particular. Since the centennial of Canadian Confederation was celebrated in the summer of that year, Expo 67, the world's fair, was held in Montreal. In the extraordinary book, *Expo 67. Not Just a Souvenir*, Rhona Richman Kenneally and Johanne Sloan point out how the event brought together architecture, design, art, and technology in a glittering modern package. With its aim of fostering global understanding and international cooperation, critics have described it as a laboratory of experimentation in architecture and design, where cultural exchange could take place.

The exhibition's central motif was Terre des Hommes/Man and His World, the territory inhabited by human beings. Kenneally and Sloan maintain that the main unifying principle of the exhibition was an essentialization of the Human Being (capitalized), by examining his/her behavior in this environment, underlining his/her achievements in the fields of ideas, culture, and science. This point of view proposed to visitors that this unique, aspirational figure represented all the inhabitants of the planet. A contemporary reading, like the one presented in the book's collection of essays, points out that the geopolitical, ethnic, or religious differences and the conflicts they involve are not even included in this idyllic vision that invited visitors —men and women alike—to believe that the planet belonged to that collective called humanity.

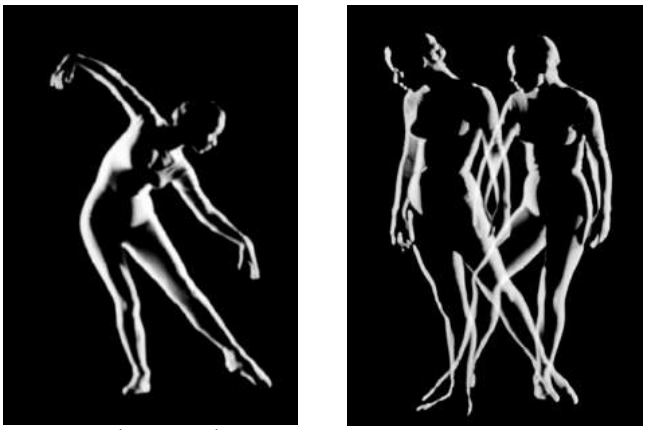
Despite this, precisely because it was made up of pavilions from other countries, Sloan and Richmond state that, as proof that the geopolitical map was in the midst of a transformation, the Expo was also a chance to promote

* Researcher and director of the CISAN, UNAM; zalce@unam.mx.

an emerging post-colonial consciousness: for example, Algeria made its debut on the world stage as a new independent entity, and the Africa pavilion testified to the national liberation struggles of the time. In the middle of the Cold War, Cuba was announced in an Expo pamphlet as the first socialist country in the Western Hemisphere; and Canada provided the almost historical stage for the U.S. and Soviet pavilions and their opposing world views to shine.

The Expo's conception, then, could be considered paradoxical, since, in order to ensure harmony, it sought to offer a homogenized vision of human well-being, and, based on that, disguised the obvious reality of the real context both on a national and a region level. Thus, the doubts put forward are linked to the question of whether it was even possible to speak of a homogeneous Canada and a harmonious humanity.

The 1960s was the decade of Quebec's Quiet Revolution: it not only represented the split of the Catholic Church and everything that it implied ideologically in the daily lives of Quebec men and women, but it was also an affirmation of its identity, a linguistic and cultural identity



Pas de Deux (sequence), The National Film Board of Canada.

that was different from that of the rest of Canada. In the United States, 1967 was the year of the Summer of Love, and also when youth rebelled and created countercultural movements linked to feminism, civil-rights activism, and protests against the war. This U.S. context became important for talking about Canada because young men who claimed conscientious objector status and were denied, plus those who had not been able to avoid the draft, simply crossed the border to the north to avoid fighting in Vietnam. The chapter in John D. Belshaw's book on Canadian history dealing with counterculture, published by the University of British Columbia, points out that the U.S. media familiarized Canadian homes with dissent.[1] Through television, they witnessed it on the news covering

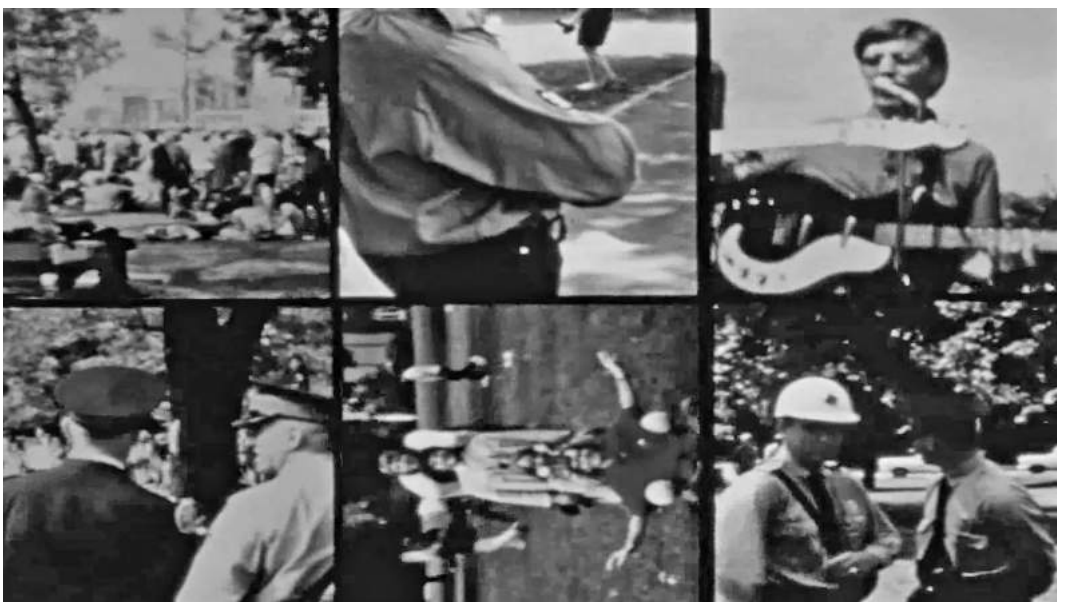
> "While in the United States, hippies were challenging (U.S.) American patriotism, in Canada, Canadian hippies contributed —ironically— to a growing sense of Canadian nationalism."

Impressions 67, The National Film Board of Canada.

the violence involved in the civil rights movement; both what was happening to African-Americans and what was happening in Vietnam was being read in Canada as atrocities and U.S. government incompetence. With the expansion of Canadian universities, U.S. professors and students moved north; and their ideas spread there and merged with Canadian concerns about freedom of expression and thought, the New Left, feminism, the Indian-American movement, and the critique of establishment values. Working class male and female students both led the protests and many of them were arrested.

Out of all of this grew another paradox: anti-Americanism and, simultaneously, a movement that argued for a more independent Canada. "So, while in the United States, hippies were challenging [U.S.] American patriotism, in Canada, Canadian hippies contributed —ironically— to a growing sense of Canadian nationalism."[2] Scholars think that many of the U.S. hippies, white male and female university students, blended into the English-speaking urban Canadian population, while others went to the Pacific Coast to set up communes. Mark Vonnegut wrote his autobiographical *The Eden Express* about his own experience in this vein.

Expo 67's conception could be considered paradoxical, since, in order to ensure harmony, it sought to offer a homogenized vision of human well-being and disguised the obvious reality.



Impressions 67, The National Film Board of Canada.

In this context, 1968 was a noteworthy year for Quebec and Anglo-Canadian literature and cinema. What follows is an inventory designed as an invitation to describe poets, film makers, and music, men and women creators who in that year were starting out and became part of the Canadian canon.

The very first milestone is Michèle Lalonde's poem "Speak white" and here we remember a fragment of it:

…
Speak white
It is a universal language
We were born to understand it
With its teargas words
With its nightstick words
Speak white
Tell us again about Freedom and Democracy
We know that liberty is a black word
Just as poverty is black
And just as blood mixes with dust in the streets of Algiers
And Little Rock
Speak white
From Westminster to Washington take it in turn
Speak white like they do on Wall Street
White like they do in Watts
Be civilized
And understand us when we speak of circumstances
When you ask us politely
How do you do
And we hear you say
We're doing all right
We're doing fine
We
Are not alone
We know
That we are not alone.[3]

"Speak white" is a racist insult hurled by English-speaking Canadians at non-English speakers. Lalonde's poem is simultaneously a grievance laid at the door of a "you" who considers himself superior and is master, employer, offensive, and condescending, and an affirmation of the language spoken by the Quebecois. The poet is the spokesperson of a community and the poem, a call for the colonized to awaken.

That year was also that of the first production of *Les belles soeurs* (The Sisters-in-law), by Quebec playwright Michel Tremblay. It was a milestone, too, because it was the first in which the characters speak joual, the slang word for the language spoken by part of the Montreal working class, that is, a variety of Quebec French.

But, in addition, it was the year of the publication of Pierre Vallières's provocative book *Nègres blancs d'Amérique* (White Niggers of America), which he wrote while he and other colleagues were jailed for belonging to the Quebec Liberation Front. His is one of many texts that break with the order imposed by the federal government due to Anglophone economic domination and the will to suppress the identity of those previously known as Franco-Canadian, but who in the 1960s fully took on board their identity as Quebecois.

But in the English-speaking world, the most important women writers of today's canon, who revolutionized that canon, previously exclusively male, also had an important presence in 1968.

Margaret Atwood published "The animals in that country." Here is a fragment of it:

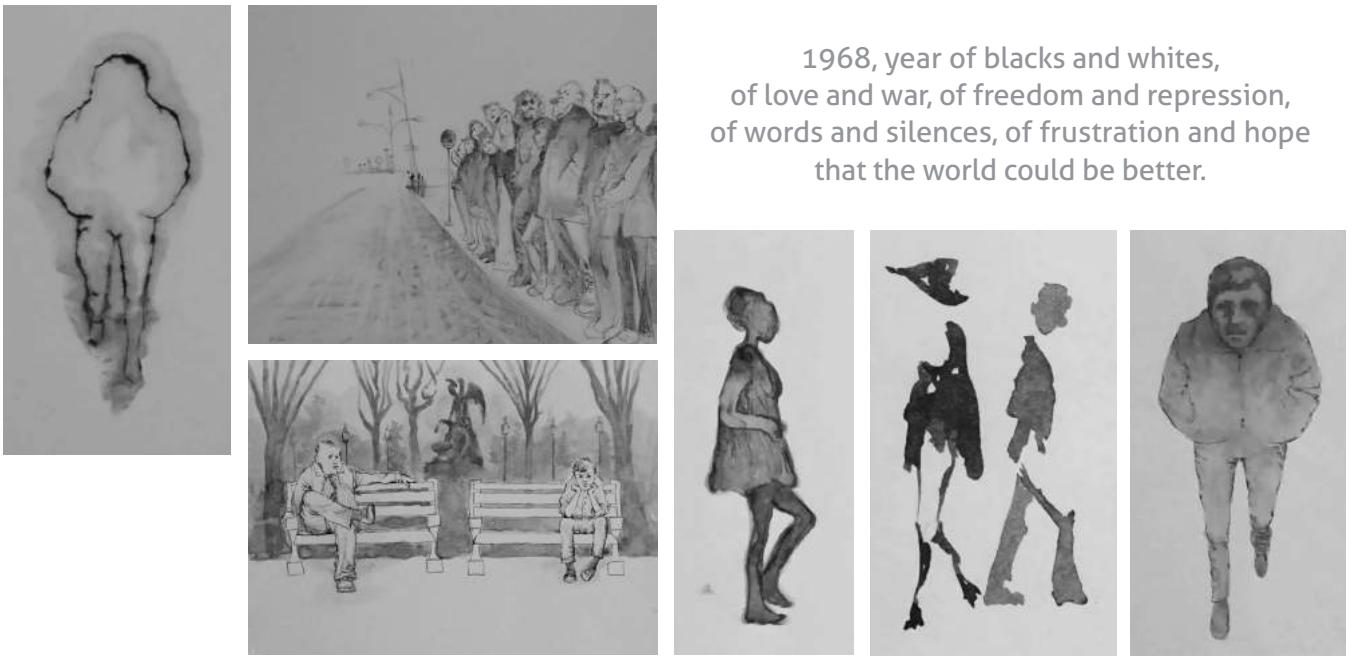
…
In this country the animals
have the faces of
animals.
Their eyes
flash once in car headlights
and are gone.

Their deaths are not elegant.

They have the faces of
no-one.[4]

Clearly, Atwood also disagrees with colonization, the abuse of power, and domination. The animals in this poem are a metaphor for the colonized murdered with education and good manners, by those who, since they hold the weapons, own their victims' lives and deaths.

Leonard Cohen, for his part, also broke the rules by publishing his *Selected poems* in Toronto, which include the song lyrics seen as poetry, joining together popular music with literature, where we find, among others, "Suzanne."



Walking, The National Film Board of Canada.

1968, year of blacks and whites,
of love and war, of freedom and repression,
of words and silences, of frustration and hope
that the world could be better.

Alice Munro published her first book of stories, *Dance of the Happy Shades*. The title is illuminating since the characters in the stories are unhappy or live like shadows. Narrated with dry, sharp precision, the stories also speak to an unharmonious Canada. In the stories of childhood, situated in poor rural areas, the main characters point out the class differences with their fellows, the religious differences among the adults, the housewife/mothers who have seen better times, the efforts by working fathers who have had to give up their ancestral trades because they can longer make a living at them and who do low-paying, degrading jobs to survive. Among the young adults, she narrates the transformation of the urban spaces due to the growth of the cities that reach the towns, disfiguring them with the advent of suburban housing projects for middle class professionals whose expensive comfort drives out the previous inhabitants, whose poverty blights the landscape.

Animation also innovated in 1968, from the NFB/ONF studios. Two works that became part of the canon premiered that year: *Pas de deux*, by Norman McLaren, and *Walking*, by Ryan Larkin. The former experiments with the figure of two Canadian ballet stars, dressed in white against a black background; and the second observes a body that, as it walks, becomes poetry.

This was the scene in Canada in 1968. The year of contrasts, of blacks and whites, of love and war, of freedom and repression, of words and silences, of the quest for and the reaffirmation of identities, of frustration and hope that the world could be better. And actually, in Canada, it was; 1968 was a notable year for art, art that never resigned itself to injustice. VM

Notes

1 John Douglas Belshaw, "Chapter 9.16: The 1960s Counterculture," in *Canadian History: Post-Confederation*, bc Open Textbook Project (Vancouver: UBC, 2016), pp. 626-632, http://solr.bccampus.ca:8001/bcc/file/504e63e2-0742-4d47-b763-49728f8b88e3/1/Canadian-History-Post-Confederation-1506534780._print.pdf.

2 Ibid., p. 630.

3 Michèle Lalonde, 1968, Albert Herring, trans., 2001-2012, see the entire poem at https://umaine.edu/teachingcanada/wp-content/uploads/sites/176/2015/06/1-Speak-Whiteen.pdf and in the voice of its author at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hsifsVi2po. The author, editor, and translator of this article understand the fundamental contradiction of translating a poem, originally written in French with certain words in English, that deals precisely with English-language domination and oppression in a bilingual country. For our readers, however, we have no choice but to provide the English translation most commonly cited, by Albert Herring, with the words that were originally in English in the poem rendered in italics. The rest of the original poem was written in Quebec French. (Translator's Note.]

4 Margaret Atwood, "The animals in that country," *Selected Poems 1965-1975* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976). You can see the entire poem at https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47791/the-animals-in-that-country. [Editor's Note.]

Wikimedia Commons

Howard University courtyard, Washington, D. C.

Juan Carlos Barrón*

U.S. Universities, Racial and Student Conflicts

No one really knows why they are alive
until they know what they'd die for.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Introduction

It could be said that, chronologically, the 1968 student movements in different parts of the world began in March at Washington, D.C.'s Howard University and New York's Columbia University. Later —and not in a chain reaction nor with a causal relation between them— came the May Days in France, the August social revolt in Czechoslovakia against the Soviet invasion, and the demonstrations that ended with the October 2 massacre in Mexico.

1968 was a particularly tumultuous year in many ways worldwide, both systemically and geopolitically. Student mobilizations were framed in prolific countercultural movements in which debates about the strategies for transforming society took place on a world scale, in both the capitalist and socialist countries as well as in the colonies and former colonies that were later categorized for a time as the "Third World."

In the United States and the Soviet Union, the 1960s began with John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev, respectively, but with different endings. However, both

* Researcher and academic secretary of CISAN, UNAM; jbarronp @unam.mx.

leaderships came to an end before the decade did, making way each in turn for Lyndon B. Johnson and Leonid Brezhnev. Those transitions are similar, as E. Wallerstein points out, in that the political systems of the time may have been aware of the roiling social pressures that existed, and, thus, they could be considered pre-revolutionary moments in their respective countries.[1]

The first half of that decade provided a context of abundance and prosperity in which certain political concessions were made. With time, society considered them irrelevant or rather unsatisfactory compared with the expectations they had raised. This sparked the new generations to mobilize politically. Wallerstein and Zukin explain that

> the new movements that emerged then were led largely by young people who had grown up in a world where the traditional anti-systemic movements in their countries were not in an early phase of mobilization but had already achieved their intermediate goal of state power. Hence, these "old" movements could be judged not only on their promises but on their practices once in power. They were so judged, and to a considerable degree they were found wanting.[2]

Each mobilization had its own specificities and different degrees of impact. This essay will review some of the interactions among the student movements that converged at Howard and Columbia Universities in March and April that year with the emergence of what Rorty called the U.S. "cultural left."[3] Characteristically, these interactions took place with other profound political movements in that country, such as the African-Americans' civil rights movement, and the great mosaic of the pacifist countercultural movements, particularly against the Vietnam War, throughout the world.

Background

The U.S. student movements had tragic precedents like the Ole Miss riot in Oxford Mississippi on September 30, 1962. President Kennedy gave the order to admit African-American military veteran James Meredith to the University of Mississippi, but both that institution and the state government openly opposed the decision. The clashes between federal marshals accompanying Meredith to class and local racists opposing his enrollment left two dead and 300 injured. This was one of many events that marked the civil rights struggles in the years before 1968.

On February 8, 1968, the Orangeburg Massacre took place in South Carolina. Similarly to what happened later at Columbia University, a group of students had previously protested segregation at a local bowling alley and carried their protest to the South Carolina State University campus. In attempting to quell the protest, police shot into the crowd, killing three Afro-American students and wounding 27 others, many of whom were shot in the back. In contrast with the two cases I will review here, police repression was repudiated by the public, making this an important case that motivated later student mobilizations.

Convergences

The Howard University Sit-In

From March 19 to 23, about 1 000 students staged a peaceful sit-in of the administration building at Washington, D.C.'s Howard University. The story began on March 2, when the university was celebrating Charter Day, the anniversary of its founding. In a local newspaper article, Barry Kalb states that about 70 students, both men and women, interrupted the traditional ceremony presided over by university President James N. Nabrit.[4] Their argument: the university charter was an example of institutionalized slavery. They demanded the president resign and the institution be re-founded to focus on the study of Afro-American history and culture.

As a result, 37 students were expelled, leading to a new peaceful demonstration on March 19. According to Rick Massimo's reconstruction of the events, added to the original demands were the elimination of sanctions against these students and the design of a disciplinary

Student mobilizations were framed in prolific countercultural movements in which debates about the strategies for transforming society took place on a world scale.

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Columbia University, New York.

system for the student body to replace the administration's previous unilateral decision-making about disciplinary cases.[5]

After four days sitting in outside the president's office, student participation was increasing, so the authorities decided to open negotiations. The movement seems to have been successful, since the university committed itself to the students' demands and Howard University continues to be an obligatory reference point for the study of Afro-American history and culture.

The Columbia University Sit-In

According to Wallerstein, in that same month, two movements at Columbia University coincided with that of Howard University and used some of the same tactics. The first, led by the campus Student Afro Society (SAS) sought to put a stop to the university's plan to build a gymnasium that they thought would shore up segregation in the educational system. The other was made up mainly of young white leftist men: the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) demanded the university cut off its relations and cooperation with the Institute for Defense Analyses think tank because it was an ethical contradiction for a university to cooperate with bodies that participated in genocide, in this case, the Vietnam War.

Several versions of the story imply that the Afro-American students were much better organized and disciplined, certainly in the framework of civil rights movement mobilizations, as I will show later. Perhaps due to this, the Afro-American students did not want the two movements to converge, thus leading each group to take over different buildings in the university, each raising its own demands. Although both movements were successful, they were bloodily repressed and the NYPD arrested more than 700.

Documentaries like *The Whole World Is Watching* have shown the climate after the assassination of Martin Luther King and the importance of the fact that the Vietnam War was considered contrary to U.S. American values.

Another literary and cinematic reference to this historic moment is *The Strawberry Statement*, a book by James Simon Kunen that was freely adapted by Stuart Hagmann for the screen. Regardless of their artistic value, both works offer an interesting, fresh look at the cultural left Rorty studied. The title refers to a statement attributed to University of Columbia Dean Herbert Deane, who said that a university could not be run democratically and that the students' opinions about matters the dean's office dealt with were as relevant as knowing whether they liked strawberries or not.

Interactions

As mentioned above, the two movements took place in a context marked by rejection of the Vietnam War, the different forms of struggle for full civil rights for the Afro-

American community, and the era's countercultural boom. It is also important to point out that, in an atmosphere of opening to racial and sexual issues, certain events scandalized those who were not part of that generation or who did not share that perspective. One was the first interracial kiss on television on the series *Star Trek* and another, José Feliciano's controversial interpretation of the U.S. national anthem at the fifth game of the baseball World Series that year.

The violence toward the Afro-American community was at a high point, and while the student mobilizations were going on, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. This sparked violent protests in more than 100 cities throughout the country.

Despite the fact that the 1964 civil rights legislation passed by Lyndon B. Johnson was already in force, a bill to ensure equal housing rights for African Americans had been blocked on several occasions in the House of Representatives. King's assassination and the wave of discontent that followed it, in addition to the possibility that the Afro-American movement might connect with the white cultural left, as had already happened at Columbia University, very possibly led the House to finally approve the Civil Rights Act of 1968 on April 10.

That year, other events involved political violence. In August, at the Democratic Party Convention, for example, the police violently repressed the peace demonstrators outside the hall as Hubert Humphrey was being nominated as presidential candidate inside. On October 22, Lyndon B. Johnson passed a gun control law regulating inter-state commerce in weapons; and on October 31, he announced the ceasefire in Vietnam, to come into effect November 1.[6] This could be seen as a desperate —and unfruitful— attempt at preventing Richard Nixon's victory at the polls a few days later.

Conclusions

The March and April mobilizations at Howard and Columbia Universities were milestones that would be repeated in other latitudes like France and Mexico. The U.S. specificities are due to their relationship with the Afro-American movements and the emergence of the cultural left currents that at that time were raising the demand to end the Vietnam War.

In an atmosphere of opening to racial and sexual issues, certain events scandalized those who were not part of that generation or who did not share that perspective.

The police repression at Columbia University opened up the possibility of an alliance among certain sectors of the Afro-American and cultural left movements. Very possibly, the political seed planted in 1968 was what allowed Barack Obama to be elected president 40 years later.

The aims of these collective actions were fulfilled: Howard broadened student participation and strengthened its history and U.S. culture studies programs to include the painful experience of Afro-Americans. At Columbia, the Civil Rights Act of 1968 clearly established the illegality of any form of segregation, and the students from Students for a Democratic Society managed to expose and cut the links between U.S. universities and military establishments like the IDA.

In contrast with other experiences such as Mexico's that same year, these collective student actions were convergences that interacted and fed back into the social movements of the time, thus mutually strengthening them. Fifty years later, a large part of the core causes of these struggles continue to exist, but in a context of precariousness and vulnerability. It is devoutly to be wished that we may learn from their disciplined, non-violent tactics and generous strategic visions to make this world a better place. VM

Notes

1 Immanuel Wallerstein and Sharon Zukin, "1968, Revolution in the World-System: Theses and Queries," *Theory and Society* vol. 18, no. 4, July, 1989, pp. 431-449, https://www.jstor.org/stable/657747?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.
2 Ibid., p. 435.
3 Richard Rorty, "Una izquierda cultural," in Richard Rorty, *Forjar nuestro país: el pensamiento de izquierdas en los Estados Unidos del siglo xx* (Barcelona: Paidós, 1999), pp. 71-96.
4 B. Kalb, "Students Halt Howard Rites, Proclaim a 'New University,'" 1968, https://www.dc1968project.com/blog/2017/3/2/hu-deja-vu.
5 R. Massimo, "'Our Demand Is an Answer' —50 Years since Howard University Protest," 2018, https://wtop.com/dc/2018/03/demand-answer-howard-university-protest-50/slide/1/.
6 The war continued despite this ceasefire until April 30, 1975.

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/05-Mitin-estudiantes-marzo-1966/MGP0096

Carlos Martínez Assad*

The Hymn to Life that Was 1968[1]

The world came to Mexico and University City in 1968. The film clubs showed movies of Cubans after the Cuban Revolution cutting cane and resisting the blockade by what was then called Yanqui imperialism; films about Bolivian peasants; about the war waged by the Tupamaros; and the motion pictures that portrayed people's suffering because of the war in Vietnam and the consequences of dropping napalm on defenseless towns in that battered country. In this context, even Eisenstein's 1925 *Battleship Potemkin* retained its subversive qualities. Equally —or even more— attractive (because of personal affinities) were Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless* (1960), *Pierrot le fou* (1965), and *Masculine Feminine* (1966); these were the films that best expressed the feelings of young university students of the time. According to its publicity, *Masculine Feminine* was about young people adrift, who, in an uncertain, violent consumer society influenced by pop culture, lacked the social and intellectual moorings they needed to find their way through the swamp.

Marxism, which had a great influence at the time and was our daily bread at the UNAM, contrasted with this individualism. The world also came to Mexico in 1968 with the announcement of the nineteenth Olympic Games, the corollary of the stabilizing developing period, which gave great impetus to the country's modernization. Everything was consumed with the preparations; construction was

* UNAM researcher emeritus; assad866@gmail.com.

going on everywhere; this activity was most noteworthy in Mexico City's Federal District because it could be seen in many different places. You had to go around the University City Stadium because it was being remodeled, and workers were repainting several hectares of concrete with the Olympic symbols, with a strong prevalence of Mexican pink.

Along the brand-new, shiny Peripheral Ring, plinths began to appear for the 19 sculptures that artists from the seven continents would place there on what was called "The Friendship Route." The 19 statues commemorated the 19th Olympic Games held in modern times. The activities drove everyone interested to all the theaters, museums, and concert halls. Who would have believed it possible to see in Mexico the Ballet of the Twentieth Century company, directed by Maurice Béjart, performing to the rhythm of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in the recently built Sports Palace; Merce Cunningham dance to the modern music of John Cage and Gordon Mumma; or the prestigious Martha Graham, who, due to her age, had to be seated as she interpreted the role of Hecuba, the queen of Troy, as her company danced around her? To go to the theater to see Peter Weiss's *Marat-Sade*, with Angélica María as Charlotte in that madhouse represented with cells like a honeycomb, in front of scenery designed by Toni Sbert? Or to listen to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir from Salt Lake City, the seat of that religion, or go to the Bolshoi Ballet to see Medusa danced by Mercedes Pascual? There was also the Magic Lantern Theater, with brilliant lighting and technological solutions. The biggest thrill was being able to watch Calderón de la Barca's *The Constant Prince*, directed by Krakow Laboratory Theater's Jerzy Grotowski: the production was so vivid that at the end of the performance no one could even applaud, and to leave, the audience had to cross over the inert bodies of the actors on the stage of the Elizabethan Forum.

The zeitgeist was defined by the idea of opposing everything that seemed like authoritarianism, whether that of professors or of parents. You could hear, "We have to criticize the education we have suffered through since childhood," a slogan against the whole traditional, rigid educational methodology most teachers used. So what was fermenting was unrest that found no form of expression and the alert went out everywhere. France's days of May were the scene for polemics and discussions among the students and renowned thinkers, while in the streets they were raising barricades to defend the slogan of being free to the cry of "Anything is possible."

> Historian Ferdinand Braudel characterized 1968 as something like the Italian Renaissance, which did not have profound consequences, but "did create a new art of living [and] transformed the rules of the game."

In Mexico, events soon went beyond social issues due to the political slogans that, after appearing in July, increased in the heady month of August. Students improvised as subversive writers of short phrases written on walls, where you could read, "Youth is power," "People, defend your UNAM," "Reason and the law, arms of the university," "Let us demand liberty," "Let us fight for the rights of the Mexican people," "Peasants in struggle with students for democratic freedoms," "We're not fighting for victory; we're fighting for reason," "She [heaven] gave you a jail for every son."[2]

There were also painters to sketch posters with Picasso's emblematic dove of peace, designed for the Olympics, pierced by a bloody lance; gorillas with signs reading "Monkey Díaz Ordaz," in allusion to the president; "People, do you want this hand?" (with a bloody hand in the background alluding to those in power and the president's declaration that he was extending his hand); "Díaz Ordaz: we don't want Olympics; we want an end to poverty." Jailhouse bars are drawn demanding freedom for political prisoners; coffins labeled "Constitution." Placards are unfurled with the image of Che Guevara, raised to mythical status by his assassination the previous year and sanctified with the slogan, "Ever onward to victory!" as can be seen in Rodrigo Moya's forceful photograph of the huge August 14 march.

The movement learned while partying. The students shared significant moments like the night of September 15, Mexican Independence Day, when Heberto Castillo headed the Cry for Independence ceremony from an improvised podium in the esplanade of University City. He was standing next to a metal cube that held the dynamited sculpture of President Alemán that the fashionable visual artists of the day like Cuevas, Felguérez, and Ponce had decorated. The students danced all night at the

School of Philosophy, with a few couples going back and forth for a private interlude in the Islands.[3]

Only three days later, these dreams of freedom would become a nightmare when, on the night of August 18, the army would invade University City. But the worst came weeks later when, in the Three Cultures Plaza, on the afternoon of October 2, the future of the movement was settled with the memory constructed with the weight of those lying on the rain-moistened ground. The fiesta ended with the repression that finalized in a funeral.

Since that time, mourning has festooned a large part of what was a social movement full of nuances, proposals, learning experiences. It undoubtedly had a strong impact on the organization of academic life and on many cultural manifestations that brought great social changes linked to something under construction across the world. The global began to manifest itself strongly through what were the until-then known media.

The selective memory has been rich, despite the emphasis on the repression in Tlatelolco, allowing a complicated web of interpretations that several thinkers have offered about what happened in Paris, in Prague, in the United States in 1968. Historian Ferdinand Braudel characterized that year as something similar to the Italian Renaissance, which did not have profound consequences, but "did create a new art of living [and] transformed the rules of the game."[4] Here he has touched on the key point of the meaning of the student movements and how in the Renaissance a new man emerged, individuals responsible for "their own lives and also their death."[5]

For Immanuel Wallerstein, 1968 was more important for its questions about the future than for its critique of the past, but his interpretation situated it as one of the constituent events of the modern "world system." The protest was aimed at the hegemony of the United States with the acquiescence of the Soviet Union, but, above all, it was a countercultural movement opposed to bourgeois ways of life. For that reason, the movement expressed itself in the immediate sense in fashion (remember the miniskirt, blue jeans, the women's straight hair, and the boys' long rumpled manes, as can also be seen in photos from the time), in the music (the well-known Beatles, Rolling Stones, Leonard Cohen), in literature (Kerouac, Salinger, José Agustín), and in new sexual behavior (and the use of the pill more than the condom). "The 1968 revolution had, of course and particularly, a strong component of the spontaneous, and the counterculture became part of the revolutionary euphoria."[6]

We experienced that movement against the schematic approach of the old left, and it was "the ideological tomb of the concept of the 'leading role' of the industrial proletariat," as José Revueltas would say in Mexico. The movement also expressed itself against sexism and racism, but it was profoundly individualistic and anti-party. That is why 1968 created a strong impetus for the new social movements like feminism, urbanism, ecology, and religious and minority struggles.

Edgar Morin considered it the "youth commune" that irrupted onto the scene as a social-political force, something that aspired to another life, another society, another politics. It meant recovering Montesquieu's libertarian sentiment, "the right of all to liberty." It was being able to write that aspiration on the city's walls, the individualistic bourgeois affirmation of the world that belongs to us.

Alain Touraine defined '68 as "a revolution without a face, since a thousand faces emerge from a mobilization of a new kind against the apparatuses of integration, of manipulation, which question the omnipresent technocracy."[7] And to Michel de Certeau, it seemed like a movement in which "we took over the word like the Bastille was taken over in 1789."

The idea was to re-politicize society with ideas and destatize politics, giving it an anti-systemic content different from the ways the institutions and society functioned. The barricades were not there to destroy capitalism, but to consolidate it, to modernize it in the perspective of Ré-

We must insist on not exclusively remembering the deaths and the repression that sent many to prison. The memory of '68 must also be nourished by the hymn to life chanted by thousands of young people.

The barricades were not there to destroy capitalism, but to consolidate it, to modernize it in the perspective of Régis Debray, who called the movement "the cradle of the new bourgeois society."

gis Debray, who called the movement "the cradle of the new bourgeois society." Perhaps from that perspective, Raymond Aron classified it as "a psychodrama," or simply and contemptuously as "the May carnival," in direct allusion to the May events in Paris, sparking strong criticism.

In this quest for freedom, understood as one of the civil rights, without taking power, there was a significant change that affected the whole society. Even the students and groups that did not mobilize benefitted from the changes in educational systems, countering authoritarian patterns and nineteenth-century teaching methods. The generations that followed were heir to the freedoms attained in assuming sexual freedom fully; women, even non-feminists, took advantage of the contributions of those who had fought for their vindication. These were changes in behavior patterns that now seem intrinsic to the middle classes the world over.

Carlos Fuentes called the days in May in France "the first prefiguration of the twenty-first century."[8] What happened in Mexico could be defined as a revolution without a revolution, because, despite its many intentions, it did not question the state. It was merely the denunciation of authoritarianism and of the fragility of the institutions. What predominated was the protest against the lack of freedoms and the demand for legal equality. In 1968 in Mexico, a crack opened up in the political system, according to Octavio Paz, "in the area of its greatest beneficiaries, the children of the middle class." And, since the country was not accustomed to this kind of dissidence, it used the same violent methods that it had utilized historically against workers and peasants.

With the terrible repression that grew in scale until October 2 and the Tlatelolco massacre, a grey cloud was laid over a creative movement with a festive air of profound cultural changes that prefigured the future. For that reason, we must insist on not exclusively remembering the deaths and the repression that sent many to prison. The memory of '68 must also be nourished by the hymn to life chanted by thousands of young people.

The changes from that year enriched today's political culture. In an interview with *El País* published on May 11, 2008, the leader of the French movement, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, said, "1968 wanted individuals to claim the freedom of daily life, the blossoming of music, the new relationship between men and women, life, sexuality." In Mexico, that egalitarian freedom was also expressed with justice and contributed to the defense of civil rights. The freedoms that emerged preserve something of the original Utopia: the Utopia that does not recognize differences in class, gender, religion, or sexual preferences.

With '68 —and there are the images that we carry within us to prove it—, society changed its mask. There is no doubt that it did give impetus to the transformation of the rules of the political game in its eternal capacity for changing everything so nothing changes, even though the weight of democracy is certainly clear. It could be no other way, after having gone through the rebellion of a revolution without a revolution. VM

Further Reading

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Hobsbawm, Eric, *Historia del siglo xx (1914-1991)* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1994).

Notes

1 A Spanish-language version of this article was published in *Revista de la Universidad de México* no. 56, October 2008.

2 The last slogan is an allusion to Mexico's national anthem, the last line of the first verse of which is, "Heaven gave you a soldier in every son." [Translator's Note.]

3 The author is referring to small areas with trees dotting the immense central esplanade of University City. Their dense vegetation invited couples to visit them on occasion. [Editor's Note.]

4 Ferdinand Braudel, "Renacimiento, reforma, 1968: revoluciones culturales de larga duración," *La Jornada Semanal* (Mexico City), no. 226, October 10, 1993.

5 Ibid.

6 Immanuel Wallerstein, "1968: revolución en el sistema mundo. Tesis e interrogantes," *Estudios Sociológicos* no. 20, May-August 1989.

7 Alain Touraine, *Le mouvement de mai ou le communisme utopique* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1968).

8 Carlos Fuentes, *París, la revolución de mayo* (Mexico City: ERA, 1968).

IISUE/AHUNAM/CL-SM-Exp_162_00006

Ricardo Pozas Horcasitas*

Mexico in the 1960s

The 1968 movement of middle and high school and college students in Mexico condensed a process of structural, systemic changes that began in the late 1950s. Despite the fact that the processes are a continuum in social time, they always end by being marked by dates, weighty years and months: these are condensed times that break up the centuries into years, into months, about which myths are created.

Like all over the world, in Mexico, the 1960s were a period of intense transformation of society as a result of constant economic, demographic, and urban growth. That growth produced increased diversity in social organization and gave birth to innovation in the intellectual, aesthetic, and political cultures. These changes were the fruit of the economic and social policies of the regime that emerged from the Mexican Revolution, combined with the worldwide welfare state trend. They came up against their political limit at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, depending on the national conditions in each country.

The social change that occurred in the 1960s was the result of growth with macroeconomic stability, low inflation, and a stable exchange rate. This began under the administration of Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958) and was consolidated under that of Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964), a term in which average annual GDP growth was 6.73 percent and average inflation was 2.28 percent. These conditions continued under the administration of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970), in which GDP grew 6.84 percent, the highest rate in the country's history, with inflation at only 2.76 percent and a nominal exchange rate of 12.50 pesos per dollar, which would be maintained for 12 years.[1] This is known as the "stabilizing development" period, and it was the first time an economic policy tran-

* Researcher at the UNAM Institute for Social Studies; pozashr@yahoo.com.mx.

Young people began to rebel against the guardians of order and their certainties and convictions. They confronted the faith that their elders had in the universe of values and beliefs sustained in dogmatic duty and that their children experienced as old-fashioned.

scended a single administration without differentiating economic policy design from one presidential term to the next. This period of economic history is mythically linked to Minister of Finance Antonio Ortiz Mena, who would give it its name and implement it in the 1960s.[2] The period seems to be the economic technocracy's most successful in Mexico's history, and the minister of finance would be considered the founder of a long line of ministers that will cover second half of the twentieth century and on into the next.

The Mexican model of development between 1958 and 1970 was implemented by a strong, intervening, protectionist, highly regulatory state, with policies of investing in infrastructure and capital goods. Between 1959 and 1970, federal spending to promote industry and trade grew 158 percent, and expenditures in communications and transportation rose by 100 percent.[3] Over those 12 years, several sectors of the economy grew significantly: electricity showed real growth of 12.83 percent; commerce, transportation, and communications, 6.03 percent; manufacturing, 9.11 percent, due to the import substitution model and growth of the domestic market; services, 6.65 percent; construction, 8.48 percent; mining, 6.81 percent; and agriculture, with the lowest rate of all the sectors, only 3.28 percent.[4]

The centralized industrialization model that intensified in the post-WWII era, began in Mexico under the administration of Miguel Alemán Valdés (1946-1952) and concentrated in three main urban-industrial areas. It subordinated the agricultural sector to industry and commerce, decreasing investment and increasing poverty. The latter, added to population growth, made the agrarian distribution program inefficient in broad swathes of the countryside. This growing precariousness could be seen in the intense migration during the decade and the appearance of political violence, which gave rise to the first rural guerrilla organizations of the post-revolutionary era.

Urban-industrial growth was stimulated by the rise in foreign demand, which raised production in already existing industry and fostered the creation of new companies. This began in the late 1930s due to World War II, and continued in the 1950s, due to the Korean War (1950-1953).

Economic and social change could be seen in the transition from an essentially agricultural world to one that tended to be urban, the result of rapid population growth due to the transformation in the quality of living standards. The latter was due to improved diet, the introduction of potable drinking water, better sanitation infrastructure, health services, vaccination campaigns, and more extensive basic education. The effects of this were a dropping infant mortality rate and higher life expectancy.

In 1950, men lived on average to the age of 48, and women, to the age of 63. By 1970, life expectancy for both had increased significantly: males, 63 years, and women 75 years.[5] Together with lower infant mortality, this had a direct impact on national population growth, associated with accelerated internal migration toward the expanding industrial centers surrounding the country's most important cities. The main development hub was the Valley of Mexico Metropolitan Area, which included Mexico City and municipalities of the State of Mexico and Hidalgo. This strengthening of the capital reinforced the economic, political, and cultural centralism that had historically existed in the country.

Mexico's population grew rapidly: in 1950, it had 27 791 017 inhabitants; ten years later, the number had grown to 34 923 129; and, by 1970, it had swollen to 48 225 238, almost double that of 1950.[6] The rate of growth was 3.2 percent between 1950 and 1960, rising to 3.4 percent in the following decade, making it the highest in the country's history.

Economic and demographic growth kept the population essentially young, huge, and urban. In 1950, the mean age was 23.7 years; in 1960, it was 22.9; and by 1970, it stabilized at 22.3. The economic and political weight of Mexico City in the country explains why it became the space for the emergence of new social movements, led mainly by young people.

Urban Middle Sectors on the Scene and The Expansion of Middle and Higher Education

One of the social results of economic growth was the broadening out of urban middle sectors (55 percent of those with intermediate incomes in 1960 and 63 percent of the same in 1970). Their living standards rose, and their new purchasing power spurred the service sector, including greater and diversified demand for educational services and cultural goods associated with the quality of life in cities.

The increase of the so-called "middle classes" created a growing demand for their children's middle and higher education. After the Great Depression (1929-1934) and the economic expansion of World War II, these classes stabilized and consolidated their social mobility, which they translated into the "legitimate aspiration" that their children have a university degree. Between 1950 and 1970, university and technical school enrollment expansion was surprising: while in 1950, the total was 32 143 students, in 1960 it had more than doubled to 75 434; and by the end of the decade, it had risen to 208 944 students in institutions of higher education.[7]

The quest for status produced selective migration made up of young people from urban middle classes, who had gone to middle school in cities outside the capital and wanted to continue their academic and intellectual education. Many of them would maintain the impetus and creative enthusiasm of the cultural immigrants, and, from the mid-1950s, would be the foundation of Mexico's new political, economic, and cultural elites.[8]

Mexico City became the strongest pole of attraction for young people from the small and medium-sized cities who felt drowned by the weight of traditional Catholic values and the lack of cultural institutions and spaces (cinemas, theaters, publishing houses, bookstores, and art galleries).

Throughout the 1960s, expanded enrollment in middle and higher education transformed students' traditional collective identities. This began with the identities related to the institutions where they studied, with three central among them: the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN), the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and the Normal Teachers' School. Being part of these offered different forms of solidarity and group cohesion.

The simple traditional identities began with the forms of organization of the student groups, from their classrooms to the student associations in each of the schools. Added to this form of student self-identification were those derived from belonging to football teams, their cheer squads, and other forms of association and competition among students from high schools and universities. Before the 1968 movement, you were a "puma," from the UNAM, or a "white burro," from the Polytechnic Institute.

In the medium-sized and large cities, the values and beliefs constructed to give meaning to their new lifestyle clashed with the myths and beliefs of their parents' and grandparents' tradition, which, thanks to economic stability, they wanted to preserve and hand down: belonging to the "middle classes" where they had managed to arrive. "Those who arrived" experienced the collective phenomenon of social mobility as the fruit of their generational and personal efforts.

Young people, the new inhabitants of the urban world, possessed the conviction of an increasingly strong individuality that was less indulgent of the past, a past constantly re-written by the social institutions in charge of watching over and preserving the traditions: the Catholic Church, schools, and the family. These traditions were preserved by their central figures: priests, teachers, and the father of the nuclear or often extended family, who reiterated their moral, patriarchal, authoritarian monologue.

Young people began to rebel against the guardians of order and their certainties and convictions. They confronted the faith that their elders had in the universe of values and beliefs sustained in dogmatic duty and that their children experienced as old-fashioned. This included versions of the world that justified the father's violent and authoritarian power to rule, versions that had stopped

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being convincing and had lost the ability to make people coalesce around them.

In the mid-twentieth century, the existing institutions were limited and incapable of producing legitimate responses in the face of the new demands presented by the masses of young people who were entering the public space in national societies.[9] The authorities, socialized in the third and fourth decades of the century, were incapable of making the forms of political and social organization flexible, thus exposing the coercive nature of the institutions.

This accelerated change produced a gap between the new, modernizing social subjects and the maintenance of a political regime with dense, heavy, presidentialist, authoritarian, corporatist political-culture traditions. The governments of the Mexican Revolution had built that regime over the first half of the twentieth century and designed it to represent and dominate the majority of a mainly rural society.

The intense change that transformed Mexico throughout the 1960s blossomed into the '68 movement that politically represented the most important social and cultural change of the mid-century and converted social subjects to political actors. VM

Notes

1 Antonio Ortiz Mena, *El desarrollo estabilizador: reflexiones sobre una época*, *México* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica / El Colegio de México, 2000), p. 50.
2 Ortiz Mena coined the term "stabilizing development," saying, "I used this term for the first time in a study I presented about Mexico's economic development at the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington in September 1969." The study was later published by El Colegio de México. Ibid.
3 Ibid., p. 173.
4 Ibid., p. 55.
5 INEGI (1950-2000), *Censo General de Población y Vivienda* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía).
6 Ibid.
7 *Anuario Estadístico de la ANUIES*, www.anuies.mx/anuario-estadistico-de-educacion-superior.
8 Ricardo Pozas Horcasitas, *Los límites del presidencialismo en las sociedades complejas: México en la década de los sesenta* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 2014.)
9 Alfred Sauvy, *La montée des jeunes. Questions d'actualité* (Paris: Persée, 1960), p. 264.

Robert Galbraith/Reuters

Julia E. Palacios Franco*

Sounds of a Generation[1]

Sandwiched between the utopian 1967 and the amazing 1969, 1968 is one of the most significant and rebellious years of the second half of the twentieth century.

In the middle of the ongoing Vietnam War, a focus for people around the globe, and increased anger at and questioning of foreign U.S. policies, in 1967 "flower power" was blooming and the hippie children were living in freedom and searching for peace and love everywhere. San Francisco's Summer of Love and the Monterey Pop Festival in August of that year exploded with extraordinary music, arts, and psychedelic fantasies floating in the air ["San Francisco (Be Sure to Wear Flowers in Your Hair)," Scott McKenzie].

The Beatle's June 1967 album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was an ode to psychedelia and a musical masterpiece. Nothing like it had been heard before ["Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," The Beatles].

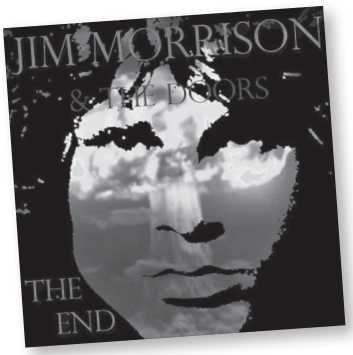
On June 24, on the *Our World* program, people around the globe were able to watch The Beatles sing "All You Need Is Love" on the first satellite television broadcast ever.[2]

And while the common message was love and the dream of a world at peace, running through it were also deep reflection and the seeds of insurrection and restlessness.

Canadian poet Leonard Cohen moved hearts and souls with his first album. Songs like "Suzanne" became symbolic anthems of a deep personal search for meaning ["Suzanne," Leonard Cohen].

In Southern California, songs dealt with protest. Buffalo Springfield, a Canadian-American band with virtuous sounds, sang about the riots, civil rights, and protest ["For What It´s Worth," Buffalo Springfield], while The Doors with their trance-induced songs and existentialist attitude were yelling, "We want the world, and we

* Academic and researcher at the Ibero-American University Communications Department; juliapalacios@gmail.com.



want it now!" ["The End," The Doors].

The 1968 rebellions were about to explode. Prague, Paris, Montevideo, Mexico: riots, demonstrations, violent government repression; the questioning of authority and the system in general was inevitable. In the United States, the assassinations of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy added to social concerns. In August 1968, the riots at the Chicago National Democratic Convention openly questioned the system and its institutions, while the black power salute with the gloved fists of John Carlos and Tommie Smith at Mexico´s Olympic Games were the most effective gesture to show the world the increased restlessness and non-conformity of one of the African American movements that permeated the decade.

There is a tendency, a myth, an idealization of 1968 as the year of the revolution, counterculture, protest, the turning point that marked some of the most important changes in the second half of the twentieth century. Mostly, this is due to the protagonist role of youth, restless and thoughtful youngsters who openly raised their inquisitive, raging voices.

Yet, those were not "all" the young people and "all" the voices. 1968, like now, fluctuated between conservatism and rebellion, a completely different, dual approach to society, culture, and music. 1968 cannot and should not be read as a single homogeneous year.

In Mexico City, the second half of 1968 was a mixture of festivity and joy with the upcoming Olympic Games and the protests and outrage of the student movement: fear and celebration, praise for modernity and anger at authorities. A similar spirit was felt in many other parts of the world. Divergence of general meaningful interests and specific musical tastes permeated the student movements and the radio waves. In Mexico, we wavered between being modern, being worldly, international, and keeping our traditions and conservative values.

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The student movement was mostly left-leaning, more related to folk and protest songs. Inspiration came from Pete Seeger, Joan Baez ["We Shall Overcome," Joan Baez], Bob Dylan ["The Times They Are A-Changin'," Bob Dylan], and Peter, Paul, and Mary ["Blowin´ in the Wind," Peter, Paul and Mary]. Our revolutionary *corridos* or Latin American "protest" songs were typically sung in brief support events and flash student rallies by singers like Óscar Chávez ["Carabina 30/30," Óscar Chávez] ["Hasta siempre" (about Comandante Che Guevara), Óscar Chávez], and Margarita Bauche, celebrated as the "Mexican Joan Baez."

Conservative youngsters were dancing to sterile mainstream songs like "El juego de Simón," a cover version by Roberto Jordán of the original "Simon Says" by the 1910 Fruitgum Company ["El juego de Simón," Roberto Jordán], or "Yummy Yummy!" by the Ohio Express ["Yummy, Yummy!" Ohio Express], or the traditional Russian song with adapted lyrics in English, "Those Were the Days," recorded at the brand new Apple Records, produced by Paul McCartney ["Those Were the Days," Mary Hopkin], and still dancing cheek to cheek with the gracious romanticism of Paul Muriat's orchestra ["Love Is Blue," Paul Muriat].

In August 1968, a major musical event took place in the heart of Mexico City. Thousands of youngsters gathered at the downtown Alameda Park, and Spanish singer Raphael gave a free concert at the peak of one of his multiple moments of popularity. He was proclaimed the Number One Artist of the Year 1968 by *Notitas musicales* (Little Musical Notes) magazine, the leading teen music publication of the era ["Mi gran noche," Raphael].

Genres coexisted on several mainly music radio stations specialized either in romantic Mexican tunes like boleros, ranchero or tropical music,[3] or pop songs sung in Spanish.[4] Plus, several radio stations played only

Peace and Love movements and attitudes were also directed at racial and gender integration, planting the seeds of what would later be gender equal opportunities.

music in English, mostly the hits of the moment.[5] Besides the popular songs with simple lyrics and nonsense rhymes, but a contagious beat for dancing, there was an eruption of poetry, complex words with deep, hidden meanings. All this was wrapped in innovative music inspired by oriental sounds and recording studio exploration, plus the so-called psychedelic sound influenced by the increased consumption of natural and synthetic substances used in name of the so sought-after "mind expansion."

Many song lyrics dealt with the drug culture, such as "White Room" by the British band Cream, one of the most powerful trios in rock history ["White Room," Cream].

There was also the Eastern influence like in the "Hurdy Gurdy Man," by Scots singer-songwriter Donovan. The troubadour-like Hurdy Gurdy song was inspired during the Beatles' famous 1968 trip to the Rishikesh Ashram in India to practice transcendental meditation. Donovan was part of the group. This was a main event that consolidated the bridge between East and West, musically and spiritually.

Critical social issues were talked about openly. The film *The Graduate*, featuring Dustin Hoffman, portrayed a young graduate having a love affair with an older woman. "Mrs. Robinson," sung by the marvelous duet Simon and Garfunkel, described a long-gone United States and became one of the 1968 "anthems."

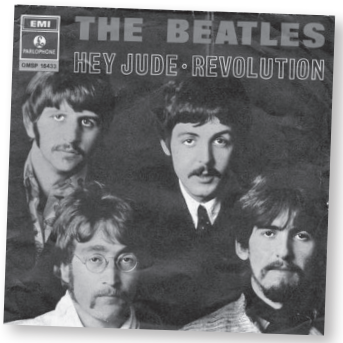
Another critical film of the time, *Valley of the Dolls*, portrayed female consumption of "dolls" or prescription pills that caused addiction and even death. This was openly talked about in the film, as was the rehabilitation crisis that addicts go through. The death of beloved star Marilyn Monroe in 1962 due to an overdose of prescription medication was still an ache in people's hearts and minds. The film's theme song was very popular in 1968 ["Valley of the Dolls," Dionne Warwick].

By 1968, the civil rights movement and so-called "black power" were at their peak. Music, in which African-American singers and composers have played a key role in music history,[6] also expressed the pride of being black. Hugely popular singers like Aretha Franklin and James Brown sang about this pride, becoming the voices of their race and generation ["Say It Loud. I'm Black and I'm Proud," James Brown].

Peace and Love movements and attitudes were also directed at racial and gender integration, planting the seeds of what would later be gender equal opportunities. At that time rock and pop music in general were both predominantly masculine art forms, but the female presence started taking on a new role beyond the candid teenage singer or the romantic sweet female voice.[7] Two important female front-women had prominent roles in the psychedelic era: Grace Slick, the voice of San Francisco's iconic band Jefferson Airplane, and Janis Joplin, the voice of another Bay Area band, Big Brother and the Holding Company. Joplin's interpretative power had been "discovered" in 1967 at the Monterey Pop Festival during the Summer of Love, and their 1968 *Cheap Thrills* album, with its cover design by underground artist Robert Crumb, set them up as one of the most impressive, influential bands of the psychedelic scene ["Piece of My Heart (You Know You've Got It If It Makes You Feel Good…)," Big Brother and the Holding Company].

Of the various bands that blossomed in the Bay Area, Sly and the Family Stone were a very interesting example of their times. A seven-member band with a powerful sound, it was the first popular racially integrated rock group. Plus, having males and females in their line-up was also something unusual for a rock band ["Dance to the Music," Sly and the Family Stone].

Rock music was transcendent in many ways. Its intrinsic force of communication became the perfect way to express the restlessness of the times. John Lennon's composition "Revolution," with its three different versions, talked about demonstrations,



supposedly the ones in Paris in May 1968 and the questioning of the tactics and forms of protest ["Revolution," The Beatles].

The Rolling Stones also sang in 1968 about the international protests young Londoners had joined and the demonstrations that turned into riots. "Street Fighting Man" also dealt with the difficult conditions facing young people without jobs or opportunities in English cities. And, with an autobiographical wink at the English baby boomer generation, born during World War II, "Jumpin' Jack Flash" portrays a young man who survives his problems through escapism and fun ["Jumpin' Jack Flash," The Rolling Stones].

As homage to the young people fighting and dying in the Vietnam War, Eric Burdon and The Animals sang "Sky Pilot." It was really a strong critique of military chaplains who blessed and guided young soldiers as part of the system that maintained the ongoing war ["Sky Pilot," Eric Burdon and The Animals].

And the main anthem of 1968, the song that became number-one that year, was the mysterious, trance-inducing "Hey Jude," with its complex, understandable meaning. Though it was said that Paul McCartney wrote it for Julian Lennon, John's son, who was going through difficult times personally, it became not only the most popular song of the year, but a real anthem of the times. Its uplifting words, beautiful melody, and impeccable chorus were appropriated by people all over the world, and would survive as an essential soundtrack of that generation ["Hey Jude," The Beatles].

Then came 1969 with the Woodstock Nation, the unbelievable gathering of a good half million people, mostly young, which seemed impossible in the aftermath of the 1968 riots and demonstrations and killings of very recent memory.

In a way, 1969 was the end of the possibility, of the Peace & Love Utopia, the raised voices and fists, the power of gathering, the strength of protest; the longing for change, for a better world in many ways. The expansion of consciousness, the exploration of the mind, were trapped in addictions, excesses, and more and more dealers.

By December 1969, the Altamont Speedway Free Festival in California became a nightmare in itself. The joy of music turned into violence; the sense of sharing, of common ground, and celebration became fearful and sad.[8]

The 1969 film *Easy Rider*, written and directed by Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda, with the two of them in the main roles as bikers traveling throughout the southern United States, summed up the end of the decade as a playful, carefree, anguished and restless escape. *Easy Rider* presented flashes of its time and, with its impeccable selection of songs and the roar of the choppers riding down the wide empty roads became an outstanding audio document that portrayed the anxiety, intensity, and exhaustion that closed the decade ["Born to be Wild," Steppenwolf]. VM

Rock music was transcendent in many ways. Its intrinsic force of communication became the perfect way to express the restlessness of the times, as John Lennon's composition "Revolution" did.

Notes

1 At the following link, the reader can listen to each of the songs cited in brackets throughout the article: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLt1NBdpYwec9rtSI8TI1Bo4_bDfLSlOKG.

2 With an estimated audience of 350 million viewers worldwide. https://www.thebeatles.com/feature/our-world-global-satellite-broadcast.

3 Tropical music was the name given to all sorts of genres, mostly dance music with Caribbean roots, like chachachá, merengue, mambo, and various combinations that had successful interpreters like Sonora Santanera. This was before the term *salsa* was generally adopted as a genre.

4 Mexican romantic pop song composers had their work recorded and were gaining audience. This was the case of singer Carlos Lico, with compositions by Armando Manzanero. Spanish singers like Raphael and Rocío Dúrcal were very popular, as were Mexican pop singers doing cover versions of U.S. ballad hits or easily translated Italian pop songs.

5 The U.S. Hit Parade was the main guide.

6 The history of U.S. pop music has been marked since its origins by Afro-American performers and composers. Musical genres as important as jazz, blues, gospel, and rock and roll are U.S. creations with a decided influence and presence of Afro-American roots.

7 Female jazz singers did have an important role in music, but they were an exception.

8 The documentary *Gimme Shelter* (1970), directed by brothers Albert and David Maysles and Charlotte Zwerin, captured what happened at this festival.

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/58-Mitin-Glorieta-Simon-Bolivar-sept-1968/MGP2866

René A. Jiménez Ornelas*

Lessons for Today

This article presents my memories of the 1968 student movement; my viewpoint is that of a young man who intensely experienced every moment.[1] I will put the events in their social context to situate their origins; then I will mention certain data and relevant events that, by their nature, make for a point of transition; I will explain a few more personal experiences; and finally, I conclude with an overall reflection and look at their implications today.

The Social and University Context

In the months from July to October 1968, the authoritarianism of then-President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) reached a critical point. This was the final stage of a process that had begun in the 1940s, a process with big milestones, such as the adoption of what was called the economic stabilization model and intense social mobility due to different factors; outstanding among the latter were higher educational levels among most of the population, since Mexico had previously had high illiteracy levels. The economic model was framed in a mechanism for industrializing the country, which prompted internal migration to the more developed regions such as Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Nuevo León. Nevertheless, although certain glimmers of development could be discerned, it was limited compared to the growth of other years.

In 1968, I was studying actuarial science in the UNAM School of Science. This major was usually considered rigid in the sense that most graduates did not get involved in social causes. It was also common to hear that people studied sciences because they "knew math," and therefore their intellectual level was "higher." For some people, this explained that they were apathetic regarding the country's social movements. Despite this, some groups were interested and became involved in social movements, although their participation was not as visible as

* Researcher at the UNAM Institute for Social Research (IIS, UNAM); renal@unam.mx.

those in the Schools of Political and Social Sciences, Economics, and Philosophy and Letters.

Among the few active groups in the School of Sciences were those drawn to the ideas of the Communist Party, the Trotskyists, and a few independents; I was among the latter. The independents organized meetings to discuss not only school-related issues, but also national issues and the need for public participation to solve them. All of this was rather marginal, since the School of Sciences was a complex place, dominated by the Catholic, anti-communist ultra-right (Opus Dei; the "Tecos," who operated out of the Autonomous University of Guadalajara; and the MURO [the Renovating Orientation University Movement, associated with the National Action Party, or PAN]). This meant that the few general assemblies held were carried out against the will of these forces.

What Lit the Fuse

Several events became pillars of how the movement played out, but the July 22 clash between students from the Isaac Ochoterena High School (part of the UNAM) and the Vocational Schools Number 2 and 5 (the "Vocas," part of the National Polytechnic Institute [IPN]) over a football game, and two gangs, The Spiders and the Ciudadelos, undoubtedly lit the fuse.

The next day, the Isaac Ochoterena High students took their revenge by throwing rocks at Vocational School Number 2. In response, Voca 2 and 5 students marched to the UNAM high school to settle the score. When the Voca students returned to their respective campuses, the riot police and Company 19 metropolitan police, who until then had not intervened, gave them a beating. The Voca 5 students took refuge in their school, but the riot police pursued them and even went through the school indiscriminately hitting men and women professors also. Dozens of young people were arrested.

As a result, on July 24, the Executive Committee of the UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences made a statement supporting the National Polytechnic Institute students, who had stopped classes to hold a rally in the Casco de Santo Tomás area to protest the riot police attack on the Voca 5 students. The UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences then declared itself on indefinite strike. At the same time, the School of Sciences was holding its first assemblies to raise awareness about the events, with increasing student participation that filled the auditoriums, and beginning to organize student information brigades. The brigades mobilized daily with the agreement of bus drivers who they paid with the funds raised by passing the hat on the street and in buses.

The information brigades were fundamental for the movement: that was the way the students began to come into close contact with the public. Their aim was to hold rallies everywhere possible.

The Brigades and Their Links to Society

The brigades were fundamental for the movement: that was the way the students began to come into close contact with the public. Their aim was to hold rallies not only in industrial areas, but everywhere possible. At first, we organizers and participants were seen as people who only wanted to defend student interests and counter the constant media campaign against us. However, in the following months, the movement began to be more structured and win over working people and then other sectors of the public, despite the exhaustive attempts by the official media, right-wing civilian groups, and the authorities to discredit it.

In the following days, the students continually clashed with security forces. On July 27, these confrontations took place in the area around the San Ildefonso College. The next day the IPN Strike Coordinating Committee, representatives of several UNAM schools, the Chapingo Agricultural School, and the Normal School held a meeting where they discussed the possibility of striking on all campuses until the following demands were met:

1) Disappearance of the National Technical Students Federation, the University, University Cheerleaders [association],[2] and the MURO;
2) Expulsion of the students who were members of these groups or the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI);
3) Compensation from the government for injured students and the families of students who had died;
4) Freedom of all detained students;

5) Disappearance of the Riot Police and other repressive police forces; and
6) Repeal of Article 145 of the Penal Code, which deals with the crime of "social dissolution."[3] [4]

After these events, the movement began to be violently repressed. I was personally involved in two examples of this. The first began with the detention of a few *compañeras* (one, the wife of a student leader), who were jailed in Santa Martha Acatitla. The UNAM School of Science immediately organized and a bus full of students went to the jail to ask that the young women be freed. But before they arrived, other students who had gone ahead in cars sent word that the place was surrounded by riot police, and that therefore it was better to return to the school to decide on alternative action. On the way back, the participants invited the public to join the movement, explaining the reasons, but also the effects that it could have.

I was in charge of the brigade, and suddenly, in the blink of an eye, we were surrounded by *granaderos* (riot police) armed with truncheons and shields. I realized that what was coming was an inevitable, unequal brawl, so I had no choice but to shout at the top of my lungs, "Get out and run!" That afternoon, Salvador Martínez della Rocca and other students who were ahead of us in returning to the School of Sciences were detained before getting to the Tlalpan campus. That was when the order to systematically arrest people was carried out.

In mid-September 1968, we organized another brigade that headed for a market in Xochimilco. When we arrived, we were again surrounded by *granaderos*. However, this time, people supported us in solidarity and began throwing fruit and vegetables at the police to drive them away; they opened up an escape route for us, protected us, and bid farewell to us with applause. This moved us greatly and filled us with hope, so, as we returned to University City, we once again explained to passersby the importance of the movement.

The Olympic Games that were about to be held were the perfect pretext for unleashing the constant repression against those who were mobilized.

Finally, the sad morning of October 2 arrived. By then our brigades had thinned out. That day, at the School of Sciences, we organized to go to the Three Cultures Plaza. Once there, we could see how flares were falling from a helicopter; that's when they began to surround the plaza. I crossed paths with Gilberto Guevara Niebla, who said, "We'll see you at the school. We're going to have a meeting to organize." Unfortunately, Gilberto never arrived; I got there because I left by San Juan de Letrán Avenue (today, Lázaro Cárdenas Central Boulevard), which was the first exit the army closed down. When I got to Peralvillo, I was protected by local gang members; this kept me safe during the clashes. Then I went back to the area and the students outside the Three Cultures Plaza were holding protest rallies while the army occupied that part of Tlatelolco.

Undoubtedly, the Olympic Games that were about to be held were the perfect pretext for unleashing the constant repression against those who were mobilized, but also to justify the authoritarianism against young people. Nevertheless, society's solidarity was something the authorities had analyzed and tried to repress in the ways we were already familiar with, since the movement had awakened the interest of several sectors of the public. That is why the Díaz Ordaz government urgently needed to dissolve it as soon as possible, before it reached dimensions that the regime could no longer control.

The indignation in Mexican society at the events of October 2 was felt worldwide. This could be seen directly, first, at the Olympics, when the public booed the president when he inaugurated the games. The second time was at the 1970 soccer World Cup, also held in Mexico, where something very similar happened.

Final Thoughts

Our memory of the student movement is, on the one hand, that of constant repression, marginalization, criminalization, and stigmatization of Mexican youth. Unfortunately, this situation continues today, 50 years later. It is worth visualizing what we are experiencing now in light of this movement, since approximately 33 000 people are missing in our country and a considerable number of them are victims of forced disappearance.

1968 has left an eternal mark on Mexico's collective memory. Today more than ever before, we must put that

at the center of the debate, not only to commemorate the 50 years of that tragedy, but also to analyze and visualize many social, security, labor, and educational problems, etc. Their solution must never again go hand in hand with repression and genocide. VM

Notes

1 I want to thank actuary Dalia Reyes García for her contribution to this article.

2 This group originally existed to cheer on the teams at university sports events, but it turned into shock troops at the service of the authorities to repress any attempt at rebellion or protest movement, particularly if it was organized by students. Since that time, being called a "*porro*" (or "cheerleader") is one of the biggest insults that can be hurled at a university student. [Editor's Note.]

3 "Chocan dos marchas estudiantiles con la policía," *Gaceta* UNAM, Special Supplement no. 2, 2018.

4 Mexico City's Penal Code Article 145 and 145b, passed in 1941 at the beginning of World War II, condemned to from two to six years in prison anyone who made propaganda that tended to "disturb public order," understood as tending to produce rebellion, sedition, or a riot (https://mexico.leyderecho.org/disolucion-social/). In practice, this was used to imprison anyone attending meetings of three or more people, deemed to threaten public order. [Editor's Note.]

Joel Ortega Juárez*

An Information Brigade Activist Remembers '68

There are hundreds of stories of what happened to the brigade members, so I will just relate my experience in the movement and the terrible night of October 2.

It's August 14, 1968 and some *compañeros* and I had been out of the country for three weeks in that crucial year. We had gone to the ninth World Festival of Youth and Students in Sofia, Bulgaria. We had a layover in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, reversing Christopher Columbus's route. From there we went to Madrid, in a country in the full throes of Franco's rule. Then we went to Vienna, where we took a train to Sofia, along with the Czechoslovak delegation, all young people. There were workers, professionals, students, leaders of the Communist youth groups, among many others, full of hope, joy, and the euphoria produced by the course of what was then called "socialism with a human face" that they were all part of.

When we crossed the border, the Hungarian police tried to stop the train and demand that all the slogans on the walls of the cars be erased: "democratic socialism," *svoboda* ("freedom" in Czech), and others like them. It was very exciting to journey together with the Czechs through Hungary and part of Rumania, and finally arrive in Bulgaria.

As We Crossed the Danube, Mexico Set Out on a Freedom Road

The day after our flight left for Europe, on July 26, the clashes between students and riot police began with a demonstration in the Juárez Semicircle in the Alameda Park. The young people at a rally supporting the Cuban Revolution were savagely repressed.

Around the site of the rally, the trash cans had mysteriously been filled with rocks, and unidentified individuals began throwing them against the storefronts on Juárez Avenue. Jewelry stores, candy stores, souvenir shops, and all manner of other businesses were targeted by these attacks. Meanwhile, the students tried to move on to the central Zócalo Square along Madero Street, but when they got to Palma Street, they were brutally attacked by the police.

* Former information brigade member; joelortegajuarez@gmail.com.

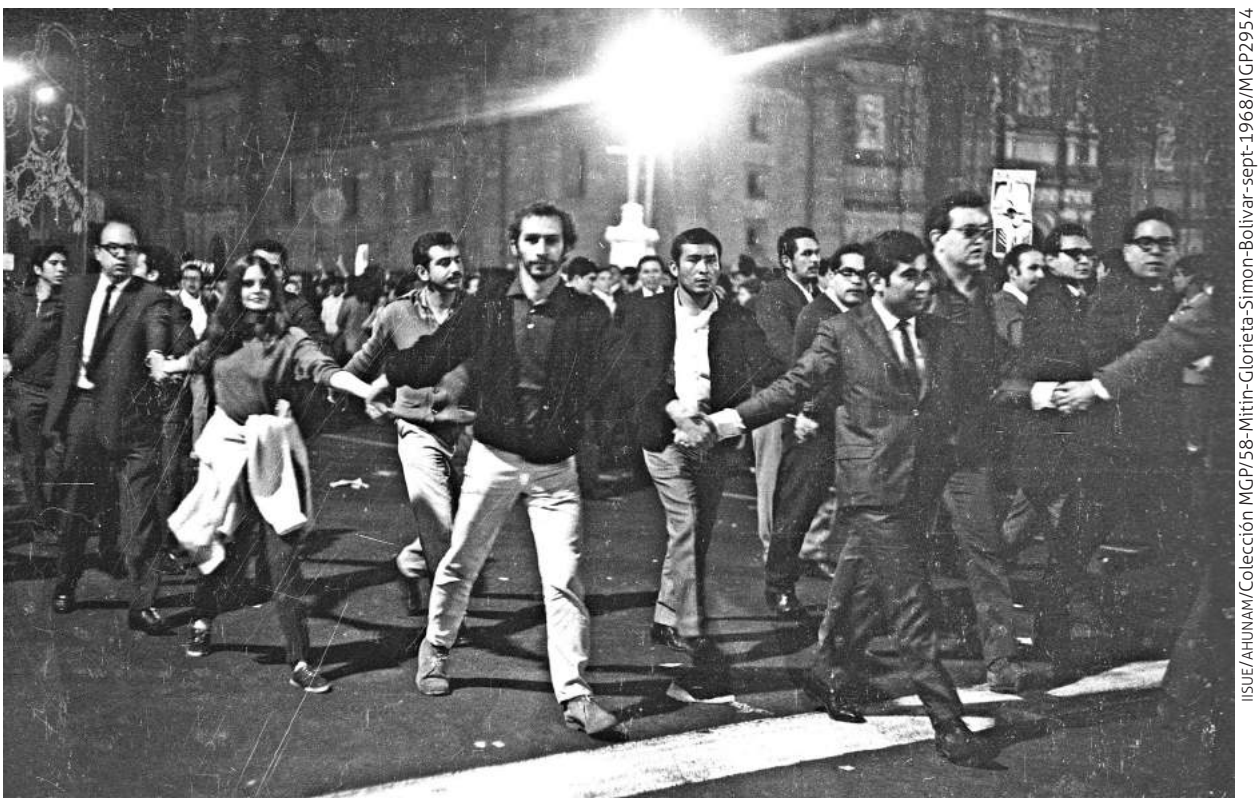
Simultaneously, adjacent streets saw clashes and persecutions of students and students taking refuge in their schools. All the downtown high schools were turned into barricades; the young people parked trucks across the entrances and then set them on fire with Molotov cocktails to defend themselves from the police. They managed to resist from July 26 to July 29, but on July 30 in the early hours, the army arrived and destroyed the century-old door of the Justo Sierra installations with a bazooka. This sparked enormous anger among university students and authorities both; university Rector Javier Barros Sierra lowered the flag to half-mast and called for a march against repression for August 1.

The Freedom Spring Was Beginning

Without that call from the university rector, the massacre might have happened before, on August 2. His participation was fundamental, a huge umbrella that protected the students from the repressive ire of the state. That ire was headed by President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and all his officials, mainly Minister of the Interior Luis Echeverría Álvarez, Mexico City Mayor Alfonso Corona del Rosal, and Minister of Defense Marcelino García Barragán.

The entire structure of the state, the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate, the printed press, radio, television, the chambers of commerce and industry, the bureaucratized, officialist, corrupt unions, and the *de facto* powers combatted the students by supporting government repression, including the acts that led to the massacre of defenseless students.

As this was happening in Mexico's capital, in Sofia, we were attending all the festival activities denouncing the violence against the Mexican students. This made us the first international brigade. That's when I found out things that had seemed impossible to me. The European youth called for a demonstration in front of the U.S. embassy in Sofia. What surprised me was that the police of the supposedly socialist state repressed the demonstration, using similar tools to those used by their Mexican counterparts: clubs, tear gas, etc., to disperse people who



IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/58-Mitin-Glorieta-Simon-Bolivar-sept-1968/MGP2954

University Rector Barros Sierra called for a march against repression. His participation was a huge umbrella that protected the students from the repressive ire of the state.

were condemning the U.S. invasion of Vietnam and supporting the Vietcong.

The festival was an immense, intense experience. I met delegates from Al Fatah, headed by Yasser Arafat, who were staying in the same building as the Mexican delegation in a kind of Olympic village. Arafat got up at 5 a.m. every morning to head the Palestinian delegation in military exercises around the buildings. Among them were very attractive women who had half their faces covered with a hijab and others who covered their entire bodies with burkas.

Noi siamo the Generation of Heroic Vietnam

To go back to the demonstration in front of the embassy, I remember that an Italian speaker spoke in his own language, saying, "We are the generation of heroic Vietnam, and we were sailing with fair winds. Our ship was driven forward by the libertarian winds of independence of the countries of Africa, by the struggles in Southeast Asia, and the libertarian hurricane of 'the bearded ones'" (Fidel Castro, Camilo Cienfuegos, Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo, and Che Guevara, who a few years before had taken power in Cuba).

The worldwide student movement that had begun in May that year in Paris spread to almost 64 countries: not only the capitalist countries of Western Europe and the Mediterranean, but also the socialist countries, where they came out against authoritarianism. Naturally, it also came alive in the so-called Third World countries: North Africa, what was called "Black Africa," Asia, and, of course, Latin America, especially in Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico.

Just three days after returning home, on August 18, Czechoslovakia was invaded by Warsaw Pact troops. This crime against the democratic process in that nation was one of the most severe blows against a generation that had had great hopes in Soviet socialism. It was even worse when Fidel Castro supported the Moscow-led intervention.

Return to Mexico

The night of August 14, several dozen *compañeros*, UNAM students, especially from the School of Economics, met us at the airport; they had taken over a bus to go there. The idea was to go together in a group and that way avoid the possible detention of those of us who were returning from Bulgaria. When we got through immigration and exited the last door of the airport, my father was waiting for me; I gave him my suitcase and didn't see him again until after October 2.

That same night, we arrived at the School of Economics and participated in several brigade and committees for struggle meetings. The next day at a meeting of the UNAM Coordinating Committee, we heard that the University Council had approved the National Strike Council's demands, except the one about freeing the non-university political prisoners, but that Gilberto Guevara had proposed that the University Council take charge of the list of demands. We opposed this and managed to defeat it. We were against it because, although it was important that the University Council had taken on board the main demands on the list, we couldn't allow that the condition for doing so be not defending the freedom of the non-university political prisoners, like social activists Valentín Campa and Demetrio Vallejo. Accepting that would have meant negating the document's independent character.

From that night until September 18, I remained in University City, doing guard duty, participating in the assemblies, discussing in meetings of the university Communist Youth, going out with my brigade everywhere: to unions, to markets, to the street, to collect food and money. We discussed the whole time, dialoguing with our *compañeros*, especially with Miguel Eduardo (The Owl) Valle, the National Strike Council delegate from the School of Economics and representative of the Communist Youth.

Brigade Member in Europe and in Mexico

I was a brigade member both in Europe and in Mexico for the great freedom movement of '68, and as such, I enjoyed

freedom like any other rebellious youth. As The Owl said in his speech in the Zócalo Central Square, "You don't forget freedom." That is my most important memory from those days: the joy of going through the streets shouting our slogans, finding support in many places, the solidarity of the public, like the three instances I will describe here.

One time we went on a brigade to the borough of Coyoacán and decided to go to a paper factory near the Conchita Plaza to ask them to donate material for flyers and documents. We went to the manager's office and were received by a Spanish man who, to my surprise, gave us huge rolls of paper that each weighed more than a ton.

Another day, we held a rally at the door where the workers left the Mexican Light Company, located at the corner of Melchor Ocampo Avenue and Marina Nacional Boulevard; we went in a bus from the National School of Economics. Standing on the roof, I used a megaphone to speak to the workers, inviting them to go to the demonstration on September 13. What surprised me was that on that day, at the esplanade in front of the Anthropology Museum there were more than 400 electricity workers with banners and placards ready and willing to march with us.

Another time, Miguel Eduardo (The Owl) Valle and I were on our way to University City in my family's old '49 Ford. In the Hongos Roundabout, I committed a traffic violation by passing another car incorrectly, and the patrol car pulled us over. The Owl daringly faced them, saying, "We're in a hurry because we're going to a meeting of the National Strike Council in University City." I thought this was stupid and that they'd arrest us. To my surprise, when they found out we were students and were on our way to the CNH, the patrol car escorted us a long part of the way there.

We brigade members had dozens —thousands— of experiences like that one during the whole movement.

The Vicissitudes of '68 Continue There and Here

I had followed the French May '68 movement. The immense demonstrations and the eight-million-worker-strong strike had not been able to bring the government down. General Charles de Gaulle called for a referendum and won it.

In Czechoslovakia, Dubcek was defeated. The troops smashed socialism with a human face. Not even a state supported by society, that is, workers, university communities, women, and young people, with international public opinion on its side, could defeat Soviet power. Perhaps that's why, even though I was profoundly enthusiastic —euphoric even— like thousands of students, I was also aware that it was practically impossible to defeat the government.

After the immense September 13 march, four weeks before the Olympic Games were to begin, the movement entered a dead-end street. If dialogue did not begin with the government, it was almost inevitable that it would use all its repressive capabilities and have the army crush us.

Most of the students and their leaders thought it was impossible for the army to act against them. They also naively believed that the soldiers were "the people in uniform," who would not fire on them. This was the movement and its leadership's biggest mistake.

We Should Have Understood and Responded Yes to the University Rector's Call to Halt the Strike

It was inconceivable that anyone would say yes to stopping the strike: you would have been labeled a traitor immediately. We discussed intensely and heatedly in the Communist Youth meetings, but we didn't dare take the proposal of stopping the strike to the school assemblies. The government was increasingly aggressive, more and more intransigent: it machine gunned the schools and arrested brigade members. Its newspapers slandered us, accusing us of being part of a communist conspiracy.

On the night of September 18, the army mounted a huge operation to take over University City. They calculated that they would be able to arrest all the CNH leaders there, dealing the movement a death blow. They were wrong. Minutes later, thousands of leaflets were in circu-

Government rage was headed by the president and all his officials, mainly Minister of the Interior Echeverría, Mexico City Mayor Corona del Rosal, and Minister of Defense García Barragán.

lation denouncing the government. It was clearer and clearer that the state would try to stop the movement at any cost.

During the military occupation, the days were extremely tense. Thousands of activists were living clandestinely. All over the city, brigade members were running their mimeograph machines day and night, printing thousands of leaflets. Students defended their schools everywhere by lighting trucks and patrol cars on fire with Molotov cocktails. Mexico City's Federal District and a few other cities in the rest of the country experienced an authentic student rebellion. Those September days witnessed the military occupation of the UNAM, but other schools like the IPN nurtured an immense wave of rebellion and student subversion.

'68 Was Not an Institutional Movement Of Young People with Their Constitution Under Their Arms

If there had been a leadership, a party, a group that had called for an armed rebellion, perhaps there would have been clashes both in the capital and the rest of the country. That didn't happen. The students were respected by the population, but they were also feared.

The government propaganda was winning the battle, to the point that many people thought it was the right time to put an end to the students' "excesses" that endangered the peace of society. They demanded the government act "firmly."

On guard duty at night, we discussed everything: the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the Cuban Revolution, the stagnation of the Soviet Union, peaceful coexistence, feminism, the struggle of blacks in the United States, the university reform of the UNAM and all the other Mexican universities. We also talked about what the socialist revolution would be like in Mexico; what would our contribution to it be, and how would we make it?

We thought that after the student strikes would come strikes of men and women workers, and then uprisings all over the country. Others simply talked about how the movement's six demands would be resolved. We also talked a lot about the invasion of Czechoslovakia. I remember that in the August 18 joint teacher-student assembly, Professor Ángel Bassols, the son of the great Narciso Bassols, interrupted the discussion because the Warsaw Pact had just invaded Czechoslovakia. He said that this had changed everything. And he was right. It changed absolutely everything in Mexico's '68 movement, but also everything on the world stage.

The French Said, "Question, Discuss, Criticize, *Challenge*"

"*Contestation*" is the slogan of France's May '68 events. We debated (*on contestait*) the way forward for the movement, how to create worker-student unity, what to do to break the wall of the kind of union corruption known in Mexico as *charrismo* that was keeping us from penetrating the workers' movement. The most radical among us proposed going beyond the six demands and including wage demands so the workers would join us, just as journalist Víctor Rico Galán proposed from Lecumberri Prison. Nothing was sacred; everything was discussed; everything was challenged; everything was doubted; everything was questioned. But that wasn't all: in the brigades, in the assemblies, everywhere, above all people acted.

If the shock troops organized by the authorities in the educational institutions themselves —the famous *porros*— were breaking the strike in High School No. 2, we would take a bus from the University City and go directly to Licenciado Verdad and Guatemala Streets, near the school, and confront them there. We managed to chase them away and they failed in their attempt to take back our schools thanks to the response by brigade members and leaders like The Owl.

When the army took over University City, brigades came from out of nowhere to throw Molotov cocktails at trucks, patrol cars, and streetcars, and once those were in flames, they were used as barricades to defend the

The entire structure of the state, the press, the chambers of commerce and industry, the bureaucratized, officialist, corrupt unions, and the *de facto* powers combatted the students by supporting government repression.

The students and their leaders thought it was impossible for the army to act against them and naively believed that the soldiers were "the people in uniform," who would not fire on them.

schools. For some members of the movement, these actions were the beginning of a general rebellion that would be replicated in cities all over the country.

A Hail of Bullets

On the morning of October 2, we heard that there would be a meeting between the government's recently appointed negotiators, Jorge de la Vega and Andrés Caso, with representatives of the CNH. Both that meeting and the fact that the army had left the UNAM on September 30 made me think that the government's "hawks" had been defeated and the "doves" had won the day.

When we left my parents' house in the Popotla Neighborhood for Tlatelolco, we were somewhat optimistic. I was with my brother Carlos, a normal school teacher and UNAM architectural student, in his Fiat, accompanied by my other brother, César, also a normal school teacher and student of physics and mathematics at the IPN. We headed to Tlatelolco on Los Gallos Avenue, and then turned onto Manuel González Street. There, we ran directly into dozens of army trucks in an enormous line that went from Insurgentes Avenue to Reforma Avenue, that is, they took up all the space behind the Tlatelolco Housing Project. It scared us.

When we got to the Three Cultures Plaza, I headed to the ground floor of the Chihuahua Building, where the sound system for the CNH speakers was to be set up. I told the *compañeros* that we were practically surrounded by the army and that the demonstration should be canceled to avoid being repressed. They told me that they had decided to only hold the rally and to cancel the march programmed to the Casco de Santo Tomás area. I thought that was the most prudent course of action.

We were very concerned that there were men with shaved heads (like soldiers) stationed at the entrances of the elevators in the Chihuahua Building. This was an indication that they might try to arrest the *compañeros* from the CNH.

Some of my *compañeros* from the National School of Economics Communist Youth were exactly on the ground floor of the Chihuahua Building, a few meters away from the elevators. Among others, I remember Miguel Ángel Salvoch, Enrique del Val, Bonfilio Cervantes Tavera, Alfonso Vadillo, and "Nachito." Alfonso and "Nachito" left a little before the rally to go on a brigada to Xochimilco. The Owl was on the stage because he was going to be one of the speakers.

When the rally was ending, we saw the soldiers coming across the San Juan de Letrán Avenue bridge. They advanced with their rifles in hand along a narrow path between Vocational School 7, the project's apartment buildings, and the area with the pre-Hispanic ruins. As he saw them approaching, the person with the microphone called for calm, naively urging that nobody "accept provocations."

A lot of people began to panic, but they ran precisely in the direction of the soldiers. Miguel Ángel Salvoch created a human chain but, I managed to get away, and without thinking much about it, I headed east toward Reforma Avenue, running on the paths through the buildings. There were several of us, among them my brothers, and a cousin who was at his first demonstration.

We got as far as Reforma Avenue, just when a convoy of military jeeps closed off the circle around the demo.

We crossed the avenue under a hail of bullets from the helicopter. For a few moments we stopped to make a decision: we could return to the housing project and try to take refuge in one of the buildings, risking being arrested when they combed the area; we could get on a bus if the driver would stop; or we could cross Reforma under the hail of bullets from the helicopter. We decided on the last option, and on the way, I saw several people fall, without knowing if they had been injured or were dead. There was no time to stop to see what was going on.

Miraculously, we got across.

In the slums bordering on the recently opened avenue, people took us in, and we stayed 30 or 45 minutes. We could hear the shooting everywhere. The soldiers patrolled the streets looking for students. People protected us in their little dwellings and offered us coffee and bread "to counteract the fright." When they realized there were no more soldiers they said, "Go on, and run as fast as you can."

Near the Peralvillo Neighborhood, we managed to take a taxi and leave the area. Miguel Ángel Salvoch, Enrique del Val, and Bonfilio really went through hell. Salvoch was hit by a bullet through and through on his scalp, and he was bleeding: his whole face was covered in blood. Del Val and Bonfilio managed to get him into a military ambulance, but when he arrived at the Military Hospital, the officers shouted, "What is that scumbag doing here? Take him back to Tlatelolco!" Anguished, Del Val and Bonfilio managed to put him in a Red Cross ambulance. When he got to the hospital, the agents from the Ministry of the Interior wanted to arrest him. Fortunately, his wound was superficial and they were able to stop the bleeding with a bandage. Miguel Ángel Salvoch was freed a few days later.

After the Massacre

After the events of October 2 at the Tlatelolco Plaza, unfortunately the movement retreated. The next day at University City only a few dozen brigade members showed up and it was practically impossible to hold an assembly. Any repression weakens a movement, and therefore, the discussion became more and more bitter in the search for who was at fault for our prostration. Terrible signs of division appeared, slander, berating the leadership, and specifically those who had survived and continued the struggle outside of jail.

Those were very sad, bitter days. The few members of the Communist Youth who were not in jail and continued in the movement were accused of betrayal, of selling out the movement for a handful of congressional seats.

The climate was one of terror: we were under attack from the government, but also accused by the groups manipulated by the so-called "sacred cows" who were in jail. They were the ones that accused the *pescados* (members of the Communist Party) of being traitors.

Some of those prisoners used their relatives, even their mothers, to go to the houses of the members of the Communist Youth to pressure them to break with the organization and with the "bureaucrats," the leaders of the Communist Youth and the Communist Party. Some beloved *compañeros*, brothers in struggle for many years, like Eduardo (The Owl) Valle, were subjected to this kind of manipulation and resigned from the Communist Youth. It was a heavy blow to live through all that internal warfare based on false accusations and even physical attacks.

Sometimes, when we visited the *compañeros* in jail at Lecumberri, we had to stoically put up with their insults, despite having gone there to express our solidarity, our support, and risking our own freedom just by going there. They didn't care; they thought they had the absolute truth on their side and, therefore, they were willing to do whatever was necessary to maintain control of the movement, even if it meant using slander and insults.

Nevertheless, there were reasons for questioning and even challenging the Mexican Communist Party (PCM), particularly because its European counterparts, among them the French and others, came out against the movements in their countries; in France, for example, they used workers to physically attack student activists.

We all remembered an absurd —even imbecilic— statement made by the PCM leadership at the start of the movement, when President Díaz Ordaz said he was offering to *extend his hand* to find a way out. The party responded that it was willing to take him at his word and also offer *its hand* to the same end. This discredited us in the student movement. The pressure from the UNAM Communist Youth activists made the Central Committee take a step back on this position, and we were able to reverse this "extended hand" policy. However, there was still a lot of tension among the student movement activists, and the Communist Youth leadership was isolated, locked up in the party headquarters.

One day before October 2, we had met with the PCM leadership. Present at the meeting were Arnoldo Martínez Verdugo and Eduardo Montes, in whose house we met, taking many security measures. The leadership told us that they had information that the "hardliners" in the government were pressing to resolve the situation using "large-scale military repression." The leadership's proposal was to have the political prisoners, the majority of whom were PCM members, go on a hunger strike, to be announced at Tlatelolco on October 2.

I never understood —or I didn't want to see— the gravity of the situation.

To conclude, I must mention that, because of its size, the Tlatelolco massacre was considered a crime against humanity and the Mexican government policy, genocide, according to international human rights legislation. VM

Nelly Salas/Cuartoscuro.com

Jorge Javier Romero Vadillo*

The Tail of the '68 Comet

Only 10 days after the administration of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz put a bloody end to the intense 1968 student movement, he inaugurated the nineteenth Olympic Games in the University City stadium, occupied by the army just a few weeks before. The movement was a joyful, naïve uprising against a regime boastful of its economic successes, with its authoritarian rites of fake unanimity that reacted clumsily and bloodily against the young people who were merely demonstrating against police brutality and the repression of protest.

The government intended to bury the blood spilled by the students and hide the huge number of political prisoners that its paranoid repression had produced. A government that boasted about its social successes was the same one that had repressed striking doctors a couple of years before. From the very beginning of the decade, when Díaz Ordaz's predecessor, Adolfo López Mateos, was in office, the regime had faced social disturbances emanating above all from dissidents in its monolithic, corporatist unions, the basis for its control over workers' demands. However, despite having used the military to put down the 1960 railroad workers movement and beating back teachers fighting for a democratic union, the massacre in Tlatelolco, with its dozens of dead, marked a turning point in the legitimacy of the Institutional Revolutionary Party regime. It would never recover its mythical aura of being the product of a revolution that had fought for justice; in any case, that revolution had already been buried two decades before due to its sale of protection to the businessmen who would thrive at the expense of low wages for industrial workers and the poverty of the peasantry.

For me, a nine-year-old boy who lived in an extremely politicized family, the '68 movement had been like a turbulent nightmare from which I awakened to dive com-

* Professor/researcher in the Political Science Department of the Autonomous Metropolitan University, Xochimilco campus; romero.jorgejavier@gmail.com.

pletely into the Olympic fiesta. I was at the university stadium both for the inauguration and the closing ceremony. This was thanks to the fact that, to avoid any demonstration against the Lord of Great Power who had ordered raining down blood and fire on the student protest to end it, all the tickets were distributed among the regime's loyal supporters and their families. My father was a journalist, loyally critical —*ma non troppo*— from the left, and he was given some tickets due to that privilege; so we went to the two celebrations with my grandparents. The fiesta seemed to have left behind the tragedy.

However, the spell didn't last long. 1969 was an asphyxiating year despite the president's triumphal tours to inaugurate large public works. One was the Mexico City subway system that launched its first two lines that year, initiating a grand transformation of the face of the city. Those were years when the population explosion began to be felt in all its severity as the city became massive. The local baby boomers were arriving en masse to the universities or demanding jobs in an economy that began to show signs of reaching its limits, with real wages that had only just recently recovered the level of 1939, the end of the administration of President Lázaro Cárdenas.

It was then that the aftereffects of the repression of the student movement began to show. The kernels of rebellion subsisted in many public universities, where struggle committees and radical groups abounded. Guerrilla movements began forming clandestinely and would reveal themselves in the months and years to follow: groups of young students who saw violence as the only way to face up to the regime's authoritarianism and refusal to deal with them. They were never massive groups, but only small cells of bewildered young people with a thirst for justice, intoxicated by the ideology and heroic halo of the Cuban Revolution and its derivations in the rest of Latin America.

The government of Díaz Ordaz came to an end with a country under its control, though at the margins of society, the tragedy of the political violence that would break out shortly after his successor, Luis Echeverría Álvarez, took office was gestating. Despite having been the minister of the interior during the events of 1968, Echeverría attempted to present himself as someone who was reactivating the reformism of the Mexican Revolution and was seeking to reconcile with the aggrieved university youth using the regime's traditional method inherited from the times of the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz: offering to include them in the public budget. Some former leaders of '68 accepted being coopted. But the overtures were rejected by the majority of those who began being released from jail in the first months of the administration. Any possibility of healing the deep wound inflicted on the students, separating them from the regime, evaporated when, on June 10, 1971, the university community was once again brutally repressed by paramilitary groups.

On September 27, 1971, an urban guerrilla group struck for the first time in the country with the kidnapping of Julio Hirschfeld Almada, then director of Airports and Auxiliary Services. He was an important official for the new administration and the Urban Zapatista Front took credit for it. Later, it would be known that this group was made up of former militants of the Spartacus Communist League, led by Francisca Calvo Zapata, a relative of outstanding members of the regime. The children of sustained development and revolutionary "social justice" were rebelling against oppression and authoritarian asphyxia. Later, different groups gestating in public universities around the country would burst upon the scene. An alphabet soup of acronyms, with ideological visions extracted from manuals and irreconcilable among themselves, condemned from the start to defeat, these groups showed up the asphyxiating political climate of PRI unanimity.

Urban guerrilla groups — the September 23 Communist League, which stood out among them for its harshness, would assassinate Eugenio Garza Sada, the patriarch of the Monterrey business community— were not the only expression of political violence in that era. Rural guerrilla groups also emerged, acting mainly in the state of Guerrero, led by teachers who graduated from what is now the sadly notorious Isidro Burgos Rural Normal School in Ayotzinapa. But the causes that gave rise to them were different, fundamentally the continuing domination by

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local strongmen in great swathes of land in Mexico's countryside. The groups that opted for violence in the cities, in contrast, had become politicized in the universities and their radicalization fed on the perception that peaceful change was impossible in the face of a repressive, authoritarian state.

Mexico's '68 had been nourished by the intellectual inputs of the 1960s worldwide rebellion and counterculture and drank deep from their causes. Another relevant aftereffect of the movement was women's growing demand for equality and inclusion. To a great extent, Mexican feminism also grew out of the student movement, even though it had been overwhelmingly been led by males. In the 1970s, however, Mexican feminism flowered and began to have a presence in the debates of the time. The Echeverría administration also attempted to ingratiate itself with women's struggles and promoted Mexico as the host country for the 1975 UN World Conference on Women.

These were years of great population growth and the demand for higher education was growing. The Echeverría administration reacted by creating new universities all over the country, several of which immediately became radicalized. A large portion of the professors of these new universities were from the '68 generation, and the students still maintained the rebellious spirit of their predecessors. In different public universities, unions began to be formed, often led by former movement participants. The arrival of exiles from South American dictatorships to Mexico also contributed to a left turn in higher education. Marxism, then, became the predominant ideology in public universities, not always to the benefit of academic quality and the richness of intellectual discussion.

From its beginnings, the Echeverría administration had declared the "democratic opening," with the intention of reversing the de-legitimation that the movement had caused. The democratic opening was supposedly a process of liberalizing the narrow protectionist electoral system that impeded the participation of any force not approved by the regime, that represented a split in the practically single party system, or that could represent any kind of threat to its political monopoly. The announcement of this opening sparked expectations that, at the end of the day, were not met. However, a new kind of political organization did take place in those years.

The '68 prisoners began to be released from jail in the first months of 1971. Some went into exile, but others, like Heberto Castillo, a leader of the professors who had supported the movement, or Eduardo Valle, immediately began to organize politically into something that would lead to the creation of parties. The National Committee for Inquiry and Coordination (CNAO) was formed in 1972, attracting different groups and intellectuals, outstanding among whom were Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, and Luis Villoro. A little while later, this group, minus its best-known figures, became the Mexican Workers' Party (PMT), headed by Heberto Castillo and Demetrio Vallejo. The latter had been the leader of the railroad workers strike repressed in 1960 and, together with Valentín Campa, had been the political prisoner who served the longest sentence in the classical period of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) regime. A CNAO split-off also created the Socialist Workers Party (PST).

The Mexican Communist Party, which from the beginning of the 1960s had begun a process of reform that would distance it from Soviet orthodoxy, had been particularly harshly dealt with by the repression of '68, and a large part of its leadership ended up in jail. In addition, the radicalization of the leadership of the Communist Youth led it to be dissolved, with part of its cadre entering guerrilla groups. Forbidden since 1948 to participate in elections, in 1970, it called for "active" abstention in protest of the persecution. However, the release of several of its leaders from jail and new militants in its ranks sped up its internal reform. Therefore, even though it maintained certain ambiguity about Lucio Cabañas's guerrilla movement in the mountains of Guerrero state, it did not support the urban guerrillas and instead decided to have an impact on the democratization process.

One of the intentions of Echeverría's "democratic opening" was to incorporate the Communist Party (PCM) into electoral struggles, to channel left dissidence through them, and offer it limited parliamentary representation. However,

In 1988, many of the movement's old leaders and activists gathered around the candidacy of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, and they would be the protagonists of the democratizing process of the years to follow.

the PCM decided not to accept the government's terms, because they included making the names of their members public and putting them in the hands of a government they considered to be a repressor. This meant that the reform attempt would fail. Six years had to go by before the authentic left could legally participate in elections However, in 1976, the PCM did run Valentín Campa for president; he had been a political prisoner for 11 years as a result of the repression of the 1958-1960 railway workers movement. The only candidate officially on the ballot was the PRI's José López Portillo. This was because the National Action Party, the domesticated, right-wing opposition that, since 1958, had been the only party to officially register a presidential candidate aside from those of the PRI, was completely wrapped up in an internal dispute that made it incapable of fielding a candidate.

The student movement's impact was felt in other spheres of Mexican society. Former students headed popular movements of all kinds. Exponential urban growth, a product of both population growth and migration from the countryside to the cities due to industrialization, created a demand for housing that neither the government nor private business could satisfy. Mexico's property rights set-up was in disarray: ownership of collective farm *ejido* land impeded the existence of a flexible land market that could lend itself to urbanizing old agricultural lands. This meant that the demand for housing fostered what was then known as the urban-popular movement, which staged land takeovers and noteworthy mobilizations during the entire 1970s. This movement's slogans and discourses clearly showed the impact of the radicalized students who headed it or had influenced its leaders.

In the years after the '68 movement, the attempts to build independent unionism to break the corporatist chains of the labor movement also multiplied. The ideas of the different strands of Marxism that spread among radicalized students led many of them to approach workers' causes. It was among electricity workers where the demand for respect for union democracy achieved its greatest strength, with vigorous mobilizations. Several young people who had been schooled in the university and participated in the student movement joined in support of the leaders of the Democratic Tendency of the recently founded Unified Union of Electrical Workers of the Mexican Republic (SUTERM), contributing ideas, work, and efforts.

The climate of political tension, of youth radicalization, and of guerrilla violence that had characterized the Echeverría administration, together with the fact that José López Portillo, the official candidate, had no one to officially run against in the 1976 elections, led to the new government initiating a process of political liberalization. In the long run, this would lead to democratization and the dissolution of the regime. In 1977, after a process of dialogue and negotiation with different political forces until then excluded, an important constitutional and regulatory reform was carried out. This would lead to amnesty for all the political prisoners who had not committed crimes involving bloodshed and the normalization of electoral participation of the left through the Mexican Communist Party and, to a lesser extent, the Socialist Worker's Party. The Communist Party caucus elected to Congress in 1979 included three former '68 political prisoners (Pablo Gómez, Gerardo Unzueta, and Gilberto Rincón Gallardo), plus Valentín Campa and other leaders who had been the targets of the PRI regime's repression. By 1985, a large part of those who had mobilized against authoritarianism in the student movement had opted for the electoral road to influence political transformation.

Eleven years after the brutal repression of 1968, the regime began its process of dissolution. This would be slow and torturous, lasting more than two decades, including a deep economic recession and huge mobilizations against electoral fraud in the 1980s. In 1988, many of the movement's old leaders and activists gathered around the candidacy of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, and they would be the protagonists of the democratizing process of the years to follow.

The ripple effect with its epicenter in the 1968 days of fiesta and tragedy ended by tearing to pieces the foundations of the regime born of the Mexican Revolution and contributing crucially to its dismantling. VM

Henry Romero / REUTERS

Mónica Maristain*

"Commemorating Should Be More about Questions than Answers"

Ricardo Raphael was born in 1968 and is now the director of the UNAM Tlatelolco University Cultural Center, which will commemorate October 2, 1968 with 112 events of all kinds, an Interuniversity Colloquium with more than 75 activities, and Mexican and foreign guests. As director, Ricardo hopes to be able to do a little history about what he dubs the last great social movement of the twentieth century. Today, all social movements in Mexico owe a debt to it and that year, when everything happened, including, of course, the protest in Helsinki, the May events in France, Martin Luther King's death . . . the year when the world moved.

Interviewing Ricardo Raphael is interviewing someone who thinks. Of course, saying it like that could even be banal, but, although he's not a journalist, he brought himself to analyze where we're going in this very dilapidated profession and published the manual *Periodismo urgente* (Urgent Journalism). Though not a politician, he is a brilliant analyst, who, by common sense, forces readers to always dig deep in their emotions and try, precisely, to think about the phenomenon that week after week he publishes in the *El Universal* daily.

He has two television programs on Channel 11 (*Espiral* [Spiral] and *Calle 11* [11th Street]), and, in addition to being a professor at the Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE), is now the director of the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center.

* Journalist, writer, and editor of *Puntos y Comas* (Periods and Commas) for *SinEmbargo*; maristain@gmail.com.

"It's very difficult to understand feminism today without '68; environmentalism, its leaders and its causes, without '68; pacifism, without '68."

The important thing about him, in addition to the fact that he thinks, is that he broadcasts with the enveloping serenity of a great academic, above all because of what he says and manages to project.

Interviewing him was talking about social movements. Time and again, he referred to 1968 as that watering place we all drank from, in today's out-of-joint world that is looking to the past for a guide to be able to deal with the present.

MM: What are social movements?

I'm convinced that there are two ways of making social change. One is the slow, gradual change of customs that transform little by little. Human beings discover the fork; another day they use it; another day, it becomes a social norm. . . . These changes are really imperceptible. The other way of changing society is with drastic changes, breaks. If you observe, the last 300 years of human history, from the French Revolution until now, the great changes, the great historic movements, have almost all included the incisive participation of a social movement. Actually, what they do is to distribute new maps; they are societies that feel uncomfortable because the maps they have no longer suffice for measuring reality; they no longer suffice. One example is the Encyclopedia, going back to the French Revolution. This was a critical community that was drawing new maps, and suddenly, those critical communities needed a more powerful microphone to complete those findings, to explain them, to return them to a broader area. The French Revolution, the Mexican Revolution, the Russian Revolution are all movements that not only transform the formal institutions, the constitutions, the laws, but also transform informal institutions. From that perspective, social movements are extremely important, because they explain, among other things, the way we live; and I have the impression that in Mexico, we haven't studied them as they deserve. We study their leaders, but not the entire sequence of information. I'm referring concretely to the fiftieth anniversary of '68, which could be contemporary history and seeing it as the most important movement now, in the Mexican democratic transition, it can be commemorated but also analyzed.

MM: I think that the last great social movement of the twentieth century was Chiapas, the Zapatista National Liberation Army, which put that region on the map, precisely a region that hadn't been on the map...

No, there are very different movements. I think that the last movement of the twentieth century was the democratic transition. I think that, electorally, the PAN taking office would be inexplicable without a social movement behind it. Well, I wouldn't venture to say that it was the last. I do think that in '94, the Zapatista movement was fundamental for changing the maps of all the systems: one, to incorporate the indigenous issue in Mexico's great diversity, and two, to refute the kind of economic and social integration that Mexico was experiencing. Of course it changed things, yes, but it's not comparable to '68. Because '68 wasn't a movement, but a movement of movements that was replicated in several parts of the world. It's very difficult to understand feminism today without '68; environmentalism, its leaders and its causes, without '68; pacifism, without '68; the educational reforms, democratic unionism, the guerrilla movement, and —if you'll allow me— the laws about diversity, without 1968. In that sense, I think that the last great movement of the twentieth century in the world is 1968, which supported all the other movements. The last chronologically or do we say the last, as the most popular, the most powerful?

MM: Are you referring to '68 in plural?

It's wrong to talk about '68 in singular. It's plural because, in effect, '68 happened in several parts of the world, with causes that may have been different, but one that unites them: the arrival of the baby boomers, of those born in the 1940s, born during or right after the war, and became political subjects as adults. In '68, young people were minors and not po-

litical subjects. What happened? May '68 in France is young people's demand to be political subjects. Tokyo, in the face of Vietnam, in the face of nuclear development, is the young people who demand to be political subjects. Columbia, Berkeley, Prague with its spring: all these movements of this kind. And Mexico's, too. Each had its different causes. In the case of Mexico it was democratic freedoms. In the case of Tokyo, the separation of Vietnam. In France it was a rebellion against the adults who were in charge of politics, concretely De Gaulle's style of government.

In 1963, Mexico made the decision to open the windows to let the world in, but above all so Mexico could enter the world. That year, construction work began on the tower where the Ministry of Foreign Relations was, in Tlatelolco. What López Mateos and his successor Gustavo Díaz Ordaz didn't take into account was that, when you open the window, what was happening in the world reached Durango, came through to Veracruz, snuck into Michoacán. So those '68s multiplied in Mexico. Sure, 1968 is October 2, but not only October 2. Not only Mexico City.

I would dare say that another systematic variable in those '68s is that the monolithic authorities reacted according to their own interpretations. Taking the Mexican example: for Díaz Ordaz and Echeverría, '68 has a single explanation, an international Soviet conspiracy, that aimed to destabilize the regime. A single vision. But it was more or less the same vision that Charles de Gaulle had about '68. When he ordered Pompidou to shoot the young people —an order, by the way, that Pompidou ignored—, he thought that he had to do away with those rebellious youths who could put an end to the institutions that emerged after the war. There was a single way of thinking about the diversity of thinking. There are two ways of commemorating '68 with dignity. One is to recognize that it was a movement that gave young people the stature of adults to act politically. The other admits a single interpretation of what happened in 1968, which is making the same mistake that De Gaulle or Díaz Ordaz did. Commemorating must be more about questions than answers.

MM: There were absolute, transcendent changes . . .

What catches my attention is that any movement that wants to legitimize itself in Mexico or in the world brings up '68. The movement of the parents of the disappeared students from Ayotzinapa brings up '68 because the youths were kidnapped in a bus that was coming to Mexico City to commemorate October 2, 1968. The Zapatista movement considers itself the heir of '68. The "132 movement" asked questions about '68. It is a source of legitimacy because it was a genuine, honest movement. I don't think we have seen a social phenomenon again with that strength and genuineness. We should also say that the fact that young participants were murdered and forcibly disappeared sanctified it.

What I'm seeing today are other forms of social mobilization that are not taking over Insurgentes Avenue or just holding a silent march. We shouldn't disregard these mobilizations, and we should see that young people today are experiencing circumstances that are very similar to 1968. The maps of the readings we give them today to understand reality were forged in the past. The crises we see in the world today are generational crises. Young people today are against Donald Trump in the United States. In England they didn't go out to vote because they didn't believe in the politicians; it was the old who voted for Brexit. There is a distance between them and their elders. In Mexico, the victory of Morena and Andrés Manuel López Obrador would be inexplicable if young people had not decided to massively support that option.

MM: It's also true that Mexico's situation is very different from that of the United States and England. Here, as Juan Villoro says, we had gone past the Apocalypse. We either voted for somebody different or what could we do?

Yes. Let's hope it was a vote for someone and not a vote against . . . In any case, when you talk to those young people to try to understand their vote, you hear very similar arguments to those you hear in England or the United States.

"Any movement that wants to legitimize itself in Mexico or in the world brings up '68.... It is a source of legitimacy because it was a genuine, honest movement."

MM: Do you mean that politicians continue to be far removed from people?

From my point of view, with a few exceptions, the answer is yes. Twentieth-century political forms continue to dominate, and what we are seeing are young people trying to change those forms.

MM: One proposal that failed in the twentieth century is neoliberalism. What would you say comes next?

1968 had the Cold War and there were two possible historical currents. The last 50 years have seen seeds of the two ways of looking at things. The conservatism and neoliberalism of Ronald Reagan and Thatcher, on the one hand, and on the other, consolidating the welfare state or the social democratic state that was in play in those years. What I think is that both models are worn out. There is no longer a way to build the social state we saw emerge after the war because the conditions for its legitimacy do not exist, and there is no financing that can sustain it; and of course, its neoliberal counterpart, this obstinate austerity, this accumulation of wealth, thinking of human beings as merely economic animals, this is completely worn out. That's why our era seems so interesting to me. I would emphasize that the main element of neoliberalism is denying others. Social Man is negated. Man and his environment are denied. Man and his intelligence, Man and his spirit. Man is reduced to someone who produces, and for neoliberalism, that is the only vision. That's why the massive vote for Morena was, speaking of '68, the fight against inequality.

MM: Could any element of '68 be included in the administration of Andrés Manuel López Obrador?

The young people who rebelled in 1968 were the emerging bourgeoisie. Actually, they weren't fighting for their own equality, but protesting unequal freedoms. From that point of view, yes, I would venture to look at the present: the rule of law in Mexico is not interpreted as equality before the law or equality before the state. I think that one of the great causes we have not achieved is being equal before the law. No matter what part of Mexico you're in, no matter whether you come from a poor family or not, we have to make ourselves equal in these democratic freedoms.

MM: How do you feel, having been born in 1968 and directing the commemorations?

I must confess that that's what led me to accept Enrique Graue and Jorge Volpi's appointment to head up the Tlatelolco Cultural Center. I feel it is a great responsibility. Nacho Padilla used to say that we could include the fact that we had been born in that year in our biography. Commemoration does not mean imposing a view of the events, but creating the conditions so that many can express their own vision of the events. Commemorating means creating a worthy event for those who suffered, for the victims, but also that it be an intergenerational event so that everyone can speak. VM

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Guillermo Boils*

The 1968 Student Movement And Gender Equality

…the true heroines of the student movement: those anonymous women whose names aren't well known, who go unrecognized. But some of them gave their lives. If we have gained democratic freedoms, it's due to them.

Ana Ignacia Avendaño
(Leader of the School of Law, 1968)

Introduction

Among the issues not taken much into account when scholars think about Mexico's 1968 student movement is gender equality. One central idea in these pages is that the student mobilizations of that year paved the way for many other expressions of democratic freedoms. This happened in the public's awareness, in the sphere of local and national political life, and in social relations. Thus, after the painful events of that year, in the last third of the twentieth century, concerns about the inequality between men and women began to unfold in a growing sector of Mexican society. This growing consciousness has taken place gradually and not always explicitly; and in its origins, it was circumscribed to small groups of people in intellectual, artistic, and student milieus. However, with time, it expanded to broader sectors of society.

It is true that the issue of equality was not among the main demands of the student movement, led by the National Strike Council (CNH). What is more, the vast majority of CNH members were men. Similarly, the issue did not come up in the assemblies in the dozens of schools that mobilized in the UNAM, the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN), the Normal Teachers School, or the University of Chapingo. Neither was it present at the mass demonstrations that wended their way through downtown Mexico City between July and October, or in the banners, leaflets, or posters, the proclamations, or the discourse of the infinite number of brigades that spread out through

* Researcher at the UNAM Institute for Social Research and the School of Architecture; boils@unam.mx.

the capital of Mexico in those months. Even so, the mobilizations of 1968 awakened concerns that, as we shall see here, fostered the quest for gender equality.

Democracy and Gender Equality

One general starting point for this article is that, the more democratic a society, the more gender equality is affirmed. From here, it follows that if the 1968 movement fostered democratic demands, even though it did not explicitly achieve greater equality between men and women, inevitably it would bring with it a more egalitarian society in this sense also. This is borne out by what happened in the years afterward. This process unfolded despite the fact that the Mexican political system continued to be authoritarian and repressive in the 1970s and the decades following. In this order of ideas, after the student movement in Mexico, democratic spaces opened up with greater freedom of expression and organization. Even if only in a relative way, they tended to encourage greater participation by women in the different fields of cultural, artistic, and academic life, and, to a certain extent, also in politics.

Accordingly, greater consciousness of equality became perceptible as a series of day-to-day relationships and practices began to take on strength that emerged from a society with greater margins of democracy and civic participation. Channels for women's participation also gradually broadened out, even increasingly at the level of private business executives and important government posts. For the first time, a few women became governors or ministers of state. In addition, during the following decade, the number of women deputies and senators grew, as did their participation in important positions in the judiciary.

Women and the '68 Movement

As mentioned above, the members of the movement's collective leadership, the CNH, were majority male. However, we have the record of 15 women participants; the best known were the representatives of the UNAM School of Law, Ana Ignacia (La Nacha) Rodríguez Márquez and María Esther (La Tita) Rodríguez, outstanding activists in brigades and in their school assemblies.[1] Ignacia Rodríguez

Even though women did not necessarily formulate feminist proposals in the discussions, the simple fact that they participated opened up spaces for their cause.

was detained several times and ended up in the Santa Martha Acatitla prison, together with María Esther Rodríguez, for more than two years. They were not the only women students in prison for having participated in the movement. In an interview Ignacia Rodríguez gave to the *El Universal* daily, she said that there had been two other *compañeras* from the Law School imprisoned with them: Amada Velasco and Adela Salazar de Castillejos.[2]

A record exists of 13 others who were members of the CNH: Dana Aerenlund, Patricia Best, Adriana Corona, Oralia García, Mirthokleia González, Mareta Gutiérrez, Consuelo Hernández, Ianira León, Eugenia Mesta, Erlinda Sánchez, Marta Servín, Eugenia Valero, and Rosalba Zúñiga.[3] This list of women leaders of the movement may not be complete, but at least is shows that they undoubtedly were part of that student leadership body, showing that women not only participated as rank and file members, but in the leadership.

Like them, hundreds of women students participated outstandingly in the debates in the assemblies at their campuses and fortunately did not go to prison. Significantly, many had an impact on the decisions made about strategies and enthusiastically participated in the hundreds of informational brigades that spread out all over the city every day. Even though they did not necessarily formulate feminist proposals in the discussions, the simple fact that they participated opened up spaces for women's cause. Among the many 1968 activists, we should remember María Antonieta Rascón, at that time a student in the UNAM National School of Political Sciences, who had a singular progressive influence on the movement, using forceful arguments. Years later, she would be an outstanding figure in Mexico's feminist movement and the author of several pioneering works, such as *La mujer y la lucha social en Mexico* (Women and Social Struggle in Mexico), a historical review of women's struggles in the first decades of the twentieth century.[4]

In terms of the day-to-day activities at the schools on strike, the women worked with singular enthusiasm and camaraderie on writing and printing leaflets and making

banners and placards. Some were particularly skilled at these tasks and even led their male colleagues. In these concrete tasks was where women students participated significantly as the equals of their male *compañeros*. Although this was not a profound change in gender roles, unquestionably, for many, it was the first time they put themselves in a situation of being the equals of the males.

They also occasionally spoke at the rallies that punctuated the huge marches, proving their ability as orators and their solid thinking and analysis, thus winning their *compañeros*' recognition. Some also stood out in the constant discussions that took place in the Committees for Struggle in the striking schools. Frequently, they were no longer *soldaderas*,[5] cooking for the strikers and then washing the dishes. It became very common for these tasks to be carried out jointly by men and women. This meant that not only did the women gain ground in terms of equality, but also that the male students became aware that the subordination of their *compañeras* could not continue.

The Weighty Heritage of Centuries

Another consequence of the '68 experience is linked, though in a limited, indirect way, with the break with old, outdated customs deeply rooted in Mexican society for centuries. People began to question the role of women as subordinate to male hegemony. Very particularly, an offensive began against the very entrenched values of that very primitive *machismo* prevalent in many sectors of Mexican society. These changes could be felt above all in Mexico's academic, intellectual, and artistic communities after '68.

Better conditions for women in Mexico have come about above all in the urban middle classes and are circumscribed to rather small sectors of society; among them are women professionals, those with university educations, literati, artists, company executives, public officials, or politicians. But even in these sectors, the gains cannot be said to apply to all women.

Not only did the women gain ground in terms of equality, but the male students became aware that the subordination of their *compañeras* could not continue.

Institutions of Higher Learning And Gender Equality

It is probably in university life where we can most clearly see that advance in equality between men and women. One example is the changes in enrollment in the country's two main institutions of higher learning: the UNAM and the IPN, whose students were fundamental protagonists of the '68 movement. In the 18 years of this century, the proportion of women enrolled at the UNAM has remained at about 51 percent. In the current school year, 2017-2018, of a total UNAM population of 349 515 in all levels (high school on), 177 903 (50.9 percent) are women.[6] In the same school year, IPN enrollment was 177 983 students, 64 964 (36.5 percent) of whom were female and 113 019 (63.5 percent) were male.[7] While female enrollment at the Polytechnic Institute does not match that of the UNAM, it is also true that the number of women students at the IPN has increased considerably since 1968, when they only made up 10 percent of the total.

We could say that the changes in the gender composition of enrollment in Mexico's institutions of higher learning would have taken place even if there had not been a '68 movement, but what we can also venture to say is that it is very probable that the movement did contribute to speeding this process up. What is more, I think that the movement can be credited with the relatively swift transformation of gender relations in the university sphere. Added to this is the increase in research and teaching staff, where the number of women academic personnel has continued to rise.

The solidity of equality and how fast it unfolds depends on the extent to which real democracy is practiced and democratic values advance in Mexican society. The existence in the UNAM of the Center for Gender Research and Studies, as well as the diverse measures and programs designed to combat gender harassment and violence are important factors in fostering that transformation. Other institutions of higher education have also implemented programs and measures similar to those of the UNAM. The IPN created the Polytechnic Gender Perspective Unit, which has implemented different actions for years. Outstanding among them is the June 18, 2010 decision to offer male workers paternity leave when their children are born or they adopt. The aim of this measure is "to promote the father's emotional, responsible ties, not only

when their sons and daughters are born, but throughout their lives."[8]

The Situation Today

Half a century after the '68 student movement, we can say that the process of gender equality is far from complete. Many advances in women's participation in the sciences, the arts, the world of work, in politics, and above all in university academia undoubtedly exist. However, there is still a long road ahead for Mexican society to be more just with regard to real conditions of equality between men women and men.

It would be truly foolhardy to say that the '68 student movement fostered an important change in the situation of Mexican women, since many forms of inequality still exist. In a country in which the values of a patriarchal, sexist culture are deeply rooted and which can be seen in all social sectors, much is left to be done. A reality in which harassment, rape, and feminicide are daily events,[9] and where women are paid less than men for the same work shows just how much is still pending in the sphere of gender equality.

Neither can we ignore that domestic violence is taking place every day in innumerable homes, with the result that women victims frequently require hospitalization. The judicial system, which is not characterized by its moral irreproachability or its efficiency in administering justice, contributes to maintaining this situation; in addition, impunity is rampant and the ratio of complaints made to incidents of violence for which no complaint is made remains very low. Even so, although limited to small sectors of society, the achievements are still important, above all in decreasing prejudices and slowing stubborn misogyny. Plus, legislation does exist —although it is not always followed to the letter— that offers at least a certain degree of legal security that did not exist 50 years ago.

Prospects for the Future

It is difficult to break down deeply-rooted old beliefs that have existed and been reproduced for millennia. We cannot ignore that, as Barbara Burris wrote, all of us, men and women, have grown up in institutions that have created inhuman attitudes in us,[10] reactive attitudes in the face of true gender equality. What is certain is that these prejudices are not emerging only now: they have always been there on the surface. This means that the idea that male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of exploitation takes on new depth of meaning.[11] And it is perpetuated in a society in which the corrupt justice system and crime prevention apparatus do not usually fulfill their functions, making them the main cause of impunity. But it is also reproduced due to prejudices and daily practices that have prevailed since time immemorial.

Although in our country perhaps not very many men and women see gender equity as an essential aim, it is true that their numbers seem to be growing. The fact that institutions of higher learning foster programs aimed at gender equity leads me to think that, at least indirectly, the experience of '68 has had an impact. Above all, in the coming years, these institutions and the people who are part of them will be key for advancing equal relations between men and women in Mexico. VM

Notes

1 "Historias del 68: la Nacha Rodríguez, un privilegio seguir viva," *Proceso* (Mexico City), October 2, 2008, https://www.proceso.com.mx, accessed July 24, 2018.
2 Teresa Moreno and Pedro Villa y Caña, "Voy a morir sin saber qué pasó en el 68," interview with Ignacia Ramírez, *El Universal* (Mexico City), "Justicia y Sociedad" section, March 12, 2018.
3 Ángeles Márquez Gileta, video, https//regeneración.mx<Sociedad> EquidadyGénero, accessed July 22, 2018.
4 María Antonieta Rascón, *La mujer y la lucha social en México*, Women's International Resource Exchange (WIRE), 1989.
5 The *soldaderas* were women who accompanied the revolutionary armies —and occasionally took part in the battles— during the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, famous for their bravery and constancy. [Translator's Note.]
6 Series Estadísticas UNAM 2000-2018, www.estadistica.unam.mx/sideu.php, Table 3, Población escolar, accessed July 24, 2018.
7 IPN estadística institucional, www.gestiopnestrategica.ipn.mx/Evaluación/Paginas/Estadisticas.aspx, Hoja estadística institucional, several tables, accessed July 24, 2018.
8 "El IPN a la vanguardia en equidad de género," noticias.universia.net.mx, accessed July 20, 2018.
9 In the first half of 2018, an average of two feminicides were committed every day, according to the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Safety System, making a total of 387 at this writing. See Fabiola Martínez, "Se perpetraron 387 feminicidios en el primer semestre," *La Jornada* (Mexico City), July 27, 2018, p. 3.
10 Barbara Burris, "What Is Women's Liberation," *It Ain't Me Babe* vol. 1, no. 3, February 1970 (Berkeley), 1970, quoted in Marta Acevedo, *Ni diosa ni mártir…: la mujer de hoy en lucha por su liberación* (Mexico City: Extemporáneos, 1971), p. 102.
11 Ellen Willis, "Consumerism and Women," quoted in Marta Acevedo, *Ni diosa ni mártir*, op. cit., 1971, p. 109.

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección Ethel Villanueva/EV-03

Álvaro Vázquez Mantecón*

Youth Counterculture In 1968

We forget that the student movement included members of both the Institutional Revolutionary and the National Action Parties. If you go to the UNAM Institute for Research on the University and Education (IISUE) and look at the images of '68, you'll be surprised to find the photo of a young bearded man speaking in favor of the students. This is none other than Diego Fernández de Cevallos when he was a member of the National Action Party (PAN) youth group.[1] This means that post-Vatican II Catholics participated; however, all those memories have been replaced by the narrative centered on the left, which has meant that we remember a series of events in a specific way and not in their plural entirety.

If we think about '68, it's like we're listening to a soundtrack with the voices of Judith Reyes and Óscar Chávez. But, what happens when we look at some very interesting audio-visual materials like, for example, *Mural efímero* (Ephemeral Wall), by film-maker Raúl Kamffer?[2] It turns out that at the end of the University City esplanade, a statue of former President Miguel Alemán had been erected, and, in 1968, after many attacks, it was covered by a corrugated metal structure. A group of artists in solidarity with the student movement painted a temporary mural on it in August of that year.

Raúl Kamffer, a student at the University Center for Film Studies (CUEC) at the time, filmed the process. What catches the viewer's eye first is the color. It contrasts with other films made at the time, but in black and white, like

* Professor-researcher in the Social Sciences and Humanities Division, Autonomous Metropolitan University, Azcapotzalco campus.

Editor's Note: This article is an adaptation by M. Cristina Hernández of the lecture, "The 1968 Student Movement and Youth Counterculture," given at the CISAN as part of the conference "The Mexico 1968 Student Movement and Counterculture in North America." José Juan Múñoz Munguía transcribed the video.

the ones about the famous Silent Demonstration. Second, the music is *Deep Purple*. Yes, rock groups were part of the student movement; this says something to us about the diversity and counterculture present.

What happened in '68 was worldwide. People who study some of the specifics of what happened in São Paulo, Berlin, Paris, or Mexico often think that each movement was a local phenomenon, but it turns out that the May Days in Paris were also marked by counterculture. The subversion that had an impact on a series of important political events cannot be understood without including the cultural. However, we must recognize that it is true that while '68 was global and counterculture was probably one of the keys to that globality, it also had a specific character in each place, and the political reading of it is part of that vision. I would venture to go further and say that '68 is also a specifically Latin American and Mexican phenomenon that is part of a left-identified political line.

This global/local dichotomy speaks to a dual tension that I will use as the starting point for my analysis. To that end, it would be important to define just exactly what we understand by counterculture. I would begin by saying that it is one culture moving *against* another, opposed to an "established" culture (bourgeois, racist, conservative, opposed to women's freedom, and the civil rights of Afro-descendants). Out of that grew a worldwide mobilization in which Latin America participated, because here, just like elsewhere on the planet, many young people oppose that system of values.

Counterculture promotes integration, recognition, and respect for women's rights; it is opposed to the subjection of women; it wants society to recognize and defend the exercise of freedom, including sexual freedom, among other issues. While it is a worldwide phenomenon, in Mexican society, which is very modern and at the same time very conventional and traditional, it is worth asking how much counterculture there actually was in 1968. And the answer would be a great deal, that the counterculture was opposed to the political, and that music played a central role.

While '68 was global and counterculture was probably one of the keys to that globality, it also had a specific character in each place.

When 57 participants in the student movement were interviewed about what music they listened to, the answers varied widely. There were those who liked to listen and dance to tropical music, like Roberto Escudero, but also those who listened to Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Simon and Garfunkel. Film-maker Margarita Suzán remembered that as she was being hunted by the police in those years, she listened to "Light My Fire," proof that the counterculture from other countries existed in our midst. This was clearly due to the changes in Mexican society under stabilizing development, since, as Octavio Paz writes at the end of his *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, for the first time, we Mexicans were contemporaries of the rest of the world's inhabitants.

There was a middle class that lived in or had family in the Narvarte Neighborhood, who, of course, listened to the Beatles, to Eric Burdon, to Joan Baez, and who also obviously identified with a series of the Latin American political causes that gave them their specific identity; that is, both realities co-existed. There was also a contradiction: when the first Early Bird satellite television broadcast featured the Beatles playing "All You Need Is Love" amidst a psychedelic scene filled with flowers and hippie symbols, Mexico responded with Lola Beltrán singing "Cucurrucucú paloma." This gesture seemed to strengthen our identity, as though with that, we were saying, "I'm going to be modern, but I don't want to lose what defines me," what was very peculiar to Mexican society.

Coming back to counterculture à la Mexico in the student movement, in addition to the aforementioned ephemeral mural musicalized with *Deep Purple*, we have the graphic arts of '68. If you take into account the diversity of our cultural traditions, it is also there that we will find work from the Popular Graphics Workshop and Adolfo Mejía's engravings, with indigenous faces in resistance and elements of pop culture. Other works are almost post-Vatican II because the Catholic Church was also opening up to a renovation marked by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, from 1962 to 1965.

Focusing on the issue of sexual freedom associated with the 1968 counterculture, we tend to think about it as something absolute, but it was relative: it had its lim-

its, dictated by the prevailing morality of the time, which also permeated the progressives. In an interview, writer Luis González de Alba, who had been imprisoned in Lecumberri, complained, "Don't tell me that the student movement was tolerant of homosexuality. Not at all! When somebody came to talk to me in my cell in Cellblock M, my *compañeros* from the Communist Party would meet to censor me. They argued that homosexuality wasn't revolutionary."

And this was happening at the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s. Women also participated in the movement, but we'd have to look at how many were members of the National Strike Council. Among them was Roberta "La Tita" Avendaño Martínez, who had an attitude like movie star María Félix, very empowered and cocky. That is, the '68 movement did not necessarily put into practice all the countercultural freedoms; but it positioned them as the starting point so many more could be exercised years later.

In that context, and following up with the visual arts, one noteworthy experience was the first contest for experimental film held in 1970. A group of cultural promoters, including playwright Juan José Gurrola and poet Leopoldo Ayala Blanco, opened an existentialist café-concert, The Muses Forum, which miraculously survived the persecution of Mexico City's mayor, ultra-right-wing Ernesto P. Uruchurtu. About 35 films were presented in the 8mm and super-8mm categories, and Ayala Blanco, who went to the screenings, said that he was very impressed by the fact that all the young people from the ages of 20 to 24 seemed to have agreed to film the same movie: '68 was very present as a common thread throughout, as something that had also had an impact on the upper layers of society.

Here, counterculture has a very important role to play. A couple of films were key in this contest: *El fin* (The End), by Sergio García Michel, and *Mi casa de altos techos* (My House with the High Ceilings), by David Celestinos. The first is a short a little over eight minutes long that portrays the harmony and decline of a couple with music first by the Rolling Stones and then by the Doors, to finish, paradoxically, with Armando Manzanero.[3] The film won the Luis Buñuel Prize.

I think the other film is very important because it deals with the political/countercultural dichotomy in a story about two young art students from Mexico City's San Carlos Academy. They are friends, but they have opposing ideologies: one has a social conscience and is trying to develop committed art, while the other is bearded, dedicated to counterculture, practices Zen meditation, and is depressed by '68.

A doubt arose about where we were going: were we moving toward continuing to fight for democratic freedoms through activism or toward escapism in the exercise of the counterculture?

This quandary emerged after the '68 events, this doubt about where we are going: are we moving toward continuing to fight for democratic freedoms through activism or toward escapism in the exercise of the counterculture; are we going to form guerrilla groups or be hippies? In the first half of the 1970s, counterculture played a very important role in the narrative about '68, always through metaphor, its warhorse. So, when Arturo Ripstein directed *El castillo de la pureza* (The Castle of Purity), in which Claudio Brook played an authoritarian father who imprisoned his family at home, everyone —above all the critics— began to speculate that the character was Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, the metaphor for the authoritarian father. In the counterculture, this notion meant that it was not the president who governed, but in a certain sense, it was our own father. The same was the case of the patriarch of *La oveja negra* (The Black Sheep), starring Fernando Soler and Pedro Infante, which shows the impact of an arbitrary, brutal, tyrannical, repressive family head. The parallels with Gustavo Díaz Ordaz abound, given that in his annual government reports, he used to say that we had believed Mexico was an untouchable island, and of course, he wanted it to be one.

In *La montaña sagrada* (The Sacred Mountain) (1973), by Alejandro Jodorowsky, the viewer sees the symbolic force of metaphor and counterculture in its 1970s representation of '68. This allusion led to the film-maker having to leave the country, since government spies had him under surveillance. I should underline that few representations or artistic images are as eloquent as the scene of the indolent bourgeoisie on their knees in front of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe pretending that they

Counterculture and politics
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that many people explored.

don't know what's happening in their country, contrasted with the images of a long line of skinned, crucified individuals, a clear allusion to the sacrifice and murder of students. The surgical tape on their mouths remits us to the September 13, 1968 Silent March, which happened in the very same country where the bourgeoisie was perfectly aware of what was going on.

The film is very striking. However, when you ask activists about how important this director was to them in the 1970s, you find that almost all of them speak badly of him. They distance themselves from his forms of representation because what predominated at the beginning of the decade was a different logic altogether, that of leftist activism, eliminating the possibility for the counterculture to have its own effect. So, the sources of Latin American radicalism had to be, *a fortiori*, the Latin American struggles, the Cuban Revolution, its leaders, and their plan for transparency.

Along these same lines, a key event for the counterculture, for example, would be the Avándaro Festival in September 1971. Writer Carlos Monsiváis wrote a famous letter from London —which he later clearly said that he regretted having written— referring contemptuously to the young people who listened and danced to songs in English sung by Mexican groups. He called them a bunch of colonials, the first generations of U.S. Americans born in Mexico, who didn't understand the country they were living in and played no part in what was being built there.

Someone who went to Avándaro told me a story that I think is very memorable: in Alfredo Gurrola's film of the festival, in one very strange scene, some young Mexican hippies, with their allusions to Aztec culture, our version of counterculture, are holding a ceremony with copal incense and seem to be meditating. According to the person who told me the story, this is linked to the fact that one of the concert's MCs asked for "a minute of silence for our dead." Naturally, all the young people accepted this, and, in this case, "our dead" were those from October 2, 1968 and June 10, 1971, just recently murdered, even though the MC was referring to Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix.

This shows that the counterculture and politics were not so very counterposed at that time. However, the disassociation and confrontation seemed to be a line of thought that many people explored. If you read "Luz externa" (External Light), by José Agustín, later filmed in super8mm, you will encounter the story of a countercultural young man at the beginning of the 1970s who travels from Huautla de Jiménez. He's a macho, trying to hook up with all the little princesses attracted by the hippies, and he wants to do a million things. Along the way, he meets an ex-hippie involved in the radical, revolutionary struggle. This leftist is now critical of the hippies, reproaching them that they get high when what's needed is an exercise of conscience and a revolution. But the other character responds that his revolution is internal.

Positions as distant from each other as this make both worlds' coexisting impossible and remind us that activists in the 1970s were very hard on everything countercultural. In that world of folk music *peñas* and middle-class youngsters singing revolutionary songs, it was very difficult for anyone who ended up being part of the rock milieu of the 1980s. Eblén Macari composed "Yo no nací en la Huasteca" (I Wasn't Born in the Huasteca),[4] a song that was a banner raised in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the face of those who claimed counterculture was illegitimate. Among its stanzas are the following:

I wasn't born in the Huasteca,
Nor in Tierra Caliente.
For better or for worse,
I was born in this city.

A city southerner,
A product of the Beatles.
That was my folklore:
Being born without a label.

Sometimes I think that it's a blessing
To be a rudderless mestizo.
Therefore, it's a curse
To be born without a label.

It was the complaint of the people who had taken the counterculture on board and experienced it as their own and had opted for rock as a form of expression, a decision that was harshly criticized. It would not be until the 1980s that left opposition music festivals would include rock groups.

That is, this supposed separation between the countercultural view and politics is false and artificial. I will be self-critical: when I wrote *El cine súper 8 en México. 1970-1989* (Super8 Film in Mexico. 1970-1989),[5] I fell into this same mistake because I included a chapter about countercultural expressions and another about political cinema as though they were two different phenomena. As we have seen, however, politics was profoundly countercultural, and they were both part of the same cultural matrix. So, this reflection about '68 should lead us to think about the many '68s, allowing us 50 years on to begin to reclaim those other parts of the experience expelled from our memories. VM

Notes

1 Fernández de Cevallos is today one of the deacons of the conservative National Action Party. [Editor's Note.]
2 https://www.filmoteca.unam.mx/cinelinea/videos/video37.html. [Editor's Note.]
3 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odAk6-2iA3s. [Editor's Note.]
4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1wKJoEYVSI. [Editor's Note.]
5 https://issuu.com/filmotecaunam/docs/cine_s-8_prueba2. [Editor's Note.]

Armando Fonseca*

1968 Around the World

THE AMERICAS

Mexico

- Military and police repression in educational institutions sparks the movement.
- August 2. The National Strike Council (CNH) is formed to coordinate student and academic protests. By this date, there have already been 12 deaths and 100 arrested or disappeared.
- October 2. Thousands of students go to the Three Cultures Plaza in Tlatelolco to present their six demands to the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz administration.
- October 2, 6:12 p.m. An army helicopter launches a flare signaling the order to commence firing. Soldiers, paramilitary, and snipers fire into the crowd of 5 000 demonstrators, mostly students.
- The crowd seeks refuge in nearby buildings.
- In the following hours, soldiers and police raid homes and illegally detain people in Tlatelolco apartments.
- The unofficial death toll is between 300 and 500 and more than 2 000 arrested.

Panama

- Before 1968, workers, peasants, indigenous groups, and students hold protests due to a profound economic, political, and social crisis.
- October 11, 1968. Major Boris Martínez stages a coup d'état against Arnulfo Arias, initiating what has been called the Panamanian Dictatorship. That night, union, community, and student leaders are hunted down.
- October 13. The military government officially takes office and is recognized by the United States and several Latin American nations.
- More detentions, torture, murders, and forced disappearances. Constitutional guarantees are suspended.
- The University of Panama and the National Institute are closed. The University Student Union calls for general opposition to the regime, underlining the violation of the university's autonomy.
- October 20. A 72-hour general strike is called.
- November 3. The regime represses a student march and arrests its leadership. Disturbances and protests continue for several years.

United States

- April 4. Martin Luther King, Jr., civil rights leader and activist against racial discrimination, is assassinated in Memphis.
- June 5. Democratic presidential candidate Robert Kennedy is shot and dies the next day.
- August. Groups of young people, like the Youth International Party (or "yippies"), demonstrate at the National Democratic Convention in Chicago against the war in Vietnam. Mayor Richard Daley sends in riot police to quell the protest, causing what was later called a "police riot." Seven event organizers are charged with conspiracy.
- October 14. Almost all university campuses erupt in protests against the war in Vietnam.
- November 26. South Vietnam agrees to peace talks in Paris.

Canada

- Spring. Six black students from Sir George Williams University (today, Concordia University) ask for an investigation into failing grades they received because of the color of their skin.
- Students organize sit-ins when the grades are not overturned and on February 11, 1969, the police clash with students in the most violent student disturbances in Canadian history.

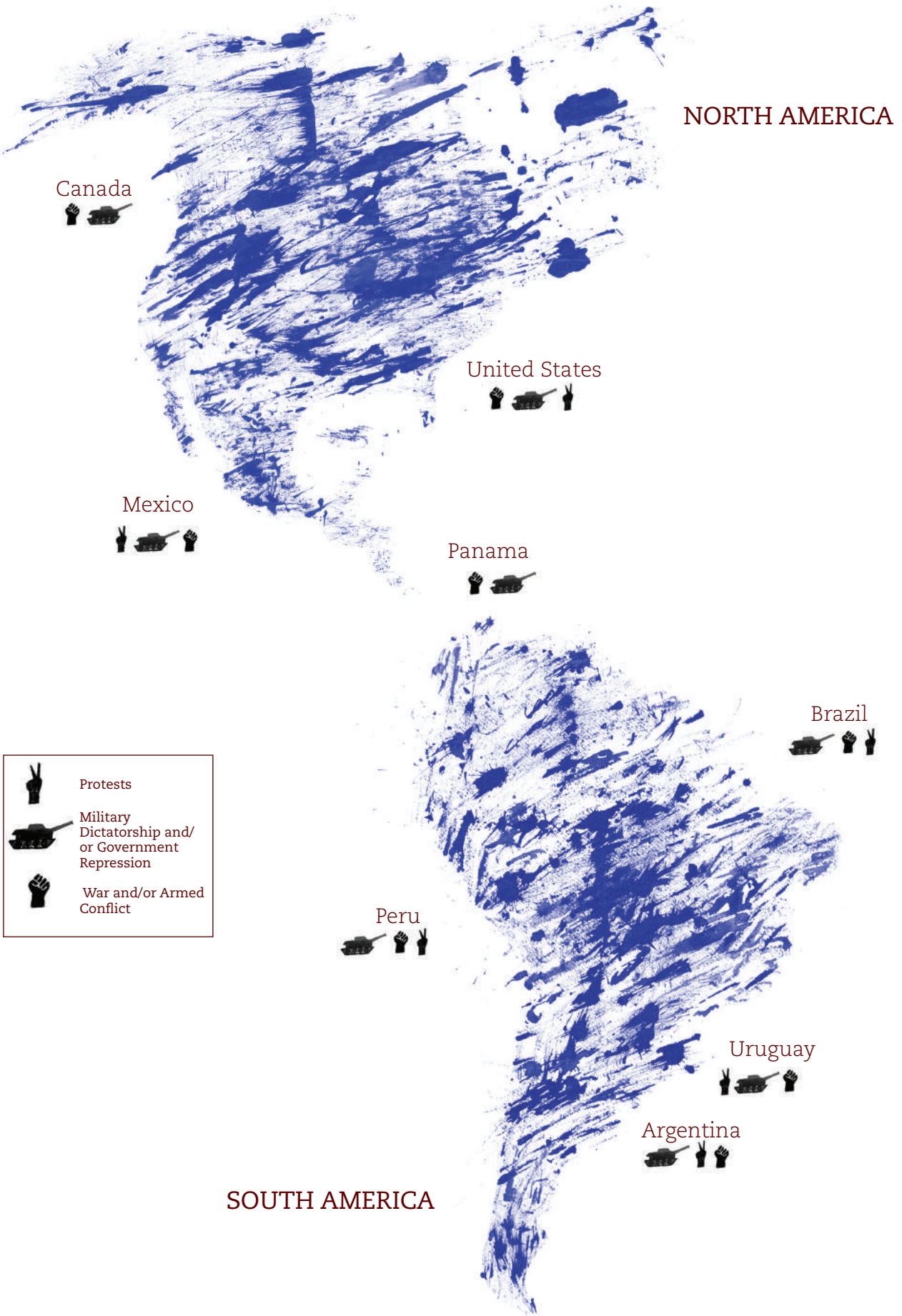
Argentina

- March. Under a military dictatorship, the unions, with support from students, artists, and intellectuals, found the General Confederation of Labor of Argentina (CGTA).
- September. The CGTA and the Student Struggle Front organize protests in Córdoba and are violently repressed by police. The student struggle re-emerges in 1969 with a strike against the privatization of university canteens, which meets with harsh repression, but that does not immobilize society.

Brazil

- 1957-1968. Huge marches against the military dictatorship.
- March. The National Student Union of Brazil mobilizes. In its first public activities, the police murder one young man and wound others. Indignation spreads nationwide.
- This sparks marches in all of Brazil's major cities with bloody results. The demonstrations start again May 1, expressing the alliance of the student movement and workers' struggles

* Visual artist; armandofonsecag@gamil.com


NORTH AMERICA
Canada
United States
Mexico
Panama
Brazil
Peru
Uruguay
Argentina
SOUTH AMERICA
Protests
Military Dictatorship and/ or Government Repression
War and/or Armed Conflict

"to build a new Brazil" and against the dictatorship of Artur da Costa e Silva.
- June 26. 100 000 march in Rio de Janeiro to repudiate arbitrary arrests and murders.
- The dictatorship's most repressive period begins, the "Years of Lead."

Peru

- October 3. General Juan Velasco Alvarado stages a coup d'état to depose Fernando Belaunde Terry.
- Despite a strong political and ideological campaign, the student movement, most of which opposes Velasco, does not prosper in the universities.
- Given firings of workers and factory closures in important sectors of the economy, more and more students join workers' movements.
- The crisis speeds up political radicalization, heavily influenced by Maoist positions.

Uruguay

- May 1. The National Workers' Convention (CNT) celebrates International Workers Day in Montevideo, but the event is violently broken up by the Republican Guard. This spurs the unions to call a general strike.
- A hike in student bus ticket prices and the reduction of the budget for education spark the mobilization of the Secondary Students Coordinating Committee. By May 13, 12 high schools have been occupied in protest.
- Despite the government cancelation of the price hike, the mobilization continues, and workers join in with their demands, creating a popular movement.
- Universities join in, demanding better budgets and that the government pay its debts to the university.
- June 18. The University Students Federation of Uruguay (FEUU) organizes a general work stoppage.
- June 24. President Jorge Pacheco declares a state of emergency and orders the armed forces to repress the strikers.
- August 9. Pacheco orders the police enter the University of the Republic, violating its autonomy, using firearms against students and academic and administrative personnel. One student is killed, thus increasing the tension.
- The student's funeral is the largest gathering in Montevideo on record until then, showing society's rejection of the dictatorship.

EUROPE

France

- March 20. The National Vietnam Committee demonstrates against the U.S. occupation of Vietnam; several students are arrested.
- March 22. 142 students (anarchists, Trotskyists, Communists, libertarians, and a group called "The Indignant") protest, taking over the central tower at Nanterre University.
- May-June. Revolt, not to take power, but for a substantial change in society, in defense of freedom in the private sphere and questioning the public sphere.
- May 3. The protests spread to the Sorbonne. Police evict them and detain about 600 people. Demanding the police withdraw and freedom for detainees becomes routine.
- May 6. The so-called "Nanterre Eight" are brought before a university disciplinary committee; when they exit, a demonstration and another clash with police sparks solidarity from most of French society.
- May 10. "The Night of the Barricades" in the Latin Quarter. The clash, the harshest of the month, leaves hundreds injured.
- May 11. Armored cars circulate in Paris.
- May 13. Ten million workers respond to a union strike call. The shut-down of train service, airports, and factories paralyzes France.
- May 27. The unions pact with management and government to end the strike in exchange for a higher minimum wage, a shorter work week, and a lower retirement age.
- June. Despite the violence, all workplaces go back to normal

Poland

- March. Numerous student protests against political repression and the concomitant government anti-Zionist campaign. At least 2 700 people are arrested.

Finland

- Demonstration against Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and in support of Dubček.

Germany

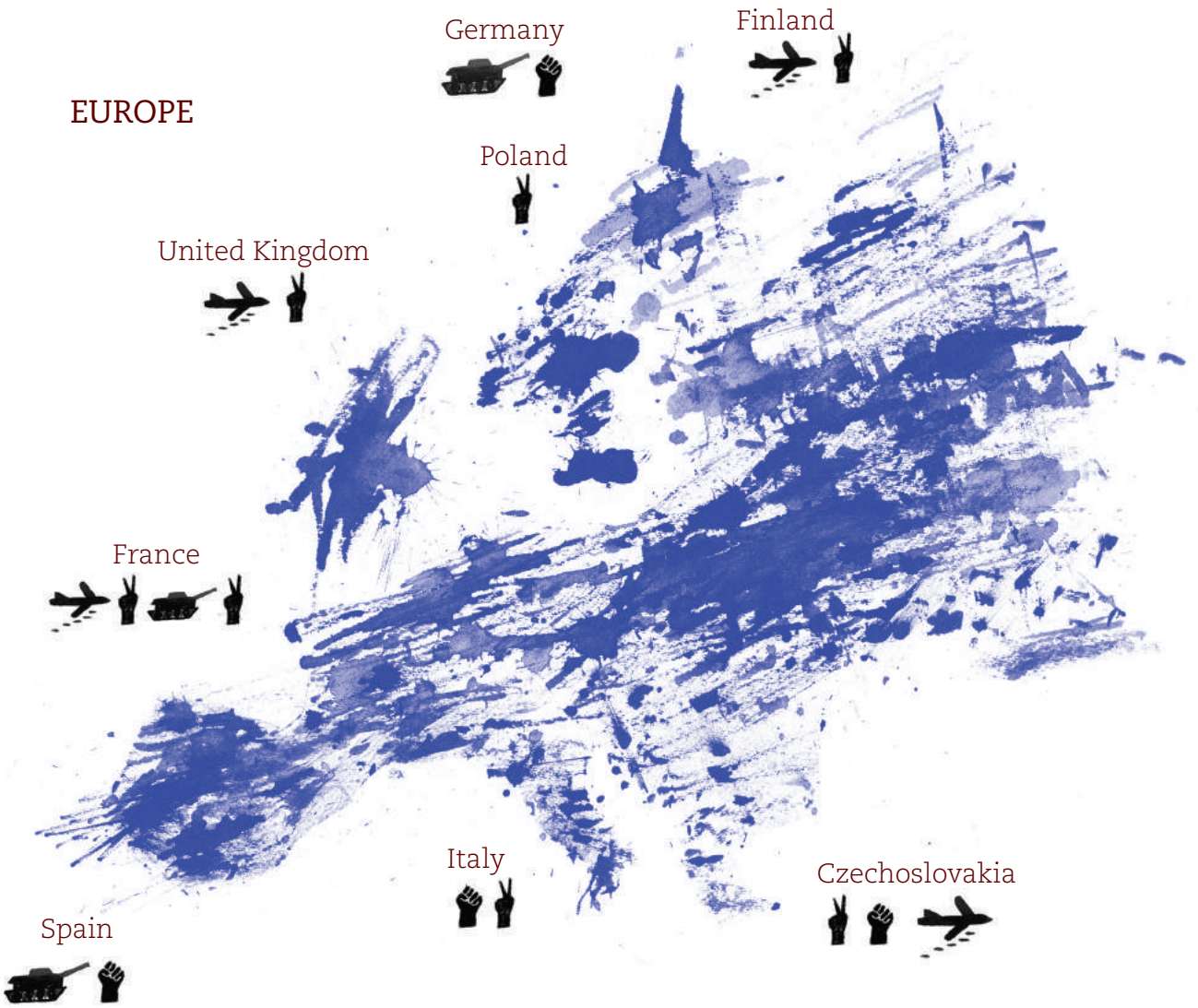
- Student demonstration against appointment of former Nazis to high government posts and anti-democratic legal reforms.
- February. International congress against Vietnam War with thousands of participants from West Berlin.

United Kingdom

- October 27. During protests against the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, students take over the London School of Economics. More than 100 000 participate in the demonstrations.

Italy

- November 1967-early 1968. Most universities join together in protest because the economic boom only favors the Italian bourgeoisie.
- Students mobilize against rate hikes and Ministry of Education plans to restrict access to a university education.
- February 1968. University student occupations, starting in Milan, Turin,



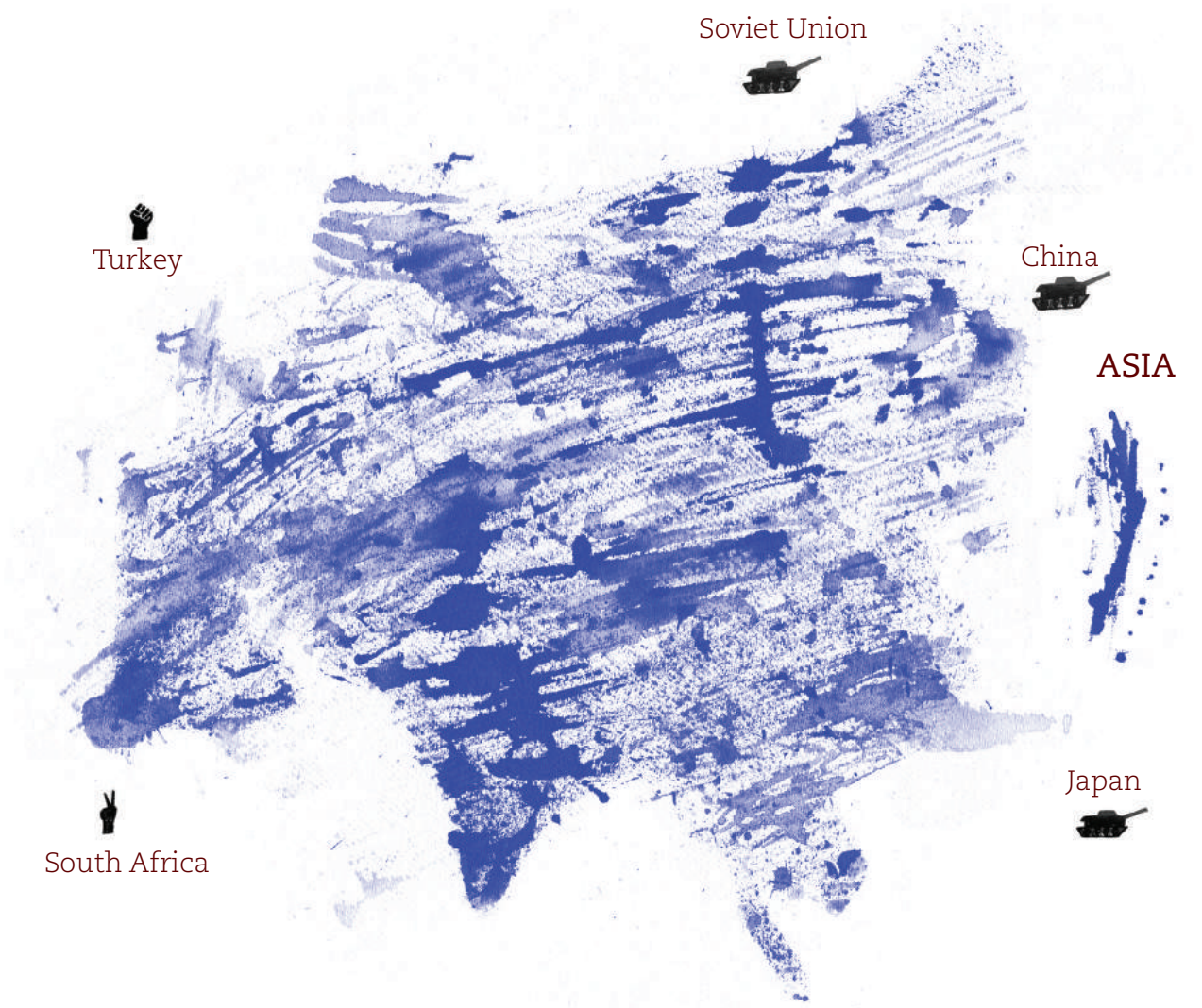
and Trento, spread; democratic assemblies coordinate the movement.
- Late February. The police evict students from university buildings and expel thousands nationwide.
- March 1. The government decides Sapienza University of Rome "must be recovered." The Battle of Valle Giulia leaves wounded on both sides and the students are forced to retreat.
- Summer. Numerous revolutionary groups promote the idea that the use of violence is necessary.

Czechoslovakia

- January-August. The Prague Spring begins, a peaceful movement to eliminate Soviet abuses and move toward "socialism with a human face." Communist Party General Secretary Alexander Dubček heads the reforms, recognizing the right to strike, legalizing multiple political parties and unions, and promoting freedom of expression and the press.
- August 20. The Warsaw Pact (except Rumania) and Soviet troops invade Prague, ending the process.
- Dubček is forced to sign the Moscow Protocol, which moderates the reforms.
- In a radio speech, Dubček recommends submitting to the invasion to avoid a bloodbath.

Spain

- Ideologically heterogeneous movement; different groups fight for political and organizational leadership amidst repression.
- The struggle against the Franco dictatorship overrides everything: its defeat is the only aim.
- Students create new unions, refuse to take exams, and demonstrate against arrests and expulsions.
- March 22. Police raid the universities without authorization from the university president to "impose order" and detain student leaders; dozens are wounded.
- Police murder Enrique Ruano of the Popular Liberation Front and impose a state of emergency, revealing the regime's inability to quash society's discontent.
- Increased police presence on university campuses demobilizes students; clandestine parties and unions take up the anti-Franco struggle.



ASIA AND AFRICA

China

- 1967. Consolidation of Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution defending revolutionary ideals. Any attempt at rebellion is crushed, with Mao allying with a student group called the Red Guards.

Japan

- 1965-1967. Nationwide protests against the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the Vietnam War, and school tuition hikes.
- 155-day strike at Waseda University.
- October 1967. Clash between riot police and demonstrators at Tokyo's Haneda Airport; one student is killed and 600 more injured.
- Autumn 1968. Student unrest grows; Molotov cocktails are used at demonstrations; 6 000 protesting students are arrested and more injured.
- Nihon and Tokyo Universities. Intercampus Joint Struggle Committee created to mobilize non-affiliated students. More universities join the strike.
- Early 1969. The conflict heightens: 8 500 anti-riot police force students out of university buildings and arrest occupiers. Injuries and home-made bombs are common in clashes.

Soviet Union

- August 21-22. The Warsaw Pact invades Czechoslovakia to stop political liberalization reforms; about 250 000 troops from the URSS, Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Bulgaria participate in what is dubbed Operation Danube.
- Approximately 500 Czech civilians are wounded and 108, killed.

Turkey

- June. University students organize anti-U.S. and anti-imperialist demonstrations. The Revolutionary Youth Federation of Turkey heads boycotts and school takeovers all over the country.

South Africa

- Almost 600 students and professors occupy the Cape Town University's Bremner Building for nine days to protest the withdrawal of the offer of a senior lectureship to Archie Mafeje due to pressure from the apartheid government. This marks the beginning of the civil disobedience that led to the end of institutionalized racial segregation in that country. VM

COMIC STRIP **CHRONOLOGY**

July 22

Hard feelings after a football game spark a violent clash between students from Vocational Schools 2 and 5 of the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) and the UNAM's Isaac Ochoterena High School in the Ciudadela (Citadel) area.

July 23 and 24

High school students clash again with vocational school students, this time involving cheerleader-team-based thugs who provoke both students and riot police into a confrontation. At the end of the day, Riot Police Battalion 19 enters Vocational School 5 without a warrant, attacking and arresting students and teachers.

As a result of the violence at Voca 5, different IPN schools and centers cancel classes so their students can organize a peaceful protest, supported by the National Technical Students Federation (FNET) and the Executive Committee of the UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences. The latter declares an indefinite strike stating that it is to defend the prestige of both institutions.

Drawings: Santiago Moyao, santiagomoyao@gmail.com.
www.santiagomoyao.com

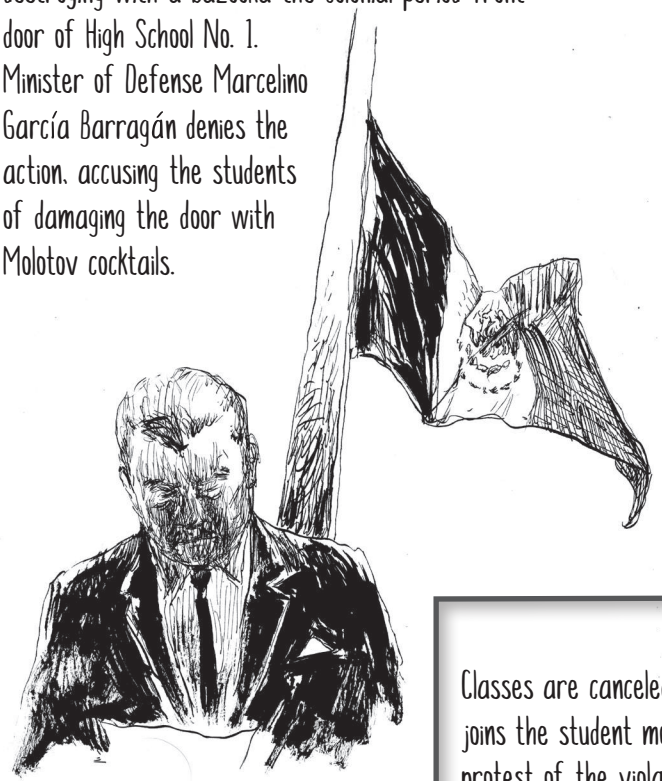
July 25 and 26

A group of IPN students and FNET leaders meet with the minister of the interior of what was then Mexico City's Federal District, Rodolfo González Guevara, to report on the march slated for the next day to denounce the police attack on Voca 5 students.

A demonstration organized by the National Democratic Students Central and the Communist Youth to commemorate the Cuban Revolution coincides with the National Technical Students Federation (FNET) protesting the police intervention at the Citadel. Police violently repress both demonstrations.

July 29

The police and the army occupy National High School and IPN campuses in downtown Mexico City, destroying with a bazooka the colonial period front door of High School No. 1. Minister of Defense Marcelino García Barragán denies the action, accusing the students of damaging the door with Molotov cocktails.

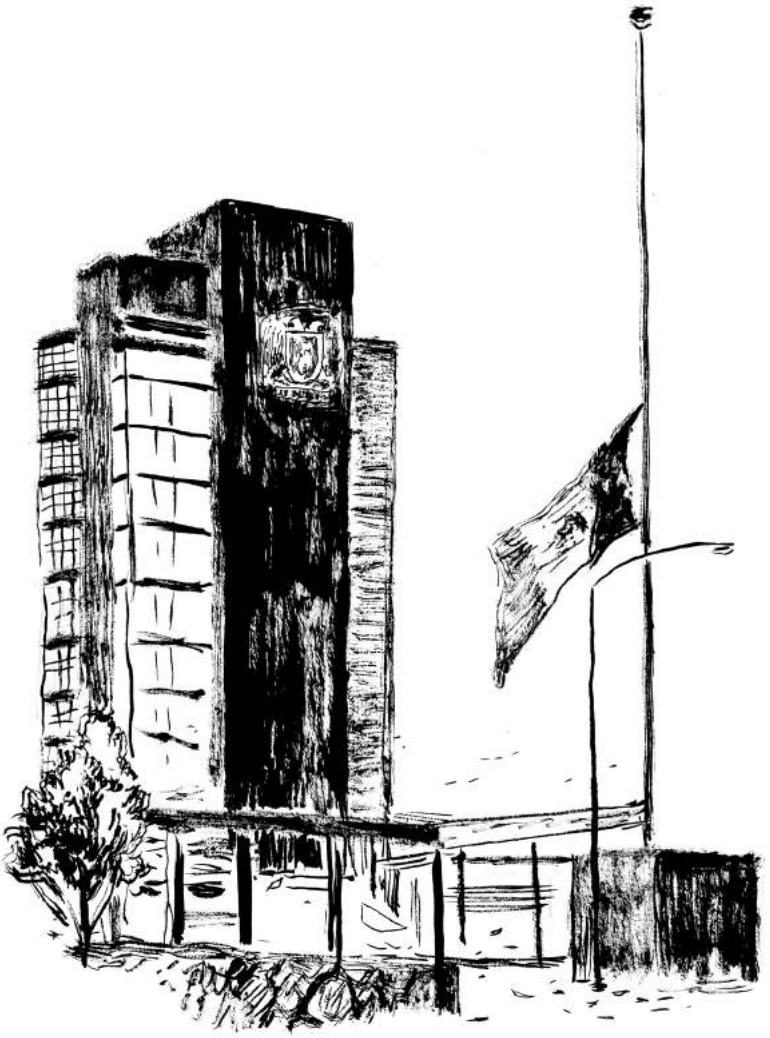


July 30

Classes are canceled in the UNAM and the IPN. University Rector Javier Barros Sierra joins the student movement in University City and lowers the flag to half mast in protest of the violation of university autonomy. Mexico City Mayor Alfonso Corona del Rosal promises to withdraw from the schools "if there are no further clashes."

July 31

Dawn comes to the capital with the news that the army has left Vocational Schools 3 and 5. The strike spreads in the UNAM, the IPN, the Higher Normal School, the University of Chapingo, the Ibero-American University, the La Salle College, El Colegio de México, the National Fine Arts Institute schools, and some other local universities across the country.



August 1

Barros Sierra heads a demonstration in defense of university autonomy. More than 80 000 leave University City, march along nearby streets, and return to campus. Meanwhile, President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz makes a speech in Guadalajara "lamenting" recent events and offering to "extend a hand to anyone who will take it."

August 2

In response to the attacks against the movement, the National Strike Council (CNH) is created to coordinate the institutions on strike. Twenty-six directors of IPN schools and other institutions publish a paid ad in the press supporting the students.

August 8

The CNH puts out its list of six demands:

1. Release of political prisoners
2. Dismissal of police chief General Luis Cueto Ramírez and his assistant Raúl Mendiolea, and Lieutenant Colonel Armando Frías
3. The disbanding of the riot police
4. The repeal of Articles 145 and 145a of the Federal Criminal Code describing the crime of "social disturbance," used as the legal argument to justify the government attacks

5. Compensation for the families of the dead and injured
6. Determination of which authorities are responsible for government actions.

August 13

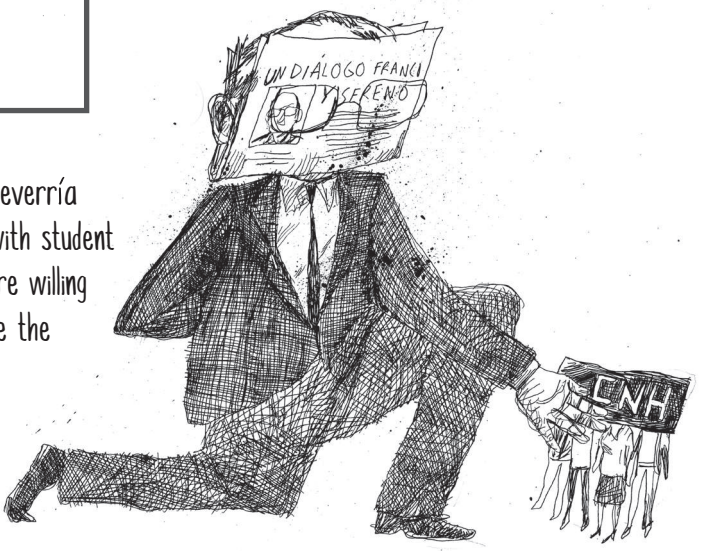
The first student march leaves from the Casco de Santo Tomás IPN campus to Mexico City's central Zócalo Square, headed by the Teachers Coalition. Almost 50 000 people ask the CNH demands be met.

August 16

Strikers form informational brigades, becoming one of the main forms of direct participation to reach out to the public about the government's irresponsible repressive attitude and the lack of democracy. Intellectuals, writers, and artists form an alliance to support the students' resistance and denunciations; among the members are José Revueltas, Juan Rulfo, Carlos Monsiváis, and Manuel Felguérez.

August 22

Minister of the Interior Luis Echeverría offers to open a "frank and serene dialogue" with student representatives, saying that the authorities are willing to deal with the demands to definitively resolve the problems. The National Strike Council accepts with the condition that the dialogue be held in the presence of the print, radio, and television media.



August 27 and 28

The Teachers Coalition publishes a paid ad inviting the public to "a huge, popular demonstration in defense of democratic freedoms" to be held that day, marching from the National Museum of Anthropology and History to the Zócalo Square. Participants protest police repression of free speech and democratic values as well as the unjustified arrests of students and members of the public, turning them into political prisoners. The rally lasts well into the early hours of the next morning.

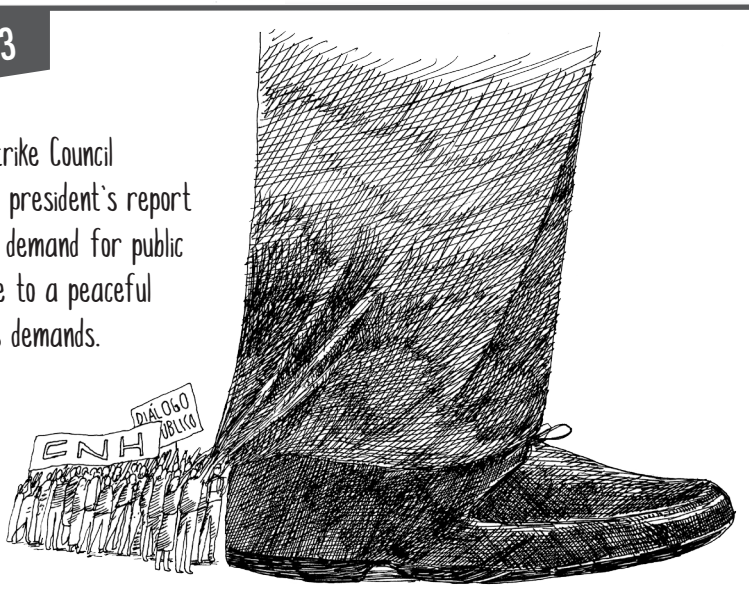
Police (one parachute and two infantry battalions, 12 armored vehicles with presidential guards, riot police, squad cars, firefighters, and several traffic cops) force demonstrators out of the Zócalo Square. The Ministry of National Defense and the Police Chief's Office state that they were simply doing their jobs maintaining public order when they intervened to evict the "troublemakers."

September 1

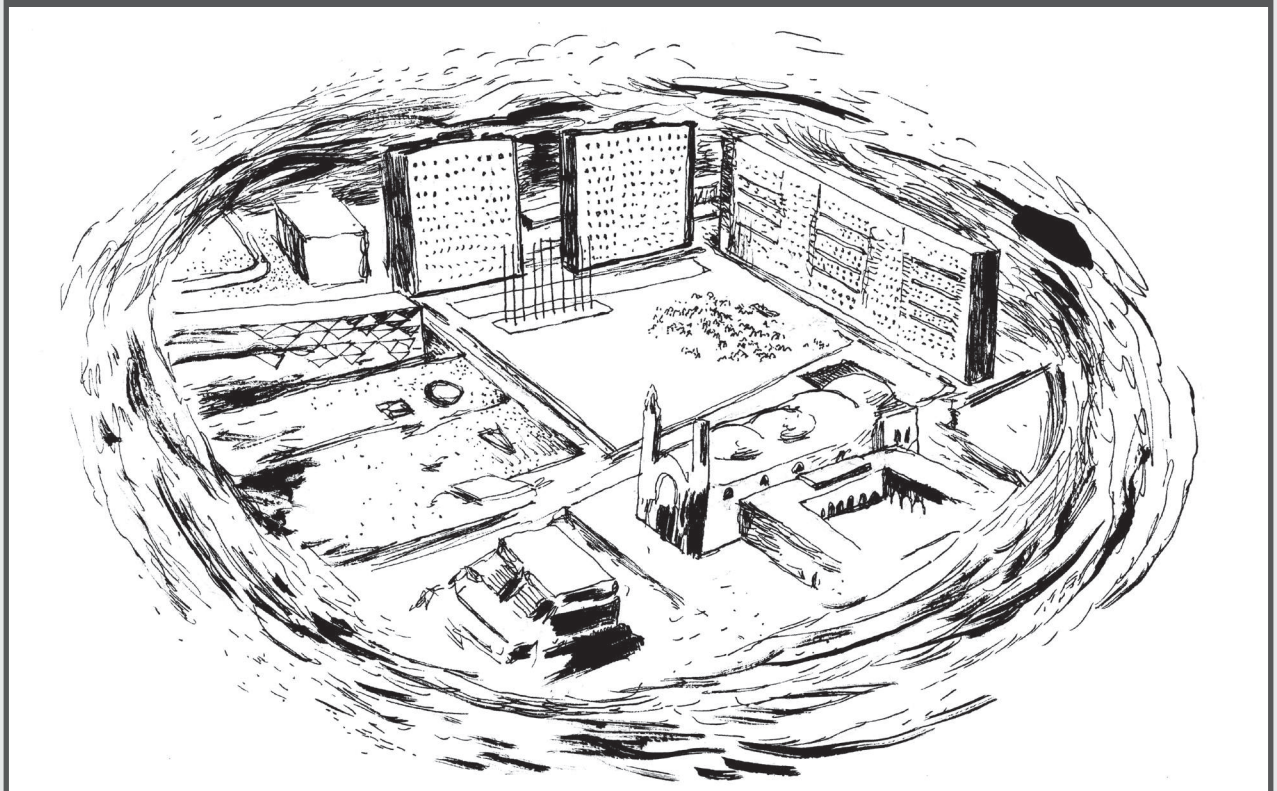
In his Fourth Report to the Nation, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz states that university autonomy has not been violated and Mexico has no political prisoners. He expresses his confidence that the disturbances will not prevent the Olympic Games from happening and that, if necessary, force will be used to maintain order: "We have been excessively tolerant and criticized for it, but everything has a limit, and we cannot allow order to continue to be disturbed, as everyone can see has been happening."

September 3

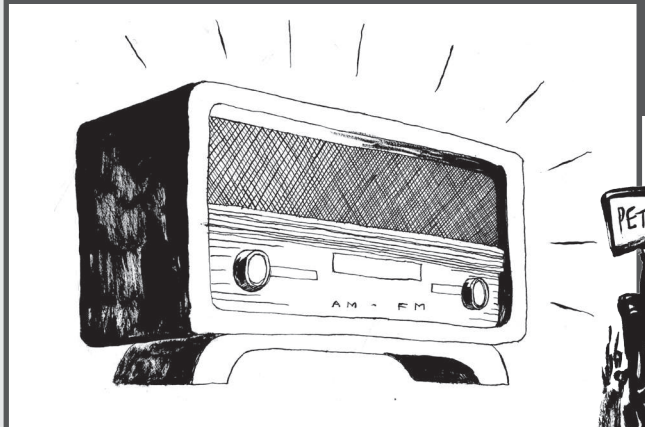
The National Strike Council responds to the president's report and ratifies its demand for public dialogue to come to a peaceful resolution of its demands.



September 7. The government proposes "public dialogue but without exhibitionism." In rejecting this proposal, the CNH holds a rally of 25 000 in the Tlatelolco Housing Project.



September 9. Rector Barros Sierra calls on the community to go back to class without renouncing the movement's aims.



September 13. A silent march is held along Reforma Avenue. 250 000 march in complete silence, using placards and gags over their mouths to express their rejection of being called "provocateurs and agitators."

September 18 and 19

At about 10 p.m., the army occupies University City and removes students from the premises, making students, parents, teachers, and workers retreat to the esplanade, arresting almost 500 persons.

The rector protests the military occupation, terming it "an excessive use of force" and a violation of university autonomy.

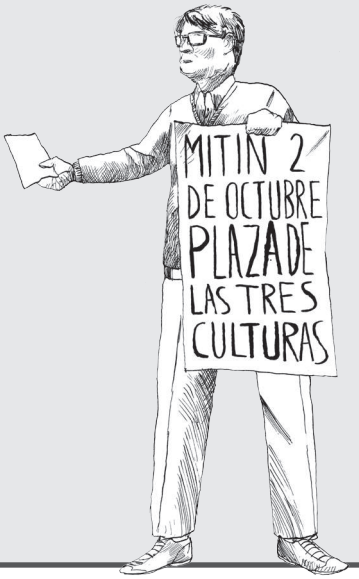
September 23

Barros Sierra resigns as rector citing the violence against the UNAM through the violation of its autonomy and the personal attacks and slanders hurled against him. He states that "young people's problems can only be resolved through education, never by force, violence, or corruption."

Numerous institutions and public figures make statements against his resignation and ask him to return to his post.

September 24

The army attacks the Casco de Santo Tomás IPN campus. Several young people are injured and the riot police damage the installations.



October 1

Attempts are made to renew certain research, administrative, and cultural activities in University City. The National Strike Council calls for a demonstration in the Three Cultures Plaza in Tlatelolco for the next day.

October 2

During the rally, a flare is launched from a helicopter, the signal to begin firing against the demonstrators, killing and injuring a large number of participants and arresting many others.

Alma Soto Zárraga*

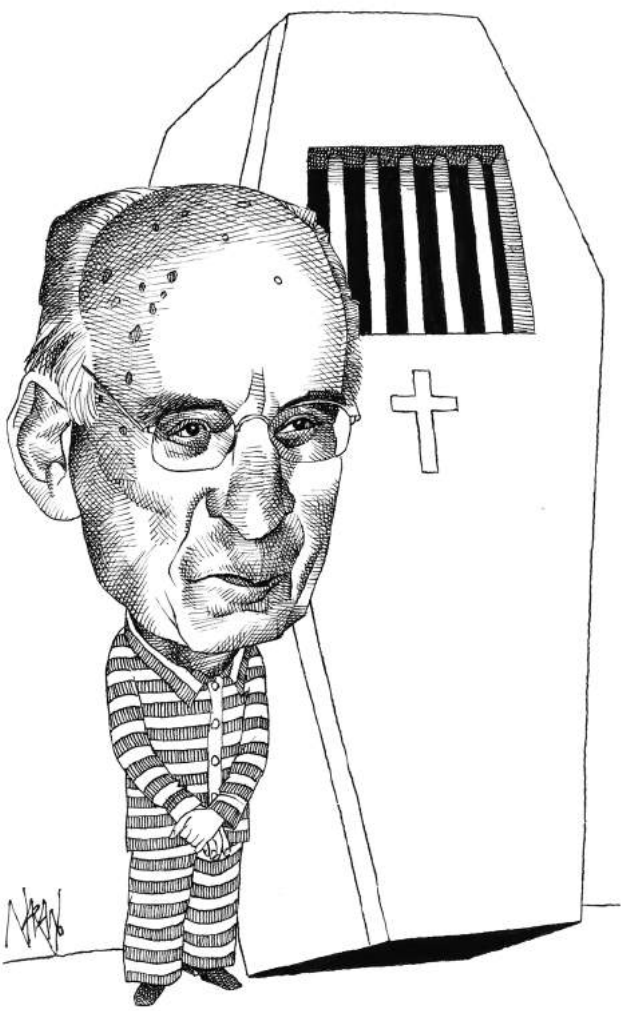
THE INFLUENCE OF '68 ON POLITICAL CARTOONISTS[1]

Fifty years after the massacre, no one has been arrested or sentenced for the bloody Tlatelolco events. Despite the attempts to silence further inquiry about this atrocious, authoritarian act, a wounded society made sure that the slogan "October 2 Will Never Be Forgotten!" would be written in the pages of history forever. The country's cartoonists joined in the work of keeping that memory alive without faltering and not knowing that they would transform entire generations of citizens.

Gustavo Díaz Ordaz could not tolerate jokes about his image in the press of the time. His evil temper became harsher and harsher, and then 1968 came around. In the year in which it was impossible to differ, the cartoonists differed big time.

The Artifices of Social Literacy: Before, During, and After 1968

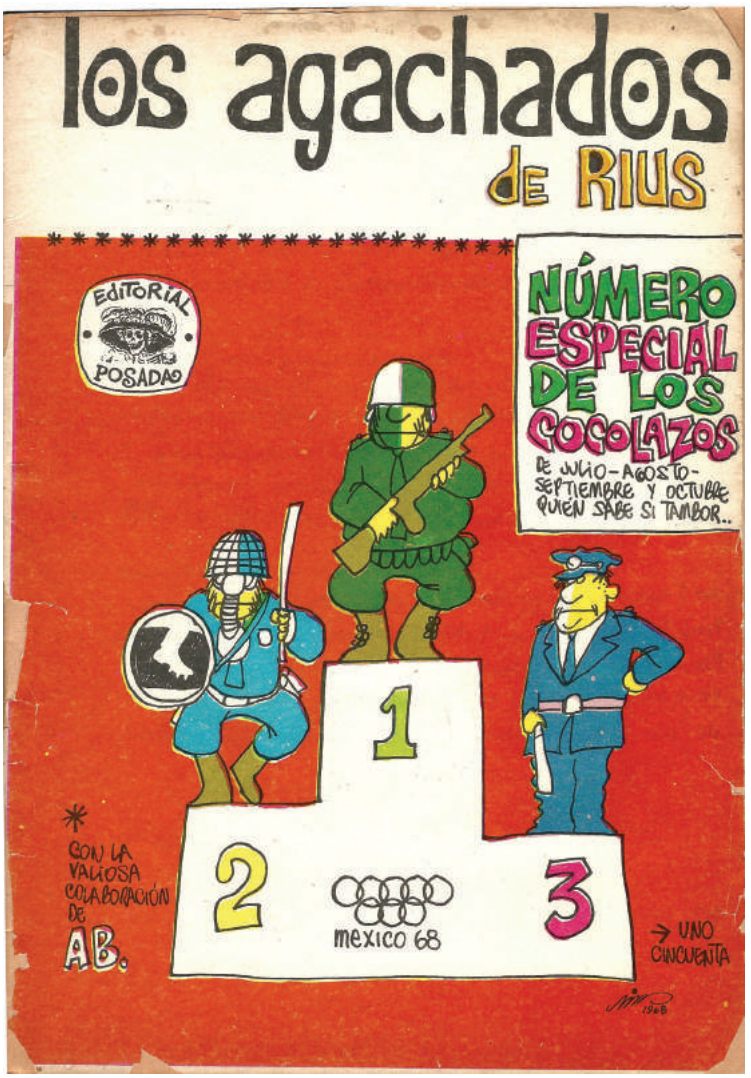
After the 1968 student movement broke out and was repressed, Mexican political caricature, which was already in transformation, took on new energy among cartoonists who exercised their craft critically, bravely, and with humor. They did not know that their work would serve to teach the citizenry political literacy, to change forms of behavior, and begin a democratizing movement



October 2, El Universal, October 2, 2003, 34.6 x 22.3 cm (ink on paper).

* Editor of the magazine *El Chamuco* (Old Nick); sotoamish@gmail.com.

Unless otherwise indicated, all caricatures are by Naranjo, with the permission of Tlatelolco University Cultural Center.



Gustavo Díaz Ordaz could not tolerate jokes about his image in the press of the time. His evil temper became harsher and harsher, and then 1968 came around.

in the country. However, years before, that neo-revolutionary nature of the cartoonist's trade had already been gestating.

A little before 1968, a group of young caricaturists —they could be called the Mid-Century Generation or the Generation of the Break— began publishing in independent media. But they also broke into the traditional media, breaking with the official vision, making an effort to be up to the challenge of the circumstances and infusing their sketches with the scathing criticism that that historic moment required. They drank from the fountain of Rius (Eduardo del Río [1934-2017]), whose cartoons, graphic jokes, and comic strips began appearing in 1954 in the humor magazine *Jajá* (Ha Ha); from then on, he stood out for his need to break with the official world, adulation, and ceremony. For writer Carlos Monsiváis, Rius was the only one who saw the comics as an instrument for political persuasion.

His characters were exaggerated stereotypes like Calzonzin ("emperor" in the Purépecha language); Doña Eme; the strongman Don Perpetuo del Rosal; or Venancio, the corner store owner; then there was San Garabato (Saint Squiggle), his comic strip's mythical town. All this portrayed and criticized what readers had never seen before. In 1957, Rius began to publish in the daily newspaper *Ovaciones*, thanks to a recommendation from his colleague Abel Quezada, of whom we will speak later. In 1963, he came up against presidential candidate Díaz Ordaz in the magazine *Política*. Then, in 1965, he published his celebrated *Los Supermachos* and in 1968, *Los Agachados* (The Bowed Ones).

Since his youth, Helioflores had published in the *Diario de Xalapa* (Jalapa Daily) and had dropped out of architecture school to do caricature full time. In 1964, he was publishing his cartoons in the newspaper *Novedades* (News) and was about to leave to study drawing on a scholarship at the School of Visual Arts in New York. Rius knew him from the cartoons he had sent when applying for a job at the magazine *Siempre!* (Always) and decided to contact him to invite him to contribute to the cartoon supplement of the magazine *Sucesos* (Events), *El Mitote Ilustrado* (The Illustrated Kerfuffle) that Rius was editing. That was how Helio began to send his cartoons from New York, thus beginning an epistolary relationship that would become friendship and give rise to joint publications like *La Garrapata, el azote de los bueyes* (The Tick, the Oxen's Scourge) after his return to Mexico.

Rogelio Naranjo, a member of the Mexican Communist Party (PCM) was an illustrator for union newspapers and the Mexican Workers' Party (PMT) and a collaborator of the "*El Gallo Ilustrado*" (The Illustrated Rooster) section

of the *El Día* (The Day) daily. In 1968, he contacted the Strike Committee leaders and became part of the movement, creating placards, banners, sketches, and engravings. Though he was anonymous in a crowd, Naranjo, as he is known, was proud to see his sketches on posters, leaflets, and stickers at demonstrations and student marches down Reforma Boulevard, since that was a way of circumventing censorship and reaching a wider audience. When events began in '68, he went to the university to look for a leader to tell him he was at the movement's disposal. He met with a mid-level leader, Romeo González, a student leader at the School of Political Sciences, who said he couldn't pay him. Naranjo responded that he wasn't there for money and said, "I'm an inciter of consciences; I like to be in these kinds of things and I'll do it for free!"

While the student movement proclaimed that it would "win the streets," the cartoonists were winning quarter pages away from the censors in the big newspapers. The editorial norm of the time was being a-critical or even reverent in the face of power. The task of the cartoonists was to use humor to beat censorship. Abel Quezada was one of the first who ventured an anti-solemnity position in the press. He systematically and humorously exposed the figures of post-revolutionary presidentialism using characters like "The Hooded One," "Don Money-Spender," "Matías the *Charro*" (Union Bureaucrat)," "The One-Dimensional Peasant," "The Charitable Lady of Las Lomas," "The Preventive Police," etc.

Abel Quezada was one of the first who ventured an anti-solemnity position in the press. He systematically and humorously exposed the figures of post-revolutionary presidentialism.

For Rius, Quezada's triumph was due to his "mocking, disrespectful humor," but he also published several cartoons about the student conflict before the attack in Tlatelolco. For example, his work "Words at Rest," published in the newspaper *Excélsior* on September 14, 1968, is about the March of Silence in response to the Díaz Ordaz administration's hollow rhetoric after days of uninterrupted repression. In the cartoon, two white doves (the symbol of the Olympics and peace), look at each other and say, "Silence is louder." Meanwhile, most newspapers barely reported the march and gave no precise figures about the number of demonstrators.[2] The cartoon seems subtle, but nothing made those in power more uncomfortable than a dissident in the press. The censorship of photographs —only one photographic report about the march was published in all the print media— was made up for as the political scenario was recreated in an eighth of a page.

On October 2, 1968, a few hours before the massacre, "La cultura en México" (Culture in Mexico), a supplement of the weekly *Siempre!* (Always), published "Seis puntos de vista sobre

el delito de la disolución social" (Six Points of View about the Crime of "Social Dissolution"). The article mentions a Quezada cartoon that suggests the resignation of university President Javier Barros Sierra (1966-1970).

After the massacre, confusion reigned in the print media, and expressions like "bloody encounter" or "fierce fighting" were the euphemisms to avoid saying "gunned down by the army" or asking the government for an explanation. But, *Excélsior* published one of the most memorable challenges to censorship and "official versions" of the era: a Quezada cartoon on October 3, 1968 that consisted of a black rectangle titled "Why?" For writer Carlos Monsiváis, that "had the force of a deluge of manifestos."

A Manifesto against Repression: *La Garrapata* (The Tick)

In his book *Los moneros de México* (Mexico's Cartoonists), Rius says that, "a little pissed off" about what had just happened on October 2, he and other colleagues began publishing the bi-weekly magazine *La Garrapata* (The Tick). Naranjo said it was a response to the massacre to denounce everything Díaz Ordaz was doing. This "bi-weekly of humor and bad habits" was co-edited by AB, Helioflores, Naranjo, and Rius, who called themselves the Politbureau or the Central Committee.

The first official issue was published November 8, 1968 sporting a cover by Rius. The headline was a question: "Do we have a legal or a right-wing regime?"[3] The editorial states, "Today, a solemn, tranquil, black, sinister day, you receive the first issue of *La Garrapata*." It cost four pesos, a rather high price for a publication at the time, but that guaranteed that it had no "official line" handed down to it because it contained no advertising and had no other income or subsidies of any kind.

Almost all the pages in the issues 1 to 13 made some mention of or vindicated the student movement. They referred to the witch-hunt against intellectuals and journalists, to the preponderant role of the army, to authoritarianism, or to the harassment of educational institutions like the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) or the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN).

This publication made it impossible for the memory of the movement to be erased, and later made it possible for broad sectors of the population to become politicized through political humor. It also turned laughter into a very popular political act, an exercise of dissidence to defeat the hitherto untouchable figures of presidentialism.

We should remember that at that time, the Ministry of the Interior controlled all publications. Yet another office distributed all the newsprint, so it was almost impossible to get out from under its control, since the authorities threatened the media with cutting off their supply of paper.

The magazine disturbed the regime so much that, in early 1969, an attempt was made to kidnap Rius; this was denounced in issue four of *La Garrapata*. On January 29, 1969, he was actually kidnapped and taken to the Toluca Snowy Mountain, where he was subjected to a simulated firing squad; it is public knowledge that he escaped from that alive because former President Lázaro Cárdenas del Río, a distant relative, intervened.

Never to Be Forgotten, El Universal, February 13, 2002, 35.1 x 22.1 cm (ink on paper).

Naranjo used to say that Rius remained frightened for a very long time. They had told him to do something else for a living and that if he did not, they would not only kill him but his entire family, of whom they had photos and information about the places they frequented. Despite everything, they decided to continue since, in their opinion, the only thing that could provide them with certain security was that the people threatening them were more frightened than the magazine's publishers. So, they decided to continue publishing and making denunciations even more vigorously.

Using the slogan "Neither blackmail nor threats will make us improve the quality of this magazine," they dropped the price to three pesos and then to 2.60 pesos, and made it a weekly that came out on Wednesdays! They fought to keep it on newspaper stands as they commented and condemned the wars in the world —with Vietnam as the center focus— and U.S. intervention in national politics, as well as the constant Mexican government repression against its own populace.

The jokes continued to center on the students who had become political prisoners or the torture they suffered under interrogation in the basements of the Attorney General's Office secret service. Mentions of disappeared detainees and political prisoners were a constant, as these practices were common during and after the movement.

The magazine continued to exercise furious criticism until issue 32, when, after stating in the editorial that threats and political or official pressure had had no impact, the editors announced the end of the magazine's first era. By that time, *La Garrapata* had become the breeding ground for young, talented political cartoonists like Vadillo, Checo Valdés, Efrén, Feggo, Sergio Arau, El Fisgón, Alán, Rocha, and Jis.

The magazines *Política* and *¿Por qué?* (Why), also critical media, closed due to government pressure through the paper monopoly Productora e Importadora de Papel (PIPSA), and also because they were raided and their collaborators persecuted by the police. On April 20, 1970, *La Garrapata* came out again, with an editorial denouncing this same official pressure mechanism.

By 1971, after the June 10 massacre, Helioflores stated in an interview that when the shock troops known as the Falcons went out to kill students, the city's mayor said, "The Falcons don't exist." So, he did a cartoon in which a drunkard is holding on to a lamppost, saying, "Alcohol doesn't exist."[4] He took it to the newspaper *Novedades*: they liked it, but it was never published. Censorship was very harsh at the time, and particularly in that newspaper.

Implacable against Díaz Ordaz, Naranjo parodied the logo of Johnnie Walker whiskey using the president's face, emulating a dandy walking seriously and very elegantly over coffins, to remember the 1968 attack. This image was reproduced in the poster for the film *1968* in August 1973.

The Solidarity Movement After the 1985 Earthquake

The committed work of these and other cartoonists in different media (magazines like *Proceso*; newspapers like *La Jornada* and *Unomásuno*) also reflected the exceptional public solidarity in the face of the Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) administration's incapacity after the September 19, 1985 earthquake. One of the results of that movement was the September 19 Union of Neighbors and Earthquake Victims, whose Cultural Commission carried out several artistic activities as a form of resistance. One was the publication of Rafael "El Fisgón" Barajas's first book, *Sobras escogidas* (Selected Leftovers), a large collection of cartoons about the earthquake.

In his cartoon "Discovery," Naranjo denounced the clandestine jails and special dungeons discovered both in the offices of the Attorney General and those of the Mexico City judicial police when one of their buildings collapsed in the earthquake. This exposed the methods being used to obtain "witness testimony" to implicate innocent people.

"No... how could I forget?" *In Perpetuity, El Universal,* June 13, 2004, 34.2 x 22.4 cm (ink on paper).

The Didactic Comic Strip and The Spawns of Neoliberalism

Naranjo was a founding political cartoonist at the magazine *Proceso*; as such, he had a full page to himself. His criticism disturbed President Carlos Salinas (1988-1994) so much that he wanted him fired; so his work ended up being put on the last page, where it became an emblem of the publication until his death.

Helguera and El Fisgón published *El sexenio me da risa* (The Administration Makes Me Laugh), a kind of didactic comic book that emulated Rius's work. The book began a series of comic books that included *El sexenio ya no me da risa* (The Administration No Longer Makes Me Laugh); *El sexenio me da pena* (The Administration Embarrasses Me); and *El sexenio se me hace chiquito* (The Administration Seems Short to Me).[5] Among other topics, they all criticized those in power and dealt with the problems facing the educational institutions and student movements of the following eras.

In February 1994, Helguera, El Fisgón, and Rius, together with the Posada publishing house, created the political humor magazine *El Chahuistle, la enfermedad de los nopales* (Blight, the Disease of Nopales), which ran to 41 issues. After adding Patricio and then José Hernández, they abandoned the project in 1995 because publisher Fernando Mendizábal R. defrauded them and kept the rights to the magazine's name. As cartoonist Hernández said, he continued publishing it as an "apocryphal *Chahuistle*" with other sketch artists and content.

The bi-weekly *El Chahuistle* gave its readership another renewed tool for politicization. It became very popular

Though he was anonymous in a crowd, Naranjo, as he is known, was proud to see his sketches on posters, leaflets, and stickers at demonstrations and student marches.

among university students and staff at the time of the January 1994 Zapatista uprising, a very common topic in the magazine's pages. The project was very similar to that of *La Garrapata*: confronting authoritarianism, censorship, the army's violation of individual rights, the crisis of credibility in the institutions, and the frank decline in the presidential image due to the cases of corruption and impunity associated with it.

It published comics whose characters portrayed the police practice of torture and their cynicism and impunity: "Las aventuras del Sargento Mike Goodness y el Cabo Chocorrol" (The Adventures of Sergeant Mike Goodness and Corporal Chocolate-Cake-Roll), by Fisgón, and the ups and downs of recurring characters in his books like La Beba Toloache (Love Potion Babe) or El Charro Machorro (The Macho Cowboy) and El Deputado Sí (Congressman Yes), all neoliberal prototypes. *La cocina de Don Chepino* (Don Chepino's Kitchen) and *Don Quijotillo Quitamanchas and Ancho Panza* (Little Don Quixote Stain Remover and Wide Belly),[6] by Patricio, also reflected the political class's lack of character and the poverty and ingeniousness of the lowest rungs of society.

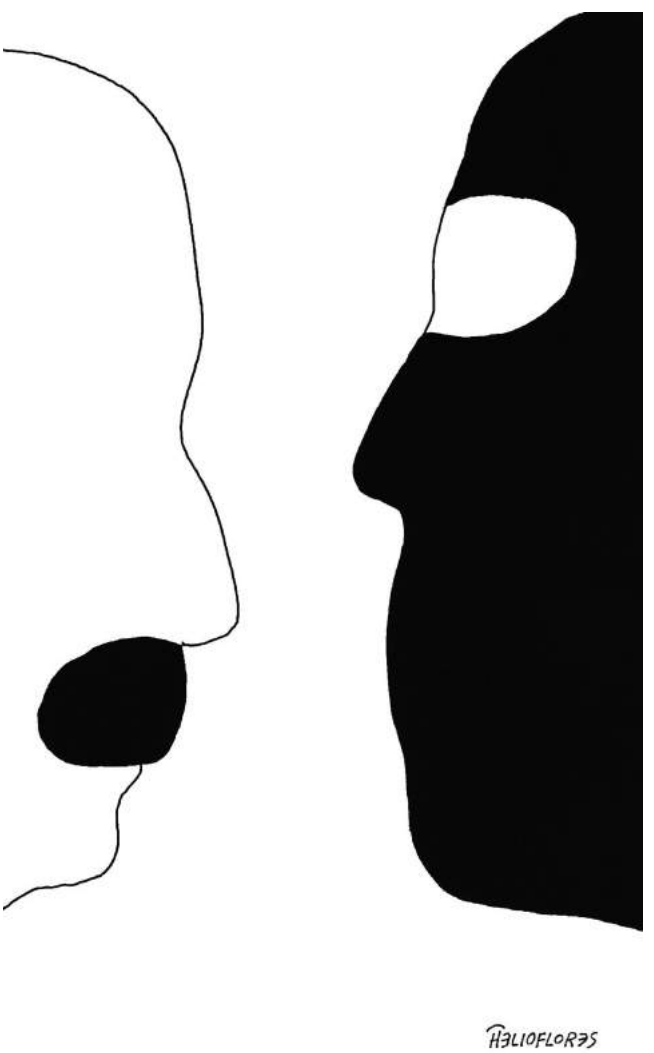
On February 25, 1996, the first founders and collaborators of *El Chahuistle* published the first issue of *El Chamuco y los hijos del Averno* (Old Nick and the Sons of Hell). In its first era, they edited it collectively and continued to publish the most savage cartoons possible at the time. They insisted on creating these humorous political satire magazines for different reasons, such as feeding the resistance to the neoliberal offensive (aggressive budget cuts for university education, the imposition of tuition fees, and union busting, among many other measures taken to dismantle the welfare state).

Also in 1996, Helguera and Hernández went to work at the weekly magazine *Proceso* to illustrate its last page, which the great Fontanarrosa had made iconic with his *Boogie, el Aceitoso* (Greasy Boogie), a tradition begun by Naranjo. The pair founded the section "Mono sapiens" (Monkey/Cartoonist Sapiens). *Los hijos del Averno* continued to publish daily cartoons in the national press, but it was in *El Chamuco* where they would put out their most daring work.

Many more creators contributed to *El Chamuco*, also keeping alive the memory of the '68 events in cartoons by Ahumada, Luis Fernando, Noé, Jans, Rapé, Jis and Trino, Vico, Cintia Bolio, among others. An editorial dedicated to October 2 read,

> Some brainy theoreticians say that '68 was a milestone in the modern history of Mexico, but the truth is that it was a beat-the-shit-outta-you-stone.[7] However, we would have to admit that after the student movement of Mexico and the world, everything changed. Before, the status quo was unmovable: it was impossible to question the president; the United States was a huge power; and nobody could talk about sex. Now, however, nobody questions the sexual potency of the president of the United States.

The last line alludes to the sex scandal involving Bill Clinton, who was on the cover of that commemorative issue, published October 4, 1998.



Excélsior published one of the most memorable challenges to censorship and "official versions" of the era: on October 3, 1968 Quezada cartoon that consisted of a black rectangle titled, "Why?"

El Chamuco filled its pages with events like the 1999 UNAM strike to change tuition regulations, or Andrés Manuel López Obrador, then mayor of Mexico City, being stripped of immunity and having his political rights taken away in 2004 to prevent him from running for president.

In November 2000, before businessman/rancher Vicente Fox took office as president (2000-2006), the first era of *El Chamuco* came to an end. Its issue 116 began the second era on February 14, 2007.

Other Fruits of '68

By presidential decree, on November 27, 2001, the Special Prosecutor's Office for Social and Political Movements of the Past was founded. Its only achievement after four years of work was that on June 30, 2006, Luis Echeverría Álvarez, Diaz Ordaz's minister of the interior and president at the time of the "Falcon Attack," was placed under house arrest on charges of genocide, homicide, and the forced disappearance of university activist Héctor Jaramillo. That was the first and only time that the Mexican justice system has ordered the arrest of a former president for these reasons.

Helguera and El Fisgón say that the first weeks of the Felipe Calderón administration (2006-2012) showed what was considered its media policy: journalists Ricardo Rocha, José Gutiérrez Vivó and Carmen Aristegui, whose popular program was cancelled, all came under pressure. For its part, *El Chamuco* continued publishing uninterruptedly despite serious administrative problems. For this reason, the cartoonists decided to stay away from all kinds of businessmen and to manage the company themselves. Despite these economic adversities, the magazine's small team of collaborators and founders continued sketching without pay, or charging only symbolic amounts, donating their work to the cause.

In 2011, Naranjo gave the UNAM his life's work and made an enormous donation to its collection of political caricature: 10 600 drawings, including political cartoons, posters, erotic drawings, and comic strips, to be collected, conserved, and disseminated. El Fisgón said that Naranjo was the first to systematically touch on the president in his cartoons, the one who persistently and consistently attacked the office; and none of them, including Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, Luis Echeverría, José López Portillo, Miguel de la Madrid, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Ernesto Zedillo, Vicente Fox, Felipe Calderón, and Enrique Peña Nieto, escaped his pen.

To a great extent, this artist ensured that the '68 insurgency was reflected daily against the murkiness of officialdom.

To return to President Peña Nieto when he was still a candidate, in 2012, he had his first big encounter with the real electorate at the Ibero-American University. He stated that the use of force in Atenco had been necessary, and for that reason, the students pursued him on the campus, questioning him about that repression.[8] That was when the YoSoy132 (IAm132) student movement was born,

Magazine cover showing a play on words: in Spanish the word "vota" (vote), as in "Vote for the PRI," sounds exactly the some as "bota" (throw [the new PRI] out).

Political caricature has prepared the ground for freedom of expression thanks to the founders of *La Garrapata*, but also to their disciples and heirs, who forged creative resistance.

which was widely covered in the social media and sought to stop the mainstream media war that was trying to discredit the students who had questioned Peña. Despite all efforts, a new electoral fraud put Enrique Peña Nieto in the Los Pinos official residence, returning the PRI to office.

Repression stained the inauguration itself, since on December 1 of that year hundreds of young people were corralled in streets, arrested without reason, and jailed without proof. The onslaught was compared to what happened in '68 when similarly, fear and disorganization reigned, but it also gave rise to new forms of resistance: lawyers defended the detainees in solidarity; marches were organized; lightening rallies were held; and different actions were convened on social media, showing that society was no longer the same as in 1968. Censorship was no longer possible and the criminal abuse of authority and force were clearly revealed.

On September 26, 2014, a group of students from the Ayotzinapa normal school mobilized to procure buses to transport them to Mexico City. They intended to participate in the march to commemorate October 2, 1968. They did not know that they would become the center of a similar tragedy. After a confrontation with the police about the take-over of the buses, shots rang out, there were arrests and dead, and the number became clear: 43 students had disappeared. Immediately after they were attacked, rumors became rampant. The caricaturists took on board the demand for their return alive, publishing cartoons about the event and reminding the public that in 1968 the university students and ordinary people had been at the mercy of the army.

The '68 graphics are so deeply rooted that the cover of the July 4, 2016 issue of *El Chamuco* was a Hernández cartoon pointing out the Peña Nieto administration repression against the teachers and civilians of Nochixtlán, Oaxaca, who were demonstrating against the educational reform.

Comic strip artist Augusto Mora's work stands out; in his didactic, documented way of narrating the student movements, he has created two graphic novels, indispensable for the new generations to be able to understand the transcendence of the cultural, political, and social heroism of 1968. The first novel, *En busca de una voz* (In Search of a Voice), won the comic division Prize for Short Story, Short Film Subject, and Comic at the second Memorial for '68 hosted by the UNAM Tlatelolco University Cultural Center in 2015.

In 2016, Mora published *Grito de victoria* (Victory Cry), a graphic novel dealing with the recent history of social movements in Mexico. It reconstructs two events separated by 40 years: the 1971 Falcon Attack and #1DMX, the march against Enrique Peña Nieto's inauguration.

After Naranjo's death in 2016, Rius stated, "We had to put ourselves on the line so that those who came after could enjoy a little more freedom of the press. They called Rogelio, Helioflores, and me the Three Musketeers. . . . We

put an end to the myth of the figure of the president and Our Lady of Guadalupe. The only thing left is the Army."

Peña Nieto (2012-2018) did not change military strategy. The result was hundreds of reports of human rights violations, multiple murders of journalists, and unexplained massacres like Ayotzinapa, Tlatlaya, Tanhuato, and many others that go unreported.

After Rius's death on August 8, 2017, all over the country countless events were held honoring his humorous, didactic work, and his book *Los presidentes me dan Peña* (I Feel Sorry for Presidents) was published posthumously.[9]

On December 15, 2017, the Senate approved the Internal Security Act clearly intending to legalize the presence of the army in the streets, given the immanent presidential elections, to guarantee control, surveillance, and military police participation in the life of the citizenry.

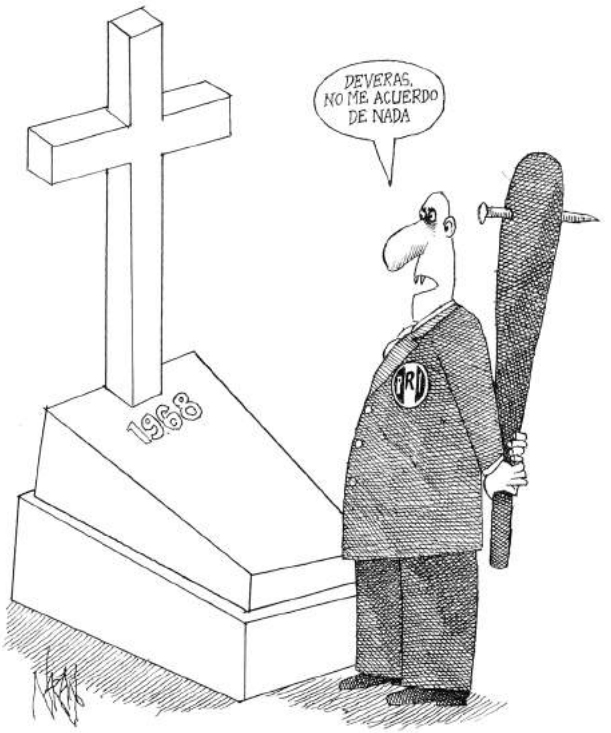
Comic strip artist and illustrator Luis Fernando Enríquez published *La pirámide cuarteada: Evocaciones de 1968* (The Cracked Pyramid: Evocations of 1968) in October 2018. This autobiographical novel targets a young readership and deals with how "an ordinary young man" reaches new awareness when he sees the country through this movement.

Rius used to say that you couldn't change the country at the point of a cartoon, but that there was no reason not to try. Political caricature has prepared the ground for freedom of expression thanks to the founders of *La Garrapata*, but also to their disciples and heirs who forged creative resistance, journalism that goes hand in hand with activism, and have fostered the training of political cadre and broader civic participation.

The sketch artists of today may not be hitting the brick wall of censorship, but they do have to deal with the insolence and cynicism of Mexican politicians who, despite being caricaturized, do not change their discourse and do launch veiled threats when they see themselves portrayed in a cartoon.

However, society has been changed by seeing its politicians ridiculed and deformed through the eyes of these cartoonists. Political party members have changed due to mobilization and social protest, the forging of communities, and social media activism.

Despite a vigorous offensive by the right wing, the current decade has seen civil society and transformative movements like the Zapatistas and feminists put on the agenda perspectives and reflections about the national moral, political, and economic crisis. Hopefully, caricature will remain at the side of all of this in order to sketch out a better road ahead. VM



"I really don't remember anything." *Amnesia, El Universal*, October 2, 2012, 30.4 x 22.9 cm (ink on paper).

Notes

1 A Spanish-language version of this interview was published in the book *Memoria en pie. 1968-2018. 50 años de resistencia artística, crítica, independiente y popular* (Mexico City: Tintable/Secretaría de Cultura, 2018).

2 Official sources said there were 180 000 participants; unofficial and journalistic sources cited 300 000 to half a million.

3 In the original Spanish, "*¿Tenemos un régimen de derecha o de derecho?*" is a play on words because "*de derecha*" means right-wing and "*de derecho*" means "legal." [Translator's Note.]

4 Another play on words, since in Spanish, the word for "falcons" is "halcones" (with a silent "h") and the word for "alcohol" is "alcoholes." [Translator's Note.]

5 Yet another play on words: in the original, "se me hace chiquito" also refers to the sphincter tightening in fear. A loose translation would be, "The administration makes me shit myself." [Translator's Note.]

6 Ancho Panza (Wide Belly) is a take-off on the name of Don Quixote's companion, Sancho Panza. [Translator's Note.]

7 In Spanish, "milestone" is "*parteaguas*", and the authors use the invented word "*partemadres*" in the original, alluding to the phrase in Mexican Spanish, "*partirte la madre*," meaning approximately "beat the shit out of you." [Translator's Note.]

8 In 2006, when Peña Nieto was governor of the State of Mexico, he sent police into the town of Atenco, State of Mexico, to put an end to demonstrations involving activists and the students supporting them around a local issue. The brutal beatings administered by the police were filmed live, as were the arrests of dozens of people, some of whom remained in prison for years afterward. [Editor's Note.]

9 Another play on words: the word for "feeling sorry [for someone]" is "*pena*," and here, Rius deliberately uses the outgoing president's last name, "Peña," instead. [Translator's Note.]

Abril Castillo*

MEXICAN ILLUSTRATION, 1968-2018

A Conversation with Fabricio Vanden Broeck and Éricka Martínez

Did Mexico's 1968 student movement point the way forward for art and culture in our country? Have we taken it upon ourselves to forget it? What was the significance of illustration in the middle of the last century? What links up politics, society, and culture? Can we understand one without the others?

To answer all these questions, two very experienced, well-known Mexican illustrators offer us a complex picture that, paradoxically, poses even more questions about Mexico's graphic identity. They talk about how complicated it is today to define illustration, how it has developed in the different decades of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and how this relates to social movements, that is, to living history.

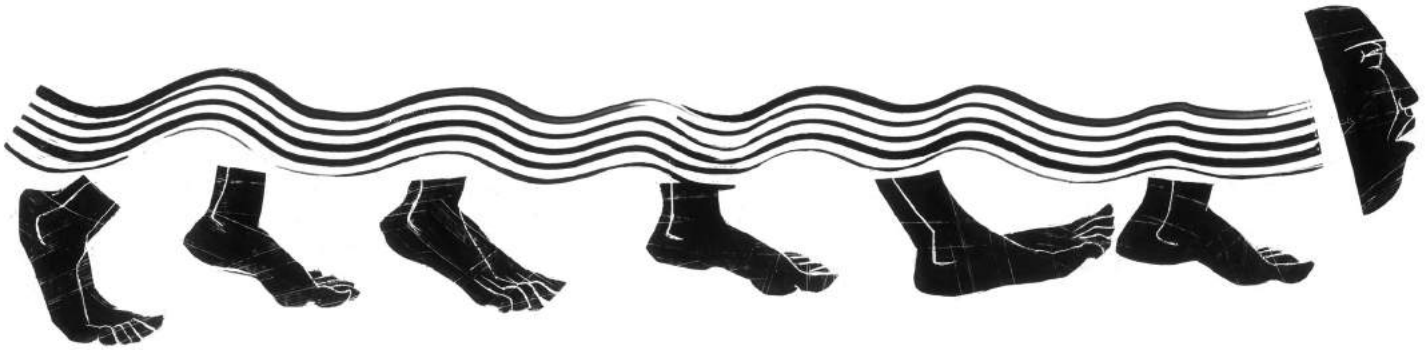
Saying "No" to Repression, Mauricio Gómez Morin.

1968, a Movement that Broke the Mold

Fabricio Vanden Broeck's mother was a professor at the UNAM School of Political Sciences at the time. He was 12 and remembers,

> A lot of students paraded through my house and the ambiance was high-spirited. I remember it as a huge party. After October 2, Televisa began spreading its tentacles and brutalizing the audience with its programming, toeing the government line, I suppose. That lasted ten years or more. The country's artistic and cultural development was brutally cut short and in

* Editor, writer, and illustrator; havrill@gmail.com.



Fabricio Vanden Broeck.

general fell into a mediocre patronage system that we are still partially subject to.

For Fabricio (http://fabriciovandenbroeck.com/#display), 1968 changed an entire cultural universe, not just illustration. It broke the mold and brought new paradigms, partly thanks to the musical explosion that began in England with the appearance of groups like The Beatles. He says,

> Surrealism, until then called "kitsch," seeped into pop culture. People recovered the margins for going beyond the stage and expressing themselves with album covers designed by irreverent visual artists like Peter Max, Andy Warhol, or George Dunning. That's where the possibility of contemporary, "*d'auteur*" illustration emerged.

But, who were the forebears of Mexican graphics and how have they influenced artists and their relationship to social causes, even if their work is not editorial or a textbook or a narrative? For Vanden Broeck, José Guadalupe Posada, Leopoldo Méndez, and Gabriel Fernández Ledezma are the main influences in the graphics of the '68 student movements. He does not think, however, that they influenced contemporary Mexican illustration very much, with one exception: the work of Mauricio Gómez Morin, whose work does reflect those influences.

For her part, Éricka Martínez thinks that the 1968 graphics took a lot from the "official design" for the Olympic Games, that were "much more bourgeois," with references that more clearly came from the United States, but with Mexico adding aspects of pop culture, concretely Wixárika art.[1] "That repetition of lines that lasted into the 1970s was the same as Mexico '68, which also was related to the Wixárika "God's eyes" that the students use to mock that [official] aesthetic. Take it, appropriate it, turn it into something else."

Éricka points out that publishing houses like Siglo XXI (Twenty-First Century) or the Fondo de Cultura Económica (Fund for Economic Culture) and social movements throughout Latin America continued to use these design elements in their own graphics.

> '68 had an impact not only on design, but it also nourished all the arts. In theater, for example, CLETA was born with the Cisneros brothers;[2] in Uruguay, [the] El Galpón [theater group]. Groups sprang up all over Latin America involving theater and painting . . . and music! So many groups doing protest music emerged after '68. What happened that year in Latin America was fundamental for all the arts: architecture, painting, design. The literary boom began. In pedagogy, prominent currents wanted children to be freer, to learn how to plant crops, to reason, and for their voices to begin to be heard. I don't know if it had that much of a repercussion in illustration.

Mexico took in an enormous number of exiled Bolivians, Argentineans, Uruguayans, Chileans, and Brazilians. For Éricka Martínez, it is undeniable, for example, that Carlos Palleiro's presence in Mexico defined design to a great extent in this country, giving preponderance to the committed, revolutionary work characteristic of exile.[3] This was a determining factor in the work of future gen-

For Vanden Broeck, José Guadalupe Posada, Leopoldo Méndez, and Gabriel Fernández Ledezma are the main influences in the graphics of the '68 student movements.

Éricka Martínez thinks that the 1968 graphics took a lot from the "official design" for the Olympic Games, but adding aspects of pop culture, concretely Wixárika art.

erations of creators, something that can be observed in the book covers of the Ministry of Education's free textbooks and those of the National Council for Education, the Fondo de Cultura Económica, and Siglo XXI. The last two distribute throughout all of Latin America and have been the bearers of that graphic tradition inherited "not from the Taller de Gráfica Popular [José Posada's Popular Graphic Workshop], but rather from the graphics of '68, that lasted into the 1970s," explains Éricka Martínez.

This kind of graphic design can be found in publishing, logos, and in the collective work and artists' groups from that period with a leftwing focus, like Imprenta Madero, headed by Vicente Rojo. Éricka says,

> He collaborated on many covers of great books. He was a great designer. After him, we saw Rafael López Castro, Germán Montalvo, and Mauricio Gómez Morin, who is very important because he belongs to the last generations who really used design to express ideas with social content; later this intention faded away.

For Vanden Broeck, "Mauricio Gómez Morin's images link up identity-wise to the tradition of the Taller de Gráfica Popular. For my generation, experimentation, structuring a personal language, and references to the Mexican visual universe have been central concerns."

Martínez, for her part, emphasizes that the Taller de Gráfica Popular dealt with issues like the post-revolutionary peasant struggle, inequality, and poverty, and in '68 began another stage: one that involved urban struggles and young people's demands the world over. This made it a more urban, immediate aesthetic, heir to certain techniques and the popular roots already present in the Taller:

> The Taller de Gráfica Popular aesthetic strove for formality. This contrasts with that of '68, which emphasized the immediacy of events and was obsessed with certain topics. The "gorillas," military tanks, chains,

Mauricio Gómez Morin.

No More Agression!, Francisco Moreno Capdevila, 1968, 59.5 x 87 cm (poster, silk screen on paper), UNAM University Contemporary Art Museum Collection, donated by Arnulfo Aquino in 2002.

> gagged women, and repressed students spontaneously emerged from the San Carlos and La Esmeralda workshops, in the clandestine workshops that invited artists, designers, non-designers, cartoonists, and everyone else to join in. This knowledge, these skills, were put at the service of the movement in '68 and expressed them very economically, using stencils, silk screening, and printing on reconstituted paper; this gave form to what we would later recognize as an aesthetic of the period.

Vanden Broeck reiterates that contemporary illustration is not linked to the Taller de Gráfica Popular or the Mexican School of Painting, in the first place because illustration *d'auteur*, which has a dynamic relationship with the text and the search for a style,

> is something that has come to us from abroad, and the social movements of the 1960s in Mexico put a priority on political and social demands, but graphic expressions were secondary, more collective, and anonymous. Observed from afar, they seem coherent and compact, and we like thinking that they were orchestrated. But I don't believe that. On the other hand, at the end of the 1970s, groups like Suma or the Non-group appeared, with a collective intent, but then came the 1980s, and they disappeared to make way for individualities, in harmony with the times.

He says that, before '68, each publishing house, like Fernández Editores or Trillas, had a full-time, versatile, anonymous sketch artist, who one day would do a technical drawing, the next, a realistic drawing, and the next, a narrative drawing. "That versatility was what was looked for in an illustrator," says Fabricio. "The name was irrelevant. No credit was given, and the idea was that the sketch artist's personality was neutralized to make way for a style that combined with everything. A universal style."

After '68, illustrators appeared from advertising agencies, "good for everything and for nothing in particular, according to advertising needs," says Fabricio. And in the 1970s the free textbook project reared its head again, involving several illustrators and artists.

Another key moment was when the early 1980s economic crisis led to closed borders: this forced Mexican illustrators to develop a dynamic of their own. Beginning with the first International Children and Young Adults Book Fair in 1981, small, more dynamic independent publishing houses began to spring up. Éricka tells us that, before that, there were not many children's illustrators:

> There were children's literature collections, but nothing like today. At that time, they used painting or engraving. The fair included publishing houses, but few of them focused on children's books. Some had a division that did things for children, like Trillas. The Ministry of Education (SEP) produced some, and some collections existed in which painters participated as illustrators, like Diego Rivera or José Clemente Orozco. In the 1980s, a series of books illustrated by cartoonists like Helioflores, Naranjo, and Palomo came out: the SEP Books from the Corner collection, with huge printing runs of titles like *Matías y el pastel de fresas* (Matthias and the Strawberry Cake), *Patatús* (Pass Out), and *La abeja haragana* (The Lazy Bee).

As Fabricio says, today, illustration tries to establish a dialogue between the text and specific topics. For him, a before and an after exist in the craft in Mexico, marked by the appearance of the magazine *Letras libres* (Free Letters), where he collaborated for 14 years as art director,

Carlos Palleiro's presence in Mexico was determinant in the work of future generations of creators and, can be observed in the book covers of the Ministry of Education's free textbooks.

a relatively new position for the country. Before, to a certain extent, magazines were reserved for artists' contributions: "The editor would go to an artist's workshop, pick up sketches, and use them to create images for the magazine; but for me, that's not illustration as we understand it today."

In a paper presented at a conference in Colombia, Fabricio states, "The first generations of contemporary Mexican illustrators look at and deal with the issue of cultural identity to a greater or lesser degree. They look to their own cultural roots to construct a personality that distinguishes them from what was coming in from Europe and the United States." However, what is considered illustration today is not at all closely related to what was being done in the 1960s. "Perhaps, [there were] a few exceptions, like the covers by Vicente Rojo, and [only] up to a certain point, because while in principle that was linked to the content, he did it freely. The illustrator has to dialogue with a text by contributing something."

Martínez emphasizes that the Taller de Gráfica Popular dealt with the post-revolutionary peasant struggle, inequality, and poverty, and in '68 works that involved urban movements and young people's demands the world over.

Promenading in the Ocean, Éricka Martínez, año. Cartel. Watercolor, 40 x 20 cm.

Something was also lost in the 1990s. Éricka Martínez states that during the dictatorships, the relationship between social issues and art was very close. In that sense, the era after the death of Che Guevara, the Cuban Revolution, and the rest of the Latin American social movements fostered art in which design became a tool ruled by certain aesthetic guidelines, but that also marked stages and styles both in illustration and in painting. However, the "children" of the dictatorships lost that voice, and "in the 1990s, social consciousness clearly was getting lost. The Televisa generation was brought up with other kinds of art and no commitment remained like the kind that existed after '68."

Fabricio, for his part, points to another important moment for design in Mexico: the appearance of the newspaper *Reforma* in the 1990s, which was

> a proposal by young people who greatly appreciated design, making for a newspaper that was much easier to read and more interesting visually. I think that was a golden moment that lasted from the beginning to the end of the 1990s, a very important period that led to the appearance of *Letras libres* (Free Letters), a magazine that marked a difference with what had been done before in terms of publishing illustration. It was the spiritual heir to *Vuelta*, but with a more contemporary idea, closer to *The New Yorker* or *The New Republic*, to cite just two examples. One of my proposals was that each article should have its own illustrator, something quite polemical at the time. People didn't question that a magazine could publish different writers, but they did question that there be several illustrators. That proposal was very criticized during the first year of *Letras libres*, and later, it was not only widely accepted, but became the example to follow for many other magazines.

"We are living in an era in which the individual is always at the center of everything. Have we forgotten how to see the other?" FVB

For Éricka Martínez, today, there is no commitment between design and illustration and social issues, or, if there is any, it is momentary. This can be seen in how events of the magnitude of Ayotzinapa take place: "When something so brutal happens, groups and movements emerge that try to bring together designers and painters to do something interesting that will have an impact, but that's as far as it goes until it fades away."

In contrast, when I asked Fabricio about these social initiatives, he responds with another question: "Is it a vocation of illustration? Don't you run the risk of trivializing such a painful, profoundly devastating issue with images that seek the aesthetic? Because, if we're honest about it, that kind of initiative serves more to promote the illustrator than to create awareness or help a cause."

We want to help from our own firing line, but we cannot find the way. Even though the intent is never to do damage, we are living in an era in which the individual is always at the center of everything. Have we forgotten how to see the other?

Fabricio notes a fourth generation of illustrators in Mexico that emerged in the first decade of the twenty-first century, characterized precisely with a greater group consciousness and less interest in searching for roots and references to themselves: "Their diverse proposals are the result of an influence of global trends, with a particular accent on the Asian and the use of digital techniques. This generation focuses on personalizing trends created in other latitudes, and today, the illustrators of the world often look like each other, wherever they're from."

Up to what point is illustration seen as a minor art? What graphic expressions speak to us today about the social? Do we remain silent or are we using media that are not within everyone's reach? In the twenty-first century, who are the ones breaking the system with their discourse and forms? What graphic revolutions are about to happen? Can we continue looking through the lenses of 1968 to see the future? Is now the future?

"Hypocritical, murdering government!, Men die. Ideas don't," Jorge Pérez Vega, 1968, 36 x 54 cm (poster, linoleum print on paper), UNAM University Contemporary Art Museum Collection, donated by Arnulfo Aquino in 2002.

People are not doing the same thing young people did in 1968, that's true. But so many things have changed. Undoubtedly, today's market is not the fertile ground of the 1970s, and printed publications have been in crisis for over a decade. But even so, the book publishing industry forges ahead, above all with independent, underground initiatives.

And what happens if what we do not see is overshadowed by the new "official design"? Where is the democratization of expression, freedom? Will those voices come in fanzine format, in hybrids, on the Internet, in a group, in do-it-yourself, in quality, responsible production, and in new ways of publishing and consuming?

Asking ourselves about illustration, about the work of those of us who labor in it, seems like it continues to be a question about identity. Perhaps, yes, we should begin to forget what separates us from others in times and ways of doing, and instead embrace our common ground, the transversalities. Perhaps we are everything all at the same time. What quality illustration tries to be: at the same time both form and content. VM

Notes

1 This is art by the Wixárika or Wirrárika people, incorrectly called "Huichol," who live in parts of Jalisco and Nayarit states. [Editor's Note.]
2 The Center for Free Theatrical and Artistic Experimentation (CLETA) was created in Mexico in 1973. See more about this at https://www.proceso.com.mx/130231/cleta-teatro-popular. [Editor's Note.]
3 Palleiro is a graphic designer who, after being exiled from Uruguay, came to live in Mexico, where he has been very prolific.

The Right to Nutritious Food (hand embroidered with silk thread).

William H. Beezley*

Indigenous Women Embroider Their Rights in the Shadow of '68[1]

This essay reflects on the repercussions the 1968 movement had on Mexican daily life for the next 50 years. One word is key in this effort of retrospective understanding five decades on: Tlatelolco. With regard to Tlatelolco's political consequences, we can look at the efforts made all this time to democratize Mexico's political system, above all the mechanisms for electing government officials, as well as in the proliferation of programs and protest and struggle activities against repression through culture in film, music, or literature. Most people agree that electoral democracy now exists, although of course the significance of the word "democracy" goes way beyond voting.

One important aspect of democracy in the country is the recognition of women's rights, the first of which emanate from the 1917 Constitution and its multiple amendments. Outstanding among them is women's right to vote, won in 1953.

In 1968, women students at the UNAM and other universities and women in other spheres of life played im-

* Professor at the University of Arizona; beezley@email.arizo na.edu.
Photos courtesy of Semillas'Fund.

Ernestina Gil Herrera, Josefina Sánchez Figueroa, Antonia Morales Méndez, Caritina Bertha López Sánchez, Ninfa Anallely Martínez Rodríguez, Natalia Nava Olaya, and Zenaida Carrera Aquino, from Coyomeapan, Puebla, participated in the embroidery project.

In Coyomeapan, indigenous women formed a collective to embroider 27 pieces to inform the other women in their community about their political, human, and civil rights.

portant roles despite the prejudices and resistance of some men. There are many examples, as Elena Poniatowska points out in her book *Masacre en México* (Massacre in Mexico). They were actors in the struggle against repression and the defense of their own rights. However, today, many Mexican women, particularly those of indigenous origin, do not know their rights and, as a result, do not exercise them.

This is the context for my research about the women embroiderers of the Sierra Negra, specifically from the town of Coyomeapan in the state of Puebla. In that Nahuatl-speaking region, several indigenous women formed a collective to embroider 27 pieces of silk and wool cloth to inform the other women in their community about their political, human, and civil rights. The result of their work was the exhibition "Embroidering My Rights." The project was supported by the National Human Rights Commission of Mexico and the non-governmental Mexican Society for Women's Rights (Fondo Semillas, or "Seeds Fund").

Each of the 27 pieces of cloth measured 48 x 24 inches and was worked on by a member of the collective, taking a fundamental women's right as her theme. Among them are the right to vote; the right to democracy; to equality; to justice; to food; to freedom of movement; to be elected to office; to peace; to access to education; to a life free of violence; to a healthy environment; to health; to participate in the benefits of science and technology; to a nationality; to freedom of religion; to freedom of association; to freedom of expression; to preserve traditional usage and customs; to life; and to decent housing. All the rights displayed on the pieces of cloth are included in the Mexican Constitution.

The rights represented in this embroidery refer to community traditions. For example, to indicate that women have the right to express their opinions, two of the pieces, about the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom of religion, include balloons to indicate speech, a very common symbol in the codices painted before the Spaniards arrived to Mexico. These pieces were first exhibited in the community itself, and later at the National Museum of Folk Cultures in Coyoacán, Mexico City, and at other venues in Puebla. For example, they were displayed at the headquarters of the Comprehensive Family Development System (DIF) in Tehuacán, particularly the piece about the right to a life free of violence.

The Right to Vote, Susana Ábrego Pacheco (hand embroidered with yarn).

In addition to the embroidery from Coyomeapan, women in other places have embroidered their rights and reflected their lives on cloth. Their embroidery is not only a vehicle for artistic expression, but is also conceived of as a form of social struggle with the aim of informing people, just as the '68 student striker information brigades did. At the same time, it plays a role as a product of the women's labor that can bring in money for their families.

For example, in the community of indigenous women in Xochistlahuaca, Guerrero, the axiom seems to be that women weave and embroider; they weave and embroider everywhere;

Embroidery is not only a vehicle for artistic expression, but also a form of social struggle with the aim of informing people, just as the '68 student striker information brigades did.

The Right to Education and Culture .
(hand embroidered with yarn).

they weave and embroider all the time; eight hours a day on average. A person can live on Mex$100 a day in Xochistlahuaca. The blouses that these Amuzga women take a week to make are sold on Sundays for anywhere between Mex$120 and Mex$200. This will feed a family for only a day or two, and that is if they are lucky. This income is only viable if they sell to a private party. However, most of what they make is sold to an intermediary who then resells them in markets outside the communities. They purchase lots of about 50 pieces and set the price; as a result, the indigenous producers have to lower the price of their labor considerably.

In the mestizo town of San Francisco Tanivet, Oaxaca, we have a special case: there, the embroidery focuses on local inhabitants' concerns. Among these are their problems involving corn production, their children's education, their disappearing traditions, and family members' migration to the United States.

In San Francisco Tanivet, they have created many other embroidery pieces as a result of a government educational program in support of women in the community, introduced by Marietta Bernstorff, a teacher from the city of Oaxaca.

Other groups of women make duvets to express the violation of their right to life. For example, one shows the victims of Ayotzinapa, with the names of all the young disappeared students. Others deal with the issue of migrants who have died attempting to cross the border with the United States.

As a result of the considerable support that women embroiderers have received, in September 2018, two exhibitions of textiles of opened, expressing the interests of women from Mexico and other Latin American countries. The exhibit "Transitional Justice and Art-Textile" opened at the Anáhuac University, and "Footprints: Memory, Stitches, and Steps" opened at the National Museum of Cultures. Similarly, different groups from Mexico City, Chiapas, Michoacán, and elsewhere exhibited embroidery and textiles showing what women think about their families, communities, and rights.

The embroidered pieces represent these women's voices, since this is a way that they can defend and express their rights, traditions, and ways of life, all in the shadow of '68. VM

Notes

1 I wish to acknowledge the former director of the Center for Research on North America, Silvia Núñez García, the current director, Graciela Martínez-Zalce Sánchez, and the center's academic secretary, Juan Carlos Barrón, for their support. I also must thank the Department of National Scholarships, under the aegis of the UNAM Academic Education Office, for having supported me in spring 2018. Above all, I must express my most sincere thanks to the women who did the embroidery mentioned in this brief article.

Valeria Guzmán*

PIONEERING ARTIST

A Conversation with Mónica Mayer[1]

Mónica Mayer showed me an apron that her daughter had had made for her. It's hanging on the door of her studio. It reads, "I am the primary source." The phrase alludes to the fact that Mónica is one of the most important artists in Mexico who is also a feminist, one of the initiators, and also a witness. Mónica Mayer studied art at the UNAM's National Art School (ENAP) and went on to study at Goddard

* Poet; valeria@iibi.unam.mx.

General shots of the exhibition "If You're Wondering, Ask: A Collective Retrospective of Mónica Mayer," University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC), 2016. Photos by Oliver Santana, courtesy of the MUAC.

College and the Feminist Studio Workshop in Los Angeles during the pivotal decade of the 1970s, where her thesis, advised by Suzanne Lacy, was "Feminist Art, an Effective Political Tool."

Once back in Mexico, together with Maris Bustamante in 1983, she founded the Black Hen Powder collective, the country's first feminist art collective. Then, in 1989, with Víctor Lerma, she began the *Pinto mi raya* (My Line in the Sand) project, which seeks to "lubricate" the artistic system to make it work better; it is an archive that collects the critical articles about art published in Mexico's newspapers. A large part of her work was gathered together in 2006 in a retrospective at the University Contemporary Art Museum, "If You're Wondering, Ask," named after one of Mayer's most representative performance pieces.

When I asked Mónica why she and Maris Bustamante named their group Black Hen Powder, she explained that a powder made from black hens is a popular remedy for evil eye and that they already knew that it was going to be rough going for a feminist women's collective, so they decided to vaccinate themselves beforehand. At that time, Maris and she were vying for spaces and recognition for women artists and were interested in discussing issues like abortion and rape.

When Mónica began creating art, the theory was just beginning to emerge; but fields like literature, psychology, sociology, law, and the arts were already opening up. In contrast with the United States, in Latin America, the feminist

The new revolutions
of the feminist and LGBTTI movements emerged,
seeking to redefine what was political
and work with new supports for art.

Artistic activism always went hand in hand with reflection and art criticism that weighed the most valuable pieces artistically and not only for their political position.

struggle was eminently leftist, and it joined with the movements that fought to eliminate class barriers. Mónica calls it "serious politics," since at that time the feminist struggle and the gay movement were not considered part of the prevailing political agenda. The political movements of the 1960s that, for example, gave rise to the '68 movement in our country, were at bottom related to gender issues because they called for social freedoms for citizens, but gender issues were not on their lists of demands. That is why even Monica says that at that time, she wouldn't even have thought of being part of a movement like that or being thought of as a social actor of that kind. "Suddenly, it turns out that we're all part of that history."

Today, many people recognize that it is necessary to fight for women's inclusion in important roles in society. But at that time, as Mónica says, even her professors and activist *compañeros* at the ENAP asked the women why they were studying if they weren't going to become artists but were going to get married. They would say, "Women were less creative because they weren't cut out to be artists but to be mothers." While such positions abounded in the university, there were also wonderful teachers like photographer Kati Horna and Irene Sierra. The women students also read authors like Simone de Beauvoir and Susan Sontag, and the testimonies of Benita Galeana and Domitila Barrios de Chungara. At that time, although many women were activists, they weren't thinking about gender issues yet.

Mónica's artistic generation is called "the Generation of the Groups," which was highly influenced by the 1968 movement. By the 1970s, art was considered a means of communication that enabled one to be in contact with society. In that context, collectives emerged like Mira (Look), Germinal, Tepito Arte Acá (Art Here, Tepito), and Proceso Pentágono (Pentagon Process), whose political line was clear. Parallel to them emerged another, called No Grupo (Non-Group), which questioned what art was and how it should be presented.

At that time, in the San Carlos Art Academy, "there was a whole mystique around '68." But nothing was being taught about women artists: "Even Frida wasn't very well known at the time; she was Diego's wife." These sexist

Mónica Mayer, *The Clothesline*, participatory installation first exhibited in 1978.
See pregunte.pintomiraya.com/index.php/la-obra-viva/el-tendedero.

biases in aesthetic criticism led Mónica Mayer to begin to ask herself how to change this perspective.

In this context, the new revolutions of the feminist and LGBTTI movements emerged, seeking to redefine what was political and work with new supports for art. The first feminist poster was created for a march against the motherhood myth. "And that's wonderful, because, how do you protest a myth? It's the counterpart of materialism. And, on the other hand, these women were questioning culture and its foundations and myths. In that context, it was a matter of understanding that the revolution had to start from the way we see our body."

Several artists began making new kinds of art. For example, Nahum Zenil painted explicitly gay canvases. Other artists like Magali Lara, Martha Hellion, Ulises Carrión, or Felipe Ehrenberg experimented making art in non-traditional media. In the late 1970s, Pola Weiss, the pioneer of video-art in Mexico, did a piece called *City, Woman, City*, in

"One journalist wrote that when I had my children I stopped working, and that's not true; even though I spend time with my family and it's important to me, I haven't stopped [working] for a moment."
Mónica Mayer

which a woman displayed her nude body vigorously dancing with a city in the background.

Mónica Mayer was a feminist activist in the Mexican Feminist Movement (MFM) together with other women like Lourdes Arizpe, Mireya Toto, Sylvia Pandolfi, and Marta Lamas. This group belonged to the Feminist Women's Coalition, which published a newspaper called *Cihuatl* (Woman), one of the first feminist publications in the country (along with *La Revuelta* and *Fem*). As a medium for both information and denunciation, *Cihuatl* covered issues such as the decriminalization of abortion, sexual violence against women, how housework is made invisible, and labor discrimination.

The Feminist Women's Coalition was formed in 1976 by the National Women's Movement and the MFM. Later, La Revuelta, the Women's Liberation Movement, and the Women's Collective joined it. Meeting in a small venue on Ebro River Street, they spent hours discussing different positions —many radical— in long sessions as they smoked and discussed above all abortion and rape.

Mónica also participated in the Women's Cinema Collective organized by Rosa Martha Fernández, who filmed movies about abortions, rapes, and the debunking myths about women. "That was my first real school: you went to the borough building with women who had been raped, and the doctor would say, 'No, no woman can be raped because they can't open your legs against your will because these muscles here 'blah, blah, blah.'" There were very few feminist activists. The first demonstration for the legalization of abortion and against forced sterilization was attended by about 30 women. "It's a very long, very difficult battle to get these ideas accepted by society." This is certainly worth mentioning, since 50 years after 1968, this year, hundreds of thousands of Argentinean women mobilized to decriminalize abortion, showing the strength the feminist movement has achieved, and even so, the Argentinean Senate's refusal also shows that there is still a long way to go to ensure our rights.

"The idea of the solitary artist is patriarchal, in contrast with the idea of collective work done in solidarity. This conception is feminist, and the critics don't know what to do with us."
Mónica Mayer

1975 was International Women's Year. Lectures were given at the Mexico City Museum and the exhibition "Women as Creators and Theme in Art" was held at the Modern Art Museum. Almost all the works displayed were by men, although a few women painters were represented, such as Frida Kahlo, Leonora Carrington, Marsole Worner Baz, María Lagunes, and Geles Cabrera.

Given the scant dissemination of women artists' work, Mónica´s generation explicitly and systematically set out to be a group of feminist women artists. They began organizing exhibits of women's art. "We're not the first. María Izquierdo organized an exhibition in 1934 of revolutionary women artists and wrote about many other women; also, when Frida Kahlo died, women artists organized an exhibition in her honor of solely women artists."

Mayer collaborated in the organization of the First Mexican-Central American Symposium of Women's Research in 1977, curated by Sylvia Pandolfi, Alaíde Foppa, and Raquel Tibol. "I had never seen so many works by women all together; and they were great pieces by living artists." This artistic activism always went hand in hand with reflection and art criticism that weighed the most valuable pieces artistically and not only for their political position. "Just because you're a feminist doesn't mean that you're making art or that that art is really profoundly questioning things." With this focus, as part of her feminist group activity, Mónica held the exhibit "The Normal," in which gender was treated as non-binary and which questioned precisely what normalcy is in gender. "I think it was an exhibition that, more than feminist, was prequeer." Also in 1977, together with Lucila Santiago and Rosalba Huerta she presented the exhibit "Intimate Collage" in Chapultepec Park's House on the Lake, the first exhibition of feminist art in Latin America.

Several women accompanied Mónica on her journey; among them, Jesusa Rodríguez, Magali Lara, Carmen Boullosa, and Rowena Morales, who constantly dialogued about how their work related to feminism and gender. Two predecessors of this conscious art are, for example, Marta Palau and Helen Escobedo.

> I didn't want to be an artist who suffered like Frida Kahlo or Nahui Ollin. I wanted to be a successful artist like Helen Escobedo, a wonderful artist and public servant who opened doors to the Generation of the Groups; I wanted in practice to have that sororal, generous attitude. Although because of her generation, Escobedo's attitude was as though she had to be one of the group, one of the boys; our generation was already independent, but not separatist.

Mónica Mayer started out on the road to performance art at the San Carlos Academy, which was beginning to offer workshops. In the United States, performance art was eminently political, since it exposes the author to the viewer "with your gender, with your sex, with your age, with your weight." This new art form also made it possible not to follow a canon, in contrast with the visual arts. The art had to be what its creators needed it to be to promote

Detail of *The Clothesline*.

their message, even if this challenged the critics' opinions. At that time, Suzanne Lacy, Mónica's advisor, began the "Making It Safe" project to rebuild the social fabric of marginalized communities. "Part of the project was offering a self-defense workshop for little old ladies, doing poetry readings; we made an exhibit on the main street and I made my clothesline." Artistic objects were left behind. In their place, actions were carried out to raise society's consciousness. This way of creating has its antecedents in conceptual and post-war art.

Mónica wrote the book *Rosa chillante. Mujeres y performance* (Intense Pink: Women and Performance). In it she relates that the 1980s saw a boom in feminist art collectives, with groups like Tlacuilas and Retrateras (Women Illustrators and Portraitists), Polvo de Gallina Negra (Black Hen Powder), Coyolxauhqui Articulada (Articulated Coyolxauhqui, Queen of the Southern Star Gods), and Bioarte. Later, in the 1990s, artist Lorena Wolffer developed a project called "I'm Totally Iron," in answer to and to counter the slogan of a well-known department store, Palacio de Hierro (Iron Palace), "I'm Totally Palacio." In that project, a dark-skinned girl is clearly countrposed to the women department stores portrayed as ideal.

Other women who have also been at the cutting edge of insurgency with performance art that demand's society's attention are Niña Yhared, Iris Nava, La Congelada de Uva, Yolanda Segura, Adriana Amaya, Lorena Méndez, Doris Steinbichler, Laura García, Elvira Santamaría, Katia Tirado, Lorena Orozco, and Pilar Villela. I also asked Mónica if she knows the young performance artists of The Daughters of Violence: "Oh, I'm a big fan, and I love that they shock me."

Our country's women's artistic movements have opened up new spaces. "Two years ago, the Carrillo Gil Museum published its statistics about how many women had exhibited there compared to the men. They haven't done anything yet to change that, but they have recognized it [that there are fewer women]."

Art criticism should also focus on women's art, since it has tended to emphasize the personal lives of the artists rather than their work. "Even when I had my retrospective in 2016 at the University Contemporary Art Museum, one journalist wrote that when I had my children I stopped working, and that's not true; even though I spend time with my family and it's important to me, I haven't stopped [working] for a moment."

Feminist activism in art has managed to open up many spaces for women artists. However, many issues still remain to be resolved. While people's paradigms seem to have opened up to including gender and women's rights, "We have changed a huge population in word only, but in daily life, in practice, it hasn't changed. Everything still remains to be done."

The art world does not offer equality with regard to studios, exhibits, publications, or archives, either. "We have to denaturalize the different kinds of violence: the violence of a teacher who harasses is the same as one who doesn't take a woman artist seriously." Academia and the artistic milieu do not demand the artistic level of women that they do of men. "It's our responsibility to take ourselves seriously, to demand more of ourselves; we carry patriarchy within ourselves, too. The idea of the solitary artist is patriarchal, in contrast with the idea of collective work done in solidarity. This conception is feminist, and the critics don't know what to do with us." VM

Notes

1 A Spanish-language version of this interview was published in the book *Memoria en pie. 1968-2018. 50 años de resistencia artística, crítica, independiente y popular* (Mexico City: Tintable/Secretaría de Cultura, 2018).

In **MEMORY** of **TLATELOLCO**

by Rosario Castellanos

Illustration by Diego Molina; diegomolinabb@gmail.com

Darkness begets violence
and violence demands darkness
to cover its crime.
That's why October 2nd waited till nightfall
so no one could see the hand that gripped
the weapon, just its flashing effects.

And in that light, brief and fierce, who?
Who is it that kills?
Who are those who agonize, those who die?
Those who flee without shoes?
Those who end up in a hole in some jail?
Those who rot away in the hospital?
Those who fall silent, forever, from fear?

Who? Whom? No one. The next day, no one.
Dawn found the plaza swept; the headline
in the newspapers
was the weather forecast.
And on TV, on the radio, at the movies
there was no change in the programming,
no newsflash, not even a
moment of silence at the banquet
(but the banquet went on).

Don't look for what isn't there: traces, bodies
for it has all been given in offering to a goddess,
to the Devourer of Excrement.

Don't dig through the files, for nothing's been recorded.
Yet behold—I touch a sore: it is my memory.
It hurts, so it is true. Blood for blood
and if I call it mine, I betray them all.

I remember, we remember.
This is our way of helping the light shine
upon so many sullied consciences,
upon a wrathful text on open bars,
upon the face obscured behind the mask.
I remember, we remember
until we feel justice at last here among us.

—Translated by David Bowles
February 15, 2018.

This poem is published courtesy of the Economic Culture Fund (FCE) and Gabriel Guerra Castellanos.

recordamos

aprendemos

florecemos

MÉXICO 68/18

A cincuenta años del movimiento estudiantil
México 2018

"1, we remember; 9, we learn; 6, we flourish; 8. Fifty years after the student movement, Mexico, 2018."
Illustration by Leonel Sagahon.

MEMORY, 2018

by Mercedes Alvarado

"Poetry is found in struggle."
Leopoldo Ayala
"The poet's real commitment is to put the word
back at the service of the people."
Juan Carlos Mestre

The country I am
    lives in all geographies
on the lips of those who speak other languages
    —second, third, fourth languages—
to name the direction they came from;

the country I am
    we are
son of corn
sentinel of its legacy
    a country that walks
    a country that is carried on the back
    a country that crosses the river
    a country that dares
    a country that shouts
    a country that knows how to be silent
    a country that does not know how to give up;

the country I am
continues to search
for all its children
    brothers
    sisters
    fathers
    mothers
    friends
    colleagues
that have been
thrown into a grave

that have been found in a grave

those of us who don't know when
    we will be
        one more in just another grave;

the country I am
    that we are
is the vocation of a smile
    with its music
    with its word play
    with its seizing the good
    with its forgetting the bad

the song that weeps for itself
the promise that laughs at itself
the pile of words
and the turbulent time that is
    "right away;"

the country I am
    the one that will go out
        again
        again
        again
    into the streets
to say
    I, from the middle class
    I, the bourgeois
    I, the proletarian
    I, the emigrant
    I, who return
    I, who have left
    I,
    I, Mexican
    I:
        I decide.

Mariana Velasco* and Gustavo Marcovich**

Changing the World
The Stories of Four Members of the "Avándaro Nation"

The word "*avándaro*" is from the Purembe language (or Purépecha, as it is known colloquially); it means "place of dreams" or "place of the clouds." This is the name of the area in the State of Mexico where young people camping out founded what was then called the "Avándaro Nation," asking for peace and love. Later, a mall was built with luxury shops selling motorboats, motorcycles, and race cars. Today, no one walks there anymore; all you see is a parade of luxury cars. The music you hear is completely different from the good rock played there almost five decades ago. The hired guns, now called "escort details," wander around and remind us of the "Judas" (judicial police) of times gone by. Some even look like agents from the now defunct Crime Prevention Investigations Department (DIPD).

There, very few people —or no one— seem to remember, and much less celebrate, that September 11, but in 1971, a unique event in the history of Mexico was held, congregating a huge number of young people: The Rock and Rolling Festival.

An enormous number of "nobodies" came out on the street, young people who only then became visible. Rock was new, liberating, loud. The music managed to bring

* Actress and singer; marianayvm@yahoo.com.
** Writer; marcoviz@prodigy.net.mx
Photos by Sergio García, taken from the video *Avándaro*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdEaip0c9jQ

together the youth that had broken apart after the June 10, 1971 massacre.

At a time like that, an ideology and an emotional response converged, but the important part was the response. The rest is words, theories that can be critiqued. What was irrefutable was the horde of young people who came on foot from everywhere just to be there. It was an unconscious movement born of a growing rebellion that combined with and was due to the music because the music represented them; not because of the language, but because of its strength, capable of penetrating directly to the heart and the mind without any kind of explanation in between.

After Avándaro, rock died in Mexico. It was more dangerous to be a trafficker of vinyl records than of hard drugs, weapons, or people.

The banned music went to what were called "funky holes," and the audience changed radically.

This article is based on the experiences of Maricruz Patiño, Bernardo Perezverdía, Gordon Ross, and Antonio Mendiola, residents of Valle de Bravo, whom we would like to thank for their collaboration.

Rock Has Been My Religion, Bernardo Perezverdía

"Rock has been my religion. I'm sure it saved my life. If rock and roll hadn't existed, I would've been a real delinquent," says Bernardo, the youngest of five children born into a conservative family "with eighteenth-century and Porfirio Díaz-era values."

> I studied middle school with the Silesians. I had been expelled from a different school, and to discipline me, they put me into a boarding school with them. That changed my life forever. Until I got there, I had been one of the true faithful. The education was Pavlovian and very, very repressive: they tortured us; they left us outside at night. You ended up very injured emotionally. The priests told me that my behavior had condemned me to Hell; so then I started doing really weird stuff because I didn't care anymore. To the point that the first time I took LSD was there. Rejected by my family, humiliated by the priests, I needed something to hold on to, and I liked rock from the very first bar I heard. At boarding school, I would hide to listen to Capital Radio, covering myself with the pillow so they couldn't see me. It was horrible. I had a poster of Dylan under my desk's glass and when the father found out that I wanted to be like Bob, I was grounded for a month.
>
> People started to play good rock here in Mexico, and there were several places that used to be called "cafés-concert" that were closed down just after the Avándaro festival, on September 14, 1971, even though they only sold milk shakes and coffee. The strongest thing that you could get was a double espresso or a Coca-Cola with lots of lemon sherbet. Among these cafés were the A Plein Soleil (In the Scorching Sun); the 2 + 2; La Rana Sabia (The Wise Frog); but there were a bunch.

After Avándaro, rock died in Mexico. It was more dangerous to be a trafficker of vinyl records than of hard drugs, weapons, or people.

Bernardo used to go often to Los Globos (The Balloons), on South Insurgentes Avenue across from the Hotel of Mexico (today, the World Trade Center), because you could dance there. Groups like Tequila, Bandido, and Peace and Love played there.

> There were very good groups, particularly the ones from Tijuana, who brought the black influence and music back with them from San Francisco. That's where Santana left from to go to San Francisco, leaving behind Javier Bátiz who, romantically, wanted to save national rock and roll. Because being a rocker in Mexico is like being a democrat at election time. It's just not possible.

We Opened an Immense Door, Maricruz Patiño

Poet Maricruz Patiño, who began her philosophy studies at the UNAM School of Philosophy and Letters in 1968, says,

> I was a young girl from the educated middle class. We were going through a period of transition because the traditional Mexico we had been raised in mixed together with all the

international influence, and rock united everybody. It united the youth. That meant a change in values and principles: the hippies preached freedom, peace, and love; the surrealists, all power to the imagination. Maybe it was all a little Utopian, but you have to have Utopias because if you don't, there's no horizon to head for. We didn't manage to free ourselves completely, but we did open a huge door. The conquest of freedom had to include a time for reflecting, for assimilating just exactly what freedom is.

Then, she says, came the Avándaro happening.

Actually, the rock music accompanied a car race but wasn't the main event. The organizers estimated that a maximum of about a thousand people would attend, but thousands and thousands and thousands of young people turned out. It happened without anyone planning it that way because the promoters just wanted to organize a nice little party for young kids with their cars in a place where the police wouldn't fuck them over for staging drag races.

Who Went to the Festival?

"I did!" says Bernardo, delighted,

and they kicked me out of the La Salle school for being a bad influence on the other students, since I also sneaked out to go. My parents wouldn't let me go. My room had a balcony facing a little porch, so I jumped to the fence, got out on the roof of the big door to the place, and scarpered. My pal was waiting for me and we left.

My life-long buddies are my friends because of music; we would form our own groups and get together to play. We'd come to Avándaro often. The electricity would go out all day long and there was no TV, no anything. And we'd go with bongo drums, maracas, guitars, and books . . . and candles because the electricity would go out. That's what we'd do. We lent each other books and records. I heard about Avándaro on the radio and because I was addicted to the Hip 70 shop. On South Insurgentes Avenue there was an ice rink where I used to go to skate with my buddies. The Dug Dugs would play there; most of the groups that went to Avándaro played there. Outside was Hip 70 and they sold posters and records, the best records. It was a very special place for me, where people who knew about rock got together; it was an underground culture. There was the music that everybody knew about: the Beatles and what you could hear on the radio. But there was also the Cream and very dark groups that never got any airtime on any radio. At Hip 70, I bought my 25-peso ticket and my T-shirt (which somebody stole from me when I came to live in Valle del Bravo).

We were a pretty large group of friends. We left around five in the morning on a Friday in a caravan. Around 10 or 15 cars. On the way, we picked people up and gave them a ride because lots were going on foot. They had set up a Red Cross station next to the Avándaro church, and on that same street, near the center divider, were all the cars that were going to be in the race.

There were people of all colors, from kids from very poor backgrounds to people from Las Lomas. They came from Tijuana and also from Mérida, but, even though it was very mixed, you could see the social differences. We had a tent where we put our food. We'd get lost and find each other again. Nobody stole our stuff.

You felt very safe; it was like a brotherhood: peace and love. And it rained and rained, and we wrapped up in sheets of plastic. I didn't sleep either of the two nights I was there. Suddenly, somebody would pass around a bottle or a joint; you'd open a can of tuna and you'd give him a spoon, and he'd stand staring at you because everybody was starving. . . . You had to "pass it around" and at the end, you only got a spoonful out of your can. When somebody fainted or got too high, they'd pass him or her over the crowd toward the Red Cross.

Some people stole ears of corn and potatoes from the nearby fields to cook them on campfires. The townspeople peeked out of their balconies and threw us fruit; they brought out jugs of water, or even just offered us the garden hose, because we were all dehydrated. The food, the taco stands, the corner stores, everything ran out of everything. The state government sent food, but they didn't give it to us.

"My life-long buddies are my friends because of music; we would form our own groups and get together to play. We'd come to Avándaro often."

Setting Up the Stage, Antonio Mendiola

"The stage was up front," remembers Antonio Mendiola, who lives very close to where the concert was held.

> From the *tecalli* [the security booth] you turn right, and where the road ends, you turn right again toward the golf club. At that time, there was a field, a very large esplanade; that's where the festival was held. I have a friend named Armando Molina. He was in charge of coordinating the musicians who would be playing at Avándaro. Before the festival, I went with him to look for the groups and hire them, and to the radio stations to promote it. We set up the stage, the sound towers. We promoted the concert on Telesistema Mexicano and on the radio; we took the groups' records to them. and they broadcast them. The tickets sold out. We expected about 12 000 people, but many, many more came. The groups that I remember were La Revolución de Emiliano Zapata, La Tribu (The Tribe), Love Army, Peace and Love, Bandido (Bandit), Tinta Blanca (White Ink), Dug Dug's, Epílogo, La División del Norte (The Northern Division), and Three Souls, which closed the concert as dawn was breaking.

Maricruz Patiño was also a brigade member and the only one in her family who didn't go to the October 2 demonstration because her mother locked her in her bedroom. She was in a group called Like Old Friends, "a real musical promise," according to *México canta*, one of the few magazines that published articles on rock. There were four of them in the group; they had won a contest, recorded a single, and had been playing together for a year when they went to Avándaro.

Maricruz remembers,

> I told my parents, "We're going to sing at Avándaro."
>
> "Over my dead body," said my mother.
>
> My dad said, "We have to go to Valle [de Bravo] this week anyway." Because we had a house there. "But you're not going to Avándaro."
>
> So then, as soon as we got out of the car in front of the house, my sister and I took off running to Avándaro. My mom was really worried and sent my brothers to catch up with us, but they just stayed all night at the festival, too. I was wearing some leather shorts and Federica boots; and it was raining; it was horrendously muddy, and those boots were really heavy . . . and I couldn't take them off.

I remember when we were on our way from Mexico City, we gave a group of kids from Tijuana a ride. They had left three months before. From the day the announcement was made that there was going to be that concert, we all thought about Woodstock and that all the new groups would be there, enthusiastically received by all the youth. Because it was Mexican rock. We went around the paths in Avándaro and thousands and thousands of young people were on their best behavior: not even anyone pushing. And if you happened to step on somebody because he was just lying there, gassed up to his eyeballs, you'd say, "Gee, brother. Sorry." And from down there on the ground, you'd hear the answer: "No fucking problem, kid."

When the naked women appeared, everybody got up and they started pinching their butts, but it went no further than that. And the music . . . those of us who were there, the last thing we heard was the music. You're with the people around you and they're passing around the joint; that's what's going on. Yes, we were all facing the stage and watching, but an awful lot was going on in the audience: there were the people who had put up a tent and they were fucking in there and

you could hear them shouting, and all that in the middle of the rain and a field of mud . . . but we didn't care. We were playing one of our songs called "Martha."

And Maricruz emphasizes,

> The 1970s were precisely the time when Mexican rockers were making the genre our own. Up until then, people had the idea that rock had been born in English, and if you sang in another language, it ruined it. But there was a group from Yucatán called Los Fenders who sang rock in Mayan. So, we started getting the idea of assimilating it as a genre, making it our own, and expressing it in our language. It's like what happened with Spanish: in our country we used to speak other languages, and when we were conquered, they imposed Spanish. It took us centuries to assimilate it to be able to express the indigenous or mestizo soul in a borrowed language. Maybe it wasn't conscious, but it happened; and a revolution was happening, and young people were part of that moment. So, the world connection was through the Avándaro happening.

We Didn't Know What It Was All About, But We Said, "Ok, Let's Go," Gordon Ross

A university production of the rock opera *Tommy* debuted in Avándaro, directed by Eduardo Ruiz Saviñón and produced by the Tenase brothers. Gordon Ross, a ceramicist now living in Valle de Bravo, who was studying communications at the time at the UNAM School of Political Science, tells us about his experience:

> By chance, I went to the home of José Antonio Guzmán, the musical director. I saw that he had the score of *Tommy* and said, "I can read this." He was looking for people who could play the music for the piece and he made an appointment for me to go the next day to a rehearsal. We were a very curious mix of 10 musicians: rockers and people from the conservatory. And we rehearsed every day. The dancers and the actors worked at the UNAM School of Architecture, and we'd get together there in the mornings. Little by little, the production was taking shape. We were pretty far along when they told us we were invited to a festival in Avándaro. We didn't know what it was all about, but we said, "Great. Let's go."
>
> The UNAM rented a house in Avándaro and Tena got a bus for transport. The house is still there; it's pretty big: everybody fit. Avándaro was a fucking great forest. Almost the whole group arrived on Tuesday. On Wednesday, we went out really early to where the festival was going to be. The whole structure was set up, and there were already a ton of people there. We watched as the place filled up with people. They brought in a monster electric generator, and we were able to rehearse on Friday. But the whole cast wasn't there. The lead actor, who thought he was really important, didn't want to arrive until the last minute . . . . and he never made it: he got stuck in traffic. So, Lalo Ruiz Saviñón had to pay the part of Tommy.

Avándaro proved that Mexican youth was alive, open, eager to change history. Latin America's hippies were the guerrillas of the Cuban Revolution who defeated the United States.

I was doing my military service. In a division with really hard training. I had started High School No. 1 in 1968 and was very active in the student movement; that's why at the time I took the militia very seriously. I remember that the colonel who commanded my group said, "Listen, I have something I have to do and I have to miss [practice]." Nobody knew what he was going to do or what was going on, but he gave me leave. . . . The next Sunday, when I got there, they arrested me demanding how I had dared go to "that." Soldiers are tough.

We were going to play on Saturday when the sun came out. We had everything ready so that the moment it peeped over the horizon, we would play the first chord of the overture and wake everybody up. That night, the rock groups started arriving, and when they found out we had a house and equipment, we organized a huge jam session. One group of dancers got lost in the woods and didn't turn up until after midnight. We all woke up at 5 a.m. and went over to the stage. When we got there, it was already taken over by the army. They were watching everything. We got there and we couldn't tune up because the instruments were all adjusted at I-don't-know-what voltage and the electricity there operated on another; so the organ couldn't give us the note and the engineers hadn't set up our monitors, so we couldn't hear each other.

There were four towers with these humongous speakers, and I was playing the guitar to try to tune it, but you couldn't hear anything. So, in the end, of course, there was no way we were going to start playing at six in the morning like we had planned. We started at one . . . and the river of people kept coming. When the music started, something beautiful and magical happened. The forum was about half full, but people kept arriving. . . . We played. I could never hear myself, but everybody loved it.

For me, Avándaro, being with everybody there and all, it was great; but it was also very painful because three months before, on June 10, they had beaten the shit out of us in Mexico City. And so the fiesta was a little macabre: the helicopter kept circling, the Coca-Cola ad in the background; these were things that, to my mind, were really fucked up. The crowd was from everywhere, but mainly from the poor neighborhoods in Mexico City. They were all really great. The atmosphere was respectful, but apolitical. The group I was with was also apolitical because we [political people] were always a minority.

What Did the Avándaro Happening Show?

Avándaro was very important because it proved that Mexican youth was alive, open, eager to change history. Latin America's hippies were the guerrillas of the Cuban Revolution who defeated the United States. That was a precedent that had weight; that is why these Mexican youths believed they could change the world. And there were also the U.S. American youths who burned their draft cards, protesting the war in Vietnam. Also, the men were letting their hair grow long, and the women were taking contraceptive pills. The feeling was that they were changing the world, that things were going to be different.

At Avándaro, the kids felt very safe because they knew that their equals were not going to betray them; nobody cared if you were a kid from wealthy Las Lomas or a kid from down-and-out Tepito: they were all young people. Everybody took care of everybody else; and the girls —and a lot of them were naked— nobody bothered them. Nobody. It was all like a dream or Paradise, like something that doesn't exist but there, it did exist. So, they thought, "Yes, we can change the world." And who knows what happened, but neoliberalism came with the next generation."

"Later they invited me to go sing at Rock sobre Ruedas," says Maricruz Patiño.

We'd go in a stake-bed truck customized so that when you opened it up, we could play right there. It was a great fiesta. Whenever the cops could come, people would tell us from way in the back, and by the time the officers managed to make their way through, the truck had already closed up, we were leaving, and the people in the audience were watching out for us. In fact, one day we also went to play and raise hell outside of Los Pinos [presidential residence].

"Rock came to an end, and disco music started up," concludes Bernardo, "but I decided to go to the bar León and listen to chachachá and salsa." VM

Santiago Robles*

THE MEXICO 68/18
100 Poster Collection

"October 2, Neither forgive nor forget," Ricardo Ceceña.

When violent events that have left open wounds in our society are commemorated —at least by those who are sensitive to violence—, I have contradictory feelings. On the one hand, I agree that we have to fight tooth and nail to retain both our individual and our collective memories. On the other hand, I ask myself how much people really make an effective commitment, with real participation in causes, and not just automatically commemorate something.

As I am writing this, in addition to the 50 years that have passed since the '68 student movement, we are commemorating other events that have been very painful for our society: it has been four years since the disappearance of the 43 Ayotzinapa Normal School students; and recently we commemorated the first anniversary of the September 19 earthquake that shook Central Mexico, leaving what official figures cited at almost 300 dead.

Although it is true that these unfortunate events sparked big social mobilizations, it is also true that as time has gone by, the levels of active participation and

"A wounded country cannot move forward, " Joan Vázquez.

* Visual artist; roblesbonfil@gmail.com; about his work, see http://www.santiagorobles.info/.

Manuel Guerrero.

community labor have dropped precipitously, despite the fact that none of them have received the justice they deserve.

I think that cultural production linked to events in society is an essential part of confronting the political system and the authoritarian, corrupt government that made them happen —we still are not capable of creating earthquakes, but direct responsibility does exist with regard to the administrative reactions to the natural phenomenon. However, I would like to believe that that cultural production is not an end in itself, because, although it is very important, it is insufficient.

In my view, art directly linked to politics, whether literature, design, or anything else, fulfills the function of greater signification if it fosters encounters that go beyond the parameters of the respective disciplines —do those borders actually exist? This happens, for example, when it contributes to creating autonomy, to strengthening community causes that crystalize in concrete actions and movements of true social solidarity, not just discourse; that is, when it transcends café chit-chat or the hermetic discussion that takes place on the great Internet social network or at a gallery exhibit.

Cultural production linked to events in society is an essential part of confronting the political system and the authoritarian, corrupt government that made them happen.

In this emotionally complicated context, I am writing to present some of the images in the "Mexico 68/18, 100 Posters" collection, organized at the Veracruz University Visual Arts Institute by designers José Manuel Morelos, Abraham Méndez, and Alfredo Ayala. I want to believe that this enormous effort of bringing together the voices of 14 states throughout Mexico is on the side of a new col-

Art contributes to creating autonomy,
to strengthening community causes that crystalize in concrete actions
and movements of true social solidarity, not just discourse.

Eduardo Picazo.

lective way of doing national politics. I have certain reasons for thinking about this way of doing politics as something that is never fully concluded, as an infinite road, but a road that we can take step by step, one of which is the renovation of elected positions in our country with the recent federal elections. That change was decided on by the population at large.

As a society, we deserve a government equal to its task, but we must also think and act in accordance with the political and social responsibilities assumed. This should always have been the case, although it is never too late to start again.

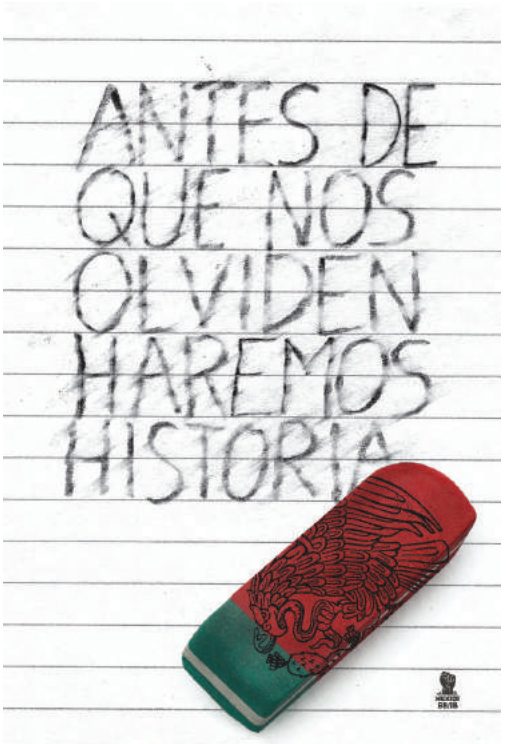
As a population, we do not deserve, nor should ever we allow the government to commit again a crime of the magnitude of October 2, 1968, in Tlatelolco. Nor should we allow the investigations about it to become an infinite bureaucratic labyrinth in the hands of successive administrations and framed as supposed "historic truths".

Élmer Sosa.

"The crime is there, covered in sheets of newsprint, by televisions, radio, by Olympic flags." Jaime Sabines. Poster by Adán Paredes.

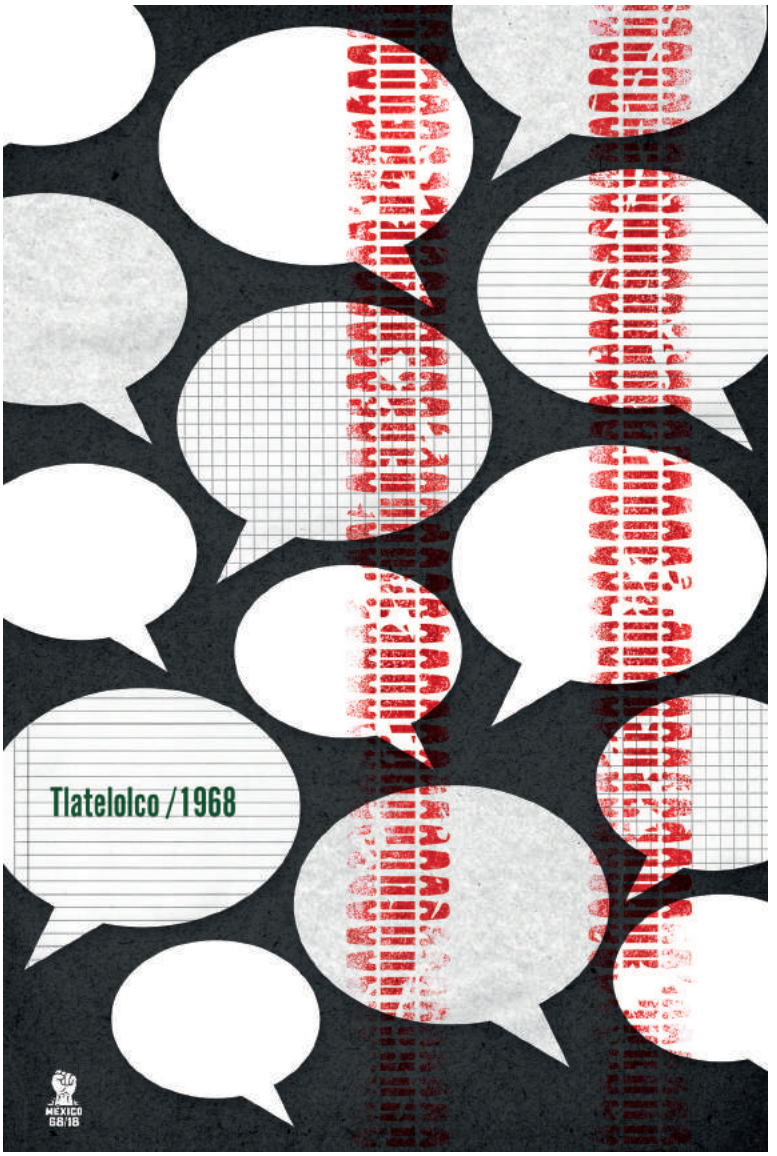
As inhabitants of this land, we neither deserve, nor must we accept that official discourse advance in the opposite direction from the daily lives of the citizenry, nor that the government attempt to keep busy disguising itself and presenting a friendly face to the world community while our compatriots are murdered (see Adán Paredes's poster).

As a collective, we neither deserve, nor must we accept the system's discourse, like Enrique Peña Nieto's speech justifying corruption as something inherent in Mexican culture,[1] that it blur our political identities, our capacity for empathy with other social groups, or the conviction that things can be changed for the better (see Eduardo Picazo's poster).



"Before they forget us, we'll make history," Alejandra Guerrero Esperón.

Art linked to politics, fulfills the function of greater signification if it fosters encounters beyond the parameters of the respective disciplines.



Belinda Ugalde.

As a community, we neither deserve, nor must we allow the continued media manipulation that attempts to convince us that the channels for dialogue and agreements with the system are open while it runs roughshod over our individual guarantees and violently silences those who do not agree with it (see Belinda Ugalde's poster).

As participants in social and affective movements, we must maintain a critical stance, separating ourselves and openly pointing to the voices that say they are representative and that use media platforms to betray the principles of society's initiatives.

Hopefully, this and other art will seek to accompany an effective commitment, real participation in popular causes and not be understood as an act of creation that has *fulfilled* all political responsibilities, discarding the possibility of undertaking other actions.

October 2, never again. VM

Notes

1 See *Animal político*, "'La corrupción es un asunto cultural': Peña Nieto," September 4, 2014, https://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/09/la-corrupcion-es-un-asunto-cultural-pena-nieto/. [Editor's Note.]

THE STUDENT MOVEMENT, NOW AND THEN

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección Esther Montero/EM-TX-C2-E14-0733

Miguel Aguilar Dorao

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/05-Mitin-estudiantes-marzo-1966/MGP0105

Graciela Martínez-Zalce

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/05-Mitin-estudiantes-marzo-1966/MGP0112

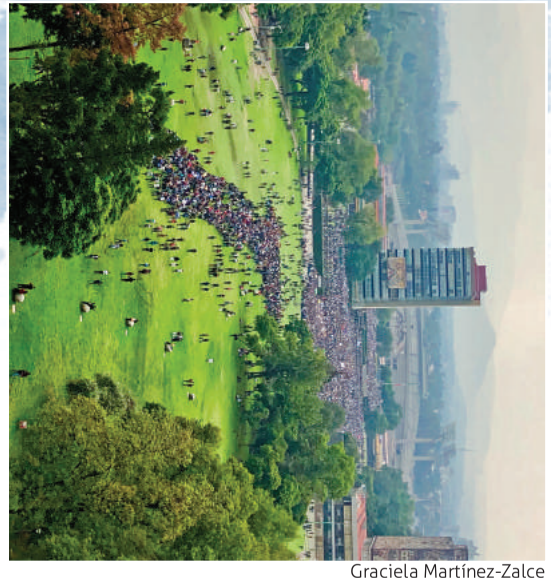
Astrid Velasco

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/53-Toma-CU-ejercito-letreros-alusivos-sept-1968/MGP3076

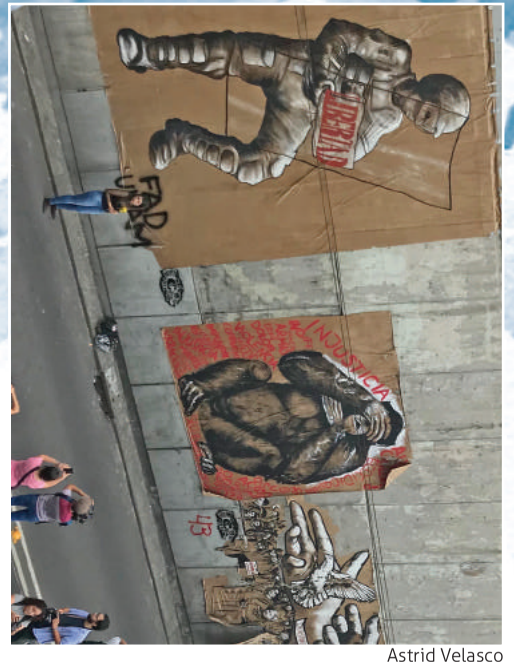
IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección MGP/53-Toma-CU-ejercito-letreros-alusivos-sept-1968/MGP2596

IISUE/AHUNAM/Colección Esther Montero/EM-C-022

Astrid Velasco



Graciela Martínez-Zalce



Astrid Velasco

Diego Bugeda Bernal*

Not Even all the Bullets Can Beat Us
The Literature on '68

The literature about Mexico's 1968 student movement is vast and the types of works, very diverse. They range from historical, critical reflection in a huge number of essays and books dealing with these iconic events from different perspectives and disciplines, to almost all genre of literature (outstanding among which are a few novels and a great deal of poetry) and a huge proliferation of chronicles, chronologies, memoirs, and personal accounts of the events by participants themselves or journalists who interviewed them, gathering information from very different sources. In this article, I will venture a few thoughts.

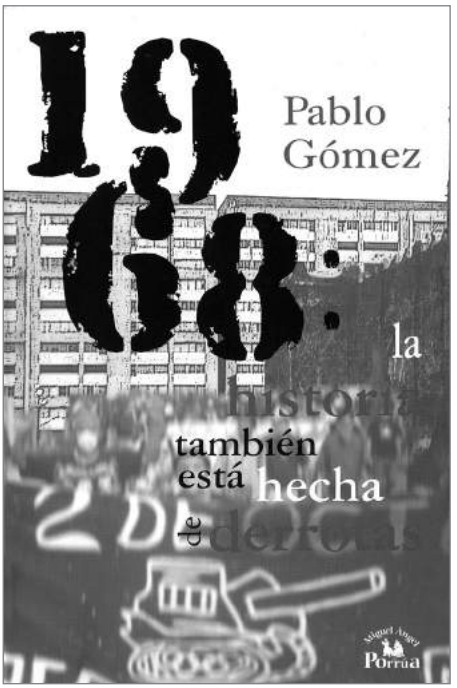
I will focus above all on personal accounts written by the leaders, activists, and eye witnesses of the movement years —decades, rather— later, a half century later. The time lapsed has offered them the possibility of rendering a dispassionate, critical —and also self-critical— vision. Some enter into open discussion and sometimes —it must be said— in open opposition to the most iconic texts produced in the wake of the events, such as *La noche de Tlatelolco* (The Night of Tlatelolco), by Elena Poniatowska; some of the chronicles of *Días de guardar* (Days for Staying Home to Think), by Carlos Monsiváis; *México, una democracia utópica: el movimiento estudiantil de 1968* (Mexico, a Utopian Democracy: The 1968 Student Movement), by Sergio Zermeño; *El movimiento estudiantil en México* (The Student Movement in Mexico), by Ramón Ramírez; or *Los días y los años* (The Days and the Years), by Luis González de Alba, among many others.

* Editor at CISAN; diebb@unam.mx.

Fifty years after the Tlatelolco massacre, different versions, even by eye witnesses, are still circulating about what really happened. No single, definitive historic truth, accepted by everyone, exists, but there have been diverse official and extra-official histories. Five decades later, some think that knowing is no longer important, but that is not the case. It is not the case because undoubtedly the 1968 student movement was a watershed in the history of Mexico. Many later events and many changes in Mexico's political culture can be explained using it as a starting point. Above all, the process of transition to democracy can be understood, leading, in the last analysis, among other things, to the creation of the Federal Electoral Institute, under whose aegis alternation in office became a reality after almost a century of absolute domination by a single hegemonic political current.

For Pablo Gómez Álvarez, the UNAM School of Economics representative in the 1968 National Strike Council, the movement opened up two roads for the authentic Mexican left (although it also led the way to co-opting its leaders for a certain time). One way forward was the armed struggle, which culminated in the so-called "Dirty War" of the 1970s; and the other was the institutional, electoral road. The latter involved the foundation and consolidation of political parties and impacted the first great electoral reform in 1978. That reform introduced for the first time the election of federal deputies by proportional vote and culminated in the unrecognized victory of the National Democratic Front in 1988, led by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas.

In his work *1968, la historia también está hecha de derrotas* (1968: History Is Also Made Up of Defeats), Pablo Gómez



Pablo Gómez, *1968: la historia también está hecha de derrotas* (Mexico City: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2008), 453 pp.

Fifty years after the Tlatelolco massacre, different versions, even by eye witnesses, are still circulating about what really happened. No single, definitive historic truth, accepted by everyone, exists.

sought to write a detailed chronicle of the events from the point of view of the student assemblies and the CNH, with a very effective direct narration reflecting the climate of tension and terror of repression. But, above all, he intended to render a critical, *a posteriori* reflection of the causes and errors of the movement itself that were also factors —naturally not the sole or perhaps even the most determining ones— that led to the October 2 massacre. This is probably the book's greatest merit. Of course, it will be said that it is easy to be self-critical *post-factum*. However, it is extremely necessary, since it is also true that later student movements took on board this lesson —although not always, as 1999 shows.[1] For this author/participant, the '68 student leadership did not correctly interpret the government's intentions when it first occupied University City and National Polytechnic Institute installations, and then withdrew a few days before October 2, or when it accepted the beginning of negotiations with two government representatives that same day in the morning. A huge act of repression was being prepared and they did not realize it until it was too late. Pablo Gómez's book has another important merit: using the narrative technique of counterpoint, it presents the opposing positions about almost every one of the events between July 23 and 26 and until December 1968, when the movement was officially dissolved and the strike was lifted in the last school. The last chapter, "30 tesis sobre el 68" (30 Theses on '68) serves as an epilogue and is very useful. The author ventures a few hypotheses about its causes, consequences, and development, some of which are frankly unorthodox *vis-à-vis* the best-known mainstream visions.

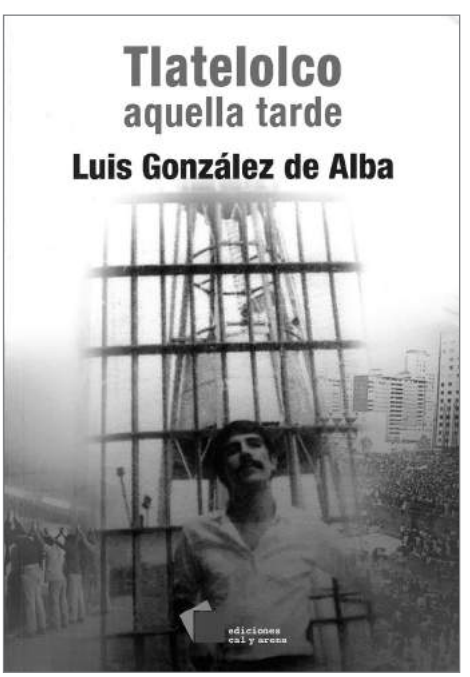
Luis González de Alba, who represented the School of Philosophy and Letters, was one of the CNH's most lucid leaders. He is also a symbol of the ability to be self-critical and to evolve his thinking about the historical transcendence of the student movement and its derivations. One of the most prolific writers about the topic, he is the author of *Los días y los años* (The Days and the Years), written while his memory was still fresh and the wounds were still open from the defeat, written from Lecumberri Jail, where he spent almost three years as a political prisoner. Almost 50 years later, he wrote *Tlatelolco, aquella tarde* (Tlatelolco, That Afternoon), where he changes several of his reflections and points made in his first book. And he also combats several of the visions that he thinks have twisted the facts and not been faithful to the truth. Above all, he criticizes *La noche de Tlatelolco* (The Night of Tlatelolco), by Poniatowska, for its lack of journalistic rigor and the innumerable instances of using poetic license to the detriment of precision, which in this case was a moral imperative, and which even compromised the honor of some of the leaders. Beyond this anecdote, what is important is that González de Alba also postulates that there has been a certain idealization of the '68 movement as well as its leaders and sympathizers, turning them somehow into irreproachable, mythical individual and collective heroes, very much in the manner of the frequently encountered official Mexican "bronze" historiography.[2]

This might be unimportant, but this idealization often does not take into account the true significance of the '68 student movement: its contribution to the process of the country's democratization, to the transition from an authoritarian, repressive, dictatorial regime to one with clear democratic rules and practices and a more anti-establishment, pluralist political culture. Naturally, many social scientists would not accept that Mexican democracy is now a consolidated regime. Nevertheless, some consensus seems to exist among the leading figures in the '68 movement in Mexico who have written about it: the six-point list of demands was to a certain extent the first great programmatic document to demand a democratic transformation of the nation.[3] The most representative CNH leaders, such as Luis González de Alba, Pablo Gómez, Raúl Álvarez Garín, Gilberto Guevara Niebla, Marcelino Perelló, or Gerardo Estrada, just to mention some of those who have written books or articles about the events, agree on these points. Other eye witnesses and non-student activists also agree, like the members of the Professors Coalition or the Alliance of Intellectuals, Writers, and Artists, who always supported the CNH. Among many others were Heberto Castillo, Eli de Gortari, Fausto Trejo, Carlos Monsiváis, and José Revueltas.

One acute observer of the movement's day-by-day development, though neither a leader nor a participant in the assemblies, but rather a sympathizer, was Sergio Aguayo Quezada, then a student at the University of Guadalajara. He experienced the events as a rank-and-file student and a citizen in Mexico City. He later became one of academia's most important specialists in the phenomenon of violence in Mexico, including political violence and specifically that exercised by the state. In his recent book *El 68, los estudiantes, el presidente y la CIA* (1968: The Students, the President, and the CIA), Sergio makes two essential contributions to the analysis of Tlatelolco. On the one hand, he attempts to demonstrate the very important U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) influence in logistical, informational, and intelligence support for the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz administration in its fight against the movement. It did this through infiltrations, co-optations, and other hidden war strategies, and also through the creation of a discourse to justify the repression, a discourse that was clearly false and full of what today we would call "fake news." This discourse labeled the student movement an international conspiracy by Communist forces acting in the context of the Cold War to bring down the legitimate government. This worldwide strategy, not limited to Mexico, used students as the cohesive social vehicle that could make communism advance on a planetary scale. Naturally, this mythology resonated in practically all the communications media in the Mexico of the time who were accomplices of and subordinate to the regime. All of this was framed in the Mexican state's concern with showing the world a tranquil, peaceful face during the rapidly-approaching Olympic Games, which demanded a swift, radical solution to the student conflict. That solution came on October 2 in the Three Cultures Plaza.

Aguayo's book also uses documents and eye-witness reports to attempt to explain what really happened that

There has been a certain idealization of the '68 movement as well as its leaders and sympathizers, turning them into mythical individual and collective heroes, as in official Mexican historiography.

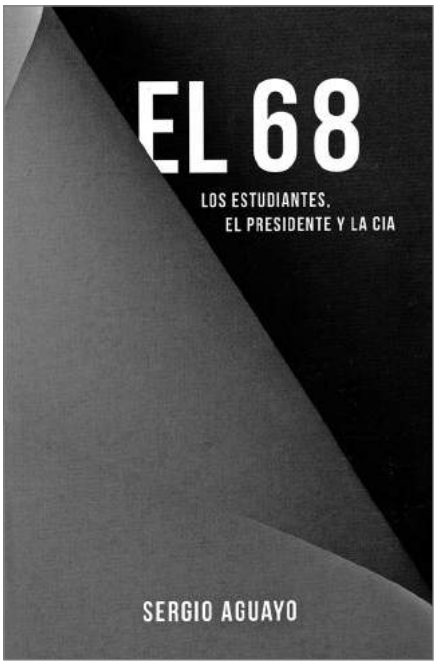


Luis González de Alba, *Tlatelolco, aquella tarde* (Mexico City: Cal y Arena, 2016), 130 pp.

October 2 afternoon. In the face of the absence of a definitive official investigation, Aguayo maintains that the Díaz Ordaz administration deliberately encouraged a climate of chaos that degenerated into that day's massacre. He did this by deliberately making the different police forces and army units clash with each other and then blaming the demonstrators, specifically the student leaders, of beginning the shooting. Aguayo's hypothesis is that the operation was not headed up by a single command, but that one part of the police and military forces was ordered to attack and shoot at their own comrades in order to provoke chaos and a disproportionate response by the army, the police, and the elite detachment that had been instructed to detain the greatest number of CNH members possible, the Olympia Battalion. According to the author, this mission was carried out by about 40 carefully selected snipers who belonged to the Chiefs of Staff Presidential Guards, the most highly trained group in the armed forces. Neither González de Alba nor Gómez Álvarez accepts this explanation in their respective books. The latter goes even further and openly opposes it, maintaining that the massacre was a deliberate action led by a single command, Minister of Defense Marcelino García Barragán, with a clear objective: striking hard and, as far as possible, dismantling the student movement 10 days before the October 12 inauguration of the Olympics.

I will only mention one other book, which has become a classic and has been published in several editions, each time adding information, criticism, self-criticism, and new thinking: *Pensar el 68* (Thinking About '68), originally compiled by Herman Bellinghausen and Hugo Hiriart. This volume contains articles not only by the CNH leaders, but also by rank-and-file student participants in assemblies, as well as writers and intellectuals who supported the movement, journalists who witnessed the events, and experts in social movements and social scientists who contribute new, diverse perspectives.

All the reflection and analysis produced over the last 50 years seem to have produced three main consensuses. Everyone agrees about the dignified, ethical, and simultaneously cautious and moderate actions of Javier Barros Sierra, engineer and then-rector of the UNAM. He always maintained unconditional support for the students without ever renouncing his convictions and expressing his differences with some of the movement's decisions when necessary. The second consensus is that the student



Sergio Aguayo, *El 68, los estudiantes, el presidente y la CIA*, Ideas y Palabras Collection (Mexico City: Proceso, 2018), 148 pp.

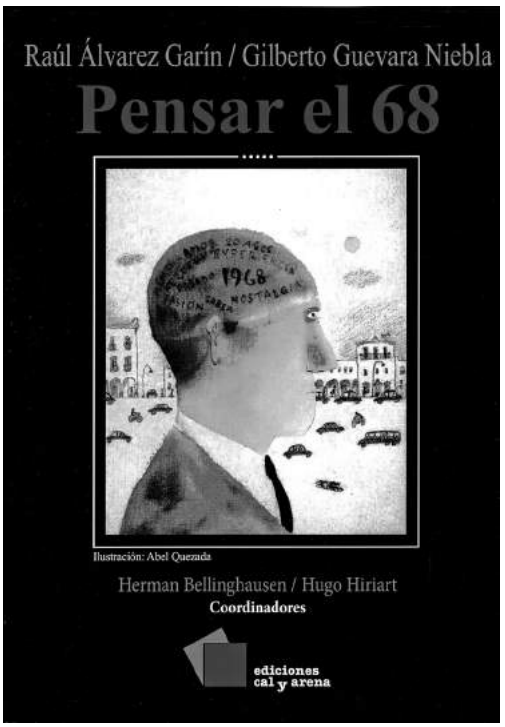
leadership's political analysis and response were mistaken when it continued to call for the October 2 rally in the Three Cultures Plaza: they interpreted the military withdrawal from University City and the initiation of informal conversations between government representatives and the National Strike Council as encouraging signs. The third and most important consensus is that the student movement was a watershed in Mexico's political history, which undoubtedly produced a radical transformation in the population's political culture and contributed to accelerating the transition to democracy —which for many has yet to conclude. What is absolutely certain is that, without '68, it would be impossible to understand Mexico's current multiparty system, which has already made alternation in office possible on three occasions. Nevertheless, it also cannot be denied that much is still

Aguayo attempts to demonstrate the very important CIA influence in logistical, informational, and intelligence support for the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz administration in its fight against the movement.

One important consensus is that the student movement undoubtedly produced a radical transformation in the population's political culture and contributed to accelerating the transition to democracy.

left to be done and that there have even been involutions and setbacks on Mexico's road to democracy. This can be seen both in the climate and very high rates of all kinds of violence (repressive, criminal, systemic, and institutional) prevalent throughout the country, including the repeated human rights violations —Ayotzinapa is the symbolic high point of this reality— by the state and other social actors. Among the latter, decidedly and unfortunately, are the forces of organized crime, which in the last two presidential periods has gained unanticipated and frankly terrifying strength.

This is why it is important to preserve the memory of '68 and its libertarian spirit, with its huge dose of imagination and idealism that from time to time returns to the streets and classrooms of Mexico. The undeniable demonstrations of solidarity and civic organization of the general populace and young people in particular during the earthquakes that devastated Mexico City and other regions of the country on September 19 of both 1985 and 2017 are examples of this. Other examples are the many civic organizations fighting against violence and for the respect for human rights that have emerged in the last 20 years. Among them are the groups of victims' relatives and those looking for the disappeared; also, the different student movements since then, including the exciting, inspiring recent mobilization of students form the UNAM and other institutions of higher learning that bravely began a struggle against violence and so-called *porrismo* on university campuses.[4] Whether they use other methods or recycle the best traditions of the historic struggles, Mexico's young people —outstanding among them, the students— are still and will continue to be a conscience for social transformation, a moral reserve of society, generous and brave, willing to carry the banner of and be a vanguard, to play the role that German philosopher Herbert Marcuse assigned them as social agents for change, to contribute to pointing out and resolving the new major national problems, regardless of who is in office. Together with singer-songwriter Daniel Viglietti, we sing, "Long live the students!" VM



Herman Bellinghausen and Hugo Hiriart, comps., *Pensar el 68* (Mexico City: Cal y Arena, 2018), 273 pp.

Notes

1 In 1999, UNAM students went on strike, closing down the university from April 1999 to February 2000, to oppose a proposed tuition hike. [Editor's Note.]

2 The "bronze historiography" refers to the practice of turning social actors into good and bad icons or static bronze statues; this kind of history is often used by governments to create "the official story" to justify the dominant power structure. [Editor's Note.]

3 The six points were 1) Release of all political prisoners, including those incarcerated before the student movement; 2) The disbanding of the riot police; 3) An end to repression of movement members and compensation for victims up until that date; 4) The repeal of Articles 145 and 145a of the Federal Criminal Code describing the crime of "social disturbance"; 5) Dismissal of police chief General Luis Cueto Ramírez and his assistant, General Raúl Mendiolea, who had directed the repression; and 6) Determination of which authorities were responsible for government acts of violence against students and a public dialogue between the authorities and the CNH to negotiate the demands.

4 "*Porrismo*" is the practice by certain university authorities and other interest groups of organizing groups of students or pseudo-students to threaten real student associations organized to defend their rights and to offer solidarity to other social movements. It is a form of political control on university campuses. [Editor's Note.]

Liliana Cordero Marines*

A Documentary Shines a New Light

From the early days of film, documentaries have established dialogues with social situations. This is why a nexus exists between the documentary and the world and history, since it sends the gaze of the filmmaker to a specific time and space. That is, it turns his/her eye to interests, concerns, and interpretations of events.[1]

It also tends to become part of the collective memory of a group. This is the case of the documentaries that have attempted to reconstruct the '68 student movement and its terrible outcome. Without a doubt, 50 years later, these materials have become an invaluable tool of memory. From the very first moment, cinema contributed to keeping events alive, resisting the censorship of the time, and holding back oblivion. In the manner of a puzzle, each documentary has contributed pieces for understanding the events.

One example is the emblematic documentary *El grito* (The Shout) (1968), by Leobardo López Arretche, filmed during the movement. *Historia de un documento* (History of a Document) (1970), by Óscar Menéndez, includes shots of the political prisoners filmed clandestinely in Lecumberri Jail. The documentary series *Memorial del 68* (Memorial of '68) (2008), by Nicolás Echevarría, brings together recollections of different movement participants.

These are invaluable pieces, which have replaced the investigative work that the government never did. The Canal 6 de Julio production company contributions and their director, documentary-maker Carlos Mendoza, stand out. In the 1990s, Mendoza began researching about the military/police operation staged during the student demonstration in Tlatelolco on October 2, 1968. This work concluded with the documentary *Tlatelolco: Las claves de la masacre* (Tlatelolco, the Keys to the Massacre) (2002).

However, another very important but little-cited piece interprets the student movement in a broader context: the documentary *1968 Conexión americana* (1968, the American Connection) (2008). This work, shelved for many years, situates the events on the international stage and presents revealing data. In the first place, it points out that any reading must begin in the framework of the Cold War and the ideological-political opposition between the capitalist bloc, headed by the United States, and the communist bloc, led by the Soviet Union. In the second place, it must be understood in the context of U.S. interventionist policies and its support for the Latin American military dictatorships in the 1960s and 1970s. In that scenario, Mexico emerges as a strategic territory for U.S. interests.

Hand-in-hand with its documentary research, the film collects evidence that shores up the hypothesis of Central Intelligence Agency intervention in the student movement, possible thanks to the consent and collaboration of high government officials and the Mexican army, including then-President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz.

In order to protect economic interests, the government mounted a scenario that encouraged the movement's radicalization. To create fear among the populace, U.S. and Mexican media added to this by emphasizing a series of fake news reports about communist and terrorist group activities, linking them with the students and presenting them as a threat to public order and safety. The aim was to effect a political turn toward the right and strict protection of large corporate interests.

Besides being the only documentary that deals with this issue, the film is valuable because it looks into its complexities and revitalizes the memory of the movement. Fundamentally, it contributes to maintaining a critical view of U.S. interventionist policy through history. VM

Notes

* Post-doctoral stay researcher at CISAN, UNAM; lilianacorde@gmail.com.

1 Bill Nichols, *La representación de la realidad* (Barcelona: Paidós, 2007), pp. 13, 33, and 47.