

voices of MEXICO

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

The Debate on the Mexican Stock Market

**On the Mexico-
U.S. Border:
Between Two
Laws**

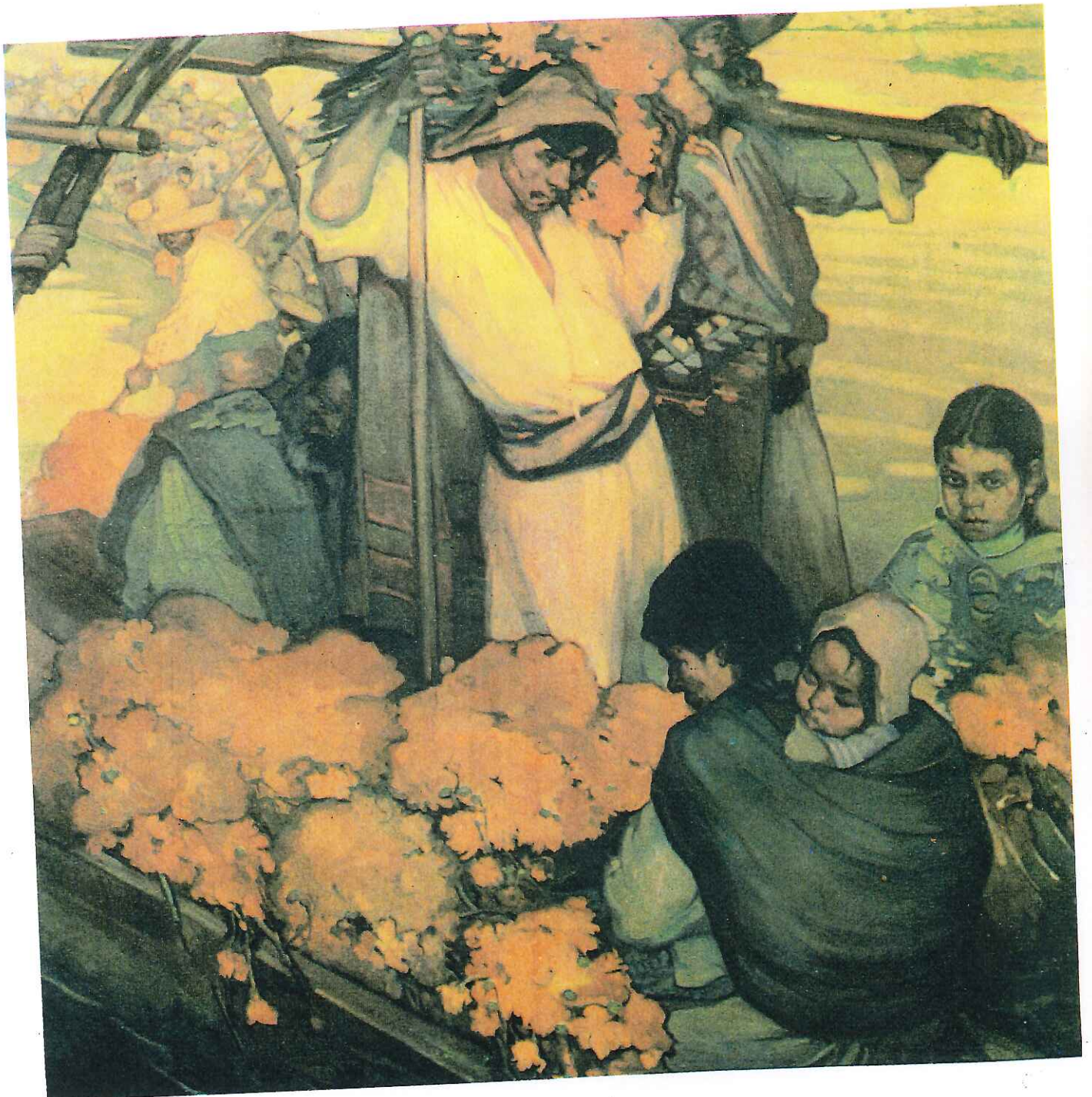
**The PRI and Its
Three Paradoxes**

**Women Film
Directors
in Mexico**



SATURNINO HERRAN

1887-1987

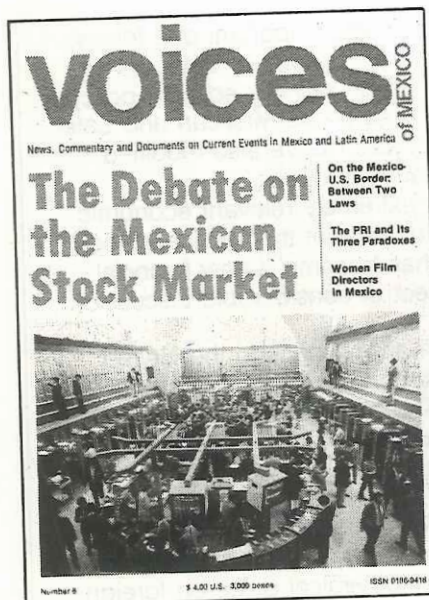


La ofrenda

Gobierno de *Aguascalientes*

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This issue of **Voices of Mexico** is an especially important one for us. After an exhaustive evaluation of the work we'd done to date, we've made some changes, incorporating new ideas into our editorial policy in an effort to provide more in depth analysis of the Mexican and Latin American reality. To reflect this new emphasis, we've also modified some aspects of the magazine's format and structure.

Part of our focus this time is on an extremely relevant economic issue in Mexico today, namely the development of the Mexican Stock Exchange. In just a very brief period, it has become a new financial power in the country, and thus, the subject of considerable discussion in economic and political circles.

Our Report deals with the migration of Mexicans to the United States in search of work, one of the most conflictive aspects of the relationship between the two countries. The increasingly intolerant nature of U.S. legislation regarding the undocumented makes this a topic of primary concern for Mexico's future.

The challenges confronting Carlos Salinas de Gortari, presidential candidate of the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), is the subject of our lead in depth article. We are also running an article on Mexico-U.S. oil relations, as well as a very polemical piece on foreign investment in our country.

Our coverage of Latin America focuses on two of the most pressing regional issues: Latin American integration and the search for peace in Central America. Both express a new Latin Americanist consciousness emphasizing sovereignty and the right to self determination for our peoples.

Finally, in the Science and Culture sections, we take a panoramic look at some subjects which we hope will be of interest to all of our readers. In the former, new discoveries made by UNAM researchers in superconductors and astronomic equipment are highlighted. And in the latter, we're running articles on the contribution of Mexican women to film and fiction in the development of the country's arts.

Mariclaire Acosta

THE PRI AND ITS THREE PARADOXES

Raúl Trejo Delarbre

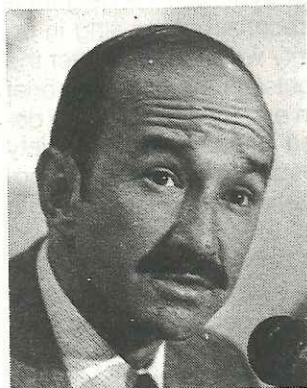
"Resistance is support". They say that was Jesús Reyes Heróles adage for explaining the secret behind the political reform he helped promote. Thanks to that reform, authentic competition between political parties could begin in Mexico. Reyes Heróles, who died in March 1985, understood that preserving the Mexican political system, even with its historical stability, would require not only the further consolidation of power, but also the recognition of rights and a role for minority political groups. Thus, he sponsored legislative changes, which since 1977 have allowed new political parties to obtain legal, institutional status. Since then, these groups have even been eligible for federal support. While they have grown slowly, they now represent more consolidated alternatives within the Mexican political system, with specific ideological characteristics and programatic platforms. Mexicans, who before had virtually no choice but to vote for the PRI or to abstain, now have a much broader range of alternative projects from which to choose. And while people's knowledge of these new options was still insufficient, in the 1982 presidential elections, voters could choose from among seven registered candidates. In next year's elections, there

will be a similar number of presidential hopefuls, but the campaigning is bound to be hotter as the parties have intensified the political struggle.

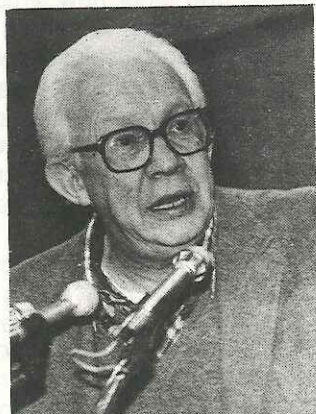
It is a foregone conclusion that the victor will be 39-year old Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the young man who represents the option of continued political domination by the PRI. Given that it is so easy to predict the winner, it might seem hard to find the attractions in the upcoming race. Nonetheless, Salinas' candidacy faces at least three paradoxical situations, which give a novel twist to this presidential contest.

First, Salinas has few ties to the country's traditional political elites; his main base is among young government officials, many of whom have done graduate studies abroad, but who have limited experience in negotiating the relationships between political power and the country's social sectors, a fundamental component of the Mexican system. Salinas' candidacy, and his certain victory, represent a triumph for this new generation of statesmen. They have promised a "new political style," free from some of the traditional vices that plague the Mexican political system (influence peddling, authoritarianism, corruption, etc.). Nonetheless, in order to put together an acceptably effective team, and especially to maintain the balance required in exercising presidential powers, Salinas needs the support of the old Mexican political elites. Thus, the need to reconcile different interests within the governing apparatus, may force him to compromise on his drive for political modernization.

Another disadvantage for the candidate, and for his future government, if he holds true to the positions he's held until now, is his economic policy. As Minister of Programming and Budget, Salinas was responsible for implementing an economic strategy, which in general terms can be considered neoliberal. It limited public spending, lifted some protective trade restrictions, weakened the state-run sector of the economy, set wage restrictions and held firm on government commitments to continue paying interest on the foreign debt. While the strategy may



Carlos Salinas de Gortari,
PRI presidential candidate.
(Photo from Novedades archive)



Heberto Castillo, PMS candidate.
(Photo from Novedades archive)

Researcher in the Institute of Social Research, UNAM.

well have been applauded on Wall Street, it has provoked widespread complaints in Mexican society, especially among working people. Now, the candidate, already committed to a specific economic line, must define what could be a slightly different course if he wants the votes, and later, the support of organized labor. For now, the most notorious tensions to emerge within the PRI's power structure over Salinas' nomination have come from traditional union leadership.

Therein lies the first paradox for Salinas' candidacy. He promises democratic political modernization, but his plans for economic modernization tend to imply even greater restrictions for Mexican society; and his hopes to consolidate a new political style among the country's political leadership are challenged by the need for reconciliation with Mexico's most traditional politicians.

New Sources of Power

A second novel aspect of this political campaign grows out of a new, and still emerging, perhaps less authoritarian, profile of presidential power. It is common knowledge

Salinas de Gortari needs the support of the old Mexican political elites

that during their drive to consolidate power, reaching something close to omnipotence at times, Mexico's presidents are able to balance diverse political forces, guide the country's growth, resist foreign and domestic pressures and establish themselves as the definitive and often unquestionable designers of the nation's course. In formal terms, Mexico's political system is democratic, since despite the excesses and even the occasional manipulation of electoral results, it is obvious that those in office have been chosen by the majority of voters. But, in practical terms, this capacity for democracy within the Mexican system has been conditioned by the concentration of power in just a few hands (and often, in regards to important matters, in the hands of a single individual, the President). Formally, the President's legal resources are virtually limitless. Ten years ago, in fact, given the absence of a legislative branch capable of forming an effective counterweight to presidential powers, Jorge Capizo, now the UNAM's rector, wrote that "pure *presidencialismo*" reigned in the country.

Nonetheless, today it would be difficult to affirm that pure *presidencialismo* (that is a political system that concentrates tremendous power in the president), without constraints or counterweights on the excess authority of a single individual, is still an effective way of governing Mexico. It is widely held that the concentration of power in any country is inversely proportional to the society's vigor, organization and free expression. As a society diversifies, gains experience and generates different political currents and parties, it tends to produce new sources of power, which eventually can act as a counterbalance on executive authority.

It is impossible to understand presidential power in Mexico without examining the contradictions of its early



Jorge de la Vega Domínguez and Adolfo Lugo Verduzco, president and general secretary of the PRI. (Photo from Novedades archive)

20th century history. *Presidencialismo* as a form of government was consolidated 50 years ago by General Lázaro Cárdenas, after an intense period of civil strife and rule by regional strongmen. Since then it has functioned to reconcile—or subordinate, when deemed necessary—the dissident forces both within and outside of the governing political bureaucracy. This exercise of presidential power, authoritarian, but without excesses, conciliatory, but pluralist, permitted sustained economic growth (at least until the 1970s). At the same time and above all, it led to political stability, in contrast to the situation throughout the rest of Latin America and to the country's own earlier history.

While *presidencialismo* has played an important role in Mexico, it is quite possible that its historical cycle is now drawing to a close. Mexican society has changed since the 1930's and 40's, when the country was just beginning to take its first simultaneous steps toward urbanization and modernization. While large swatches of Mexican society remain unorganized, there is a perceptible and growing move toward greater participation. Perhaps some of the most important examples of this phenomenon, although not the only ones, are the recent student mobilizations, strikes and other new struggles by labor, the neighborhood organizing to defend or reconstruct housing in urban areas and a spirit of solidarity which spread after the 1985 earthquake. These were outstanding and often brief moments, which form part of an experience still to be developed (and even to be studied in detail), as the society evolves in search of greater freedom from political imposition, or perhaps, of greater participation or influence in decision-making.

Presidencialismo is increasingly challenged here, at times with reason, at times with exaggeration. It has occasionally been blamed for events or decisions arising from circumstances much broader than the domain even of Mexican presidential powers. Such was the case with the decision to nationalize the country's banking system. Commonly believed to have been President López Portillo's sole, personal decision, it was in fact, also determined by

economic considerations and the resulting need to reorient the Mexican financial system.

On other occasions, *presidencialismo* is mythified and apparently reinforced. Carlos Salinas de Gortari's nomination by the PRI is a good example: suddenly he became heir, even before the elections, to all the traditions, practices, faculties and defects related to the exercise of presidential power.

Nonetheless, Salinas will hold presidential powers diminished by the country's new political conditions. It is increasingly clear, in both governmental and non-governmental circles, that Mexican *presidencialismo* must cede some of its privileges to the rest of the state (for example, the Senate and House should have some of the authority denied its by omnipotent presidentialism), and of course, to civil society. The deterioration of the presidential image may well have been greater in the last several years than at any other time in contemporary Mexican history. Until recently, it was virtually unheard of for the press to question the President; it was simply taboo, and no journalist or editor was willing to violate it. In the last five or six years, that unwritten rule has disappeared, to the degree that now the President is often the subject of political cartoons, and his decisions are the object of sharp criticism in a whole range of ideologically diverse publications.

Perhaps the single-most important of presidential powers in the Mexican system has been the president's prerogative to name his own successor. The tradition was

maintained this year, although with certain nuances. As a result of the frequent criticisms of *tapadismo* (the presidential practice of keeping his successor's name secret until the last moment) and the need to generate a bit of movement in the PRI, President Miguel de la Madrid decided that this time six members of his cabinet would be publicly named as contenders for the Party's nomination. In the second half of August, each of the six addressed the PRI leadership, providing a synthesis of their political thinking and an outline of the program they would implement if elected president. The public and, above all,

The precedent for open competition will clearly influence the selection processes for other PRI candidates

PRI members, got the chance to have formal contenders for the nomination (unknown in the PRI for the past 30 years) and to express support for their favorite. The final decision was still the President's, but the process allowed Party leadership at all levels and from all sectors to exert pressure on behalf of their respective candidates. This nuance may appear minor from a distance, but given the orthodoxy that defined the succession process before, it

OPPOSITION LEFT AND RIGHT

To the right of the PRI is the National Action Party (PAN). With roots in the middle-class, the PAN campaigns for a weaker state, especially as related to its traditional role in directing the economy. It will be difficult for the PAN to gain significant new support at the polls in the next elections (it's never received more than about 18 % of the total vote), in part because the PRI will be making a special effort to win back the middle-class, especially in the northern part of the country, where the PAN has been strongest. In addition, the fact that the PAN has found support among influential, elite political sectors in the United States, rather than helping the party to recruit here, has actually led to its repudiation. Although it is not likely to grow, the PAN will probably take up increasingly radical positions.

Also to the right on the political spectrum is the Mexican Democratic Party (PDM), small, with modest ambitions, but constantly active. With considerable strength in central Mexico, the PDM has dusted-off a pro-clerical discourse, recited by candidate Gumersindo Magaña as he campaigns in the party's traditional strongholds: Guanajuato and Jalisco. Despite its activities, it seems unlikely that the PDM will ever be more than a small, virtually regional, party. In 1985, it won 2.73 % of the vote.

There is more movement on the left of the electoral spectrum, although there probably won't be any more new surprises. The Mexican Socialist Party (PMS) was formed earlier this year through the merger of several left parties, the most important being the Unified Mexican Socialist Party (PSUM, which won 3.2 % of the vote

in 1985) and the Mexican Workers Party (PMT, which won just 1.5 % of the votes that year). It was hoped that the PMS would become a pole for consolidating left opposition, what with its real capacity for growth and an appealing, personable presidential candidate, Heriberto Castillo Martínez. Castillo won his party's nomination in a rather curious primary, in which voting was not limited to party members, but was open to all citizens.

Nonetheless, shortly after the PMS primary, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Solórzano, another well-known political figure identified with the left, although an active PRI member, announced his own candidacy. Governor of Michoacán, thanks to the PRI, until little more than a year ago, Cárdenas, at the head of the "Democratic Current," had proposed a radical reorganization of PRI internal procedures. He later decided that the space for such democratizing efforts did not exist within the PRI and became a member of the small Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM), which immediately named him as its presidential candidate.

Traditionally subordinated to the federal government and the PRI, the PARM enjoys little prestige in the country. Nonetheless, it does have some popular support and some autonomy in certain parts of the country, especially in northern Tamaulipas. It received so few votes in 1982 that it dropped below the minimum percentage required by federal laws and temporarily lost its legal status as a party. In 1985, it was able to reestablish its status, winning 1.65 % of the vote. Respected son of the general who governed Mexico some 50 years ago, Cárdenas and

his candidacy could occasion a rapid recovery for this otherwise deteriorated party.

In relation to the elections, his candidacy will most likely have its greatest impact on the left, especially the PMS, rather than on the PRI. Many people, without being PMS members, who probably would have voted for Castillo, may now decide to opt for Cárdenas, a less radical candidate and product of the traditional political system, whose split with the PRI has gained him new popularity.

If both Castillo and Cárdenas continue to run, the country's center-left electorate will be divided. The PMS still has the option of supporting Cárdenas, although as late as November, the idea was causing heated debate in the party. The Cárdenas candidacy will probably be supported by the Socialist Workers Party (PST, which won 2.46 % of the vote three years ago), recently split over the decision to participate in the PMS, with half of its leadership leaving to join the new party. The Popular Socialist Party (PPS, with some 2% of the vote) will probably line up behind him, as well.

Finally, also on the left flank, is the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT, with 1.5 % of the votes in 1985), which may well-run Rosario Ibarra de Piedra for president. A well-known human rights activist, nonetheless, Ibarra's anti-government positions have not sparked interest in significant sectors of the electorate.

RTD

The PRI must acknowledge that the opposition should be allowed to gain strength by winning fair elections

represents an authentic transformation, facilitating more direct and open political life in the PRI.

For now, the precedent for open competition and public presentations of platforms and programs has been set; it will clearly influence the selection processes for other PRI candidates, especially in gubernatorial races and even local elections, where authoritarian decision-making has predominated and base-level PRI members generally left without a say. And from now on, the presidential succession will probably be determined in a more open process, with greater participation by Party members and a smaller dose of the traditional presidential prerogative.

With the most important of presidential powers thus limited, it is reasonable to think that Mexican *presidencialismo* could become less authoritarian. This presents the second major paradox: Salinas owes his nomination and the presidency to the traditional, vertical exercise of presidential power. But he will have to accept (and he may even move to facilitate) a reduction in, what have been until now, the excessive powers and attributes of the Mexican presidency.

Limits on the PRI?

This more modern, and thus democratic, form of *presidencialismo* must allow for its corollary in a more active role for political parties. And that's at the root of the third paradox for Salinas and his team. A greater role for opposition parties implies setting limits for the PRI. But it is not at all clear that PRI members, and especially the old school leaders in certain sectors of the Party, labor for example, or in certain regions where political authority is particularly concentrated, will permit such a redistribution of power.

While presidentialism has played an important role in Mexico, it is quite possible that its historical cycle is drawing to a close

Given this panorama, it's quite reasonable to think that the 1988 elections won't bring any, or but very few, changes to the Mexican political scene. Unless there are some really major surprises, it seems unlikely that past electoral patterns will change much on a national level. But that doesn't make next July's elections, and especially the campaigns leading up to them, irrelevant. Their relevance lies in the chance for people to express their opinions and for the parties to make proposals. Carlos Salinas' insistence since the start of his campaign that people should raise criticisms and make suggestions is significant in this regard. Only time will tell how much those opinions will be taken into account.

In addition, to the extent that they can put together

coherent and believable programs, opposition parties could become both effective interlocutors for political power and intermediaries between that power and society. In this context, then, the 1988 elections represent a real test for the new party system that has begun to develop in Mexico. If they manage to overcome their internal weaknesses and put together a set of proposals, not only to implement if they should win, but rather to present to those in power in the coming years, then opposition parties could have a greater presence in the reorganization of the Mexican political system. All of this implies, among many other things, that they will need to go beyond the limits of electoral politics, organizing, for example, among sectors that have only recently arrived on the political scene: tenants, women's groups, alternative labor organizations, environmentalists, etc.

The challenge for the PRI, the governing party, is to recover some of its lost ground (it dropped from 80 % of the total vote in 1976, to 69 % and later to 64.5 % in 1985). But it can't do this by using force to impose an artificial majority, as some believe it did in the July 1986 elections in Chihuahua. This is the third major dilemma for Carlos Salinas de Gortari and the PRI: to acknowledge that the opposition should be allowed to gain strength by winning fair elections, as one way for civil society to increase its political influence, while deepening the process of transformation within the PRI, so that its capacity to influence policy depends less on government support and more on the strength of its own membership. What is at stake, then, is the creation of an authentic party system in Mexico. That means recognizing, as Jesús Reyes Heróles always said, that despite ideological differences, in politics, "resistance is support." □

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

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MEXICO-U.S. OIL RELATIONS

Marcela Serrato

With its effect on the energetics sector, external trade and international finances, the oil slump of 1986 marked the beginning of a new stage in the energetics relations between Mexico and the U.S. In the months immediately following the third oil slump, there were clear differences between them respecting the balance of cost against benefit. From the U.S. point of view, even although the fall in prices would have grave consequences in the oil industry and the economies of the oil producing states, there would definitely be greater benefits for the country and for the community of industrialized countries in general, in terms of accelerated economic growth and the reduction of unemployment levels and inflation.

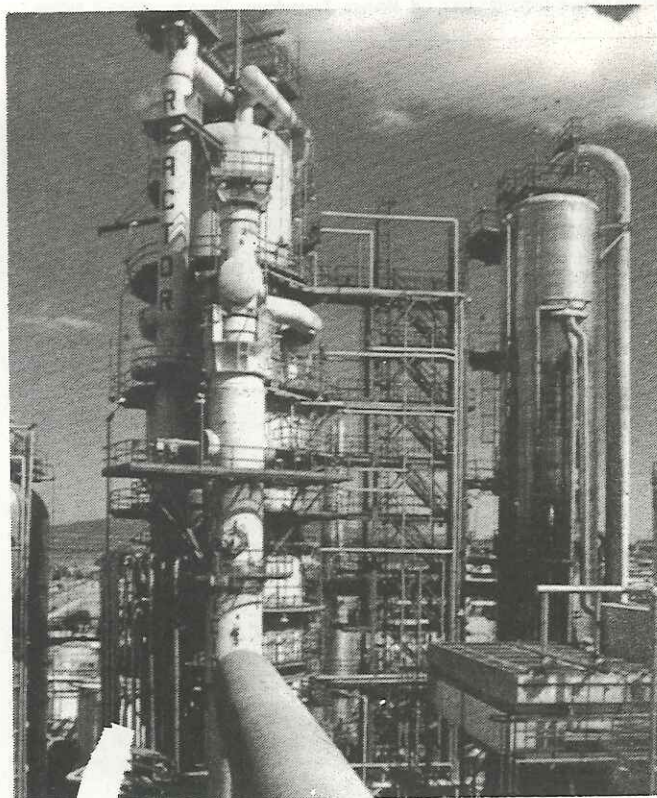
Setting prices through the simple mechanism of supply and demand means they will be excessively low and even below production costs

For its side, the Mexican government maintained that, as much with oil producing countries as consumers, the new oil crisis would have a predominantly negative outcome, since the lowering of prices of crude oil would affect not only the oil industry itself but also the behavior of the economy, finances and international trade. The majority of oil producing countries and exporters would have to apply drastic economic measures, practically to the point of seeing their margin for internal manouvre used up. The oil importing countries would find themselves forced to reduce their dependence on external oil supplies, and to develop new policies on alternative sources of energy. For the sake of a supposed short term benefit of greater economic growth with lower inflation, obtained through lower oil prices, the stability and rational equilibrium of the world

Director of the International Market Analysis, Ministry of Energy, Mines and State Industry (SEMIP).

economy would be endangered.

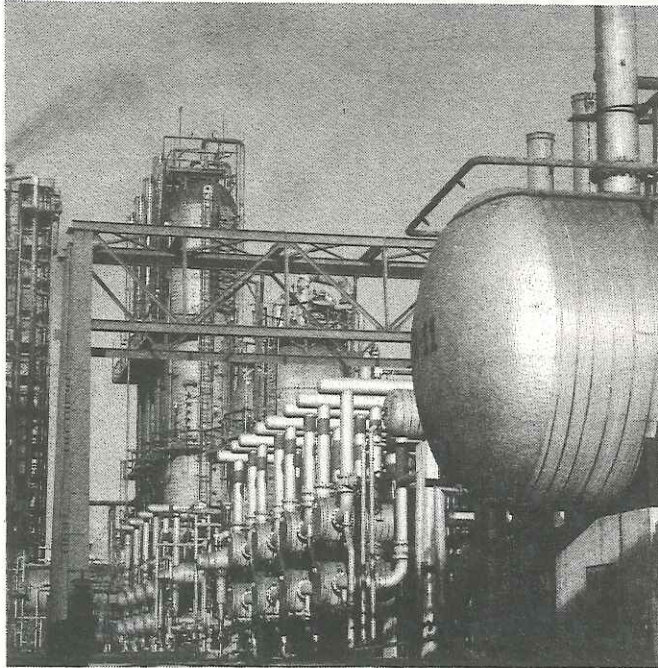
On the other hand, within the framework of the new oil crisis, the U.S. maintained its traditional support for the interaction of supply and demand in international oil price fixing, considering it consistently as "just another raw material". In contrast, Mexico maintained a position favoring intervention in the oil market to regulate supply and price protection with two basic arguments. In the first place, oil is a raw material of strategic importance whose exploration, production, refining and commercialization re-



Oil complex. (Photo from PEMEX archive)

quires long term program design and inversion projects that involve thousands of employees and an investment of thousands of millions of dollars. This cannot be subjected to the arbitration of speculative forces.

In the second place, in a context of an extreme excess in production capacity of between 11 and 12 MBD principally among member countries of the OPEC and representing around 45% of oil traded internationally, price fixing only through the criteria of supply and demand would imply excessively low price levels, in many cases,



DEMEX Metal removing unit, Cd. Madera, Tamaulipas. (Photo from PEMEX archive)

below cost. Even with the supposition of an increase in demand of 2 percent annually, equivalent to around 900 MBD, it would take 10 years to close the breach between real and potential supply and demand in the oil market.

Economic Strategy

Consequently, the stabilization of prices through automatic mechanisms would imply, on the short term, a long period of erratic movements resulting in high costs as much for exporting as for importing countries, in a global framework of uncertainty and instability. On the long term, it would result in a new oil crisis with abrupt price rises in the next ten years, should an excessive dependence on oil again arise.

Instead of waiting for stability in the world hydrocarbon market, and heeding only the market forces, Mexico applied a double strategy of coordination with other exporting countries with efficient mechanisms to regulate the oil supply and give oil an economic and strategic value, apart from the strictly commercial one.

While incorporating its economic value, the price of oil would take into account the exploration costs, and the development of new oil fields that would guarantee the renewal of the volumes extracted and secure the role played by this energy source in the world energetics balance. The great differences existing between various regions in the world in terms of extraction costs would also be taken into account in this economic valuation. In incorporating its strategic value, oil would be priced at its correct value not only in terms of energetics but also economics and politics, allowing for aspects of independence and vulnerability.

Suddenly, the negative effects of the oil crisis in the American oil industry began to appear, in terms of lowering of production, and increase in demand and imports. The expected stimulus of price-lowering on economic

PEMEX: MARKETS AT HOME AND ABROAD

In 1986, the international oil market lived through one of its most critical stages, when the price of crude oil fell by almost 50% in the first three months of the year.

As a result of this, and other factors, the global income, from external sales of Mexican oil and derivatives decreased considerably.

Mexican oil production is the exclusive responsibility of Mexican Oil (PEMEX), a state monopoly since 1938, when it was expropriated from the American companies who had worked it for years.

Since the Mexican subsoil is rich in hydrocarbons, it soon became the country's main economic activity and the most important export item surpassing agricultural production and other aspects of the economy.

In this sense, the fall in oil prices in the international market was a real blow

for Mexico, at present suffering from one of the worst crises of its history. The details of sales of oil and its derivatives in 1986 are as follows:

In 1986, PEMEX had a positive balance of trade, 5 451.6 million dollars, down by 59.8% on the 1985 figures.

Crude oil constituted 90% of the total value of external sales: oil products 8.7% and petrochemicals 0.5%.

The average daily export of crude oil was 1 289.6 million barrels (MBD), of which 44.4% was Istmus and 55.6% Maya.

Over the year crude oil was exported to 23 countries, of which the five main clients were the U.S., 50.6%; Spain, 15.2%; Japan, 14.1%; France, 6.3% and Israel, 3.0%.

The average export price per barrel was 11.84 dollars, in December reaching 13.67 dollars.

The oil product exports were 115.7 MBD, 14% down on the 1985 figures.

The oil products registered a positive trade balance of 181.3 million dollars, of which the most outstanding were diesel exports, 28.9%; petrol 26.8%; liquid gas, 11.6%; pentane, 11.0% and gas, 9.9%.

The petrochemical exports reached 187.9 million tons, 22.6% down on the 1985 figures.

During 1986 there was a general decrease in the volume of internal sales. Oil products fell by 1%, natural gas by around 19% and the petrochemicals by 1.88%, with respect to the previous year.

In what in oil industry terms is considered to be an unprecedented fall, the liquid gas sales fell by 1.3%, turbine gas and diesel by 4.1% and 6.8% respectively.

In contrast, gas and combustibles

increased their sales by 2.7% and 2.2% more than in 1985.

The petrochemicals fell considerably in the sales of acetaldehyde, 24.8%, butadiene, 37.8% and paraxylene, 15.9%.

There were gas price increases to the order of 84.2% for Nova and 71.4% for Extra, although this did not affect sales.

The same occurred with domestic gas, whose price increased over the year by a total of 250%.

As a result of price increases and in spite of the decrease in sales, the institution's income rose by 101% over the previous year, going from 1 570 212.2 million pesos to 3 156 880.7 million pesos.

growth did not happen. At the same time, there were some important shades of changes in the external oil policies, with a clear effect on the course of energetic relations with Mexico.

Although the U.S. continued to cling to the principle of the interaction of supply and demand, rejecting proposals such as a tax on crude oil imports or the application of import quotas, they finally recognised that no one was benefiting from the lowering of prices and even made discreet diplomatic interventions in favor of the stabilization of the oil market. In fact, while the Energetics Secretary, Herrington, publicly repeated the U.S. obligations towards the free markets, the Vicepresident, Bush, paid a visit to Saudi Arabia in the summer of 1986 to convey a message contradicting this. Weeks later, OPEC agreed on the re-establishment of production controls to raise prices.

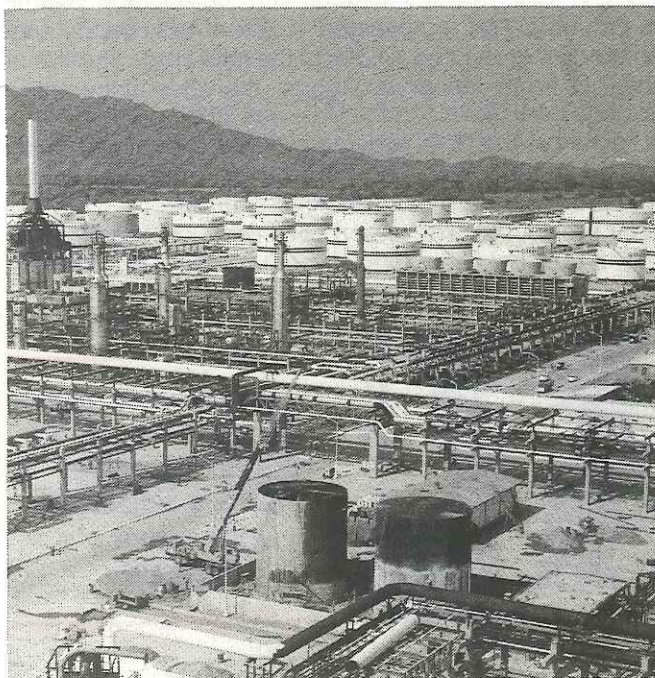
To a great extent, this change in the U.S. position came from an awareness of the effect on national security signified by the price fall of 1986. In a medium term, the persistence of these tendencies pointed clearly to an international setting that would lead to an abrupt rise of prices.

In March 1987, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) issued a bulletin on energetics security where, on the basis of the growing external vulnerability provoked by the third oil slump, they urged the Reagan administration to give renewed impetus to the traditional axis of the policies of energetics (energy saving, diversification of resources, sources and increase of strategic inventories) and to establish fiscal and reglamentary measures to promote the development of the oil industry in this country. In particular, the DOE demanded priority for nuclear energy, with the search for formulae to obtain the support of the member countries of the International Energy Agency (AIE) for the future development of this energy source.

In principle, a greater U.S. awareness of the significance of energetics security is advantageous to Mexico because it implies a lowering of their dependence on

supplies coming from unstable zones such as the Middle East, and more strategic interest in supply sources, both closer to home and stabler, such as Mexico. Nevertheless, what is imperative in strategic terms might not be so in strictly commercial terms. (And in the last instance, for a country such as the U.S. with a serious external trade deficit, it is probable that the commercial considerations will prevail finally over the strategic).

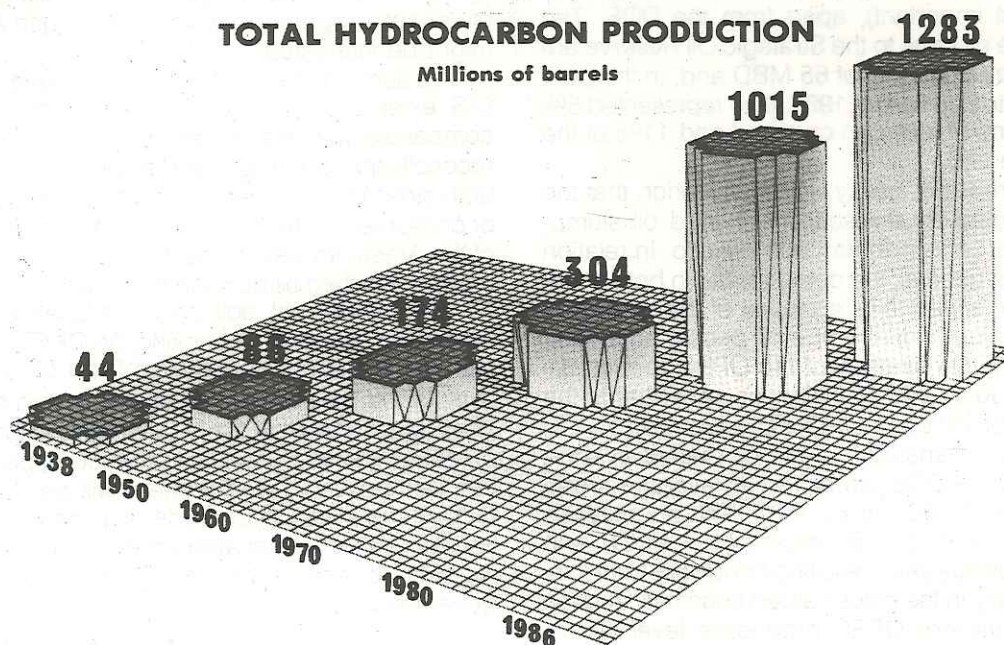
Recent experience indicates that, in spite of constant reference, on the part of the U.S. authorities, to the problem of vulnerability signified by the growth in crude oil imports, these are maintaining their tendency to in-



Tank area in Salinacruz, Oaxaca. (Photo from PEMEX archive)

TOTAL HYDROCARBON PRODUCTION

Millions of barrels



crease, and the participation of the Organization member countries stays around 50%, for reasons of a strictly commercial order: a greater competitiveness in OPEC crude oil sold at official prices against non-OPEC crude oil (Mexico among others) sold also at prices that are official but tied by formulae for spot prices.

Oil Trade Mexico U.S.

The export of Mexican crude oil to the U.S. has been subject to production capacity, to the availability that is controlled by a self-imposed export platform, and to the criteria of geographic sales diversification. From January to September 1987, Mexico sold the U.S. an average volume of 625 MBD that represented 46.6% of this country's total crude exports and 14.3% of the total crude imports of the U.S. From January to August, the value of the crude exports from Mexico to the U.S. was 2632 million dollars, a figure that was 39% larger than that obtained in the same period in 1986, reflecting the average price recovery to levels of 16.60 d/b in the American market (11.93 d/b a year previously). The export of oil products from Mexico to the U.S. between January and August 1987 reached



Francisco Rojas, director of PEMEX.
(Photo from PEMEX archive)

The new turn taken by the U.S. in its foreign oil policy is more compatible with Mexico's position

80.7 MBD, equivalent to 43% of the total import of products in the U.S.

The folder of clients that Mexico has in the U.S. already includes 18 oil companies (Chevron and Marathon are among the most important), apart from the DOE. The volumes of crude oil sales to the Strategic Oil Reserve are subject to a contractual goal of 65 MBD and, in the period from January to September 1987, they represented 5% of the total exports of Mexican crude oil and 11% of the total sales to the U.S.

The new oil relations policy with the exterior, that the U.S. has developed as a result of the third oil slump, promises a better understanding with Mexico. In relation to the oil market in general, the oil authorities in both countries have demonstrated their approval of the tendential changes of the international crude oil prices, attributing success to the double strategy of the OPEC to reestablish production quotas and official prices, as well as to the support actions of various non-OPEC countries.

The prospective analyses of the oil market at short term, created by the DOE, predicted an average crude oil price of around 17.70 p/b by 1987, with an increase in world consumption of 0.8 percent (400 MBD) with respect to the previous year, resulting principally from lower economic activity in the industrialized countries, and the maintenance of the non-OPEC production level. On its part, Mexico was more conservative in its prognostications,

In a country like the United States, with its serious foreign trade deficit, commercial interests prevail over strategic concerns

with an estimate in the 1987 budget of a yearly average price of 12 d/b. The dynamics of the Mexican crude oil prices and the achievement of the export goals produced an income, through crude oil sales to the exterior during the first nine months, of 6042 million dollars (MMD), which exceeds, by 348 MMD, the calculated for the entire year.

As much from the Mexican as the American point of view, even when the basic aspects of the market (supply and demand) appeared to have reached a certain equilibrium, this should not be seen as a reason for complacency. In fact, in the months of July and August 1987, the prices of crude oil reached their highest level in the year for eminently speculative reasons (the raising of the American flag in Kuwaiti ships, and the deepening of hostilities between Iran and Iraq) without necessarily reflecting the fundamental conditions of supply and demand in the short term. The violation of the OPEC production quotas (estimated in 2.2MMBD during the third quarter of the year), and the consequent excessive supply, practically nullified the effect of the Persian Gulf War of raising prices. By the end of the year, this reduction could determine, in its turn, a lower OPEC production and a price stabilized around 18 d/b.

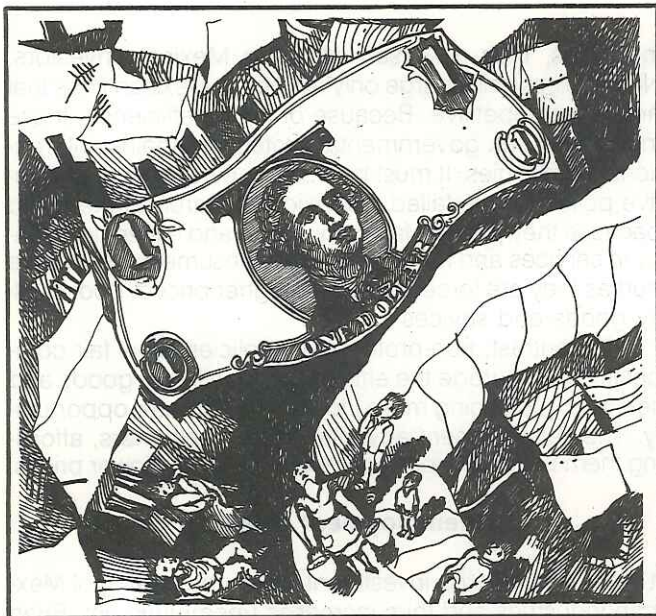
The only disturbing element in the commercial oil relations of Mexico and the U.S. in recent dates has been the application, for December 1987, of the U.S. crude oil tax on imports for the treatment of toxic waste (the so-called "Superfund"). Together with other crude oil-exporting countries that were affected, Mexico demanded the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) to remove this tax on the grounds of discrimination, and received a positive answer to the petition. In bilateral meetings, Mexico emphasized its preoccupation with the fact that little taxes of the "Superfund" type could proliferate in support of various programs in which the Reagan Administration might be interested.

To sum up, the new turn taken in recent dates by the U.S. external oil policy certainly indicates a position more compatible with that of Mexico. To a great extent, this reconciliation of interests is the result of an awareness on both sides of the adverse effects on everyone, producer or consumer, of the low oil price policy, and, in particular, of the American view of the energetics problems originating from the third-oil slump in questions of national security.

For the moment, both countries take the position, common in the oil market, of backing the OPEC's effort to regulate supply and to re-establish fixed official prices. The evolution of the bilateral oil trade at government and company level shows that the U.S. remains the most solid part of Mexico's crude oil and oil products exporting effort. As can be foreseen, this closeness will persist while the effects of the lowering of crude oil prices persists and will intensify with a greater awareness of their vulnerability with regards to energetics on the part of the American government. □

MODERN VIEWS ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN MEXICO

Luis Miguel Díaz



The Mexican government has recently enacted a series of incentives to attract foreign investment, declaring that it can and should play a role in the structural transformation of the country's productive plant. This essay will briefly examine some of the aspects of foreign investment most cited by critics as counterproductive for Mexico.

The Economic Power of Foreign Investors

One claim by critics is that due to the enormous economic power of foreign investors, foreign investment does not solve the country's economic problems, but rather prevents their solution. Historically, this argument was based on turn of the century conditions, when the Mexican economic system was largely financed by foreigners and con-

Doctorate in Law from the University of Harvard. A diplomat by career, he is at present a lawyer for International Investments in Mexico City.

Today, foreign firms in Mexico account for only 4.5 percent of total investment in the country

trolled from abroad. In addition, the industrialized countries made their recognition of the Mexican government contingent upon the country's acceptance of conditions set by foreign investors. In those days then, foreign investment represented a real threat to Mexico's economy and sovereignty.

Today, foreign firms in Mexico account for only 4.5 percent of total investment in the country, and the legitimacy of the Mexican government is beyond question. In light of these new circumstances, it is unrealistic to think that a few foreign investors can manipulate the Mexican economy or challenge the legality of the Mexican government. Currently, the power of foreign investors might be decisive in one sector or another, but not in the Mexican economy as a whole.

Exploitation of Natural Resources

Foreign investors are accused of exploiting Mexico's natural resources, at the expense of Mexicans. Foreign corporations here do not make their profits by exploiting natural resources, but rather by managing and training Mexicans who work in the manufacturing, marketing and service sectors. According to figures from the Under Secretariat for Regulating Foreign Investment, the distribution of foreign investment in 1985 was as follows:

Extractive.....	1.28 %
Agrobusiness.....	0.08 %
Manufacture.....	71.42 %
Services.....	20.35 %
Commerce.....	6.87 %

Clearly only a very small percentage of foreign invest-

ment goes into the exploitation of natural resources.

Disadvantages of the Maquila Program

An increasingly important component of foreign investment enters Mexico through the maquila program, by which foreign-made parts are assembled at low wage, Mexican manufacturing plants and the finished products shipped back across the border at reduced duty rates. Critics argue that Mexico's development should not be based on maquila (in-bond) industries. This charge, however, only takes into account one angle of the situation. It simply condemns the economic success of foreign investors without considering the benefits for Mexican workers. Nor does it evaluate the maquila program in relation to its specific role in the Mexican economy.

This program reflects the unique economic relationship between Mexico and certain markets in developed countries. It generates thousands of new jobs and ranks second in foreign exchange earnings. The program per se is not intended to solve Mexico's complex economic problems, nor to meet all the demands of foreign corporations.

A Threat to Mexico's Economic Independence

The argument that foreign investment threatens Mexico's economic independence is rooted in the legal conception of the state as an independent entity. Foreign investment is viewed as endangering the country's independence because it signifies economic and technological dependence on foreign sources. These fears grow out of confusions regarding the meaning of independence. One thing is an independent government as a legal concept, a necessary component of the state; another is independence as a word denoting the absence of dependence or total freedom from outside controls. The legal conception of independence has nothing to do with the diverse forms of economic and technological dependence characterizing international relations today.

The restrictions on a nation's freedom, resulting either from the norms of international law or contractual agreements, do not affect its independence in the least. As long as those restrictions do not place one country under the legal authority of another, the former remains an independent nation, however extensive and burdensome its obligations may be.

The United States of America presents a perfect example of how foreign investment does not jeopardize a state's legal independence. The U.S. continues to be an



industries, thus adversely affecting Mexican investors. Nonetheless, this charge only applies to Mexican firms that are non-competitive. Because of their inefficiency, these industries seek governmental protection against international companies. It must be noted, however, that protective policies have failed in Mexico and around the world because they prevent fair competition and foster inefficiency in services and manufacturing. Consumers, in turn, are hurt as they are forced to accept higher priced, poor quality goods and services.

In contrast, non-protectionist policies allow fair competition, encourage the efficient production of goods and services, producing more income and greater opportunity. They also present advantages for consumers, affording them better services and quality articles at lower prices.

Unemployment Goes Up

It is said that foreign investment forces the closing of Mexican industries and thus increases unemployment. Even though new capital and technology may temporarily contribute to unemployment when they cause obsolete Mexican industries to shut down, the available data suggest that in the long-run, and at least in certain sectors, foreign investment creates more jobs in Mexico than the same

Mexico's development should not be based on maquila industries

independent nation, even though there is more accumulated foreign investment there than in any other country in the world.

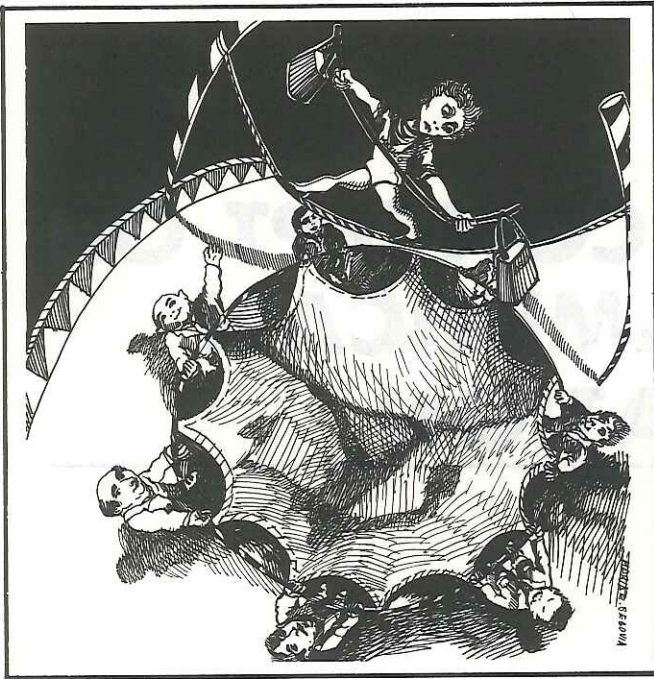
Mexican Investors Are Adversely Affected

Critics argue that foreign competition displaces Mexican

Today, all nations are competing to attract foreign investment

amount of local capital investment.

According to the National Commission on Foreign Investment, in 1985 foreign investment in manufacturing amounted to more than 343.8 billion pesos and created 147,447 new jobs, or 0.43 jobs per million pesos invested. According to the National Accounts System 1960-1985, prepared by the Programming and Budget Minis-



Jobs were created when new foreign enterprises required parts which could be produced by national industries

try, during the same year, national investment in manufacturing was 2.4 trillion pesos, creating 15,166 new jobs, or only 0.006 per million pesos invested.

Competitive international industries may also indirectly generate more jobs. Case studies in Kenya, Nigeria, Brazil, India and Singapore support this view. Jobs were created when new foreign enterprises required parts which could be produced by national industries; others were created for marketing the finished products. In short, the available data support the conclusion that, in general, foreign investment generates more new jobs than unemployment.

Conclusions

To understand the role of foreign investment, we must first place Mexico in the context of the world economy. Not only does foreign investment promote efficiency, generate foreign exchange earnings, decrease unemployment and increase wealth, but it is also part of the reality of the modern world. In primitive market conditions, products were made and sold in the same nation; today, all nations compete to attract foreign investment by liberalizing their policies.

In this context, then, the Mexican government needs to enact measures that facilitate greater productivity and successful competition in international markets. This is the real world the Mexican government should deal with. While it is illusory to think that investment and trade policies alone can solve Mexico's problems, they are indeed an important means for improving its economy. The time has come to shed 19th century approaches to the Mexican economy, as we enter now onto the threshold of the 21st. □

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ROGER BARTRA



Rosario Green

A NEW CONCEPT OF LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION

The subject of Latin American integration has been taken up repeatedly in diverse academic and political fora. The history of regional integrationist movements is quite well-known. For the purposes of this essay, it is sufficient to recall that the idea of integrating national markets—too small individually according to the logic of modern day economy of scale—originated in Western Europe, culminating in the creation of the European Economic Community in 1957. In Latin America, the same idea was first advanced by the United Nation's Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL), as a way of revitalizing the import substitution model, then stagnated by the limits of individual Latin American markets, and progressing toward the efficient production of intermediate, durable consumer and capital goods.

The main idea behind integrationism was to broaden national markets, seeking in that way to open the way for rational industrial development. In other words the need for integration grew out of the high costs of industrial technology, and not from issues related to agricultural or mining needs. Thus, the initial measures taken in the integrationist process were to eliminate tariffs and permit free trade between the countries included in each specific project, after first unifying customs nomenclatures and establishing norms for determining the origin of goods and services, dealing with cases of disloyal competition and the occasional use of safeguarding clauses. This first type of integration produced what are called "free trade zones."

Important Precedents

In this context, then, the Montevideo Treaty was signed in February 1960 by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, giving rise to the Latin American Free Trade Association (ALALC). The following year, Colombia and Ecuador signed on, followed by Venezuela in 1966 and Bolivia in 1967.

One of the immediate motivations behind the accord was the sharp drop in inter-Latin American trade in the



Miguel de la Madrid, President of Mexico. (Photo from Novedades archive.)

Alan García, President of Peru. (Photo from Novedades archive.)

second half of the 1950s. At first, the ALALC concentrated its efforts on compensating for the deterioration in the market relations with third countries by actively promoting trade within the region. The Montevideo Treaty also sought the creation of a free trade zone by mid-1973, through gradually eliminating all existing trade barriers among signatory nations. The elimination of trade restrictions was to come about via both multilateral and bilateral negotiations. In the 20-year period from 1961 to 1980, more than 11,200 tariff reductions were negotiated within the ALALC. Nonetheless, the process developed unevenly, and after 1967, its pace dropped off appreciably.

The virtual failure of the ALALC was described by British economist, Sydney Dell in this way: "A large part of the (tariff) reductions was more apparent than real, since in many cases rates were set, which were never applied in practice."¹

As the ALALC stalled, representatives from Chile, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela and Ecuador met in 1966 and issued the Bogota Declaration, the first step toward the creation of the Andean Pact. In 1969 they, along with other countries, signed an agreement for Andean sub-regional

Director of Institute "Matías Romero" of the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

integration, known as the Cartagena Accord. Its defined purpose was to increase economic growth rates through integration and to design the necessary conditions for changing the ALALC into a common market. By late 1980, its members had assumed a basic commitment to eliminate duties on regional trade and to establish a unified tariff system for trade with third countries. They hoped to accelerate industrialization through "Sectorial Programs of Industrial Cooperation", and they worked to adopt a single set of regulations for foreign and mixed capital enterprises. With the Andean Pact, the volume of sub-regional exports grew 18 times, to almost 1.4 billion dollars, in the period 1968 to 1980.²

But very soon, a series of factors intervened to frustrate the aspirations of this group. Chile, under Augusto Pinochet, took on increasingly irreconcilable positions regarding its participation in the Andean Pact. The military junta threatened, for example, to leave the Cartagena Accord unless the regulations for foreign and mixed capital enterprises were annulled or radically changed. To avoid a collapse, member nations made some concessions, raising export profit limits from 14 percent to 20 percent and classifying investments made by international financial entities as neutral, among other measures. Nonetheless, these concessions proved to be insufficient for Pinochet, and he withdrew Chile from the Andean Pact in October 1976.

This move posed a series of problems for the remaining nations regarding the future of integration. The Andean Pact presidents, meeting in Cartagena to celebrate the Accord's 10th anniversary, issued a joint statement, the Cartagena Mandate, in which they affirmed, "Despite the difficulties confronting the integrationist movement, it is still an indispensable tool for furthering economic

sovereignty."³ But the Pact had already beginning to fall apart.

Other Regional Efforts

Efforts to develop the Central American Common Market (MCCA) were no less important. The Managua Treaty, which established the MCCA in 1960, differed from the ALALC in that it outlined a broader and more detailed program for integration. It set specific, concrete stipulations for foreign trade, including a calendar for rapid liberalization, implementing a unified regional customs nomenclature and protecting the five member nations of the MCCA through common customs rates. The major objectives had been essentially achieved by 1966, just as planned.

But first the "One-Hundred-Hours-War" between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969, and then the conflicts and increasing foreign intervention in the region combined to stall what had been a relatively successful process. Thus, by the beginning of the 1980s, member countries began to propose radical changes in the terms of cooperation, the dissolving of the MCCA and the creation of what they called the Central American Economic and Social Community (CESCA), setting goals for the end of the century. Of course, it is important to emphasize that the problems and prospects for Central American integration are related to the possibilities of peace in the

The problems and prospects for Central American integration are related to the possibilities of regional peace

THE CONTADORA GROUP AND PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Ricardo Córdova

In recent years much has been commented on the role played by the Contadora Group in peace negotiations in Central America. This group of countries has on the one hand received wide political support and international recognition, and, on the other, has been

criticized for not reaching a peace agreement.

But either supportive or critical, little is known of the history of this group's pacific efforts. In this article we shall attempt to present a view of what the Contadora Group has done, from its establishment (January 1983) until the signing of the Agreement of Esquipulas II (7 August 1987).

Establishment of the Contadora Group

On the invitation of the Panamanian Chancellor, the Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela met on January 8 and 9 1983, on the island of Contadora. Their intention was to examine the complex panorama existing in Central America, as well as the political processes taking place in

Researcher for the Center of Interdisciplinary Research in Humanities, UNAM.

The initial measures taken in the integrations process were to eliminate tariffs and permit free trade

region. The future now seems bright in this regard, thanks to efforts by Contadora and its Support Group, as well as to the Arias Plan and the Esquipulas II accords.

In short, one of the persistent mistakes in Latin American integrationist efforts (not only in the above mentioned attempts, but also in others like the ALADI and the Caribbean Free Trade Association) has been to model their programs after the European Economic Community, ignoring the fact that our economies depend to a large extent on primary sector activities and especially the export of raw materials (about 70 percent of total exports). To make things even more complicated, we don't all depend on the same raw materials: for Mexico and Venezuela, it's oil; for Colombia, coffee and cotton; for Peru, copper and fish meal; for Bolivia, tin and natural gas; and so forth. In addition, a serious problem with all raw materials is that their market prices rise and fall cyclically, with tremendous variation between products. The result of a great range of factors, coffee prices can be rising at the same time that oil prices plummet. In other words, our insertion into the world market as producers of raw materials makes economic integration very difficult.

Political Factors

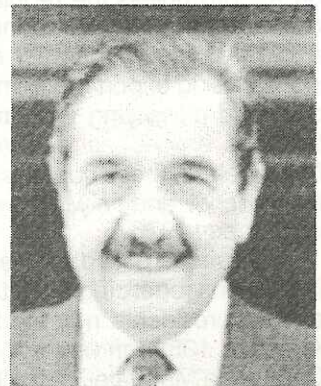
These experiences offer conclusive evidence that it is utopian to aspire to significant levels of economic unification, without also establishing a basis for more general under-

standing, especially on political issues. Thus, it is clear that new criteria are needed for Latin American integration. The Group of Eight (working from an agenda broadened beyond the original concerns of Contadora and its Support Group) is breaking important ground in this regard. All of the members are distinguished as having democratic governments: Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay.

The decision by the presidents of these eight countries to meet in Mexico on November 27 and 28 (thanks to efforts by the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Political Harmony, established in Rio de Janeiro last December 18) reflects the levels of political agreement already reached. Efforts by the Group of Eight, with support from the Central American countries, first contributed to the search for regional peace and for balance between the legitimate interests of each state and the region's col-



José Sarney, President of Brazil.
(Photo from Novedades archive)



Raúl Alfonsín, President of Argentina.
(Photo from Novedades archive)



Ministers of the Contadora Group. (Photo from Novedades archive)

the region, their interrelation and the effect of these on regional stability and peace. They called on the countries in the area to reduce tension, by means of dialog and negotiation, and establish the basis for a permanent climate of peaceful co-existence and mutual respect among the States.

Taking its name from the island of their reunion, the Contadora Group, comprising the countries of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, was established. Its aim: to give momentum to a process of peace negotiations in the region.

Declaration of Cancún

A meeting of the Presidents of the countries forming part of the Contadora Group took place on July 17 1983, in Cancún, Mexico, as a result of the intensification of the

lective security. Now the Group not only continues to promote the agreements reached through the combined negotiating efforts of Contadora, the Arias Plan and the Esquipulas II meeting, but has broadened its agenda to include such items as the foreign debt. As regards the latter, it has agreed that the Cartagena Consensus must define its authority over such related matters as trade and finance, which form part of a series of unavoidable political decisions.

The first meeting by the Group of Eight's Permanent Mechanism was held in San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina, from April 14 to 16, 1987. It acknowledged important legal aspects of Latin American integration, concluding that it is necessary "to coordinate and strengthen efforts to harmonize national legislations (of the different countries), so they do not block joint undertakings, but rather facilitate the integrationist activities of the public and private sectors." An ad hoc commission was created to identify the major issues needing discussion; to carry out an inventory of regional communitarian laws and of "private, conventional international law"; and to organize a comparative study of basic national legislations in order to analyze "the possibility of adopting homogeneous legislation or multilateral agreements on integration."⁴

The Permanent Mechanism's second meeting was held August 9 to 11, 1987 at Campos do Jordao, Brasilia. There, the foreign ministers agreed to ask the Argentine chancellery, in collaboration with the other foreign ministries and the General Secretary of ALADI, to present a study on the juridical aspects of regional integration for its next meeting.

Novel Definitions

As part of the preparations for the Presidential Meeting,

the Group of Eight's foreign ministers will meet at Punta del Este, Uruguay, from October 23 to 28. Participation in the Group of Eight is extremely important for each of its members, especially as it begins to explore the application of such novel concepts as *concertación*. In fact, this concept has fast become part of the doctrinal framework for Latin American integration. *Concertación* can be understood as the search among a community of states

The insertion of individual economies into the world market makes economic integration very difficult

to coordinate and make compatible certain strategies toward common aspirations, purposes, interests or ideals. In short, it is a new concept of integration, more viable and better suited to our own history.

Given the increasing complexity of international economic and political affairs, and the specific difficulties confronting Latin America, including the foreign debt and the Central American crisis, among others, regional *concertación* takes on special importance. The area's democratic governments have begun the effort to promote it.

While it is true that the search for *concertación* integration has not always produced significant concrete results, it has, nonetheless, helped the participants in the process to analyze its potential and its limitations, to explore possibilities heretofore unexamined and to draw attention to its relevance and importance. Latin American

One of the principal obstacles to peace has been the lack of will on the part of the U.S. government

conflicts in Central America.

At this meeting they expressed their preoccupation with the rapid deterioration of the situation in Central America, its escalation of violence, the progressive increase in tensions, border incidents and the threat of generalized war. They also outlined the achievements of the Contadora Group: initiating a dialog between all of the Central American governments; the establishment of a consultation mechanism; and the outline, by unanimous agreement, of an agenda assembling the most relevant

aspects of the region's problems.

Aware of the necessity of translating the will for peace into specific proposals, they established the general directives of a program to be proposed by the Central American countries: the creation of agreements and political pacts that would lead to an effective control of the arms race; the elimination of foreign intervention; the creation of demilitarized zones; the prohibition of the use of the territory of some States to develop political or military actions that would destabilize other States; the eradication of antagonism and arms-trafficking; and the prohibition of other forms of aggression or interference in the internal affairs of any of the countries in the area.

It was also stated that these measures, designed to eliminate the peace-disturbing factors,

should be accompanied by a great internal effort to strengthen democratic institutions and guarantee the observance of human rights.



Bernardo Sepúlveda, Secretary of the Mexico's Foreign Department. (Photo from Novedades archive)

countries need to understand the idea of concertación integration, not as a utopian formula, but rather as a concept based on peoples' very real needs, on the painful lessons of history and on the fact that it's time to respond to the shared aspirations for true cooperation.

At the recent XLII Annual Assembly of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Washington, many countries emphasized their belief that the world economic crisis has a negative impact on their attempts to restructure the economies of their countries. The crisis has heightened the need for *concertación* toward implementing plans or tactics for problems such as those caused by the foreign debt; to defend the prices of our traditional export products; and to explore the potentials of inter-regional cooperation. This has all been difficult until now, due to the international economic disorder and the lack of a solid political foundation, impossible during the long years of military rule in several countries.

The tasks ahead for the Group of Eight will demand *concertación*, the persistent search for accord, putting the region's democratic countries to the test as they seek Latin American solutions to Latin America's problems. They sound a hopeful note for the region's immediate future, as they explore possibilities in other terrain, beyond the specific challenges of integration. □

¹ Dell, Sydney. 1966. *Integración de América Latina. Experiencias y perspectivas*. Fondo de Cultura Económica; México, p. 97.

² Cfr. *Bolsa Review*, febrero de 1981, p. 8.

³ Cfr. *Comercio Exterior*, Vol. 29, No. 7 (julio de 1979); México, p. 799.

⁴ "Comunicado Conjunto de los Cancilleres de los Grupos de Contadora y Apoyo al término de la Reunión de San Carlos de Bariloche" (Joint Communique by the Foreign Ministers of Contadora and the Support Groups at the Close of the San Carlos Bariloche Meeting), *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior*, No. 16 (julio-septiembre de 1987); México, p. 109.

Document of Objectives

On September 9 1983, a document with 21 basic points for peace in Central America, better known as the "Document of Objectives", was published. The most outstanding of the objectives indicated in this by the Contadora Group are as follows:

- to promote the lowering of tension and to put an end to the conflictive situations in the area, abstaining from any action which would endanger political confidence or tend to be an obstacle to the peace objectives, the security and the stability of the region;

- to adopt measures leading to the establishment and, in this case, the perfecting of the democratic, representative and pluralist systems, which guarantee effective popular participation in the decision-making process and

assure free access of the various currents of opinion to honest and periodic electoral processes, based on the full observance of citizen's rights;

- to halt the arms race and begin negotiations for the control and reduction of the present inventory of arms and on military forces.

- to reach agreements to reduce, and finally eliminate, the presence of foreign military intervention and other foreign elements participating in military and security activities;

- to forbid the use of territory and neither lend nor permit military or logistic support to persons, organizations or groups attempting to destabilize the governments of any Central American countries.

In this reunion it was stated that the foreign ministers of the

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* En nuestro número dos, correspondiente al mes de agosto, dijimos que el peronismo iba a ganar las elecciones argentinas, que era exactamente lo contrario de lo que decían todas las encuestas y sondeos de opinión publicados; un mes después, el 6 de septiembre, el peronismo ganó las elecciones.

* En nuestro número 3, a principios de septiembre, indicamos a Carlos Salinas de Gortari como el candidato más idóneo del Partido Revolucionario Institucional a la Presidencia de México; un mes después, el 4 de octubre, todos los sectores se pronunciaron por él.

* Para nuestro número 4, dialogamos con el

presidente Arias en San José de Costa Rica, acerca de la iniciativa de paz que habíamos apoyado desde sus orígenes; unos días después Arias era galardonado con el Premio Nobel.

* También adelantamos que en el Uruguay se iban a reunir las firmas para el referéndum, el fracaso del Plan Austral argentino, la inviabilidad de la Simpson-Rodino, el resurgir de la violencia en Colombia y Haití y el proceso de unidad del socialismo chileno. Además propiciamos un encuentro de representantes de la sociedad civil latinoamericana, previo a la reunión de los presidentes del Grupo de los 8, iniciativa que fue adoptada por las cancillerías de los países participantes.

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José Napoleon Duarte, President of El Salvador.
(Photo from Novedades archive)

Central American countries, with the participation of the Contadora Group, began negotiations with the aim of reaching agreements and adopting the necessary mechanisms to formalize and develop the objectives contained in the present document, and secure the establishment of adequate systems of verification and control.

Formulae for the accomplishment of these aims

As the Document of Objectives was passed by the five governments in the region, the negotiating process was directed towards a necessary agreement on the practical measures in order to achieve the aims stated in the document. This new agreement was published on January 8 1984. The text is in three parts and the outstanding points are as follows:

Formulae to be immediately accomplished

1. Security aspects

— The creation of a register or detailed inventory of the military installations, arms and forces of each one of the Central American states, with the aim of establishing the criteria for implementing a policy of control and reduction of these, imposing maximum limits and allowing for a reasonable balance of power in the region.

— The preparation of a census in each country and adoption of a calendar for the reduction, and eventual elimination, of foreign military intervention and other foreign elements participating in military or security related activities.

- The establishment of direct communication mechanisms with the aim of forestalling and resolving incidents between States.

2. Political Aspects

— To promote national reconciliation on the basis of justice, liberty and democracy and, to this end, create mechanisms allowing for dialog among the countries of the region.

— To guarantee full respect for human rights and, to this end, comply with the obligations contained in the international judicial



Central American Ministers. (Photo from Novedades archive)

instruments and the constitutional dispositions on this.

— To authorize or, in some cases, bring up to date, the formulae guaranteeing the existence and participation of political parties representing various currents of opinion.

3. Economic and Social Questions

— To authorize the full cooperation of the Central American Bank of Integration, the Economic Commission for Latin America, the Action Committee for Support of Central American Economic and Social Development and the SIECA.

Certain attitudes and situations still persist, making it more difficult to reach an agreement

— The Technical Group, assessing organ of the Joint Reunion of Foreign Ministers of Central America and of the Contadora Group, was authorized to follow through the previously mentioned actions.

— Three Work Committees were created within the Contadora Group and made responsible for preparing studies, judicial projects

and recommendations for the development of the areas of security, political, economic and social questions and proposals for the verification and control of the execution of the agreed measures.

Contadora Act for Peace and Cooperation

Since the establishment of the "Formulae for the accomplishment of the aims outlined in the Document of Objectives" the principal efforts of the Contadora Group have been directed towards reaching an agreement between the governments of the area, with special emphasis on security problems. This led to the creation of the "Contadora Act for Peace and Cooperation in Central America" on September 7 1984, a document that provoked objections on the eve of its being signed by some governments of the region, and had to be modified. A revised version of the Act was submitted to the consideration of the Central American governments in 1985, but this was equally unsuccessful. It is not, at the moment, our intention to dig deeply into the external factors preventing the Act from being signed, but we should like to affirm that one of the principal obstacles to the signing has been the lack of good will on the part of the United States govern-

ment that has verbally supported the Group, but in practice has committed actions prejudicial to the dialog and negotiations in Central America. Preventing the signing of the Act became a fundamental point in the United States external policy in the region, where they have had the support of the governments of El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica, what has been called the Tegucigalpa, or San Salvador, group.

The difficulties in getting the Act signed uncovered the political nature of the problem and the weakness of the Contadura Group in this respect. The foreign ministers of the Contadura Group, in their meeting on July 21 and 22 1985, made a statement concerning this: "The solution to the conflicts depends on the will and decision of the Central American governments, whose responsibility it is to reach an agreement allowing for political stability, economic and social development,

and ordered, pacific and secure co-existence in the area".

The Support Group

On August 25 1985, the Support Group of the Contadura Group,



Vinicio Cerezo, President of Guatemala.
(Photo from Novedades archive)

comprising Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, was created. The most important functions of this support mechanism are as follows:

- consultation, with the aim of facilitating the coordination of diplomatic actions for the Contadura negotiation process.

- to give impetus to a rapid conclusion and the signing of the Contadura Act for Peace and Cooperation in Central America.

The Message of Caraballeda

As a result of the opposition of some governments in the region to the signing of the Contadura Act, the foreign ministers of the Contadura Group and the Support Group sent out the "Message of Caraballeda" on January 12 1986.

This stated: The negotiating process should lead as soon as possible to the signing of the Contadura Act for Peace and Cooperation in Central America,

DIALOG IN EL SALVADOR: DEMAND FROM A WAR-WEARY PEOPLE

After an interruption of almost two years the official dialog was renewed between the Demochristian government of El Salvador and the opposition, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), on October 4 and 5 1987.

Although external factors — the Agreement of Esquipulas II and the active mediation of the Costa Rican President Oscar Arias Sánchez — were what overcame the obstacles to the dialog, started in 1984, no one was unaware of the fundamental role played by the existence of an overwhelming national majority in favor of this third encounter.

According to a poll made by researchers of the Central American José Simón Canas University (UCA) and of the University Institute of Public Opinion (IUDOP), 82.1 percent of those consulted pronounced themselves in favor of a dialog and 87.6 percent stated their support for a ceasefire.

Another poll, this time by Gallup, and the results of which were issued October 19, confirmed that 74 percent of the population supported a negotiated end to the civil war that has lasted for

seven years.

It is not strange, therefore, that the main political theme in El Salvador at the moment is the dialog. There is not an important force or sector of the country which has not pronounced itself in its favor, including the parties of the extreme right, such as the National Republican Alliance (Arena), whose leader, Roberto D'Aubuisson, is connected with the foundation and the activating of the Death Squads.

In spite of the importance of this national call for a negotiated solution, we can scarcely be optimistic about the possibility that negotiations will lead to internal peace in the near future. The complicated actions necessary to get both sides to sit once again and converse, speak of a very fragile and uncertain process.

The very results of this third round did not respond to the national or international expectations nor to the overflowing popular enthusiasm that led the National United Salvadorean Workers (UNTS) to organize a multitudinous concentration of support in the immediate neighborhood of the Apostolic Nuncio in San Salvador — where the reunion last-

ed for four days and nights.

The constitution of two commissions to form proposals for a ceasefire and other aspects of the Guatemala agreement — amnesty, national reconciliation, return of the refugees and incorporation of the armed opposition to legal political life — is a small step, considered significant by some, but in fact it does not avoid the possibility of a future invalidation of these achievements by the reopening of talks.

And, in the same way that external and internal factors led to the third encounter, others of a similar nature press in the opposite direction. As regards the external, the close ties that Duarte's government has with Ronald Reagan's — measured by an economic and military aid of a million and a half dollars daily — places in doubt the sincerity of the governmental commitment to the Esquipulas II agreement.

Internally, the predominance of military leaders who still consider the possibility of a military victory over the FMLN guerrillas, contributes to the doubt as to what point Duarte is able to carry the possibility of an agreement to a conclusion.

From this point of view, the third meeting basically introduced nothing new: Duarte insists that the FMLN should lay down their arms, while the FMLN-FDR coalition demands the establishment of a government with full national participation and the fusion of the two military forces operating in the country: the official and the guerrillas.

There is no suggestion yet of the possibility of the two parties making any concessions. On the contrary, the October conversations occurred within the framework of a worsening situation. It would appear that each side is attempting to debilitate its opponent in order to emphasize its position at the negotiating table.

Meanwhile the country continues to bleed profusely and the hope of "humanizing" the conflict still seems very distant. The non-combatant population continues to pay a high price in lives and injuries. To sum up, the situation in El Salvador is probably the toughest test on the Esquipulas II agreements.

E.C.

THE ARIAS PLAN WINS THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

The Arias Plan arrived silently, when many were asking themselves what mechanisms would Contadora use to unclog their peace negotiations in Central America. At first, practically everyone was skeptical. More than one person insisted that it was a plan made with Washington's approval, but soon those responsible for Central American policies in the U.S. also indicated their disagreement, among other things for the protection that the Plan received from the Democratic leaders.

There is a contrast between the reserve with which the Plan was received, in February 1987, and its unexpected adoption in Guatemala August 7. Such a surprising change is not comprehensible unless some propitious factors are taken into account.

The plan of President Oscar Arias Sánchez was negotiated when some compromising details of the Iran Contras scandal were made public. Some of these involved his predecessor, Luis Alberto Monge, as an accomplice in secret activities against Nicaragua, in open violation of the self-proclaimed "active and perpetual neutrality". Arias had to disengage himself in some way from this embarrassing past.

It was also helped along by a fall in Ronald Reagan's popularity and the emergence of the Democratic Party as winner of the legislative elections of the previous year. Although the Democrats did not formally decline the bipartite agreement on Central America, one of the favorite themes of the new Congress leaders was criticism of Reagan's policies in the region.

On their part, the Latin American efforts to revitalize the negotiating option, through Contadora and the Sup-

port Group, seemed to have come to a stop: the effect of the incorporation into their negotiations of the General Secretaries of the U.N. and the O.A.S. had soon faded away. So, when it was presented, the Arias Plan did not receive a warm welcome—it even prompted suspicion on the part of some—but survived as a benefit of the doubt.

A few weeks were sufficient time for the ministers of Contadora and the Support Group to discover that the Plan was an affirmation of their frustrated peace plans. In reality—and this is one of the Arias merits—the new plan dispensed with all of those themes that had been most controversial throughout the long years of the Contadora struggle.

So, for example, the question of the withdrawal of the bases and the extra-regional military advisors did not appear in the Arias plan. Instead, special emphasis is placed on the democratization process and reconciliation in each country, particularly in Nicaragua.

The plan represented a breathing space for Contadora, in spite of the fact that, in some of the formulae, it was far removed from that contained in the Peace Act and the Message of Caraballeda. The main thing, at the moment, was that the initiative was put in the hands of the Central American governments and allowed for the possibility of Contadora and the Support Group making their contributions to the negotiations.

And in fact that's the way it was. The summit of Central American Presidents would scarcely have been able to take place and reach such surprising conclusions without the decisive participation of the eight ministers

of these two Groups.

Meanwhile Washington's Central American policies suffered a serious blow and seemed to lag behind. Reagan's desperate effort to put obstacles in the way of the Arias plan, by the mention of another Peace Plan on the eve of the Central American summit, only confirmed how out of step he was. Then, neither the abandonment of Philip Habib, nor the urgent meeting of the heads of the diplomatic missions in the region's capitals, enabled him to swim against the tide of facts: the signing of the Agreement of Esquipulas II by the five leaders.

But American diplomacy still had to receive two more blows. One was the audacity and vivacity with which Managua began to apply the Guatemalan agreements, discarding, one by one, the arguments put forward by Washington and its allies: the re-opening of the newspaper *La Prensa*; the re-establishment of communication with the Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo; the establishment of the National Reconciliation Commission, with the Catholic prelate as president; acceptance of the amnesty by involved counterrevolutionary leaders, were some of the intelligent initiatives on the part of the Sandinists.

And if that were not enough, Oscar Arias, author of the plan that released the negotiations from deadlock, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

A just prize for an opportune initiative, however the future of the Arias Plan may be marked by the sign of uncertainty.

Edgar Celada

the only way of assuring a general political understanding allowing for respectful, peaceful and productive co-existence among all the countries in the region.

The chancellors can confirm that, after 36 months of negotiations there persist attitudes and situations that hinder a general and comprehensive agreement to overcome the climate of hostility and halt the arms race, foreign intervention and the politics of force.

Declaration of Esquipulas

On May 25 1986, as an outcome of the meeting of Central American presidents, the Declaration of Esquipulas was published.

In this, in relation to the negotiating process of the Contadora Group, they declare "their wish to sign the Contadora Act for Peace and Cooperation in Central America, assuming the complete fulfillment of the aims and procedures contained in this. They recognise that there are aspects to be solved, as, for example, the mili-

tary manoeuvres, arms control and the verification of the fulfillment of the agreements."

Another Version of the Contadora Act

On June 7 1986, the delegates of the Contadora Group submitted a new version of the Contadora Act to the Central American governments. This was the third version to be submitted for their consideration. Once again it became obvious that there was a lack of real political will to sign the agreement.

The Arias Plan

On February 15 1987, another peace-negotiating process, parallel to Contadora's, was opened in the region. President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica called a meeting of the Presidents of the region and presented his proposals, "The Procedures for the Establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America". The document was

not passed on this occasion, but it allowed for the opening of a process of negotiation that led to its signing during the second meeting of the Central American Presidents in Esquipulas, Guatemala, August 7 1987.

The Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and of the Central American countries met on August 1 in Tegucigalpa to prepare a rough draft of an agreement, which was used as a basis for the discussions in the presidential meeting.

The purpose of the Arias Plan is much less ambitious, more pragmatic and starts off from the point that the governments "initiate the dialog with all the unarmed groups of internal political opposition and with those who have welcomed friendship". Equally, they agreed on other procedures to promote the establishment of peace. The great political activity for peace in the region has as its objective the accomplishment of this starting point passed in the reunion of August 7. □

GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT AND GUERRILLAS MEET FOR FIRST TIME

At the beginning of the 60s, an attempt, with controversial results, was made in Conciúa, Baja Verapaz, in the north of Guatemala, which marked the beginning of guerrilla war.

A short while after, in the east, there was the first gathering of young rebellious soldiers, students, peasants and some workers, to consolidate the first guerrilla front, whose development would seriously threaten the regime of Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, overthrown in 1963 by Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia.

With this there began a process of militarization of power, the answer of the establishment to the uprising resulting from the great social imbalance produced over the centuries.

Twenty seven years later, the imbalance is even larger. Twenty seven years later, the war continues.

The involvement of the indigenous population in it give it a specifically national character, in a situation where its so far unforeseeable outcome also seems determined by events in the region.

So, the agreements reached in Esquipulas II have established guidelines

in the contender's political diplomatic behavior. Bound by these conditions, a meeting between the government and the politically-armed opposition took place for the first time in twenty seven years.

The failure of the government to comply with some previous agreements, such as the ceasefire during the meeting, endangered its existence.

The content of the stipulated agenda circled around the question of the country's democratization. Nevertheless, the governmental delegates, advised by army officials, went to Madrid, last October, to repeat their demand that the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit (URNG), lay down their arms and take refuge in an amnesty published for this effect.

The URNG, in its turn, insisted that a global solution to the conflict should be sought and demanded that demonstrable measures should be taken to produce a national dialog between all the social sectors.

This dialog, according to the Guatemalan revolutionaries, is only pos-

sible in conjunction with an effective demilitarization program in the rural areas, respect for the right of organization, and a clarification of the thousands of assassinations and disappearances in recent years and a legal trial of those responsible.

The day that the meeting began, the Coordinating Committee of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial and Financial Associations (CACIF), declared a stoppage against a tributary package which, months before and with the Army's approval, the President Vinicio Cerezo had promoted, arguing that he himself would contribute to redeem the "social debt" whose expansion threatened the country's stability.

Knowing the military's determination to neutralize the political dividends yielded to the URNG from the meeting, it is not a wild guess that they "inspired" the strike in order to divert public attention to another conflict. The press even reported the detonation of some explosives in the capital.

At the end of the dialog, the two sides declared that, although a date was

not fixed for their next meeting, they could count on a "discreet channel" of communication.

In spite of the fact that they did not come to any substantial agreements, it is worth pointing out that the Madrid meeting added political shades of importance to the internal and external understanding of the Guatemala conflict.

Particularly in a country where there is a such a great authoritarian tradition, a national dialog implies the insistence on citizen participation denied legitimacy by institutionalized violence which attempts to deprive the population of its own political space in popular or trade union organization.

On the other hand, it is obvious that the inoperable economic model applied in Guatemala, has provoked discrepancies and polarization that, if it is not solved with the participation of every sector, will worsen and prolong the war that no one wants.

Otoniel Martínez

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THE MEXICAN STOCK EXCHANGE: A NEW FINANCIAL POWER

The October stock market crisis in the world's major financial capitals caused distress on the Mexican exchange. With that, the debate surrounding the Mexican Stock Exchange and its role in the country's economy began to heat up. Opinions on the matter are diametrically opposed. But what is true, independent of the discussion, is that the stock market here has become an essential force in the country's life. To get an insider's point of view, VOICE'S reporter Jorge Luis Sierra interviewed a major protagonist on the Mexican exchange: Eduardo Legorreta Chauvet, President of the Administrative Council of the Operadora de Bolsa, the country's largest brokerage firm.

In 1982 the Mexican banking system was nationalized. Private bankers were displaced from the country's financial heart, and Mexico experienced what the government and business community have liked to call "a loss of confidence."

No one could have imagined then that those same executives, taking refuge in the still-young stock brokerage houses, would be the lead actors in the spectacular growth of a new, alternative financial power. Five years later, what was once a distant glimmer of hope for those ex-bankers, has become one of the world's most prosperous stock markets. At the head of their own strong, efficient and hi-tech brokerage firms, they have achieved a ten-fold increase in the dollar-value of the stocks traded over the past four years.

No one doubts the role they've played in the repatriation of large sums of money, taken out of the country as part of the capital flight following nationalization in 1982. Nonetheless, they have also managed to get the State out of stock market operations and to totally privatize what they now call the investment banking system.

Having been able to recover 34 percent of bank shares, purchase "Operaciones Bursátiles Somex", once the most important brokerage firm in the nationalized system, and limit the government's role to simply regulating and promoting investment, these financiers now form a sector with the power to dialog, exert pressure and win new privileges.

Eduardo Legorreta Chauvet is one of these actors in the stock market boom, perhaps the most important. His friendly and unpretentious manner contrast sharply with his social position. He belongs to one of Mexico's wealthiest and most powerful families. His brother, Agustín Legorreta, was the owner of the National Bank of Mexico (Banamex) until 1982 and is now the head of the Business Coordinating Council (Consejo Coordinador Empresarial, CCE), a leading private sector

The market is nothing more than the confidence of Mexicans in Mexican business and the Mexican economy

association. The two brothers have established a veritable financial and industrial emporium.

The brokerage house "**Operadora de Bolsa**", founded and owned by Eduardo Legorreta, leads the Mexican Stock Exchange. Its capital value is 10 percent higher than Inverlat, owned by his brother and the country's second-most important exchange house.

VOICES interviewed Eduardo Legorreta ten days after October 19th, that "Black Monday" when the Mexican market plummeted as never before. Yet he believes that the stock market here will continue to be one of the world's most prosperous, as well as the only financial force capable of driving industrial production up and creating the one million new jobs the country needs each year.

For him, there is no recession in Mexico. He is confident that brokerage houses will play a vital role in the country's immediate future. That is, they will become Mexico's second financial heart, beating stronger and growing wealthier despite inflation, the foreign debt and the fall in consumer purchasing power. This is his point of view:

Now that five years have past since the banks were nationalized, what do you think of the balance that's been created between the nationalized credit companies and the kinds of financial operations carried out in the private brokerage houses?

I think both the nationalized banks and the brokerage houses have developed in important ways. And I think the banks need us, just like we need the banks. We provide financial services to our clients. Obviously, what we do is convert savings into investments, so there can be credit. That's what banks do in general, turn savings into credit. We need firms with lots of capital that can do the converting, demand credit, healthy credit, and ultimately pay it back. So I believe they are congruent points of view. Both kinds of businesses are needed for any country's economy to function adequately, and Mexico is no exception. Obviously, brokerage houses had already developed considerably before 1982; the capital market had been showing significant growth.

What caused that growth?

I think it's due to two major factors. One is confidence; in other words, the capital



The October crisis also affected the Mexican Stock Market. (Photo by José Fuentes Salinas)

market hadn't had time to develop before, since prior to 1970, the country's economic model of stabilizing development did not contemplate the growth of a capital market. Promotion of such a market only really began in 1970, when people began to acknowledge the country's size and its great needs for capitalizable savings. That's how the market got started. Later, however, unfavorable conditions developed; that is, people lost confidence in things, and there was not enough investment. Investment remained stable, or perhaps grew a bit during the oil boom. But by 1979, before the oil problems had really evolved, investment started to drop because people didn't believe the market was solidly backed by Mexico's economic conditions. The market is nothing more than the confidence of Mexicans in Mexican business and the Mexican economy. People invest in stocks when they think business is good and the country's economy is strong.

My question was really focused on its growth after the nationalization.

Fine, things didn't grow much in the beginning because plans were just being announced. And only when people really felt that the Mexican government was going to create satisfactory conditions for investment did the market begin to show significant growth. That's when the repatriation of capital really started; people brought their money back, they began to make considerable investments, they bought shares in banks, and so on. Mexican investors have regained their confidence, which is just natural, right. I think that for all Mexicans, the country we like and the country we're from is Mexico. Investors didn't leave, it's just that they took their savings elsewhere for reasons obviously related to confidence, and even to economic factors. That was when the cheapest thing in this country was the dollar, so people bought dollars. Obviously they were the object of terrible propaganda, called *sacadólares* (those who take their dollars out) and unpatriotic. But people, and not only Mexicans, but from all over, tend to protect their capital. It's a natural tendency. So the tremendous reactivation of the stock market is due to the fact that the people willing to invest in Mexican industries have regained their confidence in the country.

Do you have any idea about the amount of resources generated for business by the stock market?

This year more than a trillion pesos entered for new investments. So new businesses, as well as already existing ones have been able to increase their capital. This is a record figure in Mexico's history.

Until "Black Monday", it was said that the Mexican Stock Exchange was a bull market, one of the most prosperous in the world. Is that an overstatement?

No. It's true. Over the entire year, to date, the Mexican market continues to be the most prosperous. And there are two reasons for that. One, the market started out very low. With 1982 and the lack of confidence, shares were going for ridiculously low prices. So with the readjustment in the market, growth parameters have been enormous. The other reason is that the Mexican economy is beginning to recover from its difficulties and the recession of 1984, 85 and part of 86, caused by a second round of oil problems. So business profits have shown impressive growth. The initially undervalued shares, then, combined with the increased profits, have pushed the stock market way up in 1987.

One of the most important things to happen in this field is the institutionalization of the brokerage houses. You explained that a few months after the nationalization, the *Operadora de Bolsa* became institutionalized. That was the reason for the company's growth. What does that institutionalization consist of? And was it a generalized process for all of the brokerage firms?

No, it's still not become a general trend. But I can say that we were probably the first, and today there are many others. The idea is that before 1982, brokerage firms, for all practical purposes, were corporations with very few associates. In 1982, and in our case due to a shortage of capital, we invited a number of industrialists and merchants, among others, from Mexico to support us with their

The weight of oil in gross national production has dropped to about 30 percent, while it used to be more than 70 percent

capital, so we could buy computers and open new offices. That's how we were able to institutionalize our operations, since we were no longer dependent on just two or three associates. *Operadora de Bolsa* now has 10,000 associates nationally, and no one person controls it. The business is run by its administrative bodies, by its Administrative Council, named by the firm's assembly and where the directors make our reports. That makes it a highly professional corporation. Here decisions aren't made by a single person.

Within that process, have there been any advantages from decentralization?

Decentralization has been very important for us. I think people in Mexico City think there's nothing more to the country than the capital. We've discovered a much more credible Mexico, with many more opportunities. We felt that Mexico's wealth was to be found in the provinces, and we haven't been wrong. There are two cities, perhaps the country's most important ones, with really major problems, Mexico City and Monterrey. Besides them, really, the rest of the country is doing quite well. There's an incredible boom along the northern border and in all the tourist resorts. Things have even gotten much better in rural areas; we've had years with good rain, etc. I would say that besides Monterrey, which has a large debt, everything is looking up in the rest of the country; it's impressive. Here, in Mexico City, there are so many people, all packed together; everything's so expensive, everything is

CRITICS: GAMBLING WITH THE ECONOMY

Investment banking is complementary to national banking, according to the non-banking financial groups. Nevertheless, the relation between the Mexican government and the stock brokerage houses has not been tension-free. The ex-bankers demand that the stock market operate freely, and constantly press for the removal of governmental interference.

In these years when "confidence" has been undermined, there has been a re-privatization of a third of the nationalized bank and the two main Exchange institutions which were still in Government hands: the *Indeval* (Institute for Deposit of Stocks) and *Somex* Stocks and Shares. The existence of state-owned stock companies is now prohibited by law, while the profits from the Stock Exchange are tax exempt.

Nevertheless, the government itself maintains its Mexican Stock Commission as an institution promoting investment, and also regulates and vigilates this finance market. In October 1987, for example, the Commission suspended the historic session of Monday 5 October, when the Exchange had an incredible rise of more than 25 thousand points in the index of prices and quotations. Although this action gave rise to the immediate protest of the Stock Exchange authorities, the government refused to budge, considering that the quotations were rising beyond the real value of the business enterprises.

In the opinion of Carlos Acosta, reporter in an important Mexican weekly, nothing appears to deter the proprietors of the brokerage houses. Acosta wrote the following during the Stock boom: "The ex-bankers see how, day by day, their profits and those of their clients grow in a scandalous manner, without any impediment whatsoever, and what's more, with the approval and even the help of the government".

Three days after October 19, "Black Monday" in the memory of the investors, some criticism was made by Lorenzo Peón, President of the National Committee on Stocks and Shares, when he appeared before the Exchequer Committee of the Chamber of Congress: "The problem we have with the Stock Exchange —said Congressman Jorge Alcocer— is that the Mexican economy, through some pernicious influence, has run along the same lines as a casino where what is important is profit gained, not on the long term, but on as short a term as possible."

Alcocer demanded why the volumes negotiated in the Exchange are so voluminous, when there are only some 200 business enterprises involved and the amount of shares offered there has scarcely changed in 10 years.

"What has grown —he added— is the speed with which these papers change hands and this reflects the fact that the Exchange in general is not for investment for medium or long term returns; even less so when the Stock houses inform their clients of returns such as! *Operadora de Bolsa*, 4127% profit in the course of this year; *CAP S* of *Banamex*, 3264%; *Inverlat*, 2648%. Faced with these returns, would anyone be interested in investing in the productive sphere?"

One month before, another Congressman had proposed a tax on the profits from Stock Exchange activities. Humberto Ramirez Rebolledo, representing the parliamentary section of the National Action Party (PAN), expanded on this in the Chamber of Congress: "The tax exemption on Stock Market profits is an example that does most damage to the equity and justice of the law on that subject".

The representative of the PAN understood that this tax privilege was established as a promotional measure for the Stock Exchange, in order to stimulate its function of attracting national savings so that this would be channelled into productive investment. At that time —he explained— there were few people investing in the Stock Market and it was necessary to give a fiscal stimulus to increase this participation. "The situation today has gone to the opposite extreme", he added.

The legislative proposal is based on the fact that the number of saving and investing participants in the Stock market has now reached 400 thousand and their operations reached 16 billion pesos. In 1983 all the Mexican brokerage houses together had a capital of only one thousand million pesos, while it is calculated that, by 1988, every brokerage house will be able to count on a minimum of 10 thousand million pesos for its operations.

During the sequels of "Black Monday", the presidential candidate for the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), Heberto Castillo, stated his position as to the possibility of a Mexican Stock Exchange crash! "The speculative spiral unloosed in the Stock Exchange —completely unconnected from the productive apparatus— is an act against the people of Mexico."

Castillo stated that, with the appearance of the Exchange, as government compensation for the nationalization of the bank, productive investment ended, no new business enterprises were begun, employment figures fell, and, in the field of speculation, the most powerful were those who took advantage of the circumstances.

The PMS proposals went even further than the PAN: "What is needed, —said the presidential candidate,— is the total nationalization of the bank, an impetus to small and medium industry, a stimulus to the productive areas and an end to money speculation".

The business sector have the opposite opinion. Agustín Legorreta Chauvet, owner of the Stock company, *Inverlat* and president of the Council for Coordinating Enterprises, demanded fair taxes from the government, low charges to promote investment and saving, as well as a reduction in governmental spending.

On his part, Bernardo Ardavin Migoni, president of the Mexican Employers Confederation, declared to the national press that Mexico has to undergo a profound change that will stimulate investment and growth. He emphasized that re-privatization is the only way to develop the country.

shipped in. It's become a real problem; we're all suffocating here. Without a doubt, decentralization is vital for the country, and the same goes for business. There's great opportunities to be had by moving businesses out of Mexico City.

What role have small and medium sized investors played?

There haven't been many so far. The mark of a healthy capital market is the participation of small and medium-sized investors. Here, many people are just beginning to find out about this kind of investment. They are just beginning to see the possibilities of investing in the market. With time, the opening of more branch offices, changing investments, publicity and advertising, people will get to know the stock market better and make their investments there. In the developed countries, millions of people own corporate stock. General Motors, for example, is the largest shareholder corporation, with some 1.3 million shareholders. That's true democratization of capital. We want to reduce the concentration of wealth and distribute it via a capitalist market.

Why do you place more importance on the capital market than on the money market?

As financial advisors we need to have all kinds of products to suggest to our clients. For example, if someone has 10 million pesos, it's not a good idea for them to invest all of it in the stock market. They should invest part of it in stocks and another part in the money market. What then is the brokerage firm's main role? It's to take the money that's been entrusted in us and channel it to businesses through the stocks they issue. That doesn't mean we won't buy Treasury Certificates or Petrobonos, because clients also need liquidity. But stocks aren't high liquidity instruments. Companies aren't like banks that pay interest every month. A company may take several years to begin producing dividends. That's why they are not instant investments. But it's been proven that a productive investment will generate greater returns, in due time, than if you had your money invested in a bank. Fifteen years ago, a person with a million pesos in the bank could live stupendously on the 120,000 pesos in monthly interest. But that same person spent the interest, and now those million pesos aren't enough to live on. But you can't eat stocks, either; you need money. That's why the liquidity provided by fixed return instruments, combined with the profits generated from stock holdings, are both important elements in the portfolio of the sensible investor.

A crack in the U.S. financial system would affect Mexico because we're part of a global system



Stock Brokerage House. (Photo from Novedades archive)



Eduardo Legorreta Chauvet. (Photo by Laura Cano)

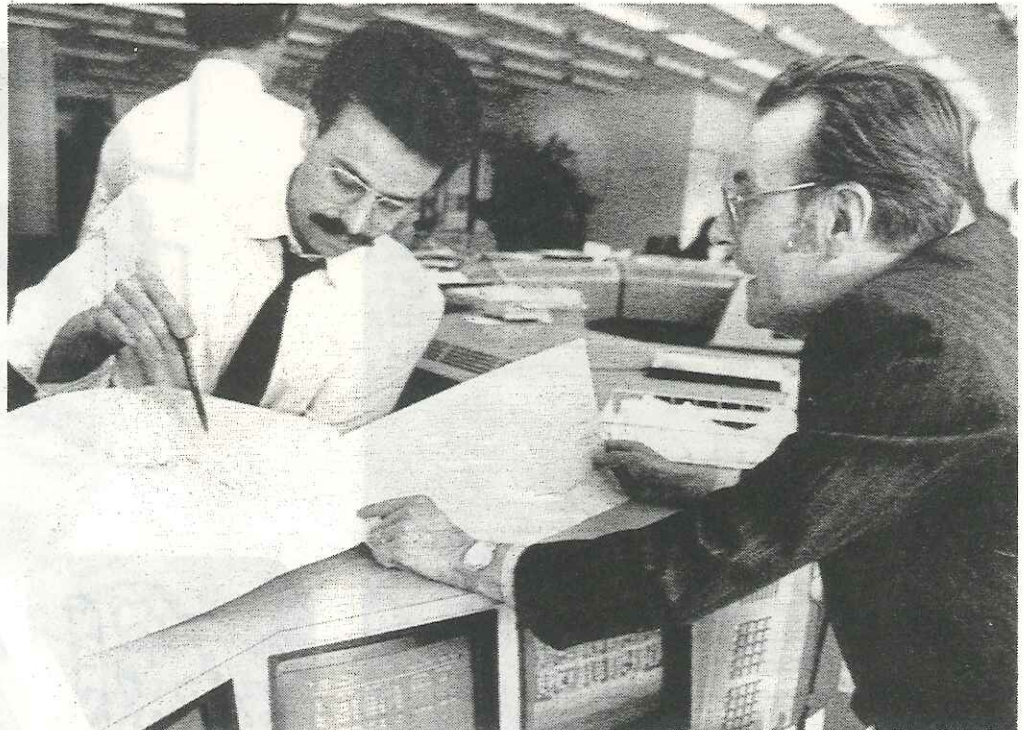
How has the government's economic policy influenced the stock market, and in particular the brokerage houses?

Two actions were taken. In 1975 a law was passed regulating the stock market. Before that, there was no legal framework for operating brokerage firms, or for the capital market. Another very important thing was done in 1984; the commercial banking system was separated from the investment banking system. Previously, banks could also own brokerage houses. It was essential to separate them because they follow very different courses. This division exists in practically all the developed countries: the commercial system on one side and the investment system on the other. Banks try to attract resources in order to make loans; brokerage firms do it to make investments.

What is responsible for the stock market's enormous growth in a country which, since 1982, suffers from a serious economic crisis, with open recession, inflation rising and real wages falling?

I only agree with you on two points. Inflation is high, that's obvious, and purchasing power has also dropped. But that doesn't necessarily go along with the rest of what you've said. The country is in the midst of a clear economic recovery. It's just that we don't realize it, or we don't want to acknowledge it. What happens is that Mexico has a high population growth rate and needs a million new jobs a year, but enormous numbers of new positions are being created. The crisis has not gotten out of hand. Clearly all of us got poorer in 1982, with the demagoguery of redistributing what didn't exist. But all of the current programs have helped the country to develop in important ways. The GNP dropped, but that was due to the fall in international oil prices. The decision to promote exports of manufactured products was good for the country, it diversified the economy. The weight of oil in gross national production has dropped to about 30 percent, while it used to be more than 70 percent. People are investing because of these conditions, and that's what makes the market rise. A stock market is moved by two factors: people's confidence and the performance by business. And business here is producing more. So I don't believe in the recession; it doesn't exist. Yes, there has been a reduction in spending, in consumption, at all levels. Obviously the middle-class has been most affected. Workers understand things well because of their unions, and with these new measures, they understand even better.

The main role of a brokerage firm is take the money that's been entrusted in us and channel it to businesses through the stocks they issue



Experts in foreign exchange quotation. (Photo from Novedades archive)

How is the Mexican Stock Exchange affected by the international situation, with the falling dollar, its impact on U.S. companies and the possibility of increased protectionism?

The Mexican Stock Exchange doesn't have anything to do with stock exchanges in other countries. But clearly we live in the world, although at times we Mexicans are like the Chinese and like to think we're isolated. And we just saw that. The big drop in the New York market affected Mexico. That's not because Mexican shares dropped there, but rather it was a simple reaction, in which people said, "Well, if the world's most important market just plummeted, and in Tokyo, Germany and England they're also falling, then why won't the Mexican market fall, too?" Right? It was a purely psychological reaction, and if people's psychology isn't right, they won't invest. Our starting point is that Mexico forms part of a global system, whether we want to or not. I also think the crack in the U.S. financial system will, in fact, affect us. It's not over yet, and if the U.S. doesn't correct its budget deficit or its problems with the dollar, then the situation will get worse. It's the same thing that happened to us: we spent too much and borrowed more than we should have. The difference is that they can't run out of dollars because they print them; we did run out because they didn't lend us their press.

What role will the stock market play in the country's immediate future?

I think we need tremendous investment in order to be able to generate a million new jobs a year. It takes 200 million pesos for each employee. We need to create a huge amount of investment, and the only way to do that is through a capital market. The only way to create jobs is through investment; there's nothing else that will do it. That's the role we must play. The capital market needs to be the most important part of the country's financial system.

Will the Mexican market continue to be one of the most prosperous in the world?

I believe it will because the country is becoming more prosperous. Between 1950 and 1970 we grew so much that we outstripped the Japanese and the Koreans. Current conditions in Mexico will allow us to do that again. □

Decentralization is vital for the country, and the same goes for business. There's great opportunities to be had by moving businesses out of Mexico City

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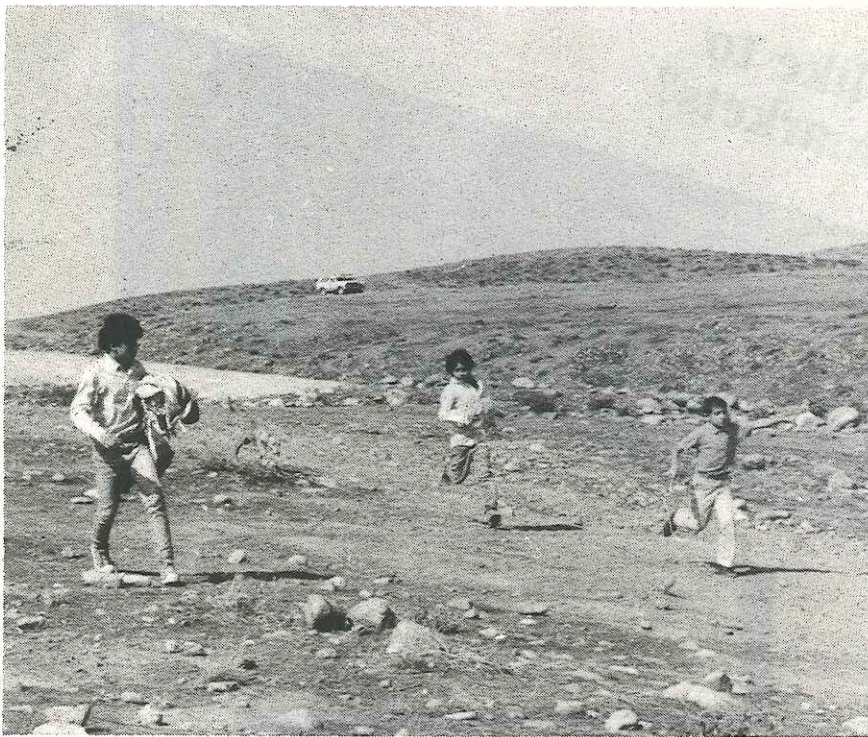
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ON THE MEXICO U.S. BORDER: BETWEEN TWO LAWS

The stream of Mexicans migrating to the United States in search of work is one of the thorniest aspects of the relationship between the two countries. The economics of the matter is obvious. On the Mexican side, it reflects the country's inability in the midst of the crisis to absorb all of its workers in jobs at home. On the U.S. side, it fills a demand for labor at the lowest possible cost, in jobs that no one else wants. Yet paradoxical as it may seem, the U.S. has increased its legal restrictions on this migration. And in the midst of everything, undocumented workers are the victims of inhuman treatment, living the most vulnerable of lives. VOICES reporter Jackie Buswell traveled to the border to cover these and other issues in her first hand report.



Zapata Canyon (Photo by Gerardo Magallón)

Tijuana, capital of Baja California, thrives on the people business. It is the busiest border crossing between Mexico and the United States. According to the local Chamber of Commerce, there were 43 million legal border crossings at Tijuana last year; of these, 26 million were tourists visiting Baja California.

Tijuana is also the crossing point most used by undocumented workers from Mexico and Central America looking for work in the USA. The local Migration Information and Studies Center claims that people from 85 different nationalities cross the border illegally at Tijuana.

While some say that "undocumented workers put their food on our tables," not everybody in the United States views migrant workers favorably. They are seen as "a silent invasion," a "threat to national security," and an "economic burden for state and

local governments;" they are accused of displacing millions of U.S. workers from jobs and of violating U.S. laws. Massive migration from Mexico and Central America is said to prove that the U.S. has "lost control" of its border with Mexico.

While former CIA-director William Colby once said that Mexican immigration could become a more serious threat to the U.S. than the Soviet Union, others disagree, arguing that Mexican labor is necessary for the U.S. economy. Dr. Jorge Bustamante, director of the *Colegio de la Frontera Norte* (Colef, the Northern Border School), explains that the United States needs migrant labor because the local work force is not replenishing itself. Academic studies estimate the U.S. will have to import 10 to 15 million workers in future years in order to maintain a three percent economic growth rate. Significantly, the average age in the U.S. is 33, while in Mexico it is 15.

Similarly, the Council of Economic Advisers' February 1986 *Economic Report to the President* argued that undocumented migrants provide more benefits than costs to the U.S. economy. And many claim that migrant workers cost the U.S. next to nothing. Migrants are born and raised in another country, while once they begin working illegally, they contribute as workers and even as tax-payers to the U.S. economy. In a book edited by Patricia Morales, *Indocumentados mexicanos* (Undocumented Mexicans), one study found that while 75% of migrant workers pay U.S. taxes, less than 4% had ever put their children in public schools, less than 4% had ever received unemployment benefits and only 8-10% had ever received free medical service in a clinic or hospital.

And if migrant workers take jobs away from the local workforce, it is because employers prefer to pay lower wages to new arrivals. Yet the very demand for their labor indicates that they are needed in the economy. Meanwhile, the great expansion of assembly factories in northern

Mexico, Korea and Taiwan, has been taking jobs away from the U.S. for over 20 years.

Nonetheless, it is true that migrants do violate U.S. laws. They must enter the country illegally, they find work illegally, they may well have to live in a "spider hole" or a shack that violates accepted American living standards, or they may use false documents so they can send their children to school.

As for the northern country "losing control of its border," this seems laughable in the face of the increasing militarization of the 2000-mile border, surely one of the longest in the world, with great contrasts between one side and the other. The U.S. Border Patrol is equipped with many vehicles, helicopters, electronic detection devices, powerful lights, cameras and binoculars with night vision, and weapons. There is no apparent Mexican military presence along the border, while the "invasion" is carried out by unarmed persons looking for work.

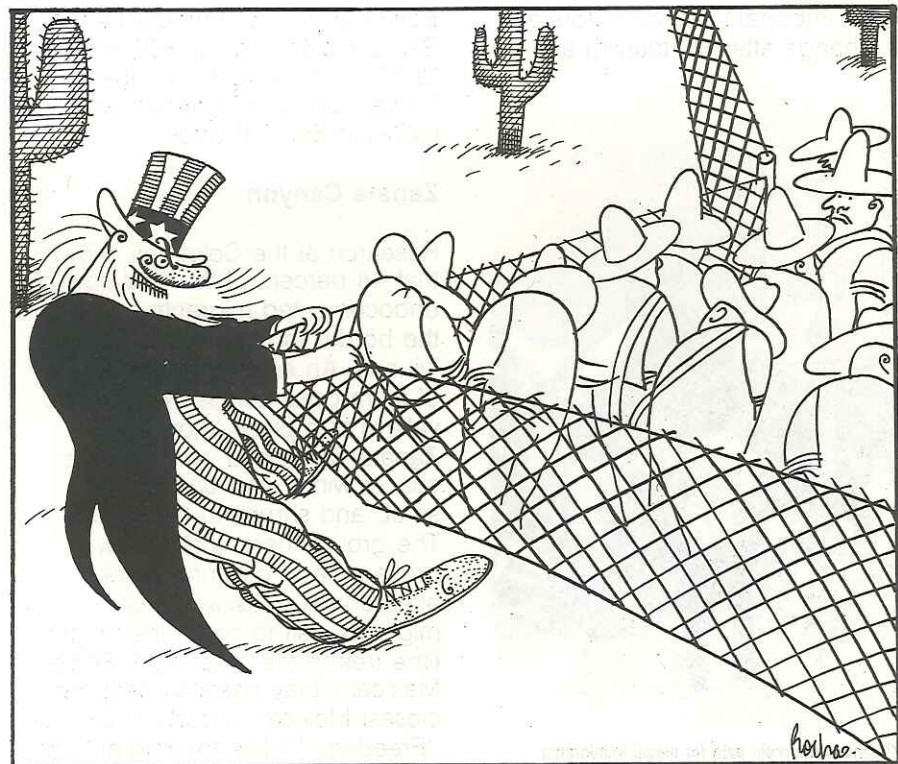
Mexicans and Chicanos view the problems of undocumented migrant workers as a socio-economic phenomenon,

associated with the economic crisis in Mexico and political turmoil in Central America. And they criticize U.S. authorities for responding with police measures. Dr. Bustamante sums it up, "For Mexico, migrants represent a social and economic issue, yet Mexico has to face a police

If the undocumented take jobs away from the local work force, it is because employers prefer to pay lower wages to new arrivals

attitude on the part of U.S. authorities."

At the same time that farmers in the southwest states have called on the U.S. government to relax the recently implemented Simpson-Rodino Law (which seeks to further restrict entrance to the U.S. and imposes fines for using undocumented workers), would-be workers are being rounded up by the "migra." At times, workers' homes are searched, and factories employing undocumented workers



"Tension"

are frequently raided by immigration officials.

Dr. Bustamante explains that growers want the law relaxed because they are used to having an over-supply of labor. When they don't have it, they call it a "labor shortage." In addition, the migrants make good labor because of the limitations implicit in their illegal status. "They can't bargain for better wages or living conditions," he says, "because they are illegal aliens."

José Luis Pérez Canchola, director of the Migration Information and Studies Center (CIEM) in Tijuana, estimates there were three to five million undocumented workers in the U.S. in May of this year. Of these, 85 percent are said to be Latins, mostly Mexicans; although there are also significant numbers of Guatemalans and Salvadorans. According to Pérez Canchola, Mexican authorities calculate that about 1.5 million Mexicans work in the U.S., with another million entering each year as seasonal workers.

Migrant laborers send home lots of money. Dr. Bustamante estimates that expatriate Mexican workers send between 500 and 900 million dollars back to Mexico each year, making this the fourth most important source of foreign exchange after oil, tourism and



Tijuana is the main path for illegal immigrants. (Photo by Gerardo Magallón)

non-oil exports. Pérez Canchola asserts that migrant workers make up 11 percent of the Mexican work force and provide more money for Mexico than tourists. He postulates: "Even if there are only one million Mexicans working in the U.S., and if each of them maintains five family members at home, that makes five million Mexicans who are being looked after, who have a certain security and who thus cause no drain on the Mexican economy, nor social unrest."

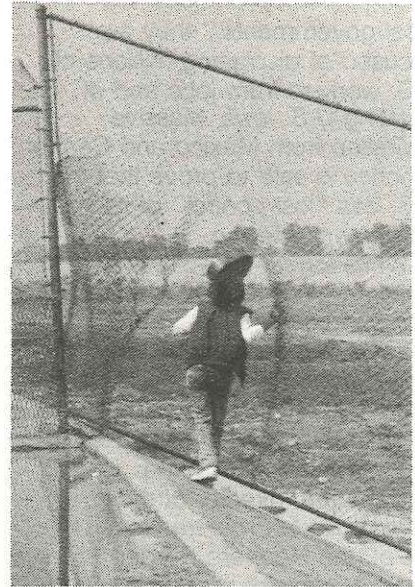
Meanwhile, it seems that El Salvador relies directly on the U.S. for most of its foreign exchange. According to Guillermo Ungo and Schafick Handal of the FDR/FMLN, U.S. economic and military aid to that country amounts to two million dollars a day. Salvadorans working in the U.S. also send back huge sums,

The extortion racket is a chimneyless industry, mainly benefiting corrupt police officials

with amounts estimated at 300 to 400 million dollars annually by Edwin Corr, U.S. Ambassador in San Salvador, and at 800 million to 1.3 billion annually by the Universidad Centro Americana (UCA) in San Salvador.

Zapata Canyon

Research at the Colef has shown that 48 percent of the total flow of undocumented migrants crosses the border through the city of Tijuana. An estimated 80 percent of them goes across the hills and valleys of a place known as Zapata Canyon, a wide treeless space, windy and barren, with scrub and shrubs in the valleys. The ground here is strewn with broken glass, glittering in the afternoon sun, as would-be migrants wait to begin their night-time trek to the other side. Some Mexicans play baseball near the closest Mexican suburb, known as "Freedom," while the migrants sit watching distant Border Patrol movements. As many as 2000



"A silent invasion." (Photo by Gerardo Magallón)

would-be migrants may gather any afternoon at Zapata Canyon during the peak working season.

If all goes well for the itinerant illegal alien (for he's now in U.S. territory), he'll arrive at San Ysidro tonight and be looking for work tomorrow. Some take the longer walk to Chula Vista, thinking it safer, or easier. Three travelers from Jalisco said they were going to fly from San Diego to Los Angeles; they had walked illegally across the border, not because they didn't have the money, but because they didn't have the papers they needed.

Dr. Bernardo González Aréchiga, head of the Colef's Economic Studies Department, comments, "The distribution of documents is very unequal, and the principal determinant is socio-economic status. Virtually all of the upper-class can cross the border, but only 70 percent of the middle-class can do so and only 30 percent of the lower-class. About half of the three million residents in Mexico's border cities are unable to cross the border legally.

Easy Prey

If all does not go well for the intending migrant, he or she will be picked up by the Border Patrol. The least this means is deportation. But human rights workers and Chicano leaders in San Diego and Tijuana say that heavy violence is part of the arrest

and deportation process. Those who attempt to run from the "migra" may get shot at; those who try to resist arrest may be beaten.

Roberto Martínez, a lawyer working for the American Friends Service Committee in San Diego, says there are countless types of shootings and assaults along the border, which he described as "like a war zone." Migrants are often cruelly treated, exploited and robbed by the so-called "coyotes" or "polleros," travel agents for the illegals. They are responsible for such tragedies as the deaths of the 18 men suffocated in a closed railway car in Texas last July, and of the dehydration deaths of three men in the Arizona desert, also in July.

Pérez Canchola says there were around 300 deaths in the border region in 1986, while Martínez says he knows of six shooting deaths during the past year. Martínez analyzes the problem: "In Mexico, there's a problem of extortion of migrants by police. Here, the issue is violence. Take a look at these photos; this man was beaten up by the Border Patrol. I don't think they left a single part of his body untouched. The history of this violence goes back 150 years. In the 1880s and 1890s, thousands of Mexicans, naturalized U.S. citizens, were murdered and their land was robbed. Texans make

very violent police. The ones trained in Glencoe, Georgia (Ku Klux Klan territory), are completely brain-washed. Some of them are of Mexican origin; they get de-programmed so they don't identify with their own people...Not all police or Border Patrol agents are violent, some indeed are humanitarian, but a significant element of these agents of law and order are corrupt Rambo types, who take out their frustration on defenseless people."

People who are arrested by the Border Patrol —Martínez calls them assault victims— end up in detention centers such as the Metropolitan Correctional Center in San Diego. Not only illegal migrants are detained; witnesses may be held for weeks or months when their only crime is to have seen some incident of violence or extortion. Martínez points out that most people are too frightened to testify against the state's agents, so when they come to court, they say they've seen nothing. Only then, when dismissed by the judge, are they set free.

Children are pawns in the migration detention game: some get separated from their families; others are held with their mothers in state prisons or in alternative detention centers run by the Catholic Community Services in California. Lawyer Martínez says that lost children are interviewed daily by members of the Mexican

Consulate and held at Chula Vista until some relative is located in Mexico to take charge of the child.

While Mexicans are easily deported back across the border, Central Americans and others are held in centers known as "OTMs," for Other Than Mexicans. Roberto Martínez, also a member of the Coalition for Law and Justice in California, explains that there are major detention centers for OTMs all along the border: the "Corralon" in Calexico, another in Oakdale, Louisiana and Krome in Miami. The Central Americans who seek political asylum in the U.S. rarely receive it, he asserts, primarily because the U.S. government does not recognize that the political problems in the region are capable of expelling populations.

In Mexico, migrant workers also suffer discrimination, be they Mexican or of other nationalities. Pérez Canchola of CIEM says, "the migrant" is alone, he's vulnerable to extortion, he has no local support, he's an easy victim of corrupt "coyotes" and policemen.

Undocumented Central Americans are vulnerable because they are in Mexico illegally and risk deportation if detained. But Mexicans are vulnerable too. According to Mexican law, it is illegal to cross the border except at authorized points. Pérez

CENTRAL AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS ON THE LINE

During a visit with a human rights worker to a Salvation Army shelter in Tijuana, a Guatemalan man told the following story:

Orphaned at age six, he was left in the care of an uncle who treated him badly. One day he was sent to look after the cows. At one point he fell backwards into a thorny bush and in the confusion, the cows escaped into the corn field. His uncle/guardian was so enraged that he had the boy imprisoned in the local jail house for a month.

He grew up in El Quiché, a province in northern Guatemala, where there was violence, murders and machine guns. He married a woman with family in the military, and he feared them. Finally he left his wife and daughter, who now live in Guatemala City, and traveled north. With two friends, he traversed the northern Mexican desert on foot, only to meet up with a white police car while crossing a highway one day. The policemen let them go after telling them they didn't want the measly 2000 pesos the tired walkers had in hand.

In Tijuana, this 30-year old Guatemalan seemed to be a very dynamic member of the community. He was the one who saw us to the door and accompanied us to the car. During our visit, he put on a big pot of lunch-time left-overs to warm up, then he organized

a group in the kitchen, and while talking with us, fixed an outside water faucet with a spanner brought to him by a young man in a wheel chair. He said that tomorrow he would go asking for money to buy food for the hostel and to take to prisoners in the local jail.

Asked about his future plans, the Guatemalan responded neither north nor south. He said he missed his wife and daughter, and worried about them, and that he needed to make some money. He does send them money from time to time, like last week, after he painted the house next door.

Three Salvadoran men also spoke with us. They were thin and poorly dressed, and they had some kind of dust or paint on their hands that indicated they had been doing hard physical work. They were evasive and confusing in answer to direct questions. The oldest of the three said he used to work for the government, but we weren't sure he didn't mean the Army. He had work in El Salvador, but said he had sold his truck to travel north because "he couldn't stand the situation any longer."

These four men in the Salvation Army hostel all said they had wives and children back home...that makes four single-mothers more, waiting —or not waiting— for the appearance of the absent husband-absent father, his letters, or some money.



"Illegal aliens." (Photo by Gerardo Magallón)

Canchola explains that this law, which carries a 15-day jail term, provides the excuse for all kinds of police actions against the undocumented. Itinerant workers in Tijuana and other border cities are harrassed by police who demand money to "arrange the situation." Three Mexicans in Zapata Canyon told me they had each given 20,000 pesos to police at the bus station when they arrived in Tijuana from Jalisco, while Pérez Canchola told of a Salvadoran who lost 150,000 pesos (lent to him in Guadalajara) and 200 dollars (given him by a Canadian pastor) to the municipal police in Tijuana. Local police authorities are working to control corruption, says Pérez; 120 policemen have been sacked so far this year for abuse of authority, but none of them have been charged.

Research by Victor Clark, of the Binational Human Rights Center in Tijuana, shows that 65 percent of intending migrants suffer extortion by police in the area. He described the extortion racket as a "chimneyless industry," mainly benefiting corrupt police officials. A study of 26 cases over the past three months, says Clark, shows that migrants paid an average of 44 dollars to "arrange their situations."

Policy and Law on the Mexican Side

José Luis Pérez Canchola, who has studied migratory

phenomenon over more than ten years, affirms that migration is not sufficiently recognized in Mexico as an important socio-economic fact of life. He proposes that universities study the issues more: the situation of the families left behind in poor rural areas, the experiences of migrants and their economic impact on their communities, for example.

Those who do study migration agree that only with a working knowledge of the issues, can policy-making be carried out effectively. "The study of migration-related issues is necessary so that policy making can be based on facts, and not on myths," says Gustavo de la Vega of the Metropolitan University in Mexico City.

Pérez Canchola asserts that the Mexican government does not have the infrastructure to meet migrants' needs. "There are no offices to inform intending migrants of their rights and obligations, or of current possibilities or difficulties in the U.S., nor are there any facilities to deal with the dead bodies that might get sent back to Mexico."

The Mexican General Population Law does make a general statement of good intentions in this regard (Article 139): "The Ministry of Internal Affairs, with the support of the Foreign Ministry, will take care that migratory workers in foreign countries, even the undocumented, be treated in accordance with their human and

social rights, which allow them to conserve their cultural patrimony and the integrity of their families."

Nonetheless, a CIEM study done in 1986 argues that most aspects of the law related to undocumented workers refer to sanctions. The study concludes that the current Population Law in Mexico reflect "great backwardness and a lack of understanding as regards the treatment received by migratory workers."

The Simpson Rodino Law

In fact, there are relatively few critics of Mexican immigration law, which is widely viewed as flexible and humanitarian. But there is widespread protest and confusion about the latest U.S. immigration legislation, known as the Simpson-Rodino Law.

Dr. Bustamante, at the Colef, says the law has had no impact

AN OPEN WOUND

The U.S. Mexican border es una herida abierta where the third world grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the life blood of two worlds merging to form a third country "a border culture." Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. Los atravesados live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half-dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the "normal." Tension grips the inhabitants of the borderlands like a virus. Ambivalence and unrest reside there and death is no stranger.

from: Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Spinsters/Ann Lute, San Francisco, California, 1987.

on the migratory flow; it's simply "business as usual." Figures for the number of arrests and deportations in any given month can be misleading in this regard since they don't reflect the number of migrants who cross the border, but rather the intensity of Border Patrol activities.

The Simpson-Rodino Law provides an amnesty for those who have lived continuously in the United States for five years since 1982, as well as special programs for agricultural workers. The most important new aspect of the law, in contrast with past federal immigration legislation, is the establishment of sanctions for employers using undocumented workers. But Dr. Bustamante says the law has enough loopholes to render these sanctions inapplicable. "An employer could be found in full compliance with the law if he or she signs a form stating that an alien who is applying for a job has produced a legal document demonstrating eligibility to work in the U.S., regardless of the existence of such a document." And it seems that fines will be levied with flexibility. Roberto Martínez explains that a match factory in

workers, especially farm workers. His reaction: "What's the point of continuing to help people comply with this law? It's a violation of human rights if there's no provision for family reunion."

That same day in Mexico, the *Excelsior*, one of the country's major newspapers, carried a story on the same press conference given in Washington by Alan Nelson, head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). This report, taken from the *New York Times*, said that the Reagan government "announced a policy which would permit some foreigners to remain in the U.S. if they have immediate relatives qualifying for amnesty." The text continues, "Nelson said there would be a careful review of each individual case, but he did not exclude the possibility that some married couples might be separated."

Asked for his opinion on the INS decisions announced on October 21, Dr. Bustamante said he thought the U.S. government was becoming "more and more flexible in its application of the Simpson-Rodino Law, because it knows that the country needs migrant labor. Their very law is a recognition of that."



People of 85 different nationalities cross illegally at Tijuana. (Photo by Gerardo Magallón)

Academic studies estimate the U.S. will have to import 10 or 15 million workers in future years in order to maintain a 3 percent growth rate

San Diego was recently fined \$6000 for employing 25 undocumented workers.

"According to the terms of the law, the fine could have gone much higher."

Conflicting interpretations of the law in newspaper reports help confuse the matter more. An October 22 *Los Angeles Times* front-page story claimed that children of illegal aliens could face deportation: "Offspring can remain only if both parents qualify for amnesty; spouses may also be ejected." This was alarming news to Martínez, who works in San Diego in defense of migrant

Hernan Baca, Chicano leader in National City, near San Diego, has a more radical, layman's view of the law:

"The Simpson-Rodino Law is not immigration reform, it's labor legislation, manipulation of labor, of the normal flows of supply and

Expatriate Mexican workers send between 500 and 900 million dollars back to Mexico each year

demand. It results in police treatment of a labor problem. The importation of foreign labor in the U.S. will have to continue because there's zero population growth here; estimates differ, but five to fifteen million workers will have to be imported in the future. Farmers here need workers, and that's why they're pressuring for the INS to loosen up the legislation.

"The amnesty for undocumented workers is nothing less than a massive rip-off. The INS expected four million applications; at a cost of \$175 per application, that's 700 million dollars for the INS. Then, the necessary medical exam costs at least \$75; that's 300 million dollars for doctors. Besides, money for lawyers, for photos, for agents and "coyotes" I estimate the amnesty plan could rip-off anything between four and seven billion dollars from undocumented workers. And all this to militarize immigration. The amnesty is a false proposition for most workers. The Simpson-Rodino is a unilateral bill which ignores all push and pull factors between Mexico and the United States. What will be the effect in Mexico if four to seven billion dollars are taken out of the undocumented's economy?"

Asked if he thought sanctions would be applied to employers, Baca replied: "Oh, they'll catch some little fish. It's like prohibition. There'll be some attempts to show they're getting tough on employers. But the system here demands Mexican labor; the economy can't survive without it." □

THE MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY

The maquiladora industry began in Mexico in 1965, and has now expanded to 1,070 plants in the northern border states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua and Tamaulipas. Around 375,000 persons currently work on these assembly lines; they are generally aged between 14 and 26 years, and today represent 11% of Mexico's work force. They earn a total salary of 1500-1800 million dollars a year, according to research at the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF).

The maquila industry functions with foreign investment, some national capital, and intensive use of local labor. The plants usually assemble goods imported from the United States, for exportation of the finished product. The factories process food, fridges, televisions, motors, spare parts, textiles and other products; some plants process coupons and accounts of supermarkets or discount stores.

The plants vary enormously in technological sophistication. The most sophisticated factories—many of them Japanese—use the latest technological developments and attend to the lighting, ventilation and health needs of the workers. Other maquila processes, especially in the clothing industry, operate almost clandestinely, or employ women at home, thus saving on all overhead costs.

In Baja California, says Octavio Corona Flores, President of the local Chamber of Commerce, there are some 400 maquila plants, which employ 35,000 workers. Dr. Bernardo González Aréchiga, head of the Economic

Studies Department of the Colegio de la Frontera Norte, says there are 180 plants in Ciudad Juárez, but these employ four times as many workers.

Work processes on the assembly lines generally involve rapid repetitive movements; some tasks cause considerable eye strain, others are done with the use of toxic substances, such as acetone, strong glues, and other chemical products, which cause all kinds of illnesses: nausea, headaches, alterations to the nervous system and intoxication.

Women used to make up almost the entire population of the maquila workforce: they were considered better at the work, which demands attention to detail and repetition. Today however, women make up only 66% of the total maquila workforce, says Dr. González Aréchiga. Male or female, most of the workers are migrants that have come from nearby rural areas or from further south. The maquila provides ample job opportunities along the northern border, which does not suffer the high unemployment rates of central and southern Mexico.

Transition is the most notable aspect of this workforce. The maquila industry has a turnover rate of 20% each month, says the investigator of the COLEF. He estimates that seven or eight million workers have held jobs in the maquila industry over the last 23 years. A worker lasts an average of six to eight months in any one job. There is massive desertion in December, according to Dr. González.

The high turnover rate is due to the very nature of the work: the workers get burned out doing boring, repetitive actions to the rhythm of the machine. While trade unions do exist and have existed, they are not very strong defenders of worker's rights and wages. There were strikes in Tijuana in 1982 and in Ciudad Juárez in 1974-1975. Dr. González says that the union movement in the latter almost destroyed the maquila industry during that time. Various reasons are given for the relative weakness of the maquila trade union movement: Dr. González says the high turnover rate has a lot to do with it. He also says that the factories employ strong images of authority to intimidate young female workers who come from rural areas where they have been taught to work and obey. Other employers use the strategy of "the company family" where all will advance together.

Norma Iglesias, of the Colegio de la Frontera Norte, author of the book *La Flor mas bella de la maquiladora* (1985), says that sexual games are also used to increase production. Bosses and supervisors flirt with workers, they have "favorites" and those who compete to be the favorite. Sexual energy is converted into work capacity. Furthermore, the traditional image of the woman is utilized, as "women aren't supposed to complain". And if, in fact, the women do not complain—even when their health has been affected by the working conditions—it's because they are glad to have a job and an income.

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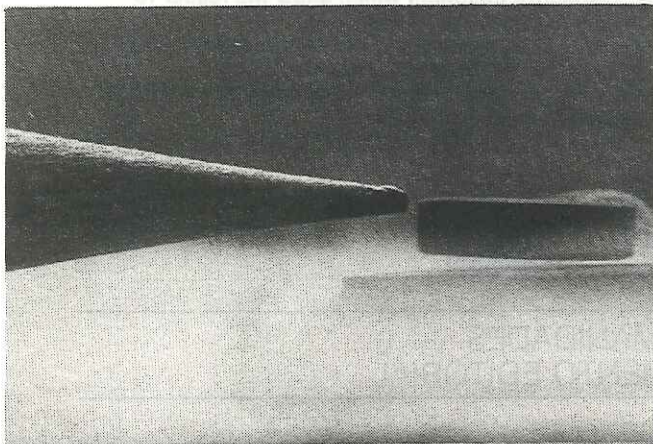
Daniel Reséndiz Núñez

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN MEXICO: LOOKING FORWARD

Introduction

During the past 15 years, Mexico has made some progress towards developing its own science and technology. The National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT), created in 1970, has contributed in a number of ways, by promoting interest and support for science, developing scientific and technical infrastructure, and emphasizing the relevance of science for development. Yet an explicit science and technology (S&T) policy, related to the country's overall national development plans was only recently defined. The process that led to this policy is closely related to the country's perception of its economic reality.

For many decades, industrialization was based on foreign technology. Correspondingly, technical education, higher education and research were poorly budgeted. More recently, from 1970 to 1982, Mexico invested considerable resources in its scientific and technical infrastructure. The number of students in higher education increased from a few hundred thousand to about one million. The



Magnetic levitation achieved by high temperature transition superconductors.
(Photo from the Instituto de Materiales, UNAM)

budgets, laboratories and general facilities of universities and technological institutes grew even faster, and important advances in basic research were made at several of those institutions. Technical information systems for industrial needs were created, and more than 20 centers for research and development were established throughout the country. The end result —on the supply side— was a significant increase in technical services and scientific activities.

Yet a comparable demand for these services from industry never materialized, despite tax and loan incentives. The prospects of abundant petro-dollars and easily obtainable technology, capital goods and intermediate products from abroad made the national effort rather extraneous.

During the last few years, however, there has been a turn-about in Mexico's views on its own future. From the optimistic expectations of an economic take-off propelled by oil revenues, the country soon came to the conclusion that there are no short cuts to modernization.

Not all of the consequences of this shock were undesirable. In fact, the shortage of hard currency has brought about some unexpected benefits. Most important among them is that government, industry and academia have all come to the conclusion that technical skills, scientific knowledge and the will to develop and apply both of them are among the missing links in the Mexican economic system.

This consensus gave rise to the National Program for Technological and Scientific Development 1984-1988. This new S&T policy is defined within the framework set by the National Development Plan, and the interrelationship between them is very close. The Program is the main instrument —though not the only one— now being used to guide the advancement of science and technology in Mexico. The Program and other policy instruments, which will be described later, were designed to take full advantage

Director of the Engineering Faculty, UNAM. Ex Secretary General of the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT).

of the country's scientific and technical infrastructure in the quest to improve the current technological situation.

The Present State

Mexico's technological backwardness is expressed in the lack of vertical integration in industry and the weakness of its capital goods production. This sector of industry has been unattractive to local entrepreneurs because, unlike finished goods and intermediate products, capital goods are not covered by protective trade measures. At the same time, they require more complex technology, more highly-skilled labor and larger markets than those available in the country.

Most of the technology currently used in industry comes from abroad, either directly or as part of imported capital goods. In addition, most of the technology used in industrial plants is obsolete or lags behind state-of-the-art innovations. Even industrial sectors with a tradition of high quality in Mexico, such as the construction industry, need technological revitalization to reduce their costs for the internal market and to compete successfully abroad.

In all branches of industry, small and medium-sized enterprises are unable to improve their products and production processes due to poor management, a lack of technical capacity or inadequate local services for technological adaptation and development.

The country's scientific and technological infrastructure has expanded and improved noticeably during the past 15 years. However, it has barely been used by industry due to the lack of communication between the latter and academic institutions. As a result, not only has industrial growth relied excessively on imported know-how, but technological assimilation has also been very limited. The present challenge to Mexican industry, then, is to develop in such a way that imported technology and local innovative capacities are combined, with the latter increasing progressively.

The following are the most important obstacles to meeting this challenge:

- limited capacities of small and medium-sized industrial enterprises to manage technology;
- excessive protectionism, which isolates many sectors of Mexican industry from the demands of international competition;
- poor relationship between industry and academic research centers, and a lack of institutions concerned with building links between them;
- few highly qualified scientists and engineers;
- lack of innovation in industry;
- poor documentation and assimilation of technology in many industrial enterprises;
- work by the strongest R&D groups is mostly in the basic sciences, and they rarely participate in projects of a larger scope linked to problems of national interest;
- disparity between Mexico's needs and the national capacity for R&D in areas like earth and marine sciences;
- limited local supply of basic engineering services.

Quantitative indices of some of these constraints are the following:

- There are some 7000 full-time scientists, less than one per 10,000 inhabitants. In contrast, the index for industrialized countries is 10 to 25.

- Expenditures for science and technology are about 0.55 percent of the GNP. France, Japan, Great Britain, the U.S. and the USSR spend from 1.8 to 4.2 percent of their respective GNPs.

- 90 percent of the national expenditure for S&T is publicly financed, revealing the weak links between research and industrial needs.

- Among the population of graduate students (31,000 in



Fire rescue vehicle. (Photo from the Unidad Académica de Diseño Industrial)

1983) only 3 percent were pursuing a doctoral degree, and more than three-fourths of all graduate students were studying in the humanities, social sciences and administration.

- More than half of the country's S&T activities are concentrated in Mexico City and its environs, most of them in four large institutions.

The Current Policy

In the context described above, the current S&T policy has been designed to:

1. Strengthen the national system of science and technology, with the commitment to contribute solutions to Mexico's major technological and social problems, thus reducing the country's dependence on foreign technological sources and services;

2. Foresee social needs and technological changes in order to design timely policies or preventive measures;

3. Promote awareness throughout society of the nature and role of science and technology in the nation's integral development.

The ways proposed to achieve these objectives are the following:

- conduct scientific and technological development with the broad, active participation of scientific organizations, industry and other economic sectors;

- encourage industrial organizations to increase their vertical and horizontal integration and to identify and manage technology as an explicit variable;

- reinforce the capacity of industry to assimilate and adapt imported technology, so that it stimulates rather than substitutes the national technological effort;

- increase systematically the investment in science and technology in accordance with the country's needs and possibilities (a growth rate of 15 percent per year during the period 1984-1988 has been set as a goal);

- encourage industry and other enterprises to finance

- research projects oriented toward meeting their own needs;
- promote decentralization of R&D activities as in other economic activities;
 - encourage graduate education that improves the quality of higher education and fosters technological innovation in industry;
 - link science and technology programs to those for in-

dustrial development;

- develop mechanisms that promote cost-sharing for technological innovations between government and industry.

The main instruments designed to implement such policies are:

- The Plan for National Development (PND) 1983-1988;

NEW DISCOVERIES IN SUPERCONDUCTORS

For the first time in its history, Mexico has established itself on an equal footing with other countries at the vanguard of superconductor research. Mexican researchers developed new superconductors at the UNAM's Institute for Materials Research, just a few days after Physics Nobel Prize winners, Karl Alexander Muller (Switzerland) and Georg Bednorz (Germany), announced their own recent discoveries in this field.

Dr. Tatsuo Akachi, academic secretary at the Institute and a member of the team which carried out this feat, told us that they first heard of research on superconductor materials at the Winter Meeting on Low-Temperature Materials, held in Mexico City in January 1987. With this scant information, they began to work on synthesizing new materials, finally managing to do so by mixing copper, barium and iridium oxides.

According to Dr. Akachi, the new material is a kind of ceramic with two basic properties. The first is that below a certain temperature (known as the critical transition temperature) its resistance to energy conduction is zero, meaning that it possesses an infinite conduction capacity. Its second property is that it prevents external magnetic fields from entering its own, a phenomenon known as the Meissner Effect, making it a perfect diamagnet.

The new material developed by Mexican researchers at the UNAM achieves superconductivity at a temperature of 90 degrees Kelvin. The same team produced another material exhibiting similar properties at 150 degrees Kelvin, but it is unstable, and they have been unable to reproduce it.

Research at the Materials Institute has gone away beyond the mere reproduction of experiments. In fact, Mexican discoveries are con-

tributing to a better understanding of superconductivity. Its causes are still unknown, as is the mechanism by which crystals are paired from the mixed materials.

The team reported its findings in *Fisica Review B*, an important scientific journal. Basically, these involve the discovery of certain vibrations of the network at very high frequencies, a phenomenon they believe may be related to superconductivity. As part of their research, the Mexican scientists added trace amounts of iron to their previous mixture of copper, barium and iridium oxides, thus creating a very strong magnetic field in the crystal (what is known as the Mossbauer Effect). A further aspect of their research involves the problem of the extremely short life span of the materials in question. In general they deteriorate rapidly, and for commercial purposes, they will need to be made more stable.

Dr. Akachi believes that we are at the dawn of a new industrial revolution. The use of superconductors has implications for all aspects of electricity and electromagnetism, that is, the generation, storage, transmission and general use of energy. Superconducting cables will be created which will be able to use electricity more efficiently. Faster and more sensitive machines will be designed, for example in the case of computers. In medicine, it will be possible to develop sensors capable of detecting small magnetic fields indicating the early beginnings of disease, as well as other instruments related to human magnetic fields. Normal superconductors are already used in medicine for brain scans, and new possibilities are still being imagined.

In terms of energy storage, the potential is boundless. At present, it is not possible to store energy in large quantities, beyond that for car and regular batteries. In the future

it will be possible to store solar and oil-derived energy, as well as that derived from other non-conventional sources, such as hydrodynamic magnets or nuclear power.

Dr. Akachi added that in many of the cases given above, the technology has already been developed, although it has yet to be released on the market. All that is missing are superconductors suitable for commercial use, meaning that research in this field in the more developed countries is a race against the clock.

The research at the Institute's Low-Temperature Laboratory demonstrates that Mexico has the scientific expertise and personnel needed to make such discoveries, and thus needs not lag behind in technological development. Nevertheless, as the superconductor specialist admits, it is impossible to compare the research infrastructure in advanced countries with Mexico's. Here it is very difficult to obtain financial support for such work because research is not tied to industry, as it is in many other countries. According to Dr. Akachi, however, this situation may be changing. Although the effort is still insufficient in relation to the needs, private firms and research centers are now joining forces in superconductor research.

The main difficulty lies in the lack of infrastructure for using the new materials. According to Dr. Akachi, Mexican industry is not equipped to take advantage of them. At present, Mexico does not produce generators, motors, computers or their components, all of which could be improved greatly with the new discoveries. Nevertheless, he believes the country is at the point that it can make plans for applying the findings in the future.

- The Program for Technological and Scientific Development 1984-1988;
- Other mid-term, sectoral programs linked to the PND;
- The National System of Researchers;
- The Law for Promoting and Coordinating Scientific and Technological Development.

Each of them will be briefly discussed below.

The Plan for National Development

In January 1983 the Planning Law went into effect. It established procedures for designing federal government plans with the participation of groups to be affected by them or who have expressed interest. The government was also mandated to formulate and issue a six-year Plan for National Development (PND), setting the framework for specific programs to promote the development of sectors, regions and strategic fields of activity across economic sectors. A typical example of the latter is that for science and technology.

In May 1983 the PND for 1983-1988 was approved and issued. It established the country's objectives and pri-

orities, decision-making procedures, working mechanisms and organizational responsibilities for the various areas of activity covered in the Plan. Also included are the policies for global, sectorial and regional development.

The PND delineates general policy for science and technology. It differs from previous global plans in an important way, namely science and technology are no longer dealt with in an isolated chapter, but rather are a constant component of most aspects of the Plan. This is an obvious pre-condition for the effective contribution of science to development.

The Program for Technological and Scientific Development

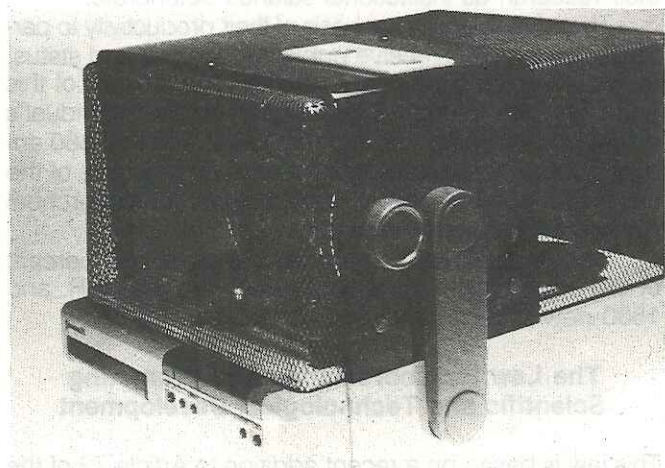
In 1984 the government established this Program for the period 1984-1988. Since the Program derives directly from the PND, its provisions are intimately linked to those for a variety of economic and educational activities.

The National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) coordinated the design and integration of the Program. Ten major government departments, representatives from industry and academic institutions also participated. The resulting Program adds specifics and details to the PND's guidelines, with the aim of making science and technology an integral part of Mexico's development. The responsibility for implementing the Program lies with each of the participating government departments and agencies, while follow-up and evaluation fall to CONACYT.

Each of the Ministries most closely involved in the production or demand for technological development contributed a chapter to the Program. Other chapters were prepared by CONACYT, although often in close collaboration with academia and industry. Their participation was important for technical, as well as political reasons, given that the Program's ultimate success depends on having



Laboratory for the characterization of amorphous silicone materials. (Photo from the Institute of Material Research, UNAM)



"Comalli" automatic tortilla-maker. (Photo from the Unidad Académica de Diseño Industrial)

The country's scientific and technological infrastructure has expanded and improved noticeably during the past 15 years

research centers, their potential beneficiaries and the government join their efforts and resources toward meeting common objectives.

The Program is divided into five parts. The first defines the purposes, priorities and strategy for the science and technology policy. Part two contains specific programs for improving the national system for science and technology (a system including everything from research centers to engineering firms, from graduate schools to agencies that disseminate and popularize scientific information). Part three defines development programs for specific sectors of the economy: agriculture; communications and transportation; urban development and ecology; education; energy, mines and state-owned industry; fisheries; and health.

Part four establishes research priorities directly related to the country's major needs. These are a greater knowledge of Mexico's natural resources and environment, as well as its society; research on nutrition and

health; R&D on the use of renewable and non-renewable resources; and technological development for a whole range of industries: agriculture, electronics, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals and construction. Finally, the fifth part defines mechanisms for implementing the Program, including ways to involve industry, research institutions and local governments.

The federal government invested 700 million dollars to implement the Program in 1985. If its provisions are met, this amount will increase at least 15 percent each year through 1988. This means that the portion of the GNP devoted to science and technology will grow from 0.55 percent in 1984 to 0.78 percent in 1988 (assuming the GNP grows at an average rate of five percent per year).

Sectorial Mid-Term Programs

The Program for Technological and Scientific Development and the mid-term programs for the development of various economic sectors are mutually complementary. Each of the latter is aimed at achieving integral development within its sector, and thus includes the technologi-

BIOTECHNOLOGY ON THE HORIZON

Conclusive results of research in the genetic engineering of food plants will not be known until 1990. In the meantime, several large firms are moving to monopolize initial findings in an attempt to get patents on the new products as they are developed.

It is believed that new scientific research in this field will lead to revolutionary changes in agriculture in the industrialized countries. They will be able to produce a greater variety of goods, on a larger scale, making it possible for them to eliminate imports of such products once and for all.

A similar process is already underway with sugar cane. The United States has been the largest sugar importer in the hemisphere, while the crop has been the main export product—and the basis of the economy—in many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. One day scientists in the U.S. discovered they could make a sweetener by modifying

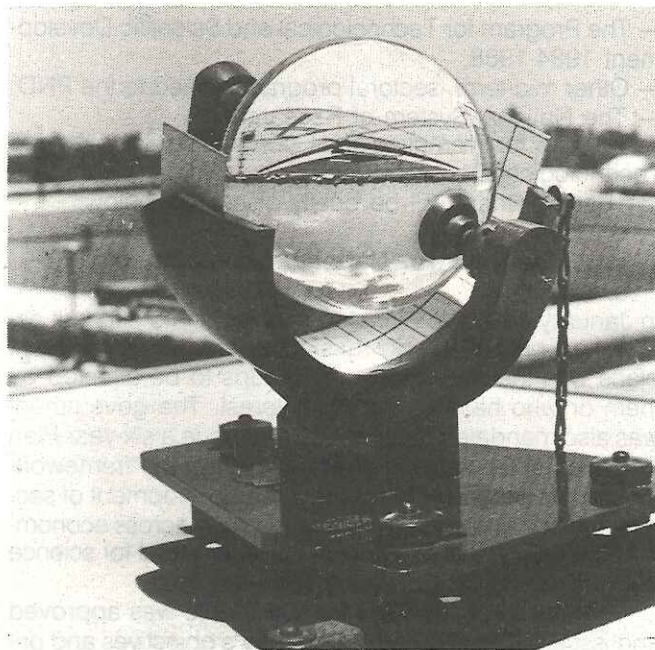
corn starch, corn being produced in great abundance in the U.S. That discovery marked the beginning of bankruptcy for sugar producing nations.

In fact, all the agricultural products of the less-developed countries run the same risk. Likewise, this possibility increases the danger of new political and economic struggles for control of the new surpluses, which will likely be created. The most immediate danger, of course, lies in the economic problems facing the countries which will no longer be able to rely on income from traditional exports.

Mexico's situation is alarming. While other countries such as the United States, Germany, Belgium and Holland, and particularly the large multinationals, invest millions of dollars in biotechnology research, this country has only two research centers working in the area: one at the UNAM and the other in Irapuato, Guanajuato.

cal dimension among other relevant variables. In a sense then, these programs actually define portions of the science and technology policy. From this perspective, the most important mid-term programs are those for Industrial Development and Foreign Trade, Communication and Transportation, Education, Health, Ecology and Urban Development, Rural Development, Fisheries, Energy and Mining, and Forestry.

The fact that these programs all derive from the PND



Solar radiation deposit, Institute of Geophysics. (Photo from La Gaceta, UNAM)

and are oriented toward managing technology in each sector, in accordance with the Program for Technological and Scientific Development, gives the national S&T policy unity and relevance, making it not only compatible with, but essential for overall development.

The National System of Researchers

In July 1984 another important S&T policy instrument was created, the National System of Researchers (NSR). Its aim is to encourage the best individuals working at government-supported research institutions to pursue their careers and concentrate full-time on their scientific activities. Since more than 90 percent of Mexican research institutions are funded by the government, the NSR has had two immediate positive effects. The first is the practice of evaluating all researchers simultaneously, with uniform criteria, regardless of their specialty or institutional affiliation; the other is to keep the best scientists from leaving their research as institutional salaries deteriorate.

Those selected on the basis of their productivity to participate in the NSR receive public recognition and status, as well as a supplementary income. The amount of this additional, tax-free stipend depends on the individual's professional stature, varying from US\$1,560 to 9,360 annually. To promote decentralization—an objective of the current S&T policy—the stipend is higher for researchers working outside of Mexico City.

During 1984, some 1400 people (about 50 percent of the applicants) were incorporated into the NSR, and 1500 new applications were under study in 1985.

The Law for Coordinating and Promoting Scientific and Technological Development

This law is based on a recent addition to Article 73 of the Mexican Constitution, which empowers the Federal Congress to pass laws to stimulate the production, diffusion and application of the technology and scientific knowledge required by the country. The Congress then proceeded

ADVANCES IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN AT THE UNAM

The Industrial Design School of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) is considered one of the best in the world. Its infrastructure competes with the best, and it is the only such school in Latin America offering a masters degree.

The high regard for Mexico's School of Industrial Design is shared by Horacio Durán, founder of the school and presently coordinator of its graduate program, Carlos Daniel Soto, full-time professor of the Design Workshop, and Oscar Salinas Flores, the general coordinator of the undergraduate program, all interviewed by VOICES.

The three professionals agreed that their students' creativity is highly-valued outside of Mexico. This, they believe, is largely attributed to their rich cultural heritage, the more than 7000 years of humanistic development of Mexican society. The sad proof is that the "brain drain" in this field is extremely high.

Some of the most renowned Industrial Design School graduates who have chosen that path, include Federico Díaz de la Peña, now living in Great Britain; Federico Hess, now living in Bilbao, Spain; Daniel Hernández, living in Chicago; and Lucía Montiel, hired by the Volkswagen Company in Germany to design auto parts. There are many more Mexican designers who have found better professional opportunities in other lands.

This profession is relatively new in Mexico; the School was founded barely 27 years ago. Since then the new professionals have had to overcome academic obstacles and others derived from the Mexican tradition of importing everything, from machines, to patents, to finished products. Thus, industrial designers in Mexico face the additional task of having to modify this practice,

since imported goods are often not even compatible with the customs and culture of the people who wish to adopt them.

This was one of the main arguments which led Oscar Salinas Flores to state that industrial design is still in the process of being born in Mexico. Only now is it reaching maturity and recognizing that the role of industrial designers is not limited to designing furniture, but rather includes the creation of an infinite gammit of durable and capital goods.

The three men interviewed agreed that Mexican industrialists represent the main obstacle to the development of a national, industrial design profession. They believe part of the problem is that the young Mexican industry grew out of small shops tied to family enterprises, which lacked an adequate concept of how to organize a business along modern lines. In their opinion, this small family shop mentality persists and represents a serious obstacle for industrial development.

Nonetheless, this situation may change with Mexico's new membership in the GATT, which will demand that these businesses make major changes. More modern industries will certainly require designers, and the interviewees expressed the hope that industrialists will approach the School and use it to its full capacity. They insist that it is possible to develop a great variety of products, which are potentially competitive on the international market. This would benefit the economy, as well as people seeking new areas of investment.

One of the more interesting examples of the high-level of creativity at the Mexican School of Industrial Design is the recent development of a blood oxygenizer, vi-

tal for open heart surgery. Many believed that such a machine could never be built in Mexico. The last in stock was imported in 1982, at a cost of \$700, and could not be reused. As a thesis research project, Ricardo Torres designed a new oxygenizer using only Mexican materials and costing \$100. The new design has the added advantage that it can be reused. Torres' oxygenizer is presently being perfected at the Cardiology Hospital of the Mexican Social Security Institute Medical Center.

Another interesting design developed at the School is a piscicultural calibrator, a breakthrough in its field, which won a prize at the Young Inventors' International Competition in Bulgaria in 1985.

Other original designs include special wheelchairs for athletes, various types of medical instruments and a prototype for transportation adapted to Mexico's specific needs. Mexican designers have also identified problems of over-design in imported machines and instruments.

Mexican graduates are now able to develop the most complex kinds of instruments, including the famous electronic guides for telescopes used at the San Pedro Mártir Observatory in Northern Baja California. UNAM designers participated in the multidisciplinary team that built them.

The three professionals interviewed expressed the hope that Mexican industrialists will soon value the importance of the School of Industrial Design and the training it gives students. In the meantime, they continue to seek multidisciplinary efforts, many of which are already underway.

More than 90 percent of Mexican research institutions are funded by the government

to pass the Law in December 1984. It is designed to:

- establish governmental procedures for the promotion of S&T and their application;
- define basic rules for planning and executing scientific and technological activities when these lie within the domain of government ministries;
- delineate rules for coordinating federal, state and local government efforts regarding the development and application of scientific solutions for problems;
- establish mechanisms to stimulate the participation of private and/or social organizations in the production, diffusion and application of S&T in the effort to accelerate overall development.

The Law consolidates the advances in S&T made by the federal government during the two previous years. Some of the immediate results of the Law are the following:

a) The consensus reached by government, industry and academia regarding the need to coordinate and pro-

mote S&T activities was incorporated into federal law.

b) For every presidential term (six years), the federal government is obliged to formulate a mid-term program for scientific and technological development.

c) Freedom and responsibility were established as the guiding principles of scientific research.

d) Resources allocated to specific S&T programs by the federal government are non-transferable unless specific permission is granted by CONACYT and the Programming and Budget Ministry.

e) The Planning Commission for Scientific and Technological Development was created with representatives from several government agencies. The commission will be an effective tool for comparing the positions of different sectors and reconciling them into unified proposals for formulating and evaluating S&T policy.

f) Guidelines for coordination were established to maintain a unified, multi-sectorial science and technology policy and to prevent its disintegration into an aggregate of independent, sectorial policies.

Conclusions

During the last 15 years, Mexico built a scientific and technical infrastructure which, despite its small size and specific weaknesses, is already a significant asset for development

MEXICO'S TRADITIONAL EXCELLENCE IN ASTRONOMY CONTINUES STRONG

The San Pedro Mártir Observatory in Northern Baja California recently installed new instruments that revolutionize earth-based observations of the firmament. With these new additions, designed by an entirely Mexican research team, Mexico hopes to keep pace with the most modern work in the field and continue its vanguard role in the study of the solar system, a tradition maintained for more than three centuries.

The Observatory was inaugurated on September 16, 1979, and its 2.12 meter diameter telescope was also designed by UNAM researchers. It is presently considered one of the world's 12 most potent telescopes, incorporating state-of-the-art technology. The new instruments, which will help make the Observatory even more efficient, are an astronomic detector and an excentric telescope guide.

A five-member team built a system to optimize infrared observation of stars, nebulae or any other stellar objects. The photometric and infrared spectrophotometric system (SIFEI), as

the detector is called, is used to detect celestial objects despite the opacity produced by background radiation, which may be stronger than the signal emitted by the stellar body.

The system involves the following components (among others): a secondary oscillating mirror that makes it possible to discriminate the noise; a photometry box where the detectors are lodged; criogenic bottles that act as detectors; and a data collecting system. This equipment registers a signal and processes it in a micro-computer, a universal transmitter-receptor, which in turn can establish communication with a printer or a larger computer, and a pulse counter used to measure the light being received.

The Observatory is also equipped with an excentric telescope guidance system. This is a new instrument with high spatial resolution adapted to the telescope. It is special because it is much thinner than all the other guidance systems currently in use, barely 72-centimeters wide and 22-centimeters high. The

new system can be used at the telescope's three positions, or mirrors, as well as on other instruments such as the photometer (measures the light emitted by the stars and identifies its magnitude with various colors), the Fabry-Perot interferometer (measures whether stellar bodies are drawing closer or moving farther from earth), and the Echelle-Cassegrain spectrograph (determines a star's material composition and temperature).

The excentric guidance system is basically an optronic (optics and electronics) system which receives images and relays them to a color television monitor. It consists of a detection system made of a CCD-EEV-P4310 camera adapted to a second generation image-intensifier by means of optic fibers that guide the light from one end to the other without significant loss. Along with the camera, another essential component of the new system is an intricate set of mirrors, one of which is mobile.

The excentric guide acts as an auxiliary in-

strument for solar system observations. After locating the particular star under study, it searches for a near-by stellar object to act as a guide star and thus prevent atmospheric changes from affecting the measurements. The guide aligns the telescope, making the axes of symmetry of the primary and secondary mirrors coincide, thus preventing blurred images. After locating a star with the mobile mirror, it sends the light signal to the detection system, where the image-intensifier amplifies it one million times. From there it is sent to the television camera, and then to a 16-inch monitor.

The researchers involved believe that the new excentric guidance system will greatly benefit astronomical observations. Astronomers will be able to make their observations from a greater distance from the telescope, and from there, control the instruments in use.

purposes. In order to put this infrastructure to full use, policy instruments have been designed and implemented. These are expected to provide orientation, purpose and effectiveness to the march of science and technology in Mexico.

In the past, some failures could be attributed to a lack of clarity as to who was responsible for what. This is no longer the case, since the new S&T policy instruments are quite specific in assigning responsibilities. This will doubtlessly add to the system's reliability.

Yet the final results of the current science and technology policy in Mexico are still very sensitive to a number of variables. Among the internal factors, the most significant are: 1) the degree of political commitment by government, industry and academia to their new consensus regarding the need for innovation in all areas of

production and to concentrate S&T efforts on the key fields and objectives identified during the process that led to the current policy; 2) the degree of governmental commitment to increase the allocation of resources to S&T at a rate about three times that projected for the GNP; 3) and the decision by industry to understand technology as a mid-to-long-term investment and so invest both in R&D, as well as in measures to increase assimilative capacity.

The most important, short-term external variable involves export earnings, since they could well affect the availability of hard currency for investing in S&T projects that show a return only in the long-run.

A Closing Note

After this paper was presented, a number of questions and



"The Lord of the Mountain", observatory in San Pedro Mártir. (Photo from La Gaceta, UNAM)

comments were made by several symposium participants. The discussants and the author agreed on the following two points:

1. Latin America's development, and Mexico's in particular, require contributions from all scientific disciplines, including the social sciences. However, it is not enough just to create research groups or institutions; in addition, specific programs and actions should be implemented in each country to facilitate the flow of information and promote stronger links between the basic sciences (universal knowledge) and the local production of goods and services. Social scientists can contribute significantly by designing appropriate ways to build these links, such that they are compatible to national history, culture and conditions.

2. The migration of scientists and other highly trained professionals from Latin America does not follow a uniform pattern. Some countries are badly affected, whereas in others, the phenomenon barely exists. In Mexico, the migration of scientists and technicians to other countries has not occurred at any significant rate; nonetheless, internal occupational migration from research to other activities does occur and has increased in recent years. The need to reinforce the links between science and the production of goods and services (point 1, above) reduces the negative aspects of this phenomenon. In fact, this occupational migration reinforces industry, government and other sectors with scientifically-minded and trained personnel, thus opening the way to dialog between those sectors and the scientific community. To avoid the risk of debilitating research in the process, the rate at which new scientists are trained must be accelerated. □

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WOMEN NOVELISTS IN MEXICO REFLECT THEIR REALITY

If until now a woman has not been made visible, if she conforms to an image that has been dictated by society, the Church, the family, then how is it possible for her to appear through her writing?

Elena Poniatowska, 1975.

I think that when a woman has felt affected by living in a sexist society, it is inevitable that this be reflected in her works.

Gabriela Rábago Palafox, 1981.

Really, the Mexican male is very weak in relation to the opposite sex, and so long as you know how to play the flirt, and aren't too ugly, they won't put obstacles in your way. That's why I don't think women in Mexico who want to publish have trouble simply because they are women.

Esther Seligson, 1974.

It has been said that there were no women writers of worth in Mexico between Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (17th century) and Rosario Castellanos (1925-74). While there may be some truth to that, we need to ask how much of it is history rather than "herstory", before relegating such a splendid chronicler of the Mexican Revolution as Nellie Campbell, for instance, to obscurity. While Esther



Elena Poniatowska. (Photo from Novedades archive)

Seligson identifies one reality, her tongue-in-cheek comment obscures another: the bulk of her own work has been published through cooperative, self-publishing ventures.

When it comes to contemporary Mexican women writers, rather depressingly, the assumptions are clearer than the reality. The few recognized names, like Castellanos or Elena Poniatowska, perhaps Julieta Campos or Elena Garro, and probably Angeles Mastretta since her first novel was a recent bestseller, give no indication of the range or quality of works. Since 1970, over 50 women have published novels or collections of short stories.

When we consider the odds against women publishing, the figure becomes even more impressive. For a woman to write and publish anywhere is difficult; to do so in Mexico is an act of courage, perseverance and sheer single-mindedness. Although the literacy rate in Mexico is over 90 percent, for many it is no more than functional literacy, and the most common reading materials are comics, for adults and children alike. A new novel costs about the same as the daily minimum wage. A writer cannot hope to live off her novels or stories, nor can publishers expect to sell more than 1000 to 3000 copies (a typical first-run edition) of a work by a little-known writer. So women who want to write, in addition to the necessary space and time, must have another source of income. This means they are almost exclusively from the middle or upper class, a situation reflected in their works. So they

Doctor in Latin American literature. Scholarship from the Foreign Department and the Australian Government. Attached to El Colegio de México.

teach, they take workshops, launch books, write for newspapers, edit and proofread the work of others, and/or they have an affluent husband. A far cry indeed from Virginia Woolfe's quiet garret on 500 pounds a year.

Moreover, Woolfe had a sympathetic publisher husband and no children; in Mexico many aspects of the traditional roles of wife and mother still persist, and the writer creates in her spare moments. The very low productivity of most women writers in Mexico attests to this situation, as does the increased production when children are older, or after a divorce.

All these factors are reflected in the kinds of writing we find in women's novels and stories, in their themes and concerns. So, who are the writers, and what do they write about?

Another Manner of Challenging

Perhaps we should begin with what they are not about. We don't have an Erica Jong or a Ruby Mae Brown, nor a Marge Piercy. We don't have the equivalent of

For a woman to write and publish anywhere is difficult; to do so in Mexico is an act of courage

smart-arse New Yorkers or up-front Californians, challenging the Establishment in as many ways as possible, blatantly and defiantly outrageous. Nor do we hear the voices of drug addicts, prostitutes, lesbians, single mothers or drop-outs, all themes of the times in North American women's literature. For a foreigner, reading these works is like entering a time warp at first; but one needs to persevere and discover another manner of challenging. There is a subtlety in the best of these Mexican women writers that recalls the traditions of the 19th century, more than the late 20th. The whispers of Jane Austin and the Brontes, together with the shared colonialism of writers like Nadine Gordimer or the early Doris Lessing, pervade these novels and stories, richly

blended with elements of the pre-conquest culture of Mexican legend and belief structures, and a Catholicism that invades when least expected.

The works of women are almost exclusively slim volumes; there are no epic tales in either size or content, and the historical novel is virtually absent. A good-humored, tongue-in-cheek adventure yarn is impossible to find. There are no Great Love stories, though there is love and loss, passion and despair. Sexuality is not often explicit and is almost always male-female. While a number of writers have created minor homosexual characters, lesbianism and masturbation don't appear in the literature until the 1980s, and the only case of oral sex is punished immediately: the characters are stoned to death! While this apparent reticence has many possible explanations, it is important to emphasize that many stories and novels have an intense undercurrent of sensuality and eroticism, subtle, but all pervasive, like the smell of flowers and markets in Aline Petterson's novels (see box).

ALINE PETTERSON: A NAME TO WATCH

Aline Petterson has published five novels in the past 10 years. Yet even more extraordinary than her productivity is the consistently high quality of her work, as she has attempted very different kinds of novels. Reputed to be modest and shy, she is more commonly seen accompanying the now aging Josefina Vicens, another splendid writer, than at book parties or panel discussions on the state-of-the-art. Her books manifest a delicacy disguising both daring and passionate sensuality.

Her first novel, *Círculos* (Circles, 1977) narrates a day-in-the-life of a middle-class housewife and mother in Mexico City. Ana interpolates her memories of childhood and adolescence throughout the day. She is unhappy, but finds no logical reason to be so, given her good husband, her children, comfortable economic situation, her lover. The lover (or is he the husband as he used to be?) is not posed as an alternative to her life, but as part of it. None of Petterson's women characters see love as the answer; there is always something else, within each of them, that needs to be touched, felt, explored.

Her second, *Casi en silencio* (Almost in Silence, 1980) is structurally a much more ambitious novel. It is narrated from three perspectives: Bruno's, a university professor, and Gabriel's and Virginia's, his students. The three are kindred spirits, each writers; they explore their interrelationships delicately. Woven into the text are their discussions on Virginia Woolfe's *Orlando* and references to Proust; thus, the characters are both intimately accessible to the reader as real people and representations of other literary figures. It is, perhaps, the least accomplished of Petterson's novels.

Proyectos de muerte (Death Projects, 1983) is the diary of a middle-aged architect, hospitalized and dying of cirrhosis. The confined white world of Room 401, with its four moribund occupants, is the last world left to him, and his journey through the phases of dying defined by Kubler Ross is disturbingly narrated.

In 1986 Petterson published two short novels, both attesting to her fine talent. *Sombra ella misma* (Shadow Herself) tells the story of Adelina, single and 60, who owns a stationary shop. The first part describes a day in her life, a day which she concludes by sealing

her house, strangling her canary Felipe and turning on the gas. This section is carefully constructed so that we are at a distance from Adelina; her behavior and reactions are not explained. It reads rather like a detective story, with clues and hints to provoke our curiosity. Adelina dreams, and her dreams seem curiously out of character with the dry, gray spinster whose daily routines haven't varied for decades. The second part is Adelina's diary, the secret of her apparently ordinary, uneven life. Over 30 years ago she was raped—though that is not quite the right word—on a train by a man named Felipe, who she'd just met. Adelina's is really the story of a woman whose sexuality is irreversibly awakened, but who is then abandoned. The intensity of the frustration—in this case sexual—can almost be smelled on the pages.

Los colores ocultos (The Hidden Colors) begins with the proverbial slammed door, although Elena, being rather timid, closes it with just the force needed. She is leaving, but quietly, without fuss. A modern woman, an artist and gallery director, Elena has been married to Carlos, loved Daniel, her fellow artist who proved impotent, and lived for some time in free union with René. Her son Andrés, died in childhood. Since adolescence she has loved her friend Isabel; their relationship has been tender and supportive, and sexual. But Elena is not fulfilled; her interior voices sometimes take possession of her, their murmurs imperative, their message unclear. She seeks herself, not through others, but within herself.

Petterson is a very subtle and erudite writer. She makes compulsive reading with her spare style and such carefully elaborated structures that we are barely aware of them. It is a modest kind of writing, almost gentle. We could easily miss the fact that she breeches most of the tabus observed by nearly every other Mexican woman narrator. Her characters have lesbian and homosexual relationships, they masturbate, they fantasize scandalously, they sometimes can't stand their mothers or their children, and fathers feel "funny" about daughters. They are real people, convincingly portrayed.

Aline Petterson is among the best writers in Mexico today. Do read her work.

In contrast to the U.S., a curious and rather depressing characteristic of recent women's writing in Mexico is the presence of misogyny. In very recent books like *Pánico o Peligro* (Panic or Danger, 1983) by María Luisa Puga, *El bien y el mal* (The Good and the Bad, 1986) by Manu Dornbierer or *Las líneas de la mano* (The lines of the Hand, 1985) by Hortensia Moreno, we find some evidence of close friendships and solidarity between women characters. Yet during most of this period—which includes the International Women's Decade—rivalry and envy, betrayal and identification with men characterized women's relationships. Not surprisingly, these characters are terribly alone, their conflicts and problems presented as personal, and not the product of a social system that isolates all of them. Nor is the mother-daughter relationship explored; the few times it does appear, it is conflictive and marked by misunderstanding on both sides. Ethel Krauze bravely examines it in a painful little story, "Rumbo al Popo" (*Intermedio para mujeres*, Interval for Women, 1982).

In the tradition of current women's writing, most novels are written from the perspective of a

In very recent books we find some evidence of close friendships and solidarity between women characters

woman protagonist, often in the first person. There are, however, notable exceptions: Josefina Vicens *Los años falsos* (The False Years, 1982) is narrated by an adolescent boy; Aline Petterson's *Proyectos de muerte* (Death Projects, 1983) by a dying man; and Gabriela Rábago Palafox's *Todo ángel es terrible* (Any Angel is Devilish, 1981) by a small boy. María Luisa Puga's first, and best work, *Las posibilidades del odio* (The Possibilities of Hate, 1978) uses a variety of narrators/perspectives to provide a rich and thought provoking set of reactions to colonialism in Kenya.

While most of the women are from the middle and upper-classes and write about that world, here there are also exceptions. Elena Poniatowska seems equally at home writing from the perspective of the bourgeoisie, as from that of a servant. Her novel about the life of Jesusa Palancares, *Hasta no verte Jesús mío* (Until I see you, my Jesus, 1969) has been very successful, but her lesser-known volume of stories, *De noche vienes* (You come at night, 1979) demonstrates her versatility as a narrator. The title story is a delightful reversal of a common social situation: it deals with a woman bigamist (five times!). But humor as social criticism is quite rare among Mexican women writers; the anguished cry is far more common. One writer who deals exclusively with the marginalized is Cristina Pacheco. With five volumes of short stories published since 1982, her latest, *La última noche del Tigre* (Tiger's Last Night, 1987) demonstrates that she is becoming a very good writer indeed. Her themes are the despairing responses to hunger and deprivation: male violence towards women and children, abandonment, robbery and the consequences of drunkenness.

Several writers are daughters of immigrants, (principally refugees from Europe in the 1930s and 40s); their work reflects this past in a variety of ways. For example, *Las genealogías* (Genealogies, 1981) by Margo Glantz explicitly traces this inheritance. Angelina Muñoz' novels describe the Spain of the Inquisition, painting landscapes of nostalgia, while Esther Seligson's lyrical obsession with mythology and biblical allusion reflect a Jewish intellectual formation, rather than a Catholic one. There is also a small group of Cuban-born writers: Julieta Campos is by far the best-known; others include Livia Sedeño, Aralia López González and the very promising Magaly Martínez Gamba.

What They Write

The low productivity of most women writers can be very depressing. For instance, it would delight many an avid fan to see more stories by first-rate Inés Ar-

redondo (*Río subterráneo*; Underground River, 1979), who has only published two volumes, or by Carmen Rosenzweig. Although the versatile Luisa Josefina Hernández is an internationally recognized playwright, her lesser-known novels are also a joy, particularly



Cristina Pacheco. (Photo from Novedades archive)

Nostalgia de Troya (Trojan Nostalgia, 1970), one of the most accomplished novels published in Mexico in the past 20 years.

A most striking characteristic of recent women's narrative in Mexico, as compared to its counterparts in Europe, North America or Australia, is the absence of heroines: assertive, self-conscious figures who demand their rights to personal integrity and realization. Mastretta's Catalina in *Arrancame la vida* (Tear Out My Life, 1986) no doubt owes much of her popularity to the refreshing fact that she enjoys life, in contrast to the anguish expressed by most women characters. Yet Catalina is a bought woman, accepting even her lover's murder in order to retain her position and her husband. While many women characters damn their situation by simply describing it, few take the next enormous step and assume responsibility for their own lives, at any

A PLACE TO START

Rosario Castellanos: *Album de familia* (Family Album, 1971, Joaquín Mortiz, México: some of these stories have been translated and published by the University of Texas Press, Austin). A collection of ideologically charged stories about women in Mexico: the new wife; the middle-aged housewife and part time painter; the widowed mother; and the

successful spinster-poet. Painful, ironic stories by a most accomplished writer (and feminist).

Olga Harmony: *Los limones* (The lemons, 1984, Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa). A barely-known novel tracing the rebellion and ultimate submission of a woman growing up in the 1940's and 50's; a spinster school teacher's story of

her attempts to confront Mexican mores and conventions. A well-written exploration of Mexican society.

Josefina Vicens: *Los años falsos* (The False Years, 1982, Martín Casillas, México). A superb, deceptive novela about an adolescent boy's identity crisis, about family, machismo and political and sexual

corruption. A marvelously disturbing book.

María Luisa Puga: *Las posibilidades del odio* (The Possibilities of Hate, 1978, Siglo XXI, México). An unusual and fascinating collection of stories—or novel—about Kenya and the nature of colonialism.

cost. Thus, sexual politics are barely confronted, reflecting cultural differences in dealing with male-female relations, in a country that suffers from a colossal Oedipus complex, as Rosario Castellanos put it. Vicens' superb novel, *Los años falsos*, explores aspects of the political, including sexual politics, in such a subtle and skilled way that we are left devastated as much by her portrait of Mexican reality, as by her extraordinary talent as a writer.

Few women write about explicitly political themes. Emma Prieto's *Los testigos* (The Witnesses, 1985)—barely-known, yet convincing and well-written—is the only novel by a woman to examine the consequences of 1968's tragic events in the Plaza of Three Cultures. In a similar vein, *Pánico o peligro* and María Luisa Mendoza's *Con él, conmigo, con nosotros tres* (With Him, With Me,

Women who want to write, in addition to the necessary space and time, must have another source of income

With the *Three of Us*, 1971), while not dealing directly with those events, can't be read intelligently without knowing something about them. Mónica Mansour (*Mala Memoria*; Bad memory, 1984) also recalls those times, but among women writers, Elena Poniatowska's chronicle, *La noche de Tlatelolco* (Tlatelolco Night, 1971) remains a classic.

One approach to the political, at least in dealing with corruption, is

through the detective story. The *Grande Dame* of the genre in Mexico is María Elvira Bermúdez, now in her seventies. An accomplished writer of other fiction, as well, her latest collection, *Encono de hormigas* (Ant's Revenge, 1987), includes a tender story of an older woman's affair in Rome and an amusing tale of sexual politics, in which a couple exchanges bodies for a week, obliging them to exchange roles as well. Ana María Maqueo has also ventured into this field of political criticism with *Crimen de color oscuro* (Crime of Dark Colour, 1986), and Malú Huacuja has had some success with her first novel (*Crimen sin falta de ortografía*; Crime without Spelling Errors, 1986) in this fairly minor field of Mexican letters.



María Luisa Puga.



Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Among younger writers, Ethel Krauze has achieved some fame; she dares to break tabus, describing the reactions of her sexually assertive young heroines and writing from the perspective of the young lover of a married man (*Donde las cosas vuelan*; *Where Things Fly*, 1985). Lesser-known writers of considerable promise include Mónica de Neymet (*Las horas vivas*; *The Live Hours*, 1985), Rosa Beltrán (*La espera*; *Waiting*, 1986), Ana Clavel (*Fuera de escena*; *Offstage*, 1984), Bárbara Jacobs (her latest work is *Escrito en el tiempo*; *Written in Time*, 1985) and Regina Cohen (*Adentro el fuego*; *The Fire Within*, 1985).

This brief panorama is intended to whet the appetite. There is much to be learned from women on this side of the border, about differences and about similarities. It is quite astonishing that Mexico, host to the U.N. International Women's Year Congress in 1975, remains almost unknown in the exploding world of women's letters. It is time to demand translations from North American publishers and insist that the "Boom" include the wealth of these women's talents. You will not be disappointed. □

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CRONOLOGIAS TEMATICAS SOBRE CENTROAMERICA

MEXICAN WOMEN FILM DIRECTORS

Marcela Fernández Violante

In film, the director is the supreme artist; in the final analysis it is the director who is responsible for the success or failure of the film; for he gives form to the material, inspires the actors and manipulates and unites all the fragments.

Bette Davis

By 1936 Mexican cinema had evolved from an artisan activity to become a powerful industry. The key that opened the doors to the international market was a film entitled *Allá en el Rancho Grande* by Fernando de Fuentes. In 1936 alone, 26 full length films were made; the numbers would increase to 38 in 1937 and to 59 in 1938, in a trend that would continue for years. It is estimated that in the last fifty years, more than 3200 films have been produced in Mexico, yet of these, only 15 have been directed by women. To further our pessimism on the matter, the negatives of four of them have disappeared, leaving us with only their titles.

The Mexican film industry prides itself on having had nine women directors during its 60 year history. Of these, only two were true pioneers, and their respective experiences were separated by two full decades: Mimi Derba, working around 1917, and Adela Sequeyro, in 1937. The same lapse occurred between the works of Matilde

Landeta and Marcela Fernández Violante.

All of these women, with the exception today of Nancy Cárdenas and Marcela Fernández Violante, had to rely on the imaginative use of their own resources to finance their projects. This initial obstacle was combined with the dual demand of producing and directing, and in some cases of even writing and acting.

The results of these intense labors did not always bear the desired fruit. As we shall see, four of the women were only able to make a single film, becoming, as go the words of a popular Mexican song, their debut and their farewell.

1. **Mimi Derba:** This beautiful woman is best remembered as a mature screen actress, playing elder ladies roles in the 1940s and 50s. Few people know that she had been actively involved in cinematography since 1917, working variously as producer, screen writer and actress for Azteca Films, a producing company. Of the 17 Mexican-made films in 1917, six were financed by Azteca. Yet despite its apparent success, the company folded the following year. Mimi Derba's career was suddenly and mysteriously eclipsed. She disappeared from the scene for fourteen years, reappear-

The results of these intense labors did not always bear the desired fruit

ing as a supporting actress in *Santa* (1931), the first Mexican talking film. In contrast, her partner, Enrique Rosas, began his brilliant ascent as a film director.

2. **Eva Limiñana:** A concert pianist of Chilean origin, better known as the "Duchess Olga", Limiñana emigrated to Mexico with her husband, Chilean director, José Bohr. He broke into the film industry here in 1933, directing *La Sangre Manda* (Blood Compels); the storyline was written by Limiñana. During her six year collaboration with Bohr, the "Duchess Olga" would work as producer, writer and adapter. In 1940, José Bohr left Mexico, but Limiñana stayed. In 1942 she decided to produce, write and adapt what would be her first directorial effort, *Mi Lupe, mi caballo y yo* (My Lupe, My Horse and I). This debut made her Mexico's third woman director. But the film, co-directed with set designer Carlos Toussaint, was plagued by bad luck. At one point, filming was temporarily suspended due to a lack of funds. When it was finally completed, the premier was

Director of the University Center of Film Studies (CUEC), UNAM.



Lola Casanova. Directed by Matilde Landeta. (Photo from the Dirección de Actividades Cinematográficas archive)

delayed two years, creating further financial difficulties. After that, the "Duchess Olga" retired from the film industry. Meanwhile, her co-director, Toussaint, achieved success as a director, as did Bohr after he returned to Chile. (Limiñana is, by the way, the maternal grandmother of screen actor Pedro Armendáriz).

3. Carmen Toscano: Born in Mexico City in 1910, Carmen is the daughter of Salvador Toscano, a pioneer of Mexican cinema. Before becoming the country's fifth woman director, she wrote cultural programs for television. In 1950 she produced, wrote and edited the script for the movie, *Memorias de un mexicano* (Memories of a Mexican). For this full-length documentary, she used film footage from her father's collection, shot during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917). After this first success, 27 years would pass before she could direct her next film: *Ronda revolucionaria* (Revolutionary Round), which she also wrote in collaboration with director Matilde Landeta. This film also used documentary footage from the Mexican Revolution, combining it with fictional recreations of certain episodes. The film was never released. The reasons why it remained in storage are still a mystery, especially since the project



The Way of Life. Directed by Matilde Landeta. (Photo from the Dirección de Actividades Cinematográficas archive)

was promoted and financed company, Conacine. At present, Carmen Toscano is quite ill, having suffered seven cerebral hemorrhages.

4. Nancy Cárdenas: Director, theater actress and dramatist, Cárdenas was born in Parras, Coahuila in the mid-1930s. She studied literature and philosophy at the National Autonomous University

through the state film production of Mexico (UNAM) and later went to Poland to study cinematography. Cárdenas has wanted to direct for many years. Yet her only experience in this area was with her brilliant and original editing of an anthology on the Golden Age of Mexican cinema. This full-length film, entitled *México de mis amores* (Mexico, My Love), was shown commercially in 1978.

The three women who have been lucky enough to direct more than one film are, in order of appearance:

5. Adela Sequeyro (Perlita, Little Pearl): Born in Veracruz on March 11, 1901, Sequeyro began her film career in 1923 as an actress. Her career was not interrupted by the arrival of sound; rather her most important perfor-

mance was as the lead in Fernando de Fuentes' 1933 film, *El prisionero número trece* (Prisoner Number Thirteen). In 1935, together with several other film technicians, she formed a film cooperative, Exito, with financial support from the Popular Credit Bank. The cooperative's first film was *Más allá de la muerte* (Beyond Death), directed by the Cuban Ramón Peón and based on a script he

co-wrote with Sequeyro. She also played the lead in the film. After a conflict that split the cooperative, Sequeyro was forced to leave, but not before expressing her indignation at what she considered an unjust decision:

I organized the Cooperative. I brought all of you in. In order to pay everyone's 10 % share, I had to sell everything I owned, and I was left with nothing at home but a rolled up mattress.¹

Adela did not give up. In 1937 she founded her own cooperative, which she named *Carola*. That same year she decided to become a director. For her first effort, she wrote and adapted a story with few characters, and played the lead. *La mujer de nadie* (Nobody's Woman) was a fitting title for the



Prisoner Number Thirteen, 1933. (Photo from the Dirección de Actividades Cinematográficas archive)

WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL

Seventy films and fifty videos were exhibited at the first Film and Video Festival of Latin American and Caribbean Women, held in Mexico in October. The festival opened with an excellent film from Martinique *La Rue de Cases Negres* (The Street of the Black Houses), directed by Euzhan Palcy and continued for ten days of intensive viewing by an enthusiastic audience.

Venezuelan women directors presented two surprises in the festival. *Macu, La mujer del policia* (Macu, the policeman's woman), by Solveig Hoogesteijn, and *Unas son de amor* (Some are for love), by Haydee Asacanio. The first deals with the story of a child wife, married at 11 to a policeman. Several years and two children later, she "provokes" his excessive jealousy. This film has had great success in Venezuela, where it beats even "Rambo" at the ticket office.

Unas son de Amor tells of a conflict faced by a young woman when she has to choose between an unwanted pregnancy and her dancing career, to which she has dedicated ten years. It costs her emotionally, but she chooses to abort, and goes on, albeit painfully, to a successful first night as prima donna. Romantics are pleased when the lover re appears, sees her perform and accepts her as a dancer.

Other important fiction films presented at the festival included *Camila* and *Señora de Nadie* (Nobody's wife), both by the Argentinian María Luisa Bemberg; *De Tripas Corazón* (Plucked Up Courage), by Ana Carolina of Brazil; *Gaijin*, *Caminhos da Libertade* (Gaijin, Paths of Liberty) by Tizuka Yamaskai, also of Brazil; *Nocturno Amor que te vas* (Nocturnal love you are going) by Marcela Fernández Violante (Mexico).

Many of the films were documentaries made with the intention of denouncing problems confronted by women in different countries. From Puerto Rico, *La Operación* (The Operation), directed by Ana María García, deals with the practice of sterilization of women as a means of birth control. This well made film had a strong impact on viewers, as it denounces the fact that one third of Puerto Rican women, aged between 15 and 40, have been sterilized.

No les pedimos un viaje a la luna (We didn't ask them for a trip to the moon), by Mari Carmen de Lara, documents the plight of women seamstresses after the 1985 earthquakes in Mexico City, their subsequent battles with bosses and authorities, and their increasing politicization within their independent trade union.

Comadres (Godmothers), by Catherine Russo, shows something of what women experience when they lose a relative through shootings, kidnappings or arrest and torture. Her 30 minute documentary is a condemnation of the war in El Salvador. The Argentinian mothers of the Plaza de Mayo were also present in the film festival, in a documentary by Susana B. Muñoz: *Las Madres* (The Mothers): a 65 minute testimony to the efforts of these women to locate 30,000 persons who disappeared during the "dirty war". This was a Chicana Argentinian co-production.

Women film makers sent their work from many other countries Colombia, Peru, Ecu-

ador, Nicaragua, Cuba, Jamaica and Chile although film makers from this last country generally live outside of Chile. The festival, titled "Cocina de Imágenes", (Kitchen of Images), included meetings among women cineasts, and public talks where these directors discussed their work.

Womens film collectives have produced films in Brazil and Colombia, while in Peru the Grupo Chaski has produced films by women, for example *Miss Universo en el Peru* (Miss Universe in Peru), which examines woman object in beauty contests. Other directors work virtually alone for example Mónica Vázquez is the only woman film director in Ecuador. She came to Mexico for the festival, and showed *Tiempo de Mujeres* (Women's Time) —a 20 minute documentary about women who remain at home when their men emigrate to the U.S. to look for work: about how the women organized themselves collectively to survive and produce.

Cuba and Mexico are the only Latin American countries with film schools today, says Julia Barco, who helped organize "Cocina de Imágenes". In Mexico the schools are: Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos, of the UNAM, and the Centro de Capacitación Cinematográfica, Churubusco. Mexican cineasts at the festival said it was easy to make films while at school, when material and equipment are accessible, but that it's difficult later to break into commercial film.

In Nicaragua since 1979 there has been a lot of work done in the "Popular Workshops". Videos from Nicaragua shown at the festival included *Rompiendo las cadenas* (Breaking the chains), about prostitution, and a 52 minute documentary about a war zone: *Pantasma: sembrando el maíz, botando el miedo* (Pantasma, planting corn, throwing away fear), by Miriam Loasiga, Beate Beuhaus and Marga Holthues.

Guatemala was also present in the festival, with a 30 minute video about women in that country: *Somos cientos, miles y millones* (We are hundreds, thousands and millions), by Francis García, in collaboration with the women's group Ixquic.

During the public talks, eight cineasts from Mexico and twelve from other Latin American countries discussed their goals and difficulties as women film directors. Latin American and Caribbean women said they had difficulties learning film skills, due to economic political situations in their countries, specific discrimination suffered as women, and to the great difficulties faced by all who want to make independent film in the region. They said there was no lack of willingness to work or themes to work on, but that state or private support for their efforts was quite scarce. The women agreed that they were not specifically making "feminist film", but that it was obvious their concerns and outlooks were distinct from male film makers.

Organizers of the "Cocina de Imágenes" say there is interest in the women's festival visiting other countries, such as Puerto Rico, Colombia, Spain and Venezuela, and that they hope the festival will become a regular event.

THE ACAPULCO INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW

After an interruption of 19 years, the XII edition of the Acapulco World Film Festival illustrated that the aesthetic tendencies in cinema continue to clearly identify the countries of origin; Science fiction, cartoons and spectaculars (U.S.); epic themes, social criticism and existential conflicts (U.S.S.R.); Rulfo-styled realism, historical themes, detective stories and melodramas (Mex); Cuba and social criticism shared with Spain, Belgium and other Latin countries.

Nevertheless, the film festival that took place between 7 and 17 November, in the tropical port on the Mexican Pacific coast, had some novelties to offer. On the one hand, video, television, radio and music were important complements and, on the other, there were notable changes in what the two big countries had to offer. The URSS decided—for reasons of *perestroika* (modernization)—to defreeze the film *Arrepentimiento* (Repentance) by Tengiz Abuladze (1984), who denounces

Stalinist bureaucracy and corruption. On its side, the US indicated its acceptance of productions representing the so-called minorias (minorities). Luis Valdez placed *La Bamba* side by side with *Bambi*, one of the Walt Disney classics that, together with *Bajo el Volcan* (Under the Volcano), by the late John Huston and *Educando a Arizona* (Educating Arizona) by Joel Coen, brought together a particular point of view of contemporary times in American film.

The exhibition of films was divided into four sections: Official, panoramic, informative and retrospective. 61 films from 16 countries—apart from Mexico—were shown.

The official section presented the films that had won awards in some of the most important film festivals in the world. The others allowed us to evaluate what has been and is the panorama in some countries, especially Mexico.

In the retrospective section we saw the work of the Mexican camera man

Gabriel Figueroa and of the outstanding Soviet director, actor and scriptwriter, Nikita Mijalkov, of the film "Black Eyes", which won the Best Actor Award (Marcelo Mastroianni) in the International Cannes Film Festival, France, in 1987.

Perhaps one of the new films that most moved the public was *Heroe del año* (Hero of the Year), (Bohater roku, Polonia, 1986) by Feliks Falk, with Jerzy Stuhr, Mieczyslaw Francaszek and Matarzyna Kozak Paszkowska. Here we follow the fate of someone who gains the title of the film after saving some people in a gas explosion. The hero, nevertheless, is manipulated and used for propaganda. This film was the winner of a special award from the International Jury and the Fipresci (critical) award in the XV International Film Festival in Moscow.

The XII Film Festival was inaugurated with the film, *Gaby, una historia verdadera* (Gaby, a true story), by the Mexican Luis Mandoki, photographed

by the Hungarian Lajos Koltai and starring Liv Ullman, Norma Alejandro, Rachel Levin, Lawrence Monoson and Beatriz Sheridan.

This film, the authorship of whose script is disputed, narrates the life of Gaby Bremer, who, in spite of her cerebral paralysis, manages to overcome her difficulties and become a writer.

Other films that entranced the public in the tropical city of Acapulco were *Tangos, el exilio de Gardel* (Tangos, Gardel's exile) by Fernando Solanas, *El imperio de la fortuna* (The Empire of Fortune) by the Mexican Arturo Ripstein, *Un hombre de éxito* (A successful man), by the Cuban Humberto Solas, *Bajo el sol de satanas* (Under Satan's sun) by the Frenchman, Maurice Pialat. These, among other quality films, had already received awards in one or even several international festivals.

José Fuentes Salinas

film. The next year, she followed up with *Diablillos de arrabal* (Little Devils of the Slums), also based on a script she wrote. But luck would again turn its back on her:

Those who bought the distribution rights to the film turned their backs on me. Then the union got on me. I didn't have the money to pay the workers or the

actors. Finally, I found a woman who became my associate, and she ended up keeping my film.²

After several attempts to direct again, Adela Sequeyro left the movies in 1943, her dream never realized. But she did leave behind the shining example of 20 years of unrelenting effort.



Lola Casanova, 1948. (Photo from the Dirección de Actividades Cinematográficas archive)

They told me: "If they push you aside as a director, then just become the assistant director." "No", I answered; "I'll die on the line. I was a director, and I won't stop now. I go up, but never down. I don't need to. I've shown that I can direct a movie, and do it well. I don't need to be under anyone!"³

This attitude, in a society that expects both submission and obedience from women, met with complete silence. Adela Sequeyro, today a beautiful lady of 87, lives very modestly with her only daughter, totally removed from the film world. Her sense of the power she had as a director was completely honest, and it recalls the sincere words of a very well-known American director, Dorothy Arzner:

If I am going to stay in the film business, then I had better become a director myself, for it is she who gives the orders. The director is the only one who visualizes in her mind the whole show beforehand and during shooting.⁴

6. Matilde Landeta; The most solid and representative figure of

Mexican cinema, Landeta was born in Mexico City on September 20, 1913. Her parents died when she was still a child, and together with her only brother, she was sent to live with her grandmother on a *hacienda* outside of the capital. She literally fell in love with the movie industry watching the shooting for *Prisionero número trece*, a film her brother was acting in. She decided to dive in head first, entering the industry in 1933 as a script girl. She held that position until 1945, when she asked for a promotion to assistant director. Her ambitions caused strong opposition among her colleagues in the union:

I knew that the Assistant Directors' Section of the union was completely against me. They were even, one could say, cruel to me. Therefore, I decided to write to the general assembly of the Motion Pictures Union, asking for my promotion. Roberto Gavaldón, film director and Union Secretary, warned me that the majority of the assembly was made up of construction crews, electricians, etc., who think a woman's place is at home. "Why do you want to lose everything you have achieved?" he asked me. "If it's

and was closely followed by her second, *La negra Angustias* (Angustias, the Black Woman), in 1949. Both films were based on novels by Mexican writer and anthropologist Francisco Rojas González, and adapted by Landeta herself. In 1951, she directed her third and last film, *Trotacalles* (Street Walker), based on a script by the late novelist, Luis Spota.

In 1955, she presented an outline for a new film, *Tribunal para menores* (Juvenile Court), to the National Cinematographic Bank. The script was hers, written in collaboration with her brother Eduardo. It was to have been her fourth movie. She gives an account of what happened:

I asked the Cinematographic Bank to review it. They told me they liked it. Later, they informed me that they wanted to make some changes. It was the story of four minors, using the Juvenile Court as the device to tie them all together. But Bank officials thought they could be brought together better through a teacher, or a lawyer, or who knows what. In order to make the change, they bought the story from me. A few months later, I read in the newspaper that my story was going to be shot by another director. When I found out, I was really disgusted.⁶

Ironically, Matilde obtained her first and only Ariel, (the Mexican equivalent to the Oscar) from the Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Sciences for *El camino de la vida* (The Walk of Life), the name given to her *Tribunal para menores*. The award was for best script.

But Matilde, a persistent and tenacious woman, has kept her hand in film-making. She directed several shorts on "Howdy Doo-dy," managed a movie theater, worked in the Bureau of Cinematography and completed several other projects. Until 1986 she was president of the Awards Committee of the Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Sciences. Currently, she is secretary of the Film Industry Union's Writers' Retirement Fund.

Together with writer and screen actress Elda Peralta, Matilde has just completed a documentary, left unfinished by Luis Spota. With a Buddha's patience, she smiles calmly and wisely, alertly on the look-out for every opportunity to direct.

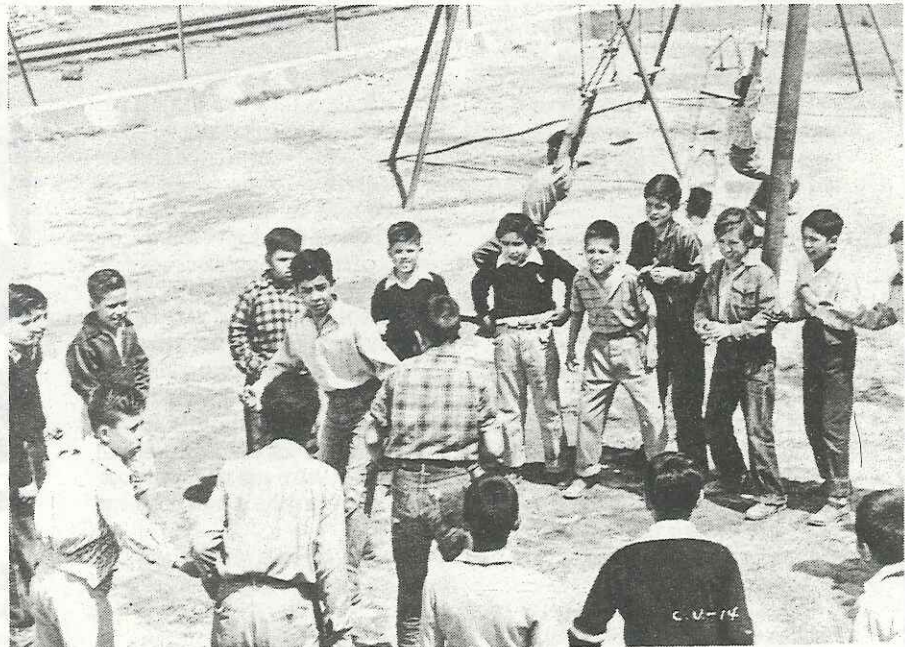
7. Marcela Fernández Violante: Since in this case, the subject is the author, I would only mention that I've been the luckiest, since I have been able to direct five-full length films in the past 13 years. The last two women, who form

Matilde Landeta literally fell in love with the movie industry and decided to dive in head first

necessary, I will," I answered. "I'll play their game."

I went before the assembly, where my letter was read. I adopted a humble and quiet attitude, clasping my hands in front of me and leaning my head to one side. Then the assistant directors began to attack me, but with that, the "chivalrous knights" came to the aid of a lady in distress. That is how I won.⁵

Matilde worked as an assistant director for three years, collaborating in 14 films. In 1948, she decided to try directing. Her first film, *Lola Casanova* came out in 1948



The Way of Life. (Photo from the Dirección de Actividades Cinematográficas archive)

part of the previously mentioned list of nine directors, are Isela Vega and María Elena Velasco (The India Maria), both also very popular actresses in Mexico. They have both just finished a film, and it is too soon to predict if they will continue to direct or not.

As we have seen, all of these women have had to confront countless obstacles; few have survived the test. The reasons for their failures, if that is what they really were, are to be found in the nature of our society. The old prejudices of our Colonial past, which we prefer to think remote,

The evolution of Mexican society can be seen in the increase in female students

still persist today in our society. Women's suffrage wasn't won in Mexico until 1953, almost 40 years after the Mexican Revolution. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz' letter to Sor Filotea in the 18th century, in which she passionately defended her right to read, her right to write and her right to know, resisting

the slavery of ignorance and silence, still holds a certain relevance for many societies.

We'll close this brief review by asking, Up to what point can men tolerate the intrusion of women into what has traditionally been their domain?

Adela Sequeyro answers from her point of view:

Now probably the whole woman is accepted. But in my time, it was very hard because men felt threatened when a woman tried to do what he did. He was very annoyed when his domain was invaded. It was very un-

THE FESTIVAL CERVANTINO: AN AVALANCHE OF ARTS

From October 16 to November 6, Guanajuato was the city of celebrations and culture. The touch of Spain's Golden Century and the flavor of red wine and quarry-stone attracted thousands of tourists to attend some of the best known samples of art in the world.

The International Cervantino Festival—in memory of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra and as a celebration of the Spanish tongue—observed its 15th anniversary. During this time the modern and the classic have got together to have fun. There was something for every taste! theater, dance, music, paintings...all in order to forget, for 20 days, the mundane noise of the large cities and, of course, the daily routine of work.

Guanajuato, a city whose foundations date from 1554, gave itself up entirely to the visitor. Those who knew it remained fascinated by the narrow, tortuous, stone streets, with steps, that decorate the hills of this old colonial city. Of course, the splendor of its baroque, neo-classic buildings was only possible because of the abundance of gold, silver, opals and other minerals existing in this state. Nevertheless, cultural wealth does not fall behind.

The Cervantino Festival had its antecedents in the theatrical activity of the Autonomous University of Guanajuato (UAG), with the outstanding participation of the teacher Enrique Ruelas, who died October 5 of this year. The UAG rescued and revived the *Entremeses cervantinos* (Cervantine interludes) and in general the theater of Spain's Golden Century, an activity which, with time, has become one of the most important cultural festivals in the world.

In the XV Festival, thirty five countries were represented by 60 international companies and more than 50 national groups. The wide range of artistic programs produced a consequent variety in the currents of aesthetic thinking.

In the auditorium of the university, the "Grupo Pueblo" of the new Nicaraguan song shared their

public with the jazz bands, "Side Street Strutters" or "Francine Reed and Fever" from the U.S. The National Theater of Sub-otica, Yugoslavia was applauded for a work as masterly as the "De la calle" directed by the Mexican Julio Castillo. Narciso Yépes illustrated his mastery with the guitar in the Juárez Theater.

In the music program the most outstanding were the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra from the U.S., one of the best in America, the Capella Lipsiensis from East Germany, the Cuban saxophone player Miguel Angel Villafuella, the Coral Salvé from Laredo, Spain, the Italian Solisti Veneti, the Mexican violinist Henry Szeryng, the Polish Chopin trio from Poznan, the Detroit Jazz Quartet, the Endymion Ensemble from Great Britain, and Lo Jai from France.

The scenic arts ranged from the traditional to the contemporary. Dance and theater from every continent was well represented with the Muteki-Sha from Japan, Danza Corpo from Brazil, Madhavi Mudgal and Leela Samson from India, the folkloric groups from Czechoslovakia, Peru and Korea and Lar Lubovitch Dance Company from the U.S. For its part, theater was well represented with the Mally from the URSS, San Martín from the Argentine, Tag from Venice, Fronterizo de España and many others.

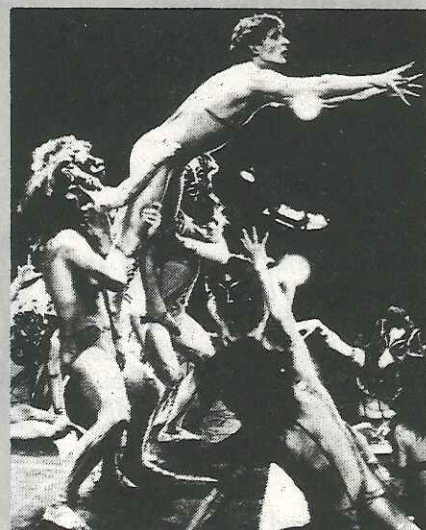
The International Cervantine Festival was also employed to pay homage to the great living Mexican painter, Rufino Tamayo, on the occasion of his 70 years as an artist. Besides a wide range of infantile spectacles, songs, mime, clowns, storytelling, troubadours and jugglers, folklore and Mexican gastronomy, some of the most respected and well-loved female voices in Mexico were also present! Eugenia León, Margie Bermejo and Tania Libertad, from Peru.

To sum up, the Festival was the enjoyment, the rediscovery and the extravagant display of universal art.

J.F.S.



The theatrical work of *The Tigress and Other Stories*, by Dario Fo, presented in the XV International Cervantine Festival.



Mexican National Dance Company, in *The Weddings*, presented in the XV International Cervantine Festival.

comfortable having to put up with diatribes and other things, indirectly and otherwise.⁷

Matilde Landeta adds:

From the time I started to work in film, I was the only script girl in Mexico. I never succeeded in getting them to accept another woman in that position. Why? Because of Mexican "machismo." Machismo that accepted women as make up assistants and hairdressers, but could never tolerate the same woman working as a technician or as an assistant director, criticizing and making decisions. It was very difficult.⁸

In analyzing most aspects of the film industry, it would seem that the world hasn't changed much. And you ask: Where are the women editors? The camera women? The sound technicians? The assistant directors? Where are the women in Mexican film?

The evolution of Mexican society can be seen in the increase of female students at the UNAM's Center for Cinematographic Studies. This is an indication that yes, things are changing. Numbers don't lie. During the 1960s, only two short films were produced by women; in the 70s, the number rose to 24. In the present decade, some 80 films have already been made by women.

If societal attitudes continue to block the forward march of feminine talent, in film-making and countless other fields, women will no longer be willing to wait passively for things to change. We have always known that without our creative presence, men could not carry out their work in peace. □

¹ Personal interview, July 1986.

² The negatives of her two films were lost.

³ Personal interview, July 1986.

⁴ From, *Reverence to Rape*: Molly Haskel.

⁵ Personal interviews, July, August, September 1984.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Personal interview, July 1986.

⁸ Personal interviews, July, August, September 1984.

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PAINTING

SATURNINO HERRÁN: THE EPHEMERAL AND THE GRANDIOSE

José Fuentes Salinas

The life of Saturnino Herrán was as short as that of his close friend the poet, Ramón López Velarde. Herrán was born in Aguascalientes in 1887, López Velarde one year later in Zacatecas. The painter lived for 31 years, the poet 33. Both have been the foundations of national identity in their respective art forms.

The Mexican School of Painting, whose most visible leaders are Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros, was based on Saturnino Herrán's aesthetic denifi-



The Creole woman with shawl. Saturnino Herrán.

tions. Affected by the transition from the Porfirian period to the Mexican Revolution, the painter was able to interpret the country's reality and rescue the banner which the Europeanized artists had trampled into the ground, with the help of Don Porfirio Díaz.

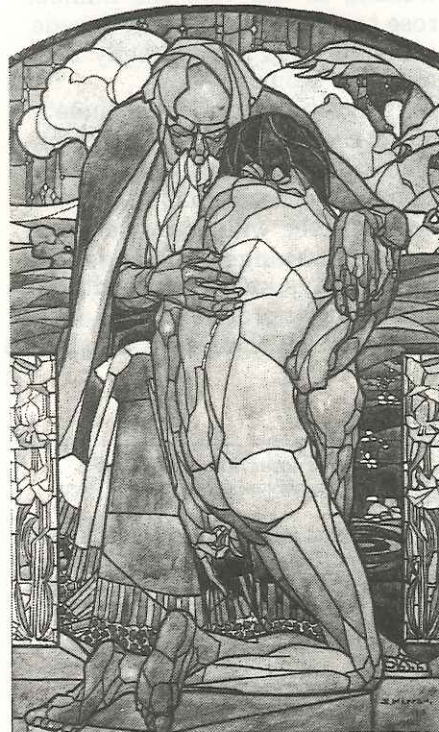
Herrán has many merits attributed to him: he was concerned with Mexican things in spite of the predominating values of that period, he survived as an artist in a state of economic penury (because of a lack of space in his tiny study—according to Manuel Toussaint—he was never able to full extend the six metre long cloth for his plan for the decorative frieze, called *Nuestros dioses* (Our Gods), in the Mexican National Theater), and he set the foundations for the revolutionary period in painting in Mexico. Nevertheless, the painter's actual contribution appears to be simpler: he was an honest artist who discovered, exhibited and painted the Mexico that had been forgotten by the fickle society of the Porfirian period.

Earthy peasant faces, the sadness of the country, our golden, cinnamon indians, *La Tehuana* (The Woman from Tehuantepec), humiliating French exquisiteness, *the Quetzal and the Gallero* (Cock Fighter) of the cunning expression, *El Jarabe* (Syrup), danced to the rhythm of brush strokes, and *Las vendedoras de ollas* (The Urn Vendors) among many other themes, are imprinted with the artist's singular mastery. The popular element is portrayed with an unusual tenderness. Those influenced by Europe, who disdained and categorized the humble as vulgar, found themselves in difficulties.

Saturnino Herrán synthesized the

most important developments of his teacher's paintings. "Herrán's personality as an artist stated—Raquel Tibol—is delineated by Fabrée, the then director of the San Carlos Academy, who passed on to him the heritage of academic ornamentalism, Izaguirre his interest in the indigenous, and Gedovius the expressive sincerity of simple things."

In its turn, the arrival in Mexico of the Spanish artists, particularly Zuloaga, for the centenary celebrations in



The Prodigal Son (Stained glass project). Saturnino Herrán.



De feria. Saturnino Herrán.

1910, had some influence on Herrán's work." Nevertheless, —says Luis Garrido— in protest at this deference to foreign painters, Doctor Atl organized a popular exhibition to take place in the streets adjacent to the pavilion, where the powerful creative initiative of the young San Carlos students, exhibited their nonconformity, and the first samples of their art, to the public in the street. Later this art would cover the walls of public buildings, relating the history of Mexico, our roots and the social concept of art. On this occasion Herrán showed *Vendedora de ollas* (Urn vendor), *Los ciegos* (the blind people) and *Paneaux decorativos sobre el trabajo* (Decorative work panels).

Apparently the painter was better known to the printing trade as a book and magazine illustrator than as a painter. This was probably due to the economic needs which every artist has to preoccupy himself for his own survival. His best known covers are those of the magazines, *El Universal ilustrado* (the Illustrated Universal) and *Pegaso*, as well as the covers of the books, *La muerte del cisne* (Death of the Swan), *Silenter* by the poet Enrique Conzález Martínez and others.

"Fuensanta, give me all the tears of the sea/ my eyes are dry and I suffer/ an immense urge to cry." At another analytical level, the psychological, the constant exaltation of his women is notorious, their bodies and haughty expressions, which almost always contrast with submissive expressions on the part of his men, according to the comments of the critic Fausto Ramírez. This is what, somewhere else, Alberto Cañas defines as "the sensuality of Herrán's work".

Friend of the great poets of the period, Herrán interchanged creative flow with them, particularly with Ramón López Velarde, who appeared to write his poems with the artist's pictures in mind, and vice versa: "You had a shawl where the white/ lay gently on top of the grey/ to make for the eyes that loved you/ a feast of snow in the weeds".

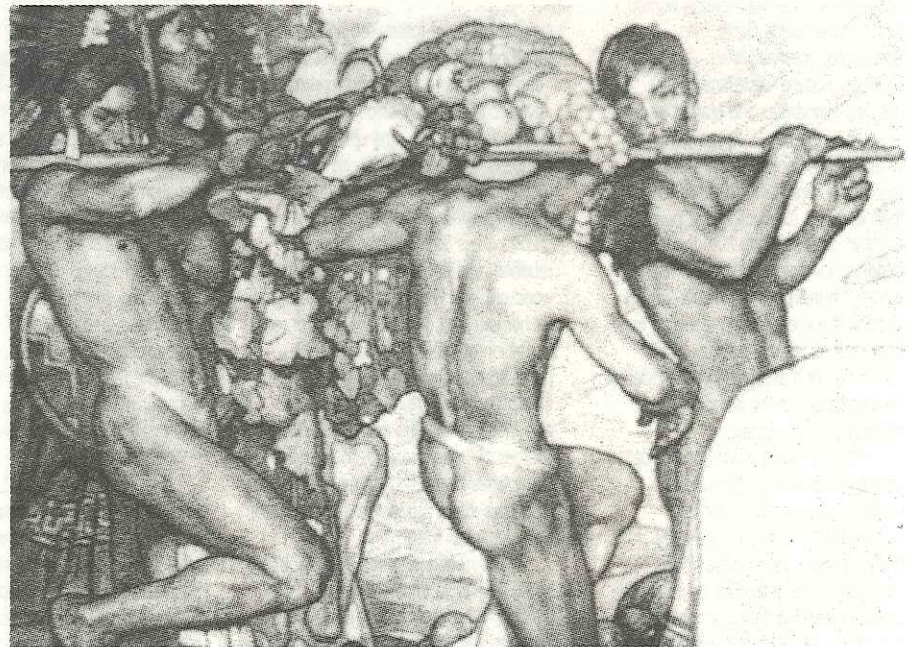
In this way, *La viejecita* (the little old woman), painted in 1917, appears to have its antecedents in the poem "The Knitter": "Knitter, knit your wool/ the inertia of my dream and your trusting illusion;/ knit the silence; knit the timid syllable/ passing our lips and

saying nothing; knit the fluid voice of the Angelus/ with the creaking of the doors;/ knit the rhythmic dilatation/ of the pained hearts/ that are alert in the shade."

Who got most from whom: There are common themes throughout the entire work of both Herrán and López Velarde. The poem, "The Soft Fatherland", could well be illustrated verse by Herrán's painting, and vice versa: López Velarde's poems would be the best text for a book presenting the painter's work.

Corresponding to the frieze *Nuestros dioses*, with its prehispanic motif, would be the "Cuauhtémoc: young grandfather/ listen to me praise thee/ the only hero reaching the height of art..."

In "The Cowardly Moment", dedicated to Saturnino Herrán, Velarde assembles the significant elements of the painter's conscience: "... Obesity of those moons that went/ rolling, sleepy and flirtatious,/ through an absorbed blue/ over the trees of the pavements... Creole throat of Carmen García/ sending her song even to the streets/ surrounded by vegetable perfume... blockhead chromes,/ hanging by stimulus to the table/ with its water melons and meats/ with exaggeration..." And it was the same poet who wrote the posthumous page in *El minuterero* (the minute hand) "How much have I lost, if truly what is lost is he whose essence we would willingly keep. The painter we are celebrating today is one of the beings with whom I should like once more to spend twenty four hours." □



Study for the frieze, "Our gods". Saturnino Herrán.

BOOKS

IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY

"Las escritoras mexicanas de este siglo gozan de una fama ambigua: sus nombres son muy conocidos, de ellas se afirma que están entre los mejores narradores de México, hasta se llega a sostener que varias de ellas superan en talento literario a algunos escritores de fama internacional. Sin embargo, sus obras son poco leídas, menos aún estudiadas" (Mexican women writers of this century enjoy an ambiguous reputation: their names are very well known, they are claimed to be among the greatest commentators on Mexico, several of them are even claimed to be greater literary talents than some writers of international fame. Nevertheless, their work is rarely read, never mind studied). So writes Fabienne Bradu in the introduction to her book of essays titled **Señas Particulares: escritora** (Special Characteristics: Woman Writer).

This work attempts to conjure up the contradictory fate that Mexican women writers suffer. Elena Garro, Inés Arredondo, Josefina Vicens, Julieta Campos, Rosario Castellanos, Luisa Josefina Hernández and María Luis Puga, —seven of the best Mexican women writers of this century— are brought together by Bradu in a detailed reading of their works, in a reflection that purposely declares itself separate from the themes generally touched in literature written by women. In this book the reader will not uncover the intention of underlining only one voice as the embodiment of the "feminine" or that represents the different transformations in the history of the emancipation of women.

Without making erudite or vindictory claims, these essays offer, on the contrary, as their main point, a demonstration of the unmistakable quality of each one of these voices she has studied: the search for an imaginary or ideal identity; a theme which although it is not the exclusive property of women, is present in their artistic creations, particularly those of an acute and

anguished order. Nevertheless, Bradu states: "La femineidad no es propiedad exclusiva de las mujeres, afortunadamente" (Fortunately, femininity is not the exclusive property of women).

Bradu's work shows us that, although the main thread of her essays is the search for identity in the literary creations of the authors under study, this does not mean that she is attempting to offer a uniform vision, but on the contrary, to show, in each case, the variety which each one brings to her creation.

Elena Garro (1920). Author of various works, among which are "Los recuerdos del porvenir" (Memories of the Future), "La Semana de Colores" (The week of colors) and "Andamos huyendo, Lola" (We're running away, Lola), she offers a literary treatment illustrating at the same time a concept of power, and the position she takes with regard to this. The theme of power is, in the works of Elena Garro, one of interest and preoccupation holding,



simultaneously, a fascination and a repulsion for the author. Bradu states that "un espíritu de rebelión recorre el mundo novelesco de Elena Garro y la creación literaria es, para ella, una suerte de compensación o corrección de una realidad... que no acaba nunca de aceptar y que repudia a través de o gracias a sus ficciones" (a spirit of rebellion runs through the novelesque world of Elena Garro, and literary creation for her is a kind of compensation for, or correction of, reality... which she will never accept, and that she rejects through or thanks to her fictions). She also mentions that the author used literary sources of "magic realism" before, and many times better than, some writers who made this into a product for exportation of Latin American literature.

Inés Arredondo (1928). Author of *La señal*, (The sign), *Río subterráneo* (Underground river) and *Opus 123* she presents, through a transparent writing style, a theme that is constant in all of her work: that of passionate love, *l'amour*

fou. Other underlying themes in her texts are those of madness; purity in or towards perversity; the "avoided possibility" (of incest, for example); and the "look of love", either of recognition of what has been lost, or that which only last some moments and soothes ancient wounds.

The work of Josefina Vicens (1911) comprising of two novels: *El libro vacío* (The Empty Book) and *Los años falsos* (The False Years), occupy a special position in Mexico. Much of this is due, as well as to its individual merit, to its antecedents, or lack of them, in Mexican narratives. For example, she achieves the paradox of being able to enter, in the last instance, a classification such as that of the "social novel", yet maintaining an intimate tone, subjective for excellence.

In the maps drawn in the works of Julieta Campos (1932 —maps of desire and of death— circularity, by antonomasia, would be the form that is desired and feared at the same time. In her work, among which we find "*Muerte por agua*" (Death by water) and "*Celina y los gatos*" (Celina and the cats), nothing is static, in spite of first impressions. Only particular attention, a patient, fixed and anxious study such as shown by the narrator, can uncover the movements and subtle changes that are almost invariably a threat to survival: of the world, of things, of beings, of love.

Critics of the work of Rosario Castellanos (1925-1974) appear to have reached agreement: that it is eminently autobiographical, or rather, that the life of Rosario Castellanos, is a presence, a theme and a circumstance that cuts across her work in all of the varieties she has practised: poetry, novels, short stories and magazine articles. Some would see this intervention of life in her work as a human quality; others as a limitation that makes literature excessively subjective. What is true is that the autobiographical commentary in the work of Rosario Castellanos is like a sort of mirror play between the groups where she achieves simultaneously an affirmation and a negation of the autobiographical source, disguise or displacement, as occurs in her novel *Balún Canán*. As Bradu states: "La verdadera Rosario Castellanos está y quedará en su obra, a un tiempo desgarrada y reunida en sus contradicciones y en su enorme deseo de ser" (The real Rosario Castellanos is and will remain in her work, in a time torn up and rejoined in her contradictions and enormous desire to be).

The extensive work of Luisa Josefina Hernández (1928) divides itself in two: drama and the novel. To this writer, creator of *La plaza de Puerto Santo* (The Square in Puerto Santo) and *El valle que elegimos* (The valley we chose), among other things, Mexico is a vast stage where the same dramas are enacted, disguised as comedies or tragedies. Her

personages are actors in their own lives, in search of an unachievable authenticity.

This is how, to Luisa Josefina Hernández, there exists a difference between the representation of being and the representation of appearing. In this difference lies the whole problem of authenticity.

Preoccupation with the theme of alterability marks all of the work of María Luisa Puga (1944): the Other is always present, because to her it means the different modes of the why and for whom (or against whom) of writing. Nevertheless, the establishment of identity through writing scarcely acquires, in the work of María Luisa Puga, the characteristics of the directly autobiographical account. To become "another", or take another to write one's own history, are the gestures that the personages of "*Las posibilidades del odio*" (The Possibilities of Hate), of "*Cuando el aire es azul*" (When the air is blue) and "*Pánico o peligro*" (Panic or Danger) repeat, in a sort of imitative homage to their creator.

Seven voices, seven choruses that seize the interior reality of woman, of being, of the Mexican, and that manage to elevate themselves and make themselves universal: that is what is offered in the essays of Fabienne Bradu.

Bradu, Fabienne. **Señas Particulares: Escritora**, (Special Characteristics: Woman Writer). FCE, México, 1987, 138

Regina Cohen

MEXICANS AS OBJECTS AND SUBJECTS OF STUDY

What is the Mexican like? What does he consist of? are questions where both artist and intellectual have become entangled, from many points of view, disciplines, and historical circumstances. Personalities as different as Lorenzo de Zavala, Baron Humboldt, Benito Juárez, Malcolm Lowry and Octavio Paz, have all tried to discover the formula that explains exactly how the traditions forming our national personality are composed.

We still do not know exactly how to characterize and analyse a civilization that is recent on the world scene, that is built on a multi-ethnic past, three centuries of colonialism, a process of independence dominated by instability and one of the most controversial and spectacular

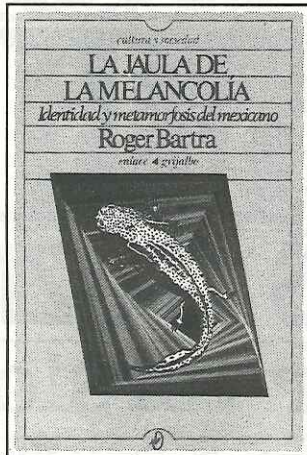
revolutions of this century. Nevertheless, the Mexican state enjoys a legitimacy that allows it, in spite of what many specialists have foreseen, to veer away from difficulties which the country's economic situation have made increasingly serious.

La jaula de la melancolía: identidad y metamorfosis del mexicano (The Cage of Melancholy: the identity and metamorphosis of the Mexican) is a stimulating inquiry penetrating the basis of Mexican nationalism and some of its manifestations "para avanzar en el estudio de los procesos de legitimación del Estado moderno" (advancing the study of the legitimizing processes of the modern State). The author, Roger Bartra, who received a Guggenheim scholarship to write the book, used his own studies on the shaping of the "Mexican national character" to show the ideological content existing behind these interpretations. "El objeto de reflexión de dichos trabajos es una construcción imaginaria que ellos mismos han elaborado con la ayuda decisiva de la literatura, el arte y la música." (The object of reflection in this work is an imaginary reconstruction made with the definitive help of literature, art and music).

This book selects some preoccupations that have arisen from the criticism that, in recent years, has been levelled at the fruitful tradition of French structuralism, and from the new analytical proposals that have tried to incorporate in social studies the points of view characteristic of other disciplines, in this case, of literature. In **La jaula de la melancolía**, the author calls on sources which, if not unedited, are very little used by the humanities in their research. The versatile structure of the text, the deliberate use of a literary point of view, and an ironic attitude towards his own analysis, make the work fresh and even amusing.

In fact Bartra presents his book as a game where the analysis of studies and stereotypes, comprising what we know as "Mexican", converses in an animated way with a creative metaphor, product of the ambivalent nature of the axolote (larva, salamander). Bartra establishes a game logic that is not of every writer's, "saltando de una idea a otra, sin respetar su contorno personal o generacional, agrupando afirmaciones y apreciaciones aun cuando hayan sido elaboradas en contextos filosóficos diferentes u opuestos", (jumping from one idea to another, with no respect for its personal or generational outline, grouping together statements and assessments even when they have been created in different or opposing philosophical contexts), with the object of "forzar la imaginaria mexicana sobre el carácter nacional para introducirla a un canon o conjunto de estereotipos y observar despues, que el

canon aparece en la cultura política mexicana como una representación tragicómica de la vida cotidiana de la masa del pueblo" (forcing Mexican imagery on to the national character to introduce it into a formula or set of stereotypes and observe after, that the formula appears in the Mexican political culture as a tragicomic representation of



the people's daily life). The formula of the axolote serves the purpose of pinpointing the presence of national culture in legitimizing processes of the political system. In this way, ideas on death or the mother, the "relajo" (disorder) or melancholy, are related to a whole social behavioral pattern that participates in the hidden mechanisms of power.

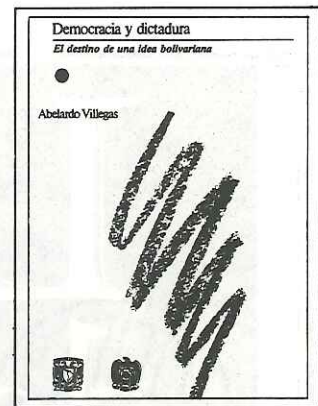
Bartra's book, in the same way as Borges or Cortázar, is conceived as a machine generating interpretations (in fact as an interpretation generating others) and in this sense, the constant use of irony, utilizing the axolote as a cohesive element of mythology and material reality, propitiates the tension between analysis and metaphor. With the use of irony, and in a freer way, the researcher confronts the transformations accompanying his findings and their results. At present, the problems presented by theory can not be solved in a satisfactory way by submerging them in a unifying discussion. The social researcher has to adopt the point of view based on reality and assume explicitly that his conclusions cannot be taken as absolute truths in a context that is permanently changing. Irony, a fundamental element of modernity, "se encuentra en el hecho de que no existe una inocente, sublime y dialéctica totalidad —ni en los hechos ni en la teoría, sino un mundo heterogéneo y dividido" (arises from the fact that there does not exist an innocent, sublime and dialectical totality —neither in facts, nor in theory— but instead a heterogeneous and divided world)".

This is the reason for which one is presented to Mexican nationalism

cemented by the double condition of the axolote: as an expression of life and as an amphibian condemned to be a symbol, sign and mask, trapped forever in the cage of melancholy.

Bartra, Roger. **La Jaula de la melancolía: identidad y metamorfosis del mexicano**, (The Cage of Melancholy: identity and metamorphosis of the Mexican) Grijalbo, Mexico, 1987, 272 p.

Luis Alberto Barquera



UNAM BOOKS

Abelardo Villegas. **Democracia y dictadura (el destino de una idea bolivariana)** (Democracy and Dictatorship (the destiny of a Bolivarian idea), UNAM, México, 137 p.

This book presents a series of essays aiming at defining a contemporary concept of democracy. The author maintains that "faced with the very dramatic reality in Latin America since the Cuban Revolution, the military wave which has still not disappeared, the permanence of dictatorships, the vicissitudes of Chilean socialist experience and the Central American crisis, once again democracy is questioned".

Gastón García Cantu. **Años críticos. La UNAM 1968-1987** (Critical Years. The UNAM 1968-1987) UNAM, México, 485 p.

Here the author reviews the problems in the UNAM during the last twenty years. History and political reflection, images of the immediate past in order to understand the university present. Chronicles critiques in the face of incomprehension, the siege and the tentative attacks of students education in freedom and culture.

Héctor Fix Zamudio. **Los problemas contemporáneos del Poder Judicial**. UNAM México, 46 p.

The present study is divided into three areas. The first tells of the connection of Judicial Power with the outlines established by the Constitution. The second area contemplates the administrative aspects of judicial organization, including the present questions related to the governing of the judicature. The third part refers to the relations of the judges and tribunals with respect to trial rights, particularly the modern role of the judge as trial director.

Luis Díaz Muller. **El SELA y las empresas multinacionales latinoamericanas**. (The SELA and the Latin American multinational companies). UNAM, México, 145 p.

The author presents a study on the role played by the Latin American Economic System within the solution of underdevelopment. He states that "Latin American development has passed through successive crises. The central problem appears to be the incapacity of our productive systems to find regional solutions to the challenges of an integral and pacific development".

Victor M. Bernal Sahagún and Bernardo Olmedo Carranza. **Inversión extranjera directa e industrialización en México**. (Direct foreign investment and industrialization in Mexico). UNAM, México, 281 p.

This volume is a collection of the talks given in an interdisciplinary seminar on foreign investment and industrialization in Mexico, which took place at this university. Various aspects, particularly economics, but also labor, technological, alimentary and legal, etc., were treated. They outline the importance of foreign investment for a post-Revolutionary Mexico and interpret its impact on national life.

Jorge Cuesta. **Sonetos** (Sonnets), UNAM, México, 109 p.

This book presents a collection of the best poems of Jorge Cuesta, one of the most representative writers of the literary group known as The Contemporaries. The poem selection and the introductory study were done by Cristina Mugica. The book also contains an exhaustive bibliography of the poet.

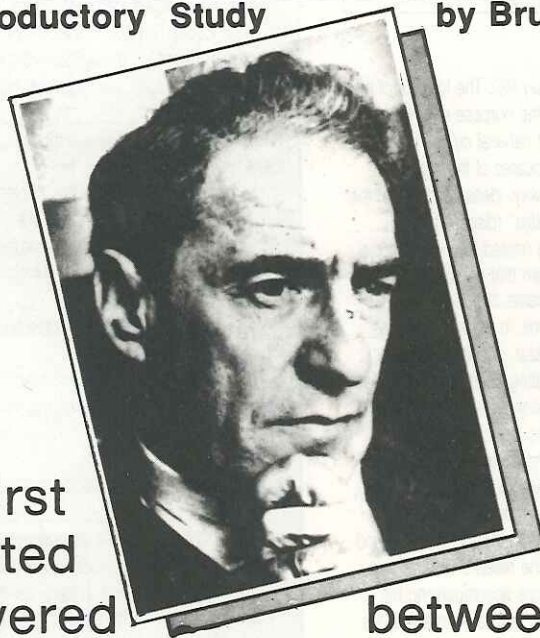
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Autodidacta de poderosa imaginación, Juan José Arreola (Zapotlán, Jalisco, 1918), ha ejercido los más disímiles oficios: vendedor ambulante, periodista, maestro y sobre todo charlista de palabra destimbrante y ademanes categóricos. El tema del amor es capital en su obra: va del idealismo adolescente a una visión aterradora y caricaturesca de la mujer, cifra y símbolo de la enajenación, el dolor y la muerte. Inquietador profesional de vidas y sensiblerías, buena parte de la joven narrativa mexicana le debe enseñanzas definitivas.

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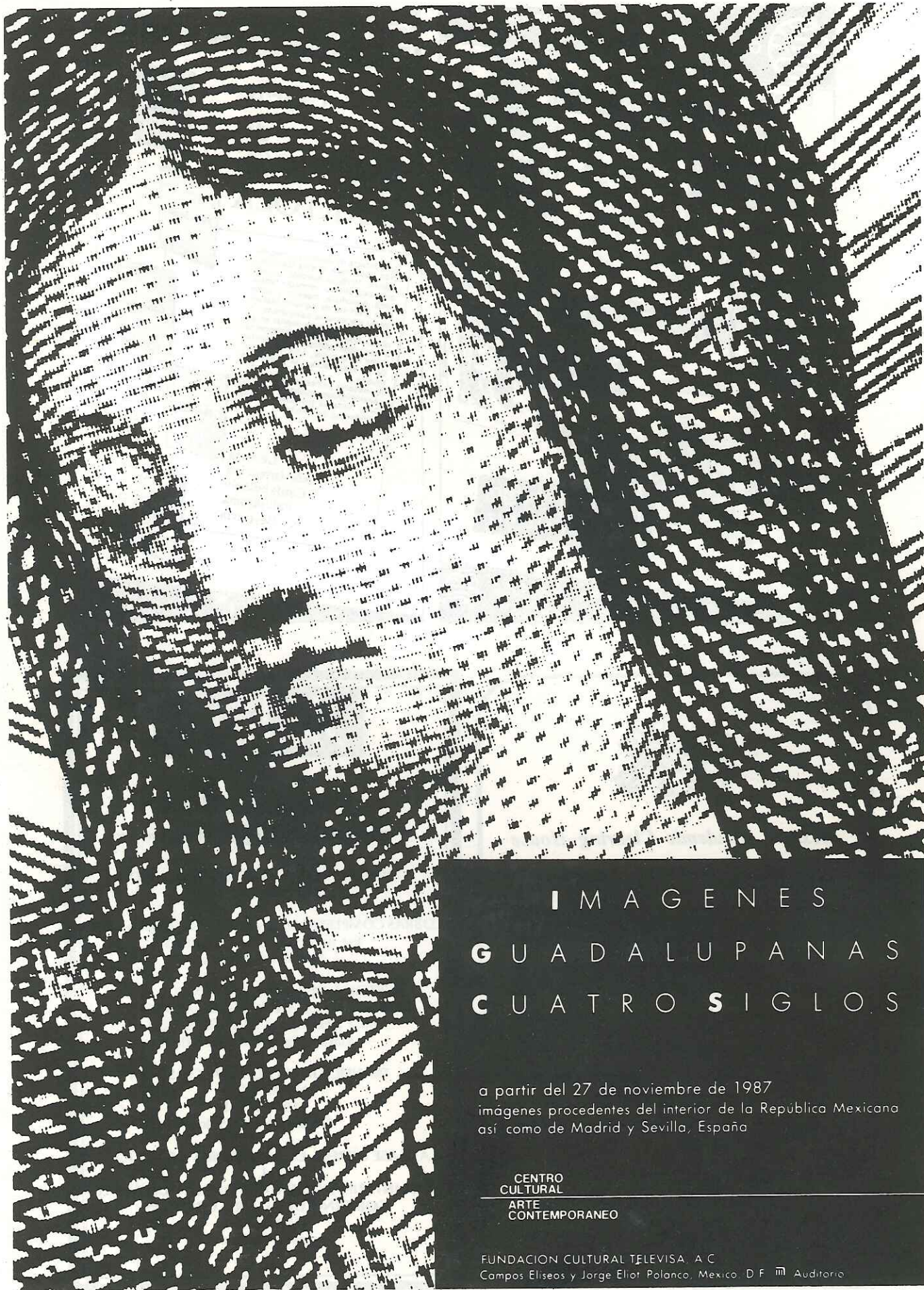
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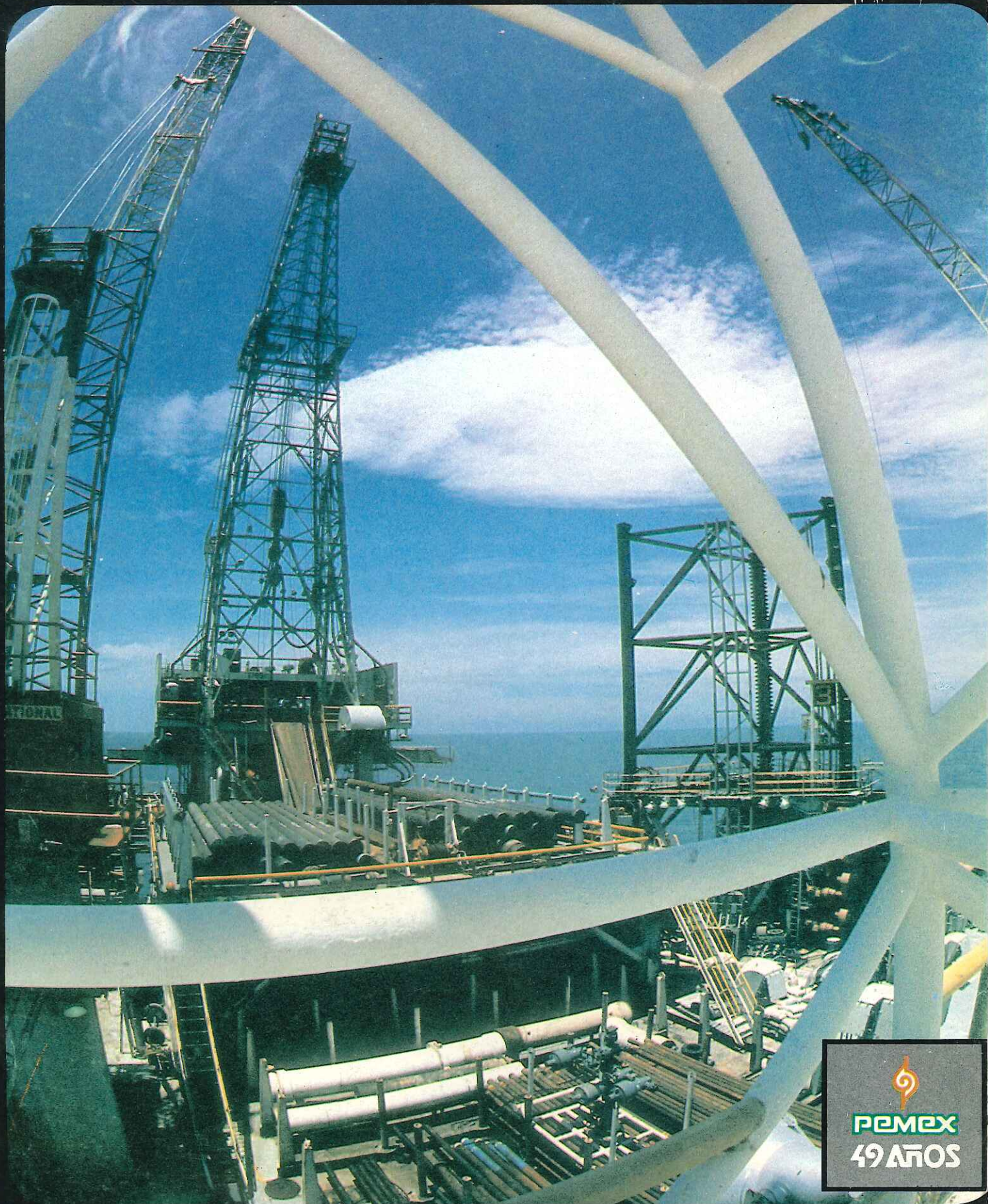
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