

Voices of Mexico

MEXICAN PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

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The
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central
banks in
globalized
financial
markets

Narcotics and the Americas:
a collective responsibility

The economic thought of Mexico's
three principal political parties

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the 21st century begins in the 90's

Mexico has emerged on the world scene with renewed vitality as a result of increased international integration and internal modernization. New and exciting interests are developing as traditional values are being reaffirmed and reshaped. *Voices of Mexico* brings you opinions and analysis of issues of vital interest in Mexico and the rest of the world. You, the reader, are invited to enjoy the most important English language quarterly currently published in Mexico. We welcome your letters, manuscripts and questions and will do our best to engage your areas of interest.

Voices of Mexico

MEXICAN PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

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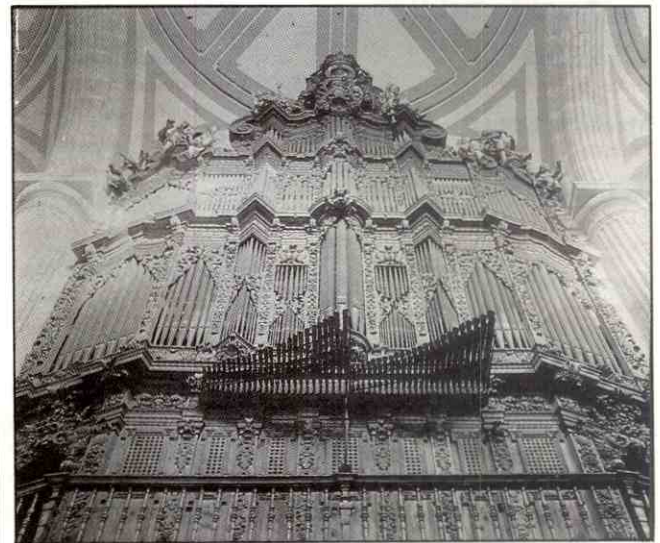
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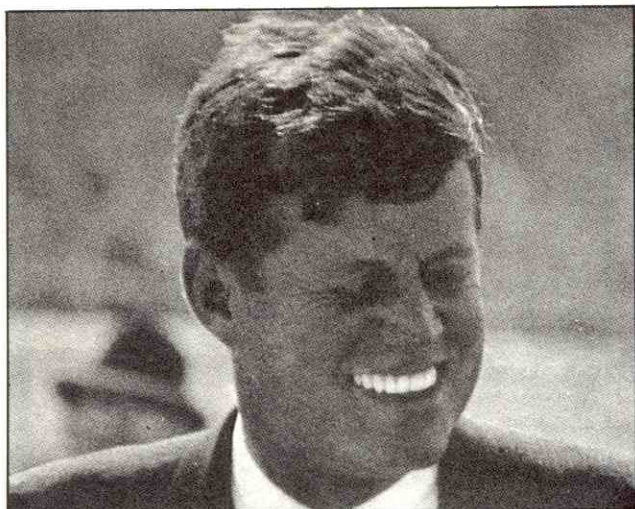
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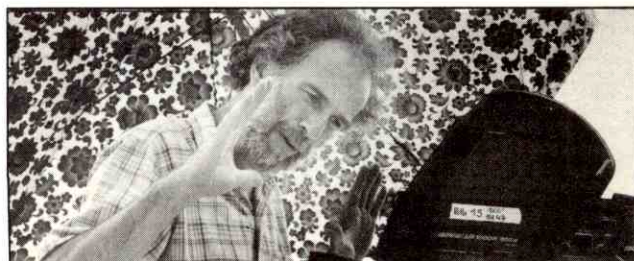
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Our voice



Drug addiction has become one of the most serious problems facing today's world.

One hundred and six countries—including Canada, the United States, and Mexico—met in Vienna in 1988 to unify their efforts and stop the advance of—and if possible eliminate—drug use which is sapping both individual and collective energy, and threatening the security of numerous nations. Enormous quantities of money are spent to stem the tide of this crime; and on the other side it is one of the most lucrative illegal businesses in the world.

The participants at the Vienna meeting determined that production, trafficking, and consumption of drugs are all parts of one single crime. The struggle against and eradication of this poison was proclaimed to be the "collective responsibility" of everyone touched by any one of these stages.

The biggest drug market in the world is in the United States. Within its borders can be found the entire process, from production to consumption. Yet drugs must be smuggled in from abroad to meet America's demand.

The world congress also condemned money laundering and the banking system's practices of secrecy which

protect criminals made wealthy by dint of illegal activities.

In 1989, the Instituto de las Américas and the Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies at the University of California San Diego, with experts from several countries of the continent, studied the policies that have thus far been used to combat the drug problem. In this issue we publish their conclusions with regard to Mexico and the northern part of the continent.

This group's proposal is to focus government action on warning young people of the dangers of drugs which, while offering a short-lived escape from difficult realities, destroy the brain and the capacity to think: mankind's most precious gift. It has been demonstrated that pursuing only producers and traffickers is useless. As long as there is demand, there will be supply.

*The NAFTA negotiations continue: in this issue some of our experts present their views, demonstrating, with those published in the last **Voices of Mexico**, the diversity of opinion in Mexico on this extremely important initiative between the three North American countries.*

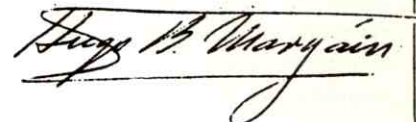
Our previous issue featured an article about the Olmec heads, one of the treasures

of our archeological heritage. In this issue we present a description of the remarkable and little-known El Zapotal in the State of Veracruz.

Here we also include an account of the most modern museum in Mexico—in the city of Puebla—as a follow-up to our presentation of the Anthropological Museum of Mexico City in our last issue.

Mexico's political parties were asked for their positions on one hundred and three subjects of national interest. Thirteen parties replied to the questionnaire, and we present here the answers of the three largest.

***Voices of Mexico** aims to bring Mexico's economic, political, social, and cultural opinions to the United States and Canada, and aims to reflect the variety and texture of standpoints which thrive in Mexican society and the increasingly plural world.*



Hugo B. Margáin
Editorial Director

Report of the Inter-American Commission on Drug Policy

Throughout history, peoples of the world have shown a recurrent tendency to abuse narcotic and psycho-tropic substances. The struggle to control abuse and traffic in these substances must therefore be permanent. Analogies of war and victory are misleading: there can be no peace.

Over the last few generations most societies failed to establish permanent programs of prevention and education and to maintain an open, ongoing discussion of the risks of drug abuse. Illicit drug abuse surged anew during the 1970's and 1980's among populations that were ill-prepared by governments, communities, families and schools. The social costs of this neglect have been crushing. Especially devastating has been the crack epidemic of the 1980's.

Shared problems

The United States, Canada, and Latin America continue to pay a high price. Throughout the hemisphere drug abuse has stricken the vulnerable, the poor, and the disadvantaged, and threatens to condemn them to unproductive lives on the margins of society.

The street children of Latin America's cities, stunted by toxic

inhalants and smokable forms of cocaine, face this danger as starkly as the youthful offenders who are continually recycled through the U.S. criminal justice system. The multiple connections between AIDS and narcotics magnify still more the threat to these and other vulnerable groups.

The drug problems faced by nations of the Americas have common elements, but also important differences. For the United States, the principal drug problems are ones of crime and public health. For Mexico, it is a problem of trafficking and of the trafficker's efforts to subvert law enforcement institutions. For Colombia, it is a problem of extraordinary violence that directly challenges the integrity of governmental institutions. For Bolivia, it is mainly a problem of failed rural development. For Peru it is that too - plus the spreading loss of government authority in whole regions of the countryside.

But shared problems faced by all the people of the Americas provide both a reason and a challenge for international cooperation. All nations have to contend with the spread of drug abuse and its threat to the young in particular. All have to defend themselves against powerful and

violent criminal organizations capable of undermining the authority and stability of their democratic institutions. And all have to deal with drug cartels that are highly mobile and adaptable. No country is immune.

The heart of the problem in this hemisphere, but not the sole cause of it, is the continuing demand for illicit drugs in the United States. The U.S. consumes most of the cocaine, heroin, and marijuana exported from Latin America. This demand encourages supply and thus strengthens the power of trafficking organizations, most notably the Colombian cartels.

Sustained progress in the reduction of U.S. consumption of illicit drugs helps all of the Americas. This is the key to success. No program of hemispheric collaboration can be truly effective unless the U.S. sharply curtails its demand for these substances.

Encouraging signs

The turn against drugs in much of U.S. society has been driven mainly by growing awareness of the risks to personal health, and by aversion to the criminal violence associated with drug trafficking. Despite little change in the availability of drugs, this increasingly negative attitude toward drug abuse

has led to a significant decline in drug consumption within the U.S. and offers a realistic basis for hope of continued progress.

Yet most resources in U.S. anti-drug programs are still devoted not to what is clearly working—the reduction of demand—but to what is not—the curtailment of drug supplies. Billions of U.S. anti-drug program dollars are still targeted on interdicting and confiscating drug

shipments, while seizures provide only an illusion of success rather than any accurate measure of progress.

Interdiction itself is not the priority policy goal. The ultimate purpose is to make drugs more costly and less available to U.S. consumers, an objective more readily accomplished by street-level enforcement at the wholesale-to-retail level and by direct attacks on the criminal organizations that transport the drugs.

The Inter-American Commission on Drug Policy is a private group of experts from six countries, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and the United States. We represent different perspectives from agriculture to rehabilitation, from education to law enforcement, and from academia to government. Our group includes former senior government officials, prominent leaders in the fields of drug treatment and rehabilitation, and scholarly experts from universities and research institutions.

For over two years we have carefully examined the assumptions and mechanisms of international efforts in the Americas to counter the abuse and traffic of narcotics that has overwhelmed the last generation. Our goal has been to assess the prospects for more effective hemispheric cooperation and to offer practical recommendations to governments, to private organizations, and to concerned individuals.

In the proposed U.S. federal budget for the 1992 fiscal year, 70 percent of the resources are devoted to programs for supply reduction (interdiction, law enforcement, and most international activities) and only 30 percent to programs for demand reduction (education and treatment).

These priorities are upside down. Nationally and internationally, authorities should give greater attention and funding to what is working: programs to reduce demand and treat drug abusers, street level enforcement, and the disruption of the criminal networks which produce and traffic in drugs.

Appropriate treatments of drug users should be one high priority. It reduces demand and all its related societal costs. The largest group of hard-core, or frequent drug users in the U.S. and elsewhere may well be people under detention or supervision by the criminal justice system.

Yet most members of this large group do not have programs of treatment and rehabilitation available to them through the penal system. Court-referred treatment and rehabilitation accompanied by testing offer one of the most effective strategies for reducing both drug use and crime by drug users.

Careful testing programs and non-penal sanctions for drug abuse can usefully reinforce society's growing intolerance for such abuse. There is no clear evidence that incarceration for drug use reduces such use.

In addition, street-level enforcement against the drug trade at wholesale-to-retail levels reduces both supply and demand by making drugs difficult and risky to obtain. Over time, education and prevention programs are the most promising strategies for overall demand reduction.

Two current U.S. programs actually exacerbate the drug problems



of Latin America. First, U.S. pressure on the governments of Peru and Bolivia to increase their military's role in anti-drug programs is misguided. The unintended consequences of an increased military role in drug enforcement in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia have included greater violence and increased human rights violations. These outcomes have weakened popular support for anti-drug efforts in general and for cooperation with the United States.

Second, U.S. support for Bolivia's program of voluntary coca substitution has actually had the effect of sustaining the income of coca

growers and thereby keeping them in the coca growing business, rather than moving them into lawful pursuits. Bolivia and the U.S. are in effect wasting most of the \$42 million of U.S. economic assistance provided to Bolivia in 1990.

To meet acute human needs and to improve support for international cooperation, the hemisphere needs a collaborative program to address the human tragedy of drug abuse and its prevention—otherwise governments will eventually lose their essential constituency, the people of the Americas.

Our recommendations

1. Terminate or reduce programs that are ineffective and counterproductive.

The Commission recommends that the U.S. government:

- Significantly reduce funding for interdiction of drug supplies in U.S. border areas.
- Half efforts to persuade or coerce Latin American governments into expanding the use of military force against processors, traffickers, and growers.
- Terminate support for existing programs, such as that in Bolivia, which pay farmers for acreage withdrawn from the production of coca leaf. These programs provide income supports for coca growers and give them a reason to stay in the business.
- Stop advocating the use of herbicidal spraying as a primary strategy for eradicating coca leaf production, since this technique entails an environmental risk and provokes political opposition to anti-drug policies in general.
- Eliminate the U.S. legal requirement for certification of anti-drug programs of other countries throughout the region; this process is demeaning and counterproductive, and it weakens political support for hemispheric cooperation.

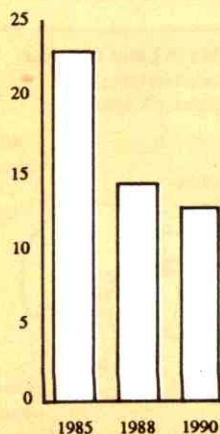
2. Concentrate international law-enforcement efforts on the disruption of criminal processing and trafficking networks throughout the Americas, rather than on seizures of drug shipments.

The Commission recommends:

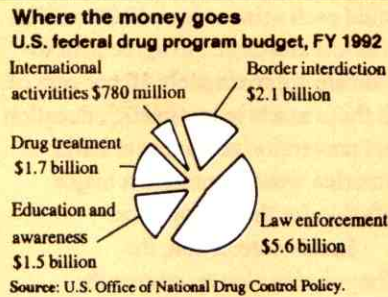
- That the Andean countries, in consultation with the U.S., develop a long-term strategy for countering the cocaine trafficking organizations and create a permanent entity to monitor its implementation.

- That the Organization of American States (OAS) assume an expanded role in strengthening judicial systems of the hemisphere by guiding the efforts of governments with legal analysis and model legislation, and by supporting regional commissions of jurists to consider such crucial issues as the status and security of judges.
- That the remanding of indicted drug traffickers from one country to another be carried out in strict accordance with existing extradition treaties and intergovernmental agreements.
- That all countries tighten purchasing regulations and export licensing for weapons and firearms, to reduce the flow of arms to drug trafficking organizations.
- That all countries require export licensing of the major precursor chemicals employed in the production of illicit drugs.
- That all countries adopt the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force as the most effective implementation of their general obligation under the United Nations 1988 Vienna Convention to take action against money laundering.

America's turn against drugs
Estimated number of current U.S. users
(in millions of people)



Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse.



3. Launch a cooperative and integrated effort throughout the Americas to reduce consumer demand for illicit drugs.

The Commission recommends that all countries in the hemisphere:

- Provide drug treatment in all penal systems.
- Target for counseling and treatment drug-using women of child-bearing age, who risk

make available to Latin American countries technical assistance in the integration of education, prevention, and drug treatment with broad social-service programs, especially for abandoned children and adolescents.

4. Create alternative economic strategies to curtail coca growing in the Andean countries, especially in Bolivia and Peru.

The Commission recommends:

- A South American strategy for reducing coca leaf production based primarily on economic disruption of the market through accelerated demand reduction in all countries, and on enforcement campaigns targeting trafficking groups and

“U.S. society's turn against drug abuse has created a unique opportunity”

contracting and spreading AIDS and giving birth to drug-impaired infants.

- Develop publicly-funded programs for young people with drug problems, especially those who have dropped out of school.
- Provide education, counseling, and other prevention programs in all elementary and secondary schools, in community organizations, and in the workplace.

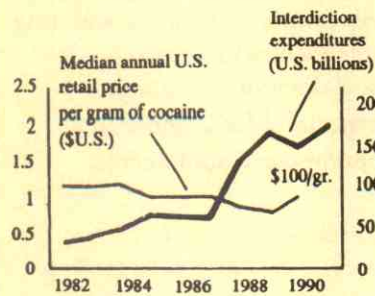
The Commission further recommends that the U.S.:

- Provide adequate drug treatment for all those who need it, with long-term commitments for substantial federal, state, and local government contributions.
- Train specialists in international assistance organizations (such as the Peace Corps, the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), and the (OAS)) in order to

processing centers, thus lowering the price of coca leaf and encouraging farmers to seek lawful economic activities.

- Concentration of efforts in the U.S. Andean Strategy toward the promotion of rural development, including agricultural infrastructure in the most promising regions, rather than on crop eradication or on existing compensation programs.
- The creation of multi-donor funds for rural development in Bolivia and Peru to exploit the best opportunities of generating lawful rural employment and growth wherever such opportunities might be.
- The extension of U.S. trade preferences beyond initial provisions in the U.S. Andean Trade Preferences Act.

Is interdiction really working?
Trends in retail price for cocaine and
U.S. expenditures on interdiction 1982-1991



Source: U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy

5. Encourage Latin American countries to mobilize additional resources for their own anti-drug programs and provide an incentive for the allocation of more resources for treatment, education, and prevention in Latin America.

The Commission recommends:

- That the U.S. and Latin American countries (starting with the Andean countries and Mexico) reach a multilateral accord under which they all promise to take the

could each seize at least \$100 million in assets and cash. An agreement to dedicate approximately 10 per cent of all these assets to treatment, education and prevention programs in Latin America would represent a major infusion for these programs.

In this connection, the Commission also recommends:

- Further research on effective methods for prevention of illicit drug abuse and for the habilitation of victims among the people of the Americas, especially street children. This research should focus on drug-related AIDS as well as on substance abuse itself.
- Research on effective means to alleviate the social conditions within inner cities, in both the U.S. and Latin America, that draw young people into informal economies, illicit activities, and involvement with drugs.
- Continuing feasibility studies of forms and prospects for alternative rural development.

accidents, not to mention the costs of combatting drug trafficking and rehabilitating drug users. And the U.S. has only begun to pay the full costs for its recent surge in drug abuse.

Each year in the U.S. over 300,000 babies are born who have already been exposed to illicit drugs, including cocaine and its especially harmful derivative, crack. Medical costs for a crack baby may exceed \$40,000 over the first four years, with subsequent need for therapy, special medical care, and special educational services.

Annual costs for therapy and treatment of crack children run into billions of dollars. Hopefully this investment will lead to the recovery and rehabilitation of many of these youngsters; some will probably require treatment and therapy over the course of their lifetimes, well beyond the turn of the century.

Latin America faces its own forms of the same human tragedy and dissipation of resources. Alarming numbers of abandoned street children inhale solvents, glue, and gasoline, or smoke adulterated forms of cocaine. All these substances can cause permanent brain damage.

Brazil has an estimated 7 million abandoned children living on the streets. Preliminary data suggests that over a quarter of them are regular abusers of toxic substances. Similarly,

“Resources should be concentrated on what’s working, not what’s not”

domestic legal and administrative action necessary to confiscate and monetize the financial and physical assets seized from drug traffickers and to dedicate the entire proceeds to anti-drug programs.

- A second provision of such an accord should be the agreement of all signatories to contribute an agreed-upon portion of such seized assets to a hemispheric fund for regional and national programs of drug rehabilitation, prevention, and education in participant countries.

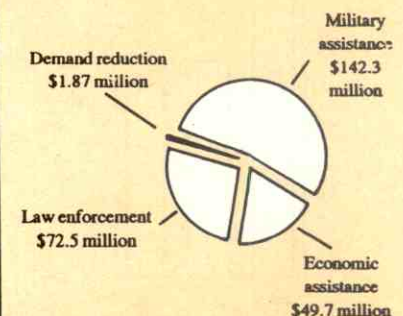
The U.S. now monetizes over \$1 billion annually in assets forfeited by drug traffickers; Colombia and Mexico

It should be emphasized, in conclusion, that these recommendations do not call for increased expenditures of public funds by governments throughout the Western Hemisphere. Instead, they call for a major reallocation of public expenditures, away from interdiction and supply control and toward demand reduction. They also envision a mobilization of new resources through the monetization of forfeited assets.

An unending campaign

The U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy estimates the current annual cost of drug abuse to the U.S. as over \$100 billion in lost productivity and drug-related

**U.S. priorities in Latin America
Narcotics-related funding
for U.S. programs, FY 1991**



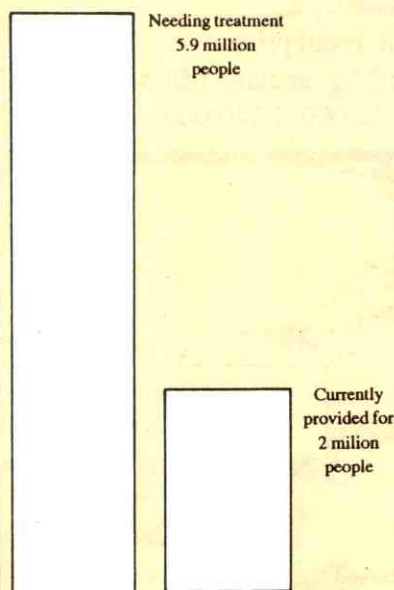
Source: U.S. Department of State.

a survey of adolescents and children working in the streets of Mexico City (often as peddlers or beggars) indicated that 22 percent are daily inhalers of solvents. Homeless children in Bolivia and Peru are regular users of adulterated cocaine.

Will these rising costs of drug abuse move the countries of the Americas to invest in programs needed to contain drug abuse and traffic over the long term?

History is not reassuring on this critical question. The U.S. has experienced repeated cycles of

The gap in U.S. drug treatment
Numbers of Americans provided for
and those in need
(projections for 1992)



Source: U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy.

drug abuse throughout its national history. On each occasion, U.S. society has slowly mobilized its moral indignation against substance abuse – and then, as the epidemics waned, the U.S. has turned its attention away from the problem, thus leaving itself vulnerable to the next cycle.

The epidemiological history of drug abuse should convince us that

controlling drug abuse and traffic is a permanent responsibility, realizable only by long-term programs that are continually supported and funded in communities and at all levels of government. Vulnerability to abuse of narcotic and psycho-tropic substances

Production and traffic in illicit drugs have been increasing in volume. And international efforts to contain the drug trade have become the most contentious point in U.S. relations with such countries as Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia.

“The Commission recommends that all countries work to provide adequate drug treatment for all those who need it”

has proven to be a persistent tendency for societies and individuals. Some percentage of the population may always be addicted to some kind of substance; the goal of public policy is to prevent such addictions from spreading out to the to the majority of citizens.

The struggle to control drug abuse and traffic is therefore one where the analogies of war and victory are misleading, because there is no peace. As a well-known comic strip character announced some time ago, “we have met the enemy and he is us.” The problem will always be with us.

The need for international cooperation

Each country must wage this unending campaign on its own ground. Yet our Commission has felt the need to examine opportunities for cooperation among the countries of the hemisphere for several reasons.

First, the international aspects of controlling drug abuse and traffic have been largely neglected by policymakers. The U.S. has in recent years devoted less than 5 percent of its drug control funds to international programs. While the input for international efforts has been low, the friction generated has been high – and the output disappointing.

The initial efforts of countries in the hemisphere to collaborate in countering the drug problem have been harmed by an atmosphere of conflict and recrimination based on perceptions that are simplistic and appealing – and wrong, and therefore dangerous.

In the U.S. one still hears that:

- We can fix the problem when we can cut off supplies from Latin America – while in reality, U.S. consumers would turn to drugs produced in other parts of the world.
- The U. S. is a consumer only of drugs produced elsewhere – while in reality, the U.S. is a leading producer of marijuana, methamphetamines and other synthetic and pharmaceutical drugs.
- Latin Americans and other foreigners run the drug trade in the U.S. – while in reality, most of the big dealers operating within the U.S. are American citizens.
- A large scale, all-out war on drugs based on massive, even military force could halt the drug business – while in reality, force cannot halt demand for drugs or replace good police work.
- Latin American governments cannot stop drug production and traffic because their economies have become addicted to the income – while in reality, Latin

American societies would be better off without the drug business and all its burdens.

In Latin America one still hears that:

- Demand for drugs in the U.S. is so powerful that Latin American countries are powerless to counter production and traffic in their own lands - while in reality, strategic attacks on drug kingpins and production facilities can have significant effects.
- The need to curtail cocaine production will eventually pass because the U.S. will soon consume so much "ice" (smokable methamphetamine) and other synthetic substitutes that the preoccupation with cocaine will disappear. In reality, "ice" and other synthetics are not sweeping the U.S. market.
- The need to restrict drug trafficking will disappear because the U.S. will lose the political will to continue anti-drug campaigns and will eventually decriminalize drug consumption - while in reality, the American public and political leadership have maintained a strong consensus against any form of legalization.
- If the U.S. would reduce its demand for drugs, Latin America's drug problem would go away - while in reality millions of Latin Americans have become drug users and they won't stop just because U.S. consumption declines.
- The closeness of Latin American family life makes its children immune to drug abuse - while in reality, millions of Latin America's children abuse toxic substances and drugs largely because their families and societies have failed them.

Our investigation thus brings us ineluctably to the conclusion that all these perceptions are wrong.

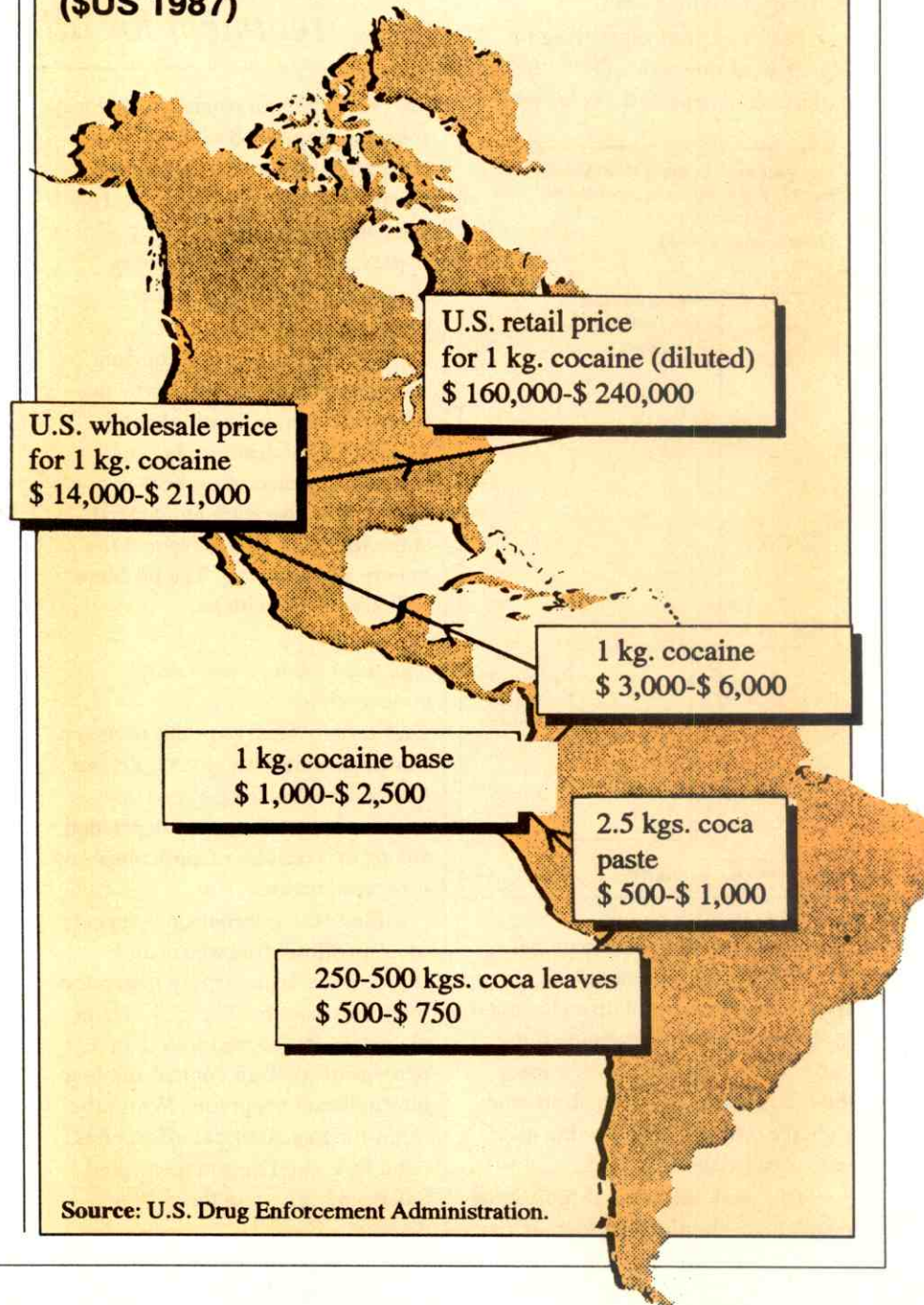
Strategies for international cooperation

In some of the most difficult areas, international collaboration in this hemisphere can best start at the

sub-regional level, particularly among the most significantly involved countries in the production and distribution chains for illicit drugs - Bolivia, Peru,

Where the profits are made

Selling prices for equivalent of one kilogram of cocaine at successive stages of trafficking (\$US 1987)



Source: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

Colombia, Mexico and the United States.

Fortunately, the political tone of cooperation among these countries has improved as a result of several factors: greater attention by the U.S. to its own drug consumption; constructive political initiatives from current leadership in the Americas; and mutual recognition of the need to end a period of political recrimination regarding who is to blame for international drug traffic.

An important step has been taken against laundering of drug funds by the expansion of the original initiative of the Group of Seven industrial countries to twenty countries cooperating in the Financial Action Task Force. Pinpointing and confiscating the financial assets of drug traffickers is critical for undermining the stability of their criminal enterprises.

The drug cartels are increasingly mobile and adopt multinational enterprises which quickly absorb most blows against them, and adjust their processing and trafficking networks to take advantage of the openings still available to them.

When Colombia's 1989-90 attack on the Medellín cartel put many of its cocaine processing centers out of business, new ones sprang up in Bolivia and Peru. As the Peruvian government's authority has weakened in the Upper Huallaga Valley, coca leaf production has increased there and declined somewhat in Bolivia. As enforcement against traffickers has improved in the Caribbean, the major routes for shipping cocaine north have shifted to Mexico, and after a brief interlude money laundering has moved back to Panama.

Yet the national governments trying to respond to such rapid moves by the drug cartels have no consistent strategy for countering this

international network, and they consult very little with one another about their respective efforts and activities. A central objective of a regional strategy to counter the cocaine trade should be inflicting greater damage on the processing and distribution networks through coordinated national actions that deny safe havens in neighboring countries for escape from national enforcement efforts.

This is one of several areas in which key countries of the hemisphere require a forum for coordinating their efforts -through sharing intelligence about processing centers and distribution channels, and sharing assessments of the regional impacts of enforcement actions taken within any one country. Only on this basis can countries take advantage of the synergy of simultaneous enforcement actions and anticipate and defend themselves against the likely reactions of processors and traffickers seeking to make up in one country what they lose in another.

Europe and Japan, a trend that is likely to accelerate in the future. In fact, growing demand for cocaine in Europe may become a major threat to a potentially successful regional cocaine strategy.

In general we see merit in a more collaborative and multilateral approach to strategies for the control of drug supplies in the hemisphere. Bilateral standards and bilateral sanctions corrode such collaboration. In particular, the certification under U.S. law of the adequacy, and implicitly the sincerity, of the anti-drug programs of other friendly democracies has proved harmful to the development of stronger cooperation in the region.

It is only through effective regional collaboration that nations of the Americas will be able to meet the multiple challenges posed by drug abuse and trafficking.

New opportunities

In summary, members of the Inter-American Commission believe that present conditions offer especially auspicious opportunities

“Growing numbers of abandoned street children are inhaling solvents, glue, and gasoline or smoking adulterated forms of cocaine to an alarming extent”

Such a forum could also develop a hemispheric system of data collection and some coordinated goals for reducing production. While its principal focus should be on the drug trade within the Western Hemisphere, the forum should include European and Japanese authorities.

We have already seen that Colombian cartels have reacted to declining cocaine use in the U.S. by more aggressive marketing in

for effective multilateral cooperation on drug policy. This is so for three reasons:

First, the declining incidence of illicit drug use in the United States has begun to shrink the international market for drugs -and demonstrates the workability of demand-reduction programs.

Second, the United Nations 1988 Vienna Convention provides a coherent set of norms and standards for multilateral collaboration. The



modest beginnings of consultation among Andean countries also provides a potential framework for active coordination and mutual reinforcement.

And third, the Andean Strategy of the U.S. government has, for the first time, budgeted sizable and increasing sums for international programs over the next several years. For the 1990 fiscal year the Strategy entailed U.S. \$265 million for military, security, and economic assistance for Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia; the 1991 total is U.S. \$370 million; for 1992 it will be nearly U.S. \$500 million. In addition, Latin American countries, with some incentive from the U.S., could mobilize significant additional funding by confiscating and monetizing the assets of drug traffickers.

Notwithstanding widespread constraints on public expenditures,

funds can be found for anti-drug campaigns. The important point is to make sure that they are used in constructive and effective ways, not on programs that are ineffective and wasteful. Now is the time to seize the opportunities.

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(Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only. Ideas and recommendations in this report are the views of the individual commission members, not the policies or programs of their respective organizations.)

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Mexico's anti-drug policies¹

Eduardo Héctor Moguel Flores*

Not a day goes by without the mass media mentioning the illegal production of drugs, their trafficking and consumption, and the exploits of the international community in the anti-drug war.

Nor does a day go by without some state insinuating the irresponsibility of some other state with regard to the drug problem, and how this cripples enforcement programs and makes eradication of drugs impossible.

This was, and still is, the situation in which the U.S. government and the countries surrounding it -including Mexico- find themselves. U.S. authorities continue to blame the drug threat in their own territory on the authorities of other nations in this hemisphere. The diplomatic friction is especially galling to Latin American and Caribbean governments who perceive the problem as fundamentally North American.

The United States has every reason to be concerned about the production and trafficking of drugs in Latin America and the Caribbean, because the biggest market and magnet for such substances is in the U.S. itself.

This has led U.S. authorities to believe that the principal problem lies in the supplier countries and in those

the drugs pass through on their way to the United States². U.S. authorities therefore came to the conclusion that the most effective method for keeping drugs off the U.S. market was to get rid of them in their place of origin, or prevent them from reaching the consumer.

Accordingly, U.S. authorities have made drug control an increasingly important item in their domestic and foreign policy, one that has had repercussions on the narcotics policies of other countries such as Belize, the Bahamas, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Jamaica, Peru, and the British protectorate of the Turks and Caicos Islands, to name but a few³.

The war against drugs has turned on the corruption that drugs bring with them and the use of off-shore banks such as those in the Cayman Islands and in the Dutch West Indies which launder money from drug operations.

The United States of America, with an immense territory and

population, nearly two thousand miles of hard-to-patrol border with Mexico and an even longer frontier with Canada, thinks itself an important target for drug producers and traffickers.

Some studies suggest that over 25 million Americans use drugs, although are not necessarily addicts. International statistics indicate that nearly 6 million people in the U.S. are cocaine addicts, over 4 million are addicted to barbituates and tranquillizers, 2 million to amphetamines, 2 million to hallucinogens, and about half a million to heroin.

In addition, lots of Americans -about 20 million- smoke marijuana regularly. It is easy to imagine how drug consumption might represent an enormous economic and social cost for the United States and any other nation with similar troubles⁴.

However, throwing tantrums without taking responsibility has a diplomatic cost, one which is perhaps more difficult to assess than monetary loss. Acting in this way the United States has isolated itself, and now resembles Don Quixote tilting at windmills, and with as little likelihood of winning the battle. Yes, there is a moral here: problems cannot be

¹ Summary of an article published in the *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior* (*Mexican Journal of Foreign Relations*), No. 30, Spring 1991.

² This of course involves classifying countries as "consumer countries", "producer countries", and "transit countries", and a variety of combinations of these three.

³ Considered to be producers and transit routes for drugs destined for the U.S. market.

⁴ During his 1986 re-election campaign Ronald Reagan informed voters that drug abuse was costing U.S. society 60 billion dollars every year.

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solved by laying the blame on others or passing it like a hot potato.

Many of the capital cities of the American continent, for example Belmopan, Nassau, La Paz, Bogota, Quito, Mexico City, Kingston, and Lima, together with those of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, felt that the threatening bluster from Washington was bringing unfair pressure to bear by holding them responsible for drug-trafficking or money laundering. It didn't help the American cause that this was perceived as a way of drawing attention away from America's own drug problem. A certain lack of congruence between U.S. domestic and foreign policy, and what it demanded from other nations, was also felt in these capitals⁵.

This situation is a good starting point for the main subject of this article: Mexico's anti-drug policy. In spite of Mexico's historical stance on the subject⁶, its policy was best known in the United States -if not in the world as a whole- by the 1986 observations made by a U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee that corruption in the Mexican legal system -in connection with the anti-drug war- was rampant.

⁵ The Latin American and Caribbean capitals were surprised that Washington's efforts to fight the drug problem during the Nixon Administration -Nixon was the President who started the war against drugs in the U.S.- coincided with the distribution of 8 million doses per year of methadone to combat heroin addiction. Methadone is now recognized to be equally addictive as heroin, and even U.S. federal law considers it relatively dangerous.

⁶ In 1925 Mexico signed the International Opium Agreement, drawn up at the Hague in 1912. The United States was not a party to this treaty. This Opium Agreement remains partially in force in certain countries, but has been repealed and replaced by the Sole Agreement on Drugs of 1961, to which both Mexico and the United States are parties.

Naturally, the Mexican response was not long in coming and heated, suggesting that U.S. officials who knew little about either Mexico's or the United States' anti-drug policies were interfering in Mexican domestic matters and meddling with Mexican sovereignty. Mexico's reaction was justified. Earlier that year the then presidents of Mexico and the U.S. had met and discussed possibilities for combating drugs, at which meeting the Mexican government promised to continue close collaboration and had committed a considerable proportion of its limited resources to this war on drugs.

Mexico's point of view is as clear today as it was then. The Mexican government holds that the drug problem observes a very well known law of the market: as long as there are

consumers there will be producers, a route for getting the product from its place of origin to its place of sale, and businessmen who will wring profits from both the producers and the consumers.

The idea that responsibility for punishing criminals should fall on the police forces of the supplier and trafficking countries is absurd; that law enforcement programs should operate as close as possible to the place of production is equally so. U.S. authorities should accept the fact that they need to fight drug consumption in their own territory, and politely request that neighbor countries do the same. Besides, the Mexican government needs no encouragement, already having its own reasons for

The war against drug trafficking in Mexico (Dec. 1982 - Jan. 1990)

<i>Illegal plantations eradicated</i>	393,937
<i>Seizures (kgs.)</i>	
Heroin and opium paste	1,415
Cocaine	69,817
Dried and packed marijuana	10,247,137
<i>Confiscations</i>	
Land vehicles	10,027
Boats	83
Planes	198
Firearms	16,171
<i>Clandestine laboratories dismantled</i>	47
<i>Persons arrested and brought to trial</i>	82,121
<i>Judicial proceedings</i>	50,585
<i>Criminal organizations dissolved</i>	280
<i>Government agents killed in action</i>	92



Harvesting for the incinerator.

putting a stop to drug production and drug-trafficking.

As if this were not enough, to comply with the new agreement with the U.S. the Mexican government had to assign money, material and human resources originally assigned to fighting the drug problem within Mexico to pitching in to the fight within the U.S.⁷

The U.S. seemed quite happy demanding that the Mexican government increase its efforts in the war against drugs. When anyone asked about where the drugs consumed by U.S. addicts came from, the answer of many U.S. officials was *south of the border!* This was irresponsible; generally the drugs came *through* Mexico, not from it. They typically originated from other Latin American and Caribbean countries.

⁷ Mexico was already using its few available resources to destroy marijuana and poppy crops, to face up to the *caciques* who controlled drug production, to prevent drug transportation, to locate clandestine airstrips, and to fight against drug abuse, all threats to Mexico's own national security, to its own territory and the welfare of its people.

The Mexican government strove to combat production, trafficking and consumption of drugs for three reasons, in the following order of importance: the health of Mexicans, national security, and international cooperation.

The Mexican approach is to wage the war in a long term fashion. This involves prevention geared toward educational, cultural, social, economic and even political causes, combatting the production, trafficking and consumption of drugs, and rehabilitation treatment for drug addicts.

Along these lines the Mexican government has strengthened its structures for fighting drug-trafficking, reforming the law and increasing penalties for those who break it, and augmenting its human, financial and material resources.

In Mexico drug-related crimes are federal offenses. Into the anti-drug fray the federal authorities throw the Judiciary Branch, the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Communications and Transport, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Navy, and the Ministry of the Interior -the equivalent of the State Department in the United States, but without its

foreign relations branch- and the corresponding authorities in the individual states.

The Office of the Attorney General is responsible for pursuing drug offenders through the federal courts, from investigation and police actions to pre-trial proceedings.

The Judiciary Branch plays its part by issuing warrants for arrest for people presumed guilty of committing an offense and later convicting and sentencing them⁸. An array of Mexican legal offices provide the criminal with a legal proceeding that affords him wider protection than the U.S. *habeas corpus*.

The treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health and the National Anti-Addiction Council, headed by the Minister of Health himself.

The armed forces and the Ministries of Defence and the Navy do their bit by seeking out and destroying illegal plantations in Mexican territory, smashing up clandestine laboratories, and breaking up drug-trafficking networks that distribute, sell, and consume drugs (see table).

Local police departments contribute to this atmosphere of brotherly goodwill by collaborating willingly with the Attorney General's office.

It should be pointed out to American officials that in spite of Mexico's critical financial position -not unlike that of other developing countries- during the eighties Mexican spending on the anti-drug war increased consistently. For example, at the Attorney General's

⁸ There is no equivalent in the Mexican legal system for the U.S.-type jury. Sentences are passed by the judges. Neither are practices such as probation or parole available to those accused of anti-social offences against health, such as production, trafficking or consumption of drugs.

office alone, the amount of cash on hand rose from 44 trillion pesos in 1988 to 122 trillion pesos in 1989.

Human resources have been specially trained, and now approximately 25% of the armed forces on active service are kept busy hunting down suspected offenders.

Today a fully operational anti-drug force operates on Mexican territory

using planes, land vehicles and boats, all provided with the necessary logistic support. They reconnoiter and verify, and fumigate illegal plantations or transport military and police personnel.

The heavy sentences imposed on drug offenders were made heavier and punishments spelled out more precisely. The average increase in sentences was 33% for most offenses,

from criminal association, offenses against health and crimes involving the transportation or use of firearms, the smuggling of explosives, to money laundering. Fines were indexed to the minimum wage, inflation, and the higher cost of living in Mexico. People were brought to trial more quickly.

In addition, the Mexican authorities put into effect certain

Laundering money

In our society money is the yardstick by which everything is measured. Money is the unit of social measurement and also the means of exchange; goods and services not being traded for other goods and services, but for money.

Money circulates so freely that it becomes extremely difficult, and at times impossible, to tell whether its origin, the way it is handled, its circulation or destination are legal or illegal.

Preventive measures are practically non-existent, and only when some illegal handling of money is suspected, or there are signs that money is being laundered, are police or other investigators put to work.

However, such clues or suspicions come from indirect sources, from rumors of unannounced transactions, or irregularities scattered through larger financial systems which cannot be accounted for by monetary or exchange regulators. Therefore there cannot be preventive mechanisms based on a single principle that would produce immediate discoveries of money laundering operations.

The most common way of laundering money consists of simply transporting money, shares, or goods physically, either individually or in bulk, through the mail, or by messenger service. Local or international bank transfers to one or several bank accounts gives money launderers access to the money and shares when they arrive at their destination, or allows them to return it to their place of origin disguised as fictitious loans or debt repayment. This way dirty money is converted into clean, a process known as recycling.

The best way to investigate money laundering is to check bank transfers and balance sheets. Investigators look to see whether the math of a company's asset sheets is all in good order, and do the same for individuals, looking at their usual income and any bizarre increases in their assets, etc.

Like most countries, Mexico has not been able to dodge the impact of money laundering. Article 115 bis of the Mexican Federal Fiscal Code does not consider money laundering, in any of its variants, to be an isolated offense, because it is the result of a different and earlier criminal act. The crimes most closely linked to money laundering are, in the following order: drug-trafficking, tax evasion, bank or insurance agency fraud, and corruption by civil servants.

The prevention and punishment of the offenses linked to money laundering are essential in the fight to halt this problem. Hence the importance of doing away with court backlogs which slow the judicial process, and the light handed sentencing which keeps money launderers and their ilk operating with apparent impunity.

In order to fight this anti-social phenomenon and its roots Mexico needs to install stricter controls over its financial, monetary, and exchange activities. With these in place we could expect a greater degree of prevention, detection, and punishment of the panorama of illegalities associated with money laundering.

special operations in the northern and southern border areas to discourage activities linked to drug-trafficking⁹.

At the international level, Mexico's anti-drug policy is self-explanatory. Mexico has repeatedly expressed its conviction that drug-trafficking should be addressed by the collective effort of the international community. Mexico's commitment to the war against drugs is firm and long-standing¹⁰.

Within the bilateral framework, the predominant place goes to the Mexico-U.S. relationship. Mexico-U.S. cooperation occurs mainly between the Attorney General in Mexico and the U.S. Justice Department¹¹.

This cooperation involves both technical assistance, providing equipment -from spare parts for land vehicles to helicopters and planes- and the training required for the war against drug-trafficking -ranging from courses for mechanics to specialized matters involving narcotics and psycho-tropic substances¹².

Mexico also honors agreements with Colombia, Costa

⁹ The war against drugs is also waged in collaboration with the Federal Highway Police, an agency of the Ministry of Communications and Transport.

¹⁰ Among more than 60 multilateral and bilateral agreements there is one for the direct exchange of information on drug-trafficking that has been in force between Mexico and the United States since 1930.

¹¹ There is also another type of collaboration with other participating parties and entities not directly related to the war against international drug trafficking, but which due to their general aim may be considered to be part of it. Such is the case for the agreement on the recovery and restitution of stolen vehicles and planes signed in 1981 and in force since 1983, or the more recent agreement for the exchange of tax information, signed in November 1989 and in force since January 1990.

¹² Courses in epidemiology, for example.



A job well done: 1,150 kilos of cocaine confiscated in Nuevo León and Tamaulipas in 1989.

Rica, Guatemala, Peru, and Venezuela. The signing or implementation of similar bilateral agreements with Belize, Canada, Cuba, Ecuador, Spain, Jamaica and the United Kingdom are imminent¹³. Mexico also participates actively in U.N. drug-fighting organizations.

Overall, Mexico has been truly stalwart in its participation in regional anti-drug efforts.

During United Nations discussions of an agreement on the illegal trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances Mexico managed to slide the following principles into the text of the treaty, the selfsame principles that have always guided Mexico's anti-drug efforts:

¹³ Of the latter -all of which have been signed- the majority have been approved by the Senate and are pending ratification.

1. A comprehensive definition of all aspects of the phenomenon, from production and transit to demand and consumption
2. Respect for the sovereignty, security, public order and legal mechanisms of each state
3. The denunciation of foreign authorities influencing national ones in the carrying-out of tasks which national laws reserve exclusively to the latter
4. The freedom of each state from supervision, certification or punitive measures by any other state

These have always been the principles of the Mexican government, and other governments who wish to deal once and for all with this scourge should keep in mind another more elemental principle: you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.



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Drugs and social complexity: constants of the past and present

Despite the differences inherent in the particular situation of each country, the growing relevance of drug-related problems in the international community has created a universal dilemma regarding the very viability of our civilization.

Within this framework, the degree of deterioration in social conditions which each country has experienced would seem, to a greater or lesser degree, to be both a cause and an effect of the increase in drug abuse. However, in spite of this argument's effectiveness in illustrating the dialectical nature of the problem, there are two additional contributing factors which cannot be ignored.

The first is the recognition of the fact that the human race has used and abused drugs throughout history. In order to assess the current situation objectively previous contexts and

perceptions must be considered carefully.

The second factor is that we must locate the decline of present society within the framework of crises in our political and economic structures. This is a crisis reflected in reduced individual and collective expectations, lower standards of living, and the loss of legitimacy of those institutions which traditionally enjoyed a broad social consensus, the most important of these being the family, the state, and the church.

An examination of history suggests the multiple roles which drugs have played. In the *Manual de las Materias Medicinales* of 1597 we see that regardless of their origin "drugs have the power to heal and relieve pain, but they can be deadlier than a sword." This passage reveals a high degree of awareness of the risks involved in the use of drugs.

In ancient China, Egypt, and Pre-Colombian America, the "magical properties" of opium, hashish, coca,

and peyote had been noted and recorded.

These herbs, and extracts made from them, were believed to provide the means to make contact with the supernatural. Their influence could also be felt in the political, religious, social, and economic spheres. In societies governed by theocratic military structures, communication with the gods was singularly important, not only as worship per se, but also as political strategy.

The healing or analgesic properties attributed to certain plants was also socially functional in the cycles of sickness and health. Coca, which was used exclusively by indigenous communities until the seventeenth century, is a typical example of the role played by drugs in the economy¹.

The use of the coca leaf was also accepted because of its power to

¹ See Antonio Escobedo, *Historia de las Drogas*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1989, 2 vols.

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Rodolfo Valterra/Cuartaescena

A youthful victim of an ancient problem.

enable people to withstand the rigors of daily work. The people of the Andes, whose geographical realities made it particularly hard for them to perform difficult physical tasks, benefitted enormously from a substance which, whilst alleviating the fatigue of its peasants and warriors and easing the population's suffering in times of scarcity, at the same time helped them survive.

One phenomenon, many facets

The increased use of opium throughout Europe, where reports dating from the

earliest times indicate it originated in the Middle East, had numerous consequences.

One of the most important was the massive introduction of opium into China at the beginning of the seventeenth century. A tool of Western colonialism, the narcotic flood altered the tradition of moderation regarding the use of opium which the Chinese had cultivated for centuries.

The Chinese had previously used opium for medicinal and culinary purposes. However, the events which led up to the so-called Opium Wars in

the nineteenth century illustrate the economic, geopolitical, and social factors which contributed to a new opium myth. Concrete financial interests were served by the artificial creation of a need for opium.

Since opium was already used for bartering in China, the Europeans were able to take advantage of the fact that it could be easily transported by sea and introduced on a large scale in exchange for tea, silk and spices, all for a considerable profit.

Oppression, coupled with growing discontent with the ruling classes, led to a rapid increase in the number of opium smokers in China, further inflated because the use of tobacco was prohibited.

The opium laws, which first prohibited the import of opium and eventually made both its cultivation and use illegal, appeared to have moral foundations, but were in fact based primarily on economic considerations.

The Western hunger for precious metals threatened the fragile Chinese economy based on spice trading. Opium was prohibited primarily as a protectionist measure.

However, as is often the case with economic policies, the measure was counterproductive. Popular discontent grew to such an extent that opium smoking became a symbol of resistance in the face of Manchurian tyranny. The creation of a black market made even higher profits for the Europeans, who had plenty of experience in handling smuggled goods. The Chinese regime was weakened by the sudden increase in corruption and illegal trading.

The surrender of the Chinese in the face of the expansionist British capitalists following a ceasefire and the signing of a treaty in 1842 signalled the end of this chapter of the Opium Wars.

As compensation for the large quantities of British-owned opium which had been destroyed, and the "rigid Chinese commercial policies," England was awarded Hong Kong and

Amoy. Several years later opium imports in that area were once again legalized, and Europeans obtained sailing rights along the Yangtse river and freedom of movement for Christian missionaries.

Liberals and conservatives

The case of opium in China has been described in some detail in order to remind ourselves of the degree of caution with which it is necessary to begin dealing with the problem of drugs in this century.

As the direct descendants of liberal ideas and laissez-faire policies, our societies are at present in the midst of a crisis in which conservative clichés, while offering no alternatives, faithfully indicate the high level of irritation.

There is a myriad of different viewpoints not only on the social significance of drugs, their use and consequences, but also on their legalization or prohibition.

When the advantages of industrial society are called into question by the numerous signs of deterioration, the most reactionary minds tend to associate drug use with moral degradation and absence of values, which they then attribute to an increasingly lay society.

To solve the problem conservatives have suggested strengthening military and police forces in order to catch drug traffickers and protect civilians from the violence ascribed to drug addicts. They advocate collective testing to detect the use of illegal drugs in both education and the workplace.

Like their conservative counterparts, the liberal position is located within the broad range of abstractions contained by the notion of freedom.

The most radical advocate the total legalization of drugs, whilst at the same time insisting that society renew its commitment to instil a sense of self-control in its members as an integral part of responsible freedom.

Using detailed analyses to support their arguments, they contend that anti-drug laws prevent the individual from adopting a critical, objective stance towards the problem, and a vicious circle is born. Given that it is unrealistic to suppose that the use of drugs could ever be totally eliminated, a more pragmatic approach might be to allow drugs to circulate in a self-regulating market.

From another point of view, liberals defend the community's prerogative to define and adopt ad-hoc

policies according to their particular circumstances in order to solve the problem. By objecting to any kind of coercive measures, they also protect the rights of the individual.

The basic tenets of this ideology brings to mind Thomas Jefferson, who in his *Notes on Virginia* (1784-1785) argues that freedom of individual thought and conscience is a natural and inviolable right. Therefore, the use or abuse of drugs is an entirely personal decision which should only be punished if it harms others.



It's just too easy for him to get hold of...



One addiction can have two victims.

Nevertheless, one question remains unanswered. If we accept Jefferson's argument in relation to an adult's capability for discernment, how is the problem of addiction in minors to be dealt with?

A concrete example in Mexico: the use of inhalants

Whilst the following is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis, it does aim to highlight aspects of the problem which have transcended national boundaries.

The population explosion, together with the ever-increasing concentration of the population in urban centers, continues to challenge developing countries.

In these circumstances fewer opportunities leads to marked social inequality, the effects of which are most acutely felt among the poorer sectors of society.

In an environment where depression, violence, insecurity, and hunger reign, inhaling chemical solvents provides both children and young people with an accessible means

of avoiding reality and experiencing a vital feeling of belonging to a group, in this case often their gang.

Such addiction, and the serious physical effects caused by consuming poisonous substances, threatens to increase as the social, industrial and domestic use of solvents makes them both cheaper and more available, and the economic crisis increases the level of insecurity and hopelessness in society.

Even though the last National Survey on Addiction in Mexico, made three years ago by the *Dirección General de Epidemiología* (Department of Epidemiology) and the *Instituto Mexicano de Psiquiatría* (Mexican Institute of Psychiatry), mentions marijuana as the most commonly used drug in the country and states that only 5% of the total population has used drugs at some time, available information on inhalants reveals an urgent need to implement measures aimed not only at preventing but also at halting the spread of their use because most of the victims are children.

The studies indicate that children start using these chemical substances between the ages of eight and fifteen and that, in spite of existing regulations prohibiting their sale to children under eighteen, solvents can be obtained through friends or acquaintances who acquire them directly or indirectly.

Users come from broken homes and tend to have had limited schooling. Only 29.4% are employed for the whole year. Among the users, 33.3% have more than ten children and 58.4% of these parent users are over forty years old. It has also been demonstrated that solvent abuse in the child often coincides with the parents' addiction to alcohol or other drugs.

The problem is aggravated in Mexico by the fact that solvent use has a strong correlation with juvenile criminal activity.

Given the delicate nature of the situation, in addition to providing information about the risks of addiction through educational campaigns and having institutions encourage voluntary rehabilitation, all Mexicans should commit themselves to the goal of social justice.

In a world which is governed by consumer choice, the poverty in which these child solvent-users live should make us realize the real source of the problem.

If we could go one step further, we might even question the nature of the social pathology in which we ourselves are immersed. The widespread use of all kinds of medicines would seem to signal the entrenchment of an established order under the permanent influence of legal drugs.

What are our priorities? To answer the universal need to soften the impact of reality, and to do it safely, or the economic power wielded by chemical and pharmaceutical companies? ❧

Puebla, history and sights



Without doubt, Puebla is Mexico's best-preserved colonial city. Built on a plain, the three great volcanoes - Pico de Orizaba, Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl as well as the smaller La Malinche volcano - are visible from every direction as you approach the city.

Its brick, mortar, and tile buildings give Puebla a special polychromy, enriched by its numerous churches with walls and vaults covered with golden plasterwork decoration. The beauty of its houses and streets makes Puebla a feast of light and color. Puebla's illustrious past is reflected in the present day character of this distinguished city.

Historical notes

The city of Puebla de los Angeles was founded in 1531 on a spot known as Cuetlaxcoapa, which in Náhuatl means "snake river." It was the first city built as part of a plan prepared by the Spanish Crown which chose a strategic spot from which the important indigenous cities of Tlaxcala, Cholula, Huejotzingo, and Tepeaca could be controlled.

In 1862 the French Army, led by General Lorencez, attacked Forts Loreto and Guadalupe at Puebla. The French were badly beaten by the forces of General Ignacio Zaragoza, who died shortly thereafter. For this reason,



Michael Calderwood/Editorial Jiguero

The city of Puebla de los Angeles.

President Juárez ordered Puebla to adopt the name of its defender. On March 16th, 1863, the French General Forey laid siege to the city; the forces of General Jesús González Ortega fiercely defended the town, fighting from house to house, but they were finally forced to surrender for lack of supplies and ammunition. On the 20th of May, one year and 15 days after the first attack, the forces of General Forey occupied Puebla.

The city

Though the *Plaza Principal* is not among the largest squares in Mexico, it is one of the most distinguished. From the higher areas of the city, the tall, well-proportioned towers of the cathedral are prominent. This is the most slender of the Herreran-style churches erected in New Spain. It was begun in 1575 and finished during the time of Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza.

The Palafoxian Library in the Bibliographic Museum occupies a splendid hall. Its walls are covered



Baroque salon at the Autonomous University of Puebla.

Antonio Mercado/Editorial Jilguero

by wooden book shelves with baroque decoration carved by order of Bishop Francisco Fabián. In 1773 the bishop selected this hall in the Tridentine School for the seat of the library donated by the Bishop of Puebla and

former Viceroy of New Spain, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza. In the initial donation there were 5,000 volumes. The library later reached 40,000, making it the most important in Latin America on theology, philosophy, holy scriptures, Christian doctrine and languages such as Latin, Greek, Sanscrit, Hebrew, and Chaldean.

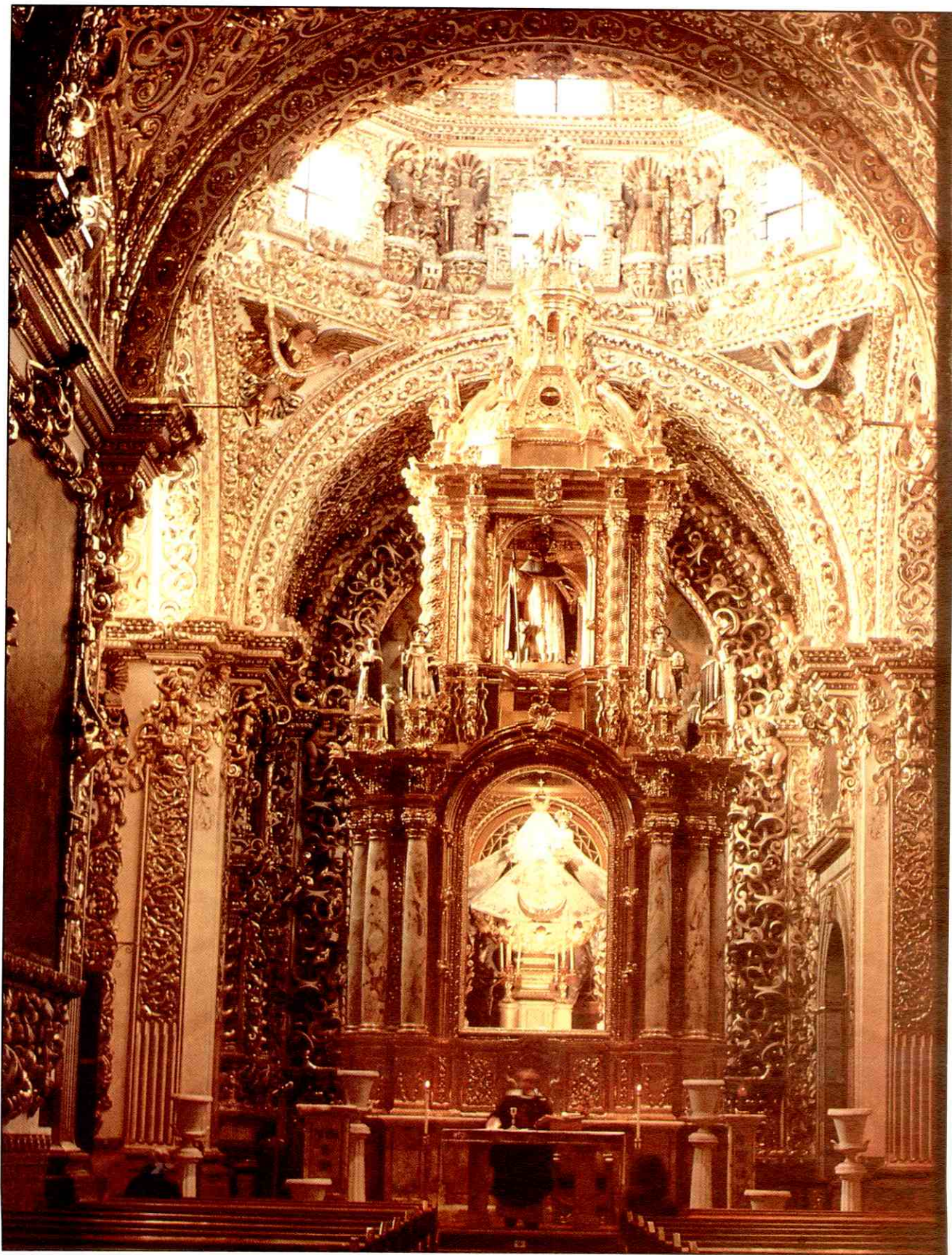
Since its opening for public worship on the 16th of April, 1690, the Rosary Chapel has been called the Eighth Wonder of the World because of its ornate and colorful plasterwork. From the entrance it resembles a grotto, due to the quantity of decorations on the ceilings and walls. Amidst the foliage, there are animals, angels, children, saints and the young martyrs accompanying the Virgin who is sheltered by the canopy on the high altar.

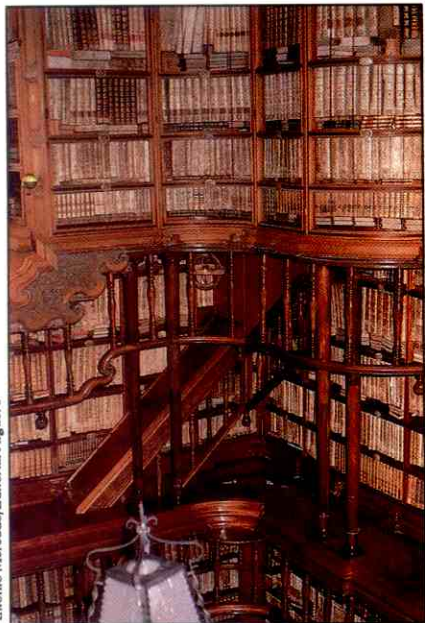
In the Puebla Popular Art Museum in the Convent of Saint Rose can be found the most beautiful Mexican colonial kitchen. The beguine convent -for devout women who did not take the vows- was



The colonial kitchen at the Convent of Saint Rose.

Antonio Mercado/Editorial Jilguero





Antonio Mercado/Editorial Jilguero

The Palafox y Mendoza library.



Michael Calderwood/Editorial Jilguero

Santo Domingo, Puebla.



Antonio Mercado/Editorial Jilguero

The colonial panorama of Puebla.



The Puebla Cathedral.



Michael Calderwood/Editorial Jilguero

page 27: The Rosary Chapel, Puebla, the eighth wonder of the world.

Karl Müller/Editorial Jilguero

The city of Morelia declared a world heritage site



Morelia, capital of the state of Michoacán, has been declared part of the World Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

There are now nine Mexican sites with this title: 1) Chichen Itzá, 2) Guanajuato, 3) The Historic Center of Mexico City and Xochimilco, 4) The Historic Center of Oaxaca and Monte Albán, 5) The Historic Center of Puebla, 6) Palenque, 7) Teotihuacán, 8) The ecological reserve of Sian Ka'an, Quintana Roo, and once again, 9) the latest addition, Morelia.

founded in 1740 but in time it became a full-fledged convent. It retains its 18th century patio, covered with bricks and tiles.

Behind an austere facade, a fine museum of colonial painting, mainly by Puebla artists, has been set up in the Santa Mónica Convent. This convent was founded by Bishop Fernández Cruz in 1682 for Augustinian cloistered nuns, who were secularized in 1934. The museum was founded with the

unclaimed objects from the convent. On the second floor of this museum the heart of the founding bishop, donated to the convent by the deceased, is exhibited.

The excellent design of the Saint Francis Church attests to the mastery of the Pueblan ceramists in the 18th century. The side portal of this church dates back to the 16th century and is presumed to be the oldest in the city.



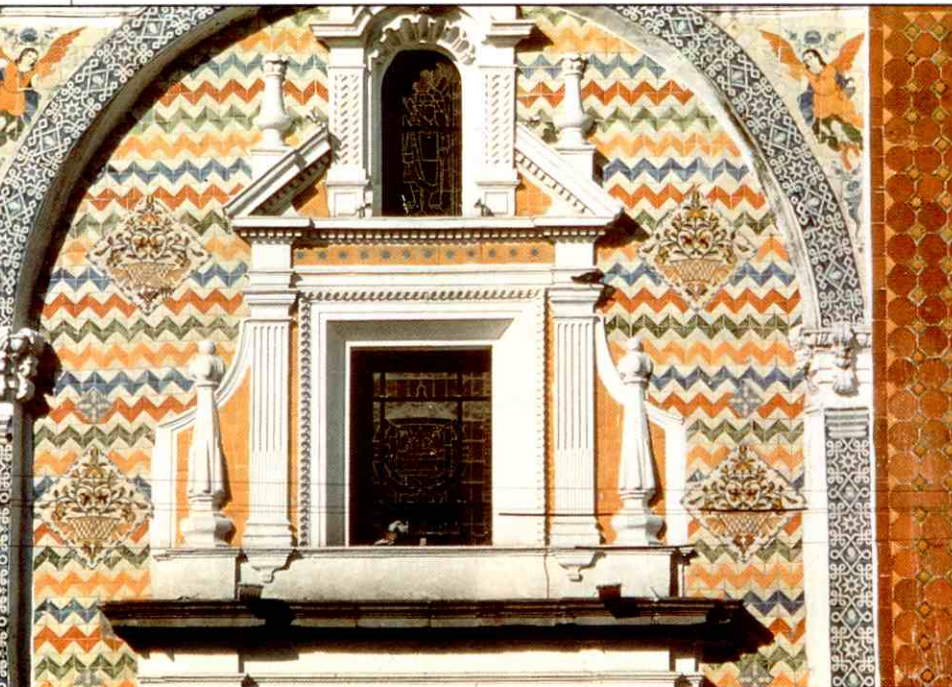
Detail of the Rosary Chapel.

Antonio Mercadof/Editorial Jilguero

Tradition has it that the *Teatro Principal* was the first to be built in mainland America in a horseshoe shape, like that of the Spanish Corral de la Pacheca. On the upper part of the facade the coat of arms of Castille and León have been carved in stone.

The Museum of the Mexican Revolution is located in the Serdán brothers' house. The museum is an interesting reconstruction of a turn of the century Puebla house. The Revolution of 1910 began here on November 8th when a conspiracy was discovered and the house was assaulted by the Federal Army. Two Serdán brothers, Aquiles and Máximo, were killed while their sister, Carmen, was saved. The museum displays photographs of leaders and battles of the Revolution. All that remains of the original structure and furniture are the mirror full of bullet holes and the room in which Aquiles was shot.

Source: Michelin Travel Publications
Banamex Tourist Guide
Mexico



La Villita, Puebla.

Michael Calderwood/Editorial Jilguero

The birth of Mexico

Andrés Henestrosa*

Where did the founders of *Tenochtitlan* come from? Over what hills and dales did they wander and for how long before building their amazing city? After many centuries we still don't know. Fables and myths prevail over history. But a cherished lie that survives long enough ends up being considered true. Thus the mythology of *Tenochtitlan* has become its history,

and the one is as beautiful as the other.

They came, so the story says, from *Aztlán*, the land of herons. But where is that, exactly? A thousand or ten thousand kilometers from the spot the numens chose for the people of Tenoch, their leader? How long had they been wandering? A hundred, two hundred years? No one can know. The only certainty is that they arrived. They never lost their direction. They

never gave up. And if sometimes they hesitated, despaired of the way they were taking, a small bird told them in its own language: *Tihuí, tihuí*, which they interpreted as meaning: *ahead, ahead*. That's how old the idea and the desire for progress and reform is in the Mexican people.

Everything appears mysterious, providential, and marvelous in this story, fable, legend, myth. One says

* Writer, essayist, journalist.



They came from *Aztlán*.





A lake, in the lake a rock, a prickly pear,
and an eagle devouring a snake.

Tenochtitlan, and one immediately sees a people, a world that is more like a vision, a fantasy or illusion, a confusion of all the senses.

The first thing that one asks is why the tribe, the people, chose a land that was as clearly barren and alien to life as the place in which they settled and made their capital.

Cornelio de Paw even threw this in our faces –to have chosen such a site for our dwelling place. How could we have raised a city on the mud and the water, among insects and reptiles. Only to beings who merely appeared to be human could such an absurdity have occurred. A lake, in the lake a rock, on the rock a prickly pear cactus, on the prickly pear an eagle devouring a snake. This is what their gods had said, this was to be the site for *Tenochtitlan*. And until they found this, they were to keep on wandering.

Only people unlike any previously known could have pulled off such an exploit, such an enormous undertaking.

The eagle represents flight, wings, the open sky; the snake represents the earth, the immediate concrete reality they had to overcome. And the eternally alternating concepts of heaven and earth led the Mexica nation to create a striking culture which is still not completely explained or understood. There are still veils hiding the Mexico that we unceasingly seek but do not find.

Not ages ago. Here and now. Did they find here a very small plant which they took home and cherished, lavishing attention on it until it became the corn plant, the grain that was their staff of life and still is? Corn was what the builders of *Tenochtitlan* ate: white corn and yellow corn: so says the *Popol Vuh*.

A mystery. A mythology. That is the history of *Tenochtitlan*, which in time became the capital city of the Valley of Anáhuac 🍷

Earthquakes in the Valley of Mexico¹

Cinna Lomnitz *

The first explicit references to earthquakes in Mexican literature are in the Chalco-Amecameca chronicle of 1475, half a century after the founding of Tenochtitlan. One can calculate the dates of earthquakes prior to 1475 using the pictographic codexes. The glyph "Ollin" (movement) appears beside an Indian date, and this is then correlated with the European calendar.

From colonial days until the National Seismological Service was founded in 1910 one can find more than a thousand references to earthquakes, mostly in Mexico City. This is quite interesting for seismologists, since on the basis of this data the peculiar features that distinguish earthquakes in the Valley of Mexico, and make them unique in the world, can be plotted out. In this article I shall examine what these peculiarities are, their causes, and how they may help us to figure out how best to protect ourselves from their devastating effects.

On the 4th of April 1768 there was a catastrophic earthquake in Mexico City. We have the descriptions of two

different scientists, José Antonio de Alzate (1737-1799) and Joaquín Velázquez de León (1732-1786). Their versions are more or less the same, though Alzate's claim that the earthquake "lasted more than seven minutes" has traditionally been looked on sceptically by seismologists. In other parts of the world a tremor lasting twenty seconds is a "long" one.

This was typically colonial and Spanish exaggeration it was said, with varying degrees of credibility, of all the

pre-modern tremors in the Valley of Mexico. Then came the earthquake of the 19th of September 1985, which lasted five minutes. It was reliably measured by a seismological device located in the center of Mexico City. Never before had such a long tremor been recorded by such an instrument, in Mexico or anywhere else. Needless to say, the colonial descriptions of earthquakes suddenly became a good deal more credible. Let's look at the earthquake of 1768, described by Joaquín Velázquez de León.

The largest and strongest earthquake this century was that in Mexico City in 1768, on the 4th of April, the second day of Easter, at 6:47 in the morning. It started, as usual, with a vibratory movement from below that lasted a very short time, although it was very strong. Buildings took nearly six minutes to recover their equilibrium, while all that time there were oscillations from the southeast to the northwest, similar to those in 1754. I was able to observe the duration of this earthquake because I had a

The 19th of September 1985 is an unforgettable date for the residents of Mexico City; a date made unforgettable by tragedy. Thousands of people were trapped in their houses and offices, and all 18 million Mexico City-dwellers were entirely cut off from the rest of the world. When we recall these sensations we realize that the wound is still open, and that perhaps it will never heal completely. But with warning another such disaster could be prevented

¹ Synopsis of the article published in *Nexos* No. 165, September 1991.

* Researcher at the Institute of Geophysics, UNAM.



Pedro Valherna/Cuartoscuro

Victims of the lake-bed, September 19th, 1985.

pendulum clock that I was able to compare with the watch I had in my pocket which always keeps good time. When the earthquake started the pendulum clock stopped, as almost always happens. The watch continued working, and seeing the very minute when the movement of the earth stopped, I checked this with the time when the other clock had stopped. The difference between them showed me the exact duration of the earthquake.

Very simple. All scientific observations have this deceptive simplicity, but it was the modernity of de León's evidence that amazed intellectual circles of New Spain, and reliably hints at the destruction our city has borne many times since its foundation.

Aztec error?

Only one man has dared to question the wisdom of the eagle who chose the site for *Tenochtitlan*. He was an eccentric engineer named Enrico Martínez, originally Heinz Martin, and was born in Germany. He was sent by the Emperor Charles V to the Indies to design the drainage canal for Mexico City.

The works of this misunderstood man, who was passionately fond of Mexico, warn as early as 1606 of the city's bad location, and suggest that it be moved toward the higher ground, reserving the flat land for gardens, orchards, flower plantations, and reserves for water birds – what we would now call an ecological reserve. Enrico Martínez' ideas, unfortunately far ahead of their time, can now guide our plans for the future of Mexico City.

The long duration of earthquakes in Mexico City is a local trait. They are felt on the flatlands, that is to say in the areas formerly covered by the great lagoon of the Valley of Mexico. On the

higher ground just a few blocks away earthquakes are felt very differently. In the 1985 earthquake 371 modern buildings fell, all of them over seven stories tall, and all on the former lake-bed.

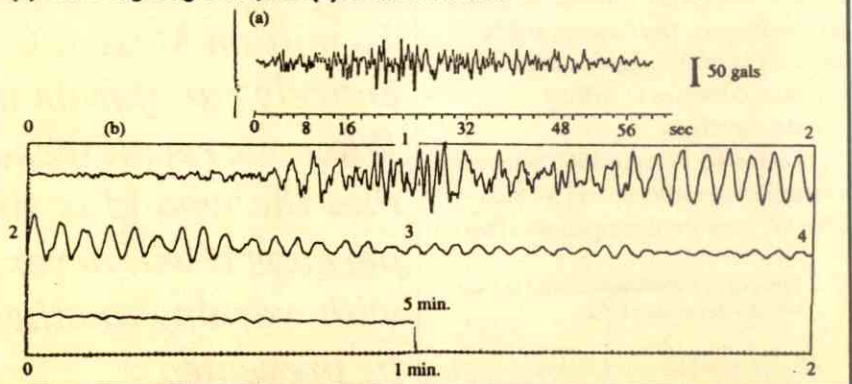
Describing the 1768 earthquake, Alzate mentions in a footnote (the main body of his text is given over to stuffy philosophical reflection, totally neglecting scientific observation) that "in general, the modern buildings seem to have been more damaged than the older ones. It is not difficult to see why, but I reserve the explanation for another time, in which it will find its rightful place."

There was no such "rightful" occasion, and Alzate lost his opportunity to make an original contribution to the study of earthquakes, contributing instead to the ignorance which produced the catastrophe of 1985.

Two hundred years have passed since the time of Velázquez de León and Alzate, and we are still as ignorant as ever about what makes tremors in the Valley of Mexico so different and destructive. Why do they last longer in the center of the city than on the higher land? Why do modern buildings fall when the towers of 300 year-old churches remain standing?

The mystery thickens as one knows more about seismology and seismic engineering. Mexico is, without a doubt, the leader in both fields, but this leadership means we understand more

The effects of the 1985 earthquake measured (a) on the higher ground, and (b) on the lake bed.



about tremors in California or Japan than about those that periodically leave our own city in ruins.

Nearly 400 buildings designed and built by our best engineers fell in 1985, burying under them more than 10,000 men, women and children.

The fact that buildings in the center of the city fell is not difficult to interpret. If they fell, it was not because of errors in their construction because identical buildings located on higher ground outside the old lake-bed did not fall. Neither was it bad technology, as only modern buildings designed and built according to the latest and not so latest U.S. fashions toppled over.

Was it then because of special conditions that are not present in other regions of the world? Dr. Suh, spokesman of the National Science Foundation of the United States, after informing Congress in Washington of

the scope of the disaster in Mexico said he was alarmed by the "total similarity" between building and design methods in the two countries. The destruction of buildings in Mexico City was unacceptable, he said, and revealed a possible knowledge gap.

In vigorous agreement the National Science Foundation earmarked 4 million dollars to investigate the cause and effects of our earthquake. With the slogan "Learn from Mexico's earthquake" it published a blizzard of brochures in English and Spanish. Yet the 4 million dollars disappeared in the twinkling of an eye, given to the same American engineers whose designs continue to be used as guidelines for building in our country.

Could it be possible that so many scholars and distinguished engineers are unaware of the singularity of the earthquakes of Mexico City? I looked over my notes from my studies of destructive tremors in California, Peru, Chile, Ecuador and Brazil. Of all the earthquake-prone areas of the world, Mexico is the only place where a city is built on an old lake-bed. I started to look for other earthquakes in lake-beds and I found one in the Japanese village of Ogata, on a lagoon near to the city of Niigate. The same long, slow and harmonious waves, the same long duration as in Mexico.

The subsoil of the Mexican lagoon is a dark-colored mud with a high content of organic material: remains of aquatic plants and water snails, carbonates from micro-organisms and live bacteria, all living together to a depth of several meters. The entire "soft stratum", as the engineers call it, is some 20-30 meters deep. Underneath starts the "hard stratum": white rock, lava, and volcanic ash down to sea level. It is the limestone rock base that tells us the region was once covered by the same shallow sea that covered the State of Morelos.

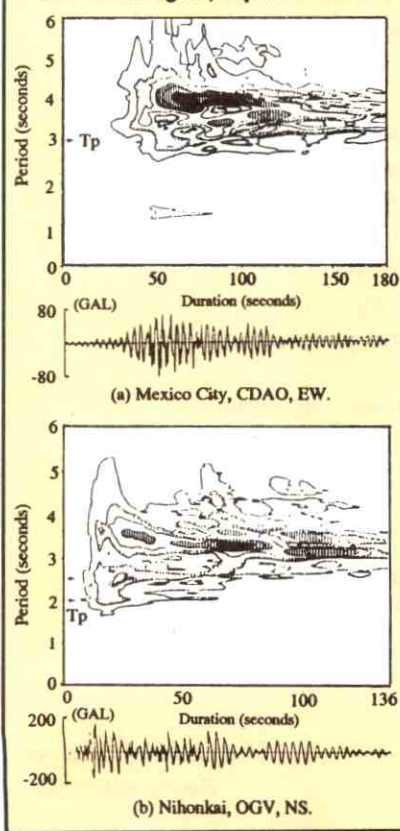
Some geologists contend that the Valley of Mexico formerly drained off toward the south, through the region between Cuernavaca and Tepoztlán, and that volcanic movement raised the *Sierra del Chichinautzin* or *del Ajusco* which closed in the waters of the valley and formed the old lake. Little geological work has been done in the region to prove whether this be true or not. What is sure is that the soft stratum that forms the surface of the Valley of Mexico is the legacy of the lagoon: the soft-stratum is almost 90% water. It appears to be solid, it supports thousands of buildings, but it is, technically speaking, water.

Some Mexican engineers, such as the brilliant Leonardo Zeevaert, had the intuition and the daring to construct buildings that floated on the mud. The Latin American Tower was built with extremely deep foundations, taking care to pump the water from the open trench into the surrounding areas so as not to dry them out and upset their balance. This building, and others with deep foundations, survived the great earthquakes of 1957 and 1985, while other high buildings with little depth were damaged or fell.

The Tlatelolco Project, the pride of Mexico in its day, was designed and built by the best seismic engineers in the country. It has 57 buildings of four to five storeys, none of which suffered any considerable damage. The Tlatelolco project is low-income, and, not needing parking space, has relatively shallow foundations: slightly under three meters. More elaborate higher income buildings were more heavily damaged, and one, the Nuevo León Building, crashed to the ground with a loss of 500 lives.

And what about the colonial buildings? No colonial building fell, all of them are on the old lake-bed and none of them have underground parking. To make sense of this muddle

Comparison of the 1985 earthquake and a tremor measured on the lake bed at Ogata, Japan.



we need only look to the action of time, which makes these buildings sink down into the mud until they find a position of natural equilibrium in the soil which then supports them.

Remember Alzatés' observation: "In general the modern buildings seem to have been more damaged than the older ones. It is not difficult to see why..." The reason is precisely that the modern buildings had not had time to sink down into the muck.

The higher the building, the deeper it sinks. The Church of the Santísima is informative because recent excavations have allowed us to study its foundations. In 1755 this church was rebuilt by the architect Lorenzo Rodríguez, master builder of the city of Mexico, the Cathedral, the Royal Palace, and the architect of the Sagrario chapel. Aware of the sinking, Rodríguez placed a high narrow door in the middle of his baroque facade saying: "As it will certainly sink, it will eventually find its right proportions." By the time of the 1985 earthquake the building had sunk more than six meters and the proportions of the door no longer provoked comment. The church did not suffer any considerable damage during the earthquake.

Over the waves

When recommending that architects and builders make deeper foundations in proportion to the height of the building we do no more than follow the recommendation of our northern neighbors: learn from the earthquake. Sadly, they have not followed their own recommendation. The serious damage suffered by reinforced concrete buildings in soft soils in the San Francisco Bay area in the small earthquake of 1989 clearly shows that this lesson has to be absorbed by American engineers as well.

What did the earthquake show us? 1) That we have to let buildings sink into the mud until they find some sort of equilibrium. Moreover to aid this process we have to build balanced

buildings. 2) We have to take into account the movement generated by the lagoon.

By this, I mean that the ground waves that damaged or destroyed buildings in Mexico City are not exactly what engineers expected. The unexpected five minute duration is one example. These mud vibrations are different from the seismic movement observed on the higher ground or in the rocky, sandy areas of the coast. Technically speaking, they are

superficial prograde oscillations of short length. In a nutshell, they are waves.

Our hypothetical engineer, hearing the word "waves" will become quite ruffled and possibly say something indiscreet. But why? We aren't on the ocean and there ought not to be waves on dry land, says our engineer. Indeed, we are not on the sea. We are on a lake. I too am an engineer, and proud of it, and I promise not to say anything I can't

Ode to the Brave

*An earthquake prowls around Mexico City.
After its passage, there remains only cracked earth.
The work of man over years and years of effort,
Becomes phantasmagoric in moments.
Nature, on behalf of the environment,
Took its revenge on man.
It showed him that although he might plant
Myriad-shaped figures of concrete in her womb,
She, protesting this pitiful and mortal violation,
Is supported by the Gods to abort these ill-conceived monsters.
As nature revealed itself to man,
Man himself showed what he was.
Although some allowed their pettiness to overwhelm them,
Most sought to help, most joined together.
Support and aid from different races flowed together.
They were moments when the beautiful,
The rich, and the intellectual were not seen.
Now it was the strong that showed forth,
Not the tough guys, but those with strong character...
The brave.
The people of the capital, always restless and hurried,
Stopped and looked about them.
After regaining their breath
They saw a city that looked bombed.
They did not wait to be called.
They went out into the streets to offer their help.
To those who showed their solidarity
We pay this tribute of respect,
Because this is an ode to the brave.*

Marybel Toro Gayol
September 1985



Pedro Valter/Cuartoscuro

A colossal, collective effort.

prove. The large earthquakes produce, in lakes, a characteristic wave-like movement lasting several minutes. These are waves of some 20 meters long, with small overlapping waves which make this waving movement look curly. The waves may be from a few centimeters to a meter high, and move slowly (at about 30 kilometers and hour) away from the epicenter. Striking the banks of the lake they are reflected, amplified, and sometimes form a shoal.

What is typical about these waves is that they are superficial, that is, they affect only the surface. The bottom of the lake remains absolutely calm. The movement of the water particles is prograde, which means that the surface bends in the same direction as the wave as it passes. This produces the same sensation of loss of balance that one experiences when trying to stand up in a boat moving with the waves. There is a combination of two effects: the lateral movement of the boat and its simultaneous rotation around a horizontal axis as it crests and falls down each wave.

Why mention all this? To explain why high buildings with shallow foundations fall. The ordinary seismic waves observed on solid land are retrograde: the surface bends away from the direction of the wave. This actually helps to balance the building. Therefore engineers tend to ignore this kind of movement, called Rayleigh waves. But if a wave is prograde, not a Rayleigh wave, its movement does just the opposite: it destabilizes the structure.

How important is this effect? We still do not know. We don't have the instruments to distinguish between a retrograde wave and a Rayleigh wave. With amazing smugness engineers have proceeded with their calculations and procedures without bothering to develop equipment capable of recording the translation movement.


Because the rotation of the ground in earthquakes is not measurable we can't know wave longitudes. We assume that it is a very long wave, several kilometers long, and that therefore it will not seriously affect relatively small structures. But

what if the waves are 20 meters long, like those we see in lakes?

Twenty meters is the typical width of the buildings that fell in the 1985 earthquake. Twenty meters is, give or take a bit, the space between the columns of the Nimitz Viaduct that fell in the recent San Francisco earthquake, killing several motorists. Twenty meters is, in fact, a wave longitude that makes trouble for engineers.

The critical wave longitude for any structure is the length and width of the structure itself. In the case of the Valley of Mexico, four factors combine to destroy buildings over six storeys high: resonance when the height of the building makes it sway in time with the seismic waves; resonance when the width of the building makes it move in step with the wave; the rotation of the ground which make the higher floors of a building swoop in synch with the lateral movement; and amplification due to soft soil.

With short waves (some 20 meters), the depth they affect is very shallow, some 5 meters down below the surface one feels nothing. Water and sewage pipes are only affected if they are less than 5 meters below the surface, and Metro lines remain untouched. Likewise, buildings with more than 5 meters of foundation are much more stable and move less during an earthquake.

We now believe we know why buildings fall in the Valley of Mexico. It remains to be learned why there are waves on solid ground. The reply is perhaps simpler than we imagine: we are not on solid ground. The Valley of Mexico was a lake and, as far as earthquakes are concerned, it continues to be. The tremor does not realize that the lake has been drained and that there are now buildings instead of trees, and people instead of wild ducks. For the earthquake, the mud ought to behave like what it looks like: practically water. 

The two faces of free trade

*Victor M. Bernal Sahagún**

Unlike subjects fundamental for society basically involving value judgments or merely ideological, political, ethical, or philosophical positions, economic thought cannot simply "express an opinion." Even understanding the mechanisms behind economic processes, and especially their effects on the different groups and classes of society, is a complex task.

Income distribution, the pace and direction of accumulation, and flows of capital are topics which –without denying the individual's right to information and the participation of all of society in matters that concern national welfare– have to be dealt with by specialists. They cannot and must not be left in the hands of pseudo-communication experts, or makeshift "economists" who just obey orders or, at best, work from subjective frameworks in which their scanty and questionable knowledge and understanding are the guiding intellectual lights. These "economists" tend to manipulate or distort public opinion. This has been the case with the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Canada, Mexico, and the United States, which apparently will be signed, come what may, now that the fast track has been approved by the U.S. Congress on the 24th of May, 1991.

The FTA and the changing world

At the present time the discussion has already gone beyond whether or not we should sign the FTA and the tedious "fast track" or "slow track" debate which gave the Bush and

Salinas administrations such a headache. In any case, those opposing the treaty, either in the United States, Canada, or Mexico, have neither the means nor the clout to prevent it, and they probably won't acquire either of these in the short or medium run. It is hard to admit, but this is the case.

In these circumstances, the first thing to do is to accept the fact that we live in a different country not only from that of five or ten years ago, but different even from that of a few months ago.

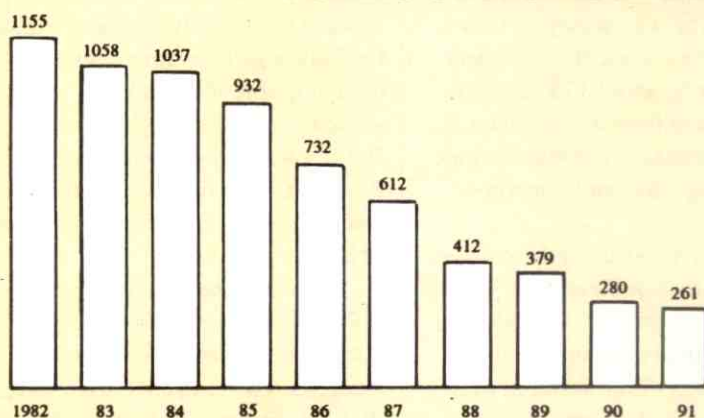
With all its obvious limitations and contradictions, the renegotiation

of the external debt laid the groundwork –as part of a general neo-liberal strategy– for regaining access to foreign loans which, even though the people responsible for the nation's financial system complain are given in dribs and drabs, have provided support for the production system, especially in concrete projects for strengthening and expanding the infrastructure and, to a lesser extent, in the oil industry and some formerly state-owned services.

Likewise, the policy of paring down the state through widespread and far-reaching processes of

TOTAL NUMBER

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANIES



Note: 1991 to March.

Privatization and liquidation of state-controlled enterprises that were considered non-strategic for the government, or that were grossly inefficient, has been an integral part of Mexico's structural reform. From an all time high of 1,115 state-controlled entities in 1982, the number was slashed to 280 by 1990.

Source: MEXICO: AN ECONOMY ON THE MOVE
Department of Economic Studies
BANAMEX (Banco Nacional de México).

* Researcher at the Institute for Economic Research, UNAM.

The challenges of changing economic patterns, neo-liberalism, the role of privatization, foreign capital, free enterprise and government pose hard questions about the shape of the future Mexico and the state of Mexican sovereignty.

reprivatization, both of existing industries -telecommunications, mining, foundries, the financial system- and of opening up areas formerly reserved for the state or for Mexican citizens to direct investment by national or foreign private capital -such as in construction of highways, railroad services, federal transport, education, customs, and general services, to name a few- has aroused enormous interest and support from Mexican big business and from foreign investors. In spite of this, foreign investors -particularly the Japanese- are demanding greater

concessions and changes in the laws on how and where transnational capital can operate.

This is the direction in which the most powerful national forces are going, those that expect the greatest benefits from the FTA such as the financial, commercial and industrial groups, the mass media, and those holding key posts in the Mexican political system. They see the FTA as an opportunity to retain or improve their present influential position.

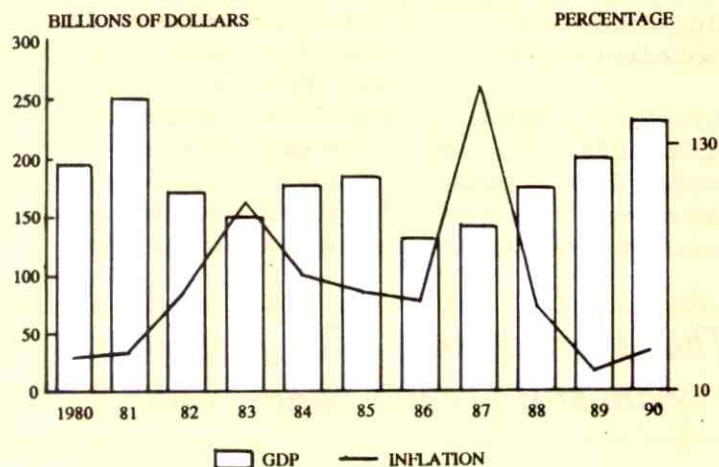
The developments initiated in 1982, and accelerated under the present administration, have on the

one hand been heading toward laying the groundwork for an improved Mexican image in international forums, mainly the financial organizations and the governments and investors of the highly industrialized countries -hegemonic blocs or markets- and on the other hand, in the domestic sphere, toward consolidating and legitimizing established authorities and powers, even while making up for what has been lost by the classes and groups that have been hard-hit by a crisis dating back to the late seventies.

It is clear that the FTA and the opening up of the country in all aspects have become the linchpins of the strategy for inserting Mexico into the concert of nations, the stated intention being to make Mexico part of the so-called First World.

This was manifest in point No. 25 of Mexico's 1991 *Letter of Intention to the IMF*: "The Mexican government maintains its commitment to consolidate the progress made in relation to the liberalization of trade. In 1991 it will continue to protect national producers from unfair practices abroad, but it will avoid introducing unjustified trade barriers. The opening up of the economy will be consolidated by the negotiation of a free trade agreement with the United States and Canada. It is expected that formal negotiations will start in mid-year although informal discussions have already been started and are progressing satisfactorily. In these negotiations Mexico will seek to bring down the existing tariffs and do away with non-tariff barriers.

TOWARDS STABLE GROWTH



Inflation has been reduced to about 25% per year, while economic expansion has resumed at an annual rate of nearly 3.9% in 1990, the fourth consecutive year of expansion. Productivity and real wages in the industrial sector are growing, and, most importantly, Mexican manufactured goods have a larger presence in international markets.

Source: MEXICO: AN ECONOMY ON THE MOVE
Department of Economic Studies
BANAMEX (Banco Nacional de México).

Furthermore, stress will be put on the setting up of clear rules for solving disputes and for defining the access of Mexican products to U.S. and Canadian markets¹."

Mexico, a player with no cards

However, the actual path of

Alienation, by any means (trusts, leasings) of national territory, either for its raw materials, for tourism, or as a place of residence for pensioners from the developed nations - mainly American - even in the cases of restricted areas such as beaches and the border strip.

obstacle to committing resources to new projects or to the expansion of the existing production plant.

The relinquishing of mechanisms and measures that define domestic economic policy by allowing governments or supra-national organizations to participate in making policy, either through commitments set out in letters of intention (IMF) or by applying for new loans from international banks and other institutions (World Bank), or directly through commitments undertaken vis-à-vis governments with hegemonic tendencies (either military, technological or commercial), not only the USA but the new leaders of the Pacific or the Pan-European regions, that is to say Japan and the reunified Germany.

In international relations, lining up with the powerful countries as opposed to the traditional dignified Mexican foreign policy, which until a few years ago was conducted strictly in accordance with the principles of the Estrada Doctrine on vital issues such as non-intervention and the peaceful solution of conflicts between states. These changes are already being felt in the official attitude toward the bloody and unjustified invasion of Panama, the Persian Gulf War and the constant provocation and permanent blockade of Cuba.

“Tackling economic questions requires expertise”

liberalization over the last nine years has left the country practically defenseless vis-à-vis its counterparts, not only in the realm of trade, but in legislation on direct foreign investment, in the so-called deregulation, in across-the-board lowering of Mexican tariffs without compensation on the part of other countries, and in the concessions to lure investment in sectors that are restricted or forbidden by the Constitution. These make it very difficult to take into account the needs and aspirations of the working classes.

In other words, the economic policy followed by the last two administrations in Mexico, even prior to the FTA initiative, has granted such privileges to foreign big business and to the international financial organizations (mainly American, for example those that Ambassador Negroponte referred to in his famous memorandum in which he commented on the implications of the FTA on Mexican foreign policy) that the only thing left to be negotiated are aspects that no sovereign nation should ever feel compelled to negotiate, namely:

Exploration, exploitation, transformation and sale of oil and its by-products, by far Mexico's greatest source of wealth.

Participation as privileged partners or absolute owners in branches and sectors that up to now have been protected by the Mexican Constitution, mainly articles 27 and 28, when this participation means getting around the Carta Magna itself by means of decrees in order to avoid having to obtain authorization from the Mexican Congress. This manoeuvring was done with regard to the Regulations on Foreign Investment and the deregulation of basic petrochemicals, in which by presidential decision they were labelled as secondary economic activities.

Transformation of the labor laws, above all the Federal Labor Law, over which far-reaching debate has sprung up in business circles. It is important to stress the fact that in spite of

constant violations, breaches and omissions (of the law which stipulates a decent wage, employers' commitments in terms of housing, transport and training, among others), both the letter and the spirit of the Mexican law are the most progressive in the world. From the point of view of potential investors, both domestic and foreign, this might become an

Changes in the rules on land ownership. It is well known that the present situation in the Mexican countryside is the result of a long and complex crisis that began in the mid-sixties with the virtual disappearance of capitalization in the agricultural and stock-raising sectors, and the inadequate handling of guaranteed prices for agricultural

¹ Nacional Financiera, *El Mercado de Valores* (The Securities Market). Year LI, No. 9, May 1, 1991.

products. The most powerful national groups and foreign entrepreneurs in this branch blame these problems on state intervention and on the existence of the *ejido* [common land held by peasant families which is worked individually or on a communal basis, but cannot legally be sold] as a form of ownership incompatible with a free market, and stress the need for efficiency in the production of foodstuffs and renewable raw materials. Therefore, according to these groups, it is essential to alter the laws. They have stated this repeatedly, and have followed up with strong pressure on the Mexican government.

Ever since the accentuation of Mexico's dependence on other countries for essential foodstuffs, and the fall in agricultural output aggravated by the dramatic

contraction of the domestic market due to the anti-inflationary measures of the mid-eighties, conditions have been favorable for launching a new offensive to radically change the system of land-ownership

the next step will be the FTA, although this means granting something that not even the European Community - whose degree of integration is unprecedented- has granted.

“The Mexican government upholds its commitment to consolidate free trade”

complemented by the privatization of agroindustry and the opening up of the country to imports of foodstuffs and raw materials. Thus sugar refineries were put up for auction, imports of agricultural and stock-raising products increased, and the U.S. position in the GATT's Uruguay Round was strengthened in so far as world trade in such goods increased. This seems to indicate that

What to do about the imminent trilateral agreement?

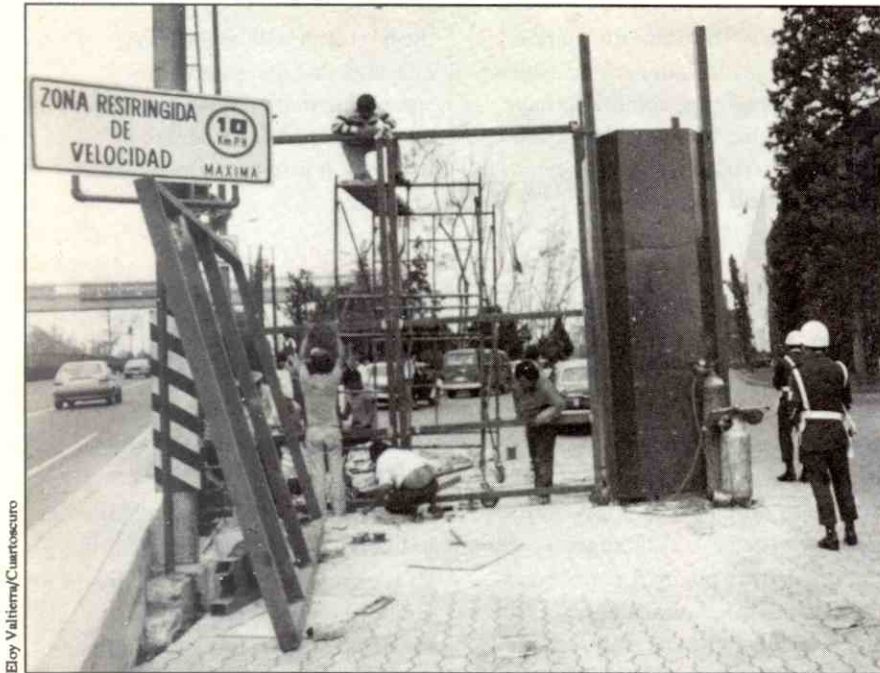
Again, at the present moment it seems unlikely that those who oppose the FTA as it is being written up by the federal executive branch - that is, the President and his economic cabinet- might introduce modifications that would make it less risky for the nation's economy and its sovereignty, since in Mexico there is no equivalent to a fast track that would have to be authorized by Congress.

There are many alternative proposals, but their application involves a fundamentally political question, and will depend on the possible changes in the domestic power relations. Perhaps the most forceful, feasible, and justifiable alternative is the Mexican government's replacing the proposed FTA by a Continental Development Agreement in which Latin America, and Mexico in particular, would take on a different role. But this would be the subject of another essay.

For now, it is enough to admit that there is strong opposition to an FTA that promises the kinds of risks already described, and others that it is not possible to deal with now. The fact is that the picture is obscured by the lack of accurate and timely information, the absence of open debate between specialists and those involved in the agreement process, and the shortage of serious and rigorous studies that attempt to predict



Ready or not, free trade is somewhere down the road.



Eloy Valiente/Cuartoscuro

Hurry up and get competitive.

the economic, political and social effects of the FTA.

This enables those who stand to benefit the most from the FTA to present the population with pure *faits accomplis*, without any possibility of civil society participating. This may cause grave and irreversible consequences for the nation.

Nobody, at least openly, can be against fair and fluid world trade, or against international collaboration. None can oppose the maintenance of fair terms of trade as opposed to those, as until now, that deteriorate to the detriment of backward and dependent regions.

But the course of recent history has proved that the contrary is the case: the trends are toward protectionism, through tariffs or other mechanisms, economic-political blocs, the rendering impotent of comparative advantages by technological subjection to the strongest, the increasing dominance of the large conglomerates and transnational banking in the production-financial sphere. All of these phenomena bring about disorder

in an international economy that is increasingly polarized and subject to deterioration of all kinds.

In spite of the above, yet without wanting to give these notes too optimistic a tone, some conditions that

would mitigate the potentially negative consequences of the FTA might still be possible; for example the continued protection of industries such as oil and its exploration, exploitation, transformation and sale; the agricultural and stock-raising sector; trade in services, especially financial and banking services; better conditions and regulations for brands and patents; the safeguarding of the educational and cultural sector which for a long time has been in a state of ominous vulnerability; the conservation and strict application of labor laws; and the absolute guarantee of human rights and humane living conditions for migrant workers. We

must demand that the extremes of Mexican law and Mexican economic and political reality converge, and nothing less than that. Most important is the participation of civil society through its legitimate representatives or in new direct ways in the planning of the nation's economic policy and international relations, of which the FTA is just one and perhaps not the most important part.

There is an awareness that time is running out and the conditions in which the negotiations are developing are unfavorable, when we take into account that:

There is a recession in the United States, whose end is nowhere in sight, and that in other parts of the world (mainly Europe and Asia) groups, blocs, and markets are strengthening in a prelude for what might be real economic warfare between the great powers and their allies involving technology, production, trade and financing, a war that will get hot at times, and whose consequences are unpredictable².

“The FTA means a level of integration which even the EEC has refused to endorse”

Now that the cold war between the former capitalist and socialist blocs—distinct from those of today—has died down or come to an end, confrontations between allies of convenience and the formation of new political groupings take on new and little known forms, whose intensity and impact have yet to be seen.

I insist, however, that the next few months will be crucial, and that we still have the capacity to influence the direction in which events are going.

² See Arturo Bonilla's work on "El Tratado de Libre Comercio y La Guerra Económica Mundial" (The Free Trade Agreement and the Economic World War), Institute of Economic Research, UNAM, April 1991.

Mexico's (black) golden egg

Mexico's oil reserves are being sized up for future development by Mexicans and Americans alike. An FTA which includes oil threatens to siphon the profits from Mexico's most lucrative industry into foreign coffers. Mexico would prefer to keep the profits at home, but can it move ahead without outside investment?

*Rocío Vargas Suárez**

This article has two aims: the first is to explain U.S. interest in Mexican oil, and the second, to discuss the possibility of including oil in the FTA negotiations. It should be remembered that any conclusions would be purely tentative, because if anything has caused confusion and given rise to speculation it is the precise place of hydrocarbons in the FTA.

This is thanks in part to the statements of U.S. officials who seem to imply that the incorporation of oil on the agenda is a practical fact. This, and Mexican refusal to include oil, or to allow foreign capital to own shares in Mexican oil reserves for constitutional reasons, all tend to shroud the subject in a fog of uncertainty.

* Researcher at the CISEUA.

U.S. interest in Mexican oil

The most obvious reason for U.S. interest in Mexico's oil reserves is the decline of existing reserves in U.S. territory and the high costs of drilling in older fields. Certain estimates indicate that the future will not be any rosier for U.S. proven reserves (28.2 billion barrels including condensates)¹, and if consumption increases there is a virtual certainty that the U.S. will become increasingly dependent on imported oil, with the consequent implications for national security.

This is no big news for the U.S. oil industry. It was in just this situation that the first oil shock took place. What then has reignited U.S. interest in Mexican oil? First of all,

¹ It is estimated that if the present trend continues, reserves will be down to 15.1 billion by 2010. *Annual Outlook for Oil and Gas 1990*, Washington, D.C. May 1990, p. 23.

departing from previous American energy strategies, the Bush administration admits that U.S. vulnerability cannot be totally eliminated even with stringent restrictive measures. The new energy strategy doesn't attempt to achieve self-sufficiency in energy products or to bring down oil imports if such a measure would involve a high economic and environmental cost.

In President Bush's energy policy announced in February of 1991, a series of measures were proposed which intend to raise domestic supplies and encourage oil production in other countries. Mexico was envisioned as a high production country, along with Venezuela. That the emphasis was on production capacity and not simply on reserves reflects the U.S. oil industry's interest in co-investments and associations with the producer nations, particularly with Mexico.

Another reason for the reemergence of the oil question is related to the sharp drop in Mexico's oil reserves (from 72,500 MMDB in 1983 to 66,450 MMDB in 1990), and fears over reduction in future supplies to the U.S. market.

According to George Grayson, a Mexican studies expert, if this trend continues Mexico will become a net oil importer by 2004². A recent Pemex report states that even with massive

² Grayson, G. "Can Mexico Prime the Oil Pump Without Foreign Capital," *the Wall Street Journal*, 19th of October, 1990.

foreign investment Mexico will be a net importer by 1997³. Independent organizations such as the Overseas Development Council are even more explicit, pointing out that "...it is the stagnation in Pemex that explains why the subject of hydrocarbons is essential in the FTA discussions⁴."

industry to other countries with weaker or non-existent anti-pollution laws.

The costs of environmental protection would be paid for by the amendment to the Clean Air Act of October 1990. It raises costs of oil and automobile

becoming directly involved in Pemex's activities. In other words, they want risk contracts and direct participation rather than merely acting as financial suppliers to the state-owned Pemex⁷.

Another group hungrily looking toward Mexico is the suppliers of services and oil technology, some of which have been associated with Pemex for years. It should be pointed out that the rapprochement between Pemex and the oil companies stems in part from the Mexican government's search for joint investments -both with the U.S. and other countries- to offset the decline in productivity and to find the capital needed by Pemex⁸.

Alfa, Cydsa, Mitsubishi, Dow Chemical, Shell and Exxon have all been solicited⁹ for investments, although the Mexican government has been obliged to limit the conditions under which they might participate so as not to violate the Mexican Constitution.

“The U.S. is beginning to acknowledge that its increasing dependence on foreign oil cannot be eliminated...”

Of course anxiety over increased consumption in producer nations is nothing new, particularly in developing ones, because it obviously means a reduction in the amount of oil for sale to developed consumers. What is new is the conviction that Mexico cannot get itself out of this state of stagnation without millions of foreign dollars.

Another side of America's encouraging stance toward increasing reserves and production in other countries has to do with the environment. In the Bush administration's National Energy Strategy one of the proposed alternatives for raising domestic oil supplies is to exploit areas classified by even the administration as environmentally fragile, such as the Continental Shelf (OCS) and the Arctic Wild Life Reserve (ANWR)⁵, areas that up to now have been strictly off-limits to the oil companies.

Environmental groups in the United States have so much clout that they alone they may be enough to drive the U.S. oil

industries and consumers to pay for the higher emissions standards, cleaner air, and reduced acid rain called for in the act. Petrochemical industries are motivated to use Mexico as a production platform for the important California market because stricter anti-pollution laws there compel producers to cushion themselves against exorbitant cost increases⁶.

“... and as Mexican reserves fall, U.S. oil companies think they can lend a hand”

Finally, Mexican oil has remained a part of U.S. energy strategy ever since the 70's because of its relative security, though there has been no shortage of observers watching the shrinkage of Mexican reserves. What is clear is that Mexican oil will continue to act as a secure reserve for U.S. energy products.

Pemex's traditional private trading partners, Chevron, Phillips, ARCO, etc. would also like to buy more Mexican crude oil, and they have made clear their interest in

The petrochemical industry is another powerful group that has begun to air its deeply felt desires. Its negotiating position is built on the assumption that Mexico is the active seeker behind the FTA and wants to speed up negotiations so that free trade may sooner go into

³ Christopher, Whalen, "Depleting Asset. Trouble Ahead for Mexico's Oil Monopoly," *Barron's*, 22nd of October, 1990.

⁴ *El Economista*, 16th of April, 1990.

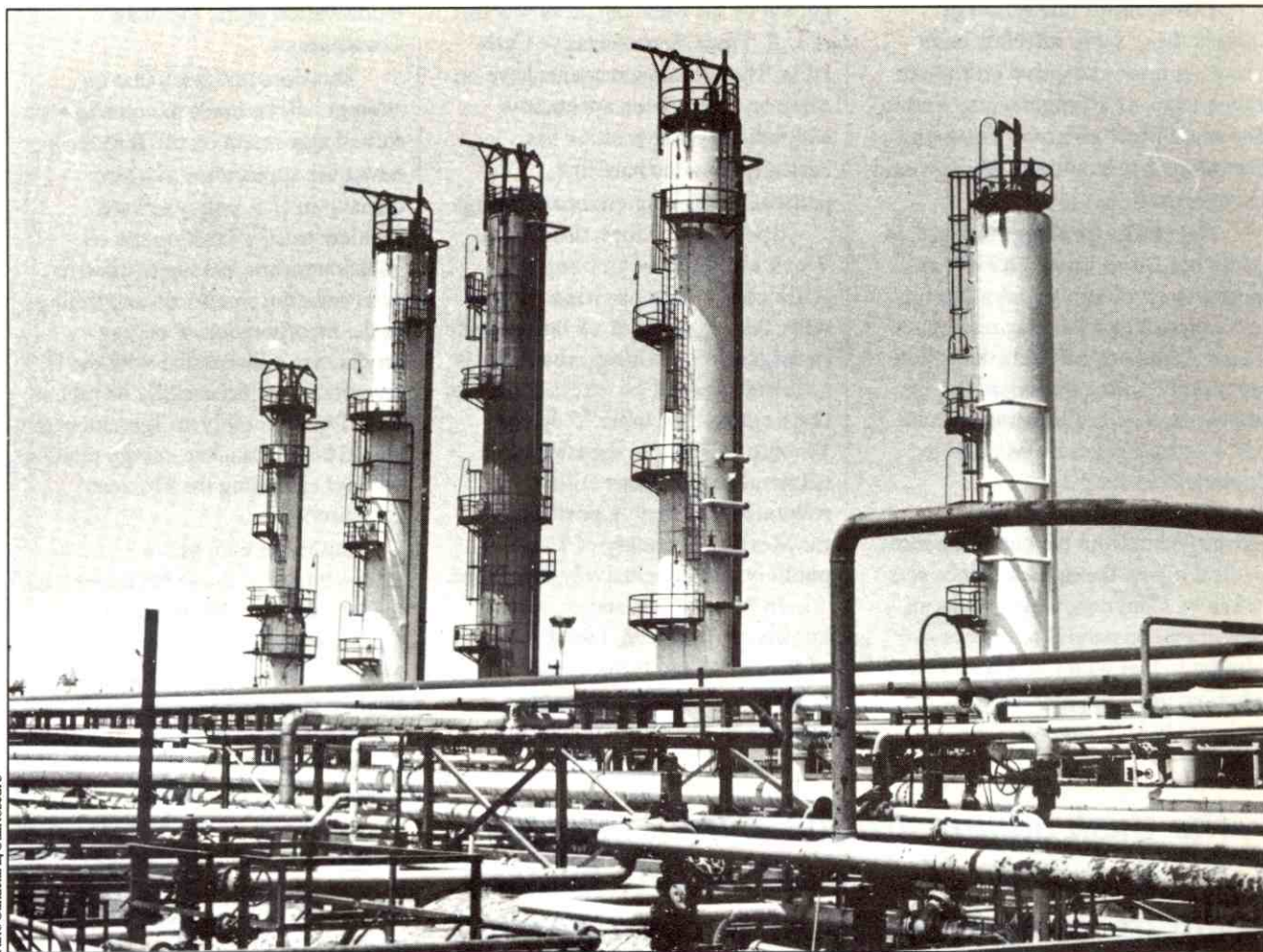
⁵ Department of Energy, "National Energy Strategy," Washington, D.C., February 1991, p. 14.

⁶ "Recomienda GAO a Washington pedir autonomía de la industria petroquímica de Pemex en el TLC," *El Financiero*, 13th of March, 1991.

⁷ For more about these companies, see David Clark Scott, "Mexico's Oil Giant Pemex May Open to Private Sector," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 18th October 1990 and, *The Oil and Gas Journal*, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 27th of August, 1990.

⁸ Pemex executives have said they need U.S. \$20 billion over the next five years.

⁹ Salinas, Roberto, "Privatization in Mexico; Good but Not Enough," *Background*, Heritage Foundation, November 1990, p. 12.



Julio Candelaria/Cuartoscuro

Under American siege.

effect. Hence Mexico should be making the concessions¹⁰.

The petrochemists want absolute control over both the plants and their operations. They are looking for equal access to energy resources and oil derived inputs, and above all they want guarantees that foreign investment reforms, such as that of May 1989, will not be rescinded at the end of Salinas de Gortari's presidential term.

Although there are other interest groups, such as border entrepreneurs, whose agendas will also be

considered at the negotiations, the above are the real heavyweights and their positions typify the industry's wheeling and dealing.

Mexican oil in the FTA negotiations

It is pretty clear that Mexican oil has a role in American energy strategies. However, the debate over oil and the FTA has given undue importance to Mexican oil within the larger field of U.S. energy options. Admittedly, the debate is relevant in Mexico because of the uncertain fate of natural resources if the treaty now under discussion becomes a reality.

It is well known that Mexico can credit itself with more importance than it really has in U.S. thinking, and this is true in the case of oil. The Mexican press has tended

to overemphasize both Mexican oil's strategic importance and role in the U.S. market at the same time that it bemoans U.S. greed for Mexican oil resources. This might be due to the lack of accurate official information about what the Mexican government is really negotiating, and the dichotomy between official assurances that oil will not be part of the negotiations and the reality which seems to give those assurances the lie.

Through July Mexican representatives insisted that the Constitution would not be changed in any way, nor would the volume and price of Mexican crude oil be negotiated. Public officials up to the President have promised that the ownership of oil resources is not at all in doubt.

¹⁰ Declarations made to the press by Dick Patterson, Head of Govt. Relations, Dow Chemical Co., "Que se incluya la petroquímica básica en el TLC," *El Financiero*, 5th of February, 1991.

However, in international circles these same officials have shown a more receptive attitude to other types of arrangements, and to the search for "creative" financing formulas that would not run aground on constitutional law¹¹.

Generally speaking, the U.S. is plugging for as broad an FTA as possible—preferably including oil, of course. Yet it has dawned on some American officials that oil is so fraught with symbolism that it would be best not to mention it at all, let alone pressure Mexico to include it in the FTA.

As to the rest of the U.S. government, from the outset the most radical oil-on-the-agenda stance was taken by Congress, which seeks an agreement on natural resources similar to that with Canada and the opening up of the Mexican oil industry to U.S. capital.

quoted by the Mexican press was that of U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills. Though her statements have on some occasions been apparently contradictory, her position has basically been the hard line, particularly in congressional hearings.

Speaking before the House Ways and Means Committee, Hills said, "Our position is that with the exception of large-scale immigration nothing, absolutely nothing, should be excluded from the negotiating table¹³." In the Toronto meeting at the start of trilateral negotiations Hills reiterated just that—a position that the Mexican Secretary of Trade publicly and conclusively dismissed.

In Mexico this stance is best known as American, but an analysis of the twists and turns of the negotiations and the probable changes in the Mexican energy

modification of the Mexican Constitution.

This does not mean that no attempt will be made to come to some formal agreement on oil. It reflects rather the appearance of a new element in U.S. policy toward Mexico: trust¹⁵. Trust on the oil question means leaving Mexico to determine the conditions and timing of the incorporation of energy products in a discussion with the U.S. that would not necessarily be part of the FTA, preferably an agreement that would institutionalize energy relations without amending the Mexican Constitution.

But in the end, to the astonishment of many Mexicans, on the 9th of July, 1991 the Mexican Secretariat of Trade announced that oil and petrochemicals had filtered into the negotiations under the heading "other sectors of industry." It was insisted that their incorporation would not mean changing the Constitution because the discussion would be limited to the commercial aspect. That is to say, the possibility of doing away with tariffs and non-tariff barriers gradually.

From speeches to facts

The significant changes in the Mexican energy sector are becoming ever more apparent, suggesting possible privatization of activities formerly tied to the public sector. In the oil industry this trend affects everything from exploration to the distribution of fuel products. These changes have not collided with Constitutional law because they have avoided ownership of services and risk contracts, keeping themselves busy with the purchase of services and technology.

Meanwhile some activities once considered strategic no longer are. In sum, all the conceivable arguments to

¹⁵ I would like to thank Adolfo Aguilar Zinser for this suggestion.

“The Bush administration is treading softly, convinced that Mexico will decide by itself that its financial needs make constitutional change worthwhile”

Some in Congress intimated that once negotiations were underway pressure should be brought to bear so that energy should not remain outside the agreement¹², and there were even some who wanted to link approval of the fast track to the inclusion of oil in the talks.

The administration itself seems to suffer from differences of opinion. One of the opinions most

sector suggests that a parallel strategy exists in Mexico.

Bush's policy is tactical, and envisions an agenda devoid of any open pressure to introduce discussion of hydrocarbons, or oil. Bush must be well aware of the political risk that these imply for the Salinas administration, yet at the same time must be convinced that the changes will eventually come about¹⁴. He also believes that the financial needs of the energy sector and the demand for U.S. capital and technology will impel

¹¹ See David Clark Scott, "Mexico's Trade Chief Sees Role for U.S. Oil Investment," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 18th of October, 1990.

¹² "El TLC deberá permitir la participación directa de EU en la exploración y producción petrolera en México," *El Financiero*, 5th of April, 1991.

¹³ "Privatizar todas las paraestatales excepto Pemex, el objetivo del TLC con México," *El Financiero*, 21st of February, 1991.

¹⁴ *Excelsior*, 8th of April, 1991.

de-politicize oil and turn it into a negotiable commodity have been tried.

Another means through which this was tried was external financing through the U.S. and Canadian EXIMBANK. Credit deals and negotiations with U.S. and Canadian companies are yet another link in a process that since 1986 has clearly tended toward the privatization and internationalization of the Mexican oil industry. Credit will obviously speed up this process.

The U.S. press called this loan a watershed in Mexican policy, noting at the same time that it was the biggest financial transaction in the history of Pemex. The loan granted by the United States was requested by the Mexican government in November 1990 at the meeting between Salinas and Bush in Monterrey, Nuevo León¹⁶. The total package amounts to U.S. \$5.6 million over a period of 5 years, of which U.S. \$ 1.5 million have already been disbursed.

Under the circumstances, this cannot be considered as just another loan to Pemex. It has meant a virtually open door for U.S. firms offering services and oil technology. So far two contracts have been drawn up, one with Triton of Houston to work in the Bay of Campeche, and the other with Smith International to install new drills (the most modern, known as the "horizontal" method) in the Chicontepec field.

The Triton contract follows the "keys in hand" plan¹⁷, originally intended for the petrochemical industry. It marks the beginning of foreign financing for a Mexican oil industry eager to see foreign

corporations participating in complex petrochemical activities.

The Canadian EXIMBANK credit of U.S. \$500 million serves Canadian interests by opening up a market for Canadian businesses, particularly those from the oil province of Alberta, which provide technology and services from exploration to refining and marketing. Nevertheless, there are other industries which interest Canadians more¹⁸.

“The Salinas administration has tried to de-politicize oil, turning it into merely another negotiable commodity”

That external financing is being channelled into one of the sectors that officially will not be part of the FTA, that Triton won a contract just prior to congressional approval of the fast track, and that in June Pemex, following the suggestion of the U.S. petrochemical industry, freed another of its basic petrochemicals (ether methyl terbutyl) for foreign investment by demoting it to a secondary petrochemical product, might make one think that the Mexican government is giving way, not only in response to pressures to include energy products in the negotiations, but possibly as a shrewd attempt to ease the approval of the fast track and thus open the doors to the capital necessary for salvaging the oil industry.

Conclusions

The FTA negotiations have once again brought Mexican crude to American attention. The U.S. has

capitalized by acquiring greater access to Pemex, and thereby the possibility of concretizing a relationship which for many years neither Mexico nor the United States had wished to formalize.

American tactics have been to leave it up to the Mexican government to persuade Mexicans that their oil industry cannot get out of the doldrums of recent setbacks – increases in Mexican gasoline imports and the projected increase of petrochemical and

natural gas purchases – without a strong dose of financing to improve production and refining capacity.

If Mexico is using its oil potential to attract capital from abroad it should consider carefully its negotiating leverage, and take into account that the United States has other energy options both domestically – large coal fields and significant reserves of natural gas – and in other parts of the world, some of them, Venezuela and Kuwait for example, offering perhaps greater availability.

Furthermore, the international oil market will probably continue to be a buyers market, enabling the United States to put off worrying – up to a certain point. Finally, international competition for capital is another prominent feature of this industry, and countries such as the Union of Sovereign States have shown that they too require a good deal of financing in order to halt the recent slide of their production. This makes them direct competitors for the loans Mexico is drilling for. ■

¹⁶ "Salinas under Pressure to defend Possible U.S. Role in Oil Industry," Nations and World, *The Houston Post*, 29th of November, 1990.

¹⁷ In this case Triton would provide drilling equipment, services, materials, know-how and logistics.

¹⁸ "México no puede ser obligado a incluir el sector energético en la negociación," *El Financiero*, 22nd of May, 1991.

Winners and losers: readjustment mechanisms in an NAFTA

The Canadian, U.S. and Mexican co-conveners decided at the close of the December meeting of the North American Institute (NAMI) held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in December 1990, that the topic of the next meeting should be "Winners and Losers: Readjustment Mechanisms in a North American Free Trade Agreement."

The topic was particularly timely because there appears to be every likelihood that the United States and Mexico, joined perhaps by Canada, will soon complete a North American Free Trade Agreement.

As the time drew near for NAMI's scheduled meeting on "Readjustment Mechanisms", held in Monterrey, Mexico on the weekend of May 17-19, 1991, debate in Congress on "fast-track" authority grew more heated. Only last minute assurances from the White House that the interests of American workers would be protected and that environmental concerns would be adequately addressed during the free trade negotiations succeeded in overcoming a concerted drive by organized labor and environmentalists to deny the President the negotiating authority he required. Had Congress voted not to grant that negotiating authority, NAMI would have been discussing not the "Readjustment Mechanisms" but the short and long term

implications of the failure of free trade in North America.

The goal of the NAMI meeting in Monterrey was to consider the likely positive and negative effects of a North American Free Trade Agreement on the three countries of North America and to suggest some national or tri-national adjustment policies and mechanisms that might alleviate the more adverse consequences of such an agreement.

Forming the basis for the discussions were papers representing the views of several experts from the three countries. The papers maintained that the overall impact of a free trade agreement would be positive and that, while there were likely to be sectoral dislocations and adverse consequences, these would be limited and difficult to

distinguish from those caused by other factors.

Furthermore, new jobs would be created by a North American trade pact. This does not do away with the need for adjustment policies that would ease the transition to a freer trade environment and assure the political support required to secure legislative approval of a free trade agreement.

Economists and other experts underscored the importance of anticipating the adverse impacts of a free trade pact by, among other things, consulting with leaders from various economic sectors, and preparing policies to provide relief for injured parties. A Canadian speaker pointed out that all three countries of North America need to re-train and upgrade their labor forces. In a sense, he said,

The North American Institute is a private, non-profit organization created to provide a tri-national forum in which the concept and realities of North American regional interdependence can be discussed on a continuing and sustained basis among private sector leaders in Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

the entire industrialized world faces an enormous adjustment problem.

A Canadian government trade expert predicted that we would soon see more active government labor market policies. Taking a phrase from de Grandpré Commission, he said that these policies, rather than providing a safety net, would serve as a trampoline to launch dislocated workers back into the economy.

Adrian Lajous of Mexico expressed his concern that the title of the NAMI meeting suggested that adjustment policies would be an integral part of the U.S.-Mexico free trade talks. If this was true, it implied that injury to a particular economic sector because of freer trade would be grounds to reimpose protectionist measures. Readjustment mechanisms should not be part of the agreement because it would be impossible to know what injury was due to a free trade agreement and what was due to cyclical economic changes or simply bad management.

Several participants emphasized the need to recognize the political dimension of a free trade agreement. Failure to respond effectively to political opposition from constituencies that felt threatened by freer trade might doom the negotiating process or at the least cause short-term political problems.

What can be done about economic sectors that might be hurt by the FTA? One suggestion was the use of existing trade laws to ease the pain, or finding money for adjustment assistance and retraining of workers.

U.S. economists agreed that trade liberalization would bring general benefits to both the United States and Mexico but that economic models cannot capture all the important interactions that flow from freer trade. In Canada, changes attributable to the free trade agreement have been dwarfed by much larger changes resulting from monetary and fiscal policies.

The need for better policy coordination between the three countries was stressed as a way to avoid the shock from sudden policy shifts, as with interest rate changes. A free trade agreement between the United States and Mexico could be a stepping stone to a better North American environment, increased productivity and competitiveness in the United States, and more rapid growth and economic development in Mexico.

One American professor said, "Free trade and the symbolic commitment it represents on both sides to an open exchange of views and ideas, as well as goods, are too important an opportunity to squander in pursuit of the perfect multi-dimensional accord."

A recurring theme in the discussion was the need to view a North American free trade agreement as not an end in itself, but the beginning of a restructuring of the North American economic space. The central mission of NAMI is to explore policy devices for better management of the continent in all its relationships, and free trade is only one of these. Echoing this notion, the need was stressed for new international institutions to help the three countries cooperate more effectively in the management of scarce and fragile resources in their border regions.

It was pointed out that a mix of national objectives exist and that a North American Free Trade Agreement is not the end, but only the start, of a process. All three countries are adjusting and restructuring in response to new and global economic challenges. The consensus within the group was that adjustment policies need to stress retraining of workers rather than subsidies to the unemployed; in other words, a trampoline, rather than a safety net.

A tri-national mechanism was suggested, an advisory body to study

economic adjustment issues and other North American problems. The question of adjustments is more of a political question than an economic one, it was added, "a question of building on the sensitivities of our neighborhood, learning more about one another, and learning more about what we need to do for one another."

Three possible themes for future NAMI meetings were discussed. One would be the issue of competitiveness in terms of managing the environment; another would be the role of education in competitiveness; and a third would be the question of populations and population mobility. These topics are sensitive, both politically and culturally, but NAMI needs to address these kinds of questions and to develop new insights for managing the North American continent. Following the Monterrey meeting, the three national co-conveners approved a joint statement.

NAMI Agreed Statement on Adjusting to Change

At its meeting in Monterrey, Mexico, on May 17-19, 1991, the North American Institute (NAMI) proposed that Canada, the United States and Mexico establish a Tri-National Advisory Commission to facilitate the economic and social adjustments that will be required by a North American Free Trade Agreement.

The North American Institute is a private, non-profit organization created to provide a tri-national forum in which the concept and realities of North American regional interdependence can be discussed on an equal, continuing, and sustained basis among private sector leaders from Canada, the United States and Mexico. NAMI's mission is to examine all aspects to the emerging North American regional relationship and to develop better ways to manage this relationship.

As negotiations for a North American Free Trade Agreement continue, the issue of adjustments to ease the transition for workers and certain industries is seen somewhat differently in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Concerns about adjustment, coupled with environmental standards, were raised forcefully in the United States during the congressional debates over granting the President fast track authority to negotiate a free trade pact. In Canada, overall support for a North American Free Trade Agreement is weak, whereas in Mexico high expectations have been raised. At its meeting in Monterrey, the North American Institute reached the following conclusions on adjustment:

1. We are neighbors facing a common challenge of competitiveness, with our collective eye on Europe and Japan. While there is a mix of national objectives, we share the goal of increasing savings and investment along with real wage growth.
2. A North American Free Trade Agreement is not a trade fortress among blocs, but serves as a regional halfway house looking toward further trade liberalization under the GATT.
3. A North American Free Trade Agreement is not an end in itself but plays a catalytic role, providing an opportunity to intensify a range of relationships in order to better manage the continent through sustained consultation and coordination. The symbolism of this is powerful and future-oriented.
4. We are in a dynamic situation, offering the possibility to create something new that will be more than the sum of its parts. There will be winners and losers in a North American Free Trade Agreement, but the overall benefits from expanding trade are compelling: this is not a zero sum game.
5. A North American Free Trade Agreement provides the context for much more systematic attention to managing change in our three countries, all of which are undergoing restructuring anyway. For Mexico it was the 1986 decision to join GATT and the wrenching developments that have subsequently taken place. For Canada, it was to accept the challenge of the U.S. market in order to transcend its traditional role as a resource economy. And for the United States, it was coming to grips with a reduced, if still powerful role in an increasingly competitive world.
6. There are four principal arenas for adjusting to change:
 - The North American Free Trade Agreement itself should provide for a long phasing-in period to protect hard-hit sectors and labor, principally by seeking to avoid sudden shocks, but in no way to build in protectionism.
 - All three countries should make a commitment to higher standards of environmental protection and wages; there must be no "leveling down" in a three-way trade agreement, although adjustment will take time.
 - The process of obtaining broad political support for a North American Free Trade Agreement from a public worried about change (the United States), skeptical of free trade (Canada), or underestimating the lead time to create benefits (Mexico), should emphasize

the future. Adjustment, in the image of Canada's de Grandpré Royal Commission, should "not be a safety net, but a trampoline," which means retraining rather than short-term benefits.

- Upgrading the quality of our workforce and management is an imperative shared by all three countries, because this is at the heart of increased competitiveness, which is the common goal and rationale for a North American Free Trade Agreement. Education is therefore the keystone of adjustment, and the commitment must be ongoing and permanent in Canada, the United States and Mexico.
7. The new regionalism is predicated on awareness of our continental neighborhood. We recognized that restructuring is going on in conjunction with the adjustment measures made necessary by, but also inspired by, the free trade agreement. All aspects of adjustment should be managed with a view to meeting our common challenge to be more competitive. NAMI therefore recommends the establishment of a Tri-National Advisory Commission on Adjustment. This commission will be in charge of enhancing the public debate as to the various ways in which trade and investment in our three countries can contribute to our total prosperity, and in which the process of adjustment can be advanced to gain higher labor standards, better environmental protection, education for enhanced competitiveness, and heightened productivity.



It all depends on your point of view.

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Senator

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David Crane M

Mexico's political assets

*José Francisco Ruiz Massieu**

A speech made in Acapulco, Guerrero on the 17th of October, 1991 to the International Seminar on labor and the North American Free Trade Agreement organized by the Lyndon B. Johnson School of the University of Texas, the National University of Mexico, the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico, and the State of Guerrero.

With regard to the state of which I am the Governor, I would like to point out that Guerrero has chipped in to form the consensus that President Salinas de Gortari has been seeking in order to negotiate a Trilateral Treaty. The state of Guerrero looks to the agreement with the United States and Canada as a means to raise employment, bring down the migration of surplus labor, industrialize, expand tourism, create new conditions for foreign investment and marketing, progress toward more balanced regional development, and develop an export-oriented economy.

To contribute modestly to this seminar from a political angle -appropriate, since I am a

*Governor of the state of Guerrero.

Governor- I would like to comment on Mexico's political assets as it enters into a North American Free Trade Agreement.

1. Mexico is the only continental Latin American country to have undergone a genuinely popular, social revolution. This popular origin legitimizes Mexico's present-day institutions and assures that sweeping change will not disrupt the historical process begun with the revolution; it assures that, in spite of economic and political reforms, Mexico will maintain its political stability.
2. Mexico is practically the only Latin American state where presidents and members of congress have succeeded each other constitutionally. Since

1920, no revolution or *coup d'état* has been successful; and since 1929 there has been no attempt to stage one.

3. Since 1936 the armed forces have not taken part in politics.
4. The FTA is of international consequence, and it is gratifying to note that Mexico's foreign policy record can hardly be equalled: it has always respected the fundamental principles of international law, and never, throughout its 170 years as an independent state, has it waged a war of aggression. This makes it clear that Mexico is a respectable and reliable member of the international community and lives up to its juridical and political commitments.
5. Unlike many other countries introducing democratic processes, Mexico has succeeded in articulating its regional diversity and its multi-ethnic character. And all of this without secession or conflict based on national, religious, or regional differences.
6. Mexicans have shown a lively pluralism in their society; unlike many developed countries, Mexico has no room for racism, segregation or xenophobia. Several million Mexicans not of caucasian origin bear witness to this.
7. Except for minor and insignificant periods, Mexico has been able to harmonize the sometimes opposing interests of government, business, and labor in a society undergoing progressive differentiation. We haven't achieved the stability of the Japanese system, but the Mexican model has been functional -to say the least.
8. One of the basic conditioning factors of the economy is the



Julio Candelaria/Cuartoscuro


Since 1936 the armed forces have not taken part in politics.

reliability of the political system; a reliability that rests on the political system's capacity to function day to day, and with ever-increasing efficiency run a democratic state based on the principles of law, the guaranteed participation of its citizens, and defense of their human rights. I am speaking of a system with the capacity to change in order to assure its permanence. With amazing speed, and with the lowest political costs imaginable—particularly in comparison with the experiences of other countries—the Mexican political system has shown its ability to reform itself. In these last few years it has created an environment—although still an insufficiently large one—for political pluralism and a greater respect for human rights. The State has been reformed and the market freed, all without having jeopardized the stability of the

nation or provoking violence. Mexico's reliability also rests on the fact that it has a dynamic political class—including both those in power and the opposition—who guarantee its governability through change and vertical mobility.

9. Its sound cultural identity, national integration, and a strong feeling of what it is to be a Mexican has enabled our country to safeguard its sovereignty and understand its role in relation to our powerful northern neighbor, the United States of America. For a free trade agreement with the United States and Canada, our greatest national asset is Mexico's political intelligence—the intelligence of its leaders and the society, a truly collective virtue—and our ability to live together constructively. These qualities have always made themselves obvious. I shall mention only two facts. One is that we attract over 5 million U.S. and

Canadian tourists each year without calamity, a practical example of our ability to live together. The second has been the skill of the northern border states to make their economic and commercial ties with the southern part of the United States into a dynamo for their respective economies. This intense contact has not eroded the sound and well proved Mexican-ness of our citizens in the North. These two experiences reveal that there is mutual confidence, without which an association for liberalizing trade would have neither viability nor foundation.

10. Mexico is reliable because it is predictable. Mexicans have a well founded national project encoded in their Constitution whose aims are crystal clear and have not been changed in decades. Nor will they change. The aims of the Mexican nation are: national sovereignty, social justice, democracy, development, and governability 

This essay by the late Guillermo Bonfil Batalla is a fitting closure to a life-time's concern for the everyday cultural life of ordinary Mexicans, and the threat posed to that life by economic transformation.

The increasingly lively discussion about the NAFTA has concentrated on what's in it for the nation's economy as a whole, or its principal sectors (energy products, the maquiladora industry). Hence, the discussion is predominantly political, concentrating on the risk of losing national sovereignty. Culture, on the other hand, has hardly received any attention at all. When it has the treatment has generally been rhetorical; oft repeated and vague references to national identity and the strength of our thousand year old culture. Such comments shy away from what is really at stake. Jaime Serra Puche, the head of the Mexican negotiating team, clarified what the Mexican government thinks is at stake when he declared at the start of talks in Canada that "Culture is not such a relevant matter for Mexico²".

Mexico and the NAFTA

GATT Article 20, incorporated into the NAFTA, represents Mexico's best chance to strengthen national legislation protecting its archeological, historical, and artistic heritage from two markets (particularly the American) with an unsettling habit of acquiring, by any means, unique and invaluable artifacts. It allows signatories to take any measures necessary to protect "public morals" and "national treasures of artistic, historic or

The FTA's cultural dimension

Guillermo Bonfil Batalla¹

archeological value³." The NAFTA would only make sense for Mexico if it were possible to extend and specify protective measures and stimulate government commitment to enforce them. The elements adopted from the GATT also foresee the possibility of controlling an invasion of cultural products undesirable from the point of view of public morals and social health. We ought to look at this closely because, like all such measures, it is a double-edged weapon. If we don't have the internal resilience to valorize such defensive zeal we run the risk of inadvertently strengthening the most obsolete and prudish facets of today's equally threatening neo-puritanical wave.

Culturally speaking, one of the most positive effects of the NAFTA might be a freer flow of ideas and the alternative values that they offer to both communities. In other words, a greater and more diverse pool of ideas and values with which we might try to make sense out of our lives.

Records, cassettes and videos have already gone transnational; at any rate it seems that Mexican tariffs have no limiting effect on their presence in Mexico. If one goes to the movies, or watches TV, one could hardly imagine that including such products in the NAFTA would in any way worsen the situation. From the purely commercial point of view then, the NAFTA appears to open up new opportunities for cultural industries in Mexico.

However, this matter goes beyond the purely commercial dimension. Cultural industries cannot be analyzed with the same criteria one uses when considering shoe-making or the sale of lingerie.

That the cultural industry's products transmit messages, uninspired though they may be, is the central question here. These messages correspond to precise systems of meaning, and reflect clearly established hierarchies of values. They arise from and point toward ways of living in and conceiving of the world that express a particular culture. This makes the cultural industry's products singularly important in the relations between societies with different cultures.

¹ Synopsis of Guillermo Bonfil Batalla's last essay published in *México Indígena*, No. 24, September 1991.

² Press conference, 12th June 1991, reported by various national newspapers.

³ "Mexico-U.S. Cooperation Agreement on the recovery and return of stolen archaeological, historical and cultural goods," signed the 17th of July, 1970, in force as of the 24th of March, 1971.

The NAFTA could have two possible consequences. One is the potential for increased cultural penetration, and the other the imposition of the American Way of Life as a model for Mexican society. I fear that the gravity of this problem goes well beyond the NAFTA. The mechanisms for broadcasting American life styles are already in place. We might hope that the NAFTA will provide us with an opportunity to accommodate the cultural messages of American products within our own chosen cultural context. This may be the best we can do, because the presence of these foreign influences in Mexico is inevitable⁴.

Opening the way for the wider dissemination of Mexican culture among Spanish-speaking Americans, particularly Mexican-Americans, represents a possibility upon which we should focus our attention. Direct communication with this segment of the U.S. population could pay off in the long run if Mexican-Americans become an active lobby for Mexican interests. It is therefore much more than a potential market.

Is it in Mexico's interest to introduce items not already included in the NAFTA, but which are culturally important? It is certain, for example, that in the U.S. and Canadian economies handicraft production is relatively insignificant, but in Mexico it is huge, above all because of the millions of Mexicans

⁴ It is worth while recalling the words of Jack Lang at the World Conference of Cultural Ministers organized by UNESCO in Mexico in July, 1982. Lang criticized "the financial domination of the multinationals" which flood countries with images and music made abroad. He also criticized T.V. programs in which the "standardized, stereotyped productions smooth away national cultures and introduce a uniform way of living that becomes the norm for the whole world." See *La politique culturelle de la France* (French Cultural Policy), *La Documentation Française*. Paris, 1988, pp. 44-45.

Idiosyncracies of the Spanish language

Creating the European Economic Community (EEC) unleashed a linguistic war. The battlefield is computer science, and the opposing factions are the defenders of the Spanish language on one side and multinational corporations on the other.

The EEC agreements that cement the community economically call for products to move freely across borders. However, Spain has issued three separate decrees blocking products that do not include the letter *ñ*¹ such as printers and keyboards.

The multinational forces have arrayed themselves behind the economic unfeasibility of modifying their hardware, and the EEC accuses Spain of blocking free trade. French accents, and Danish and German peculiarities have been integrated into computer equipment, yet the *ñ* seems to have been cast aside as an illegitimate child.

The letter *ñ*, integrated into Spanish from the Arabic and Latin double *n*, is said to be one thousand one hundred years old. Of the eight official EEC languages the *ñ* is unique to Spanish.

Mario Vargas Llosa, the well known Peruvian writer and former candidate to the presidency, rose to the occasion. "It isn't just an *n* with a squiggle on top. It is a sovereign sound which clearly expresses a nuance. It comes from the very root of one of the primary languages in the world. If there is freedom of speech, above and beyond censorship, it is in language. This is why I believe that the *ñ* will survive" (*La Jornada*, May 10, 1991).

The press has joined the battle of the *ñ*: the Spanish daily *El País* published a defense of the letter under an eight column headline. The article stressed that the European Community must respect linguistic plurality and not allow a letter to be dropped from an alphabet for commercial reasons.

An estimated three billion people currently use the letter *ñ*. Thus far, one important computer manufacturer has integrated the letter into their keyboards marketed in Spain. It was in their own best interest to continue satisfying the needs of the Spanish-speaking market. The idea is to please the customer by providing the appropriate product. And as for us, we support those who daily defend and use the letter *ñ*.

¹ The letter represents the "nio" sound, as in onion.

who depend solely or partially on the sale of handicrafts.

The international market for Mexican handicrafts is precarious. Ironically, foreign tourists make up the largest part of the market within Mexico itself. The problem of opening up foreign markets for our handicrafts is complex and not

without risks. And of course there are various categories of handicrafts, each one requiring a different strategy to improve its marketability⁵.

⁵ It is impossible to have statistics of foreign trade in handicrafts, because the way products are classified does not enable one to distinguish which are handicrafts and which are industrial products.

Highlights of six years of free trade negotiations

March 1985

U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney meet. They agree to request their respective ministers to explore the possibilities for reducing and eliminating trade barriers.

September 1985

President Reagan and Prime Minister Mulroney exchange letters of resolution to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

October 1987

U.S. and Canadian negotiators sign a draft of the Agreement.

December 1987

The heads of both delegations ratify the text of the Agreement. The final version is sent to the U.S. Congress and the Canadian Parliament.

January 1989

The FTA between the U.S. and Canada goes into effect.

March 1990

The Wall Street Journal publishes an article asserting that Mexico and the United States have agreed to initiate negotiations to develop a Free Trade Agreement.

April 1990

The Mexican Senate sets up a forum for consultations on the FTA.

June 1990

The U.S. Senate opens hearings on a "fast track" bill that would allow President George Bush to negotiate directly with President Carlos

Salinas. Both Presidents issue a joint communiqué announcing their intention to negotiate a FTA, and instructing their respective trade representatives to explore the possibilities.

August 1990

The Mexican Secretary of Commerce and the U.S. Trade Representative meet and issue a joint recommendation to President George Bush, urging that the U.S. and the Mexican President initiate FTA negotiations.

September 1990

President Carlos Salinas appoints an Advisory Committee for FTA negotiations and informs President George Bush that Mexico intends to sign a Free Trade Agreement. President Bush sends a bill to Congress so negotiations can be initiated. Canada expresses its desire to join the largest trade bloc in the world.

February 1991

President Salinas, President Bush and Prime Minister Mulroney agree to start trilateral negotiations for setting up a North American FTA.

May 1991

The U.S. House of Representatives votes in favor (231 to 192) of approving the "fast track" for negotiating the FTA with Mexico. The U.S. Senate also approves the motion (59 to 36) to give President Bush the authority to negotiate.

June 1991

Trilateral negotiations between Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are

initiated in Toronto, Canada. The issues discussed include access to markets, trade regulations, investment, technology transfer, services and settlement of disputes.

August 1991

The ministers of commerce of the three countries meet for a second time in Seattle, Washington. They agree on a gradual reduction of tariffs, to be carried out in three stages, on all products to be imported and exported between the three countries. They resolve to make an in depth analysis of the restrictions on government purchases in the three nations. In addition, a working group is created to strengthen the Mexican assembly plant program. The governors of the fifty U.S. states express their support for the negotiations.

October 1991

The Ministers of Commerce of the three countries meet for a third time in Zacatecas, Mexico. The meeting was attended by U.S. negotiator Carla Hills, Canadian Minister of Commerce Michael Wilson, and Mexican Secretary of Commerce Jaime Serra Puche, along with their respective negotiating teams. They review the progress of the work groups assigned to each of the nineteen major sections of the agreement and call for the writing of the treaty to begin so a rough draft might be ready by January of 1992. They agree to approach labor and the environment as parallel issues, but not to include them in the text of the agreement.

A well articulated handicraft policy could create favorable conditions for their entry into other markets. Indian handicrafts are of the highest quality and come from a rich creative tradition which stands among the most varied in the world. The problem consists on the one hand of selling these products for what they are really worth, a rare event, and on the other hand assuring a steady flow of production without jeopardizing their traditional character. Whatever happens, these marvels are an irreplaceable part of our cultural heritage that ought not be risked by commercial ambitions.

The other possibility for handicraft production under the shadow of an NAFTA could be producing common household objects with new, non-traditional designs. This would allow Mexican craftspeople to exploit to their own advantage their extraordinary manual ability by manufacturing objects that satisfy the contemporary tastes of medium and higher income consumers. Such an achievement would be similar to what the Scandinavians or the Brazilians achieved, but in Mexico's case with emphasis on hand-craftedness, so highly prized in industrialized countries as a mark of exclusiveness. The first step would be to establish a school for Mexican design of the highest calibre.

Handicrafts must be dealt with wisely to guarantee that the lure of economic advantage does not denature a field of expression that gives our country its cultural profile. Nor must the makers of such handicrafts become even more marginalized than they now are.

Short-term indirect effects

The NAFTA is merely an instrument, albeit an important one, to encourage and make permanent the transformation of Mexican society and economy into forms compatible with the new world's conditions and demands.

To seriously consider the implications of the NAFTA on education goes far beyond the scope of this essay, but it is the central element of our culture. Ever since the 1920's a nationalist ideology reflecting the aims of the Mexican Revolution has been taught in schools. That ideology has not been without changes: there were advances, steps back, and different emphases according to the style of each administration. But certain principles have been maintained, at least in official speeches and on the pages of school text books.

Generations of Mexicans learned that national sovereignty was worth any sacrifice. For example, that the nationalization of the oil industry, the railroads, electricity, and later the banks were historic climaxes that reaffirmed our national sovereignty. We learned that the basic criterion for land distribution was to give it to those who worked it, not to those who exploited in for the highest profit.

We also learned an image of our Northern neighbor summed up by the saying, "Poor Mexico, so far from God and so close to the United States." In terms of God himself, the educational system wanted us to be non-religious, partisans of the absolute separation between church and state, always vigilant against the dangers of the former interfering in the affairs of the latter -and it happened often.

We learned to consider the Northern border as a line of separation because we were different and wanted to remain different. To what degree are these nationalistic principles compatible with today's aims? What intellectual alchemy must we undergo in order to turn what were known as the "inalienable historic rights" of peasants and workers into "obstacles to modernization", and excrescences of a perverted past?

I find it difficult to accept that the new national project is simply the latest stage in an old project called the Mexican Revolution.

It will probably require two generations for the new principles to replace the old in the consciousness of the majority of Mexicans. There is a vast array of changes in our ideologies and in our collective desires coming from Mexico's entry into an NAFTA with the U.S. and Canada; some of these touch nodal points in how we see our country and its future. These contacts, and their consequences, demand far-reaching evaluation.

Any Mexican who reads the Canada-U.S. FTA has to feel that it is a pact between societies that are very different from ours, not only because of their wealth and level of technological development, but above all because of their culture stemming from different historical experiences. Even though there are obvious differences between Canadians and Americans, there is a common cultural ground in which interests and beliefs are mutually intelligible.

The NAFTA is not merely a matter of doing away with tariff barriers: far beyond that, it plants the seed of a society of the future. Are we Mexicans accepting this plan freely and sovereignly? Is it being imposed on us by the force of circumstance? The inevitable laws of history? By an inevitable destiny to which we can only submit?

Reflection on the cultural implications of the NAFTA must be long-term. One cannot only treat present ills, however urgent they may be. When the patient is our own society we must have a very clear idea about the direction in which the decisions and solutions of today are leading us, because one day we may find that they are irreversible. ■

The role of central banks in globalized financial markets

*Valery Giscard D'Estaing**

In recent years, considerable changes have taken place in domestic and international capital markets: deregulation, the creation of new financial instruments, the use of futures markets, a blurring of frontiers between financial intermediaries, computer based instant communication closely linking markets and currencies.

In many respects these changes were advantageous and represent a positive trend. Individuals, enterprises and countries were enabled to find at any time financial instruments tailored to their own requirements. The large-scale internationalization of capital markets and banking activities has brought about benefits in terms of access, transaction costs, and an efficient and market-based allocation of resources.

Yet these changes have also caused new problems both domestically and internationally, exemplified by defaults and failures in the inter-bank currency markets and in other markets rendered more fragile by the rapid development of new financial instruments.

* Former President of France.

More fundamentally, the growing interconnection between markets may mean that crises in one market will lead to cumulative and mutually reinforcing downward adjustments on a world-wide basis, as in the case of the 1987 market crash.

As a consequence, shifts by major countries may have disproportionately large effects on emerging markets, banks, and the development strategies of developing countries. These fledgling entities may see their domestic stabilization efforts impaired and their currencies overwhelmed by excessive capital flows. Already, central banks and other regulators have taken measures to enhance their capacity to deal with such crises in the new financial environment, such as the allocation of supervisory responsibilities, new relationships between bank and market regulators, and coordinated responses to international liquidity crises.

Some of these measures have themselves raised new concerns, notably the risk of an oversupply of liquidity fueling inflation, overcautious lending by banks, or a credit crunch. At the same time the requirements of Eastern European and developing countries, Gulf reconstruction, and securing market access to countries emerging from debt rescheduling, all pose new and equally urgent challenges.

On the 19th and 20th of April, 1991, the Inter-Action Council convened in Paris a High-Level Expert Group on "The Role of Central Banks in Globalized Financial Markets," chaired by Mr. Valery Giscard d'Estaing. The meeting was attended by four other members of the Inter-Action Council - María de Lourdes Pintasilgo (Portugal), Malcolm Fraser (Australia), Manuel Ulloa (Peru), and Olusegun Obasanjo (Nigeria)- and fourteen experts.

As the world globalizes it is moving toward a tri-polar system of three large blocs centered around the dollar, the European currency (ECU) and the yen. This itself may ultimately prove to be an interim stage toward an even broader or more closely linked global system. Meanwhile, the considerable capacity of each of the three blocs to influence one another highlights the need for closer policy coordination in the interest of a stable world economy.

The case for a ten point strategy

The High Level Expert Group has formulated a ten point strategy which aims at greater transparency, stability and efficiency in financial markets through changes in the role of central banks and other supervisors.

“Reinforcement of the independence of national central banks, and strengthening and unifying supervisory activities at the national level”

1. **Ensuring the independence of central banks.** The best way to encourage market stability is to maintain price stability. This is best accomplished through independent central banks with a clear mandate to that effect. Accordingly, it has been agreed that the new European System of Central Banks (ESCB) should take on these characteristics, but the individual European national central banks have yet to begin to reform.

An important economic policy lesson learned in the last two decades is that price stability is the ultimate objective of monetary policy, and it is best conducted by independent central banks immune from the day to day fluctuations of the market. Another lesson is that a short-run trade-off exists between lower inflation and securing employment, but that the central banks should not attempt to address conflicting goals.

Hence the efforts of the central banks must be complemented by governmental fiscal policies and by structural policies which aim to minimize the social cost of disinflation. A medium-term objective of low interest rates in the United States, the

European Community and Japan, and the perception of monetary policies which aim to achieve this will by itself encourage financial stability.

Crucial to this program is the independence of the central banks. However, it is important to remember that independent national central banks would not necessarily ensure greater coordination in a deregulated market. But if the ESCB, the Bank of Japan, and the U.S. Federal Reserve were to pursue identical policies, their coordinated action would be much more likely to achieve the desired effect.

2. **Adapting money policies to the new financial environment.** The pursuit of price stability in a deregulated world financial environment is complicated by the uncertainty over what objectives should be targeted. World-wide financial innovations make monetary bases less reliable in their definitions and more loosely related to their economic aggregates. With this in mind, in the new financial environment most central banks should aim to stabilize their exchange rates against a stable major currency. Target zones for exchange rates should be established and maintained through intervention and policy adjustments, taking into account domestic conditions.
3. **Taking advantage of a single European currency to strengthen the international monetary system.** The move toward a single European currency establishes the third leg in a three polar international order made up of the dollar, the yen, and the ECU. To offset any possible destabilizing effects measures would have to be taken to broaden the ECU-denominated and the yen-denominated financial instruments markets in order to create the same transparency, depth and liquidity that exist in the dollar-denominated markets. Also, target zones for tri-polar currency exchange would foster the convergence of domestic price stability objectives.

Other currencies might then choose individually between a link with one of the three leading currencies or with a basket of the three, either standardized or adjusted to individual national requirements.

Moving from the current G-7 to a G-3, particular responsibility ought to be given to a small group of countries which would agree on a general approach to exchange rate evolution, and would coordinate a stabilizing fiscal policy. Assuming these responsibilities would mean assuming world leadership in the aim of making international economic policy and interest rates convergent, and

8. Ensuring a better integration between the financial world and the real economy.

The stability of financial markets is not an end in itself but an instrument to enhance stability and growth in the real economy. To ensure a better integration between these two worlds, two main concerns would have to be addressed:

- a) Financial regulation should not take precedent over overall efficiency. This implies flexibility in domestic labor markets and renewed efforts to dismantle international trade barriers.
- b) Adequate signals must be given by financial markets to the real economy, with particular emphasis on the open promotion and dissemination of information, and the adoption of adequate rules allocating domestic jurisdiction over mergers, acquisitions and concentrations.

“That central banks pursue a single objective consistent within the new global financial environment”

9. Adapting present policies.

this long-term strategy toward stability we must pay due regard to current circumstances. In particular, three immediate concerns must be addressed:

- a) Concern over a U.S. domestic credit crunch should not warrant a loosening of regulatory requirements.
- b) There is a risk of world-wide shortages of savings as a result of recent capital requirements in the Gulf, Eastern Europe, the developing nations, and for the environment.
- c) The continued risks of the ever-postponed access to the market of countries emerging from debt crisis.

10. Addressing the specific concerns of non-OECD countries.

Our concern for non-OECD countries must go beyond present circumstances and must be tailored to those countries' individual needs. In the Union of Sovereign States this implies a coordinated effort to maintain the convertibility of

the ruble to insure the coherence of domestic development and the insertion of the former Soviet markets into global financial markets.

Central and Eastern European countries are developing financial markets and introducing internationally accepted supervision standards. The progress already made should be consolidated and extended to all of the countries in the area.

The developing countries are extremely diverse, with newly industrialized Asia moving toward the OECD, Latin America emerging from the debt crisis, Africa striving to meet the basic needs of its population, and oil producers, the Middle East, China, India, and Pakistan all having specific characteristics. In the face of this complexity additional allocations of SDRs, with a pattern of distribution different from the quota system, has been suggested.

Long term strategies, foreign aid and investment, and the emergence of a new entrepreneurship are the key answers to the problems of the developing world. Thus, the traditional role of the regional development banks and the World Bank needs to be strengthened, and attention would have to be paid to an extension of the supervisory standards in the OECD countries to banks and markets throughout the world. Groupings centered around a regional financial market, such as Singapore for the ASEAN countries, might prove advisable.

Compensatory mechanisms, or some measures of support should be created within each of the three currency blocs to soften the effects of short term disturbances. For instance, Europe might encourage flows of capital to Africa while African countries strengthen their banking systems and develop frameworks for attracting foreign capital. Obviously, for political reasons, capital markets cannot meet all the capital requirements of the non-OECD countries, and there needs to be a renewed emphasis on the role of official capital flows from multilateral and private institutions.

In the end, financial markets should serve as the cause of development itself in ensuring a proper allocation of resources and sufficient liquidity to attract foreign investors, thus ensuring the healthy development of financial systems.

The economic thought of Mexico's three principal political parties



PARTIDO
REVOLUCIONARIO
INSTITUCIONAL



PARTIDO
ACCION
NACIONAL



PARTIDO
DE LA REVOLUCION
DEMOCRATICA

Generally speaking, how does your party view the role of the state in the economy?

PRI: To promote economic development; and therefore the economy must be modernized. The PRI recognizes that Mexican citizens and their institutions are now sufficiently mature to become faithful agents of the economic revival. The PRI therefore welcomes the change in the state's role in the present administration. The policies of deregulation, disincorporation, modernization of finance, opening up to foreign trade, etc., all clearly illustrate that it is the government that is directing and promoting development and encouraging the participation of both the public and the private sector.

PAN: The state has authority over, but it is not the owner of, the country's economy. It should encourage all activities that promote a sound, prosperous, stable, and fruitful economic life. It should correct injustice in the allocation of national revenue. It should also avoid any unnecessary changes that might destabilize the nation's economic structure, and it must honorably maintain and manage the public institutions

indispensable for making the economy efficient. The state must also make the best possible use of the country's natural resources. In particular, the state must not conceive of the Mexican people as another tool of the economy; it must guarantee that the structure and the fruits of economic activity remain subordinated to, and at the service of, higher human values. The state's participation in the economy should be guided by two basic principles: an overall economic policy, and interventions by government in the economy which should by definition be temporary and of an auxiliary and complementary nature.

PRD: The state should have in mind the overall direction of the economy in order to see to it that the economic project is indeed completed.

Would you place any limits on financial, industrial, agricultural or urban ownership? If so, which in each case?

PRI: Our main concern is that the limits to private property in the Mexican Constitution should be fully enforced. Through all available means we wish to fight monopolies and the concentration of wealth, both of which distort

balanced and fair development. The Constitution specifies certain areas that are exclusive to the state. The PRI maintains that Mexico's sovereignty over its natural resources be inviolable. We support the modernization of the *ejidos*, (system of ownership stemming from the Mexican Revolution, where common land held by peasant families is worked individually or on a communal basis), and the assurance that they remain permanent. With regard to finance, we maintain that as the commercial banks are sold to private capital the state should preserve and modernize its development banks, and make suitable regulations so that individual rights and the public interest do not conflict. Urban land-ownership should be subject to the will of the public and comply with present laws regulating the use of land so as to regularize and improve standards of living in the cities and protect the environment.

¶ Private ownership is the most suitable means for assuring national output, and is the basis and guarantee of a decent life for the basic social building block: the family. We therefore encourage the accumulation of the highest possible number of family patrimonies. The PAN believes that the structural changes required by these times are not possible without a clear idea of the principles governing ownership. On the one hand, we should recognize that the basic nature and universal destination of material goods is to satisfy the legitimate demands of all people. On the other hand, the rational social nature of human beings calls for a certain appropriation of material goods -within the limits and conditions imposed by their universality- in the name of the nation's welfare and the needs of the international community. The principle of the universal destination of goods calls for structures to distribute private property among the greatest possible number of people and families. Importantly, the state's functions give it no authority to do away with private ownership: this is an erroneous corollary to the principle of the universal destination of goods. State welfare and social security

schemes are essential, but they do not replace the social and personal function of private property, exercised within a framework of human solidarity, the demands of the common welfare, and the concrete circumstances of the economy.

PRD: Those limits deriving from the Constitution.

What would you propose with regard to the external debt?

PRI: The PRI proposes to reduce the net transfer of resources abroad to a level compatible with the growth rate and price stability that Mexico requires. Furthermore, we stress the need to come to some agreement with our creditors concerning Mexico's capacity to service the debt and with the debt's real value, with the aim of making debt repayment a lower proportion of the gross domestic product. We are pleased with the recent renegotiation of the external debt. In the next few years it will be possible to reduce still more the transfers of the country's resources abroad. We will then be able to channel more resources toward financing productive investments and the growth of the economy. But the negotiation of the debt is no panacea; it is the sine qua non for our domestic effort to have any possible success, but we must continue our efforts to raise the level of domestic savings and productivity.

PAN: It is obvious that the external debt was imprudent. We consider the debt negotiation between the Mexican government and the international banking community of July 1989 reasonably acceptable, insofar as it established joint responsibility, and allowed Mexico a new opportunity to rebuild its battered economy, if only to respect future payments. However, we should not forget two things:

1. The nation must not overlook the responsibility of those governments that led Mexico into catastrophic levels of indebtedness; the National Action Party will not let this memory fade. There should be an exhaustive review of all agreements and documents and the liabilities entered into by each of the different

Prior to their meeting with Mexico's political parties on the 16th and 19th of April of this year, the National Association of Economists prepared over one hundred questions for the parties on different aspects of their economic policies should they come to power. In the interests of space and brevity we present only the three principal political parties, the PRI, the PAN, and the PRD, and only those questions we deem most relevant to Mexico's relations with the rest of the world.

administrations from 1970 to the present time so as to determine whether the resources obtained were in fact spent on their stated destinations, as is stipulated by Article 73 of the Constitution. We must investigate whether these agreements were made by legally authorized entities, and whether there was collusion between bankers and civil servants. All of this should be duly brought to light.

2. We should review those powers exercised by Congress that should be the exclusive right of the Executive branch. Effective mechanisms should be established for the revision and subsequent acceptance or rejection of loans in which collusion is discovered between creditors and Mexican authorities. The Congress should approve or reject the loans proposed by the Executive, and not merely limit itself to specifying amounts. The destination and applications of such loans should be examined with special care in accordance with the terms of the Mexican Constitution.

PRD: The debt must be renegotiated with a combination of discount, deadline extension, and fixing of the interest rate so that servicing of the debt will not put a brake on growth (10% of export earnings).

Does your party defend private enterprise?

PRI: Yes, definitely. We consider responsible and efficient use of private sector resources based on a nationalistic conception of the right to property, and confidence in the path upon which Mexico is embarking, to be essential to the promotion of large-scale economic projects.

Particularly, we reject the notions of state-ownership that favor concentrating all the means of production with the State, notions which are now completely discredited.

However, public interest demands that limits be placed on business: to pay taxes, to respect consumers' rights, to respect labor and sanitary and environmental regulations duly established by the community. In exchange, the government should commit itself -and in fact has committed itself- to maintaining transparent rules for business which make for confidence and certainty.

PAN: Private enterprise is the most dynamic means of improving society. The state must promote its ordered development and provide it with guarantees of stability and security. Wherever private enterprise is inefficient or insufficient, the state should urge the organization of strategically placed social activities, taking care not to make official administrative action destructive of the private sector. The state has the duty to see that the workings of private enterprise go hand in hand with the national interest, and are subordinated to the common good. A humanistic conception of business would doubtless safeguard the authority and efficiency of

management. However, it cannot reduce workers to the condition of people who simply carry out orders without right to an opinion, without any possibility of promotion. Therefore it is essential to find ways in which business may respond not only to the dictates of those who provide capital, but also of those who represent the rights, demands, and aspirations of workers. We should likewise study ways to help workers acquire shares in business so that, at the same time as strengthening their links with the firm, they establish a basis for forming their own patrimony, the legitimate aspiration of any human being. The concrete path to achieving these aims remains undefined, but the will to do so is strong.

PRD: Yes, the PRD does defend private enterprise, particularly small and micro businesses which democratize capital and encourage creativity.

Would you keep some sections of the economy under state ownership? Which ones? What type of enterprises? What percentage? Would you nationalize any others?

PRI: Historically speaking, public enterprises have been the basic tools of government action. This should be limited to strategic and priority areas, so as to make their participation more efficient. Strategic areas are economic activities reserved for the State because their effective administration, exploitation, and conservation is essential to the nation's sovereignty or because they deal with non-renewable resources vital for national security, or because they are essential public services, or constitute the basic infrastructure for the development of other activities of either the economy or the society as a whole. They should be administered according to social and public criteria, as they are the sum of the nation's history. For this reason these sectors are clearly defined by the Constitution: the coining of money, the postal and telegram services, radio-telegraph and satellite communication services, the printing of banknotes, oil, hydrocarbons, basic petrochemicals, radio-active minerals and nuclear energy, electricity, and railroads. The State must also continue its participation in sectors whose benefits accrue to the whole society, such as health care, housing, education, and the regulation and guarantee of the food supply and other basic products. In its role of promotor, the State should participate, only temporarily, in industrial activities in order to attract the investments necessary for development. Once these industries are consolidated, the State should retire and free resources for use in other strategic or priority areas.

PAN: Yes, but only those public entities that are absolutely necessary, are well managed and do not take on monopolistic qualities. To attain this we need a new



Cuartecero

Economic vertigo

concept of democratic public enterprise as an instrument for developing the country, and not a paradise for the political class to enjoy special privileges or a reserve for elitist technocrats. Finally, we need an approach that prevents the state-owned sector from becoming undefined and uncontrolled once again. We need to re-classify the areas and activities in which the public sector participates, so as to determine which enterprises should remain in State hands. We propose the following:

- Of national interest, fully state-owned: activities that produce goods or provide services directly related to the nation's general welfare and the exercise of national sovereignty and security. However, various entities should perform the same activity or trade to promote competition and efficiency. State-governmental monopolies should be held at bay.
- Of national interest, partially state-owned: areas or activities by means of which key goods and services are produced. The State should maintain some control over these, but other entities from the social or private sector may have a share in them.
- Subsidized and promoted by the State: activities in which the State intervenes with the object of encouraging development in specific regions, spurring specific branches of the economy to achieve specific economic-social objectives. In these activities there may be participation and/or association with other sectors. When enterprises are established in which the State is the sole owner or holds the majority of the shares, the

objectives and the time the enterprise will remain under state control should be clearly spelled out before hand, as should the conditions of disincorporation.

- Of a social transfer type: activities articulated through entities channelling public resources, controlled by the government but in which there should be participation and monitoring by the public. Targets, objectives, and duration should be clearly spelled out.
- Of a public service nature: areas or activities providing services of a public nature in which government monitoring is necessary, but without government control. Government participation may be limited to regulation and sale of these activities.

PRD: The strategic and priority sectors specified in the Constitution, adding to development banking all financial and insurance activities (insurance, bonding, factoring, etc.) financial intermediation, and all instruments for attracting capital. We would also add producers and dealers of basic consumer goods, to ensure that the lowest income brackets have guaranteed access to such goods.

Would you allow foreign banks to set up in Mexico? Under what conditions?

PRI: We recognize that the dynamics of our economic system, the competition between domestic and foreign financial intermediaries, and the outcome of the globalization of services make it necessary for banks to be able to offer internationally competitive services, both in quality and in price. Recently, far-reaching reforms have

been made in the financial system with a view to stimulating competition and the presence of foreign banks in Mexico. In the future these banks might bring about higher levels of competition and lower costs for credit, having access as they would to cheaper financial resources within a more efficient system. However, we must coordinate the timing and conditions of the integration in a manner suitable to the requirements of the different sectors, including the financial sector. The conditions under which such an opening should take place, if in fact it does take place, must comply with the Credit Institutions Act and with criteria of selectivity, reciprocity and, above all, gradual implementation.

PAN: The world is seeing a restructuring of trade in which different blocs of countries, mainly the industrialized and newly industrialized countries, are grouping together to consolidate their markets, seeking complementarity in their industries, and higher levels of integration. Mexico should not remain aside from these new trends, but its incorporation into international trade must be the outcome of rational and cautious planning, drawn up with the participation of all sectors of production and all regions of the country; the main objective being the national interest and the well-being of all Mexicans. We need to modify the Foreign Investment Act so as to allow foreign investors to be majority shareholders in all but strategic sectors and speculative investment, assuring by means of this modification that the following conditions, at least, will be met:

- That investment bring with it the transfer of advanced technology.
- That the social security of workers be firmly protected.
- That foreign firms commit to setting up training facilities for all their staff.
- That production processes strictly comply with the rules and regulations which protect the environment.

In view of the fact that foreign business interests will probably purchase Mexican firms, we should seriously consider accelerating worker-participation schemes, and granting preferential treatment to new investment rather than the purchase of preexisting assets.

: Yes, in order to support activities related to foreign trade, but forbidding them to act as agents of individual interests.

What do you propose on the subject of foreign investment?

PRI: We must encourage and promote direct foreign investment that accords with our own national investments. The general condition ought to be that such investment should compete with other domestic and foreign producers without the benefit of subsidies or other advantages. To promote this investment in a suitable way, the procedure

for authorizing new investments should be speedy and transparent, and mechanisms should be set up to assure that new foreign investment will not further pressure domestic financial markets.

PAN: See our reply above.

PRD: We propose retaining the present legislation on the subject.

What alternatives do you propose to control inflation?

PRI: Putting public finances on a sound footing is an important means for achieving price stability. We therefore propose a public spending policy that allows the public sector to generate its own revenue, with financing through non-inflationary sources and in amounts that do not destabilize our financial markets. Deficit financing should not rely on the excessively large primary issue of money, since experience has shown that this path leads to recurring crisis and ruin. Monetary and exchange policy should spur non-inflationary growth of monetary aggregates, maintain price stability and competitiveness with other countries. The PRI recognizes that concerting the different sectors of the country is an effective way to achieve these aims. Recall that maintaining price stability is the responsibility not only of the government, but of the whole society.

PRD

- Budget control.
- Increase of monetary supply indexed to the growth of output.
- Taxes on luxury goods, including imports.
- Progressively higher taxes on higher income brackets for individuals.
- A strategy to eliminate bottlenecks and spur the integration of production chains.

How would you regulate the convertibility of the peso?

PRI: At present, the healthy development of the financial and exchange markets has assured full convertibility of the peso in a framework of foreign exchange reserve accumulation. All the macro-economic policy instruments should work toward exchange stability to keep down inflation. Therefore we must maintain a healthy tax policy, and interest rates must balance financial markets. The country should not have to dig into its foreign exchange reserves except in cases of urgency – and then only temporarily – in order to maintain reserves at a suitable level for trade with other countries.

PRD: Under an anti-inflationary policy the market will be left free to determine the exchange rate and free convertibility of foreign exchange will be set by the private sector. Public sector reserves would be used according to the state's development policies.

In general terms, what would your tax policy be?

PRI: We propose a tax policy congruent with today's goal of modernizing the country through economic growth and price stability. Therefore, we suggest a reasonable handling of both sides of fiscal policy, that of revenue and that of public spending. With regard to revenue, we propose to increase taxes as a proportion of the GDP by widening the tax base and establishing tax rates competitive with those of our principal trading partners. Likewise, we propose a price and fee policy for public sector goods and services to reinforce the stability of the economy, at the same time strengthening the state-owned sector's financial position. Spending levels should be compatible with available resources, and should be oriented toward truly public activities that develop the economy and promote social well-being. The PRI supports continuing the disincorporation of state-owned enterprises that are neither strategic nor high priority, and also a policy of granting subsidies only to sectors that really need them.

PAN: The main features of tax law should be longevity, simplicity, precision, transparency, and effectiveness. Tax law should stimulate competition and investment. We should, therefore:

- Stabilize and enforce tax rules, and not change them every year through unconstitutional memos and circulars from authorities or minor civil servants who have nothing to do with Congress.
- Simplify tax declarations to bring down the high cost and time spent in tax-gathering. This means specifying the law so that it leaves no room for confusion, thereby clarifying and simplifying declaration procedures.
- Draw up well-researched and fair fiscal laws that pass all the hurdles of a truly democratic decision-making process.
- Reallocate to the municipalities the tax resources that the Constitution declares should be theirs and which traditionally have been absorbed by states or the federation, particularly property taxes and payments for municipal services.
- Bring down the Value Added Tax and revise the average rate of income tax. The taxation models of developed countries with per capita income ten or twelve times higher than ours cannot be applied in Mexico without modification.
- Increase tax deductions for private spending of a social nature, such as individual educational expenses.
- Thoroughly revise and reform the distribution of tax burdens, lightening the burden of persons, classes, and socio-economic regions that are now under-privileged and under-developed.

PRD: The objective of fiscal policy is to obtain sufficient revenue to satisfy the needs of our infrastructure and

development, and provide public services, especially those with the widest social impact such as health care and education. Revenue gathering must adhere to the principles of justice and equality.

What would your public spending policy be?

PRI: There are two elements to consider. On the one hand, determining the amount spent, and on the other how it should be allocated. Spending decisions should contribute to price stability and the proper functioning of financial markets. Spending should never be so high that the demand for loans exceeds the supply. This would make trouble for maintaining price stability. Likewise, the level of spending should be linked to the proper evolution of the balance of payments and the exchange market.

PAN: To change the distribution of public spending, reverse the historical preference for the capital rather than the provinces and spur balanced regional development among the different states of the republic. Congress should participate directly in regional development. Federal spending on the states should be increased substantially. Likewise, we should spend more on infrastructure, communications, urban services, education and health care in rural areas. We must encourage a new model for rural development. We must also reformulate the allocation and execution of the National Solidarity programs, delegating responsibility to municipalities and states, and providing them with the necessary funds and guidelines. The "vice-governors" or "political heads" of PRONASOL should not remain in the different states of the federation. Likewise, we must improve health care and education so that we may reach UNESCO's standard of living for developing countries. We need a new method for developing, discussing, and approving the basic instruments of economic policy. Firstly, Congress should be informed of, discuss, and approve any measure relevant to general economic policy, both regional and sectoral, well in advance of its implementation. The executive branch should take responsibility for legislation on income law and public spending. Secondly, Congress should discuss and approve the Executive branch's revenue projects by the 15th of November at latest.

PRD: We should see that spending does not give rise to a deficit which cannot be managed with profits from public investment. We must avoid deviations in current spending, and ensure that it is administered efficiently and effectively.

What would your wage policy be? And how would you achieve it?

PRI: In order to raise Mexicans' standard of living and to progress toward general social improvement, it is necessary

to increase real wages in step with productivity and the more efficient use of our production resources.

PRD: Trade union freedom is a must if wages are to match productivity and each firm's economic capacity. A commission should be set up that recognizes the loss of purchasing power due to the crisis. This commission should draw up a payment plan that would attempt to recover, within a feasible period, the purchasing power lost since 1977.

Would you keep Mexico in the GATT?

PRI: We consider it to be of the highest importance to keep the country in the GATT in order to realize our trade policy objectives. The GATT is an effective forum for different countries to solve their trade differences, and it provides opportunities for multilateral negotiation. The freeing of international trade -the GATT's main objective- is congruent with the PRI's trade policy.

PAN: We should do all we can to help the GATT overcome its present difficulties, and to see that the Uruguay Round does not collapse under the stress of the new world conditions. We should stay in the GATT and help to make it an instrument for spurring trade among the emerging regional trade blocs, and discouraging protectionism between such blocs.

PRD: Yes.

What would you propose with regard to prices: control, freedom or some mixed solution?

PRI: Price control is only appropriate when it serves the public interest, an interest based on the need for specific products, and the concrete status of the markets. This applies to the products listed in the basic shopping list. We also consider it suitable, for the moment, to continue price-guarantee schemes to protect farmers' income. Except in these cases, and especially once price stability has been achieved, it is better to allow supply and demand to set the prices for goods and services. Markets operate more efficiently this way and supply is better regulated.

PAN: A mixed solution. As much freedom as is possible for prices and as much control as is necessary. Price control distorts the economy and in the long run makes the price of the controlled product even higher. Control, whenever necessary, should be selective, temporary, and with a well identified objective.

PRD: Mixed, with ceilings placed on the articles on the basis shopping list, all others being free to find their own level.

With which countries would you wish to enter into a Free Trade Agreement? Would you exclude branches of the economy? Which ones? Why?

PRI: The great changes in the economies of many countries have enormously affected international trade relations. Mexico should participate in the new economic and trade currents. Given their geographical location, the volume of their present trade, and the fit of their economies -and principally because of its benefits to the Mexican economy- the PRI is in favor of negotiating a Free Trade Agreement with the United States and Canada. This would establish a stable and permanent flow of our goods and services to these countries. A Free Trade Agreement must remain within the framework of our Constitution; we must never include branches of activity that the Constitution does not allow, such as oil.

Likewise, the agreement should not create obstacles to trade with Latin America, Europe, and the Pacific Rim countries.

PAN: In the economic and commercial world, interaction and inter-dependence dominates international relations. Such relations now tend toward the integration of large regional groupings, by means of which each country seeks to secure its share in the world market and become more competitive. In these circumstances, foreign trade policy takes on an importance that goes well beyond mere export and import activities. It has a political content with far-reaching repercussions on the destiny of each country. Mexico's excellent geographical position enables it to design its own path, distinct from the formulas other regions have experimented with up to now, signing agreements, treaties and other arrangements in different directions without adopting exclusive commitments nor linking its fate to the North, the South, the Atlantic, or the Pacific. Mexico's strengths and weaknesses enable it to deploy a national strategy, and not to integrate in one direction to the exclusion of all others. Mexico can play the role of a multi-directional link in the new international order. Therefore, it is necessary to develop Mexican competitiveness and efficiency. Mexico should deepen and regularize its trade relations with the United States and Canada, link with the Pacific Rim countries and with the EEC. These may spur Mexico to initiate a new stage of development. Especially important are new links with Latin America through practical measures to increase trade and cultural ties. Mexico can and must take the initiative and create new models of exchange and multi-regional economic solidarity that overcome tendencies of self-sufficient trade blocs, and must promote aid and cooperation with the developing nations.

PRD: With all of the American continent, setting up special conditions for rain-fed agricultural crops and basic petrochemicals, and excluding those which the Constitution reserves for the State ❧

The Amparo Museum, Puebla

Lourdes Cruz González Franco*



Mixteco lintel, Post-Classical.

Puebla is one of the most outstanding colonial cities in Mexico. Its monuments, its churches, its museums, and the surrounding countryside make it highly attractive to tourists. At the beginning of last year, the Amparo Museum was opened, and has since become one of the major attractions offered by this beautiful city.

The museum was built by the Amparo Foundation, set up in 1979 by Manuel Espinosa Iglesias in memory of his wife, Amparo Rugaría de Espinosa Iglesias. This institution has made important contributions to Mexico's social welfare efforts in the fields of health and culture.

The aim of this cultural center is to make known the riches of our Pre-Hispanic, Colonial, and Republican past through its collections, its library, its Center for Historical and Cultural Research, and its courses on Mexican art. Its main

objective is "the encounter with our roots," as Director Angeles Espinosa Rugaría said on the day of its inauguration.

Located in downtown Puebla at No. 708 Dos Sur, at its intersection with Avenida 9 Oriente, it occupies

the colonial building which once housed the San Juan de Letrán Hospital and the 19th century home of the Espinosa Iglesias family. The outside of the two buildings were painted in one color, thus lending the ensemble a certain unity.



Patio, Amparo Museum, Puebla.

* Of the Institute of Aesthetic Studies, UNAM.



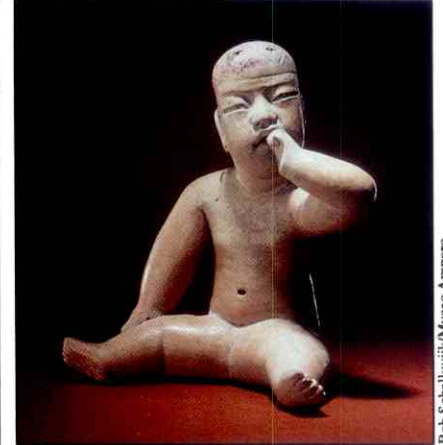
Bob Schalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Figure of seated man, earthenware, 1000-800 B.C.

The entrance to the museum is through what was once the Espinosa Iglesias home. From the outset visitors are surprised by the extraordinary way in which the

museum is organized. It was designed by the architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, who also adapted the buildings to their present use. Pedro Ramírez is well known in the world of architecture for his many world-famous buildings, such as the Anthropology Museum in Mexico City.

The materials used in the remodelling –marble, aluminum, glass, stone, and peach-colored surfacing– are handled with great dexterity in the two old houses. The colonial atmosphere has not been lost, but rather transformed into a museum incorporating contemporary technological innovations, such as the security controls, the specialized lighting, and the information system available to visitors.



Bob Schalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Figure of an infant, earthenware, 1000-800 B.C.

This system, unique in the world, consists of monitors located in every room with interactive compact discs –available in Spanish, English, French and Japanese– which provide detailed information on the exhibits.



Lourdes Cruz Gonzalez/Franco

Exhibition room, Amparo Museum, Puebla.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Tripod vase, earthenware, XII-XIV cent. A.D.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Yoke, porphyry, 800-1000 A.D.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Anthropomorphic vessel, earthenware, Post-Classical.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Bearded "chinesco" man, hollow clay and red paint, 100-500 A.D.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Person, hollow clay, 400-600 A.D.



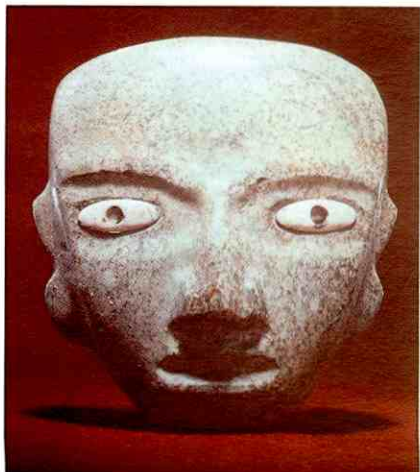
Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

Carved bead, in the form of human skull, basalt, 1000-1519 A.D.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

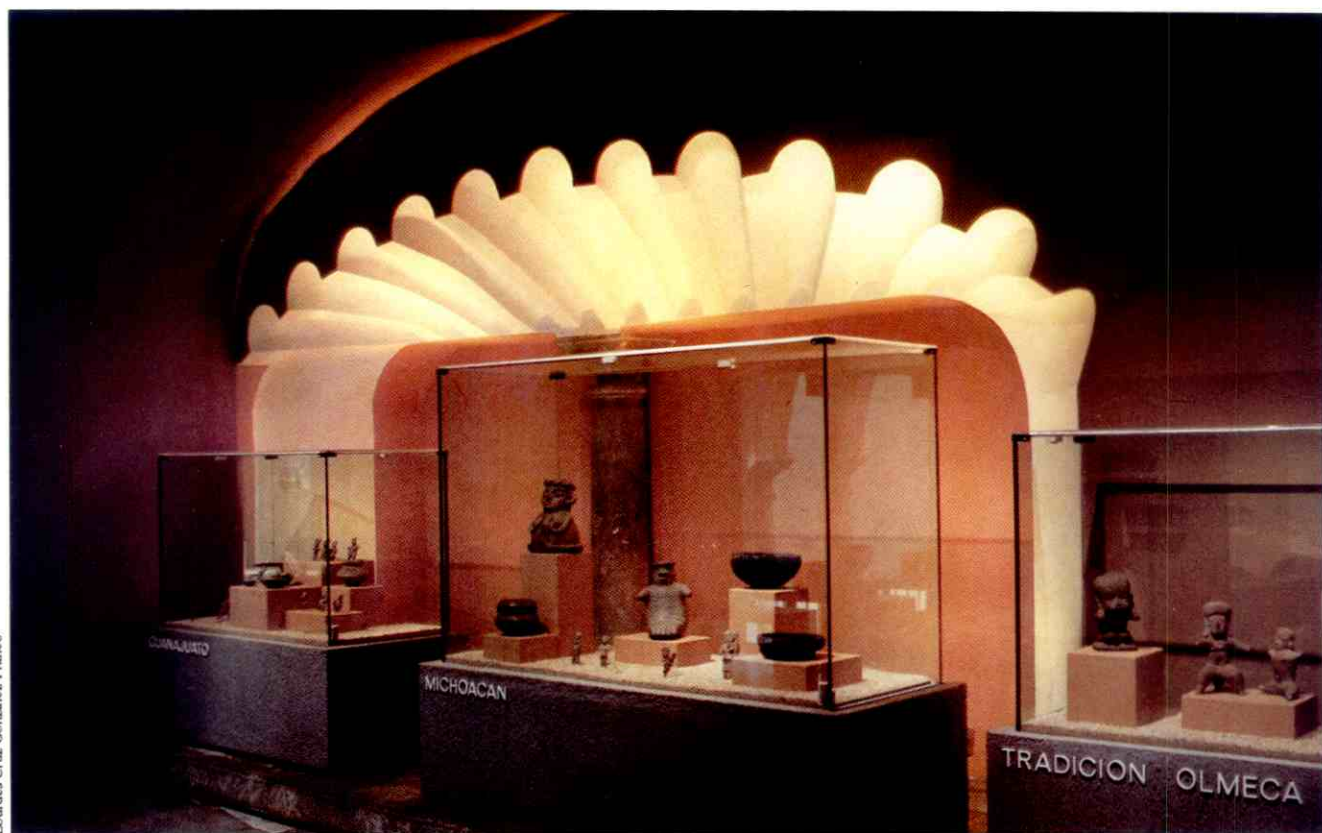
Breastplate, jade, 1000-800 B.C.



Bob Schaalkwijk/Museo Amparo

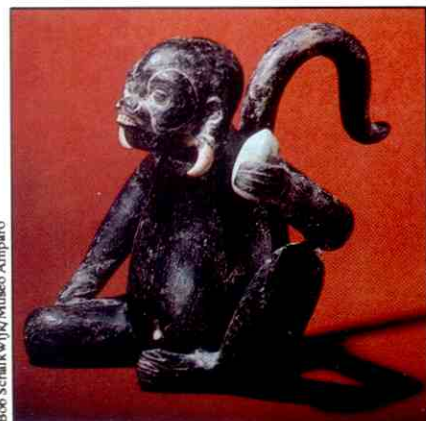
Flattened head, serpentine, 100-800 A.D.

Lourdes Cruz González Franco



Exhibition hall, Amparo Museum, Puebla.

The Amparo Museum consists of two large areas. In the first there is an important collection of Vice-Regal and Republican art from Mexico City and Puebla, with notable sculptures, paintings, furniture, wood-carving, jewelry and embroidery, all of which can be found on the upper floor of the 19th century building that serves naturally and gracefully as a frame for such pieces.



Bob Schalkwijk/Museo Amparo

"Spider-type" monkey, hollow clay and black asphalt, 400-600 A.D.

The second, larger area contains various collections of Pre-Hispanic art displayed in seven rooms intended to exhibit the customs, styles, and evolution of Mesoamerican culture. In the first room we see the production techniques of Pre-Hispanic artists in sculpture, painting, ceramics, pottery and wood-work, among others. In the second and third rooms, the styles and tendencies of different Mesoamerican communities' art is displayed.

In the following four rooms, which are on the upper floor, works from the Pre-Classic, Proto-Classic, Classic and Post-Classic periods are exhibited. This section of the museum culminates in a special room where extraordinary archeological pieces from what was formerly the Sáenz Collection are shown. The most outstanding among them are a large altar, several Mayan steles, and some Teotihuacan murals. Here, visitors are dazzled by the use

of lights and color which bring out the full beauty of these treasures. Over 1,700 Pre-Hispanic pieces are exhibited in these rooms, among which we find the Olmec *The Thinker* from Bocas, Puebla.

In another area reproductions of rupestrian paintings from Europe, Australia, and the Americas are shown. The reproductions are very successful in the way they convey the feel of the original locations. There is also a room for provisional exhibitions of contemporary art.

In addition, the museum has an auditorium for films and video, a library, offices, a cafeteria and a book store. After visiting the whole museum the visitor will certainly appreciate the excellent combination of advanced technology and magnificent art, which together create one of the best museums in Mexico, worthy of being visited time and again. ❧

Music in the cathedral (1531-1664)

*Fernando Alvarez del Castillo**

The destruction of the Aztec Empire and the construction of Spanish-style cities happened extraordinarily fast. Quite apart from our personal feelings about the imposition of a regime conceived by foreigners or pillage and the enslavement of an entire culture, we must learn to imagine ourselves in the minds and hearts of the conquerors. Rather than think only of their greed for riches and power, we must remember their firm faith in the Catholic church and the sacred duty to spread the Gospel among the inhabitants of the new world who were then considered to be savages.

The most profound motivation of the conquistadors could not have been stark avarice and the ruthless desire for power. The religious zeal of the first missionaries is unquestionable, and the conquest's success was largely based on the educational projects stemming from the genuine desire to save souls. In this, music played a leading role and was used deliberately and transcendently, influencing not so much through its art as through its effects on the consciousness.

Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and Jesuits successively built their missions and played their

music in the conquered lands. Brother Pedro de Gante, with the personal authority of the Emperor, was the first and most eager music teacher in New Spain.

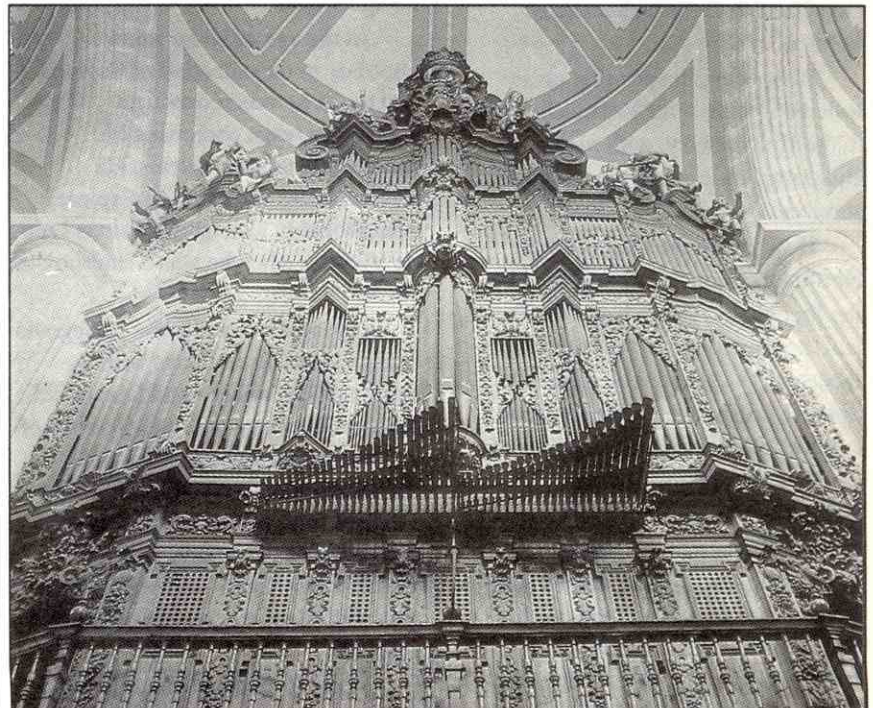
In 1531, the year in which Pizarro invaded Peru, a new city was founded in Mexico. It was called Puebla de los Angeles and was typically Spanish in all senses of the word. Its cathedral, built by native and African labor was

to be so splendid as to rival the cathedrals of Spain.

The creation of a New Spain as a faithful copy of the Old Spain was irreversible. Imported musicians and artisans trained the native Mexicans to make instruments, directed their energy and their labors down Spanish paths, and generally attempted to integrate them into the economic and social currents of the mother country.

The Spanish ecclesiastical authorities of Mexico brought with them from Spain the organization and customs of the Spanish clergy, particularly those of the cathedral of Seville. Puebla showed itself to be somewhat independent by adopting a model based on the cathedral of Toledo.

Music in Mexico adapted itself to new needs. The greatest influence was Cristóbal de Morales. His music moved the congregation in the cathedral when Charles V died, and his works, particularly his magnificats, served as models for



The organ in the cathedral of Mexico City.

* Sub-director of The Library of Mexico.



Geo Ackerman, *La Catedral y la Plaza Mayor, 1810.*

music in cathedrals all over the New World.

Among non-Spanish composers the most popular was Palestrina, whose works are known from Cuzco, Lima, Quito, and Bogota through Guatemala and the cathedrals of Mexico.

In Mexico, the printing press rolled out more than 200 music books in the 16th century, with plainsong and polyphonic music for religious services.

If we recall the history of the North American colonies settled by the French, the English and the Dutch, and the paucity of the culture they inherited, the speed with which the Spanish crown sowed the seeds of culture and assimilated the cities of the New World into Spanish-influenced urban life reveals itself as an astonishing achievement.

Economy, politics, and religion all mirrored European models. Art too, first an imported and later a native creation, matured, but with music we find gaps in the historical chronicle.

The first choirmaster of the cathedral of Mexico City was Hernando Franco, who was born in 1532 in Garovillas, in Spain. His birthplace was close to Alcántara in Extremadura, the homeland of the conquistadors.

At the age of 10 he was a choirboy in the cathedral of Segovia and by 14 he was receiving a significant wage exercising his remarkable musical talents. He studied under Jerónimo de Espinar, who probably also taught Tomás Luis de Victoria when he was a choirboy in Avila.

During his seven years in Segovia Franco spent his holidays with the family of Hyerónimo and Lázaro del Alamo. The latter was a choir-mate of his. In that house he met the rich nobleman Matheo de Arévalo Cedeño, who was to become an official in Mexico City. Arévalo Cedeño took Lázaro to Mexico with him in 1556 as choirmaster of the old cathedral.

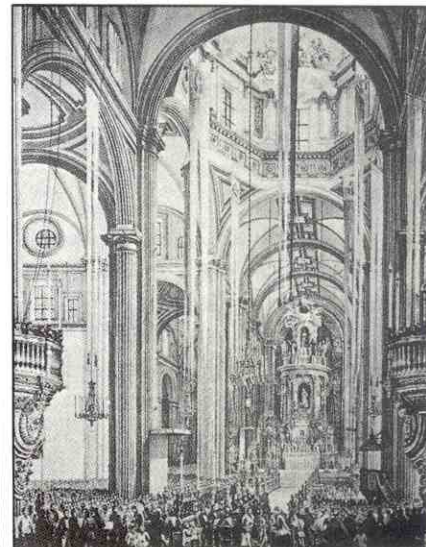
There is evidence that Franco accompanied Arévalo Cedeño on some of his voyages, but only in 1573

does Franco's name appear in the ledger of the cathedral of Guatemala, as choirmaster, with Hyerónimo del Alamo and his cousin, Father Alonso de Trujillo, appearing as members of the choir.

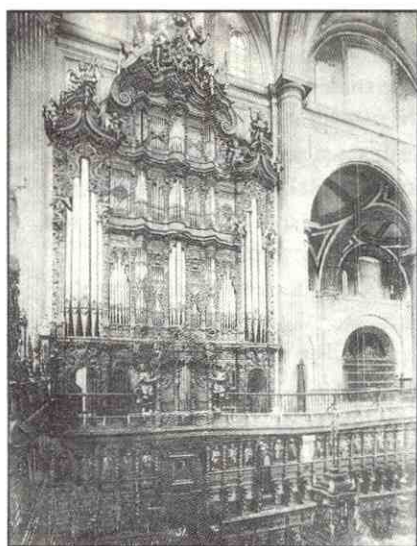
There is also a pay cut recorded in the Guatemala ledgers, and it may have been this that motivated Franco and his two choir-mates to seek employment elsewhere.

By late 1574 the three musicians had arrived in Mexico City. Franco was appointed choirmaster at the Metropolitan Cathedral, succeeding Juan de Victoria, who had in turn succeeded Lázaro del Alamo. For the next seven years, Franco received generous financial support for the Cathedral's music, support which later dried up due to the construction of the new cathedral, started in 1573.

Franco's services were of such high quality that Archbishop Moya y Contreras requested a special benefice for him. The request was addressed to the king of Spain. "Franco is a clergyman who leads an exemplary life. His abilities as a composer assure us a musical legacy that is equal to any in Spain, and he has thoroughly reorganized the cathedral choir."



Interior of the cathedral of Mexico City, lithograph, 1855.



The organ viewed from the choir.

The benefice was granted on the 1st of September 1581. However, due to changed circumstances in 1582 the cathedral chapter cut wages so drastically that Franco resigned and the vocalists and instrumentalists refused to play. Finally, pressure from both musicians and the general public made the chapter reconsider their decision. After lengthy financial negotiations the choir returned to work.

As he grew older Franco's responsibilities grew less, but he was still choirmaster when he died in 1585. He is buried prominently in the chapel of the old cathedral.

His successor Juan Hernández, who had been a lead in the choir, showed his admiration for his predecessor 25 years later as he presented the chapter of the cathedral with a lovely copy of the 16 scores of Franco's magnificats, two in each of the eight keys. At the time his choral collection was considered so important that the chapter agreed to buy the volume. Though Franco did not leave a large number of compositions, several sources bear witness to his popularity. Some of his works can still be found in Guatemala and the cathedrals of Mexico City and Puebla.

Mexican polyphony

The organs in the Cathedral of Mexico City are the most important ancient instruments in the Americas.

Historical chronicles remain somewhat confused by the abundance of contradictory and false dates. Nevertheless, one can quote, with only slight reservations, the note published in *La Gaceta de México* of the 23rd of October, 1736: "Two sumptuous organs were delivered to the metropolitan cathedral, each one a beautifully carved case of exquisite woods, seventeen rods high and eleven long. Placed in the tribune, it fills the whole horizontal space and more than half of the vertical space reserved for it. The entire device consists of a single wind chest which supplies air to both sides through five large bellows which wind all divisions of the organ without being either seen or heard. They are contained inside the upper box and are so large that each one contains over 3,350 flutes. One can obtain a harmonious mixture of diapasons, mixes, cornets, trumpets,

clarions, nazards, echos, drums, bells, small bells, violins, high pitched flutes, reed stops and all the other effects of which a full-scale organ is capable."

Standing on both sides of the choir, each organ is of different manufacture and history. The one on the eastern side -on the right when one enters through the main door- is the epistle organ, also known as the "Spanish organ."

It arrived in Mexico in 1696, built by Jorge de Sesma and sent to Mexico for assembly in the Cathedral itself by his assistants Tiburcio Sans de Izaguirre and his brother Félix, two Spaniards. According to original sources, before it was enlarged it had 76 or 78 registers.

Spanish choirs are located at the center of the church -as it is in the cathedral of Mexico City- and this positioning had greatly influenced the development of cathedral music. The members of the choir sat facing each other, thus accentuating the



"The Cathedral Under Construction, 1764," anonymous work in the Franz Mayer collection.



The beautiful columns and elegant ironwork of the cathedral of Mexico City.

antiphonal and polyphonal effects of the compositions.

Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla was born in Málaga around 1590. He began his career in Andalucía and received his musical training under Francisco Vázquez as a member of the Málaga Cathedral Choir.

Around 1613 he was appointed choirmaster in Jerez de la Frontera, and three years later he had moved to the cathedral of Cádiz where he was to remain until 1620.

It is not known when and why Padilla took ship for New Spain, but October 1622 already found him a singer and assistant choirmaster in the cathedral of Puebla, which was then one of the most important musical centers of this continent. On the 25th of September, 1629, he was appointed

choirmaster, where he remained until his death some days after the 22nd of April, 1664.

The arrival in 1640 of the cultured and powerful bishop, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, the first bishop of Puebla and later bishop of Mexico City, spurred the completion of the cathedral which was finally consecrated in splendor on the 18th of April, 1649. By that time Padilla's prestige and his economic position were firmly established. Certain sources mention the workshop for musical instruments that he had set up in his home.

In the colonial cathedrals, as in Spain, the choirmaster was responsible for the musical program and for rehearsing the choir. In Puebla, the choirboys worked and lived in the *Colegio de San Pedro*,

which was associated with the San Juan Seminary for Advanced Studies. The students of both schools attended the cathedral and were taught plainsong, polyphonic, and instrumental music. Under Bishop Palafox the quality of the music was extraordinary, and the beauty of services in the cathedral of Puebla surpassed those in the capital.

Padilla's choir was large and well trained, capable of double choir polyphony. It had fourteen choirboys and two hundred and eighteen adult singers. Some of the vocalists also played instruments, such as the famous harp-player Nicolás Grinon and the composer and organist Francisco López Capillas, who was Padilla's main rival, and who became choirmaster in Puebla later on.

When Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla died in Puebla he left behind an excellent collection of compositions, some of which can be found in *Choir Book No. 15*, Puebla Cathedral.

Padilla's works are influenced by Spanish polyphony, yet at the same time they tend toward early baroque in their slightly increased chromatism, a preference for the double choir, lively rhythms, and grave lines with instrumental support.

His imagination equalled his technical ability to create expressive and original scores, inspiring textures and rhythms which conjure up, by their sensitive use of words, vibrant vocal images. Like many Spanish choirmasters, Padilla composed a number of vernacular songs and carols for special holidays. His song cycles include courtly romances, saucy ballads known as *jácaras*, lyrical dialogues with accompaniment, and gypsy dances. His religious works include motets, funeral music, high masses, and one passion^M

Christopher Columbus' raincoat

Juan José Barrientos*

Two films on Columbus are to come out in 1992, one directed by George Cosmatos, with a script by Mario Puzo and Timothy Dalton as the Genoese navigator, and the other directed by Ridley Scott, with Gérard Depardieu as the Admiral. So far, it appears that in both films Columbus is a man of action, in contrast to his character in the 1985 six-hour television series directed by Alberto Lattuada, which focused on the navigator's mysticism. In that production Columbus was played by Gabriel Byrne, a little known Irish actor.

Paolo Emilio Taviani, an Italian historian and senator, was production advisor to the series. His wise piloting steered the production clear of anachronisms such as palm trees waving in the Caribbean breeze: palm trees were first brought to the New World many years after Columbus. But even Taviani lets a shot of a eucalyptus tree get through at one point.¹

Taviani himself remarked that the Columbus in the series "seems somewhat toned-down, and is probably a pleasanter person than he really was. Historically speaking, of course." He agrees with the script-writers Adriano Bolzano and Tulio Pinelli, and with Lawrence Heath's conception of the

Admiral as deeply religious, but he doesn't think he was so friendly with Indians. "He had faith, but he was not charitable." Nor was he so considerate in his family relationships as the TV series would have us believe. Hopefully the new films will offer us a more realistic portrait of the navigator and that, at the very least, he won't be wearing a raincoat.

During his return voyage to Spain, Columbus was nearly shipwrecked when he was surprised by an unexpected storm near the Azores on the 3rd of March, 1493. As Father Las Casas mentions with sailorly brevity in his *Diario*, "A storm came that broke the sails, and we were in great peril, but God was good enough to free us from it." In the TV series we see Columbus and

his sailors on the *Niña* protecting themselves during the storm with hooded black apparel that seemed to be made of plastic. A flagrant anachronism.

In search of an explanation, I consulted the *History of Technology* by T.K. Derry and Trevor I. Williams. They state that "in the 13th century articles made of rubber were in common use among the Mayas and the Aztecs, among which one might mention rubber balls for the *juego de pelota*. The Spaniards learned of this material during the time of Cortés and Pizarro [some thirty years later than Columbus's return journey]." According to these authors, by 1615 at latest the Spaniards were using rubber to waterproof their military cloaks. The

What *did* Columbus mean by "mile"?

This is, in fact, a matter of debate among scholars. Morison was so sure Columbus meant the Roman mile, of 4,850 feet, that he translated *millas* as "Roman miles" throughout his version of the *Diario*. Others assert that Columbus's mile is a shorter unit, of 5,000 palms, equivalent to about 4,060 English feet, or five-sixths of a Roman mile. All Iberian sailors of Columbus's time recognized 4 Roman miles as the equivalent of 1 Portuguese maritime league.

A study by James Kelly, *In the Wake of Columbus on a Portolan Chart* (1983), maintains that Las Casas may have misunderstood what Columbus was doing when he told his crew a smaller number of leagues made good than those he recorded privately. Instead of lying to the crew, Columbus was converting his 5,000 palm miles to the equivalent Portuguese maritime league of 4 Roman miles, a unit with which he and all his crew were familiar. Las Casas thought the larger figure was the Admiral's "true" reckoning and the smaller one a "false" figure provided to allay the fears of the crew.

Source: *The Diario of Christopher Columbus' First Voyage to America 1492 - 1493*, Oliver Dunn and James E. Kelley Jr., University of Oklahoma Press.

¹ Something much more obvious, to my way of thinking, took place in *Aguirre, La cólera de Dios*, directed by Werner Herzog, in which the protagonists sack an Indian village and find, among other things, some bananas. I remember having read a review of the film entitled "Aguirres Bananen" which identified several anachronisms.

evidence is rather scanty, but at least it is clear that Columbus and those who accompanied him on his first voyage didn't have raincoats.

One must also consider the sailors' inability to foresee the conditions of the journey. In 1833, the French daughter of a Peruvian went to claim her inheritance from her Peruvian relatives. She travelled from Bordeaux to Callao on *Le Mexicain*, which went round the Horn. Named Flora Tristán and about 33 years old, she was no ordinary woman. She became an active reformer and a grandson of hers became famous as a painter: his name was Paul Gauguin.

In her travel journal Flora states that "the sea near Cape Horn is appalling. There are nearly always adverse winds; the cold paralyzes even the strongest of our crew. To make things worse these poor sailors haven't a quarter of the clothing they need." She says that some of them wore "woollen shirts" and trousers so frozen that they couldn't

move "without the ice scratching bodies already numbed with cold." She mentions that one sailor had only a "pink shirt and a pair of canvas pants."

She asked the Ministry of the Navy to oblige both the commissaries of the French ports and the ships' captains to make sure that crews had sufficient clothing. Observing that on navy ships sailors had to pass inspection and were given the clothing they lacked (the price being discounted from their wages), she proposed that the same be done on all ships. She sagely pointed out that "if the men were well clothed, if they had a *waterproof cape* to protect their woolen clothing from damp, they could, with suitable food, withstand the rigors of the temperature."

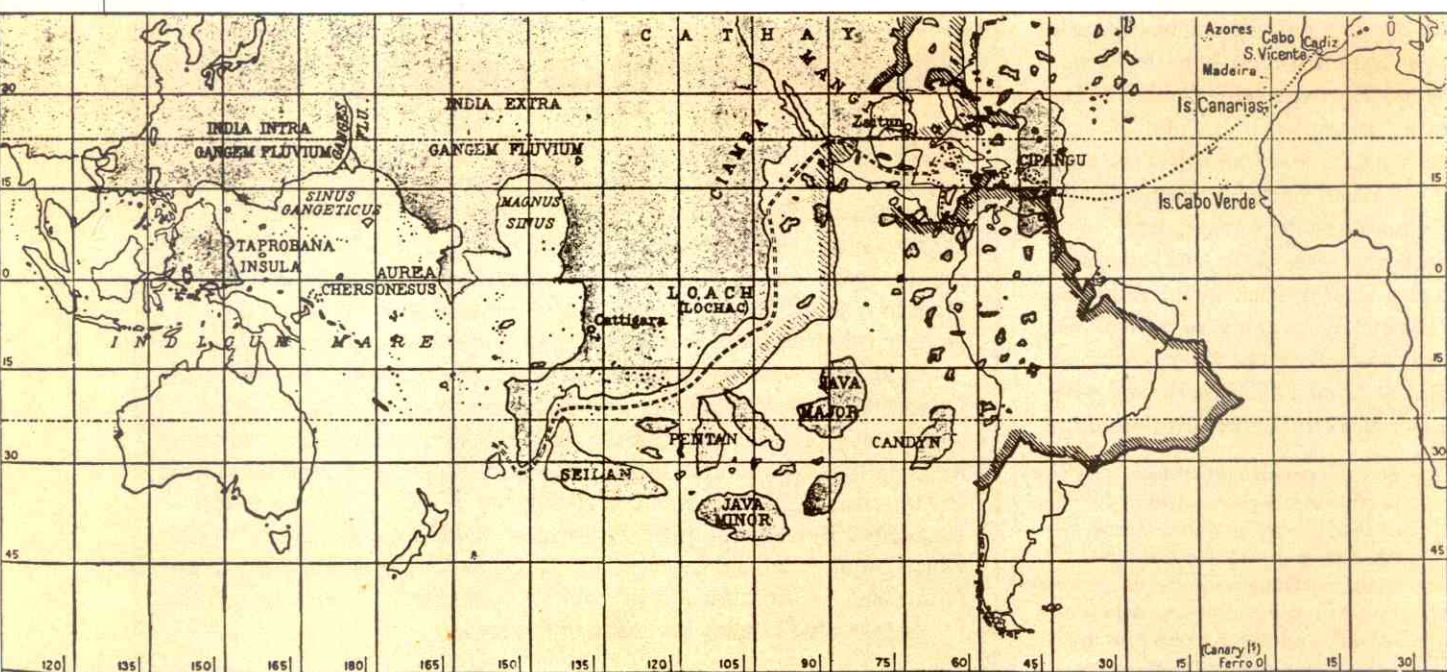
I also had the opportunity to look at some articles and texts used for the TV series, among which was an interview with Taviani in which he praises the costumes made by Enrico Luzzi and María de Matteis

for their accuracy. "One has only to see the improvised raincoats made of felt used by Columbus and the crew during the storm scene," he says, "they are copied exactly from paintings of that time."

The series was nominated for an Emmy for the costumes, but didn't get it. In any case, I don't think that the sailors from Palos who went with Columbus on his first voyage across the Atlantic had raincoats, either of felt or any other material, and it is not likely that Spaniards in the late 15th century would have had more foresight and been less ragged than Frenchmen in the 19th century, who, as we have seen, went to the famously nasty Cape Horn with only a shirt on their backs. ❧

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- * Flora Tristán, *Les pérégrinations d'une paria*. Maspéro, Paris, 1979.



Asia by contemporary reckoning, the basis of Columbus' knowledge.



East coast of Asia according to Behaim, moved east to make the cape of Zaitun coincide with the East coast of Cuba, which Columbus took to be Asia.



The coast of America described by Juan de La Cosa's map of 1500, incorporating all the recent discoveries.



Route of Columbus' voyage West on his fourth journey of 1502-3.



Route Columbus' thought he followed along the coast of Asia on his first voyage, which he thought would take him to Judea.

Columbus' notions of Asian geography as he embarked upon his fourth voyage.

The first Ibero-American Summit Meeting: results and perspectives

Miguel A. Ortega*

In his invitation to the heads of state and government of all the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries of this hemisphere and of Spain and Portugal, Mexico's President Salinas de Gortari suggested that they should get together in Guadalajara on the 18th and 19th of July, 1991, to discuss their respective ideas about regional integration, the challenges they face in the nineties, and the best way of joining forces to increase exchanges and maintain and develop their cultural unity.

The objectives of this meeting, to my way of thinking, were both to encourage Latin American integration and the role of Spain and Portugal as catalysts for greater collaboration between Europe and Latin America, and to take advantage of these two countries as spokesmen for Ibero-America within the European Community.

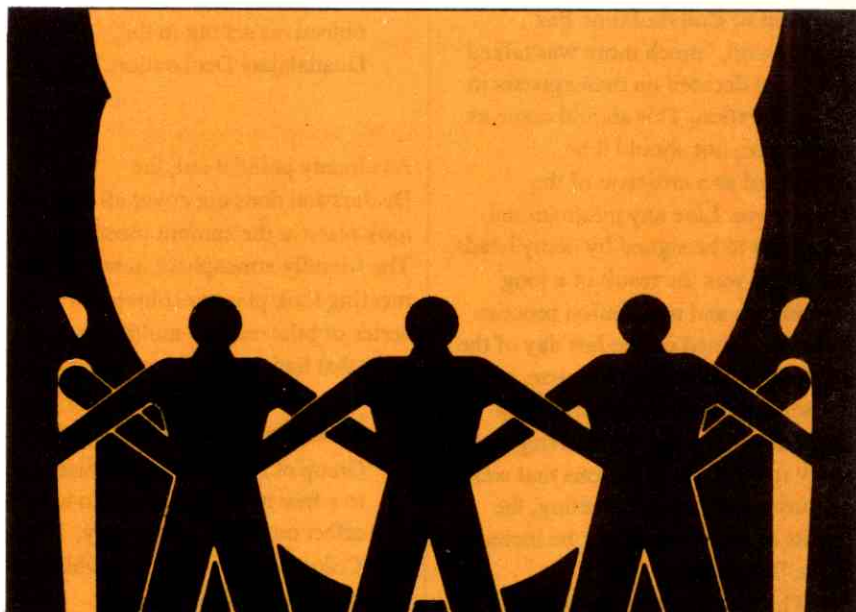
The significance of Latin America

It has often been said that the Latin American countries, taken separately, are in various degrees insignificant, but that once united they might be of great relevance in international relations.

* Advisor to the Organizing Committee of the first Ibero-American Summit Meeting.

A couple of examples illustrate this point. Uruguay is about the same size as the state of Washington (68,100 square miles approximately), has two thirds of Washington's

population, and a gross national product that, in 1987, was nearly twice as small. El Salvador is about the size of the state of Massachusetts. It has approximately the same number



P R I M E R A C U M B R E
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Logo by Rufino Tamayo.

of inhabitants, but its gross national product, in 1987, was nearly 26 times smaller.

However, the 19 Latin American countries, taken together, cover 7,700,000 square miles (more than the U.S.A. and Canada) have 430 million people (33% more than the 12 countries that make up the European Community), and a gross domestic product of a trillion and a half dollars (more than double the total of U.S. exports in 1989). Latin America is a highly attractive market and has enormous potential human and material resources. The saying that "union makes for strength" takes on special significance in this case.

What happened in Guadalajara

The Guadalajara Declaration is the most important document to come out of the meeting, although, as President of Bolivia Jaime Paz Zamora said, "much more was talked about and decided on than appears in the Declaration. This should come as no surprise, nor should it be interpreted as a criticism of the Declaration. Like any international document to be signed by many heads of state, it was the result of a long drawing-up and negotiation process. As it was signed on the last day of the meeting, it could not, of course, cover all the suggestions proposed." Paz Zamora was, no doubt, referring to the many fruitful conversations that went on during the summit meeting, the results of which could not be included in the Declaration.

The Declaration contains 23 sections and 28 concrete commitments agreed on by the 21 governments in areas such as international law, economic and social development, education and culture. I consider the document to be of fundamental importance because:

- a) It constitutes a kind of rule book for greater cooperation between the Ibero-American countries,

with a view to regional integration in the medium and long run, and an effective insertion into the rest of the world.

- b) On the political side, the heads of state and government declared that they will not stand aside from the unilateral designs of a new international order.
- c) The statement declared that they were "committed to the economic and social development of our peoples to free them from poverty before the twenty first century."
- d) The Declaration concludes by concretizing this effort; the summit meeting will now take place annually, in Spain in 1992, in Brazil in 1993, in Colombia in 1994, and in Argentina in 1995. This will make it possible to "exchange information on the progress made toward the objectives set out in the Guadalajara Declaration."

Other progress made

As already pointed out, the Declaration does not cover all that took place at the summit meeting. The friendly atmosphere in which the meeting took place encouraged a series of bilateral and multilateral talks that had concrete results:

- a) The presidents of Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela (The Group of 3) committed themselves to a free trade agreement to take effect on the 1st of January, 1992.
- b) Colombia and Chile reestablished consular and commercial relations with Cuba, and announced that they were considering renewing diplomatic ties too.
- c) The presidents of Argentina and Brazil committed their governments to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only and pledged to join the Tlatelolco Treaty which aims to eliminate

nuclear weapons from this continent.

- d) The secretary general of the United Nations made considerable progress toward peace in El Salvador, assembling the leaders of Colombia, Spain, Mexico, and Venezuela as a good-will catalys group and getting the president of El Salvador and the representative of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front to participate in this dialogue.
- e) The presidents of Brazil and Colombia discussed stabilizing the international price for coffee and reviving the International Coffee Organization.

What didn't happen in Guadalajara

Prior to the summit meeting some analysts speculated that it would be dominated by "several kinds of U.S. presence", particularly pressure on President of Cuba Fidel Castro to implement "changes of a democratic nature" in the island. It was even speculated that the White House had asked one of the presidents to hand Castro a letter from President Bush demanding something of this sort. The other U.S. presence that might have dominated the meeting was the discussion of the Initiative for the Americas. What in fact took place was just the opposite. Fidel Castro came out of the meeting more secure than he had been before and the Initiative for the Americas was only briefly considered.

Fidel Castro

It was hardly to be expected that a head of state would ask for changes in the Cuban political system when the Declaration "reaffirmed the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention," and recognized the right of each nation to build its own political system and institutions, in peace, stability, and justice.

An affirmation of the Ibero-American community of nations

The following is a message sent by 1990 Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz to the heads of state taking part in the first Ibero-American Summit Meeting on the announcement of plans to establish the Octavio Paz Ibero-American Library.

It is not easy to describe the emotion I feel when writing these lines. Perhaps it is not necessary to say anything. Perhaps the essential thing is not what I feel -surprise, gratitude- but the meaning of a gesture that far exceeds my most questionable merits.

When President Carlos Salinas de Gortari told me of his intention to put my name on the Ibero-American Library I was enthusiastic; but I knew then and know quite well now that I am no more than an incident in the rich and varied history of our literatures.

We are witnesses to the first meeting of the heads of state of the Ibero-American nations. The mere enunciation of this fact clearly reveals its sense: this meeting would have been impossible only a few years ago, and it is the first of its kind. On the one hand, it is a statement or an affirmation of the community of nations that is Ibero-America. On the other hand it is the beginning of a new stage in our history.

This meeting tells us that we have a common history, and a history on the move.

What is history? Definitions are almost always insufficient. I will only say that history is more than just the chronicle of what has taken place; it is an awareness, a point of intersection between the past and the future. History is not already behind or before us, in the folds of the past or in the mists of the future, but here and now. A here and now open to what has been and what will be.

Gravity of history. Without the weight of the past, the future vanishes into thin air; without the breath of the future, the past becomes stone and crushes us.

For this, the founding of an Ibero-American Library out of the meeting of the heads of state of our nations is an act of historical maturity. It satisfies both our will for the future and our awareness of the past.

A library is, primarily, a collective memory. Not a purely receptive memory, but an active, dynamic one; a creative memory which illuminates the works kept in a library: ideas, hypotheses, delusions, truths.

Every one of us, simultaneously, discovers and invents himself, recognizes and transforms himself, changes and by changing returns to what he really is.

As Machado would say, books are mirrored mazes. They are also transmutation chambers.

In the Ibero-American Library we can see ourselves in our past, meditate about our present, and project our future: convergences of time, space, and civilizations.

A library is a place from which one can see the whole universe. Its walls do not close us in, they are windows for looking out at the world and knowing mankind, and also something else: a library is a community of voices, ideas, passions, images, and visions.

Community means plurality, differences, exchange, conversation -never unison; the most seemingly opposed ways of thinking and the most contradictory opinions living together.

A library is a house of divergences governed by tolerance. As this century comes to a close nations have rediscovered freedom and democracy. This is a phenomenon that encompasses both Latin America and Eastern and Central Europe. Certainly, the collapse of dictatorships and ideologies has in many places resurrected old and long-buried idols, old fanaticism and blind nationalism.

I know of only one remedy against such things. Criticism as an exercise of freedom and democracy are inseparable. Without freedom, democracy becomes tyranny, while democracy humanizes freedom and obliges it to recognize its limits, the freedom of others.

The lessons of our epoch teach us that the foundations of the Ibero-American community cannot be only our past. For our past to awaken, rise and walk again, it needs freedom and democracy. More than principles or projects, these are its true foundation stones. On these we will someday build tall, transparent houses.

Octavio Paz



Pedro Valierna/Cuartoscuro

The first steps on the long road to integration.

Furthermore, Castro came to the summit in a highly constructive state of mind: "...the essential thing about this meeting is our decision to join our efforts and will to integrate and unify Latin America, not only economically but also politically. Cuba is willing to belong to such a Latin America, and even to shed its blood for it, in defense of what is now the front line of the independence and sovereignty of our peoples." Castro's way of thinking made itself felt in other ways, like his hearty applause and shouts of encouragement for Guillermo Endara's Panama Canal statements.

It would seem safe to assume that in private conversation Castro gave his Ibero-American counterparts a preview

of some of the pro-democracy trends that came out in the Cuban Communist Party meeting three months later.

It is hard to imagine the Ibero-American statesmen putting Castro on the spot when Cuba has perhaps the best social indicators in Latin America: the highest life expectancy, the lowest infant mortality rate, and the highest rate of school attendance.

Finally, I think that the opinion expressed by Angel García Lascaráin in *El Economista* (July 26, 1991; p. 9) is very relevant: "although Castro's politics might be considered outdated, he does bring into the integration effort a component that

cannot be overlooked -the historical memory."

The Initiative for the Americas

The Initiative for the Americas (IA) was briefly addressed at the summit meeting. Only two heads of state (Carlos Menem of Argentina and Fidel Castro) referred to President Bush's proposal in their official speeches. The loudest proponent was the director of the BID, Enrique Iglesias, who said it was "the way to develop Latin American economies."

There are two possible reasons why the IA received such scant attention: 1) because it would have been inappropriate to discuss an outside proposal at the moment

Ibero-America was drawing up its own strategy, and 2) because although the IA's aims are more or less clear, the mechanisms for achieving them are ill-defined. "There is no established pattern, there is no measure covering all the different approaches to reform. We are prepared to negotiate macro bilateral agreements to open up markets and develop stronger trade ties with any nation in the region. Debt reduction will be carried out on a case by case basis." This appears to have been the Ibero-American party line. The bilateral nature of the Initiative made it very difficult to consider when negotiations with the United States might have very different implications for each of the countries concerned.

A comment on the meeting's organization

King Juan Carlos of Spain was the last to speak at the Guadalajara Summit Meeting. He said that he hoped that at the next one "we will be able to match the example that Mexico has set."

A good deal of the meeting's success was due to the meticulous planning and the creation of an atmosphere conducive to dialogue. President Salinas sent special representatives to invite all the heads of state and government, giving all of them an opportunity to voice their concerns prior to the summit itself and to receive directly from the Mexican government a notion of the meeting's objectives. There were no nasty surprises during the event.

The opening public session made it possible for the heads of state and government to give their view on Ibero-American and other issues they deemed worthy of mention. The four private working sessions made for a less formal atmosphere more conducive to dialogue and personal rapprochement between the

participants, many of whom had not met previously.

Perspectives for Latin American integration

If Latin American integration hasn't been successful up to now, it has not been for lack of trying. There are at present at least 60 regional integration organisms, not including sporting, political or professional associations. There are various reasons for this consistent failure: some have been too ambitious, others have been hindered by excessive red-tape, others have come to grief on isolation and nationalism, others have been weakened by internal ideological conflicts; and others because they ran up against the interests of powers outside the region. César Gaviria, president of Colombia, summed it up as a "lack of political pragmatism and excessive protectionism."

With such a negative track-record, what is there to make one think that our present attempts at Latin American integration might be more promising? I would stress the following:

1. There is a new element of need. Latin America is emerging from the so-called "lost decade". According to the CEPAL, "Real per capita product in late 1989 was not only less than it had been ten years before, but even had fallen back to that of 13 years before, or in some economies even more."
2. Rapid changes in geopolitics and the international economy are other new and powerfully shaping elements. Globalization and the formation of large trade blocs in Europe, North America and the Pacific Rim make it clear that unilateral policies and economic isolation cannot produce growth and development in national economies.

3. The rise of a new generation of leaders in Latin America represents a desire for more pragmatic change. The tone of the political speeches in Guadalajara was very different from what was heard in the seventies and early eighties. Ideology has come to take a secondary role in inter-Latin American relations. This manifested itself in various ways at the summit meeting (for example Castro's gesture when Endara was speaking).
4. Latin American integration has been reoriented toward a gradualistic approach starting at the grass roots level, a more subregional orientation as the first step toward full integration. This has been demonstrated by the progress of the Southern Cone Common Market (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay), of the Andean Pact (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela), the Group of 3 and the Central American Common Market, plus numerous bilateral efforts such as that between Mexico and Chile.
5. "Furthermore," according to Felipe González, prime minister of Spain, "there are three new and important factors: the first is the unquestionable demographic density we enjoy; second is the established drive toward regional integration; and the third is our countries' progressive economic convergence toward modern and viable projects."

Of course the road will be long and hard. We should recall that only now is Europe seeing its efforts at integration materialize, nearly forty years after the European Coal and Steel Pool was set up. But for Latin America there is no time to lose. We have already lost a decade, and history won't wait.

Latin America's first free trade agreement

In a world whose present evolution is primarily conditioned by the challenges of far-reaching economic transformation, increasing interdependence and globalization, regional cooperation becomes a decisive and determining element for spurring development and assuring the well-being of nations.

Trade and cooperation will be the fundamental elements in economic blocs in which comparative advantages will enable countries to meet the challenges of world economic competition. Mexico is already diversifying its trade with Europe, the Pacific Rim countries, North America and, of course, Latin America. The most outstanding example of this is the Economic Complementation Agreement (ECA) between Mexico and Chile, signed on the 22nd of September of 1991.

While the agreement is significant for several reasons, its relevance and novelty lie in two basic points: 1) the ECA is the first free trade agreement signed by two Latin American nations, and 2) Mexico and Chile have taken an enormous and important step toward the integration of the continent. The presidents of the two countries, Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico and Patricio Aylwin of Chile, stated in their joint communiqué that "regional coordination, unity, and integration have the highest priority on the short and the medium term political agenda."

Furthermore, the ECA is responding to global needs insofar as globalization of markets is what mankind is striving toward. This agreement thus signifies one of the most important political acts of the last few years in Latin America for the cause of regional coordination. We have finally left behind 150 years of talking about integration without doing anything about it.

A good overview of the importance of the agreement was provided by Gert Rosenthal, the Executive Secretary of CEPAL. Prior to the signing of the ECA he had warned about the risk of creating a new economic division in Latin America: a gap between the countries who might integrate and those who can't even afford to think about it. Rosenthal pointed out that "the negotiations that Mexico is now engaged in over a North American free trade area do not exclude the possibility of negotiating similar agreements with other Latin American countries at the same time. By extension, the postulates of the Initiative for the Americas and increasing Latin American integration are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are complementary."

The fine print of the Santiago Agreement

According to information given out by the Ministry of Commerce and Industrial Development, the Santiago

Agreement, signed for Mexico by Minister of Trade Jaime Serra Puche and for Chile by Minister of Finance Alejandro Foxley, will increase bilateral trade by some 233%; from U.S. \$150 million to U.S. \$500 million over the next five years.

The program reduces tariffs, starting on the first of January this year, and will conclude in 1998 when all tariffs on bilateral trade will be eliminated. The Ministry of Trade and Industrial Development made public that as of January 1992 the maximum tariff for goods traded will be 10%; in 1993 it will go down to 7.5%; in 1994 to 5%; and, in 1995, to 2.5%. By 1996 trade will be totally tariff free.

The tariff reduction program puts the branches of commerce on two different time tables: 1) that for the majority of goods, which will be tariff-free by 1996; and 2) a shorter list of products such as petrochemicals, glass, ceramics and wood among others, which will not be completely tariff-free until 1998. Non tariff barriers will likewise be done away with starting next year.

The main Mexican products exported to Chile are, in order of importance: motor vehicles, railroad cars, petrochemicals, typewriters, tyres, synthetic fibers (polyester), and photographic film. Chile exports to Mexico fish meal, beans, iron, fruit, textiles, wood, and furniture, among other items. The Ministry of Trade pointed out that for Chile the ECA represents access to a market of approximately 15 million people. However, Chilean sources estimate that their exports to Mexico will soon have access to a market of nearly 90 million consumers.

Furthermore, Andrés Velasco, head of the Chilean Office for the Coordination of International Finance, explained that the ECA complies with the parameters set by the Latin American Association for Development and Integration, which means that it does not have to be approved by the

legislative branch. He also stated that the trade agreement contains safeguard clauses in case excessive imports of a particular product might have negative effects. In these cases a surtax mechanism would be put into effect to make the imported product more expensive.

There are also mechanisms to prevent unfair trading practices; government procurement will be regulated so that it does not set up barriers to global trade, and clear operational rules will be drawn up for settling disputes through a governmental commission which will issue its rulings within 35 days.

Chapters

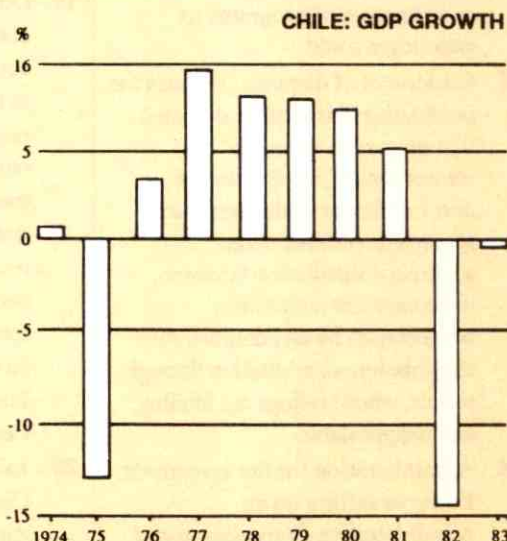
1. Objective. Establishes the aims of the agreement: increase bilateral trade, promote investment and cooperation between the two nations.
2. Liberalization program. Stipulates tariff reduction aims and the elimination of non-tariff barriers. Specifies how to treat products that are excepted from the terms of the agreement. Defines duties and restrictions on imports. In this section goods are classified according to category:

- a) The vast majority of products that are now subject to tariffs: for these goods all non-tariff barriers will be eliminated as soon as the ECA comes into force and tariff reduction programs are set up, initially with a maximum common tariff of 10% to be reduced to zero by the 1st of January 1996.
 - b) Goods of special temporary interest for both nations, such as petrochemicals, textiles, glass, ceramics, meat, poultry, eggs, tobacco and wood. The tariff reduction program starts out with a common maximum tariff of 10%; this will start to go down as of 1994 and will reach zero on the 1st of January, 1998.
 - c) Goods for which no tariff reduction program has been agreed on, for example certain fixed agricultural prices in Chile, oil and oil by-products, and key Mexican agricultural products of no interest in Chile.
3. Origin. Sets up rules of origin applicable to any bilateral trade under the auspices of the ECA. The basis is the existing rule of the Latin American Association

for Development and Integration. Some flexibility is allowed for differential requirements by sector and to sectors and their modification over time.

4. The motor vehicle sector. Makes possible the liberalization of bilateral trade in motor vehicles and parts, beginning in 1996. For Chile this means the possibility of exporting vehicles to Mexico restriction-free.
5. Safeguard clauses. Two possibilities are imagined: balance of payment problems, and significant harm to similar or directly competitive goods. The ECA allows for temporary application of surtaxes on a non-discriminatory basis. When balance of payments problems come up the application of the surtax cannot be selective.
6. Unfair trading practices. Each country's laws will be applied in such cases. Consultations will facilitate enquiries in the case of subsidy or dumping problems.
7. Domestic taxation. Commits both parties to tax exports from the other country the same way that domestic goods are taxed.

Chile is, perhaps, the country in best shape in Latin America, having avoided several crises in the past. For example, in 1973, before the military coup, inflation was close to 700%, the public-sector deficit was 25% of GDP, and there was a ten-fold difference between the black-market and official exchange rates. Structural changes were introduced at that time. They consisted of opening up the economy to more and greater market orientation. The plan was similar to Mexico's: cutting subsidies, public-sector spending and tariffs, as well as deregulation and privatization. However, in 1982, Chile went through a serious problem in the area of banking, one which would have grave repercussions. Chile's subsequent experiences teach us a lesson. We cannot ignore the external phenomena which affect our system. Nor can the commercial banking system ignore the risks inherent in micro- and macroeconomic activity. Healthy and prudent—in one word, orthodox—bank intermediation is an essential requisite for the health and growth of developing economies.



Source: Department of Economic Research, Banamex. Based on data from the Banco Central de Chile.

8. Government procurement. An attempt was made to prevent government procurement from becoming a barrier to trade. This subject may be negotiated starting in 1993. The idea is to define the coverage and clarify the procedures regulating each country's government purchases. It is especially important for Chile to clarify its procedures in the future.
9. Investments. Encourages investment and joint ventures; grants the best possible treatment to capital from the other country.
10. Sea and air transport. Seeks to set up unrestricted sea and air transport for both freight and passenger services.
11. Other services. Opens up the possibility of including trade in other services in the agreement.
12. Other standardization. Commits both parties to standardize rules and regulations when necessary in order to perfect the ECA.
13. Economic cooperation. Coordinates programs, fairs, seminars, exhibitions, and the exchange of information.
14. Encouragement of trade. As in the above chapter, stipulates the coordination of programs to encourage trade.
15. Settlement of disputes. Defines the mechanism for settling disputes that may arise from the interpretation, application or non-fulfillment of the agreement. It consists of three stages:
- a) direct consultation between, the competent authorities;
 - b) mediation by an administrative commission;
 - c) arbitration through panels, whose rulings are binding and unappealable.
16. Administration for the agreement. Foresees setting up an Administrative Commission and defines its functions. These are: evaluating how the ECA is functioning and proposing modifications; mediation, appointing arbitrators and proposing changes; establishing procedures for the application of safeguards; following up on price policies and practices in key sectors of the economy of both nations; and setting up mechanisms to assure the active participation of the private sector. The commission will be governmental with representatives from each countries' respective ministries.
17. Duration. Establishes that the Economic Complementation Agreement will be of indefinite duration.
18. Repeal (revocation of the agreement). Establishes that the country that wishes to end the agreement must notify the other country 180 days before it officially notifies the Latin American Association for Development and Integration. Likewise, from that time on all rights and duties acquired shall cease, except for those to do with imports which shall remain in force for another year.
19. Other stipulations. Includes the commitment on the part of the two countries to grant proper protection to intellectual and industrial property rights, and to keep each other mutually informed of foreign trade rules, regulations, and statistics. In addition, this chapter recommends that there be coordinated action in international forums and that the private sectors have recourse to the Inter-American Trade Arbitration Commission to settle disputes.
20. Joining the ECA. The Mexico-Chile Economic Concertation Agreement is open to other nations belonging to the Latin American Association for Development and Integration, subject to negotiation.
21. Temporary stipulations. States that the agreement will be formalized with the Latin American Association for Development and Integration and that all other agreements that Chile and Mexico previously signed within the framework of the Association will be null and void.

Anti-drug trafficking agreement

On another tack, but within the general framework of bilateral cooperation, on the 2nd of October the governments of Mexico and Chile signed an agreement in which they commit to fight drug trafficking and drug addiction. Drugs threaten the security and other national interest of both. The agreement signed contains four sections: prevention and reduction of the demand for narcotics and psycho-tropic substances; control of supply; suppression of illegal trafficking; treatment and rehabilitation.

The agreement was careful to establish Mexican and Chilean respect for the principles of self-determination, non-intervention, equality before the law, and respect for territorial integrity.

It was also agreed to beef up anti-drug trafficking and drug-rehabilitation budgets according to each country's economic resources. The production, importing, exporting, and sale of inputs, chemicals and chemical raw materials used in the production of drugs will also be regulated.

To guarantee compliance with this agreement a committee composed of representatives from the two countries will be established. Its basic function will be to recommend to the two governments the most efficient means of cooperatively achieving their goals.

Celia I. Martínez Zwanziger
Staff Writer

First Latin American to win the New York City Marathon



Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari congratulates New York City Marathon winner, Salvador García.

Salvador García, a 28 year-old Mexican widely known as "The Falcon", and his compatriot, Andrés Espinosa, won the first two places in the 22nd New York City Marathon. García is the first Latin American to win in New York, considered the most important marathon in the world, where three of the first five finishers were Mexicans.

The course, which winds through the different boroughs of New York City, starts in Staten Island, and crosses the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, treks through Brooklyn, then Queens, and finishes in Central Park in Manhattan. García ran the 42 kilometers in 2 hours 9 minutes and 28 seconds. Andrés Espinosa, also 28, finished well ahead of the rest of the field at 2 hours and 10 minutes.

Kenyan Ibrahim Husein finished third at 2 hours 11 minutes and 7 seconds; in fourth was Canadian Peter Maher at 2 hours 11 minutes and 55 seconds. In fifth place was another Mexican, Isidro Rico, at 2 hours 11 minutes and 58 seconds. The all-time record for this course is held by Tanzanian Juma Ikangaa, at 2 hours 8 minutes and one second.

More than 26,000 people from 87 different countries took part in this year's marathon.

Raquel Villanueva
Circulation Manager

The utopian Guillermo Bonfil Batalla

Lina Odena Güemes*

A professional anthropologist, and a full-time cultural and Latin American theorist and defender of ethnic minorities, Guillermo Bonfil Batalla (1935-1991) will be sorely missed in the intellectual world, as he will be too in the personal world. He was a close friend, a lively personality, a caustic conversationalist, and a great dancer of jarabes, rumbas and danzons. One listened to music with him as if it were a ritual; with opera no one was allowed to breathe a word, but the experience was equally ritualistic if one were listening to María Betania or Milton Nascimento.

He wrote stories in rich and unpretentious prose, and loved to read poetry aloud. He could share the charm of living with Darcy Ribeiro and Juan O'Gorman, with carpenters, artisans or "conchero" dancers. Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, who would burst out in peals of laughter, whose company was so pleasant... his parting has left a deep sense of loss among his friends and old schoolmates.

At the National School of Anthropology and History he received a master's degree in anthropological science, specializing in ethnology. His thesis, *Diagnóstico del hambre en Sudzal, Yucatán* (A Diagnosis of Hunger in Sudzal, Yucatán), published by the INAH in 1962, indicated what was to be the direction of Bonfil's professional path. He was extremely sensitive to the problems of the marginalized and undernourished population of the henequen-growing region.

He obtained his doctorate in Anthropology from the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature, National University of Mexico (UNAM). His thesis *Cholula. La ciudad sagrada en la era industrial* (Cholula, The Sacred City in the Industrial Age), directed by the scholar Paul Kirchhof, was published in 1973 by the UNAM's Institute for Historical Research, where Bonfil had worked as a researcher from 1967 to 1972.

Bonfil Batalla did his ethnological work at a time when field work was the principal type of research. The

script that Bonfil Batalla wrote for the film *Los Amuzgos* in 1962 was a product of field work and his interest in film as a vehicle for showing how poorer sectors of society really live. Thomas Stanford, a researcher of ethnic music, and Alfonso Muñoz were also part of the team. In 1965, with Arturo Warman, who did the soundtrack, the recording and the research and Alfonso Muñoz and Víctor Anteo, he filmed *El es Dios* (*He is God*), a documentary on the lives and work of the dancers known as "concheros". This film, a moving portrait of these people dedicated to ritual dancing who were little-known up to that time, was highly commended at the Folk Festival in Florence, and received the Silver Goddess from the Mexican Association of Film Critics in 1967.

In the early 70's, he published other results of his fieldwork, the article "Introduction to the Cycle of Lenten Festivals in Cuautla, Morelos" and another on the *Graniceros* of Tepetlixpa, State of Mexico, in which he describes the strange manner of these "weather workers" to invoke the angels to fend off rain and hail.

While he was staying with Alejo, a *Granicero* who had been struck by lightning three times, in the sacred caves at the foot of the volcanoes, Bonfil used a technique known in ethnology as "participative observation": he took part in night-long sessions and offerings to the Holy Cross, and in *limpias* (spiritual cleansings) to ward off evil. At that time, working with Arturo Warman and Alfonso Muñoz, he found that a type of fortune telling which uses grains of corn, still survives in Tepetlixpa from Pre-Hispanic times.

Guillermo Bonfil Batalla's theoretical work did not lag behind his ethnographical research. In 1967 he wrote an article on "Imperialism and National Culture," and in 1970, with Mercedes Olivera, Arturo Warman, Enrique Valencia, and Margarita Nolasco he published a book that was to become a manifesto of the new anthropology which went beyond the old functionalism-culturism type. Bonfil's article is titled "From the Revolution's Defence of the Indian Population to Critical Anthropology." The

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title of the whole book is *De eso que llaman Antropología Mexicana* (About What They Call Mexican Anthropology).

At that time Guillermo Bonfil Batalla began to speak out courageously, although he was not the only one to do so. Ethnic questions became the linchpin of his intellectual concerns. In 1972 he wrote a brilliant article, "The concept of The Indian in America: A Category of the Colonial Situation." This article, a critical view of the realities of Indian life, came from a consciously politicized position:

The notion of the Indian is in fact a supra-ethnic category that does not denote any specific characteristics of the communities it purports to describe, but rather a particular relationship between them and other sectors of the wider social system of which the Indians are part. The notion of Indian describes the condition of being colonized, and necessarily refers to the colonial relationship.

He himself pointed out that the initial plan for this proposal, which was new in the field of anthropology, grew out of his intense academic and teaching activity, particularly from the seminars he directed at the National Museum of Río de Janeiro in 1970 and at the UNAM and the Ibero-American University in 1971, and the Conference on Inter-ethnic Frictions in South America that took place in Barbados, also in 1971.

It was there that he and anthropologists Alicia Barabas, Miguel Bartolomé, Stéfano Varese, and several Indian intellectuals, wrote and published the historic manifesto known as the Barbados Declaration. This marked the emergence of Bonfil Batalla as a new anthropologist, dedicating his academic and political work to the struggles of ethnic groups to speak out for themselves. His thought, always radical and sometimes utopian, was enriched by the Barbados Group, and others who thought as he did such as his colleague and close friend Salomón Nahmad.

His unyielding defence of ethnic minorities, his vision of a Mexico reflecting its deep Mesoamerican roots and his capacity to synthesize our history and culture are all in one of his most recent books, *México Profundo* (Grass-roots Mexico), an original and polemic work that has jarred various sectors of society and the academic world.

In *México Profundo*, Bonfil Batalla makes two claims. First, that Mexicans need to recognize Mexico's cultural and ethnic diversity and must organize society based on this recognition, and secondly, that such a plural society is only viable to the extent that the dominant sectors of

Mexican society can change their mentality and acknowledge the legitimacy of this plurality.

In this book Guillermo Bonfil Batalla bequeathed to us the search for a new society, a society that adapts itself to make room for 12 million people speaking 56 different languages, whose views of the cosmos and of life are different from ours, but not any less worthy of respect. In this sense, Bonfil Batalla was not a romantic, he was a utopian. A utopia which, like Lamartine's, is thoroughly possible.

Guillermo Bonfil Batalla's work encompassed other dimensions and frames of mind.

For example, he was a remarkable administrator and civil servant. From 1972 to 1976 he was Director General of the National Institute of Anthropology and History. His administration was characterized by a strong drive to protect and restore the nation's cultural heritage, by its encouragement to historical research, and by the importance it attached to museums, the maintenance and diffusion of their collections and their values, and their accessibility to school children.

From 1976 to 1980 Guillermo Bonfil Batalla was Director General of the National Institute for Anthropology and History's Center for Research and Advanced Studies, at the same time heading the Ethnic Studies Seminar. From 1981 to 1985 he was Director of the Museum for Folk Culture which grew out of new ideas which worked well with an older project started by Rodolfo Stavenhagen and Leonel Durán, old school mates of his from the National School of Anthropology and History, and founders of the School of Popular Culture, another institution which Bonfil Batalla had directed.

At the time of his death Bonfil Batalla headed the Seminar on Mexican Culture, part of the National Council for Culture and the Arts, where he organized important research work and academic conferences. He was also a member of the Commission for the Quincentennial, in which his input was considered very valuable, and a consulting member of the National Human Rights Commission.

The work and intellectual life of Guillermo Bonfil Batalla went beyond what a mere summary can express: teacher, researcher, civil servant in cultural and academic institutions, and adviser for national and international projects. During his life he was widely recognized, receiving awards from the governments of France and the German Democratic Republic, and the *Manuel Gamio* award given for outstanding work for the cause of Indigenous communities. From Guillermo Bonfil Batalla the social sciences inherit a truly valuable legacy.

Eli de Gortari, Ana Mérida, and Alfonso García Robles

Eli de Gortari: off the beaten track

Eli Eduardo de Gortari (1918-1991), a university professor and researcher, pioneer in the fields of dialectics, logic and the history of science in Mexico, and member of the professor's coalition during the student movement in 1968, died last year in Mexico City on the 30th of June.

Completely devoted to science and humanism, his work is among the most outstanding in the critical thinking of the sixties. A Marxist theorist of dialectic logic, his work reflects his profound interest in enriching science in a critical and creative way, starting from the principle that all knowledge is transitory and will be inevitably replaced by more novel and innovative forms.

De Gortari was born in Mexico City on the 28th of April, 1918. He studied engineering and mathematics and received his Ph.D. at the *UNAM*. From 1948 he taught at the *UNAM* and in 1954 began to do research. His knowledge was encyclopedic, and his university work was characterized by the rigor with which it approached all issues touching on science and philosophy. A truly critical mind, he was open to any new argument -if he considered it well-founded.

His enthusiasm and his unlimited capacity for work can be seen in the volume of his writings and publications, among which are more than 30 books, pamphlets, and translations on various subjects. His most outstanding are works on the history of science and dialectic logic, among which are: *La ciencia de la lógica* (*The Science of Logic*), *Introducción a la lógica dialéctica* (*Introduction to Dialectical Logic*), *Dialéctica de la física* (*The Dialectics of Physics*), *Lógica General* (*General Logic*), *El método dialéctico* (*The Dialectic Method*), *La Ciencia en la Reforma* (*Science at the Time of the Reformation*), *Ciencia y conciencia en México* (*Science and Consciousness in Mexico*), and *La ciencia en la historia de México* (*Science in the History of Mexico*).

His restless, untiring mind led him to combine his teaching and research work with other projects: round-tables, conferences, and seminars. The most



Eli de Gortari.

Pedro Valtierra/Cuartoscuro

noteworthy of these being the organization of the *Seminario de Problemas Científicos y Filosóficos* (Seminar on Scientific and Philosophical Problems) in 1955. Bringing together specialists from the exact and the human sciences to discuss common problems, this seminar left an indelible mark on Mexican academia.

De Gortari considered it impossible for scientific and philosophical knowledge to progress as long as they developed parallel. His interest in promoting this seminar, the first of its kind at the *UNAM*, was to carve out a terrain in which philosophy and science could meet. The results of the discussions were published in note-books, supplements and books. Over a period of more than ten years, the seminar generated 33 books and 89 supplements and notebooks, including works by foreign authors not known in Mexico at that time.

Eli de Gortari was convinced that science is inextricably linked to economic, political, social and cultural life. This conviction kept him from ever renouncing his social and political commitment to change and democracy. This brought him into conflict with political powers.

As Rector of the *Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo* from 1961 to 1963 he tried to raise the institution's academic standards without losing sight of the community toward which his efforts were directed. He founded the *Escuela de Altos Estudios* (School of Higher Studies), which taught progressive cultural and philosophical thinking, and Marxist philosophy of science. He also created the bibliographical series *Problemas científicos y filosóficos* (Problems in Science and Philosophy), which made available to Mexican scholars the most advanced knowledge both in science and in philosophy.

While at *San Nicolás de Hidalgo* he was an active member of the Mexican Communist Party. His administration enjoyed the support of students and professors from his own university and other universities, and from worker's and peasant's organizations. However, his reforms ran afoul of certain vested interests, and eventually brought down upon him the wrath of conservative groups within the university itself backed by the state and federal government. They violently put a stop to De Gortari's reforms with a new, illegal Organic Law. De Gortari denounced the law, and then resigned in early 1963.

In 1968, with Heberto Castillo, he was one of the most outstanding members of the Professor's Coalition in Support of Democratic Freedoms, which played an important role in legitimizing and protecting the fragile student movement. His participation led to his imprisonment together with other members of the movement. They were charged with 19 federal offenses, such as leading illegal gangs, incitement to rebellion, attacks on public thoroughfares, criminal association, and theft.

Sentenced to 17 years in prison, two and a half years later charges against him were dropped and he was released. In prison, he and other prisoners had staged a hunger strike to insist that they should be brought to trial. De Gortari had to give up the hunger strike after 12 days due to an attack of diabetes. The strike lasted 42 days.

His stint in prison did not prevent him from continuing his intellectual work. His cell-mates remember him as constantly reading, writing, or giving classes. One of his most important works, *La lógica dialéctica*, was written in prison. Nevertheless, De Gortari never idealized his sojourn in prison, nor did he conceal the disadvantages of prison life for intellectual and personal development. For this he was criticized by certain intellectuals and students,

saying he had lost courage. However, these criticisms never succeeded in tainting his image as a man who lived by the light of his militant intellectual ideals.

Upon his release, he continued his work as researcher and professor and -with the support of the *UNAM*- orchestrated the rebirth of the *Seminario de Problemas Científicos y Filosóficos* which had been dormant for some years. Untiring, De Gortari continued his intellectual and political activities right up to the last months of his life with rigor and dedication.

In the posthumous homage paid to him on the 19th of September, 1991, Rector José Sarukhan said that his death was a great loss for the National University of Mexico and for higher education in general. His long academic career, guided by his lively curiosity about all things scientific, had produced a body of work that went far beyond its particular field, making important contributions to both science and humanism.

At the homage, the philosopher Jaime Labastida described Eli de Gortari as "a professor who was more modern than most, and whose critical thinking had room for all the sciences, both hard sciences and human ones. An audacious, unusual mind, he was capable of reinvigorating university thinking and knowledge as a whole."

Ana Mérida: a life devoted to dance

Ana Mérida Galves (1922-1991), dancer and choreographer, considered to be one of the creators of modern dance in Mexico, died in Mexico City on the 12th of August. She started dancing early in her life, encouraged by her father, Carlos Mérida, a Guatemalan painter who lived and worked in Mexico City, and whose extensive oeuvre reflects the movement in the early part of this century to revitalize indigenous cultural motifs.

Carlos Mérida, who collaborated with Diego Rivera on the murals in the Ministry of Education, considered dance to be a complex web of aesthetic inspirations and expressions capable of exposing the roots from which the nation's modern life had sprung, an ideal that had been pursued in painting since 1920. His views crystallized when he founded the School of Dancing, initially part of the Ministry of Education's department of Fine Arts.

The School of Dancing was to become the womb of the Mexican modern dance movement. Classical ballet, Greek dancing and acrobatics, Mexican folk dances, staging, folk music, make-up art, set design, scenic art, and the basics of modern painting and sculpture were all taught there.

Ana Mérida began her studies in the school directed by her father. From him she learned the



Ana Mérida.

importance of discipline, study, and freedom of expression. Carlos Mérida, an enemy of improvising, taught his daughter that all works of art emerge from solid work built on discipline and order: "What hasn't been thought out clearly," he said, "cannot be put into practice with any clarity either¹." Ana danced in public for the first time when she was twelve years old in a Festival of Mexican Dances organized by the school in 1934. Some years later she decided to take up dancing as a career.

In 1939 Ana Sokolow, a dancer who hoped to cleanse dance of its artificial, arbitrary, and traditional forms, came to Mexico for the first time. This ballerina captivated Mexican audiences with her technical mastery and artistic charisma. In 1940 she returned to establish a Mexican dance troupe called *La Paloma Azul*, through which she decisively influenced the development of modern dance in Mexico. Ana Mérida joined the troupe and became one of Sokolow's most brilliant disciples. Working with Sokolow she learned the technical and didactic aspects of modern dance and choreography.

In 1942 Carlos Mérida went to the North Texas Teacher's College to give special courses in modern art. Ana took advantage of this to enroll in advanced courses there in dancing, choreography and music.

When the famous ballerina Waldeen arrived in Mexico -invited by the Department of Fine Arts to organize a Modern Dance Company drawing from her extensive experience in the study of folk dances -the work begun by Ana Sokolow was consolidated and

expanded. With tact and taste Waldeen used folk sources to turn dance into an expression of the deepest essence of Mexican life.

Ana Mérida joined this new company in 1945 and, with Guillermina Bravo, became one of its most outstanding members. Ana always said that she had never had any teacher like Waldeen, her great gifts as both dancer and choreographer had enabled her students to understand and learn what it is to compose a ballet. "I owe to her my consolidation as a professional dancer²."

When Waldeen left Mexico in 1946, Guillermina Bravo and Ana Mérida assumed responsibility for continuing and developing her work, directing the company which remained faithful to her teachings. That same year they formed the Ballet Waldeen, whose aim was to create a true Mexican ballet founded on Mexican dance themes and techniques of contemporary dance.

In 1947 they gave their first performances in the Hotel del Prado, with pieces choreographed by Waldeen, Bravo and Ana Mérida. The Ballet Waldeen became the first rung of a ladder that was to lead to the foundation of the National School of Dance.

That same year Ana Mérida was guest dancer with Katherine Dunham's Black Ballet. Also at that time, the Academy of Mexican Dancing was founded, directed jointly by Ana Mérida and Guillermina Bravo. In 1948 Ana became sole head of the Academy and, the following year, organized a season of performances of works by Ana Mérida, Guillermo Keys, Amalia Hernández and Raquel Gutiérrez, among others.

Artistic differences with the rest of the Academy in 1950 led to Ana's appointment as director of the Academy's new experimental group, where she continued to pursue her own aesthetic ideas about modern Mexican dance. For two years she headed this group and staged several successful tours both in Mexico and Guatemala. One of her best pieces, presented in Guadalajara, was *La Luna y el Venado*, for which she received several awards.

When she retired from the Academy of Dancing in 1952, Ana Mérida was invited by the governor of the State of Chiapas to create a ballet based on the recently discovered murals in the Mayan ruins in Bonampak. This discovery had created a stir among Mesoamerican scholars because it confirmed the tremendous sophistication of Mayan aesthetic concepts.

The aim of the ballet Bonampak was to show the cultural complexity, the vitality and the ingenuity of the most brilliant native indigenous civilization through the medium of dance. This was a challenge for Ana Mérida's creative capacity and her skills as

¹ Antonio Luna Arroyo, *Ana Mérida en la Historia de la Danza Mexicana (Ana Mérida in the History of Mexican Dance)*. Publicaciones de Danza Moderna, México, 1959, p. 17.

² *Ibid.*, p. 107.

a choreographer. She rose to the challenge with one of her most outstanding works.

The ballet *Bonampak* was performed for the first time on the night of the 15th of September, 1951, at the open-air theater in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, capital of the State of Chiapas. The interest it aroused led to repeat performances in Mexico City sponsored by the National Institute of Fine Arts. *Bonampak* was considered an artistic triumph both in Mexico and abroad, and its success was undoubtedly due to Ana Mérida.

As a scholar of folk dancing, one of the most neglected aspects of dance, Ana toured Central and South America with the Mexican Ballet (1955-57), and the Bellas Artes Modern Dance Ballet (1958). During her tenure as Director of the National Institute of Fine Arts' Department of Dance (1958-61) she succeeded in getting official recognition for professional teachers, dancers and choreographers.

Always vital and creative, she coordinated the World Folklore Festival in Mexico in 1968. She directed dance programs for the first four Cervantino Festivals, and worked on dance and music programs for television's Channel 13, as well as a twelve part series called "The Golden Age of Mexican Dance" for UTEC (Educational and Cultural Television Unit).

As choreographer of the National Dance Company (1979), she choreographed and produced the ballet *Ausencia de Flores*, an homage to José Clemente Orozco. She also acted in several films, and in 1973 she received an award for her performance in the film *El Santo Oficio*.

Ana Mérida's extensive oeuvre contain *La Calaca*, *Profecía*, *Choros*, *La balada del pájaro y la doncella*, *El cielo de los negros*, *Norte*, *Psique*, *Balada de los quetzales*, *La llorona*, *Electra*, and *Equilibrio en punto negro*. Her personality and sensitivity, along with her dedication to creating an authentically Mexican dance, make her death a great loss.

Alfonso García Robles, man of peace

Alfonso García Robles (1911-1991), an uncompromising and untiring fighter for disarmament and an exceptional standard-bearer of Mexican foreign policy for over half a century, died last year in Mexico City on the 2nd of September.

A model of professionalism and humanitarian passion, García Robles belonged to the group of diplomats trained in the post-revolutionary decades who administered Mexico's foreign policy in the

complex world dominated by the Cold War. Promoting both conventional and nuclear disarmament were the mainsprings of his life.

He was the main force behind the 1967 signing of the Treaty for the Banning of Production and Use of Nuclear Weapons, better known as the Tlatelolco Treaty. He firmly believed that the people of the world could live together in peace and solve their differences by legal means.

His efforts to establish a juridical system to work for disarmament, and his defense of the rights of peoples and the sovereignty of nations were recognized in 1982, when in conjunction with Alva Myrdal of Sweden he became the first Mexican to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.



Alfonso García Robles.

Pedro Valtierra/Cuartoscuro

The Nobel Committee explained that they had been awarded the prize for their work at raising public awareness of the dangers of a continuing nuclear arms race, and thus contributing to a world-wide sense of responsibility. On receiving the prize, García Robles said humbly, "This is useful for disarmament because this cause will make itself heard once again, especially because the world now faces a choice: disarmament or annihilation."

Alfonso García Robles was born in Zamora, Michoacán, on the 20th of March, 1911, in the first days of the Mexican Revolution. He studied law in Mexico City and Paris. By the time he was thirty he had published two books, *El panamericanismo y la política de buena vecindad (Panamericanism and the Good Neighbor Policy)*, and *La cuestión del petróleo en México y el derecho internacional (The Oil Question in Mexico and International Law)*, the second of which was published in French shortly after the nationalization of oil. These books reflect his deep interest, from the start of his diplomatic career, in international and Mexican affairs.

A witness to the international crises of the thirties, World War II and the collapse of the League of Nations, he participated in nascent groups that were later to become the United Nations.

In 1939 he was appointed Third Secretary to the Mexican Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden, at the same time Alva Myrdal worked in the Swedish social-democratic government on working women's issues. They were to meet again in the United Nations, when Mrs. Myrdal was Director of the Social Affairs Division and García Robles was Director of the Political Affairs Division, a post he held for eleven years from 1946 to 1957.

During his tenure as Director he worked on the creation of the state of Israel and the Palestinian question, he helped to organize the Bogota Conference and labored to diffuse the Egypt-Israeli war of 1956. He firmly believed in the principles and objectives of the United Nations. In a period characterized by constant threats to world peace, his diplomacy was outstanding in its capacity to propose solutions that averted possibly violent conflicts, and the ease with which it balanced between the desirable and the possible.

García Robles was Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the De-Nuclearization of Latin America from its inception in 1964 to the signing of the Treaty in 1967. His tenacity, his enthusiasm, and

his negotiating skills were decisive in the shaping of the treaty. In 1969 he was in charge of drawing up a permanent agenda with the aim of assuring the de-nuclearization of Latin America, and in 1970 he was appointed permanent Mexican representative to the Geneva Disarmament Committee, where he set up a joint disarmament program.

From 1964 to 1970 García Robles was Under Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Later on, in 1976, President Echeverría appointed him Minister. In October 1981 he was given the rank of Ambassador Emeritus and in 1982 he received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Referring to García Robles's personality the Mexican columnist, Miguel Angel Granados Chapa, wrote, "Sergio Sarmiento, the editor of the Encyclopedia Británica in Mexico, on hearing of Don Alfonso's death recalled that he seemed to live without any material interest. Sometime after García Robles had received the Nobel Prize Sarmiento asked him for a short piece on disarmament for inclusion in the famous collection of human knowledge, and was willing to pay a very high fee for it. But García Robles preferred to receive, as payment, a copy of the Encyclopedia, which he probably had never been able to buy throughout his long and fruitful life. Sarmiento also recalls the disdainful opinion of García Robles held by some miserable politician who looked down on him because, in spite of the high posts he had occupied, he didn't even own a house in Mexico City (*La Jornada*, 10-09-91, p.4)."

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' homage to García Robles, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari said that the diplomat was "A universal Mexican and an untiring fighter for world peace."

Convinced that the peoples of the world should devote their resources -especially if they are scarce- to the fight against social inequalities, and the promotion of development and well-being, cooperating as fairly as possible among themselves, Alfonso García Robles made a lasting mark with his struggle to, as he put it, "bring the day closer in which general and complete disarmament under efficient international control may become a reality, as the people of the world demand that it should." ❧

The last days of Camelot

*Jaime García Terrés **

1963 found Jaime García Terrés in the United States. This essay relates his impressions of President John F. Kennedy's sudden death and the final days of the youthful and confident administration known as Camelot.

I Washington, 1963. In the U.S. capital there is a growing thirst for intellectualism. For that reason the Hispanic group comprising different writers and artists, of which I was a member, was received without any difficulty by the President at the White House. The next day we were interviewed by the President's brother, Robert Kennedy, the Attorney General. Inevitably, everybody called him Bobby, but this in no way detracted from his being one of the most influential members of the John F. Kennedy administration.

We then found ourselves at the house of Ted Yates, an agreeable character who had assembled much of the Washington elite for the occasion. This event would have easily delighted the most calculating or naive of name droppers. The President's other brother, the young Senator Edward Kennedy, also attended. And who is that gentleman waving me over to where he's sitting? There's no time to work it out.

"So what do you do?" he asks me.

"Oh, nothing, I'm just waiting for dinner to be served."

"Ha, ha, how amusing, I mean what do you do for a living?"

"I'm a writer, and yourself?"

The man, who was physically insignificant, turned pale. I then realized that I had unknowingly committed the cardinal sin of not recognizing a personality that no one else in Washington would have failed to identify. But it was too

late to go back now. My pale friend swallows hard and stammers:

"I...I'm a journalist."

"Wow, that's great. And what newspaper do you work for?"

The man turns even more pale. Today is obviously going to be one of those days. I've managed to upset a man who I don't know, who I've never seen before, and who has never done me any harm. He then explodes, gritting his teeth so that no one else can hear.

"Look, let's keep this short. I'm a T.V. journalist. I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing, but that's what I do."

Without uttering another syllable, he turns, highly vexed, and chats with a nearby woman who no doubt is also very important because she throws an icy and disdainful gaze in my direction. Gody Szyzlo, a



John and Jacqueline in their motorcade. Never more would Americans enjoy such relaxed access to their presidents.



Like a King Arthur presiding over his Round Table, John F. Kennedy seemed to be leading America to an heroic and high-minded destiny.

silent witness to the scene finally attempts to clear things up for me, reproaching me in his best Peruvian manner.

"I can't believe it! Don't you have any... That gentleman is none other than David Brinkley, one of the major celebrities of American television. Look how you've put his nose out of joint. Didn't you know that Ted Yates is his producer and that everybody treats him with reverence?"

The sad thing was that I still didn't understand. The name meant even less to me than the face, but either way I had meant no harm. We were still on the subject when Ted Yates came along and introduced me to another gentleman with a clear and cordial countenance.

"Jaime, have you met Senator McGovern?"

No, I didn't know him either, although I would have liked to have chatted with him in order to rid myself of the bitter taste that lingered in my mouth after the previous incident. But dinner was announced. Ted Yates places me at one of the main tables, opposite Edward Kennedy and ...David Brinkley. Ugh!

At the table the young Kennedy conducts the ceremonies as if he were presiding over some senatorial meeting in permanent session. Habit I suppose. His words and gestures are so authoritative that one of the other guests mutters that perhaps Barry Goldwater would have been better suited for the job, and is astonished upon learning that I do not willingly listen to his inopportune and exaggerated comments. The South American question had to wait until dessert to be discussed. The discussion was entitled more specifically "The Role of the Super Powers in Latin America." Senator Kennedy invites Mr. Brinkley to give his opinion.

"Would you comment on that, David?"

David Brinkley, who seemed not to have the slightest idea on the subject, responds, now fully in control of the situation:

"Well you can all say what you like, but the U.S., unlike all the other great powers, has never formally occupied any foreign territory."

I could have told him that it was not possible to make such a statement in the presence of a Mexican, reminding him that Mexico had lost half its territory to the U.S., or that there was also the small but very current matter of Guantánamo.

I would like to have dealt Mr. Brinkley another blow, this time a deserved one. But it was not quite the right time.

II

From Washington we took an air shuttle to New York, taking just under an hour to cover the distance between the two cities.

We were tired after the lavish dinner at Ted Yates's house but nevertheless happy to return to New York and see our many friends there.

We listened to the radio in the taxi that took us from the airport to the hotel. The announcement came as we were about to get out of the taxi. The door was opened and our luggage was still on the roof when the newsflash came over the air, erupting like a violent jolt.

"The President has been shot in Dallas."

I can still recall the piercing tone of the voice that related from the radio station with increasing panic the slow, confused, and disorganized information. John Fitzgerald Kennedy had been the victim of an assassination attempt. No, no, it was more, much more than an attempt. The President was at death's door. Nobody knew anything else.

Passers-by gathered around the taxi. Some had caught snippets of information, and not fully believing them had congregated around us to confirm their fears. I remember an old man with dark glasses and a cane, and a woman dressed in red. They approached us to ask about the news. What could I tell them? I who knew nothing but feared the worst. The old man and the woman threw their arms up in the air screaming, Oh God! Oh, my God!

If unconsciously we still clung to uncertainty, it did not last long. As soon as we got to our awaiting hotel room we switched on the T.V. and remained glued to it for several hours. They went through all the events leading up to the shooting and transmitted live. The commentators kept repeating that this was the first televised assassination in living history. Fortunately they didn't add that this incredible occurrence was brought to us care of Coca Cola or Chrysler, or at least I do not recall them doing so.

I have never again lived such an experience, the vaguely frightening sensation that a world was crumbling in front of our very eyes, although it has to be said that it was not our world. The few times that we left the hotel we met the same scenes on the street. People cried openly on street corners, in front of shop windows, and in telephone

booths. This is not a figure of speech. It was truly something to behold, those men and women that we were used to imagining as made of dry ice.

In the evening we met up with a few others from the Hispanic delegation at the apartment of Tom Head, one of the officials from the Inter-American Committee who had invited us to the Barranquitas symposium and other meetings in Washington and New York. Tom served martinis and offered English tobacco. But our morale was dragging along the ground.

Our American colleagues seemed particularly depressed. Jack Thompson disappeared for a moment and then came back explaining that he had telephoned his friend, the poet Robert Lowell.

"Do you know what he told me? He said nothing less than that Lyndon B. Johnson will be a great President for sure."

Juanito García Ponce told us that he and Juan José Gurrola were still in Washington watching films in Yate's studio when the news of the assassination was released. He described the crowd that gathered outside the White House, flags already at half mast. They had no definite purpose, only to wait. He finished with the words that the porter at the Hotel Washington kept repeating, running back and forth with tears in his eyes.

"It's true, our President is dead. The President is dead, our President is... We don't have a President anymore."

III

At Yale, Chester Kerr, who was head of publishing, had invited us to lunch with a few noteworthy academics. In view of its informal nature there seemed no reason to cancel. Besides, we needed a distraction, if only for a little while. We took an early train from Grand Central which



John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the torchbearer of a short-lived dream.

took us into New Haven at midday. Despite the pleasant company, the most part of whose names I have now forgotten, that gathering possessed an inexorably forlorn atmosphere which was lifted only briefly by a visit to the monumental library, a glimpse of its now legendary manuscripts, and the return journey in our friend's car, stopping at a country guest house and sitting down to an old fashioned but nevertheless welcome meal.

But on returning to New York City, our social life had all but come to a halt. We spent the few days that remained in our room at the Hotel Drake practically chained to the T.V. set. On the screen the by now unforgettable face of David Brinkley kept popping up.

I will not even attempt to analyze, a quarter of a century later, the emotional crisis that we shared during those dramatic days with the greater part of the population of the United States. I would only fall into clichés. I would rather recall the still moving words that a friend of Chester Kerr's said to me when I bumped into him one stifling summer's afternoon in Athens.

"Nothing like it has ever been seen in the States. We were all so used to perfect institutional order that the assassination of a President, our President, threw us completely off balance. It was like losing, without previous warning or preparation, the patriarch of a great tribe, the universal father. John F. Kennedy, who like us had been an academic, though not necessarily more brilliant than the average academic, was a man who possessed a certain elegance as head of the nation. Then suddenly, solely by virtue of his absence, of his brutal suppression, he took on an immense importance. It was like the end of the world. An unspeakable horror. What we had always flippantly deplored in other countries was now happening to us, in our own backyard, in the backyard of the White House, if the play on words has any significance. The head of state had just been brought down by a senseless bullet. Anonymous irrationality triumphed over the most academic and precise of formulas. I'm not saying that to portray it we need a Shakespeare, a Dostoyevsky, or a Homer. It was more an episode worthy of Conrad's pen. Do you remember the Sargasso Sea in *Nostromo* or the Gulf of Siam in the *Shadow Line*? Dead seas ruled by mysterious currents that mysteriously paralyze any mariner that crosses them. There is nothing supernatural about them. There are simply hostile elements of Nature that manifest themselves without warning and leave a slow trail of fever and corpses."

His casual homage is one of the most impressive exercises in literature that I have ever heard anywhere. ❧

Mictlantecuhtli, Lord of the Dead¹

Jorge Fausto Ceja Tenorio*

Luis Barjau**



Codex Borbonic.

Mictlán – “The region of the dead. A mythological place in the other world, and also an inhabited part of the earth, (Garibay, 1982)” – is a characteristic element of Mesoamerican mythology. It is the final stage of the process of death which consists of nine infernos:

1. A tawny dog, our dog, which must help us across a wide river of blood
2. One must slip between two mountains that move toward each other
3. One must climb a mountain of obsidian
4. A place where icy winds blow, as cutting as obsidian knives
5. A place where pennants wave
6. A place of flying arrows which never miss their mark
7. A place where wild beasts feed on hearts
8. A narrow rocky passage
9. *Chignahumictlán*: where souls rest or disappear

Mictlán is ruled by a pair of gods, *Mictlantecuhtli* and *Mictlancihuatl*, the Lord and Lady of the Dead. According to the myth of the “Fifth Sun,” or ages of time, the Lord and the Lady gave the bones of those who lived during the fourth age to the god *Quetzalcóatl* who, bleeding from his

penis onto these remains created the people of fifth age, the age in which we are now living.

For the peoples of Mesoamerica, Mictlán was at one and the same time an eschatological and a geographical space. Among the *Totonacas* of Veracruz, *El Zapotal 1* was an important shrine dedicated to the worship of the two gods of the dead. Initial exploration has unearthed a monument to *Mictlantecuhtli*, a picture of which is shown here. As yet, no monument to *Mictlancihuatl* has been found. It was considered probable that a statue of her would be found close by. There are three possible explanations: a) the couple was represented androgenously in one single figure; b) the female figure remains undiscovered in a part that has not yet been explored; c) the female figure was looted. The puzzle remains unsolved.

The Lord of Death lives on in *El Zapotal 1*, surrounded by the partial ruins of a temple whose red interior walls are painted with human figures. There are clay figurines, offerings of the type we now call “smiling faces.” There are also some human bones.

For the native Mesoamerican, the particulars of death depended on the circumstances of a person’s life. For the Mexica, for example, people who

died in battle or were sacrificed went to the Eastern Paradise, The House of the Sun *Tonatiuhichan*. The souls accompanied the Sun, and their glorious battles were re-enacted among flower petals. For this reason, when the Sun rose warriors would beat their shields and shriek. But if they fought again in paradise, among the flowers, four years later they returned to earth as humming birds, and fed on honey. Caso (1988:78) describes them thus: “They are the privileged, those whom the sun has chosen as his followers, and they live a delightful life.” By contrast, in the West was the paradise known as *Cincalco*, “The House of Corn.” Women who died in childbirth went there to occupy prominent places of honor, and at night they came down to earth in the guise of ominous creatures. They were the *cihauteteo*, god-women with skull-like heads and claws on their hands and feet.

Being killed by lightning or leprosy was considered somehow related to water, and the victims of these mishaps went to *Tlalocan*, the paradise of *Tláloc*, which was filled with various fruits and abundant corn, beans and *chia*.

El Zapotal is in the central part of the state of Veracruz, on the coastal lowlands or leeward plains of the Gulf

¹ The photos which appear in this article were taken by Luis Barjau.

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coast in a region known as Mixtequilla.

The Mixtequilla, formerly known as *Mitlán*, is a low-lying alluvial region. The land is marshy and though in the rainy season little rain actually falls, every year the Tlalixcoyan and Blanco rivers flood. The Pre-Hispanic community therefore settled on the higher ground of the area. The population was both numerous and scattered.

What little information we have on the development of these communities is derived from the pottery and clay figurines which suggest cultural exchanges with various regions of Veracruz and the Central Plateau of Mexico.

El Zapotal reached its full maturity in the Classical age, 200-700 A.D., when it was heavily influenced by Teotihuacan, Mayan and Oaxacan culture. The ichnographical hybridization of the large clay sculptures strongly suggests a practical fusion with Oaxacan culture.

Though the famous "smiling faces" of *El Zapotal* have been found at other sites such as *Los Cerros*, *El Corvite* and *Dicha Tuerta*, *El Zapotal* was certainly the regional sanctuary and was much more prestigious.

Today's archeological site is a concentration of hillocks of different sizes along a central North-South axis. The best known are *El Gallo* and *La Gallina*. In 1971, the University of Veracruz's Institute of Anthropology initiated diggings which produced several interesting results.

A rectangular platform of beaten earth 76 meters long, 35 meters wide and 4 meters high was excavated. In a trench dug from North to South numerous clay figures were found, grouped on three different horizontal levels. The first level contained figures of women from 1 meter to 1.5 meters high. The second level had other medium sized and finely-featured small figures, along with

zoomorphic statues, among which were several wheeled jaguars. The final level revealed figures representing richly dressed people. Also, human remains were discovered at this level.

The most important discovery made at this site was unearched during the second phase of excavation in 1972: a shrine dedicated to death. "A statue of the god *Mictlantecuihtli*, modelled in unfired clay, stands in the central part of the foundations flanked by walls in the shape of an 'L', with depictions of splendidly dressed people on both the inside and the outside (Gutiérrez, 1977: 29-30)."

That same year the profile of a stairway of nine steps was also found. At the bottom of it forty primary and

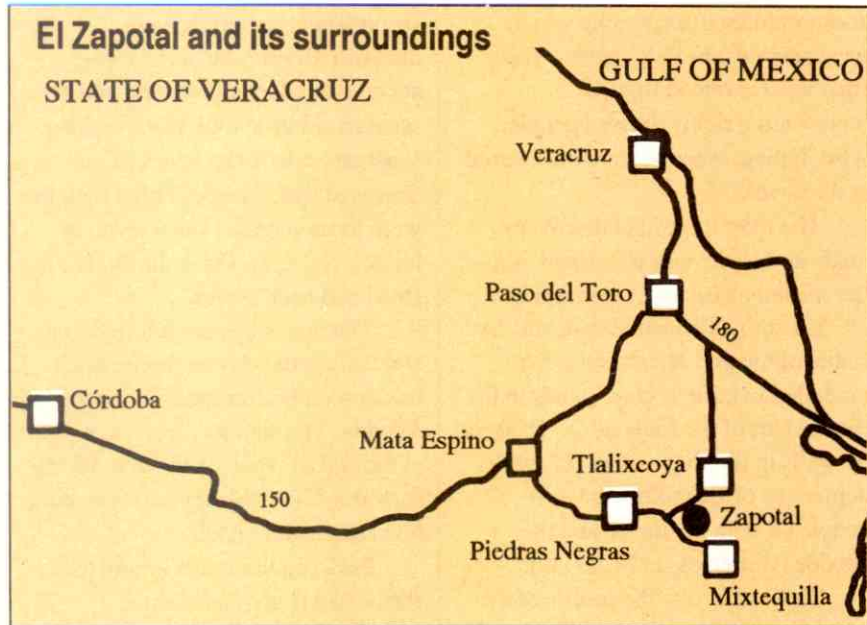
secondary type burials were discovered. Primary burials were accompanied by an offering and the secondary burial took place inside a sanctuary where the bones of the deceased were placed. These remains were located on the same level, in hillock No. 2, at which the God of the Dead had been found.

The nine steps are referred to in Nahuatl mythology as those which one descends after death to reach *Mictlán*. The stairway leads to a room at the end of which is the god, facing forward. The final step is on the same level as the altar itself.

Between the stairway and the shrine had been placed ritual offerings, clay figures of warriors and women who died in childbirth. These



Mictlantecuihtli, Lord of the Dead.



were lined up looking towards the Lord of the Dead. According to the myth, these women and warriors who died in battle shared the same rank amongst the dead.

In addition to this group there were lesser offerings at different levels, "smiling faces" and primary and secondary burials, some of which in tombs dating from earlier periods.

The magnitude of this discovery, and the importance of this Lord in the Pre-Hispanic world, justify a brief description of the principal figure, the Lord of the Dead himself.

Seen from a 3/4 angle and from a slight distance, the 1.6 meter statue of *Mictlantecuhtli* seems to still exude an imperial presence, like a frozen image of sparkling potency in the midst of the ruined sanctuary.

At closer range one sees first of all the ambiguous attitude of the figure, neither sitting down nor standing up, an attitude which, seen face on and from below, appears threatening.

Closer still, one sees that he is smiling -might one say obscenely, mockingly?- his tongue slightly

protruding like that of the central figure in the Aztec Calendar. This smile lights up the entire face. The trunk and the arms are emaciated, making the gender of the statue hard to determine. From the waist down the bones are no longer apparent, and a kind of loincloth falls between the legs. This ambiguity creates a liminal, mythical effect.

The figure stands upon a structure whose complexity suggests deliberate meaning. The presence of symbolic significances is also suggested by the painted walls. It is likely that the sanctuary once stretched out behind the god, to where the statue of his consort, *Mictlancihuatl*, might well have stood.

The head is flanked by two faces with large noses similar to that often found in Mayan art. Level with the headdress are two red skulls, and higher still, in the angles formed by the support for the sculpture, there are two other heads, one resembling an animal. The Lord of the Dead himself has three heads on it, possibly of bats, and under the lower jaw of the god hangs a "T"-shaped breastplate.

The powerful effect of the sculpture is enhanced by a daytime back-light accentuated by the sharpening and deepening of certain features of the head, trunk, and arms. At night a play of strategically placed lights also made major elements stand out. The figure was originally painted red, white, black, green, and blue.

Of the eighty-two skulls found in charnel house number 1 of section A, fifty-one were female, and thirty-one were male. In both genders deliberate deformations of the skull were evident. However, the female skulls showed deformations of a tabular fronto-occipital type, unique in Mesoamerica and found only in this part of Mexico, particularly in the Mixtequilla area.

The principal clay sculpture was made with a technique of rolling clay strips one above the other, and joining them together until they reached the requisite height. They were then left to dry so that they could support another section immediately above. The head and limbs were made separately and then placed on the trunk.

The Mexican concept of death appears to be derived from the esoteric thinking of the old indigenous religions. Certainly, the spectre of the Lord of the Dead, buried for so many centuries, has come down to us in many contemporary art forms

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Codex Cruz-Badiano: the magic of the ancient Mexican herbal¹

¹ Introduction of the recently published *Libellus de medicinalibus indorum herbis*.

Carlos Salinas de Gortari*

After much wandering, the ancient Mexican herbal written in Náhuatl by Martín de la Cruz and translated into Latin by Juan Badiano almost half a millennium ago, *Libellus de medicinalibus indorum herbis*, returned to Mexico in 1990 thanks to the generosity of Pope John Paul II. Full of medical wisdom and splendid illustrations, it is part of the historic legacy bequeathed to us by the peoples who gave us our roots and our temperament.

Since its discovery in the Vatican Library in 1929, the medical community, historians, botanists, Latinists and

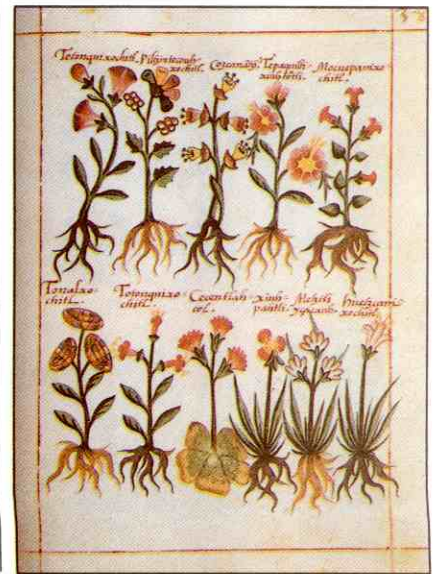
The purpose of the present edition is to disseminate both an invaluable record of pre-Hispanic medicine and an example of the sensitivity and the art of those who were here before us. Herbal medicine did not disappear from Mexico with the Conquest and the introduction of European medicine; on the contrary it continued to thrive not only among the indigenous population but among *mestizos* and Creoles as well, and still flourishes to this day. In the mid-17th century, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz wrote, "with what magical infusions have the indigenous herbalists of my fatherland poured their wizardry into my words?"



Mexican art historians have lamented its absence from Mexico's national library resources.

As a veritable treasure of our cultural heritage, a new edition of the Codex was indispensable. Since the Badiano Committee fifty years ago, the careful editorial efforts of Efrén del Pozo and Angel María Garibay's erudite translation into Spanish, the talent and the will have been there to make the Codex part of the nation's patrimony and above all of its consciousness.

* President of Mexico, honorary professor in the National University of Mexico.



A brief history of the Codex de la Cruz-Badiano

The *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano* was written in Náhuatl by Martín de la Cruz, an empirically trained native Mexican doctor and professor at the College of the Holy Cross of Tlaltelolco, at the express request of Francisco de Mendoza, son of the First Viceroy of New Spain, in the hope that it would reach the hands of his sovereign Charles V of Spain. It was first translated into Latin by another professor at the college, a Xochimilca by the name of Juan Badiano, who completed the work on July 22, 1552. It is illustrated by a profusion of colored drawings of plants mentioned in the text, made by unknown hands, undoubtedly also native Mexican though already exposed to European influence.

The book is a genuine collection of medical prescriptions for curing a variety of ailments principally by means of plants readily available in Mexico. But it is more than a simple herbal, for it includes numerous instructions of an unquestionably medical nature. It is a work which, although entirely indigenously Mexican in terms of the ethnic and cultural origin of its authors, is *mestizo* in its purpose and conception.

The *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano* is perhaps the oldest medical text written in the Americas. By the middle of the 17th century, the manuscript had come into the hands of the Madrid pharmacist Diego Cortavila y Sanabria. A copy made soon afterward was taken to England where it became part of King George III's library. This copy is now in the Royal Library at Windsor. Meanwhile, the original manuscript was acquired by Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597-1679), a nephew of Pope Urban VIII, who was highly interested in Mexican herbal matters. It remained forgotten for many years even after the Barberini collection was incorporated into the Vatican Library in 1902. The English copy was discovered in 1923 by G. Gabrielli who referred to it in his *Iconographia botanica*. Six years later in 1929, Charles Upson Clark and Lynn Thorndike almost simultaneously announced its discovery in Rome.

The *Libellus* was first printed in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1939, edited by William Gates for the Maya Society, in whose journal number 22 it was reproduced. The English translation appeared in number 23 with the editor's notes, all under the title of *The De la Cruz-Badiano Aztec Herbal of 1552*. It was printed again in the same city the next year, with a translation and notes by Emily Walcott Emmart, under the title *The Badianus Manuscript (Codex Barberini, Latin 241)*. Vatican Library. *An Aztec Herbal of 1552*.

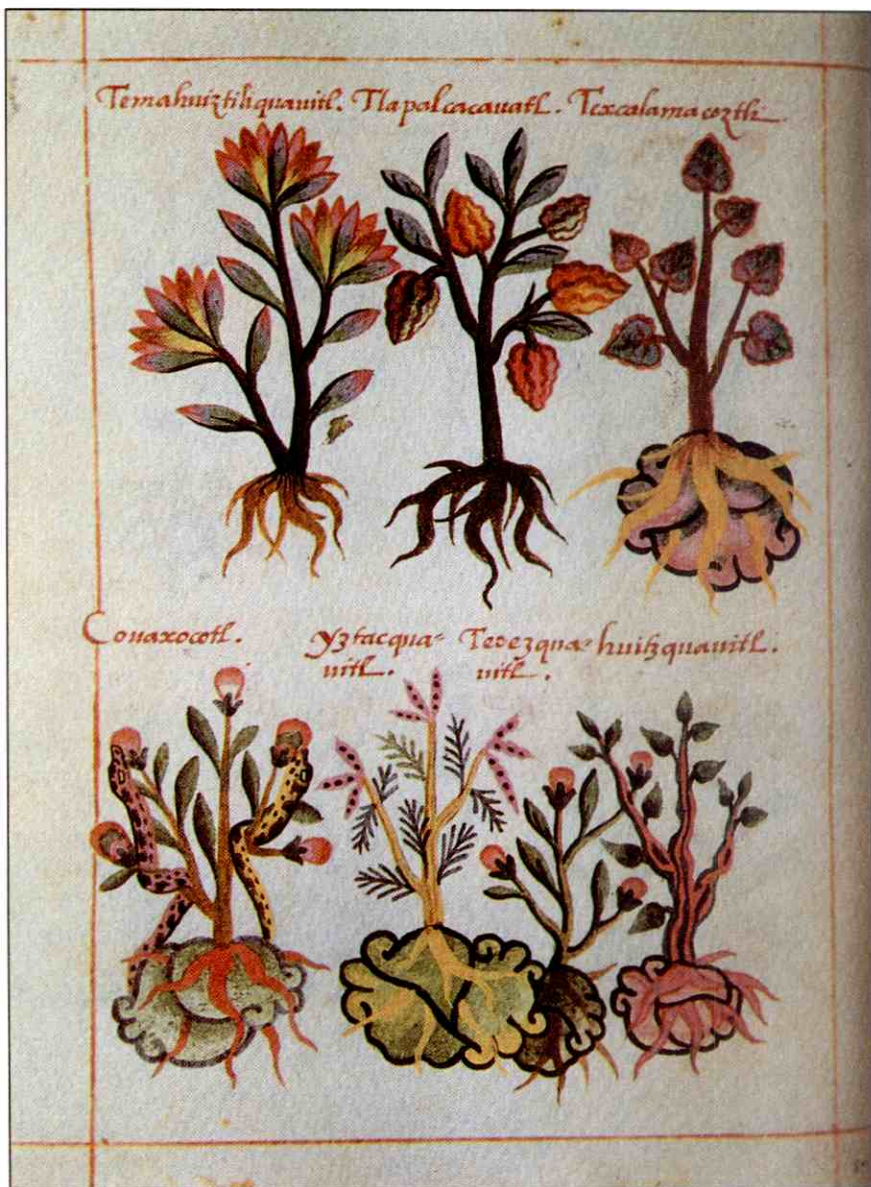
There was no Spanish edition until 1952, the manuscript's 400th anniversary, when Demetrio García and Francisco Guerra's translation was published in a limited edition in Mexico City by Luis Vargas Rea and *El Diario Español*, without the illustrations, entitled *Libellus de medicinalibus indorum herbis. El manuscrito mexicano-latino de Martín de la Cruz y Juan Badiano de 1552*. So it was not until the publication of the Mexican Social Security Institute's edition of 1964, that the general public had any direct contact with the manuscript.

Martín de la Cruz might be surprised by the interest in his work 440 years after its creation. The *Codex* appeared destined for destruction and oblivion, yet may now be the largest single source of immediate post-Conquest medicinal knowledge and also an invaluable source of pre-Hispanic scientific thought.





Cruz-Badiano herbal, the first link in a cultural tradition that has always been a source of pride to Mexico. The task falls to anthropologists, historians, literary critics, but most particularly to the medical profession to broaden interest in this gem of devotion to the health of body and mind. Let the historic validity bequeathed to us by native Mexican physicians resound in the humanistic education of tomorrow's doctors. Let the professional contribution made possible by that education be, as Diego Rivera remarked when he painted the mural of the Codex at the



La Raza Hospital, "with the intention of making the Mexican people aware of their ancient medical culture, so as to confirm their welfare in the present."

As a Mexican and President of Mexico, I hope the new edition of this incalculably valuable manuscript will encourage all Mexicans to take better and greater care of our traditions, and that it will stimulate the abilities we all share and that enable us to meet on equal terms with other nations at a time of tremendous world change.

All Mexicans without exception share the pride inspired by the majesty

and splendor of our culture which belongs intimately to each and every one of us. To know it is to make it a creative force in our lives and for our goals. No matter where it may be, we cannot give up our cultural heritage. May the experience of reading the *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano* be like one of its therapeutic potions which, as the Codex says, served "to banish weariness, shake off fear and stimulate the heart." Mexico needs all of us to be full of the vigor to overcome the challenges of this moment in history and offer our children a more promising future. ✨

Reviews

The hidden night

Sergio González Rodríguez

La noche oscura.

Cal y Arena editores
México, 1990. 170pp.



The Hidden Night, by Sergio González Rodríguez, is a breath of fresh air for recent Mexican literature. González Rodríguez' style—a mixture of literature-*noire*, esoteric research, and fantasy—is a serious crack at solving the problem faced by the Mexican novel. By definitely breaking away from magic realism and fantasy-reality, which are a tourist's view of what is Mexican (or rather of all that is Latin American in general), González Rodríguez has given a necessary twist to recent Mexican narrative.

To escape from Macondo and Comala, to break free from the most

transparent region, to flee from the circularity of the cultural myths (revolutionary, Native Indian, nationalistic, Prehispanic, Third-World) that once fed Mexican and Latin American narrative, a strategic return to the brevity of the anecdote and to the lightness of characters stripped of symbolic or emblematic connotations was necessary. González Rodríguez' prose is a return to precise, rapid, and visible narration devoid of verbal plays on words that pretend to be experimental. The same thing had happened with Joycean-like narrative, puns, the attempt at making a beachhead of *la nouvelle vague*, or the all-embracing pretensions of the historical novel and classical realism: it was necessary to learn how to write the story over again.

In *The Dregs* (1988) González Rodríguez had already explored the subsoil of our cultural obsessions with sexuality and nightlife through the trio of brothels-bohemianism-cafés. In this, his first novel, he established himself as a distinct narrative voice. If Roger Bartra, in *The Cage of Melancholy* (1987), made a herpetology of Mexican culture, González Rodríguez, for his part, did his teratology in *The Dregs*. In Bartra, metamorphosis and identity; in González Rodríguez, deviation and secret life, alcoholics, drug-addicts, homosexuals, prostitutes, secret societies, suicides, and the depressed make up the fauna that continually have to face the attacks of modern life that seek to render them normal. This perspective enabled González Rodríguez to dissect modern Mexico

through the meeting places of bohemia.

Jesús Vizcaya, the main character of *The Hidden Night*, with his fifty-odd years, his hat and the secret of his hidden night, is a creature in the category of Larsen (Onetti's *Corpse-Collector*). Jesús Vizcaya represents a real and possible human character in a literature that has previously devoted itself to the search for mythological, historic, and grandiloquent characters.

Conversing with D.H. Lawrence, enduring a thrashing outside the Catacombs, participating in a spiritualist session, and seducing a young waitress are some of the book's everyday adventures. Nevertheless, *The Hidden Night* is not a realistic novel, nor is it a detective story or a fantasy: it is the sum of all these elements and much more. Within its stance as minor literature resides its occult (and erudite) secret: beneath the anecdotic narration lie innumerable quotes and intertextual games from Walter Benjamin to Malraux.

González Rodríguez explores the hidden side of culture—esoteric books, old photographs, crime, sexual violence. He searches—like the surrealists read by Walter Benjamin—for all that is hidden in unused objects, things that are out of fashion, popular mythology, or badly-spelt pornographic books. He has made well-loved places in the city visible and palpable once again, such as the hotels and cafés downtown, the parquet floors of apartments in the Condesa area, the aristocratic

turn-of-the-century architecture in the Santa María neighborhood.

An investigation into the past and childhood, the novel is full of leaps in time. In this sense it is not a linear narration, but a discontinuous one which allows the author to insert fragments of life, deviations, and essay-like asides. Unlike Foucault's *Pendulum* by Eco, (an obligatory reference) González Rodríguez' novel does not attempt to exhaust the highways and byways of occultism,

and it does not confront us with jumbled discussions or interminable historical investigations.

In Foucault's *Pendulum*, what Eco intends to be a mockery, an ironical representation of occultism and esotericism, ends up as a consecration of it in five hundred pages. *The Hidden Night* is not a criticism of esotericism or occultism: it uses them as means. At the same time it shows us that there are revelations as atrocious or

marvelous (if not much more so) than those hidden in a ouija board, tarot cards or horoscopes. A firefly can eradicate the fear of night creatures; an old photograph of a nude woman can contain more meanings than the signs of the zodiac; and in anyone's past there may exist secrets that are simply best not revealed. ■

Mauricio Molina

Staff Writer

Interview: Toni Kuhn, cameraman for the film *La Tarea*

La Tarea is undoubtedly a Jaime Humberto Hermosillo's movie that shows that Mexican film-making in the nineties does offer alternatives. *La Tarea* is an original story of two characters who get the audience to participate as accomplices in their clever *tarea* (homework). Love, passion, eroticism, and a home video camera reveal the private life of a couple seeking entertainment which enables them to forget for a while the agitation of the biggest city in the world.

Meeting, separation, and complicity. To complete *La Tarea* a husband and wife fictionalize their intimate games and daily existence and twist their creation until it is indistinguishable from their own reality. The direction is remarkable, and the protagonists are played by two excellent actors, María Rojo and José Alonso, who "act and over-act while acting." They demonstrate that, contrary to what we might expect, nude scenes can still be striking when "egos" take off their clothes. One can

imagine that many people will leave the theatre with their own fantasy of recreating a *tarea* with a home video camera, exchanging their fantasies for delight via the world of eroticism.

La Tarea is filmed with a single 35 mm immobile camera. This has led many people to assume that there was no real work for a cameraman. The truth is just the opposite. *La Tarea* required meticulous planning before the filming and during it. Toni Kuhn's work shows that technical skill is an inherent part of any sensitive, aesthetic, and original conception that tries to eternalize a moment on film. As I was on my way to Toni Kuhn's house I thought about what I had heard about *La Tarea*, made with only one set, two actors, a fixed camera and two locations. Some thought it would be easy to emulate *La Tarea*; it seems as easy as placing oneself strategically behind a video camera and turning it on. I asked Toni Kuhn what he thought about this?

Toni Kuhn: I think it's fine that people say that, that our work is not visible. That shows it's well done.

Dinorah Isaak: Is that what you wanted to achieve in *La Tarea*?

TK: From the beginning of the movie, when María Rojo sets up the video camera, she knows approximately the angle it's focusing on, but she only manages a frame that conforms to the architecture of the apartment. Carried away by the plot, the audience forgets the hidden camera a bit. But she doesn't, and there are moments when she has to drag José Alonso into the frame. We figured that some people wouldn't be aware that the frame was deliberately prepared for putting people in it. But at the same time we wanted to avoid having to make the point with extended full-length shots of bodies with their heads cut off. Jaime Humberto Hermosillo and I decided that this kind of shot shouldn't last longer than 20 seconds, and when the two characters sit on the table and we see only their shoes this produces precisely the effect we were looking for. The room is out of focus and we see only two pairs of shoes. The shot has only the dialogue between the characters plus the funny

effect of the movements of their feet, which lets us imagine their frustration and gives a free rein to the audience's imagination.

DI: *How do you manage the movement of your camera when José Alonso discovers the video camera and kicks it around?*

TK: The camera wasn't really moved. We had it mounted on a tripod and we simulated the fall using the natural movement of the tripod. That made it possible not to lose the location of the frame.

DI: *How did you get the frame again when María Rojo moves the video camera to another part of the room and places it on the television set?*

TK: We had two tripods with two heads and at the same time that María took the video camera over to the television, my two assistants did the same with the film camera. This made for a natural movement and overcame the problem of breaking concentration. All that time we were checking the video pick-up.

DI: *How did you place the movie camera to produce the effect of natural height?*

TK: The upstage was raised 60 cms so we could sink the camera into a hole in the floor and get the precise angle a video camera on the floor would give. We had to do this because the lense of the movie camera is at a different height than that of a small video camera. We used a medium-angle lens to get the depth of field the film required.

DI: *What can you tell us about the lighting?*

TK: The lighting for this film has to do with certain memories of my childhood which Jaime Humberto Hermosillo was good enough to use. The idea was to create the effect that the apartment was close to

some big road. I tried to imagine the space that the audience wouldn't see and how this space influenced the inside of the apartment. How to give something as static as the set a certain life, and not just by turning lights on and off. Besides, that's what the actors do anyway. Above all, we wanted to make the audience imagine that the plot is really working itself out in an apartment in a city. The childhood memory is that when I used to be sent to bed at eight o'clock and I wasn't sleepy, I used to watch the ceiling and the walls of my room and see the cars passing by in the street by the shadows made by their lights. It gave me the feeling that the windows were moving around the walls and the ceiling. Without wanting to stress this idea of a daydream, because *La Tarea* is a comedy, I planned a flatly lit space that would let you feel the outside world through lights moved as if

they were the lights of moving cars. Traffic was handled by two technicians pushing lights very carefully on dollies. Of course, everything was tried out beforehand, but the technicians had to be exact because if they made some mistake a whole roll of film was lost, that is to say a thousand feet of film, so their precision was critical, and very difficult to get right.

DI: *I imagine that you also had something to do with the set design and props. Is this so?*

TK: Jaime Humberto Hermosillo was always sure about how he wanted the house, so the art director and I got together on the colors of both the walls and the furniture, and María's magenta-colored dress. On the other hand, Barbachano said the house had to look very Mexican. You have to remember that he is a film producer who is very interested in his films



Tony Kuhn.

being shown abroad, and he likes them to have a Mexican touch, like *María de mi corazón* and *Frida*, for example.

DI Toni, a lot of people are saying that *La tarea* shows one can make good films without much money. Is that true?

TK I think that the total cost of the film was somewhere between 330 and 360 million pesos (approximately U.S. \$120 thousand). We spent half as much on rolls of film that the showing time would indicate, that is to say, only 18 thousand feet of material. Another important savings was the amount of time spent filming, about six times less than usual, and with at least eight times fewer people too.

DI Are there any anecdotes you could tell us about Jaime Humberto Hermosillo's script?

TK Yes, something sensational that Jaime Humberto did after he showed us the video he had made prior to the movie and asked our opinion of it. He reversed what were the original gender roles, making it the female character's mission to invite the man and induce him to take part in *La Tarea*.

DI Tell us something about María Rojo's and José Alonso's acting. What do you think now that the film is finished?

TK Don't forget what might be considered overacting on the part of José Alonso and María Rojo was necessary and planned that way, because in the plot the two are acting for a video camera and supposedly neither of them are professional actors. Something, that María Rojo acts brilliantly is her monologue when she feels she has failed because she hasn't fulfilled *La Tarea* and speaks directly into the camera to her teachers. Here María Rojo is what she



Actors María Rojo and José Alonso.

is in real life and at the same time the character that she is playing. Both María Rojos are really suffering. This must be very striking for the audience. The text of this monologue was written by Jaime Humberto and María herself. He is a very open-minded director and adapts himself a good deal to what each actor brings to the script.

However, he is very firm about what he is looking for and wants to achieve. But he let María have a hand in it and explain what happened to her, both on the level of the actress in *La Tarea* and on that of the woman who takes her clothes off.

DI What was the biggest personal challenge in your work as cameraman for *La Tarea*?

TK That of not being able to move the camera. The frustration of looking through a camera that you know you placed, and seeing the shots as it is filming, but not operating it.

DI Tell us more about this experience.

TK A cameraman's eye seeks to constantly compose the things that he is filming. It's like the painter's placing a subject in a particular place in his frame. The cameraman does this too, and he also plays with light and colors, creating balance. Just imagine,

I was looking through the camera, and nothing more. And it was like setting out to find myself. The challenge for me in *La Tarea* was to put up with myself, to accept that lack of active composition with a camera without a cameraman to direct it. Besides, I had to accept these shots because they were planned that way.

DI How did you feel the first day of filming when you really saw what this lack of composition meant?

TK Obviously, all the prep-work had prepared us for what would happen, but I could compare this experience with John Keitch's music, going against the rules, against harmony, against premeditated sounds. I learned that chance teaches you things.

DI How would you evaluate *La Tarea* as a photographic experience?

TK I think it was a good one, and I am pleased to have had the chance of doing a piece of work like this one which, apart from its commercial touch, also has an experimental angle. It's strange that we were able to combine these two styles of working.

DI How did Jaime Humberto Hermosillo manage the directing?

TK First we made the whole movie on video, so he knew perfectly well what was going to happen from the beginning to the end. We did the video as soon as the set was ready. We worked for two weeks on the set, week one on the video and the second week on the real filming, which took only four days.

DI How did you manage to change the rolls of film without moving the camera?

TK *La Tarea* lasts an hour and a half, meaning 9 roll changes, but Jaime Humberto had it all perfectly planned, the actors had to be off camera or, José Alonso hangs his jacket on the chair and shuts off the light. The sound track goes on, keeping the continuity.

DI Toni, they say that *La Tarea* is the film that represents a "coming-out" in Mexican film-making. What do you think?

TK I think the "coming-out" of Mexican film-making took place in 1970 with Paul Leduc's *Reed, México Insurgente*. That was the moment for Mexican film-making to be reborn, and although I'm speaking 20 years later, it was then that the schools of

film-making in which many of our present film directors learned their trade began to be important.

DI Do you really believe that today's Mexican film-making is not in an important stage?

TK One would have to wait another five years to be sure of it.

DI What do you think of Mexico as a country for film-makers?

TK Mexico is marvelous. It is the country for film-making, because it's completely surrealistic. It has an ideal climate, the light from directly overhead, its contrasts. One draws sustenance from the Mexicans' attitude toward life, which I compare with that of the people who make movies; sometimes we don't know what we prefer, movies or our own lives. When filming in Mexico, unforeseen things happen that make you more creative.

DI How would you define this surrealist Mexico that we who live here experience every day?

TK I think there's more chance of remaining child-like, it's like

attaching more importance to life without being so strict. Improvising more.

DI Being more natural?

TK Being more open to the things one is experiencing and those around you. In my work I have travelled all over the country, and every time I discover new things that make me question my own behavior and way of living more and more.

DI How did you get involved in the world of pictures?

TK Ever since my childhood I have been more interested in what was seen than what was said because I grew up bilingual, speaking German and French with Swiss parents. When I arrived in Mexico and had to take on another culture I got further and further away from trying to explain things in words. So I went into the visual side of things. That's one explanation, but I don't know if that's the right one.

DI How does your inner eye feel and capture the reality of living and being part of the biggest city in the world?

TK ???

I take the liberty of guessing what this answer might mean. Toni Kuhn, in addition to being a cameraman, devotes part of his creative work to conventional photography. There he captures the unplanned reality of everyday Mexican life, the true, surrealistic Mexico, the Mexico that Toni Kuhn manages to transmit by means of the car lights "that night" in which we expiate the intimate relationship of a Mexican couple doing their *tarea* **M**



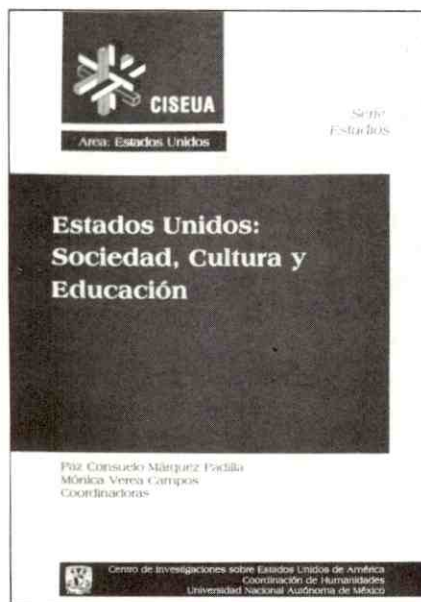
Jaime Humberto Hermosillo and his actors.

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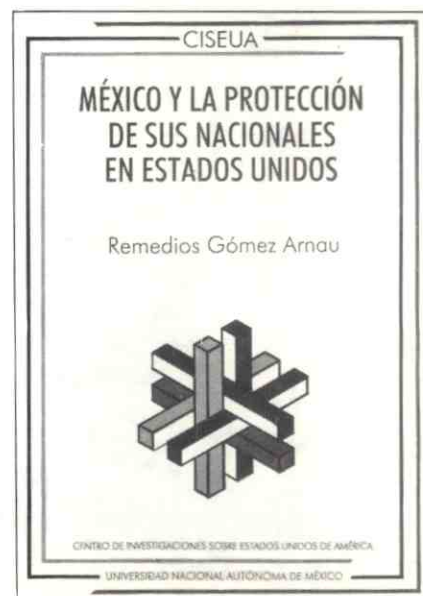
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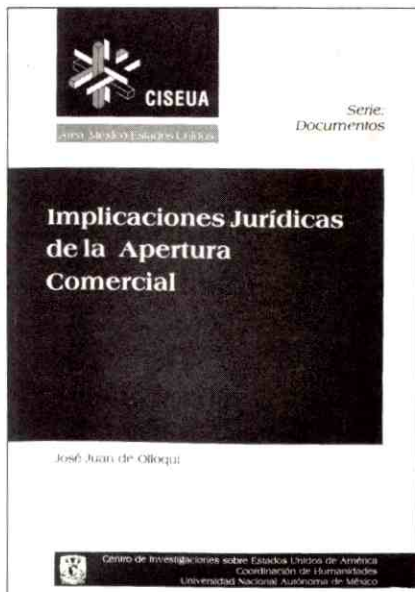
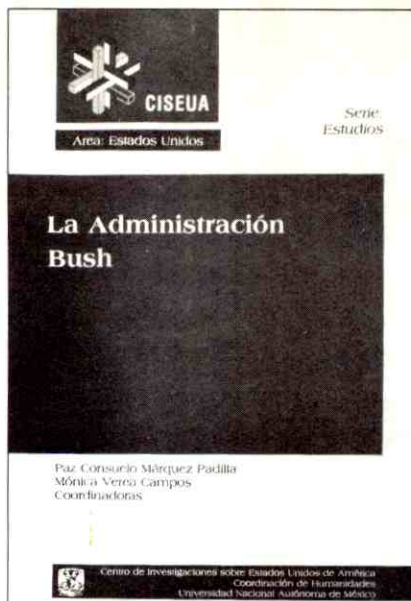
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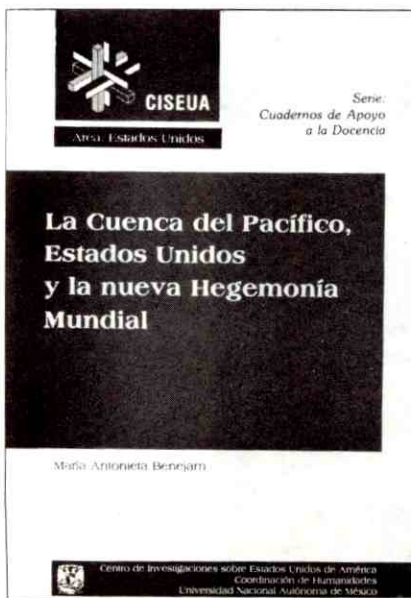
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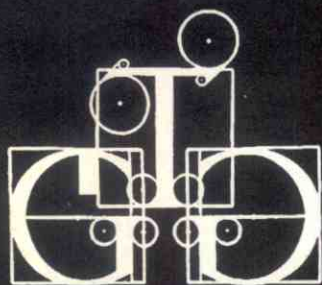
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