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Raúl Benítez Manaut

Five Years of NAFTA
Luis Rubio

Mexican International Oil Diplomacy
Rosío Vargas
Víctor Rodríguez Padilla

Puebla, Mexico's City of Art and Angels

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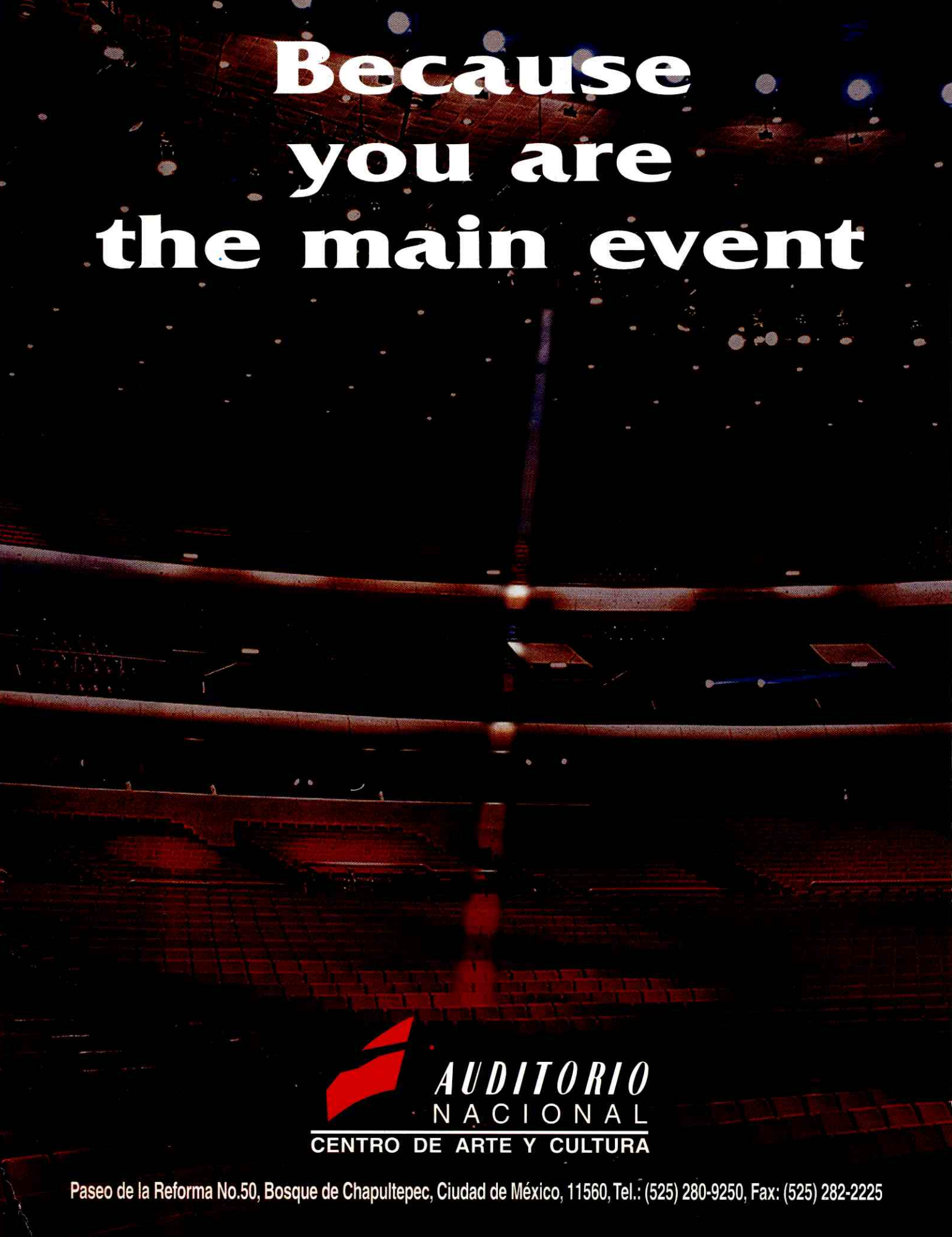
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Our Voice

Presidents Ernesto Zedillo and William Clinton had their seventh bilateral meeting February 14 and 15 in Mérida, Yucatán. It was not the best of moments for either of the two.

Although the U.S. president's impeachment trial ended well for him, the celebration in the White House had to be held behind closed doors: the delicate and disagreeable process has been, undoubtedly, the most critical moment in U.S. political history since Nixon's resignation, not to mention the cost to the president personally and to his public image. While during the Nixon administration people talked about an imperial presidency, the term "presidency under siege" was coined for the current occupant of the White House. Republican senators had to face the dilemma of removing a president who, although he probably committed perjury and obstruction of justice, also created 18 million jobs, significantly raised wages, achieved a balanced budget for the first time in 30 years and reduced the crime rate as never before. Finally, 10 Republican senators decided to vote to acquit.

President Zedillo, on the other hand, was about to have to face the U.S. Congress's certification decision about Mexico on the question of the fight against drug trafficking, an unfortunate, unilateral measure in a field which requires cooperation above everything else. Drug trafficking, of course, was the topic that determined the tone of the meeting. Although undoubtedly there have been advances on the issue —for example, the old way of looking at the question in which each party blamed the other has been left behind, and new focuses and strategies have been developed by creating high level discussion groups— the fact is that the drug trade is an increasingly difficult problem and its solution more and more complex. It will only be possible to design efficient strategies for fighting international drug trafficking through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms which include the consent of the nations involved.

Despite everything, however, the Mérida meeting was a success. The excellent personal relationship between the two presidents was the framework in which they signed nine cooperation accords on the environment, finance, the border and migration. Both chief executives' good will contributes to creating trust in such an intense, complex relationship, just as it facilitates dialogue and curtails tensions.

In this issue's "United States Affairs," Juan Pablo Córdoba analyzes the repercussions of Clinton's impeachment trial on the U.S. public and on Mexico-U.S. relations. He looks at the consequences of the intricate and not always clear link between the media and politics in the United States, as well as the Republicans' mistaken strategy in the Clinton-Lewinsky case.

1999 is a year of balance sheets. Five years have passed since two events that have been determining factors in Mexico: the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas and the coming into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The "Politics" section includes researcher Raúl Benítez Manaut's thoughts about the advances, retreats and stalemates in the peace negotiations in Chiapas. He calls it a postmodern guerrilla war, par-

ticularly in comparison with the rebel movements in Central America. Internet is used as one of its main weapons and strategies have been designed on the basis of building national and international solidarity networks, above all with the United States, Canada and Europe. In a word, a war without bullets.

In the "Economy" section, specialist Luis Rubio explains how the first five years of NAFTA have had positive results for Mexico. He maintains, in fact, that far from being the cause of the country's economic problems, the trade opening with the United States and Canada has allowed the domestic private sector to modernize and eliminated negative protectionist practices that the Mexican government used to protect industrialists and businessmen.

On this same question, Paulino Arellanes takes a detailed look at foreign investment flows in Mexico during the first half of the Zedillo administration. He describes how most investment from abroad has gone into speculative, volatile financial ventures and very little into production. The results have been disastrous, as demonstrated by the 1995-1996 crisis. Arellanes maintains that the supposed benefits of globalization and NAFTA itself should be questioned on these grounds.

One effect of globalization has been the fall in international oil prices. In their article, specialists Rosío Vargas and Víctor Rodríguez examine the diplomatic strategies and measures that the Mexican government has implemented to defend its production together with other oil producing countries. They argue that one of the fundamental points that has determined decisions on this question is Mexico's close relationship and economic dependence on the United States.

Globalization affects all spheres of society. In fact, the very notion of sovereignty has to be rethought. This is the aim of Roberto Gutiérrez, whose article in the "Politics" section asserts that the end of the millennium is characterized by a harmonizing thrust which affects not only the global market but also political institutions and practices. In that sense, it is only through democratic systems, with institutions that foster pluralism and participation, and with the existence of states legitimized by consensus, that globalization can be dealt with constructively, in a way which respects national particularities and ethnic, cultural and religious diversity.

Mexican politics is already in the throes of the 2000 presidential race. The political parties are defining their strategies and choosing new national leaderships, and a few nominee hopefuls have even begun campaigning. This issue includes two articles on this topic. Juan Reyes del Campillo appraises the profound transformation of electoral geography in recent years and shows how pluralism and greater competition have produced a great many state and municipal victories for parties other than the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and that this means that several scenarios are possible for the year 2000.

Alberto Begné examines Mexico's current party system with an eye to July 2, 2000. In this framework, he foresees possible important changes in the three strongest parties, particularly if they want to continue to be part of the system after what will be the most highly contested election in the country's history.

Puebla is a state known for its cultural diversity and artistic riches. This issue's cultural sections have dedicated an important part of their pages to it. We offer our readers an article about the work of Puebla-born painter Guillermo Gómez Mayorga, perhaps the best known painter of Puebla's scenery and sunsets. We also have a contribution by Francisco Pérez de Salazar about the most popular and world famous craft product made in Puebla: Talavera ceramics. Mónica Pérez-Salazar and Angeles Espinosa Iglesias tempt our palate with tales of Puebla cuisine, and Arturo Córdova regales us with a description of the magnificent Palafoxiana Library with its rich historic tradition.

Puebla is the home of the Popocatéptl volcano, in the news recently because, with columns of smoke and ash, it has been announcing its intention of awakening. Tom Dieusaert writes about

"Don Goyo," as the locals call the mountain, introducing us to the magic and legend of the town of Tetela del Volcán and its inhabitants, including those responsible for "talking to" the volcano.

"Science, Art and Culture" includes an article about the monumental city of Teotihuacan. Linda Manzanilla explains the original link between its architecture and the structure of government. She tells us about its utensils, crafts, political alliances with other pre-Columbian peoples in a very readable article that ably evokes the priest-rulers walking along the well laid-out avenues of a sumptuously ornamented city.

In the "Canadian Issues" section, Felipe Soto describes the forging of the most recent autonomous Canadian territory, Nunavut, governed as of April 1 by its original inhabitants, the Inuit (known for centuries by outsiders as "eskimos"). Soto zeroes in on the implications that the agreement has on the pursuit of solutions in a multicultural society like Canada, regarding autonomy and indigenous peoples' rights, a timely topic not only in Canada, but elsewhere.

Pope John Paul II's visit January 22 to 26 filled Mexico with joy, hope and religious enthusiasm. Millions of people waited long hours in the streets to see the Holy Father even if only for a second. Ricardo Ampudia, author of a recently published book about the historic role of the Vatican in Mexico, writes in this issue about the Pope's visit and its pastoral implications.

In the "Society" section, we address the question of Mexican migration to the United States, but this time, not from the standpoint of statistics, conflicts, policies, costs and even the deaths involved in this complex issue. In her article, Luz María Valdés presents the human face of cold statistics. She tells us the story of the relationship between an immigrant and his employer in the United States, and how, thanks to the latter, a network was created to intimately link the inhabitants of Cotija, Michoacán, with New York City, in an example of how immigration is also a weave of personal histories, relationships, cooperation, work, effort and mutual benefits.

Along the same lines, specialist Mariángela Rodríguez writes about the symbols and myths that have made up the Chicano identity in Los Angeles. Specifically, she delves into Chicano discourses and political positions with regard to the celebration of a Mexican national holiday, May 5.

On the eve of the new millennium, we have decided to inaugurate the dissemination of work by young artists, painters and writers, who are today the promise of vast creative production in the first decades of the twenty-first century. In "Science, Art and Culture," we present the work of painter Mario Núñez, described and analyzed by María Tarriba. In "Literature" we include a fragment from a novel by the young writer Alvaro Enrigue, along with a penetrating critique by Juan Villoro.

Carlos Bravo Marentes offers us an article in the "Ecology" section about the sustainable uses of resources for producing crafts in Mexico's subtropical regions. He emphasizes the importance of fostering knowledge about the environment in order to ensure economic activity that relates rationally to their surroundings.

In "Museums" we include a contribution by Arturo Cosme about one of Mexico's most attractive private art collections —now public property— in Puebla's Bello Museum.

Lastly, we pay homage to an exceptional woman in the history of Mexican art, María Asúnsolo, who recently died.

At the close of this edition, one of Mexico's greatest poets, Jaime Sabines, died. We will dedicate our "Literature" section to him in our next issue. For the moment, we offer our condolences to his family, friends and the great fraternity of his readers.

Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla

Director of CISAN

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The rebel army.

Chiapas War on the Net

Five Years of Negotiations

*Raúl Benítez Manaut**

1994: Chiapas and the Collapse of Carlos Salinas de Gortari

The outbreak of the Chiapas crisis on January 1, 1994, brought Mexico's entire political system into question. The main thing challenged was the legitimacy of then-President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, which had a noticeable impact on the transformation of Mexico's image worldwide.

From being a country gaining entry into the first world, signing a free trade agreement with two of the most advanced countries in the world, the United States and Canada, and rapidly modernizing, Mexico became a place blazoned across front pages and making the lead story on television news programs worldwide as a country where indigenous guerrilla wars broke out and an important part of its population lived in deep poverty.

In less than a week, Subcommander Marcos managed to destroy the image that had cost Carlos Salinas de Gortari so many millions of dollars in U.S. congressional lobbyist fees. The Zapatista guerrillas had practically no military capability at all, threatening the army with wooden rifles, but they brought the entire political system into question.

The Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) rapidly awakened sympathies in Mexico and abroad, making it impossible for the government to crush it militarily. On January 12, 1994 the Mexican army declared a cease fire accepted by the EZLN leadership. Thus began a very different story from that of Central America during the bloody wars of the 1980s.

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Octavio Nava/AVE

The national army.

THE WAR ON THE NET AND NEW CIVILIZING CONFLICTS

One of the explanations of the support for the EZLN in Mexico and abroad, expressed through the solidarity networks in the United States, Canada and Europe, is that the war in Chiapas is a postmodern war, with invisible soldiers who do battle through the Internet and offer solidarity to the EZLN from all parts of the globe. The Mexican government has no effective weapon at all to fight this war without borders. The unique thing about this war is that an armed guerrilla group, with an indigenous social base, was able to take advantage of post-Cold War resources to successfully fight, unarmed, a much better equipped army with an estimated 100-times-greater troop-strength.

This new form of warfare —to use Alvin Toffler's analytical framework of three civilizations— involves the first premodern agrarian civilization on the side of the EZLN waging war using religious images. This is mixed with the Mexican government and army, a modern army organized for the kind of fighting characteristic of the second industrial civilization. And, once again, benefitting the EZLN, it also involves the use of the civilization of science and technology, networks, the Worldwide Web and invisible soldiers.

This means that using a strategy corresponding to the first and third civilizations, the EZLN attacks an army that only knows how to act using strategies and tactics from the industrial civilization. In other words, the EZLN has the strategic advantage and is on the offensive, without engaging in military combat, and the Mexican army is on the defensive, unable to act against the new guerrillas.

LEGITIMACY AND NEGOTIATION

Through the army, the Mexican government has superior military strength, but it does not enjoy the political support needed to act against the EZLN. The EZLN has no military might, but has developed the backing of Mexican and international society. In the new end-of-century wars, to measure the balance of forces of the armies in conflict, it is not necessary to engage in combat.

This is why the dialogue between the EZLN and the government —unique in the world— was on the agenda after only 12 days of fighting.

The first round of negotiations was crucial. Manuel Camacho, the government negotiator, got the EZLN to talk about its demands so hostilities could not be renewed. This period was very important because it transformed the EZLN from an indigenous guerrilla army into an armed guerrilla organization that did not fire on the government. The negotiations were dubbed the "Dialogues in the Cathedral."

They were very important for the government because they made it possible for the presidential elections to be held successfully. For the EZLN they meant going from being a totally unknown guerrilla organization to achieving great political support. The mediator, like in many countries where negotiations

are carried out with armed groups, was a representative of the clergy, the bishop of San Cristóbal de las Casas, Samuel Ruiz.

These negotiations broke down after three months; Luis Donaldo Colosio, the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) presidential candidate, was assassinated March 23, 1994, and the dialogue was suspended for more than a year. A second government mediator, Jorge Madrazo, made no progress with the EZLN.

The important thing in 1994 was that neither side used weapons to try to improve its position. By the end of 1994, Mexico had a new president, Ernesto Zedillo, whose administration began with a profound economic crisis. In February 1995, the Zedillo government broke the cease fire and attempted, unsuccessfully, to capture Subcommander Marcos. That was the moment of greatest military tension of the conflict.

San Andrés Larráinzar

A third government negotiator, Marco Antonio Bernal, buttressed by the mediation of the National Mediating Commission (CONAI) headed by Father Samuel Ruiz and the Peace Commission (Cocopa) made up of senators and deputies, began a new stage of negotiations that concluded in February 1996 with the San Andrés Larráinzar Accords.

These accords on indigenous rights are the first and only progress in the negotiations between the EZLN and the government. The accords have not been discussed in the Mexican Congress and therefore have not been put into practice; this has originated great tension between the EZLN and the government. The EZLN demands their immediate application and the government has not managed to turn them into law. If they became law, the Larráinzar accords would affect many vested interests, mainly those of the local strongmen-landlords in Chiapas, who keep the indigenous groups there under a feudal system of exploitation.

Paramilitary Groups and the Acteal Massacre

Between 1996 and 1997, the Chiapas political and economic establishment developed a stratagem of terrorizing the indigenous communities who sympathized with the Zapatistas. In response, violence began to spread inside the communities, mainly in the northern part of the state, between members of the PRI and Zapatista followers, between Catholics and Protestants. In excess of 10,000 indigenous inhabitants are estimated to have fled their communities: these are the new refugees. At the same time many human rights violations began to be recorded.

The most important occurred in the town of Acteal on December 22, 1997, when 47 children, women and old people were murdered in cold blood by a paramilitary group financed by the PRI and landlords while they attended a religious service. As a result, the governor of Chiapas resigned after the National Human Rights Commission accused state troopers of supporting the massacre.

Between Acteal and Peace

The Acteal massacre is the gravest violation of human rights in Mexico in recent years. Dialogue between the government and the EZLN —currently at a standstill— must be reestablished to prevent the spread of violence in Chiapas.

Father Samuel Ruiz dissolved the CONAI in 1998 because it no longer fulfilled its mediation functions. Current government negotiator Emilio Rabasa has not managed to reestablish communication with Subcommander Marcos. In mid-1998, the Secretary General of the United Nations visited Mexico and there was some discussion of the possibility of the U.N. helping to break the impasse in communication between government and EZLN. The government refused this alternative, saying that it could affect national sovereignty.

In brief, five years after the beginning of the conflict, there is no war, but neither is there peace. Peace is not only the absence of war. It is also the creation of conditions whereby violence does not spread among indigenous communities, so there is no paramilitary activity and so that the EZLN can turn in their arms and become a political party as the guerrilla armies of Central America did.

For this to happen, peace talks between the government and the EZLN must be renewed to ensure there are no more massacres like Acteal and to reestablish the rule of law and the justice system. Another mediating body must be established that can make it possible to come to another peace accord, this time a definitive one. VM

Note: On March 21, the EZLN carried out a public consultation nationwide in which the population was asked if they agreed that the San Andrés Larráinzar Accords be accepted immediately. Approximately 3 million people 12 years and older answered the EZLN call.

Rethinking Sovereignty In the Age of Globalization

*Roberto Gutiérrez López**

As we approach the dawn of a new century, the changes and reorganization the world is experiencing are dramatically affecting politics, the economy, the structure of society and cultural life in a considerable number of nations. Today, it is undeniable that over the last two decades the growing interdependence among countries has become the distinguishing feature and central point of reference for the structural modernization processes of all nations.

More than ever before, we are faced with complex, close links among many social and political actors, each with different histories, interests and ideological perspectives.

In the twilight of the twentieth century, the perception of the world as a unified entity has taken on unprecedented dimensions. This involves the vision of a unified, integrating world as well as the awareness of a system of international relations which, in contrast to other moments in history, can only be analyzed, understood and evaluated from a global perspective.

For example, then, in the area of the economy, globalization in our time is distinguished by the world's nations' productive, trade and financial systems going through an intensive process whereby they become more harmonized, internationalized and complementary. Together with this, the technological revolution is radically transforming production, the conditions in which communities are organized and even patterns of daily life.

> In the code of globalization, the democratic processing of social plurality has become a fundamental principle of legitimacy in modern political systems.

We are dealing with a dynamic which is developing in a framework of economic multipolarity marked by the forging of regional alliances in which the expansion of markets acquires different characteristics initially linked to the scientific, technological and industrial development of the international economy.

From this perspective, currently at least 100 regionalization processes are underway worldwide, the most outstanding of which are the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the one in Southeast Asia headed up by Japan.

It is important to note how this worldwide integration of the economy has been accompanied by a political globalization expressed over the last 20 years in the demand for democratic governments in every region of the planet. More than at any other moment in the history of systems of government, the principles and values underpinning democracy as a form of collective organization are present and have become the reference points that orient political activity in a growing number of countries. This explains why the association between the market, the symbol of economic globalization, and democracy, the symbol of political globalization, goes practically unquestioned today. After the collapse of the socialist countries, the central question of debate is not whether the market and democracy should exist, but which forms they should take in the historical development and political balance of forces in each nation.

Thus, in the context of globalization, pluralism has come to the fore as the distinctive trait of modern societies. These are increasingly demanding and differentiated societies which require better spaces for participation, whether in forming governments or in any other facet of social life. This explains why today in a great many countries, state institutions are being reformed to allow for social diversity and to create better conditions for living together and political competition.

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In the code of globalization, the democratic processing of social plurality has become a fundamental principle of legitimacy in modern political systems. Development, social differentiation, competition and negotiation are indicative of a kind of collective interaction which only through democracy can sidestep conflicts and paralyzing confrontations.

Undoubtedly, this relative harmonization of political procedures has found significant support in the type of culture which has been promoted parallel to the economic globalization. The value structures and evaluative aspects of national identities have changed with regard to their sense of history and prospects for the future. The ever greater scope of the mass media has displaced traditional local means of forging identities.

On this basis, so-called Western culture has become the philosophical, scientific and ideological paradigm with the greatest impact on the new, globalized world. In the last analysis, it is a particular pattern of perceiving reality in which the values of rationality, effectiveness and productivity in the economy coexist with the notions of freedom, tolerance, the rule of law and unrestricted respect for the individual socially and politically. This culture has become the main source of ideological socialization and generation of behavior patterns worldwide. It is not by chance that, as Huntington points out, the main ideological and political conflict in the world is no longer the opposition between socialism and capitalism, but has now been replaced with the clash between Western with non-Western. Of course, this confrontation should not be read with simplistic geographical or even religious criteria: it can be found within many nations typically considered Western.

From this point of view, the thrust of globalization brings with it an intrinsic danger of upsetting or traumatizing particular cultural identities. If just the right harmonization between specific cultures and the global culture is not achieved —as has happened in many cases— there is a rejection of what is then seen as cultural imperialism. This is particularly important in societies like Mexico whose cultural traditions are very deeply rooted both regionally and nationally. To a great degree, Mexican nationalism grows out of the defense of these traditions and experiences which historically have forged an identity that is both indivisible and irreplaceable.

> The notion of sovereignty should be looked at from the perspective of the interdependency among nations, understood as the ability of each nation-state to decide or choose the terms under which it will be part of a globalized world.

As Dabat and Rivera have point out, "Globalization generates apparently contradictory results. On the one hand, it gives rise to supranational relations and entities of different kinds which become a basic part of the lives of peoples; simultaneously, however, it provokes strong reactions of rejection like religious or ethnic fundamentalism or the geopolitical disintegration of nation-states."[1]

Neither is it possible to ignore that the new situation created by globalization has, in many cases, accentuated the dichotomy between backwardness and development, as well as the growing difficulty national governments have in controlling the social impact of the modern economy. In our country, there has been an attempt to accompany the implementation of the internationally dominant economic model with policies to alleviate social inequalities. However, the difficulties that this has met with are expressed in the high poverty and indigence rates we still have, evidence that the so-called modernization of economic relations in and of itself does not bring equality and well being.

In addition, the difference in strength between countries has meant that the supposedly free flow of goods or services has in reality been regulated by protectionist policies designed from the point of view and in the interest of countries with a greater ability to bring pressure and negotiate. In that framework, phenomena like unfair competition for markets and the proliferation of difficult-to-regulate speculative investments have developed.

In an international scenario with such sharp contrasts, we must ask ourselves: What effect is globalization having on the redefinition of sovereignty of nation-states at the end of the twentieth century? What room for manoeuver do they have given the challenges and demands of living together internationally in a globalized world? What is the policy these states should adopt in this context as they go into the third millennium? And finally, how can they grow and develop without losing their sense of community and national identity in the process?

In relation to this, Joseph A. Camilleri has observed, "Globalization and its corollaries bring forth significant elements of analysis about the underlying premises of the legal and political theory of sovereignty. In the first place, they challenge the notion that political authority is exercised exclusively or even primarily in a particular territory. In the second place, they bring into question the hypothesis that in the state's territory, authority is unlimited and indivisible. And, in the third place, they suggest a growing dilemma between the state and civil society, between political authorities and the organization of the economy, between cultural identity and social cohesion."[2]

Clearly the common denominator of this situation is the concept of sovereignty and its implications. Certainly, the dominant trends internationally seem to question the traditional definition of sovereignty. It is a good idea to remember that the notion of sovereignty was born with the rise of national states, initially to justify the absolute, unquestionable authority of monarchs exercised between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was only after the liberal democratic revolution at the end of the eighteenth century that the concept of sovereignty changed in emphasis to link it up directly with the notion of the people's will.

What is common, however, to both these ways of understanding sovereignty is the idea of the individual's freedom to decide unimpeded how he or she is going to act. For that reason, according to the political theory of democratic liberalism, sovereignty is to a nation what freedom is to the individual. In that sense, nations must be free to decide both their internal forms of political organization and the kind of links that they will establish with other nations.

This classical conception of sovereignty has gradually been brought into question, however, by a markedly asymmetrical balance of forces among nations, an imbalance in which the rise and consolidation of great centers of power put less developed nations in a distinctly vulnerable position. In order to survive, particularly after World War II, they pressed for the formal recognition of their sovereignty in terms of self-determination of all peoples, non-intervention and the peaceful solution of controversies as defense mechanisms in the face of the expansionist and interventionist temptations of the strong countries.

Without a doubt, the nation-state will continue to be the central actor in international relations in the next century since no organizational forms capable of effectively and legitimately replacing it are on the horizon.

We should underline this reading of sovereignty associated with a clear political demand in that it continues to be current despite the enormous changes in the post-war period, which have intensified in the last two decades. While the globalized world has made it impossible to think of sovereignty as synonymous with independence or self-sufficiency, it has not made it impossible to conceive it in terms of political decision-making ability whose legitimacy is decided exclusively within each country's national borders.

If this is accepted, it becomes clear that the notion of sovereignty should be perceived, analyzed and evaluated from the perspective of the interdependency among nations, understood as the ability of each nation-state to decide or choose the terms under which it will be part of a globalized world, according to its specific circumstances and in the best possible conditions.

In the last analysis, we should remember that the globalized world exists because national states propitiated and regulated it in specific ways. The coordination of trade, financial or industrial policies, the dropping of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, the promotion of investment, the forging of regional alliances, the establishment of a common currency and even the creation of regional political bodies such as the Parlatino or the European Parliament are all the result of the sovereign will of the states involved to give ongoing globalization a particular profile.

In this same sense, the possibility of influencing and changing the evils of globalization rests in the very actions of local societies and the nation-state. On this basis, clearly nations are not bereft of opportunities for changing their international surroundings; for this reason, developing nations' so-called "state of defenselessness" in a globalized world does, in fact, not exist. Of course, this should not lead us to ignore either the asymmetries or the political and legal inequality among states. For that reason, as David Held argues, "What is needed is an intensification of the levels of interaction and interconnection within and among states and societies that make up international society since all political, economic and social

activity is increasingly played out in a global frame of reference."[3]

Without a doubt, the nation-state will continue to be the central actor in international relations in the next century since no organizational forms capable of effectively and legitimately replacing it are on the horizon. The increasingly globalized world that is approaching will require, rather, strong national communities, with governments based on consensus, capable of instrumenting their participation in the international scene with a favorable impact on the quality of life of their constituents. What will be required, then, is a nation-state that democratically integrates the interests of a plural, open society, linking them to the opportunities for growth and development that the international situation offers.

The importance of the domestic strength of nations like Mexico is expressed not only with regard to its political institutions, but also the solidity of its economic-financial system. In fact, the different impact country by country of the Russian, Southeast Asian and Brazilian crises show the importance of keeping public finances healthy and inflation rates manageable.

In other words, the favorable insertion of nations in the so-called new world order depends to a great extent on the domestic construction and consolidation of democratic governability and a relatively solid economic-financial system. Globalization demands domestic policies of each country be strengthened by consolidating democratic structures with an aim to guaranteeing social cohesion, legitimacy in the access to public power, the effective exercise of public office and a balance between its different bodies, all of which will serve to validate government actions abroad. In the Mexican case, the consensus around the 1996 constitutional amendments to effect an electoral reform is particularly significant since it has allowed for political competition to take place in a procedural framework accepted by all the political players.

In this sense, it seems increasingly clear that broadening out democracy, economic growth and the social well-being that should come of it require the solid backing of society and a medium- and long-term perspective. Only in this way will nations realize their potential and achieve a better insertion into the global scene.

Globalization demands domestic policies of each country be strengthened by consolidating democratic structures with an aim to guaranteeing social cohesion and legitimacy in the access to public power.

In a globalized world, the viability and strength of states is related, then, to economic development, the effectiveness and legitimacy of their institutions, a strict adherence to the rule of law and, particularly, the forging of consensual decisions on all levels of national life including, of course, decisions about foreign policy. On the basis of these suppositions rests the possibility of moving forward with a national project which will safeguard its own interests and be enriched through contact with other nations. Mexico is beginning to advance on a road of consensus even in economic matters. The president himself has made the proposal of discussing and coming to an agreement on a state development policy to create certainty both among domestic and foreign actors with influence in the economy, regardless of which party is in office.

Only on the basis of a strong, democratic, efficient nation-state will it be possible to face the other challenges of globalization like the zigzags of the world economy, the deterioration of the environment, today's pandemics, famine, terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering and international organized crime.

At the end of the twentieth century, the profound reforms to state structures to guarantee democratic governability and the generation of consensuses around a desirable —and at the same time possible— development model are the central features of any national strategy to meet the challenges of globalization. Only in this way can we be equal to the challenges of our time, retaining our historical memory, vindicating the cultural wealth of different communities and valuing the profound significance of each national identity. VM

NOTES

[1] Alejandro Dabat and Miguel Angel Rivera, "Las transformaciones de la economía mundial," comp. Alejandro Dabat, *México y la globalización* (Mexico City: UNAM-CRIM, 1994), p 30.

[2] Joseph Camilleri, "Rethinking Sovereignty in a Shrinking, Fragmented World," R.B.J. Walker, *Contending Sovereignties: Redefining Political Community* (U.S.: Lyenne Rienner Publishers, 1990), pp. 23-24.

[3] David Held, "Democracia y globalización" in *Etcétera* 7 (Mexico City) (1993), pp. 12-13.

TWENTY-NINTH WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM AT DAVOS

CONTROLLING THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION

Forty heads of state and government, 250 ministers of economy and finance, a thousand businessmen and hundreds of experts met in Davos, Switzerland, January 28 to February 2, to debate the responsibilities for the global economy and strategies for a lasting peace in conflict zones. This objective was outlined in the Initiative for a Transition to Peace jointly developed by the forum itself and the Shimon Peres Center for Peace.

During the meeting, Ruth Dreifuss and Roman Herzog, presidents of Switzerland and Germany, respectively, emphasized the social responsibilities that globalization imposes and called on the industrialized countries to stimulate their economies and create a social world order. They also asked governments and central banks to coordinate economic policies to foster growth and avert currency fluctuations in order to preclude panics and create confidence in the world's markets.

When confronted with the problem of how to deal with the social disintegration caused by overwhelming competition at the cost of solidarity, President Herzog said that the classical conception of foreign policy should be changed, since it is part of all fields of politics, the economy, society and culture. President Dreifuss mentioned the close interaction that should exist between economic well being and democracy, citing the important role the business community can play in promoting democratic governments by, for example, supporting an end to child labor and the struggle against corruption and paying wages that allow workers to live above the poverty line.

The president and founder of the forum, Klaus Schwab, said that the free market and the interests of society should be balanced to ensure that the gap between rich and poor countries does not grow. "Social cohesion and the free market are not natural enemies. We need globalization because it is an opportunity to share capital, technology and knowledge on a world scale and to take care of a world which, at century's end, has four times the number of inhabitants it had at the beginning of the century."

Mexican Finance Minister José Angel Gurría, interviewed by Reuters about the possible dollarization of the Mexican economy, said that it is not on the agenda for the moment, given that the floating peso system "is working well."

The forum concluded with two different positions about how to deal with the crisis of world markets: one proposes a total overhaul of the international financial system and the other counsels only certain adjustments. After analyzing the causes of the Southeast Asian crisis and the most recent crises in Russia and Brazil, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder demanded greater controls over international financial markets, while Japan, France and Great Britain opposed more restrictions. It was announced finally that concrete steps would be taken on this question at the Group of Seven summit to be held in Cologne, Germany, in June. VM

María Cristina Hernández
Assistant Editor

The Geography Of Electoral Competition in Mexico

*Juan Reyes del Campillo**

Until just a few years ago, elections in Mexico were amply dominated by the government party which managed to retain the backing of the majority of the population while the country managed successful economic growth, permanent social mobility and room for political participation. Elections, more than strictly a process for selecting public officials, were a mechanism for recognizing and accepting the policies the government carried out.

It is important to point out that the voters have not followed a single or homogeneous trend; changes in the economic and political model brought with them differentiated voting patterns.

At the beginning of the 1980s, however, given the need to modernize the country's economic and political life, elections began to play a new role. The democratic project began when the economic crisis made it impossible to sustain the old development model, when welfare policies ended and consensuses were jettisoned. All this forced the government to seek and generate legitimacy through elections, given that the old instruments for consent and support became very critical.

Little by little the process of democratization made headway in Mexico. As the development model tended toward an increasing opening up of the market, forcing economic agents to become more competitive, a corresponding need for a new political model emerged, in which the rules of competition were both clear and the same for everyone. The crisis brought to the fore the need to revise the economic model, and therefore also the political model. In that sense, elections in Mexico began to occupy a fundamental place in achieving access to government posts.

In addition, as the country developed and changed, substantial transformations were taking place in the citizenry. A constant flow of migrants to urban areas turned Mexico from a basically rural country into an urban one. The population's educational and informational levels rose and workers are today concentrated in industry and services. These changes are the basis, in the last analysis, for plurality and political diversity.

It is important to point out that the voters have not followed a single or homogeneous trend; changes in the economic and political model brought with them differentiated voting patterns. In general, the only provable hypothesis is that there is a long-term tendency for the official party to lose votes and for the opposition to benefit with a corresponding increase.

We can characterize this overall performance as a long, profound period of partisan electoral realignment. Strictly speaking, it is not only that the government party is losing electoral support due to "penalty" votes and momentary benefits to the opposition. It can also be shown that the opposition parties have been creating an electoral base, and in addition consolidating its share of the vote and its electoral current in different ways.

The party system in Mexico today is basically made up of three large political forces. In almost all elections, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the National Action Party (PAN) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) get most of the votes. But for this partisan configuration to emerge, many years had to go by and many battles be fought. The road followed also has to do with the affinities established between voters and the parties, what the parties represent and the view and the perception the citizenry has about politics as the result of its identification with a party.

We should mention that down through the years many elections have been competitive, to the degree that they represent-

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ed a formidable, emblematic impetus for the political transition. Competitiveness has also increased overall, although there does not seem to be a single dynamic —much less a single explanation— that would allow us to describe electoral behavior in the last two decades simply.

To analyze the dynamic of electoral trends and vote distribution in Mexico, we must refer to the significant breaks or splits that have occurred at different times. What we have, then, is not a single foundational election, or, as some authors have put it, an electoral watershed, but a series of elections equivalent to small earthquakes among the PRI's electoral adherents. We mean by this that over a series of elections, the PRI suffered partial electoral breaks, thus beginning to see its condition as the hegemonic party undermined.

PRI Regional Effectiveness (1997)

Source: Electoral Geography and Municipal Studies Laboratory (LAGEEM), Autonomous Metropolitan University, Xochimilco Campus.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the PRI vote began to drop in different states around the country. Baja California and Chihuahua on the northern border, plus Jalisco, the State of Mexico and Mexico City's Federal District in the central part of the country, were the first to show a decline. These states are all highly developed economically, and therefore, at first, analysts closely tied regions with high socioeconomic development to a downward trend in the PRI vote and a strong presence of the opposition.

The states of Aguascalientes, Colima, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Michoacán and Morelos were settings for the PRI's 1988 electoral shake-up. It had always enjoyed very high vote counts in all those states and its 1988 decline was very drastic. Perhaps for this reason that year was considered the moment of the great electoral breakdown of the PRI. However, only six states were won by the opposition, most of them because of the Cardenista[1] current's split from the PRI.

In the 1994, six different states —Campeche, Chiapas, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo and Veracruz— left behind total PRI hegemony. The PRI vote nationwide, in percentage terms, was more or less the same in the 1988 and the 1994 elections. However, in these six states, it declined almost 20 percent. The interesting thing about this group of states is that they all have very different socioeconomic conditions: in Nuevo León and Quintana Roo the economy is quite solid and diversified, while Chiapas and Oaxaca suffer from strong deficiencies and contradictions.

In other states where the PRI has long suffered vote loss, by 1997 parties were practically alternating in office. The official party's vote count has been dropping steadily during the 1990s. In Durango, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Sonora, Tabasco and Yucatán, the breakdown of the PRI should be attributed to the successful work of the opposition parties. In these states charismatic politicians have emerged to lead movements of civic resistance against electoral fraud.[2]

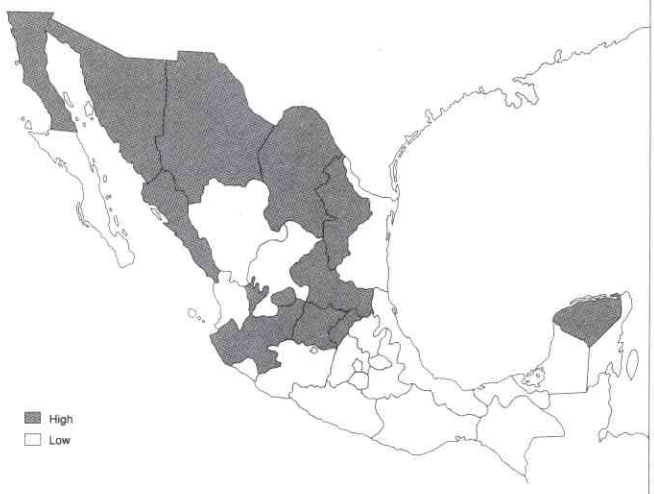
In these 23 states of Mexico, we can say that there is equilibrium between the PRI and the opposition vote. The official party derives its advantage basically from the fact that in Mexican elections, particularly on a local level, there tends to be a polarization between two political forces. For that reason, it is very important to emphasize that it is not always the same party that challenges the official party, the PRI, for first place, but it is the latter which in every region must confront a party that concentrates the opposition vote. For years, electoral trends seemed to show that in Mexico's north, the confrontation was exclusively between the PRI and the PAN, while in the south, the competing parties were the PRI and the PRD. This was

In local elections, the excessive polarization between two political forces not only excludes third parties, but also makes it necessary to consider that a series of bi-partisan systems are emerging.

only a generality and today we can make a more precise assessment. It is true that the dispute for the main publicly elected posts looks like this, but different options and results are beginning to emerge.

While the segmented regional concentration of votes in federal elections makes it difficult to eliminate third parties nationally, in local elections, the excessive polarization between two political forces not only excludes third parties, but also makes it necessary to consider that a series of bi-partisan systems are emerging.

PAN Regional Effectiveness (1997)



Source: Electoral Geography and Municipal Studies Laboratory (LAGEEM), Autonomous Metropolitan University, Xochimilco Campus.

On the other hand, recently we have seen elections in which the polarization has fragmented. That is to say, in certain areas of a single state, two parties monopolize the votes while in other areas, two different parties do the same. This is relatively new, but it means that we are dealing here with the germ of plurality in Mexico, a plurality which is beginning to take root in some parts of the country.

The state always had less of a presence, with fewer governmental companies and corporativist organizations in northern Mexico, less populated and far from Mexico City, the symbolic political center. In this sense, the region's economic development rested more on the forces of private enterprise than on government investment and therefore there was more of a tendency to vote for the PAN, a party which has always questioned exaggerated state participation in the economy.

Most public companies were located in the south and development has been prompted with vast state participation so that, when the state presence diminished and corporativist controls began to erode, it was left forces, particularly the PRD, which attracted opposition voters. The PRD puts forward the need for the state to continue to take on basic commitments for sustaining development, as well as for creating institutional mechanisms required for improving the distribution of wealth.

The 1997 federal elections showed us that the PAN still basically represented the opposition in the north, while in the south it focused around the PRD. Maps of opposition parties' regional effectiveness show that the PAN concentrates its greatest strength in the northern and central parts of Mexico, while the PRD converges on the central and southern parts of the country.[3] This trend, however, has been broken by the PRD in two northern states, Sonora and Tamaulipas, where it obtained positive results. Simultaneously, in Yucatán, in southeast Mexico, the PAN has also been highly competitive.

It is very relevant that in central western Mexico, the government party is broadly and roundly rejected. The significance of this region, where the PRI's effectiveness is below its national average, is that it represents 40 percent of the national population. Some of the opposition's most important support and loyalties come from this area, where it has an electorate closely identified with its ideals. Several other states are governed by the opposition, and everything seems to indicate an increasing tendency to have an influence on their neighboring states.

What is more, in three states (Zacatecas, Tlaxcala and Baja California Sur) where the PRI had been highly effective and no single opposition party had been able to compete in terms of votes, the PRI lost the gubernatorial races in local elections after 1997. In these states, the opposition fielded candidates who had split from the PRI and were later able to attract a broad majority of the voters.

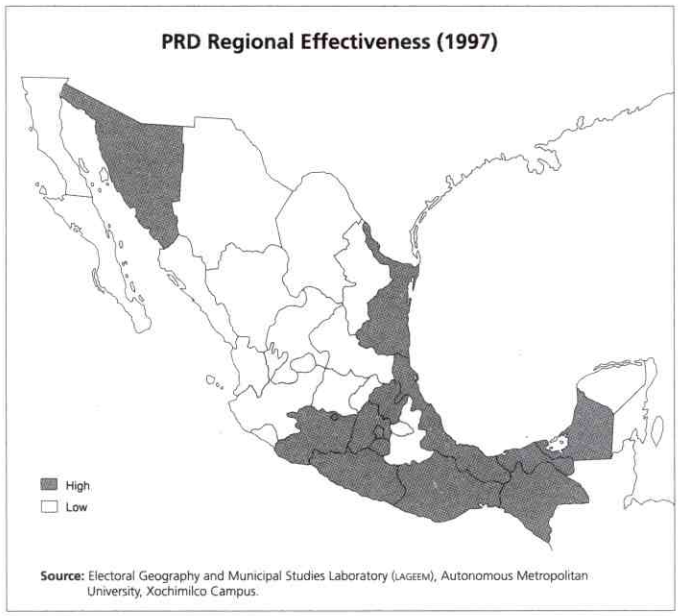
The 1997 federal elections showed us that the PAN still basically represented the opposition in the north, while in the south it focused around the PRD.

The accumulation of different tendencies makes it possible to suppose that the

presidential elections of the year 2000 will be hotly contested. Different scenarios may develop, but undoubtedly three possibilities best fit both the electoral situation and the relations among the parties. None of these scenarios can be eliminated out of hand given that the situation in Mexico today is tremendously volatile.

The first scenario is that the three main parties will run independently and there will be an equilibrium of political forces in the different states. This would benefit the PRI since it is the only party that can compete in all the states, while the PAN and the PRD would end up with segmented results.

A second scenario would be that, while the three main parties run independently of each other, one of the two opposition parties would gain strength vis-à-vis the other. In this case, regardless of which is the stronger party, it would beat the official party in the race for the presidency.



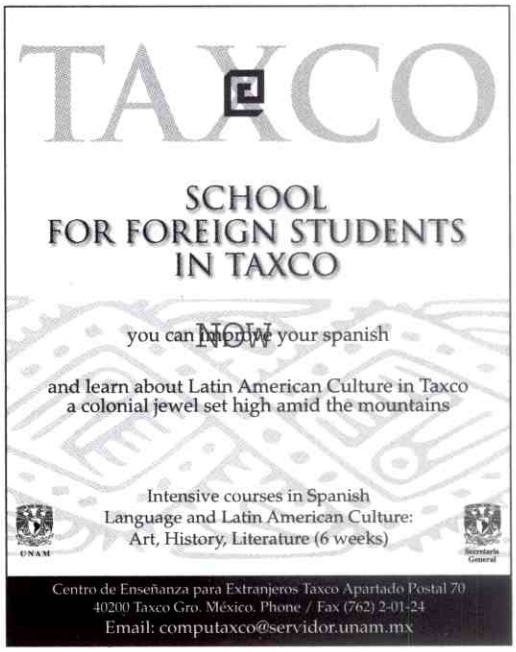
A third scenario which cannot be disregarded is that the entire opposition would band together in a coalition. Undoubtedly, it would have to run a candidate who was not linked to either party but who had sufficient political merit to be able to situate himself above both. In this case, there is no doubt who would emerge the victor. VM

NOTES

[1] A political current emerged in 1988 from a split in the PRI that was the basis for the founding of the PRD. Joining with the split were groups and individuals mainly from the left who gathered around the figure of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Solórzano. [Editor's Note.]

[2] Outstanding among these politicians are [the late] Dr. Salvador Nava in San Luis Potosí, Adalberto "Baldy" Rosas in Sonora and Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Tabasco.

[3] High or low effectiveness of a party occurs when in a given state, its percentage of the vote is higher or lower than its national average. In the 1997 election for federal deputies, the PRI obtained 39.11 percent of the vote nationwide, the PAN, 26.61 percent and the PRD, 25.71 percent.



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A Party System for Democracy

*Alberto Begné Guerra**

Since the 1977 political reform and with particular intensity since 1988's controversial presidential elections, Mexico has been immersed in continual electoral reforms; at the end of the day, they have produced a profound transformation of its political system. In the last 20 years, six constitutional and legislative reforms (1977, 1986, 1989, 1993, 1994 and 1996) have established the conditions, first, for the legal recognition, the inclusion and the participation of opposition political parties in state institutional life, and then for citizens to freely and effectively cast their votes, for electoral competition and the development of political pluralism and parties alternating in office. The advances have been substantial: today, in brief, the wide gamut of fraudulent practices that for decades characterized the Mexican electoral system are history, and with them, the previously unquestionable hegemony of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

After decades of single party hegemony, Mexico's political party system has begun to look tri-partisan: three parties —the PRI, the PAN and the PRD— have weight nationwide and significant representation in different government bodies.

The dimension of the transformation is clearly illustrated with the changes in the distribution of public posts in Mexico during the same period. While before, almost all elected positions were concentrated in the hands of the PRI, in the 1980s a gradual, but increasing process of deconcentration began. "In the early 1980s the Institutional Revolutionary Party still monopolized the vast majority of elected positions. Of 3,479 posts including the presidency, the Congress, governorships, state congresses and mayorships, the PRI controlled 91 percent. During the 1980s, the quasi-monopolistic nature of the distribution of power changed gradually until the PRI's share dropped from 91 percent in 1982, to 62 percent in 1994 and 54 percent in 1997."[1]

The opposition parties have won major posts. Today, the National Action Party (PAN) governs six states (Aguascalientes, Baja California, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Nuevo León and Querétaro), while the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) governs three (Mexico City's Federal District, Tlaxcala and Zacatecas) and has just won the governor's seat in Baja California Sur. Therefore, of a total of 32 states (including the Federal District), until 1989 all governed by the PRI, the PRD and the PAN now occupy the local chief executive's seat in 10. The figures for municipalities are also telling, particularly given not only the quantity but the quality of opposition wins: they head up 60 of the 100 most important cities in the country. The 1977 federal elections lost the PRI the absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies for the first time in its history, and with it, its ability to legislate alone without having to build a majority with other political forces.

If for decades the defining trait of the political system was the absolute hegemony of a single party and, based on that, the president's almost total domination of the legislative and judicial branches and also of state governments, today, with political parties increasingly alternating in office and the map of the new distribution of power in mind, we can say that that system has come to an end. Does that mean that the process of political change has concluded? Is it time to celebrate the beginning of a new democratic era in Mexico?

* Lawyer, political analyst and coordinator of the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico's Electoral Studies Program.

If the firm trend of the last few years toward electoral normalcy continues and conditions (effective norms, autonomous institutions, transparent procedures and equitable funding) for honest elections and real partisan competition consolidate, there will no longer be any reason to continue centering political discussion on elections. Thus, from demands and debate centered on the legitimacy of political power, the discussion should shift to issues of the exercise of power, its faculties and the organization and functioning of the branches of government. And no political party will be able to elude its responsibilities.

From that point of view, the issues concerning the process of political change acquire a dimension which transcends the electoral sphere.

Periodic free, competitive elections are, in effect, a necessary condition for democracy, a condition without which democracy cannot exist. But, this is not enough, unless we commit the tremendous mistake of reducing the definition of "citizen," or, even worse, the definition of "person," to that of "voter." What do we need, then, to bring the process of political change to its conclusion and consolidate democratic life?

Gustavo Graf/Imagenlatina

Vicente Fox, the most probable PAN nominee.

Far from thinking fondly of individual moments which lay the very foundations of the system, I see Mexico's political change as a complex process and therefore, as a series of negotiations, agreements and political decisions that, not without resistance and risks, make it possible little by little to build democracy. Therefore, I think that there are several different demands that should be satisfied to consolidate the process. One of these seems to me decisive. It is linked to the system of political parties and the possibility that consensuses be reached and reforms made to ensure the establishment of an efficient government by law.

Over the last few years, after decades of hegemony of a single party with no electoral competition, the system of political parties in Mexico has begun to look like a tri-partisan structure, a framework made up of three parties with national presence and a very significant representation in different government bodies: the PRI, the PAN and the PRD. This tendency was confirmed in the 1997 federal elections and the 1998 local races.

From that point of view, it would seem that the party system already has a well defined format with three strong parties —which among them take up almost all the seats in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies and are the only real hopefuls for the presidency— and a shifting number of small parties —two of which already have official registration (the Green Ecologist Party of Mexico [PVEM] and the Labor Party [PT]), and four to five more, which will probably obtain legal registration in the next few months— which may hold the deciding votes to make or break legislative majorities. However, different factors allow us to suppose that this trend could change, particularly after the elections of the year 2000.

The most probable scenario is that the format will not change in the short run, but that, rather, it will be consolidated, since the survival of the small parties will depend on their alliances with the large ones, unless the latter suffer splits that create groups or public figures seeking party registration of their own to run in elections. If alliances are made, additions will be made to the threesome, but the structure would not lose its shape; we would be looking at a race among three large forces gathered respectively around the PRI, the PAN and the PRD, with their respective allies garnering almost all the votes, regardless of their relative size. If there are splits, the tri-partisan system could be modified and, in that case, the effects on the electoral race's format are unpredictable. However, presumably, the contest would tend to center on the two large parties that had not split.

In contrast with this scenario, the post-electoral prospects —contrary to what happened after the 1997 and 1998 elections— are not clear in terms of the three main parties continuing to dominate the political scene in the same way. Despite their enormous influence and great capacity for gathering interests under their political umbrellas and effectively representing them, the processes of nominating presidential candidates and their vote outcomes could produce breaks and internal fights that, if extreme, could well bring into question the very survival of the parties —at least as we know them today. In particular, it

Tomás Bravo/Imagenlatina

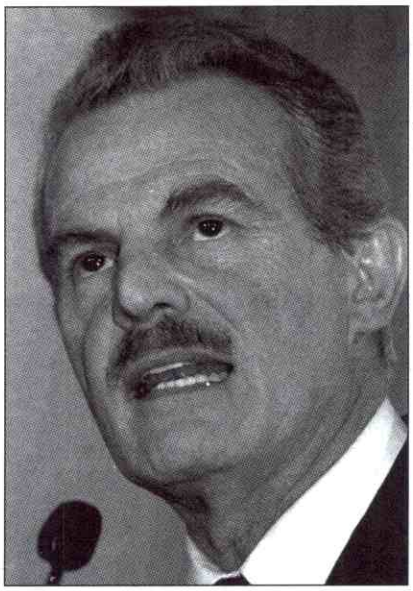
Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (PRD) will be running for the presidency for the third time.

is very difficult to imagine the PRI or the PRD after a defeat of their presidential campaign.

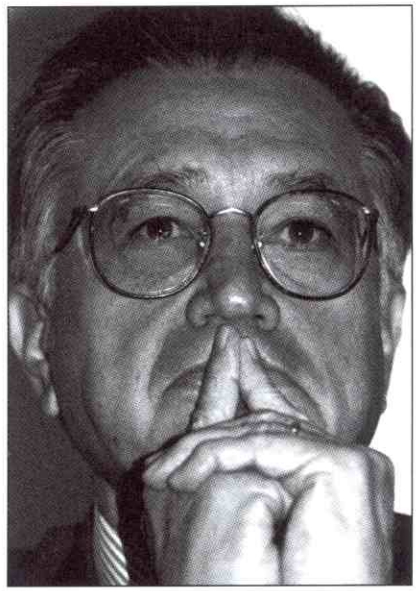
If the PRI were defeated in the next presidential elections, it is difficult to imagine that it could survive. It was born in office and is tied to the presidency by an umbilical cord that has never been severed. This would make it extraordinarily difficult for it to survive the internal bids for control by different groups and organizations that today coexist within it thanks to the catalyst that is the figure of the president and, above all, thanks to the expectations, ambitions and, therefore, party discipline that the office generates and stimulates. These probable clashes or splits would not necessarily mean the death of the PRI. On the contrary, they could herald a redefinition or restructuring that would consolidate it as a genuine political party or give rise to two different bodies. However, there is no doubt that it would be very different from what it is today. In addition, it is not too daring to suggest that in the little time left before the 2000 elections, it is almost impossible for the PRI to come up with effective, truly institutional rules and procedures that could ensure its unity in case of a defeat in the presidential race, much less when its main challenge is a short term one: averting a split over the nomination.

The PRD would be in similar straits, since a possible third defeat of Cárdenas in the year 2000, both because of his age and due to the political exhaustion that that would imply, would leave the PRD without the cohesive factor and the image that has kept it together, allowed it to grow and present itself to the voters as a viable alternative, despite the difficulties it has had to face. If during the first few years the leadership of its caudillo, or strong central political figure, was decisive for building and maintaining a minimum of unity among its different currents and organizations, now, after the indiscriminate alliances and nominations of former PRI members for governor's seats, this leadership is absolutely indispensable for avoiding natural confrontations and splits. If we try to imagine, then, a PRD after a defeat of Cárdenas in the presidential race, with a few governor's seats occupied by recent PRI defectors and leadership cadre from the old left organizations which originally

> Even if alliances are made, we will still be looking at a race among three large forces gathered around the PRI, the PAN, the PRD and their respective allies, that, regardless of their relative size, will garner almost all the votes.


Javier García/Imagenlatina

Minister of the Interior Francisco Labastida is probably the president's first choice.


Gustavo Graf/Imagenlatina

Manuel Bartlett Díaz, first PRI hopeful to campaign for the nomination.

founded the party, it is difficult to picture the consolidation of the PRD. Quite to the contrary, it is very easy to envision all manner of conflicts and splits, unless a different leadership emerged, capable of ensuring cohesion. This, however, does not at all seem a simple matter if we consider that from now to July 2, 2000, there will be no figure in the party other than its already existing central figure.

In the PAN, things are different. It is a party which was not born in office and, quite to the contrary, has managed to grow while in opposition; it has greater wherewithal for surviving an electoral defeat more or less intact. This does not mean that a defeat would not force it into a profound doctrinal, programmatic and strategic review, nor that a strong, charismatic but extremely voluntaristic personality like Vicente Fox, the almost sure bet for the presidential nomination, would not affect the institutional structure of the party. But, the important thing to emphasize is that, in contrast with the PRI and the PRD, it is possible to imagine the PAN almost exactly as it is today running in 2003 or 2006, after an electoral defeat in 2000. Its democratic tradition, shown in the effectiveness of its institutional rules and procedures, make the difference.

These unavoidable risks that the party leaderships run make the 2000 elections a fight to the finish. And this is precisely where one of the central obstacles for the consolidation of democracy emerges: none of the main national political parties seems willing to put the general interests of the nation before its own short-term interests, to a great extent wedded to the year 2000 race. Could things be any different? Of course they could.

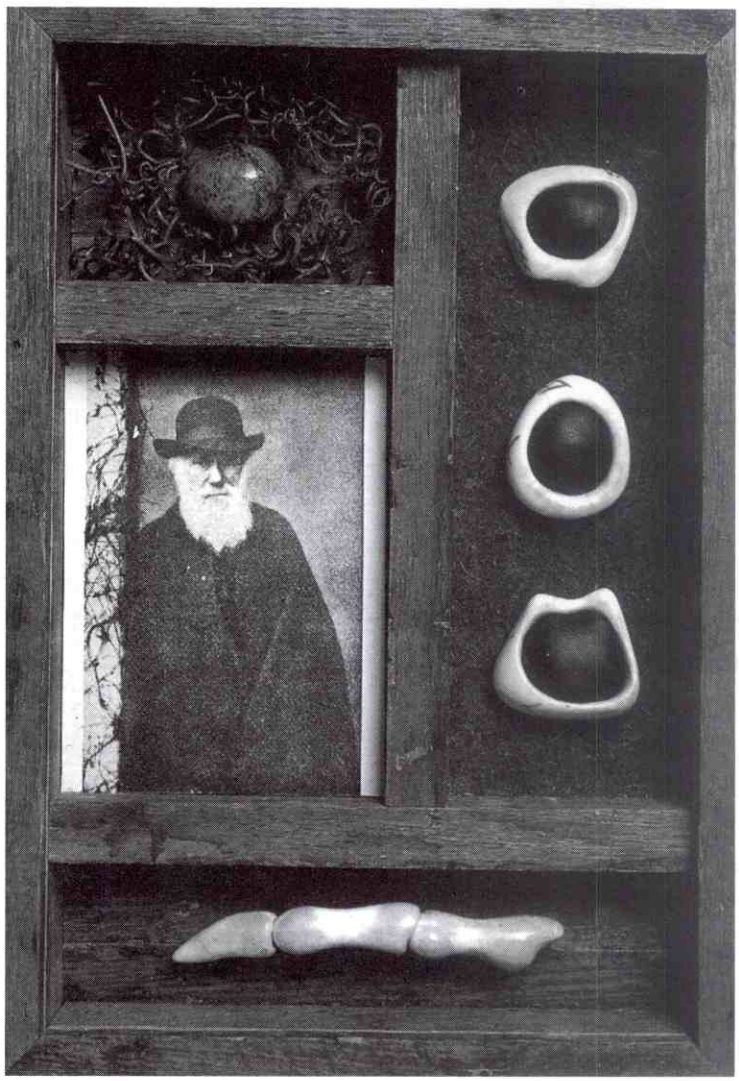
The possibility of assuming the longer-term responsibility on the basis of a general, not a particular, vision of things, and on that basis forging consensuses and agreements around Mexico's strategic needs is not incompatible —or at least it should not be— with the legitimate aspirations to office of each party. However, the contamination of the political arena with baseless palaver and quarrels, dogmatism of every stripe, intransigence and petty disputes seems to take precedence over reason and statecraft, responsibility and a constructive spirit, and a long term commitment to society. The process of political change and the country itself are trapped by a party system which, at least until now, has not shown maturity. And, just as it is probable that the threefold structure will arrive to the year 2000 firmly intact, it is also likely that after the presidential race it will give way to a different party system, with new political organizations and profound adjustments in the main parties contending for the presidency. What is needed, in brief, is a party system for democracy. Perhaps then it will be able to fulfill one of the most important prerequisites for the consolidation of a process of change: the construction of a new institutional arrangement which through pluralism will effectively resolve the demands of governability and development. VM

NOTES

[1] María Amparo Casar and Ricardo Raphael, *Nexos* (July 1998), pp. 42-43.

CIENCIAS

FÍSICA
LÓGICA
FILOSOFÍA
ECOLOGÍA
GEOLOGÍA
ANTROPOLOGÍA
MATEMÁTICAS
BIOLOGÍA
MEDICINA
HISTORIA
ASTRONOMÍA
EVOLUCIÓN



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arqueología MEXICANA M.R.

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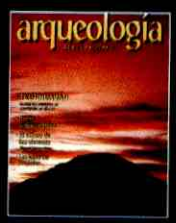
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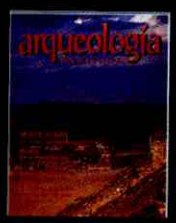
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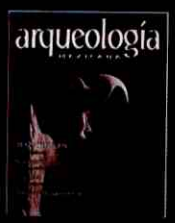
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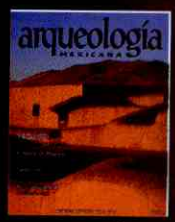
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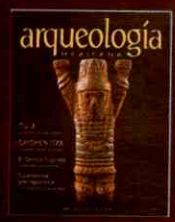
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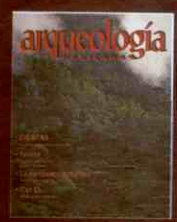
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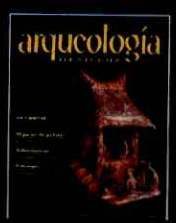
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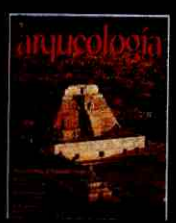
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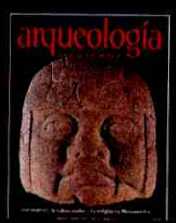
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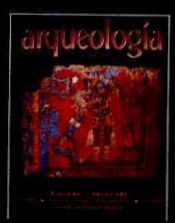
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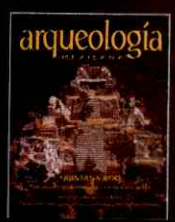
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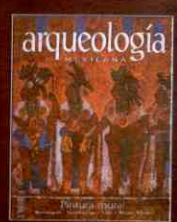
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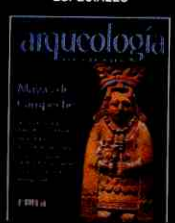
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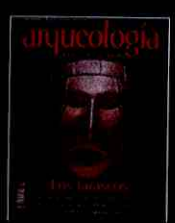
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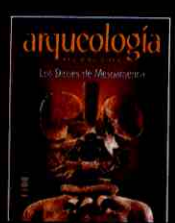
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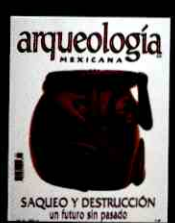

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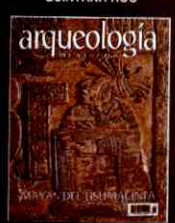
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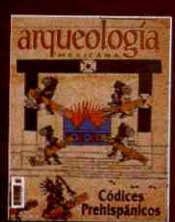

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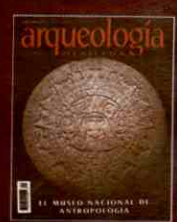
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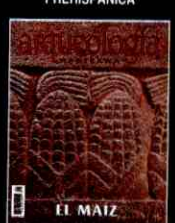

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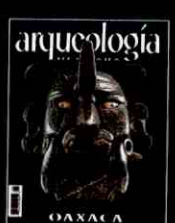

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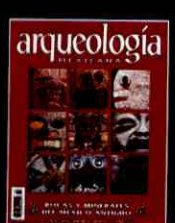
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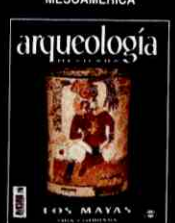

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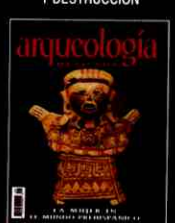
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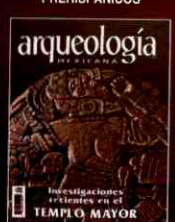

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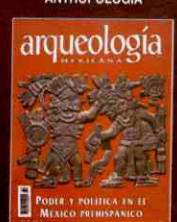

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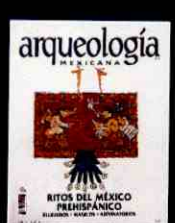

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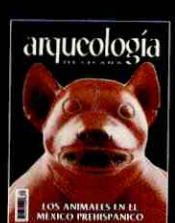

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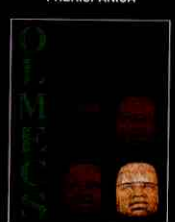
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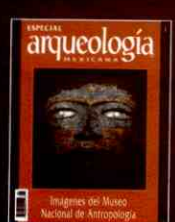

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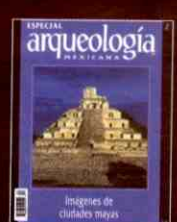

ESPECIAL IMÁGENES 2

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CONACULTA · INAH

EDITORIAL RAÍCES

GUILLERMO GO

A VIRTUOSO OF LANDSCAPING

View of the Volcanoes from Puebla, 40 x 120 cm (oil on canvas).

His Life

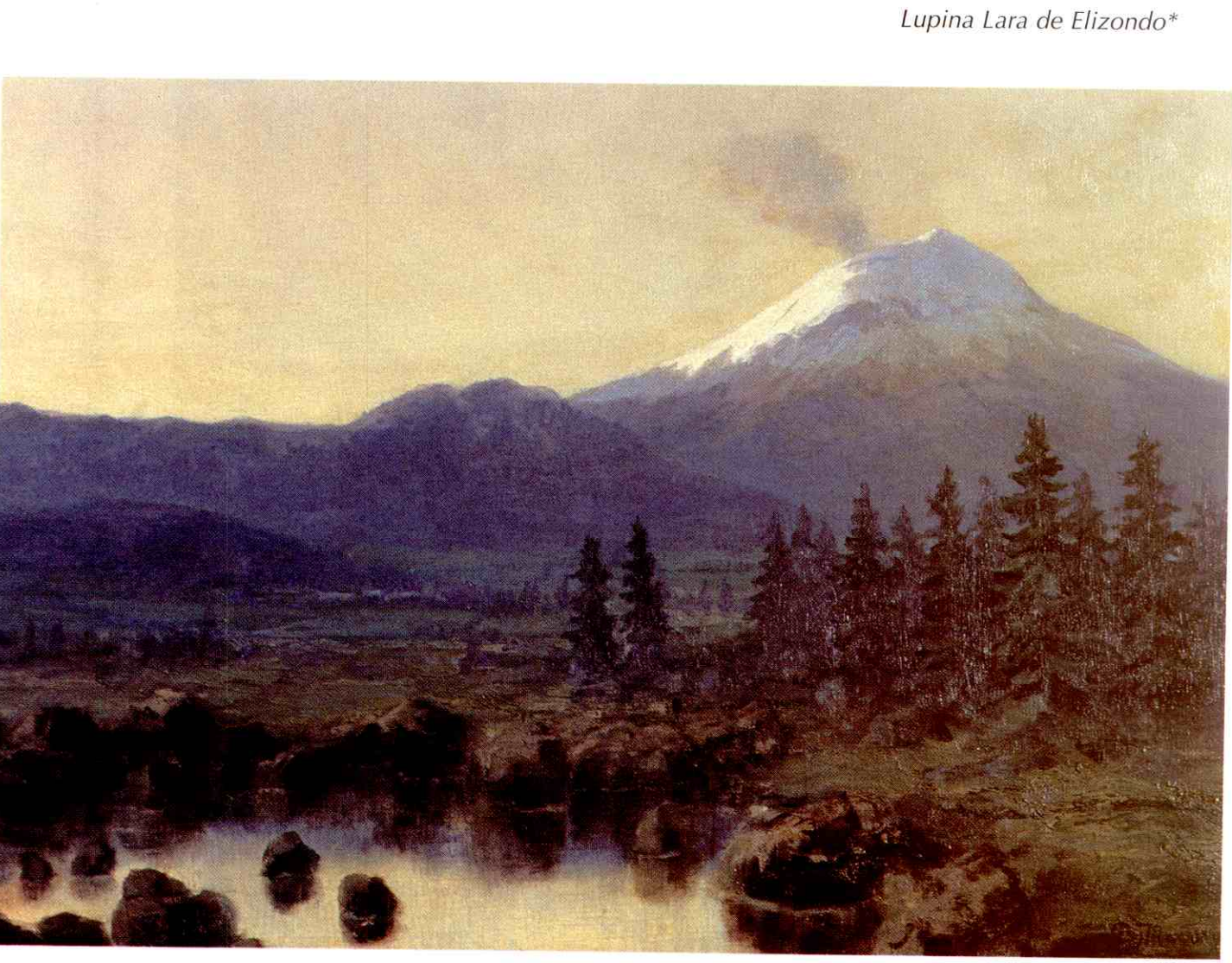
Guillermo Gómez Mayorga is one of those figures who, despite the simplicity of the way he worked, is considered as a virtuoso of Mexican art because of the quality of his painting. He was born in the city of Puebla, the capital of the state of the same name, February 10, 1887. The unfortunate dearth of archival information about this great painter makes it impossible to know how his life unfolded and how he carried out his trade. His family descended from Martín de Mayorga, viceroy of New Spain between 1779 and 1783. Gómez Mayorga, however, never boasted about that; if the topic was not mentioned, he never brought it up.

Reputedly an excellent student at the academy of his native city, he was awarded

* Director of *Resumen* magazine.
Photos by Carlos Contreras and Ramón Outón. All paintings are from a private collection.

M E Z M A Y O R G A

*Lupina Lara de Elizondo**



Photos reprinted courtesy Lupina Lara

a scholarship to study in Europe by President Francisco I. Madero. The tumultuous events of the Revolution, beginning with the president's assassination, however, made it impossible for him to go immediately.

It was at that time, exactly in the year 1910, that the Puebla home of Aquiles Serdán[1] was taken by assault and its owner killed. The young Gómez Mayorga did a painting on the topic, with Serdán lying on a stretcher. Today, this painting hangs in the Serdán home, now a museum. It won him a scholarship to study in the San Carlos Academy in Mexico City, where he was an outstanding student esteemed by his teachers, among them, Saturnino Herrán, Félix Parra, Mateo Saldaña and Germán Gedovius. At that time the academy's director was Alfredo Ramos Martínez, from Monterrey, recently returned from Europe. In his book, *Guillermo*

Xochimilco, 33 x 44 cm (oil on canvas).

Gómez Mayorga,[2] Hugo Cervantes says that Ramos Martínez wrote a letter of introduction to Leopolde Kiel, general director of primary schools, praising his student in the hope that he be given a post as teacher. "I have the pleasure of introducing and tendering my very special recommendation for Guillermo Gómez Mayorga, a very good student of this academy." Teaching was one way that painters were able to make a living. The letter continued, "You may assign him a drawing class with the complete assurance that he will execute it admirably."

Records tell us that when the armed movement had subsided, Gómez Mayorga was able to travel to Europe to perfect his knowledge. We know that he studied in France and Italy, specializing in landscapes. Most of his paintings were done at special times, when the coloring the sun gave to nature brought out the most in its beauty. Very few painters were as able as he in rendering so faithfully the wonderful spectacle of dawn and twilight.

Those who had the opportunity of meeting and sharing with him remember him with affection as a dreamer, somewhat like a Don Quixote, of great human worth; despite his repeatedly precarious economic straits, he was always willing to aid anyone who asked for help. He had an exceptional imagination which he expressed inventing stories and fables to entertain his children and sometimes his friends for hours on end as they paid rapt attention. At one time the rumor circulated that Gómez Mayorga painted his seascapes without ever having seen the sea. His relatives, who cite the long periods he spent in Acapulco, being inspired and working on innumerable paintings, have roundly denied the allegation.

After 60 years of artistic endeavor, this artist of incalculable worth to our nation died in 1962. Like few others, he loved his art and devoted himself to it with the only aim of leaving his best possible interpretation behind him.

HIS WORK

The artists of the colonial period painted landscapes as settings for religious scenes, and it was not until the nineteenth century that a whole new panorama opened

Laundresses of Puebla, 50 x 70 cm (oil on canvas).

up for this wonderful genre. The romantics gave nature a special place, and through them landscapes made their way forward in our painting. Initially these motifs were interpreted with rigorous realism, little by little allowing different representations to emerge. Here, we must mention the influence traveling painters had on the development of landscape art in Mexico: they traveled the country painting its valleys, mountains, canyons and riverbanks to try to capture its wonders. We must remember that independence opened the way to our territory, which had been the exclusive domain of the Spaniards for more than 400 years. Among the artists who visited the Americas were Thomas Egerton of Great Britain, the Germans Auguste Löhr and Johann Maurice Rugendas, the Italian Claudio Linati and Friedrich Waldeck from the city of Prague, among others. (The Soumaya Museum, in Mexico City, has a very complete collection of their work.)

José María Velasco was one of the inheritors of this artistic legacy, when he studied under the Italian teacher Eugenio Landesio. His wonderful paintings show that he surpassed his teacher and it took no time at all for him to become part of the teaching staff at the San Carlos Academy. There, he trained a generation of extraordinary painters who loved landscapes, like Cleofas Almanza, Carlos Riera, Francisco de Paula Mendoza, Dolores Soto and Mercedes Zamora. Germán Gedovius, later the teacher of Gómez Mayorga, also attended his classes.

In his book *Arte moderno y contemporáneo de México* (The Modern and Contemporary Art of Mexico),[3] Justino Fernández was quite right in saying, "Gedovius represents the last attempt to bring the formalism of the past into the present." We could say the same of his student, the young Gómez Mayorga, who worked in a period in which modernity and the avant garde had taken over his contemporaries while he always upheld the classicism of the old masters.

Like his colleague Armando García Núñez, Guillermo Gómez Mayorga was one of the Mexican landscape artists who with singular beauty painted Mexico's volcanoes. His paintings were done from nature; he used to go out into the country carrying his materials in search of the

View of Popocatépetl from Cholula, 62.5 x 90 cm (oil on canvas).

perfect place. He sketched lines, prepared the backgrounds and patiently waited for the exact time of day when the colors were contrasting, that moment when well defined shadows appear and the setting sun creates a spectacular scene. It is at that instant in which the light plays with golden tones, coppers and oranges; the clouds and the skies are cast in violet and the mountains darken from intense greens to purples. He knew how to capture the voices of nature with the chromatic lyricism of his palette, invading our senses and unleashing our emotions. This is the case of the three-panel mural *View of the Valley of Mexico with Volcanoes,* considered one of his masterpieces because of its monumental size and splendid execution.

What can we say about *View of the Volcanoes from Puebla*, painted when the sun has completely set and only a few shafts of its light are left? It is a piece you want to continue looking at because, without us noticing, it wraps us in its space. The only thing breaking the quiet of the moment is the humble peasant driving away the cold before the flames of his fire. The same series of paintings includes *Popocatépetl*, a view of the volcano from Xochimilco. The canals seem full of lilies; the white snows cover the mountain tops; the clouds have mixed in with lilacs and oranges; and the darkness begins to cover the pines, the eucalyptus and the meadows.

Later, Gómez Mayorga painted *Popocatépetl Seen from Cholula*, in which the sentinel watching over our valley seems to be doing honor to his name, spouting columns of smoke. This piece is noteworthy for its transparency, like that of Velasco's paintings, in which the air itself has been painted. The light snow on the sides of the mountain and the clean color of the sky make us think it is one of those February days when the wind has blown hard.

Usually, Gómez Mayorga signed his paintings, but he did not always write in the date, and the only indication of the period is the style, the kind of canvas and the changes in topic. In his paintings *Xochimilco* and *Laundresses of Puebla*, the way figures are represented and the polished brush work lead us to think they are early pieces.

He was an extraordinary painter of seascapes, a very difficult genre; inexperi-

Rocks and Sea of Nayarit, 39 x 49.5 cm (oil on canvas).

enced artists fall into using speckled colors, making the scenes look artificial. This was not Gómez Mayorga's case, however; his work showed both a domination of his technique and mature sensibility. Here we comment on three seascapes of extraordinary quality: *The Sailboats*, *Beaches of Veracruz with Palm Trees* and *Rocks and Sea of Nayarit*. The first is one of his early works, in which we can observe a marked influence of European painting. The treatment of space and light are part of the craft of an outstanding artist, which Gómez Mayorga undoubtedly was. *Beaches of Veracruz with Palm Trees* clearly shows his artistic security, since such an austere theme offers a great many challenges, which he resolved with mastery, giving the painting a spectacular naturalism. The third seascape, *Rocks and Sea of Nayarit*, depicts a marina at sunset when the sea seems to be rough, breaking with fury on the craggy rocks colored orange by the afternoon sun. Recently another painting on the same theme, done on a very large canvas, was sold; both pieces are worthy of a museum. The majority of his seascapes are equal in quality and beauty to those of his predecessor, Joaquín Clausell,[4] from the state of Campeche, who would have enjoyed sharing with Gómez Mayorga the visual feeling of the surrounding seas.

Gómez Mayorga also painted flowers as did many other artists of his period like Saturnino Herrán, Alfredo Ramos Martínez and Ignacio Rosas. These works are few, but of singular beauty. One example is a jug of Talavera pottery from Puebla, with a dark background in which we find details from European painting mixed with very Mexican ingredients.

We remember Guillermo Gómez Mayorga with great affection and satisfaction, for his talent, his dedication and his love for his work and everyone around him. VM

NOTES

[1] Aquiles, Máximo and Carmen Serdán were among the first to support Madero's anti-reelectionist campaign against Porfirio Díaz. They decided to organize an armed insurrection when they heard that Madero had been taken prisoner, but they were betrayed, their house attacked, the two brothers killed and Carmen arrested. [Editor's Note.]

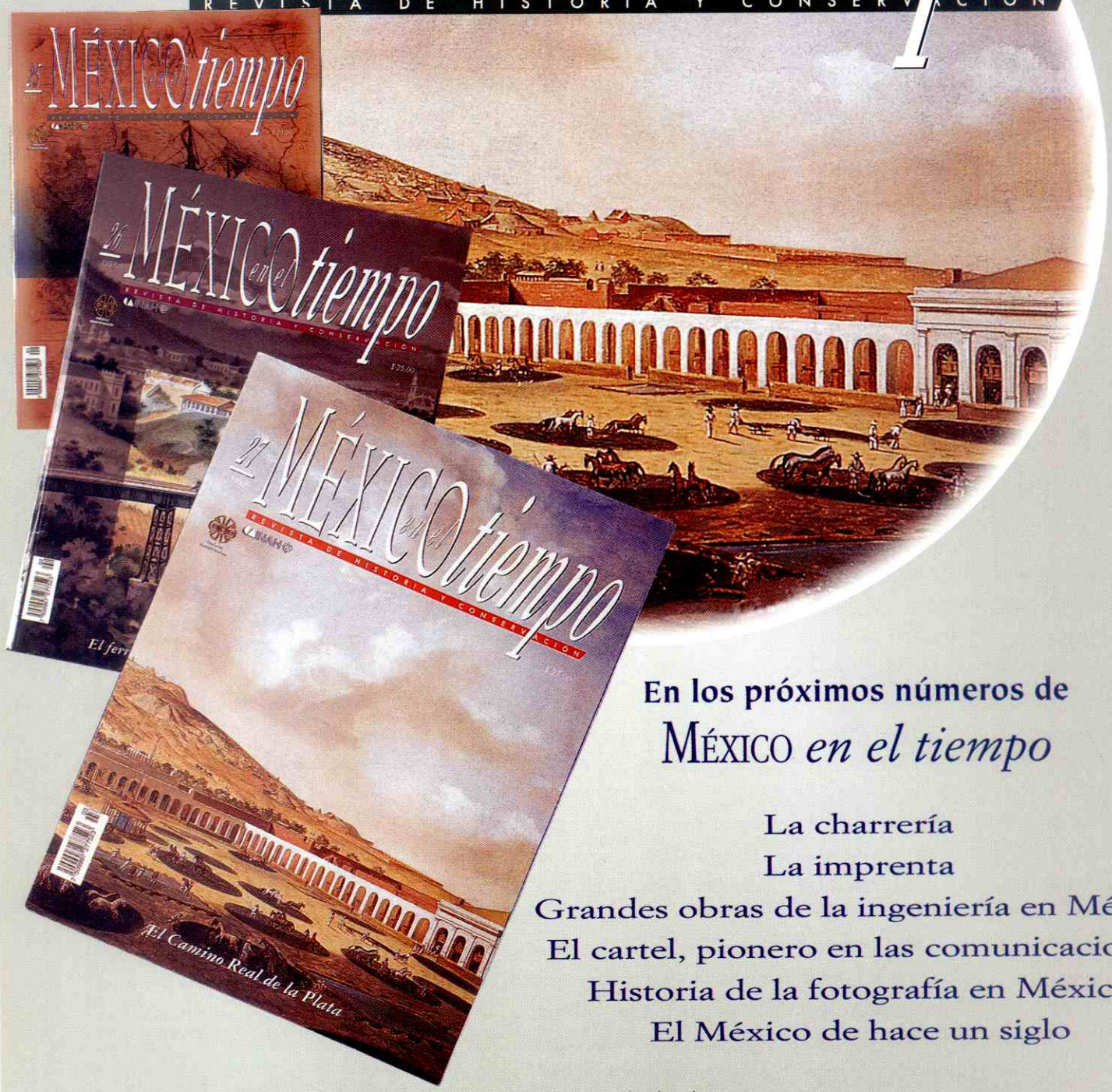
[2] Hugo Cervantes, *Guillermo Gómez Mayorga* (Mexico City: Fernández Cueto Editores, 1998), p. 33.

[3] Justino Fernández, *Arte moderno y contemporáneo de México* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1959).

[4] About Clausell, see *Voices of Mexico* no. 40, pp. 39-44. [Editor's Note.]

MÉXICO *en el tiempo*

REVISTA DE HISTORIA Y CONSERVACIÓN



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Photos reprinted courtesy of Mario Nuñez

Airplane, 130 x 115 cm, 1997 (oil on canvas).

Between Dreaming And a Cup of Tea

*María Tarriba Unger**

Mario Núñez' paintings are, like all works of art, the product of an internal voyage. These canvases, with their profusion of apparently isolated beings, eternally occupied in enigmatic affairs and arranged in spaces that end up by merging with dances or game boards, make us scrutinize with childlike curiosity life's infinite possibilities.

In an insecure exterior world, full of small problems, absurd and ungovernable, the artist feels at home in the space of his work. The adventure the painter proposes, however, is not only an escape: Mario knows how to create his own worlds, his own rules, his own games. The first of these games is, of course, the artist's: forgetting himself and giving himself the role of a god. "My greatest pleasure," he says, "is placing myself in a world where I decide what exists and what doesn't. The artist makes his own world: he's like a little god who decides, takes out and puts in."

In his explorations, the artist can allow himself the luxury of all kinds of experiences and at the same time remain untouchable. Many of Núñez' works have been said to have a certain theatrical nature, due not only to the many beings, who often, in the seriousness of their mysterious efforts, manage to become true characters, but also because he offers spaces designed for short plots, with which the imaginative viewer can enjoy himself by speculating. It would not be strange if the artist were having a good time with his caverns, shelters, labyrinths and windows, at the same time that he is allowing us a glimpse of new worlds. Images can be seductive, but Mario is not a painter in the *naïve* tradition. Fear of the unknown, anxiety, the horror of emptiness also breathe in these paintings. Perhaps the artist, identified with his characters, concedes them a rest in quiet spaces: small niches of security.

In his attempts to both run away and encounter, the painter seems to let himself be carried away completely by the act of engendering beings and spaces. It is curious how amid the fantastic environment of horses, dogs, birds, humans or whims suddenly appear glasses, pitchers, goblets, bottles or ashtrays.

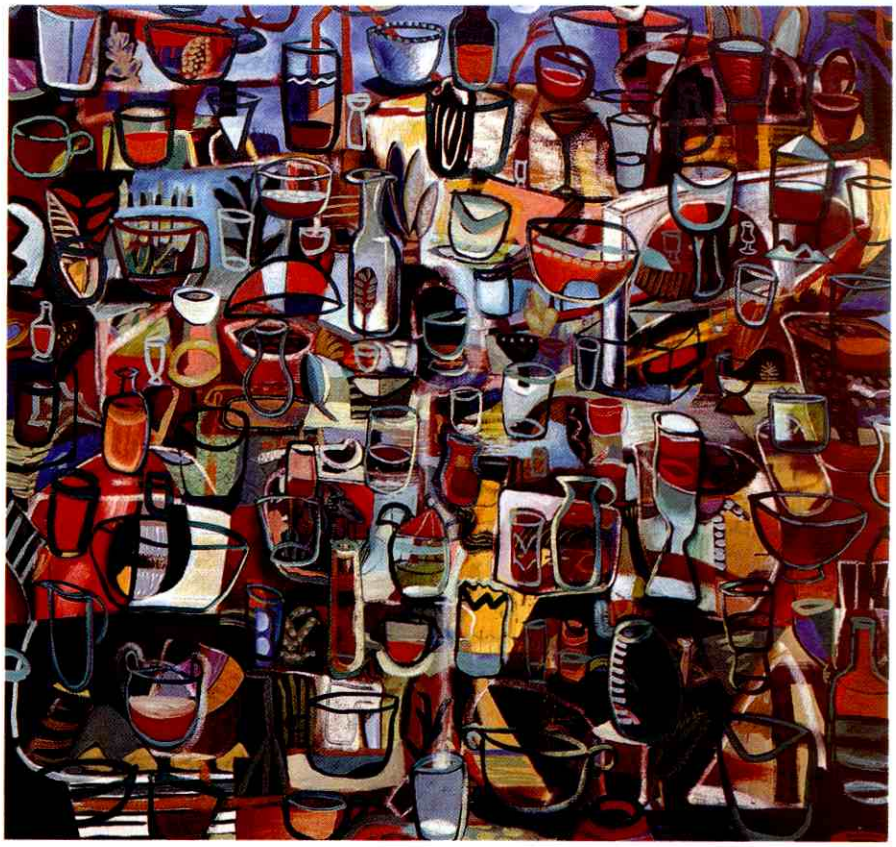
Mario's work does not represent only the terrain of the imagination or the madness of dreams. It also pays homage to the pleasure of the everyday world: a cup of coffee, a glass of wine, an armchair. It reveals to us another facet of "everyday life" with its small rituals, its rests; the tranquility of an order —whether real or imaginary— that protects us. From this peaceful perspective, Núñez shows us the most vital expressions of existence: an ambience of play, dance and the infinite potential

* Mexican art critic.
Photos by Víctor Carrasquedo.

Ghosts, 60 x 80 cm, 1995-1999 (oil on canvas).

Up and Down, 140 x 180 cm, 1997 (oil on canvas).

Sun and Shadow, 100 x 110 cm, 1998 (oil on canvas).



Containers, 140 x 150 cm, 1997 (oil on canvas).

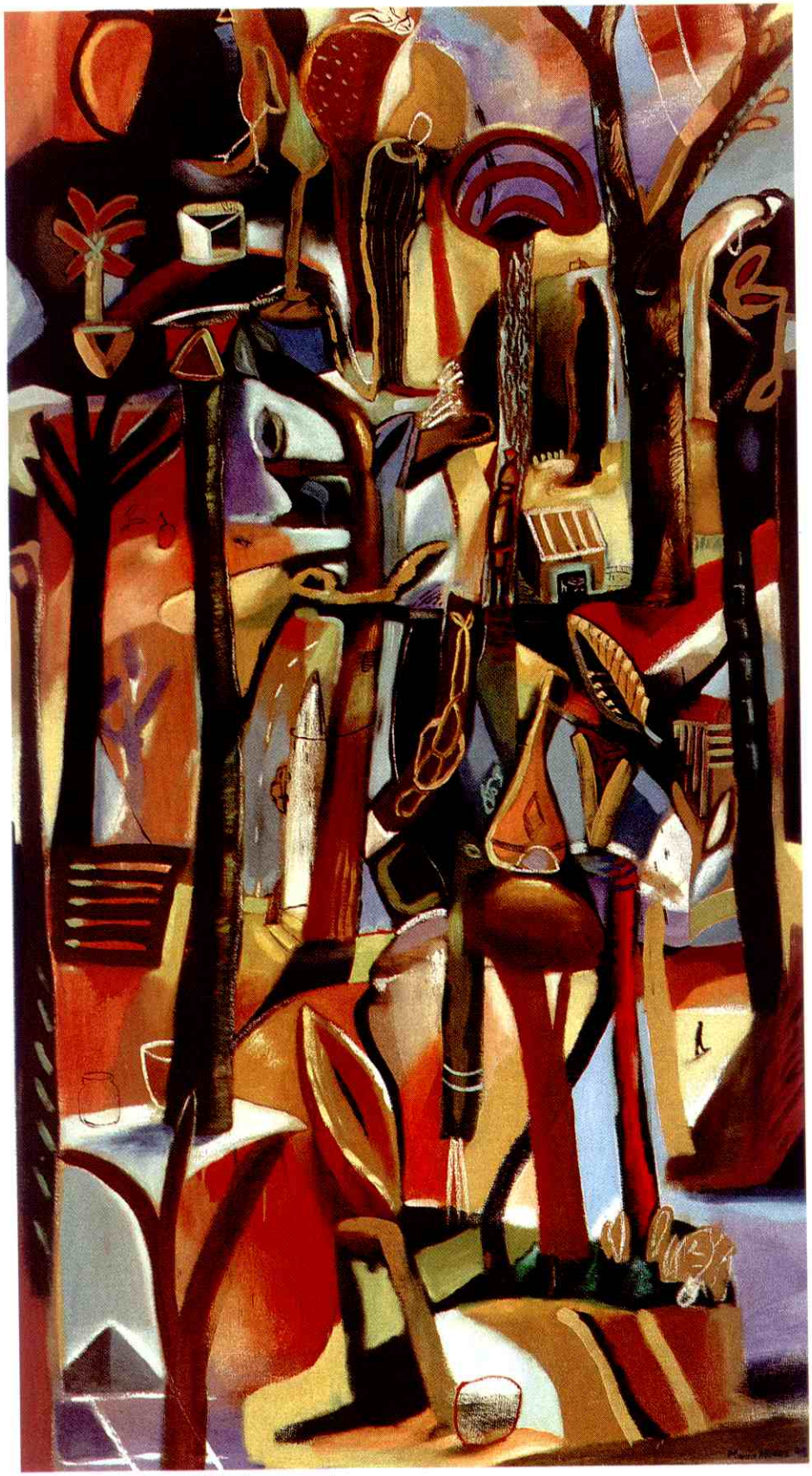
of human experience. No matter where Mario Núñez is working, his attention is on possible paradises.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

"Painting is realizing that the important thing is to be alive, to love people and what you do....A painting that isn't connected to that is silly, senseless." For Mario Núñez, like for any Mexican artist, being a painter has implied difficult going economically. He says, however, that this can have its positive side. "I have never had a boss, for example. [laughs] In that sense, the process has been very free. In fact, in the beginning, I didn't want to sell my paintings....I placed a lot of value on them and felt that separating myself from them would be like an amputation. It's silly. Now I think it's better if they're sold and 'they go away' so I can go other places more easily."

His creative process has been slow and in stages. As he himself says, "My being self-taught has led me to be isolated to a certain extent. Working in a group with similar projects and ideas facilitates things in the market, propitiates dissemination and sparks the interest of the critics."

Mario Núñez does not have a specific working method, but he says that his creation usually leaves a great deal of room for chance. Sometimes, random strokes made to clean the brushes on the canvas decide the fate of a painting. Starting from spots or lines that make up bare structures, Mario discovers or allows himself to be carried forward by a process that determines the exact balance of chaos and order.



Habitat, 190 x 100 cm, 1998 (oil on canvas).

Chaos is necessary, since an excess of order produces a sensation of stagnation. "It is like a game of metamorphosis: a line takes you to a figure, which in turn takes you to another, and so on." This kind of free association makes a game possible, both for the painter and the viewer, who discovers that a leaf is really a dancing woman, or sometimes both things at once. In this game, Núñez faces his canvas and is forced to paint "immediately, without thinking about it. I say to myself, 'Do it!' and I paint a brush stroke." The result is the creation of a general rhythm of the composition, decided by a mixture of chance and metamorphosis.

As a self-taught painter, Núñez recognizes that his lack of schooling slowed down his creative process, especially in formal efforts. On the other hand, he notes that there is an advantage in not having been subjected to the pressure that comes from working with a teacher and doing things in a particular way. This can lead to the search for a style of one's own, which constitutes a way of discovering ones' self, as an artist and an individual.

REINVENTING REALITY

Núñez lets go of the imperious need to express his joys or sufferings. The cathartic function of his painting relinquishes space to a formal and conceptual exploration. He tires of motifs and compositions that he knows beforehand "will work." He now needs to "reinvent reality." Thus, he begins to paint on already-finished paintings, mainly lines that become nets or webs superimposed on the recurring motifs in his earliest work. "I broke with my previous sense of landscape: I broke with the horizons, played with absurd sizes and with different relationships among the forms. In my current stage I am seeking greater harmony between the abstract and the figurative. The purely abstract does not interest me; it is very cold, vacant....I need to find human reference points in day-to-day life or nature."

CHANCE AND METAMORPHOSIS

We always find animals in Mario's paintings. Their not being human and their morphology facilitate giving them the personality the painter wants. Núñez does not seem to think about concrete animals: what is represented may be a dog, but it could also be a cat. He places human beings at the same level as animals, mocking but not without tenderness. "I detest solemnity. You shouldn't take life seriously, particularly your own life... although I recognize that I take the most absurd things seriously. Going to pay the light bill causes me weeks of anxiety."

Núñez' painting has been likened to that of Hieronymus Bosch because his compositions include a multitude of beings doing many things simultaneously. Mario Núñez, however, does not conceive of Heaven as separate from Hell and therefore presents us an innocent universe, free and indifferent to human strivings.

Perhaps, at the end of the day, the work of Mario Núñez is nothing other than a reflection on the freedom to express oneself and create. "Art must speak out without pamphleteering. Curiously enough, I think that part of the eclecticism of today is due to the fact that people either don't want to say anything or they have nothing to say. For my part, I am perfectly aware that I don't want my painting to develop along definite lines. There are many ways to paint; precisely, I identify with an orientation that doesn't know where it's going." VM

The Gift for DON GREGORIO

In the middle of the rainy season, Doña Alejandra and 40 followers take us up to Raspberry Hill where there are some 20 crosses in a circle, with three bigger crosses in the middle. Four men consecrate the circle with prayers and food: *mole*, tamales, beer, *pulque*, soft drinks, tortillas and fruit. "The spirits of people killed by lightning are hidden in the crosses. They also have to eat and drink; they get cold and hot, too," says one of the men.

A group attaches white flowers to the crosses, spreads incense and puts bowls of water underneath the crosses. The white flowers are meant to attract rainfall.

"Unfortunately there are ignorant or malevolent people, who leave colored flowers," says one believer. "Red flowers attract the heat, and yellow flowers, diseases."

After the preparations, the participants make the sign of a cross while Doña Alejandra, her eyes closed, begins to breathe heavily. She stumbles around her arms waving uncontrollably.

"Good afternoon," she says. "You all know me well. I'm the volcano and a Mexican," she begins. "Thanks to the strength of all of you, I am here; thanks to the power of your faith I can speak to you." Doña Alejandra continues in an incomprehensible language and appears to fall into a trance. Suddenly, she addresses our photographer.

"Where is our brother?" The photographer moves closer. "Did you come here because of your faith or because of the money?" she asks. He answers, "For neither. I came here out of interest in your culture."

"Did you bring anything for me?" replies Popo, also known as Doña Alejandra. The photographer starts looking in vain for the bottle of Coke he brought with him, until someone puts a bottle of beer in his hand. "Here is the visitor's present," says one of the faithful. Doña Alejandra takes it and says, "You're accepted."

The weatherwoman puts the bottle to her lips and starts to suck air out of it, a gesture which allows the spirits to also partake of the offering. Doña Alejandra orders the bowls of *pulque* and water be brought to her and stirs them vigorously, later sprinkling the contents around. "I'm very pleased," she says jerking in spasms. "The clouds won't stop coming around my summit. It will keep on raining."

And as to the volcanic activity of the mountain: "You shouldn't fear, I won't do you any harm and I won't explode." The weatherwoman covers her face while the spirit is blown off her neck by one of her followers. She collapses near a tree, and the faithful fetch the food from the circle and begin a picnic in the shade of the trees.

Tom Dieusaert

Photos by Denis Jockmans

Weathermen of the Popocatépetl

*Tom Dieusaert**

The recent activity of Popocatépetl, the largest volcano in central Mexico, has disrupted the quiet life of the villagers of Tetela del Volcán. It is not the column of vapor coming from the crater, but the presence of dozens of scientists, soldiers and television cameras which has upset the peaceful village routine. A major eruption would not only cover the town with dust and rubble, but could trigger earthquakes, the main reason the villagers are on alert for possible evacuation.

But Tetela's inhabitants are going about life much as they always have. They feel no need to leave their homes. They are convinced that their "Popo" or "Don Gregorio" will never erupt, a confidence rooted in the dreams of their village's *tiemperos* or "weathermen." The *tiemperos* are shamans who speak with the volcano and bring him offerings in exchange for rain. This is a pre-Hispanic tradition that survived the cultural onslaught of the Spanish conquerors.

Tetela del Volcán warms itself in the morning sun as the streets fill with vendors and housewives. Peaches, cacti, tamales and smoked nuts change hands beneath the approving glance of the snowcapped Popocatépetl ("the smoky mountain") and the Iztaccíhuatl ("the sleeping woman").

Behind the village's colonial church, Doña María de los Angeles sits at her old Singer sewing machine in front of a wall covered with the figures of saints. Doña María keeps the door shut, an attempt to keep the ubiquitous volcanic dust out of her machine. She points to two little bags. "Look, this is what I have swept from my porch in the past few weeks. But compared to the eruptions of 1925, this is nothing. Then, the whole sky was black with ashes. The eruptions came with strong earthquakes, one night the earth shook 10 times." María has lived here alone in the dark since the death of her husband six years ago. She does some sewing to make a living and looks back to happier times. "Years ago, a friend of mine, the owner of a large chain of bakeries in Cuernavaca, used to take me and the town's children to the cascades at the foot of the 'Popo.' It was a treat for the children, they loved all the pastries the baker took along. Unfortunately, we haven't been to the waterfalls

* Writer and traveler.

Tiemperos have the power to get in touch with nature.

again. Since the accident they don't let people come near the volcano anymore."

The accident to which Doña María refers is a minor eruption that killed four young mountaineers in 1995, including María's niece. "The climbers had gotten past an army blockade and found a path to the top of the mountain. But a sudden eruption of 'Don Gregorio' surprised them; the volcano vomited ashes and stones." Doña María says the authorities found her niece "with her eyes looking towards the sky and her hands above her head, as if she wished to stop the big rock that crushed her head."

After decades of sleep, huge columns of smoke and noxious fumes announced the reawakening of the Popocatépetl in December 1994. It was the same time the peso took a free fall. The volcano certainly knows how to pick its moments. Five hundred years ago, when Cortés began his conquest of the Aztecs, the volcano also protested. According to the Spanish conquistador Bernal Díaz, big rocks rolled off its flanks and lava bubbled up out of the crater. The early days of July 1997, on the eve of the historic elections in which

When will the Popocatépetl blow? Nobody knows except the *tiemperos*, who speak to the mountain.

the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) was about to lose its 70-year grip on Mexican politics, the volcano covered Mexico City, more than 100 miles away, with a light coat of ash. Coincidence or not, the powerful mountain exercises a special influence on the inhabitants of the Valley of Mexico and lies at the root of many myths and stories.

The most famous one says Popocatépetl was an Aztec warrior who fell in love with the Aztec Princess Iztaccíhuatl. Not totally in favor of a match between the two young lovers, Iztaccíhuatl's father sent Popo off to war. He later told his daughter that her sweetheart had died in battle. An inconsolable Iztaccíhuatl committed suicide. When he returned and saw Iztaccíhuatl dead, Popo turned to stone beside the lifeless body of his beloved. Promising to keep her body warm to the end of time when she will reawaken, he keeps on burning inside.

When will the Popocatépetl blow? Will it be soon? Will it ever happen? No one can tell for sure, unless of course it is Leobardo or one of the other *tiemperos* who speak to the mountain.

"I have many dreams about the volcano," Leobardo says in his Tetela home. They started when I was very young. Usually I am fast asleep when Don Gregorio [another name for the Popocatépetl] takes me to his highest peaks. There is a beautiful view above, vast and white with snow. The mountain, an old warrior, takes me to the mouth of the volcano. 'Don't get too close to the crater,' he warns. He assures me that the volcano will not explode. He'd like to, because he is angry, but his father, God in Heaven, won't permit it." Leobardo continues, "Don Gregorio isn't alone up there. He's surrounded by other spirits who rule the weather and help him with his tasks.

"Each spirit has its own function, some for the rain, others for the wind, others for hail. Everything that comes from above is their work."

To Don Leobardo and his fellow villagers, nature around him is more than a giant mechanical clock, responding to natural laws. The villagers of Tetela believe, like their ancestors, that behind every natural phenomenon is a spirit or a god, and that its divine will can be revealed in dreams. For Western man, dreams have little value. "Dreams are empty," goes the saying. For Leobardo, the images in dreams are of the same value as those seen when conscious. Nevertheless, Leobardo makes a distinction between "senseless dreams" and visions with

a message. The latter have also a collective quality.

According to Mexican anthropologist Julio Glockner, the Aztecs used to leave important decisions to professional "dreamers" (*temiquixmiati*). There were books that explained and interpreted the most common dream visions. Leobardo is a dreamer; he acts as a medium for the people around him, and he is consulted on major issues of sowing or harvesting.

Then there is 77-year-old Doña Gabina who also regularly dreams of the volcano.

Doña Gabina not only gathers information about the condition of the volcano and the coming of the rains; the villagers also believe she has certain powers to influence the weather and hold off hailstones from the corn fields. That is why she is called a "weatherwoman" (*tiempera* or *granicera*).

In Tetela the functions of weatherman and dreamer are closely entwined.

Clearly, those who have the power to get in touch with nature can also influence it. Often, these qualities are combined with those of a *curandero*, a traditional healer.

In the isolated communities of Mexico, traditional healers often work as the town's doctors.

They are often elderly women, knowledgeable about medicinal herbs. Since traditional Mexican medicine distinguishes "hot diseases" from "cold diseases," and the latter supposedly are caused by the mountains, the *tiempera* is the ideal person to prescribe remedies against traditional diseases as "the loss of one's shadow" or "the fall of the palate" believed to cause diarrhea in infants. Doña Gabina explains, "I'm consulted for diseases from the mountains, like arthritis. I ask the mountain for healing and tell the patient which offerings he has to bring. Often, the cause lies with a restless spirit, so I tell the patient which spirit is bothering him. The patient can put up a cross on a hilltop with the name of the deceased on it, so the soul of the spirit can find peace there." In fact, all around Tetela, there are wooden crosses sticking out of hills, quiet testimony to the strong influence of traditional beliefs in the village.

It is important to court the mountain to ensure rain.

The souls of those struck by lightening can influence the weather and cause illnesses. So, they need to be appeased.

Doña Gabina inherited her gifts from her deceased husband, Melchor Sánchez, who was struck several times by lightning. "Once lightning fell on a dog next to him, later on a *maguey* plant and the third time on a tree. It gave him a severe shock but he survived every time."

Lightning is an undeniable sign from God that someone is chosen to reveal heavenly secrets to other mortals.

The story is told of a woman in the nearby town of Hueyapan who as a child was struck down by lightning and seemed to be dead for more than 24 hours. She woke up at her funeral and went on to have a long career as a "weatherwoman." Born in 1901, she died in 1997.

Because of the topography, thunder and lightning are familiar phenomena in the volcano's neighboring villages. Every year, dozens of people die from being struck by lightning. To Doña Gabina this has its consequences. "The souls of those hit by lightening keep on wandering restlessly around the mountain tops; they can influence the weather and cause illnesses. So, they need to be appeased. The same thing happens with small children who die before being baptized: their spirits are condemned to work as a 'weather spirit.'"

Doña Gabina's ideas have pre-Hispanic roots. Archeologists, who dug up the remains of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztecs, found next to the temple of the rain god Tláloc skeletons of small children who were supposedly sacrificed there. The Aztecs believed that the rain god was being assisted by little helpers or

Crosses are set up on the mountain for spirits to find peace.

tlaloques, with specific tasks: creating rain, hail, fog or wind.

And the spirits of the sacrificed infants were to be *tlaloques* and continue the weather's task.

In Tetela it is still the custom to pray for rain, by erecting an altar with a model of the volcano, the embodiment of Tláloc, together with little figures or *tlaloques*, his helpers, made of amaranth, a grain-like plant. After the ceremony, the little figures are eaten.

It is not strange that Tetela's inhabitants see the Popocatépetl volcano as the physical manifestation of Tláloc. The "Popo's" summit is nearly always covered with fog and clouds; meteorological phenomena parallel the local animistic belief.

Doña Alejandra, Tetela's leading weatherwoman, frequently takes offerings to the foot of the mountain and conducts ceremonies there in which Popocatépetl speaks through her to the faithful. "He's a person, a very timid but sad person. Gregorio is an Aztec, you see it in the way he's dressed. You see his sandals, how scantily he's dressed. He's almost naked. He's not a Spaniard but a Mexican, like us." Whenever Doña Alejandra gets a message through a dream, she goes with a group of followers to the foot of the volcano with offerings. She goes there every May 3 as well, a special day on the calendar of the weathermen. The day of The Holy Cross, according to the Catholic calendar, coincides with the start of the rainy season. It is important to court the mountain on that day to ensure sufficient rain for the bean and cornfields. That a pagan ceremony coincides with a Catholic observance might seem to be the height of blasphemy were it not for the fact that Christianity is not the only religion in which the cross has special meaning.

For the Aztecs the cross was an important symbol. A bad joke from the devil, as the missionaries in the sixteenth century saw it, but at the same time a practical tool to help with Christian indoctrination. For the Aztecs the cross symbolized the four cardinal points. That is why the weather spirits prefer to linger around a cross and can find peace there. In fact when a spirit is said to be causing an illness or trouble to a member of the community, the one affected has to set up a cross for that spirit to rest on the mountain.

One follower explains why the Popo has been grumbling and spewing smoke for the past months. "The Popo is the navel of the world, through which the earth breathes. The mountain is mad at the people who climbed its flanks or made it explode from the inside."

This strange explanation of the rise in volcanic activity is based on the 1919 dynamiting of the volcano to facilitate the extraction of sulfur. An ill-fated decision, since the big eruptions and earth tremors of the 1920s are attributed to those incidents.

Old and new myths mingle in Tetela, like the ash clouds mixing with the atmosphere. At the base of folk belief lies the philosophy that nature ought to be respected; and if it is not, it takes revenge. It is not important if the offerings to the volcano have the desired effect. For the inhabitants of Tetela, their ceremonies and homage to the volcano are first and foremost a continuation of time-honored tradition and a symbol of the way they see their place in the nature of things. VM

The Teotihuacan State

Urbanism and Power

Linda Manzanilla

Parapet of a battlement in the shape of Tláloc. Teotihuacan.

Not only was Teotihuacan the first of the great urban centers of the Basin of Mexico, but, as a result of the needs arising from managing and maintaining the most prestigious and powerful city of the Classic period, it also developed complex forms of sociopolitical organization. This is shown in its great size, the diversity and sophistication of its culture, the complexity of its urban organization, its clear dominance of nearby areas and the influence it exercised over more remote areas of Mesoamerica.

Teotihuacan was the first large-scale urban area in Central Mexico. It covered an area of approximately 20 square kilometers, housing 60 percent of the population of the entire Basin of Mexico at the time. It was among the largest of all preindustrial population centers; different calculations put it at between 40,000 and 200,000 inhabitants. It was a multi-ethnic city, a strategic site because it possessed resources like obsidian, a manufacturing center, a center for trade in luxury goods, the capital of a singular state, a planned settlement, a model of the cosmos, laid out in accordance with the four cardinal points, an underworld and a heavenly sphere.[1]

The elements of its urban planning were established from the Tlamimilolpa phase (A.D. 200-350):[2] perpendicular, parallel streets and avenues organized in a highly planned, orthogonal grid dividing the city

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into four great sectors; a very efficient drainage system as well as water deposits at different points in the city; public and administrative buildings located along the Avenue of the Dead; a singular form of domestic life in multi-family dwellings where the inhabitants —all kin— shared residences and trades, as well as neighborhoods for craftsmen and foreigners (the Oaxaca Neighborhood, the Gulf Coast Merchants' Neighborhood and, probably, a neighborhood of people from Michoacán).

William Sanders, Jeffrey Parsons and Robert Santley submit that in addition to Teotihuacan, the Basin of Mexico had 10 provincial centers, 17 large villages, 77 small villages and 149 hamlets.[3] The rural population of the northern half of the basin, particularly the Cuauhtitlan-Tenayuca sector, was four times that of the southern half. Given that the population of the Chalco-Xochimilco area was smaller and more homogeneously distributed, Sanders, Parsons and Santley think this resulted from relocating people from the old centers of power and authority to the large city.

This author considers that the rise of Teotihuacan was more related to volcanic activity in the southern part of the Basin of Mexico in the first century of the Christian era: not only did Xitle cover Cuicuilco with lava, but the Popocatépetl belched ash and pumice stone, gravely affecting the Puebla-Tlaxcala settlement, an area which already contained cultural traits that were magnified in Teotihuacan. This therefore caused demographic shifts whereby a great many inhabitants of different parts of the Basin of Mexico and Puebla-Tlaxcala concentrated in the Teotihuacan Valley, perhaps because it had strategic raw materials (like obsidian or the volcanic scoria and basalt used in construction) and springs, as well as being the shortest access route between the Gulf Coast and the Basin of Mexico and bordering on the Texcoco lake system region.

Disk with the face of Tláloc.
Site Museum, Teotihuacan.

The construction of such spectacular monuments as the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon and the Temple of Quetzalcóatl is linked to the intention of creating a magnificent scenario of symbolic power, a sacred center that could be the perfect model of a civilized city.

Teotihuacan's regular layout, its organization into neighborhoods, the beautiful crafts produced there and its extraordinary murals were part of that *tollan*[4] that may well have rapidly become mythical.

Alfredo López Austin conceives of Teotihuacan as the first place where kinship organization was transformed into a state in which the old heads of clans separated themselves into an autonomous group of bureaucrats, administrators and distributors of goods: that is, nobles.[5] The birth of the

Detail of Mural 2. Patio 2,
Tepantitla area, Teotihuacan.

Pyramid of the Moon, main facade. Archeological zone Teotihuacan.

state would have derived from the existence of groups of different origins and the exercise of power over a given territory.

SOCIOPOLITICAL ORGANIZATION

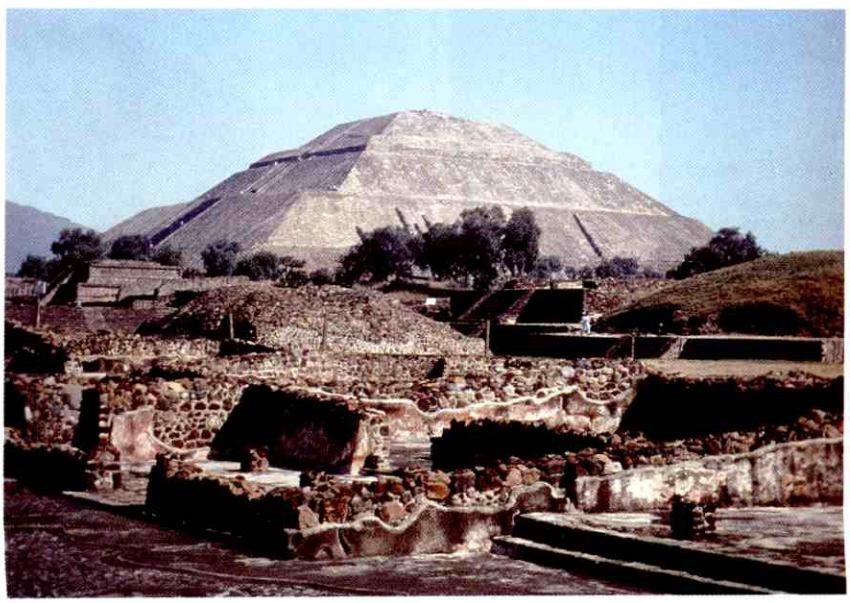
It is a paradox that despite much archeological information, Teotihuacan's sociopolitical organization is still unknown. According to different Teotihuacan pictorial representations, priests probably enjoyed the highest social position; they can be recognized pictorially by, among other things, their bags of copal. These personages frequently appear in anonymous processions, strewing seed and other symbols of fertility on the ground. This author thinks the government of Teotihuacan was collectively exercised by a group whose most frequently represented function is that of the priesthood and which was not immune from internal power struggles, as can be seen in the elimination of the Temple of Quetzalcóatl group around A.D. 250.

The high priests of the collective government were probably the heads of conic clans structured in districts of the city who represented the different groups living there.[6] What is clear is that this type of government is similar to the kind that existed in the Indus Valley, which boasted planned cities like Teotihuacan.

In contrast with other Mesoamerican centers, where the feats of the dynasties are reproduced iconographically and with glyphs on stelae and lintels and in other places, in Teotihuacan the emphasis is more on the position than on the individual.[7] The non-existence of iconographic representations narrating outstanding events in the lives of particular dynasties, of royal tombs, of the names of kings, etc., leads one to think that Teotihuacan was the great anomaly of the Mesoamerican Classic period. Perhaps the emphasis on territory, understood as the Teotihuacan colonial enclaves located at the four cardinal points, with the sacred, powerful city at the center, masked the structure based on lineage.

Recently too much emphasis has been placed on the presence of the military in Teotihuacan,[8] but the concrete data available is scarce. For example, scholars point to the more than 200 victims sacrificed at the base of the Temple of Quetzalcóatl as an indicator of militarism. I have criticized this position since, in addition to the fact that it was unique in the history of Teotihuacan, we do not know who those sacrificed were: whether they were from Teotihuacan or not, whether they were from the upper class, warriors, artisans or peasants. Some have said they were weapon-bearing

Fragment of a parapet representing Tláloc. Site Museum, Teotihuacan.



D. R. © Carlos Blanco, Raíces/INAH, 1999

Pyramid of the Sun. Archeological zone, Teotihuacan.

D. R. © Marco A. Pacheco, Raíces/INAH, 1999

Detail of Mural 2. Portico 2, Tepantitla area, Teotihuacan.

warriors, but that does not explain the graves filled exclusively with women. Only at the end of Teotihuacan history do people appear armed with throwing weapons (see, for example, the paintings at Atetelco), perhaps marking the prelude to the competitive environment of the epi-Classic period. Armillas suggested that the Citadel was at one time the religious and administrative center of the city and perhaps also the residence of those in government.[9] The residential compounds to the north and south of the Temple of Quetzalcóatl, however, differ very little from those close to the Avenue of the Dead or in other parts of the city, and we do not know what would distinguish them from that of other residential areas.

TEOTIHUACAN INFLUENCE

Clearly, Teotihuacan was the largest and most important city of the Basin of Mexico and the whole Central Highland, and it inaugurated a kind of settlement in which a great urban sprawl dominated the rural areas. A still-unproven hypothesis postulates the idea that El Portezuelo and Azcapotzalco were dependent secondary centers.

The valleys bordering on the Basin of Mexico clearly show the presence of people from Teotihuacan from the time of the Tlamimilolpa phase. In the Valley of Toluca, Teotihuacanos colonized new areas with different resources. A corridor of 80 Teotihuacan sites united the metropolis with Cholula in the Puebla-Tlaxcala valley to the south and east of La Malinche. In the valley of Morelos, particularly in the region of the Amatzinac River, Teotihuacan control spurred important demographic changes: the division into two areas characteristic of the Late Formative period became a system dominated by a single regional administrative center, San Ignacio.

Beyond the valleys surrounding the Basin of Mexico, mention should be made of Teotihuacan enclaves distributed along the four cardinal points in areas rich in strategic resources: Kaminaljuyú, the Guatemalan highlands, with the obsidian mines of El Chayal, and which probably supplied Teotihuacan with jadeite and other green stones; Chingú, in the valley of Tula, with its limestone used to make stucco; Matacapan, in the Tuxtlas region of Veracruz which probably exported fine clays, cotton blankets, the feathers of exotic birds and jaguar skins; and perhaps sites in Michoacán, like the ones in the area of Tingambato or Tres Cerritos, which may have provided Pacific sea mollusks and Michoacán obsidian.

Reconstructed patio and rooms of the Temple of Quetzalpapálotl. Teotihuacan.

There is evidence that the Teotihuacanos mined resources like cinnabar in the Sierra Gorda mountain range of Querétaro and perhaps in San Luis Potosí, different green stones and serpentine in Guerrero and probably also malachite and other mineral compounds in the Chalchihuites, Zacatecas, area.[10]

In this author's opinion, other areas of Mesoamerica, like Monte Albán, may have had political alliances with Teotihuacan; this can be deduced from different stelas and stone tablets. Other settlements in Veracruz and the south of Puebla preferred relations of frequent exchange. New lines of research seek to evaluate some attempts by Teotihuacan or its enclaves to begin private dynasties in important Mayan capitals like Tikal or

Silhouette cup with crennelated legs, decorated with the figure of Tláloc. Teotihuacan.

Temple of Quetzalcóatl (detail). Archeological zone, Teotihuacan.

Copán. Clara Millon considered certain personages pictured with tasseled headdresses representatives of the Teotihuacan state abroad.[11]

The Decline

We know that the central part of the city was burned and sacked at the time of the fall of Teotihuacan in approximately A.D. 650, and that some time later massive migration began out of the Basin of Mexico, perhaps the first migration of the *pipiles* toward Central America. René Millon has suggested that among the causes of the decline of Teotihuacan were bad political and economic management, a resistance to change, an inefficient and incompetent bureaucracy and the deterioration of trade networks.[12]

Taking into consideration the different factors mentioned as causes of the collapse, we might imagine the following scenario: the city had grown too much, encroaching on the alluvial plain and thus making it dependent on Texcoco and Iztapalapa for its food supply. At the same time, the great consumption of wood for roofs and as fuel for different activities (particularly the production of lime) caused a deterioration in the environment surrounding the city, and deforestation brought soil erosion and a drop in phreatic levels. As this was happening, there was a prolonged drought along the entire Neovolcanic Axis. If we take into account that those governing the city presented themselves as the ones responsible for making rain and guaranteeing the fertility of the land, we may understand why the internal revolt that included the burning of the administrative and religious center was aimed at the governing elite. Very probably groups from the south of Puebla who used Teotihuacan's distribution channels to sell their pottery and crafts also propiciated the collapse since seemingly the supply routes to the city were also closed.[13] VM

D. R. © Marco A. Pacheco, Raíces/INAH, 1999

Multicolored jug. Site Museum, Teotihuacan.

D. R. © Christa Cowrie, Raíces/INAH, 1999

D. R. © Marco A. Pacheco, Raíces/INAH, 1999

Reconstruction of a small temple. Atetelco area, Teotihuacan.

Notes

[1] Linda Manzanilla, "Teotihuacan: Urban Archetype, Cosmic Model," ed. Linda Manzanilla, *Emergence and Change in Early Urban Societies* (New York: Plenum Press, 1997), pp. 109-131.

[2] René Millon, "Teotihuacan: City, State and Civilization," ed. Jeremy A. Sabloff, *Archaeology. Supplement to the Handbook of Middle American Indians* 1 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 198-243.

[3] William T. Sanders, Jeffrey R. Parsons and Robert S. Santley, *The Basin of Mexico. Ecological Processes in the Evolution of a Civilization* (New York: Academic Press, 1979).

[4] *Tollan* is a Náhuatl word used to refer to a big settlement or metropolis.

[5] Alfredo López Austin, "La historia de Teotihuacan," *Teotihuacan* (Mexico City: Citicorp/Citibank, 1989), pp. 13-35.

[6] Manzanilla, op. cit., 1997.

[7] George L. Cowgill, "State and Society at Teotihuacan, Mexico," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997): pp. 129-161.

[8] Cowgill, op. cit.

[9] Pedro Armillas, "Northern Mesoamerica," in ed. Jesse D Jennings and Edward Norbeck, *Prehistoric Man in the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 291-329.

[10] Linda Manzanilla, "The Economic Organization of the Teotihuacan Priesthood: Hypotheses and Considerations," ed. Janet C. Berlo, *Art, Ideology and the City of Teotihuacan* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 1993), pp. 223-240.

[11] Clara Millon, "Painting, Writing and Polity in Teotihuacan," *American Antiquity* 38, no. 3 (1973): pp. 294-314.

[12] René Millon, "The Last Years of Teotihuacan Dominance," eds. Norman Yoffee and George L. Cowgill, *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), pp. 102-164.

[13] Linda Manzanilla, op. cit., 1997.

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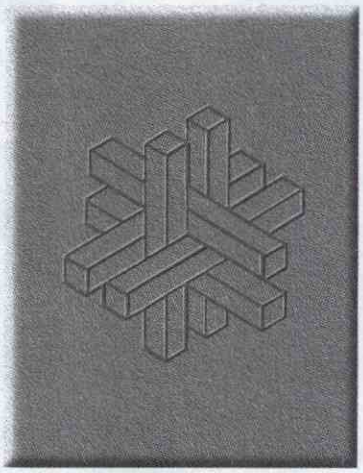

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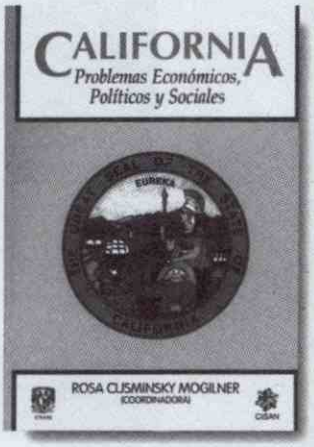

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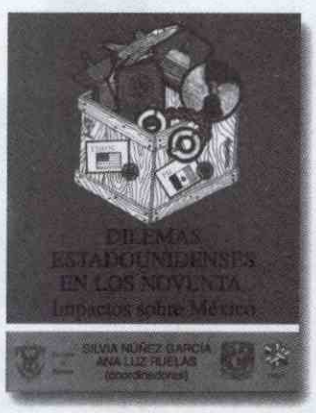

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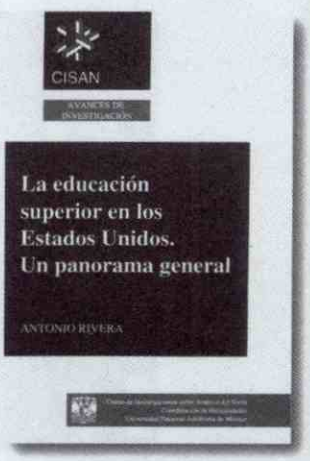

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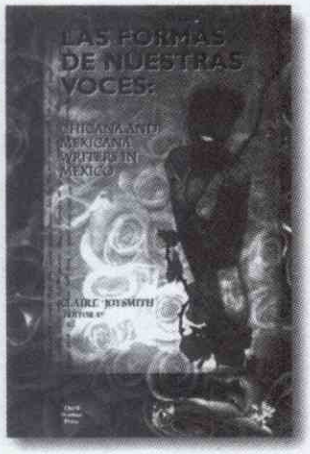

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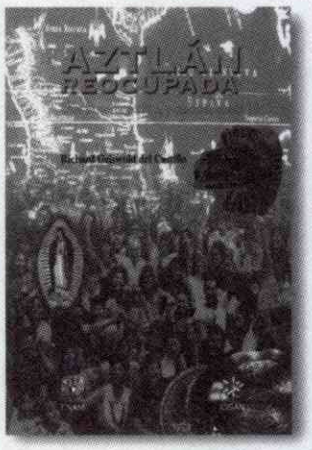

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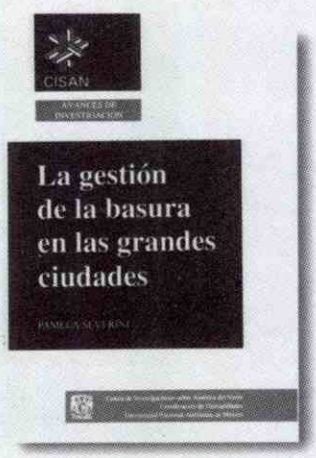

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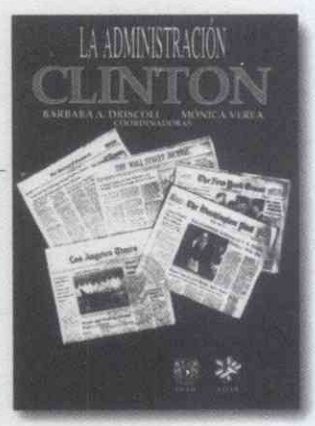

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Five Years of NAFTA

*Luis Rubio**

It is fashionable to blame NAFTA for all the ills of the Mexican economy: for the growing poverty of an important segment of the population, the unemployment of millions of Mexicans and the profound deterioration of industry, particularly industry in the central part of the country. The reality, however, is exactly the opposite. The only thing that really works in the Mexican economy is the part of it linked to NAFTA or which has modernized in line with the treaty. Without NAFTA, the Mexican economy would be in crisis, and poverty and unemployment levels would be overwhelming.

Thanks to NAFTA, the Mexican economy as a whole has been able to reverse the negative trends of decades of isolation, creating incipient prosperity. This is not by chance. NAFTA has two characteristics that make renewed economic growth possible: the opening of the U.S. and Canadian markets and the guarantees it offers to investors. Thanks to NAFTA, Mexico has become one of the world's most attractive countries for investment and producing goods, particularly those destined for the markets of our two neighbors to the north. Before NAFTA, legality was the dominant question in trade relations with the United States: during the 1980s the number of trade disputes multiplied, reaching into the hundreds. After NAFTA came into effect, total trade between our two nations exploded, and the number of disputes dropped drastically. U.S. producers' propensity to shield themselves behind accusations of dumping has almost completely disappeared. This is the reason that hundreds of U.S., Canadian, European and Asian companies have set up shop in Mexico to manufacture products —from automobiles and auto-parts to a broad variety of electronic, metal, chemical, paper and steel items, among others— that they will later export to other markets. NAFTA offers guaranteed access to the world's largest market for any product that satisfies the formal requirements stipulated in the treaty. Though Mexicans do not notice it, being a privileged producer of goods for the North American market is something the entire world envies us.

Thanks to NAFTA, the Mexican economy as a whole has been able to reverse the negative trends of decades of isolation, creating incipient prosperity.

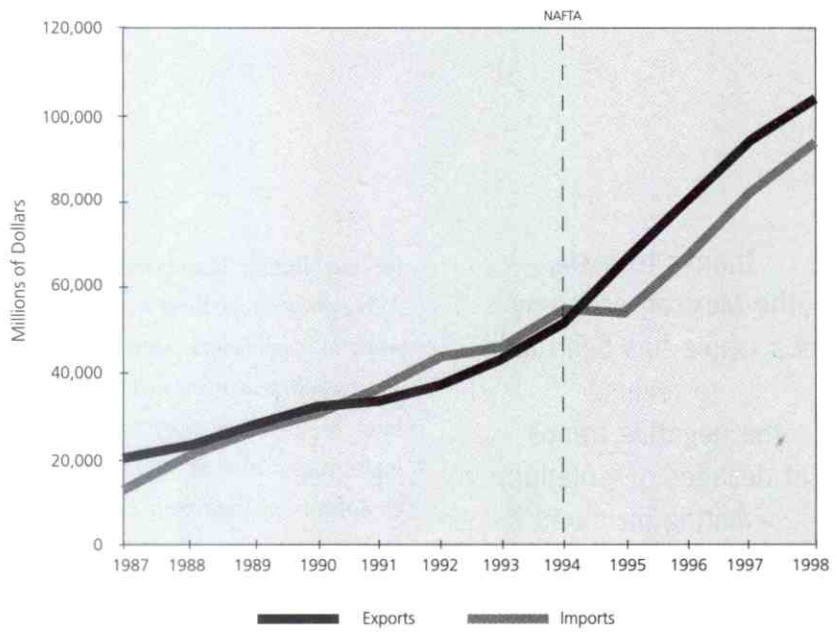
Guaranteed access to the U.S. market and the political and legal protection NAFTA offers investors are very powerful magnets for establishing businesses in Mexico. Although some of these investments are made in maquiladora plants —which, in any case, do create many well paying jobs— most of them are characterized by the sophistication of their machinery and the complexity of their operations. In fact, several companies and plants in Mexico, operated by Mexican workers, boast higher productivity levels than similar plants in the United States or Asia. In other words, Mexican workers have shown themselves to be just as capable —or even more capable— than workers anywhere in the world. This is even more impressive if we remember that Mexican workers often have much lower educational levels both in terms of quality and depth, as well as a history of access to health services and infrastructure in general that are infinitely less sophisticated and modern than their counterparts in countries like Korea, Taiwan or the United States, not to mention Europe. Contrary to what many critics of NAFTA argue, the agreement has opened up opportunities hitherto unthinkable for the development of Mexican businessmen and workers.

In addition to the old chauvinism undoubtedly hidden behind the criticisms of NAFTA, there is a very specific reason why it is blamed for our economic ills. For decades Mexico's industry lived on public spending and government subsi-

* Political analyst and economist. Director of the Research Center for Development, CIDAC.

Graphs by Marcela Osnaya.

Mexican-U.S. Trade (1987-1998)



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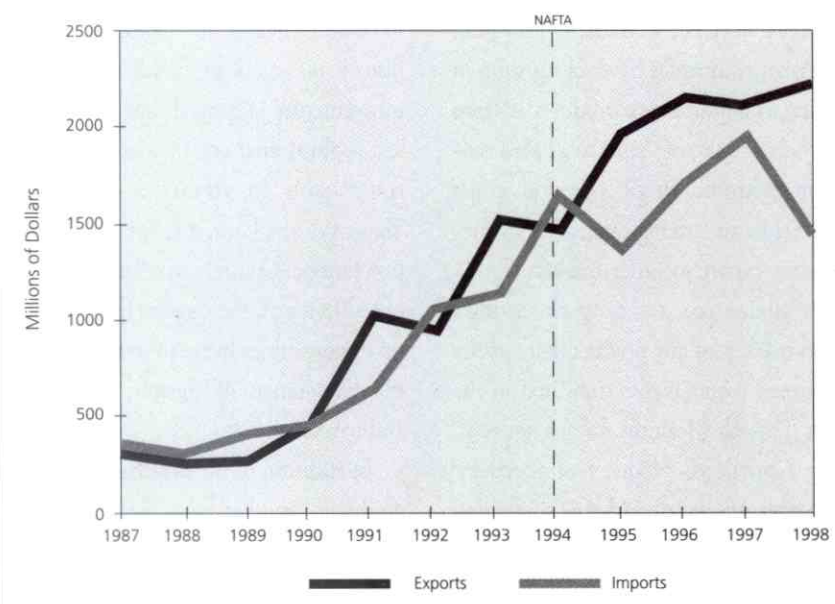
Mexican-Canadian Trade (1987-1998)



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dies and protection of companies so they did not have to compete with imports. The vast majority of Mexican businessmen became accustomed to not having to worry about manufacturing good quality products, raising their productivity or offering Mexican consumers goods or services at reasonable prices. The typical businessman bought old machinery —third or fourth hand— and never worried about the consumer. Even today, more than 12 years after opening up to the first imports, thousands of domestically produced goods have not changed a bit and continue to be of the worst possible quality. That is to say, a great many companies have not only not modernized at all, they have not even noticed the need to do so.

The truth is that for several decades —the same decades that the economy was closed— it was not difficult to become a successful businessman in Mexico. For years the government protected businessmen, banning all —or almost all— imports. This allowed thousands of businessmen to prosper regardless of the efficiency or productivity of their companies. In addition, in the 1970s, the government began to use public spending to broaden the domestic market, thus facilitating the growth of companies nationwide. Both protectionism and this kind of public spending went into crisis in the early 1980s. Protection of industry impeded its modernization and made it unable to export. Excessive public spending, as well as the foreign indebtedness that accompanied it, precipitated a dizzying growth in prices, which brought the Mexican government to virtual bankruptcy in 1982.

Many critics of NAFTA argue today that the government should strengthen the domestic market through increased pub-

lic spending and renewed protection from imports. The idea sounds very attractive, but is profoundly wrong. Public spending cannot solve the country's economic woes essentially because the problem involves the excessively low levels of productivity in Mexico's outmoded industry. Increasing public spending would lead to a rise in prices, but not to better conditions for businessmen (and their workers) who have been left behind in the process of industrial modernization. Increasing even more the lingering tariffs and non-tariff barriers would undoubtedly help backward businessmen to sell more of their products. But this would damage the rest of the economy that now competes successfully. That is to say, increasing protection to support those left behind would imply favoring those who have not been able to or have not wanted to modernize, to the detriment of those who have made huge efforts to change and be successful. This is an absurdity no matter which way you look at it. For these reasons, NAFTA is one of the few protection mechanisms we have as Mexicans to curb any renewed collusion between the state bureaucracy and many industrialists to reduce consumer options and raise prices in the old way through the norms and regulations.

The economy grew seven percent in 1997. That was the highest rate in almost two decades. For those Mexicans lucky enough to be linked to that success, all the arguments for renegotiating NAFTA are absolutely ridiculous. But for the businessmen and workers who have not modernized, they are, naturally, very attractive. The problem, however, is not to be found in the economic opening —12 years of opening has not led these companies to modernize— but in the total inability of the country —government, businessmen and workers— to create conditions to modernize previously existing industry, to launch new companies and to retain what is valuable in the old industry and definitively throw out the rest. The problem with our industry does not stem from foreign trade or NAFTA, but from its technological and entrepreneurial backwardness.

Solving this problem requires a functional financial system (which we do not have), a legal system that facilitates the bankruptcy and restructuring of indebted companies (which we do not have) and a government willing to eliminate the current enormous barriers and obstacles to setting up new companies and creating jobs (which we also do not have). No one —whether in Mexico or Timbuktu— can invent successful businessmen or employers. Twelve years of economic opening and five years of NAFTA show that the potential of the Mexican business community is virtually infinite, but also that the only businessmen who will be successful are those who help themselves. For its part, the government has to create the conditions for the businessman to develop, but he alone can make a success of it. VM

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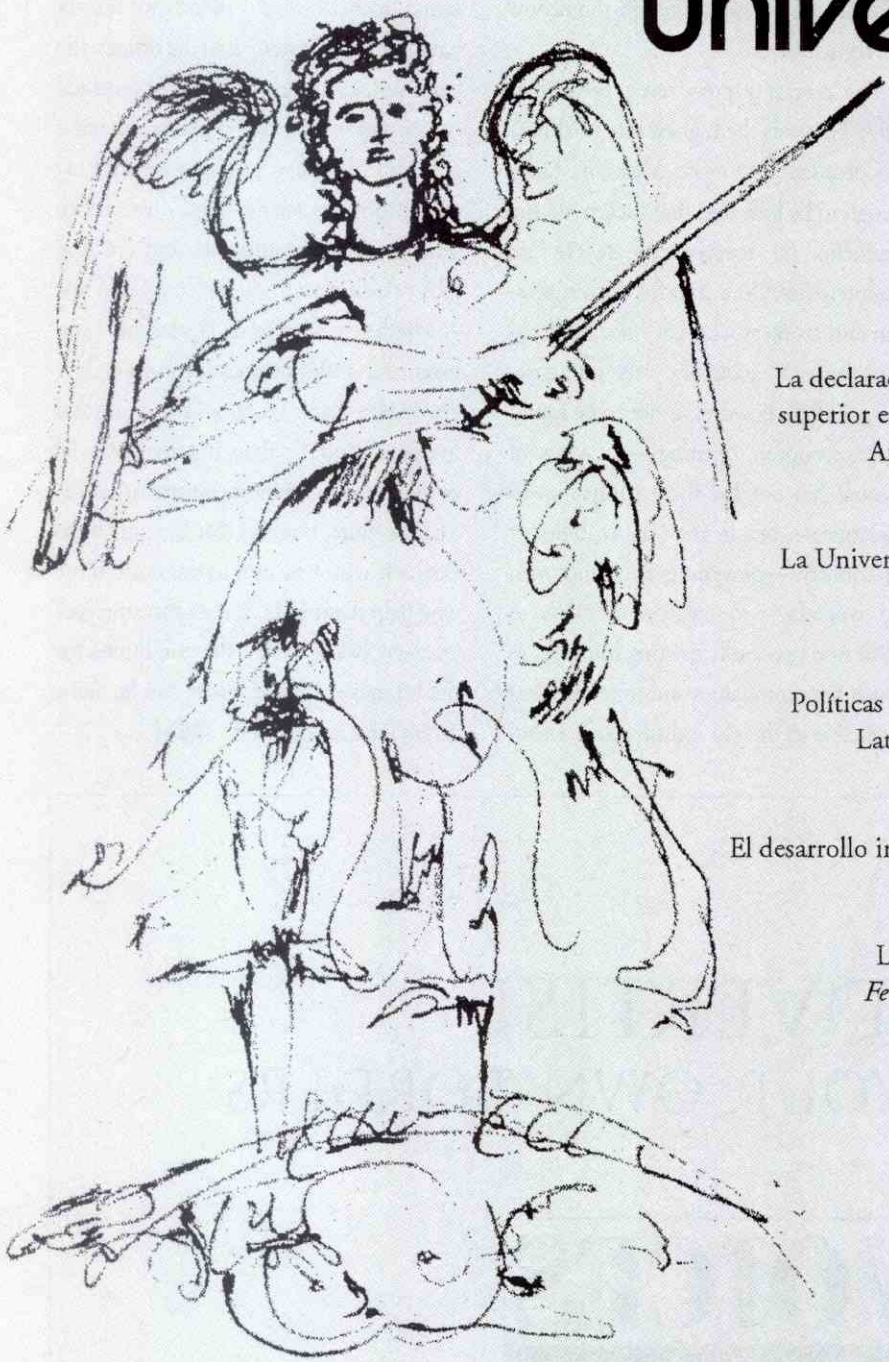

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Foreign Direct Investment In the Zedillo Administration

*Paulino Ernesto Arellanes Jiménez**

Interest in foreign investment, particularly portfolio investment, is high today because it is extending the process of globalization. What is more, in this process, foreign direct investment (FDI) has taken a back seat to foreign portfolio investment (FPI), more characteristic of globalization, while the former is more fragmented. This is related to the very nature of both kinds of capital: FPI is more short term, rentier and absolutely mobile thanks to the technology of financial services; FDI is long term, aimed at infrastructure, which is more useful for development.

From the onset of Miguel de la Madrid's neoliberal economic policy in 1982 until 1988, foreign capital had completely complied with all these hypotheses. Even though some administrations had tried to attract more FDI than FPI in an effort to create jobs, modernize infrastructure, increase savings and, above all, continue Mexico's development, it has been a difficult, often even bloody, effort because of the adverse, contradictory effects like the great Mexican crisis of 1994-1995 and the first financial crisis of globalization, the "Tequila Effect."

From the Salinas de Gortari administration on, foreign investment in general began to have more weight in the nation's economy, so much so that by 1989 it had already surpassed early government predictions.

Financial and legal policy strategies were changed to attract foreign investment. For example, the December 1993 Law on Foreign Investment (replacing the May 1989 regulations) merely legalized what was already happening. This, in addition to a drastic trade opening, made Mexico the main magnet for foreign capital in Latin America, something which has changed under the current Zedillo administration.

Mexican FDI, in addition to being part of economic policy of the last three administrations, including Zedillo's, has been one of the main financial supports from abroad, second only to the foreign debt. The country, then, has gone through the two main financial ways of becoming part of the international economy: indirect capital (foreign debt) and direct capital (FDI). These two forms have also been determining factors in the economic history of the last 30 years with regard to the United States, given that since the 1970s, the U.S. has been Mexico's main creditor and trading partner, as well as its largest foreign investor. This situation has escalated since 1994 when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect.

Accumulated FDI in Mexico (1994-1997)

From January 1994 to December 1997, FDI in Mexico came to U.S.$42.7199 billion, distributed as can be seen in Table 1. Compared to the Salinas administration, FDI in Mexico in this period is quite high and shorter term since during the entire previous administration, just over U.S.$50 billion in FDI came into the country.

Distribution of FDI by Sector

In the 1994-1997 period, FDI was distributed by sector as shown in Table 2.

In those same years, the manufacturing, commercial and financial services sectors received the greatest amount of FDI, as is reflected in each year's results, since their performance was the most dynamic and important to the nation's economy.

In the subsectors of social and professional and financial services, communications and transportation, FDI went mainly into insurance and bonding, which captured 53.9 percent; restaurants and hotels attracted 20.2 percent; professional, tech-

* Researcher in the International Economic Studies Program of the Puebla Autonomous University School of Economics.

nical and specialized services, 10.1 percent; rented real estate, 5.8 percent and "others," 10 percent.[1] This means that in services, the financial subsector has acquired an important presence in Mexico's economy, particularly because of the consequences of the country's recurrent financial crises.

FDI BY COUNTRY AND ECONOMIC BLOC OF ORIGIN

From 1994 to 1997, "FDI came mainly from the United States, with 84.6 percent of the total; then came Canada, with 0.7 percent; followed by Great Britain, with 0.5 percent; Germany with 0.4 percent; and France, with 0.2 percent."[2]

Although Canada is a NAFTA partner, its direct investment in Mexico is not nearly as significant. This does not mean that Canadian FDI is not important, as in 1997 it reached 12.1 percent, -0.7 percent less than in 1996.[3]

If we review FDI in Mexico in the same period by economic bloc of origin, we find the following: total accumulated FDI was U.S.$32.5078 billion; from North America (the United States and Canada) came U.S.$19.5078 billion (see Table 3); from the European Union, U.S.$6.9959 billion; and from "other selected countries," including Japan, South Korea, India, the Dutch Antilles, Panama, the Caiman Islands, etc. (some of which are in the Asian bloc, and others in Latin America or the Caribbean), U.S.$5.3946 billion.[4]

I want to emphasize the FDI in Mexico in the period from 1994 to 1995, in the framework of NAFTA. Analyzing it during the neoliberal period is quite complex because investments coincide with periods of the sharpest crisis stemming from the inflow and outflow of speculative capital aimed at stock markets and portfolio investments, but not at production, and from soaring interest rates in Mexico which made it possible to compete for capital.

Three points should be taken into account here: a) Mexico's economic crisis began before NAFTA came into effect; b) what it meant for NAFTA to come into effect; and, c) the December 1994 to 1995 crisis.

Overall foreign investment closed in 1994 at U.S.$16.1658 billion, of which U.S.$7.9796 billion was FDI and U.S.$8.1862 billion was portfolio investment.[5] As we can see, in that year, portfolio investment exceeded direct investment, which has been pointed to as one of the causes of the deficit of the crisis, in addition to the balance of payments deficit, which added to the deficit in the

Table 1
Foreign Direct Investment in Mexico*
(Millions of Dollars)

Sector	1994		1995		1996		1997[1]		Accum. 1994-1997[2]	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Total	14 703.5	100.0	9 270.5	100.0	8 168.8	100.0	10 015.0	100.0	42 719.9	100.0
RNIE** + Maquiladoras:	10 180.3	69.2	7 663.4	82.7	6 121.9	74.9	7 980.1	79.7	32 507.8	76.1
RNIE	9 403.3	64.0	6 564.8	70.8	5 174.3[3]	63.3	6 858.1	68.5	28 562.6	66.9
Maquiladoras	777.0	5.2	1 098.6	11.9	947.6	11.6	1 122.0	11.2	3 945.2	9.2
Reinvestment of Profits	2 366.6	16.1	1 586.3	17.1	2 050.0	25.9	2 150.0	21.5	8 152.9	19.1
Internal Company Accounts	2 156.6	14.7	20.8	0.2	-3.1	0.0	-115.1	-1.2	2 059.2	4.8

* Figures reported December 31, 1997.
** National Foreign Investment Registry (RNIE).
[1] Figures for January-December 1997.
[2] From January 1, 1994, to December 31, 1997.
[3] This figure will grow as investments made in 1996 continue to be reported to the National Foreign Investment Registry. Based on existing trends, once the reporting process is over, this amount is expected to be close to the U.S.$6.6218 billion invested in 1995.

Source: Dirección General de Inversiones Extranjeras, SECOFI.

Table 3
Foreign Direct Investment in Mexico from North America (1994-1997)
(Millions of Dollars)

Period	Total FDI	All of North America	Canada	United States
1994	10209.6	5306.9	741.1	4565.8
1995	7720.4	5055.1	165.7	4889.4
1996	6597.7	4840.1	493.0	43473.1
1997	7980.1	4775.0	102.0	4673.0

Source: Dirección General de Inversión Extranjera, SECOFI (January-December 1997).

Table 2
Foreign Direct Investment by Economic Sector[1]
(Millions of Dollars)

Sector	1994	1995	1996	1997		1994-1997[2]	
				Amount	%	Amount	%
Total	10 209.6	7 720.4	6 597.7	7 980.1	100.0	32 507.8	100.0
Agriculture	7.9	9.0	28.0	4.3	0.1	49.2	0.2
Mining	87.6	79.0	82.4	56.1	0.7	305.1	0.9
Manufacturing:	5 917.3	4 372.9	3 812.4	4 941.5	62.0	19 044.1	58.6
RNIE* +	5 140.3	3 274.3	2 864.8	3 819.5	47.9	15 098.9	46.4
Maquiladoras	777.0	1 098.6	947.6	1 122.0	14.1	3 945.2	12.1
Electricity & Water	15.2	2.1	1.1	1.0	0.0	19.4	0-1
Construction	258.1	25.3	23.3	49.8	0.6	356.5	1.1
Comercio	1 245.1	933.1	631.7	1 556.8	19.5	4 366.7	13.4
Retail & Wholesale	591.9	860.9	403.5	474.6	5.9	2 330.9	7.2
Financial Serv.[3]	950.8	1 060.4	1 180.2	532.1	6.0	3 723.5	11.5
Social & Prof. Serv.[4]	1 135.7	377.7	435.1	363.9	4.6	2 312.4	7.1

* National Foreign Investment Registry (RNIE).
[1] Includes investments reported to the National Foreign Investment Registry (RNIE) by December 31, 1997, plus imports of fixed assets by maquiladoras.
It does not include reinvestment of profits or internal company accounts, since this information is not available disaggregated by sector.
[2] From January 1, 1994, to December 31, 1997.
[3] Financial services, management services and rentals of real estate and other goods.
[4] Social and professional services: hotels and restaurants, professional, technical and personal services.

Source: Dirección General de Inversión Extranjera, SECOFI.

Table 4
Distribution of FDI by State* (1994-1997)[1]
(Millions of Dollars)

State	Amount	Percentage
Federal District	21 083.9	64.9
Nuevo León	3 722.7	11.5
Chihuahua	1 471.0	4.5
Baja California	1 417.1	4.4
State of Mexico	1 318.0	4.1
Tamaulipas	756.5	2.3
Sonora	355.6	1.1

* Includes investments reported to the National Foreign Investment Registry (RNIE) by December 31, 1997, plus imports of fixed assets by maquiladoras.
It does not include reinvestment of profits or internal company accounts, since this information is not available disaggregated by state.
[1] Figures for January 1 to December 31, 1997.

Source: Dirección General de Inversión Extranjera, SECOFI.

capital account (especially foreign capital invested in portfolios, the stock market and government bonds which are short-term and volatile), all of which had a negative impact on hard currency reserves, sparking the devaluation of Mexico's peso.

By June 1995, foreign investment had dropped, particularly portfolio investment: in the first quarter of 1995, FDI was U.S.$606.9 million, while portfolio investment had dropped to U.S.(-)$7.6657 billion, which made for a negative total of U.S.(-)$7.0588 billion. This is where we can see that portfolio investment had a severe effect on the capital account and, at the same time, on the foreign debt due to capital flight between December 1994 and June 1995 through interest payments and, above all, payments to holders —mostly non-Mexicans— of stocks and government bonds. Almost 27 percent of the equity in the Mexican Stock Exchange is controlled by foreign investors and U.S.$31 billion of a total of U.S.$50 billion in FDI in Mexico (62 percent) comes from the United States.[6]

Accumulated foreign investment until 1999 went down U.S.$9.547 billion, because although hard currency did come in directly, U.S.$11.446 billion in portfolio investment left. Before the December 1994 crisis, the historic high of U.S. investment in Mexico had been U.S.$28.6203 billion, or 62.6 percent of all foreign investments in the country. Canada's historic high had been U.S.$670.1 million, 1.5 percent of the total. Until 1994, then, investment from North America in Mexico was 64.8 percent of the total.

If we look at the figures in absolute terms, we might think that investment by our North American partners in Mexico has been favorable, but the truth is that just when NAFTA came into effect in 1994, both countries' investment dropped. By contrast, investment by other countries like England, Germany or Japan increased. We can interpret this in several ways: a) the crisis attracted an increased direct capital investment from other parts of the world; b) Mexico's participation in NAFTA (1994) spurred an increased direct and indirect capital investment from the United States and Canada although a year before, in 1993, when investment was the highest, the United States participated with 71.5 percent; and c) credit-indirect investment capital increased, one example being the financial rescue package in the first months of 1995.

There is no question that beginning with the crisis, from December 1994 to mid-1995, most of the capital which

flowed into the country went into portfolios, and not direct investments: in the first half of 1995, U.S.$899 million was channeled into direct investment, only 36.5 percent of all flows the federal government registered in the period, and only 45 percent of the total reported in the first quarter of 1994. The Banco de México (Mexico's central bank) reported that during the first six months of the year, foreign investors shipped U.S.$1.077 billion out of the country to pay royalties, remittances, interest and other items.[7] Generally speaking, in this period, investors took more money out of the country than they brought in.

During the Salinas administration, FDI was given certain privileges. The Zedillo administration continued this policy, and even obsessively sought to attract more foreign capital, despite momentary difficulties because of the international financial crises of the last few years, which have been not only recurring, but of great impact.

FDI DISTRIBUTION BY STATE

Mexico has 31 states and a Federal District, all with different levels of development and geographic, economic and political specificities. And the amount of FDI that each receives should be analyzed with this in mind (see Table 4).

CONCLUSIONS

Mexico's main economic problems in 1994 did not derive from the Chiapas conflict, nor from the death of Luis Donaldo Colosio (then-PRI candidate for the presidency), nor from the kidnapping of Mexican business magnates, etc., but from the neoliberal model. It was incapable of creating conditions for economic growth in any nation. The success stories of some countries' economies have not been based either on this model or on a selective economic opening to the outside. They have been based on broad intervention by the state, together with the private sector, in the economy, and on regulatory mechanisms that ensured the necessary macroeconomic and productive conditions. Neoliberal policies are part of the economic model of market-oriented structural reforms through which the Mexican government has attempted to insert Mexico in the world economy, reach the status of a First World country and maintain low inflation and sustained economic growth rates.[8] However, an unparalleled recession and the devaluation of the peso at the end of 1994 meant that the crisis deepened in 1995, manifested mainly in increased unemployment, inflation, indebtedness, etc.

Foreign investment in general dropped, with a particularly severe plunge in direct investment. Portfolio investment (as we noted in the period studied), however, did not decline, propitiating a wave of uncontrolled speculation which had a negative effect on national output.

1995 marked a new, sharper, stage in Mexico's crisis; since 1994, economic and legal policy has tended to give favored treatment to foreign investment, in accordance with the Mexican government's idea of not putting any obstacles or padlocks on short-term investment. Changes in the law in December 1993 made for more flexibility and increased possibilities for foreign investment in some still-protected sectors, like petrochemicals.

NAFTA rules are important points in any legal analysis, particularly given that: a) investors from signer countries can sue for damages for violations of treaty provisions; b) there is a commitment to give foreign investors from NAFTA countries established in Mexico local treatment; c) international transfers and payments made by investors may not be slowed or restricted.

The internal weakness of the Mexican economy makes it more susceptible to external problems such as the mobility of foreign capital, above all when no attempt is made to restrict or tax it, since U.S.$31 billion could leave the country at any time.[9] Even in this context, President Zedillo has said that Mexico has the capacity to deal with economic globalization.[10] VM

NOTES

[1] SECOFI, *Informe estadístico sobre el comportamiento de la inversión extranjera directa en México* (January-December 1997) (Mexico City: Dirección General de Inversión Extranjera, SECOFI, 1997).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] SECOFI, Dirección de Inversión Extranjera, 1-31 December 1997.

[5] Banco de México, "Indicadores del sector externo del Banco de México," *Balanza de pagos* (Internet publication originated in Mexico City) (1995), p. 74.

[6] "De los extranjeros, 60% de los valores gubernamentales," *La Jornada* (Mexico City), 14 September 1995.

[7] See *La Jornada* (Mexico City), 14 September 1995, p. 48.

[8] Arturo Huerta G., *La política neoliberal de estabilización económica de México. Límites y alternativas* (Mexico City: Diana, 1994), p. 14.

[9] *Bolsa Mexicana de Valores* (September 1998).

[10] Isabel Becerril, "Hay capacidad para enfrentar la globalización económica: Zedillo," *El Financiero* (Mexico City), 1 October 1998, p. 9.

Mexico's International Oil Diplomacy

*Rosío Vargas**
*Víctor Rodríguez-Padilla***

The recent plunge in oil prices is due to structural and momentary factors of both supply and demand. The structural factors involve the inability of the Organization of Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC) to regulate supply rationally; the momentary factors involve the economic crisis that forced the Asian economies to stop production, thus lowering their energy consumption; the mild winter in Europe and the United States; and, finally, the relaxing of U.N. sanctions against Iraq, which has been permitted to sell almost 2 million barrels a day (bd) on the international market.[1]

The producers' strategy is a watershed in the history of the international oil market given that it is the first attempt by OPEC members and non-members to work together to reduce crude production and stop the fall in prices. In cooperation with that effort, the Mexican government has taken initiatives and decided to join with the rest of the world's producers in setting production quotas for crude and aid in softening the differences between Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to cushion the current crisis. Until now three important meetings have been held with this aim. At the first, held in Ryad, Saudi Arabia, March 22, 1998, Mexico, Venezuela and the Saudis committed to withdrawing 100,000 bd, 200,000 bd and 300,000 bd, respectively, from the market.

That was the first time that Mexico supported a real initiative to reduce production and agreed with the two most difficult OPEC member nations on a significant measure to control oil supply.[2] Mexico is also playing a key role in reducing tensions between Venezuela and Saudi Arabia, who have accused each other of exceeding OPEC production quotas.

The next meeting took place June 4 in Amsterdam, and resulted in the OPEC deciding to lower supply by 1.3 million bd, a measure seconded by non-OPEC members, bringing the world total to 3.75 million bd. While the effect on prices was immediate, it was ephemeral given that the cuts were limited and compliance with commitments incomplete.[3] Since the agreement did have a certain positive impact on the price, however, OPEC was able to call for another informal gathering on November 25, 1998. At that meeting producers decided to extend the time limit for the production cuts from June 1999 until December 1999, with a production quota of 3.1 million bd. Despite the efforts of Saudi Arabia and Mexico to extend the time limit even further, the Persian Gulf economies refused saying that neither Venezuela nor Iran were complying with the quota.[4]

After the last meeting, despite its conciliatory position, Mexico announced that if OPEC does not comply with the agreed-upon cuts, it will change strategy and could increase its export platform again. Given this, the questions are: What obstacles could be put in the way of a production increase or decrease both domestically and internationally? Can Mexico do it, and to what degree is it a good idea to break with the strategies agreed upon with the other producers?

> Oil is fundamental to state income since Pemex supplies from 30 percent to 40 percent of all tax revenues. Pemex's being at the service of macroeconomic policies means that oil earnings contribute to alleviating pressure on public finances.

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** Researcher in the Graduate Studies Program of the UNAM School of Engineering.

NATIONAL OIL POLICY

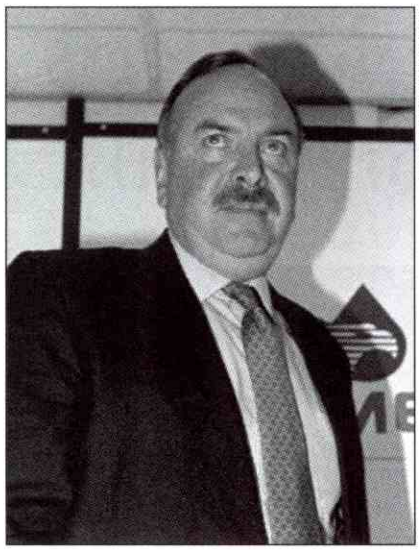
The design of Mexico's oil policy is conditioned both by domestic and international factors. The Mexican government acts within the confines which allow it to comply with the role oil has in the national economy, obviously attending to the needs of the oil industry itself. The government has attempted to alleviate the impact of the drop in prices, proposing, among others, the following measures: a) an increase in tax revenues together with a fiscal reform that includes both tax hikes and price adjustments for the public sector; b) cuts in public spending proportionate to the drop in oil income. As a result, the 1998 budget suffered three cuts, initially estimated at 5 billion dollars; c) reduction of the impact on government revenues through assuming the costs of an increase in the fiscal deficit,[5] and d) an overall fiscal reform to increase federal revenues, ensuring a 20 percent increase in tax earnings vis-à-vis GDP, thus diminishing the economic importance of oil income.

Oil is fundamental to state income since Pemex supplies from 30 percent to 40 percent of all tax revenues. Pemex's being at the service of macroeconomic policies means that oil earnings contribute to alleviating pressure on public finances.

THE U.S. MARKET

The proximity and dynamism of the U.S. market constitutes another of the fundamental aspects that mold Mexico's oil production and marketing policy decisions.

One of the basic changes today in trade policy vis-à-vis the 1980s is the elimination of the criterion that Mexican crude



Ernesto Muñiz/Imagenlatina

Pemex CEO Adrián Lajous.

exports to a single country should not exceed 50 percent of all exports. Shipments to the United States have increased noticeably, particularly since the signing of NAFTA; from the end of 1995, sales to the United States represent 80 percent of total exports. Between 1994 and mid-1998, oil trade with the U.S. market has increased 46.8 percent. Today, sales to the U.S. oil industry average 1.36 billion barrels of crude and, in April 1998, they represented 87 percent of all sales abroad.

The situation in the U.S. oil market is relevant because it is the cornerstone for Mexican oil export decisions. The United States is not only the greatest oil-consuming economy in the world; it is also of note that it depends enormously on foreign oil supplies (52 percent) and it will soon stop being one of the world's major oil producers because of the depletion of its own reserves. Despite the international oil market bonanza and U.S. recourse to Caspian Sea producers, the United States is concerned about its own future energy sources since, even though it has abundant sources of supply throughout the world, energy security considerations take into account that Mexico, due to its geographical proximity, guarantees rapid supply at a lower transportation cost. The United States has in its neighbor to the south a convenient, trustworthy and cheap supplier to satisfy its domestic needs. This relationship is also fundamental to Mexico in terms of its economy's dependence on petrodollars, which makes oil an element of economic security.

The United States is concerned about its own future energy sources and Mexico, due to its geographical proximity, guarantees rapid supply at a lower trasportation cost.

It is not strange, then, that Mexico occupies an important place in the U.S. oil market. In 1997, it was the second largest supplier (with 16.7 percent) to U.S. refineries, coming after Venezuela (with 16.9 percent) and before Saudi Arabia (16.3 percent) and Canada (with 15 percent).

In the opposite direction, the import of petroleum products from the United States into Mexico have increased considerably, particularly gasoline, of which one of five barrels consumed in Mexico come from abroad. This is a clear reflection of the renunciation of the energy self-sufficiency policies that prevailed until 1988.

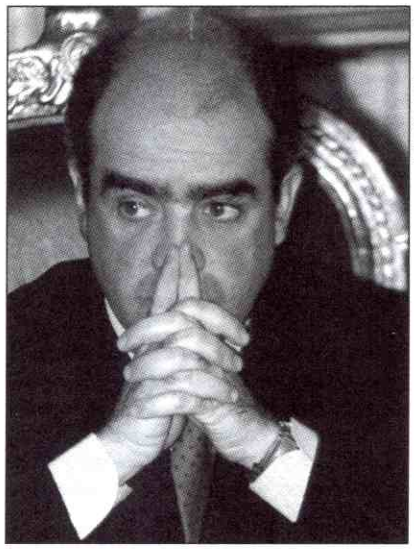
In reality, this structural link, as well as the fact that one of the main beneficiaries of the current oil crisis is the U.S. economy as a whole, force Mexico to take into account three fronts when determining its export platform: a) the international oil

market, Mexico's participation in it and its wish to cooperate to increase prices; b) its links to the U.S. market, where it competes for space with producers of the stature of Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and Canada; and, c) the fact that it has not wanted to separate itself too much from other exporters with whom it has common interests, like price stability and the preservation of room in the market to guarantee a certain level of tax revenues. Proof of this is Mexico's incorporation into the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) although it is not a member of the International Energy Agency (IEA), the body created by the industrialized nations to serve as a counterweight to the OPEC.

One of the Mexican authorities' arguments —which has even been suggested by the specialized international press— is that Mexico neither benefits from nor contributes much to the international oil market because of its limited participation. However, under current conditions of supply, 3.15 million bd in 1998 (4.13 percent) are not to be underestimated in relation to the world total of 76.198 million bd.

Mexico's international activism since the beginning of 1998 can be explained by its fiscal situation, with its activities aiming at a concerted reduction of supply and cushioning the drop in oil prices. The United States does not seem to look askance at Mexico's activism, however, since a slight increase in prices would suit its interests by reviving its battered local oil industry and that of its Middle East allies, who have also lost influence in the region due to plummeting prices, thus affecting delicate regional balances.

Specialists say that the relevant issue in analyzing Mexico's situation is that



Javier García/Imagenlatina

Mexico's Minister of Energy Luis Téllez.

most oil revenues depend less and less on the international price of oil and more on the differential between production costs and the final market price, which can even be deducted from future earnings and still obtain significant oil income. Mexico argues that it has a lot of room for manoeuver given that its production costs are low (between U.S.$2 and U.S.$4 per barrel), creating an important differential despite the drop in the international reference price of crude. The important thing here is the cost reduction due to technological factors which, together with other structural changes in the oil industry, will play a fundamental role in establishing the scenario for oil in the future.

Mexican oil policy decisions are based on the idea that the international oil industry will go through 10 to 15 years of low prices, and therefore preparations are being made to increase competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

The international oil industry, the press and different bodies suggest that Mexico, as well as other producers, open its industry more to foreign investment given the pressures of its own economic and investment requirements. They argue that Mexico should open up more areas to privatization, particularly in up-stream activities of exploration and extraction, in order to garner more earnings that would allow it to deal with the current price crisis and at the same time improve the company's efficiency. What they do not say is that the large corporations are in reality not only not divesting themselves of their assets, but are actually merging and integrating with each other vertically and horizontally with an eye to reducing production costs, improving technology and increasing oil reserves.

Examples of this, to name only the most important, are the three mergers of large oil companies: EXXON-Mobil; Shell, that merged with Amoco; and France's Total, that joined forces with Belgium's Petrofina. In addition, while it is the case that projections about future oil prices are the basis for the decisions to merge, privatize and broaden or reduce the oil production platform, these projections are somewhat uncertain. Some international specialists affirm that prices will rapidly recover once world oil production reaches its peak, which may happen in the first years of the next century.[6] In this scenario, government companies which have liquidated their fixed assets will not be able to

benefit from recovering prices. Government statements indicate that Mexican oil policy decisions are based on the idea that the international oil industry will go through 10 to 15 years of low prices, and therefore preparations are being made to increase competitiveness.[7] IEA predictions that world demand will drop from 2.9 percent of the growth of world consumption in 1997 to 1.6 percent are cited to support this scenario.[8] Once again, future scenarios are uncertain. The only thing that can be said today is that the recover of prices will depend on increased demand and producers' fulfilling the commitments they have agreed upon.[9] Today's market scenarios which serve as points of reference for policy decision making are important for the future not only of Pemex, but of the country as a whole. VM

NOTES

[1] Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior, "Lecciones de la crisis petrolera para América Latina," *Comercio Exterior* (September 1998), pp. 739-748.

[2] Antonio Rojas Nieto, "Notas para analizar la caída de los precios del petróleo," in *Economía Informa* 267 (Mexico City: Facultad de Economía-UNAM, May 1998), p. 20.

[3] Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior, op. cit., p. 741.

[4] At that time, Venezuela's quota was 500,000 bd and Iran's, 300,000 bd. Another meeting is planned for March 1999 in which it is hoped that commitments can be clarified. [This meeting was held in Vienna in March 23; there OPEC members and non-members agreed to reduce crude production once again. Since then prices have gone up. Editor's Note.] An additional factor that has had an influence may be Saudi Arabia's attempt to maintain its position in the U.S. market, and its preference for lowering prices rather than lose it. The Arabs' main concern in this market is Venezuela, whose large investments with foreign companies may guarantee it a market in the United States.

[5] Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior, op. cit., p. 744.

[6] Projections about future supply in the international oil market vary greatly. However, *The Coming Oil Crisis*, a book by industry specialist Colin J. Campbell, seems to be exercising important influence in the conformation of a vision of the future. Campbell sustains that prices will rise when global production reaches its zenith, which will happen in the first few years of the twenty-first century. See Mary H. Cooper, "Oil Production in the 21st Century," *Congressional Quarterly* 8, no. 29 (August 7, 1998), pp. 673-696.

[7] One analysis states that the probability that crude oil prices remain low for a prolonged period will diminish when demand peaks, given the loss of production capacity this will cause. See Bob William's analysis in "Oil Producers Face Key Question: How Long Will Prices Stay Low?" *Oil and Gas Journal* (December 28, 1998), p. 23.

[8] The questionability of figures even from prestigious bodies like the International Energy Agency has been shown in recent discrepancies with information put out by the same organization about oil supply and demand and inventory levels, called "missing barrels." This has sparked an investigation in the U.S. Congress itself through its General Accounting Office, which questions IEA data and its effects on prices.

[9] Antonio Rojas Nieto, "Impuestos y renta petrolera: reflexiones preliminares sobre la coyuntura actual," *El Cotidiano* 91 (September-October 1998), p. 7.

The Vatican in Mexico And the New Evangelization of America

*Ricardo Ampudia**

After John Paul II's recent visit to Mexico, *Voices of Mexico* asked Ricardo Ampudia, author of a new book about the Vatican's influence in Mexico, for an article about his book, the importance of the visit and its impact in Latin America.

La Iglesia de Roma. Estructura y presencia en México[1] (The Church of Rome. Structure and Presence in Mexico) is a book born of a genuine and very personal interest in knowing what the church is, how it is organized, how it works and, above, all, what has made it possible for it to function for 2,000 years, a period in which it has witnessed the rise, evolution and decline of several empires and of unprecedented technological and scientific headway. The most important thing about this book is that it presents the criteria upon which what we know as Western civilization was forged, a civilization whose notion of ethics depends fundamentally on the tenets of the gospel.

The book grew out of my own curiosity when in 1992, after constitutional reforms changed the legal status of churches in Mexico, formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See were proposed. At the time, I was the General Director of Protocol of the Foreign Relations Ministry, and my duties led me to find out how official dealings with the authorities of the Vatican City State should be established, particularly during the third papal trip in August 1993, when John Paul II visited Mérida. On that occasion, I had the opportunity to meet figures of the stature of

* Mexican journalist and writer.

Gustavo Graf/Imagenlatina

Pope John Paul II with Cardinal Norberto Rivera of Mexico.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State for the Holy See.

After that I began to delve more and more deeply into bibliography on the question, mainly about the role of the church in Mexico, and I began thinking of writing a book that would propound some basic ideas about the Catholic Church, its organization, structure, doctrine and, particularly, the weight that Catholicism has had in forging the Mexican state.

La Iglesia de Roma. Estructura y presencia en México is a book aimed at people interested in the Catholic Church, whether they are Catholics or not. It tries to make the basic doctrinal concepts and administrative structure of the Holy See of the Vatican City State accessible to the ordinary reader, as well as its differences and how it is unified through the Pope. It also deals with topics like the concepts of hierarchy, territorial divisions, religious orders, statistics of ecclesiastical life, etc., making it a brief compendium that explains them, how they operate and, above all, their reason for being. This part, perhaps a little more theoretical, is the first section of the book, accompanied by a brief historical sketch of the church and Pope John Paul II.

Gustavo Graf/Imagenlatina

Just before departure.

In the second part of the book, my interest is to clearly present the role the church has played in Mexican history from the conquest until our time. The central factor which continues to surprise as the reader goes through the text is the social role of the church in Mexico, which cannot be understood without first mentioning the *Patronato Real*, a legal institution of the colonial period which allowed for the church to support the state and vice versa. The state has based the conceptualization of its relations with the church on this legal institution. The symbiotic relationship of the colonial period became more difficult in the eighteenth century during the Enlightenment that the Bourbons brought with them. Later, with the insurgency which led to the independence of Mexico, we can appreciate the fundamental sociopolitical role the church played. Throughout the nineteenth century, the struggle raged to create a modern state which would limit religion to the private sphere —that is, separate church and state— leading to the Reform Laws. Today, these laws are understood as a just foundation upon which to regulate religious freedom and are the basis for our current legislation, but at that time they were an unprecedented affront domestically and internationally.

In this century, the role of the church has been uneven: it supported the 30-year regime of Porfirio Díaz and then the first stage of the Revolution; it took a position of confrontation with the revolutionary groups after 1913 and openly opposed the

Octavio Nava/AVE

Crowded streets always awaited him.

state after the Constitutional Congress of 1917 which denied the church legal status in an attempt to affirm the central elements of modernity: secularization of the state, the restriction of religion to the private sphere and freedom of religion.

While the 1917 constitution was the immediate precedent of one of the bloodiest chapters in our history, the Cristera War, an arrangement was reached later in the relationship of church and state, a *modus vivendi*. The church committed itself to staying out of sociopolitical questions and the state guaranteed the freedom of religion, an arrangement which lasted until the 1970s.

In 1970, the first voices from the church were heard demanding a change in legislation, basically to ensure respect for the clergy's human and civil rights. Though this issue was discretely discussed in the first half of the 1970s, it began to be more intensely discussed in the 1980s when a greater participation of clergymen in national life began to be noticeable despite legally prohibitions.

The changes to articles 3, 5, 24, 27 and 130 of the Constitution were a landmark in Mexican history. Confrontation was left behind and replaced with a relationship based on mutual recognition expressed in legislation. The appearance of this book on the market was opportune given the Pope's fourth visit last January 22 to 26.

John Paul II's visit to Mexico had strictly religious aims, but his importance as an international figure means it has an undoubted sociopolitical impact on the hemisphere. The objective of the visit, which cannot be underestimated, is that the Pope came to present a strictly ecclesiastic document, *Ecclesia in America*, the fruit of an analysis made by the region's bishops at their 1997 Synod of the Americas, whose conclusions are the basic outlines for undertaking the new and definitive evangelization of the Western Hemisphere.

In my opinion, John Paul II, as a historic figure —and in this I agree with several analysts— is now in the second stage of his papacy. The first stage was characterized by a palpably anticommunist discourse and political praxis, without which the fall of Eastern Europe and the liberalization of Poland, the central objective of papal policy, would not have been possible. Once the fall of the Soviet bloc was achieved, despite its consequences (unbridled consumerism, the lack of an ethic of solidarity, corruption, drug trafficking, etc.), John Paul II went back to strictly religious aims: the strengthening of Catholicism, already undertaken with the 1983 review of the Canonical Legal Code and the structuring of the universal catechism, all in the face of a more and more open spiritual market, rampant secularism and the abandonment of traditions in highly industrialized countries. In this second stage, the Americas, particularly Latin America, has become the continent of hope that will guarantee the existence of a vigorous Catholicism at the dawn of the third millennium.

For the Pope it is important to trace a new course for Catholicism in the Americas because, despite its orthodox stand defined by the papacy, deviations in the application of the church's social doctrine, known as liberation theology, have emerged here. John Paul II called a meeting, a synod, of bishops at which select members —specialists— of the Mexican hierarchy gathered to find the deficiencies, systematize them and work out strategies for spreading the gospel in the new century. The joy of continuing the work of the missionaries was a fiesta in itself, which had to be celebrated at the feet of the most venerated and loved image in the Americas, Our Lady of Guadalupe. The Pope came to Mexico to present the post-synod call exactly 20 years after the 1979 CELAM III meeting in Puebla.[2]

The expectations aroused by the Pope's arrival in Mexico were enormous. The preparations included a tremendous amount of work by employees in the offices of the Archdiocese in Mexico and different government bodies to ensure the Pope's security and that the largest possible number of people could come into contact with him. The great majority of Mexicans wanted to see the Pope, as close up as possible, even if only for a fraction of a second. His message was two-fold: the demand for a high moral standard, based on the definition of new social sins such as drug trafficking, corruption, ecocide, the lack of respect for human dignity, etc., and the introduction of values based on the message of Christ, newly modernized to make it comprehensible to those who can take the new project forward, the young. **YM**

NOTES

[1] Ricardo Ampudia, *La Iglesia de Roma. Estructura y presencia en México* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998).

[2] The document signed by the Pope on January 1999 comprises some of the bishops of the Americas' concerns expressed in 1979 at the Third Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM III), mainly the strategies the Church should develop to confront the increasing violence, poverty and inequality among peoples and countries, which still exist on the eve of the new millennium. [Editor's Note.]

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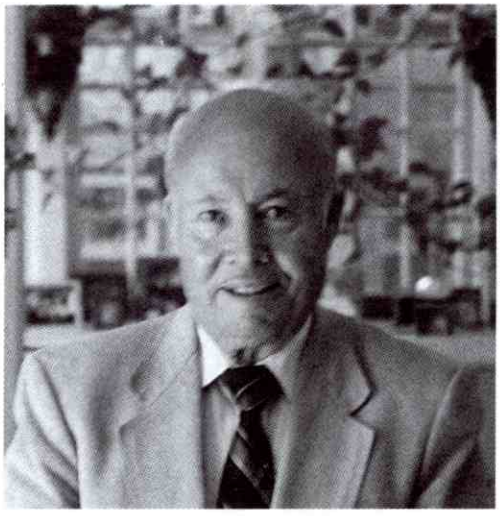

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Don Antonio Valencia.

A Pocket of Mexican Immigrants in New Rochelle

*Luz María Valdés**

Unprecedented migration from Mexico to the area surrounding New York City has taken place since 1954. It has been unprecedented because it originated with New Rochelle's mayor and his family looking for domestic servants and meeting up with Mexicans adventurous enough to leave home, but who always kept one foot in their communities of origin. This article will attempt to narrate the events just as they occurred and the paths taken by Mexicans who entered into the labor market in this part of the United States.

Allys Douayer, widow of the former mayor of New Rochelle, died last November at the age of 96 after having sponsored and given support to a great many Mexicans who today live in and around that city. The first to arrive was Antonio Valencia. The story began in 1954 when Allys Douayer and her husband, J. Vergara —of Italian origin— visited Mexico City and the Sacred Family Church seeking help in finding a domestic servant who wanted to travel to New Rochelle. Young Antonio Valencia worked in the church, and he took the job. In less than a week his immigration papers had been arranged and he left for New York to live in New Rochelle and work as the butler in the Vergara household, a post he held until Allys Douayer's death.

Don Antonio —as he is known throughout the region— says that after his first year of working for Allys Douayer, he realized that the way was open for him to help people from Cotija, his home town in Mexico. After getting to know the area and the residents, with the support of Douayer, Antonio began to get jobs for his close relatives. In 1955, a year after he arrived, his

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Our Lady of Guadalupe's image has hung in Manhattan's St. Patrick's Cathedral since 1991.

six brothers and sisters had emigrated and had jobs in different homes and social clubs.

In the next few years there was intense migration from the micro-region of the municipalities of Cotija and Jiquilpan in the state of Michoacán, and Quitupan, Jalisco. The network of relations and friends grew to the degree that today it is difficult to find anyone in the area who has not been to New York. This migration was destined to very specific job categories in the areas of caring for and growing plants, greenhouses, gardening and garden design making the immigrants indispensable in this high-income area.

At the same time that the flow of migrants grew, the job market opened up to them, and new immigrants began to take jobs as dish washers, waiters, kitchen helpers and cooks, until they filled almost all the jobs in the area's most select clubs.

The services the immigrants offer in New Rochelle are well paid, which has meant that the remittances they send home to Mexico have gone for building schools, teachers' homes, dams, roads connecting the three municipalities and, of course, improving their own homes and those of their relatives.

Allys Douayer and Don Antonio not only promoted the migration of an important number of people from Mexico, but they also opened the doors of the United States to the order of the Legionnaires of Christ in the early 1960s.

Don Antonio's activities have left a profound mark on the area. Practically all the large clubs of New York high society are staffed completely by Mexicans: jobs from chef to caddie, tennis ball retrievers, assistants for water and other sports are in the able, efficient and honorable hands of Mexicans.

Of all his activities during his 45 years as butler in Allys Douayer's home, Don Antonio first exerted his influence to ensure his brothers' and sisters' being able to come to New Rochelle. With daring and effectiveness, he was able to get jobs for all of them. Little by little, he became familiar with the needs of the society he lived in. He got to know the owners of companies where he thought Mexicans could be employed, and, little by little, he also made inroads into labor organizations, making friends with union leaders, company managers and friends of the Douayer family, in whose homes he got jobs as servants for friends, relatives and acquaintances.

He tried to get well paying jobs for the poorest migrants, in the construction industry, for example, which pays up to U.S.$20 an hour. He placed the others in greenhouses where they learned gardening trades, particularly garden design. These immigrants would earn between U.S.$5 and U.S.$10 an hour. Many have been able to set up their own businesses, mainly greenhouses or restaurants.

Don Antonio sought jobs for the new migrants according to his or her family needs. The highest wages go to construction workers, who make U.S.$800 a week, allowing them a better quality of life and enabling them to send their families in Mexico money.

Besides aiding immigrants, which led him to found and head up an organization of Mexicans abroad, Don Antonio has created other institutions to support Mexicans with labor, civil and even criminal problems. To do this, he has established excellent relationships with city officials —like mayors and judges— who he also supports and who have publicly honored him.

Thanks to his contacts, Don Antonio is allowed to appear in court to aid anyone with legal problems; he visits the sick putting them in the hands of an insurance company so they do not use up their earnings in medical attention; he helps Latino organizations that do community work, like the Hope Community Center, where Yolanda Davis, born in Jalisco and Don Antonio's right hand, works.

He promotes the donation of funds to finance the needs of communities in Mexico, a project which has transformed the immigrants' places of origin. He organizes the celebration of Mexican independence day and religious festivities in the county. For example, he sponsored the idea of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe being placed in Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan, where it has been since 1991.

Allys Douayer and Don Antonio not only promoted the migration of an important number of people from this microregion of Mexico, but they also opened the doors of the United States to the order of the Legionnaires of Christ in the early 1960s.

Allys Douayer.

The services the immigrants offer in New Rochelle are well paid, which has meant that the remittances they send home to Mexico have gone for building schools, dams, roads and improving their homes.

The immigration supported by Don Antonio, on the one hand, began a migratory flow that continues from this microregion and, on the other hand, resulted in the founding of one of the most important and influential seminaries in the United States and the world, which trains priests and nuns in the order of the Legionnaires of Christ.

Don Antonio and Allys Douayer were fundamental in the negotiations of Father Marcial Maciel, the head of the Legionnaires of Christ, to enable the order to establish itself in New York in the early 1960s. Then-Senator Robert Kennedy had to intervene to secure New York's Cardinal Spellman's consent and welcome for the order to the United States. Its first official address was the home of Allys Douayer. Today, it has educational facilities and a seminary in Purchess County, Connecticut, and it has recently bought a large piece of property from IBM corporation in the same state to build a school of philosophy. The Mexican community and the Legionnaires of Christ annually thanked Mrs. Douayer for her support with a luncheon at the seminary. She then invited them to a Mexican-style luncheon in the garden of her home. Don Antonio has been friends with Father Maciel since their childhood together in their native Cotija, Michoacán.

Allys Douayer's presence was fundamental for the Mexican community in the area. She once visited Cotija and Guadalupe with her husband to survey the benefits derived from Mexicans emigrating to New York.

Allys Douayer —whom Don Antonio accompanied until her death— supported him so his brothers and sisters could enjoy the same opportunities he had. Her death has been a great loss for the Mexican community in New Rochelle but Don Antonio, at the age of 70, still has a great deal of energy and commitment for continuing his task of supporting Mexicans in overcoming the great difficulties they face upon their arrival in New York today. VM

Public Opinion, Impeachment and Elections

*Juan Pablo Córdoba Elías**

Politics is not a game. Anyone who talks about politics as a game does not know what they are talking about. Politics is a business, a profession, or a war, but not game.

LYN NOFZIGER[1]

On Friday, February 12, 1999, the U.S. Senate absolved President Clinton of the two charges in his impeachment trial. On the charge of perjury the vote was 55 to 45;[2] on obstruction of justice, 50 to 50.[3]

The political game, the partisan war and media manipulation are day-to-day realities invoked like irrefutable evidence to explain U.S. politics in recent years.

Not only have professional politicians and political analysts always been clear that the efficient exercise of politics requires precise objectives and carefully weighed procedures, that is, a well-defined strategy, but so have the military: just like in war, politics is no game or spectator sport. It is not responsible for coming to conclusions, a task which falls, in any case, to history. Neither does it make judgments, a job left, I suppose, to the courts. What a perusal of political actors does allow us is an understanding of how and why traditional and new ways of doing politics coexist in the United States.

The victory of the moderate center and the failure of the U.S. radical conservative discourse in the 1990s is no game either, nor is the internal and external deterioration of the image of the presidency and the resignation of the speakers of the House, Newt Gingrich and Robert Livingstone, after the mid-term elections of last November 3. Much less the more than U.S.$70 million that the failed case of Republican independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr, obsessed with damaging President William Clinton, has cost the American people, or the silence of the first lady or their daughter.

Clinton will be remembered for his economic successes, his vocation for service and moderate discourse, and even for the strength and intelligence he has shown by not losing control in extreme situations. But, the opinion polls say he will also be remembered for disregarding the responsibilities of the post with which he was entrusted, that brings together at the very highest level the traditions, customs and dreams of the nation it represents.

The U.S. president owes his victories to an exceptional capacity for political-administrative management. However, Clinton is his own biggest enemy, with his permanent confusion about where public and private matters begin and end.

THE SPECTER OF PUBLIC OPINION

We can say that since the 1960 televised debates between Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy, technology and the mass media have ushered a new actor onto the political stage in the United States: public opinion. Crystal balls were replaced by surveys and oracles by opinion pollsters.

Gallup polls show that President Clinton's popularity was high even before the Lewinsky scandal broke. His administration averaged 42 percent approval versus 49 percent disapproval in the January 1996 polls. By December 1996, his rating had increased to 58 percent/34 percent; in January 1997, it was 58 percent/35 percent; and by December 1997, 56 percent/36 percent. In early 1998, it had

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risen to 59 percent/32 percent, and after the announcement of a balanced budget and the first lady's defense of the president saying the investigations were an attempt to discredit him, it increased to 67 percent approval/28 percent disapproval.[4]

In early September 1998, Clinton's rating had dropped to 59 percent/34 percent, but by the end of the month, he had recovered, with 63 percent of the public approving his performance.

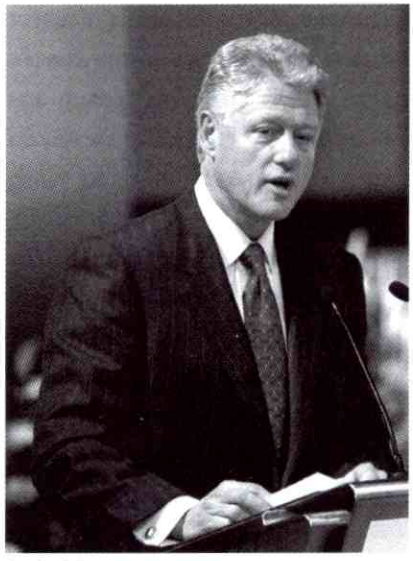
Behind the Scenes of the Trial

The charges brought by the prosecutors of the lower house were perjury and obstruction of justice (by bringing pressure to bear on a witness).

Article I, Section 3 of the Constitution stipulates, "Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment and punishment, according to law." Therefore, an official subject to impeachment may be tried under civil or criminal law, regardless of whether he or she is tried by the Senate and has been found guilty or innocent. Even though the Senate has absolved President Clinton, then, he is still liable to criminal prosecution. What is under debate is whether he may be tried while occupying the presidency.

Several questions regarding impeachment intrigue not only the experts but the public at large: Did the House of Representatives' 13 managers make inexcusable technical-legal mistakes in the brief they presented to the Senate? Or, was the case simply weak, despite its powerful presentation? Let us see.

The House of Representatives' prosecutors began their case with a series of strikes against them: they had to build a case for perjury and obstruction of justice without the benefit of the supposed key charge: perjury during the president's testimony in the Jones case (it had been thrown out by a 229-205 vote in the House). Also, they were not given the opportunity of calling the witnesses they wanted, nor of questioning them before the Senate.



Photos by Gustavo Graf/Imagenlatina

Apologizing.

Finally, the dramatization of the entire trial in the media overcharged the case from the outset, when David Shippers, the House chief investigator, wrote a memo imputing more charges against Clinton than the ones Prosecutor Starr had brought in his September 9 report.

The House of Representatives managers made the charges appear as though they were of historic importance. Suffice it to recall that the president of the House Judiciary Committee, Henry Hyde, compared the case with the battles fought by U.S. GIs in World War II. Nothing makes a jury more distrustful than evidence being bandied about.

With regard to the role of opinion polls in the impeachment proceedings, after the president's mid-August 1998 apology to the nation, 68 percent of citizens thought Clinton should remain in office, while only 28 percent were opposed. At the end of September, the *Washington Post* cited 61 percent for versus 37 percent against his remaining in office and by October the ratio was 61 percent/35 percent. At the beginning of October, 66 percent of those surveyed thought censure an appropriate measure, while 29 percent were against.

By January 1999, opinion polls showed that even after the House of Representatives prosecutors presented their case before the Senate, which was seeking a way to finish up the trial, two-thirds of Americans opposed the president being ousted from office. The *Time* magazine January 23, 24 and 25, 1999, survey is significant in that it showed that 62 percent of those polled did not want Clinton to be stripped of office; 81 percent said that even if more evidence were presented against the president, their opinion would not change; 58 percent wanted the case to be over; 66 percent supported Clinton; but 50 percent said they did not respect him as a person, while 48 percent said they did. Seventy-two percent of those polled said that Clinton will be remembered for the scandals during his term, and only 18 percent said that he would be remembered for his achievements.

Finally, the *New York Times* and CBS News did a poll in February 1999 that

During the February 14 visit to Mérida.

dispelled all doubts about the opinion of the American public: two-thirds said they had not heard or read new information about the Senate trial. Fifty-six percent did not approve of the way the Senate was conducting the trial, while 37 percent approved. Given the approaching presidential race and the fact that electoral matters are on the agenda ahead of time, it is important to note that 56 percent of Americans had a favorable opinion of the Democratic Party, while 37 percent did not. The Republicans' rating was 41 percent favorable/52 percent unfavorable.

The history of constitutional debates offers no clear definition about what kind of high crime or misdemeanor should lead to a formal accusation or trial. Penal codes render a good number of actions criminal which are not serious enough to warrant impeachment. Herein lies the problem that not all possible crimes or misdemeanors are sufficient grounds for impeachment.

Given the insufficient grounds for the bills of impeachment, a group of senators sought a decorous way out of the mire by reprehending President Clinton through a motion called a "finding of fact."[5] This would only have required 51 votes to pass, compared to the 67 votes needed to convict the president of the two charges brought against him. The difference between censure and finding of fact is that the vote on the second would actually take place during impeachment proceedings.[6] Senators Olympia Snowe (Maine) and Pete Domenici (New Mexico) proposed this way out. However, their proposal was not very well received among Democrats. On Friday, February 12, the Senate absolved President Clinton of both charges, neither of which received even a simple majority vote.

PAYING UP

The political relationship between the White House and Congress changed drastically after the Republicans achieved a congressional majority. That is why it is important to note the political price paid by the Republican Party for its involvement in impeaching President Clinton.[7] We will mention only two items on the bill: the first was the loss of 5 Republican seats and the November 6, 1998, resignation of Newt Gingrich (Georgia) as speaker of the House. Robert Livingstone (Louisiana), with 21 years in the House, became speaker on November 18, but resigned after leaks of compromising information about his private life, leaving the post to Dennis Hastert (Illinois), majority whip and liaison between moderate and conservative Republicans. It should be remembered that the speaker of the House is the third in line for the presidency.

The second item on the bill was the California governor's seat. Dan Lungreen, Republican gubernatorial candidate in the most important state in the union from the point of view of the economy and electoral college votes,[8] was one of the few candidates who openly supported the president's impeachment. After 16 years of Republican control, Californians voted Democrat Gray Davis into the governor's mansion.

After the mid-term elections, the House was divided as follows: 228 Republicans, after losing 5 seats; 210 Democrats, having gained 4 seats; and one independent. The Senate remained the same with 55 Republicans and 45 Democrats. The Republicans lost one of the 32 governorships they had held; the Democrats maintained their 17; and there are now two governors who ran on independent tickets.

CLINTON'S VISIT TO MEXICO

On February 14, 1999, President William Clinton and his wife arrived in Mérida, Yucatán, accompanied by 12 members of his cabinet. The central topics on the agenda were the fight against drug trafficking, illegal immigration and pollution on the border.

The real underlying issue at the meetings was U.S. certification policy, given the report that pointed to Mexico as a stop-off on the illicit drug route to the United States. According to U.S. figures, two-thirds of Colombian cocaine crosses into the United States through Mexico.

If Mexico did not get certification,[9] U.S. economic aid for the fight against drug trafficking would be suspended and serious economic sanctions applied, among them, blockage of international credit.

Although relations with Mexico are a matter of national security for the United States, economic issues are also fundamental points on the bilateral agenda, particularly since 1994, when NAFTA went into effect. Trade between Mexico and the United States reached U.S.$200 billion in 1998, significantly higher than 1994's U.S.$80 billion. The United States exports U.S.$79 billion to Mexico every year, twice as much as before NAFTA.

In recent years, Mexican foreign policy, has had to struggle between developing new channels of communication and negotiation with the United States and the public's particular sensitivity to any issue involving sovereignty. It is curious to watch the efforts of the Foreign Ministry, condemned to play a double game that ties up efficient negotiations both domestically and abroad at the same time that it must avoid injuring feelings that usually involve ideologues' snap judgments under the guise of expert political analysts.

Actually, this is one of the consequences of globalization: liberalizing emerging economies and at the same time submitting them to the pendular movement produced by international finance capital. This can be seen in the move from a fundamentally local dynamic in society to one which universalizes the concrete sphere of action of professional politicians and —naturally— their mistakes.

If Mexico did not get certification, U.S. economic aid for the fight against drug trafficking would be suspended and serious economic sanctions applied, among them, blockage of international credit.

Today, politicians must set objectives that are both possible and responsible. Their behavior must adjust rationally and instrumentally to a process of give and take that includes the costs and benefits of all individual acts in the public sphere. If they do not, first, they will feel the crunch at the ballot box and, second, they will see the end of a career or, in the case of a bilateral agenda, the failure of negotiations.

Therefore, the practical aspects of politics force a consideration of the benefits of efficient public management, above and beyond the media discourse which considers only the defense of national sovereignty. If we understand this, perhaps our politics will begin to mature once and for all. VM

NOTES

[1] Lyn Nofziger, "Presidents and Politicians I Have Known," *Governance VIII. The Presidency and Foreign Policy*, ed. Kenneth W. Thompson (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1997), p. 26.

[2] Ten Republicans voted with the Democrats: John Chafee, Susan Collins, Slade Gorton, James Jeffords, Richard Shelby, Olympia Snowe, Arlen Specter, Ted Stevens, Fred Thompson and John Warner.

[3] Five Republicans voted against conviction on this charge, along with the Democrats: John Chafee, Susan Collins, James Jeffords, Olympia Snowe and Arlen Specter.

[4] Gallup polls for 1996, 1997 and January 1998, with a sampling of 864 adults interviewed by phone.

[5] "Finding of fact" could be considered unconstitutional given that the U.S. Constitution does not include it as part of the impeachment trial, even as punishment. See Article I, Section 3, paragraph 7, quoted above, which limits penalties in impeachment trials to removal from and disqualification for office.

[6] According to constitutional expert Kirk Spitzer, "Basically, it's a resolution passed by Congress that expresses disapproval of someone or something. It carries no specific penalties and can compel no particular action. It's drafted the same way as any House or Senate bill, but has no force of law. It resides forever in the public records, but doesn't do anything." *USA Today* (13 January 1999).

[7] Gallup polls taken during the week of October 29 to November 1, 1998, with a sampling of 2,084, indicating that 49 percent of voters supported Democratic congressional candidates, while 45 percent supported Republicans, contrasted with the previous week's poll (October 23 to 25) that gave the Republicans a two point lead. A Pew Research/Princeton survey among 1,714 registered voters done the day before the November 3 elections gave the lead to the Republicans. Two out of three voters (64 percent) said that they would like to reelect their representatives, but when asked about the impeachment trial, 54 percent said they would not support members of the House of Representatives who voted to impeach Clinton. If we recall that in early October 1998, 40 percent of those polled said they would support House members who voted to impeach, the cost of the defamation campaign is clear.

[8] It is significant that the Davis administration has sought to create links with Mexico on two fronts: Governor Davis' visit to Mexico was scheduled two weeks before President Clinton's; and during his meeting with President Zedillo, the participants were very aware of the increase in Texan exports to Mexico, even though Texas is just a point on the route the products take, and what this means in terms of political capital —6.6 million Latino registered voters— for the Republican front-runner in the race for the nomination for the 2000 campaign, Governor George Bush Jr.

[9] Certification is based on a law passed by the U.S. Congress in 1986. Since then, Mexico has always been certified by the U.S. government. During his visit, Clinton confirmed his intention of presenting a favorable report on Mexico. The Congress can overturn the president's report by a two-thirds vote of the House. Significantly, last February 18, the Republican Party introduced an amendment that was approved by a partisan vote of 212 to 205 postponing 90 days the last day for a possible decertification, initially set for March 1.

Aztlán
A Primordial Imagined Community

*Mariángela Rodríguez**

The purpose of this article is to consider identity as a process that takes place in a historically determined time and space. The first question guiding the research was the way in which national identities are constructed in a foreign territory, concretely that of Chicanos in the United States.

I chose as a representation scenario the political ritual of Cinco de Mayo, a fiesta on May 5 which commemorates a battle against French intervention in the last century. I was intrigued to know why this date is so rooted among Mexicans living in the United States. It is an activist, political and non-commercial celebration, and a scenario of representation of identities that, to my surprise, involved an indigenous identity, based on which values and deep-seated emotions can be inferred that, like in all rituals, are displayed.

This all takes place at East Los Angeles College, the university with the largest number of Mexican American students in Los Angeles. The program, presented in English and Spanish, an important achievement of the Chicano movement, namely bilingual and bicultural education, includes activities beginning on May 4, sponsored by the Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán (M.E.CH.A.).[1] The program begins by mentioning the two heroes of the battle of Cinco de Mayo. The first is Benito Juárez, whose famous saying, "Among men as well as among nations, respect for others' rights is peace," has enormous meaning for Chicanos as a whole, one of whose main demands is self-determination.

The second is Ignacio Zaragoza, who some say was born "on this side" of the border when Texas was part of Mexico, in Espíritu Santo Bay, March 24, 1829. Zaragoza is considered the main hero of the battle.

The Cinco de Mayo victory is presented as Mexico's great triumph against the invader. According to this story, Mexico conquered its sovereignty and independence there. This way of narrating the events inverts the historical time frame and idealizes the facts. But that is really not important if we consider that what is interesting is its pedagogical intention, amid the colonialism, the racism and the discrimination that Mexicans suffer daily along with the rest of U.S. "minorities."

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Photos by Mariángela Rodríguez

Mural art has been an instrument for Chicano protest.

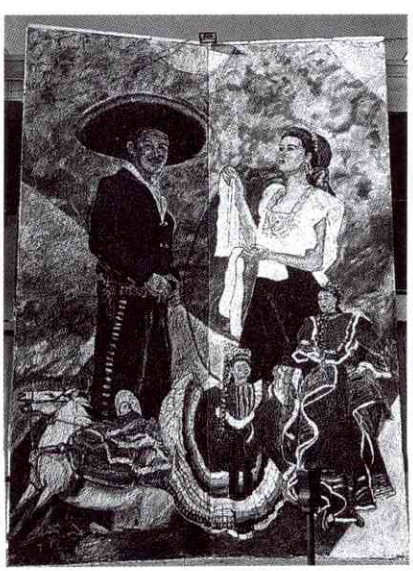
In the popular Chicano collective imagination, different historical threads are brought together in a symbolic unity that bestows a meaning to the commemoration.

In response to the question, "Why this holiday?" the organizers emphasize the pedagogical effect, the importance for Chicanos to know "the truth about their history, this history that they have been denied by the U.S. educational system. We can only struggle for our freedom if we first know who we are."[2] From the organizers' perspective, the goal of the civic-political celebration is to teach participants about the paradigmatic events in the history of Mexicans and Chicanos. For this reason, the Battle of Puebla has become a watershed based on which seasonal holidays are established to constantly maintain their principles fresh and timely. ("Wherever there are five Chicanos there is a Cinco de Mayo celebration," they say with pride.) These are spaces for mounting the imagined communities, in which the past and the future are seen as simultaneous with the present.[3] As the school dean and master of ceremonies explains, "Cinco de Mayo is important for Chicanos because the hero of the battle, Ignacio Zaragoza, was a Texan, a Chicano."

The Mexican ambiance is brought out in the decoration of the hall, which sports balloons with the colors of the Mexican flag, plus the mariachi music, Aztec and regional dances, and the Mexican food served in its (industrialized) American version. The students wear dress styles and fashions that evoke the Indians of northern Mexico and the southwestern United States, with their hair down to their shoulders or braided. The clothes speak of an indigenous culture, and their T-shirts are adorned with the Aztec calendar or the image of indigenous gods. Others carry signs declaring, "Our true history must be told," and the flag of Aztlán hangs in the hall, reflecting a clear demand for a space for their historical time.

This type of ethnic identity is projected, spread over the length and breadth of the ritual space. It is clearly expressed in the program, which points out that the indigenous dances are authentic, and that the dancers belong to the group known in Mexico as *concheros*, who practice forms of indigenous religiosity, in many cases creolized.[4] They are presented as the "Aztec Dancers Xochi Pilli."

These dances alternate with the band that plays Chicano rap, music whose rhythm recalls the urban way of life, the subway, the planes, the noise of traffic, factories, etc. It is music that transmits the tyranny of the clock that is characteristic of the big city. The group's name, Aztec Underground, evokes the marginal music of a group that appeals to the pre-Hispanic past to define its nationality. When evoking this imagined community, they establish a mythical time in a contemporary context. They also speak of re-appropriating the U.S. Southwest, a territory that Mexico lost in the war of 1848.



Between one musical number and another, American music is played over the sound system. Immediately after this, The Chicanos Pride Rappers group is introduced, whose songs express the immigrants' situation, what it means to be a "wetback" and getting paid by piecework; they also speak of the need for trade union organization. The group's vocalist asks the crowd, "Is La Raza in the house?" "Sí!!!" everyone responds. "Are there Hispanics in the house?" "Nooo!!!" There are no white Americans in the audience. It is a festivity of one "minority" for the other "minorities."

However, this concept of minorities does not seem to be based in reality. Of the U.S. population of 249,632,692 inhabitants, 22.35 million are Hispanics, according to the 1990 census. One out of every 11 Americans is Hispanic, and 36 percent of the minority population.[5] These minorities are encompassed in a common category: race. It can be argued that there is a mixing together of subordinate cultural characteristics that today come together around Mexican-ness.

The commemoration of a battle that occurred in 1862 is resignified, acquiring current content that speaks to the reality of the social panorama, especially of a racist social order. The ideological content of this ritual openly questions the social order and asymmetrical social relations. Music is one of the most important emotional poles.

All of a sudden, absolute silence. The air is full of incense and the atmosphere is like a temple, with music from pre-Hispanic musical instruments such as the *teponaztle*, *chirimía* and the *caracol*. It is very clear that political and religious phenomena are two sides of the same coin. It is a

moment of deep withdrawal among them, the sign that a sacred space has been produced among the participants. The dancer explains their ritual links with central Mexico, but at the same time informs the audience that the members of the group are Californians initiated in *conchero* religiosity. The *conchero* dances have a great importance among Chicanos, in the first place, because they enormously condense dominant political and religious symbols. "The most diverse and resonant symbols coexist within them [the dances]: the Guadalupana and the country's three-colored flag, Quetzalcóatl and St. James the Apostol, the Catholic cross and the *ollin* cross. As dance captain Ernesto Ortiz said, "For *concheros*, syncretism has become a cry of victory: syncretization is not a defeat, but a victory of Mexican culture that persists under other symbols, which are given the religious character taught by our forefathers."[6]

This syncretism is linked to what I have termed "cultural creolization," which characterizes Chicano culture. If the *concheros* consider themselves warriors and what is commemorated on Cinco de Mayo is a battle, the *conchero* conception of body is tied to this concept. For the *concheros*, the body is an instrument of battle with which order is restored amid chaos. The dancers are warriors and their musical instruments are their weapons, they fight while dancing and through prayer, religious harmony is established.

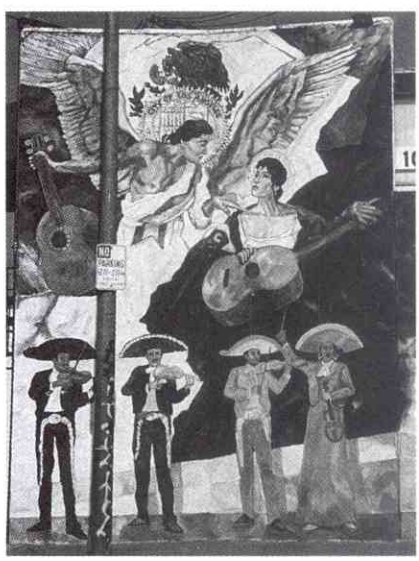
Ortiz explains the origin of the costumes; much of the embroidery had been a gift from Native American groups. It should be mentioned that there is a profound link between Chicanos and American Indians that is expressed in different ways, through marriages, for example, or through sharing what they consider to be their spirituality. It is an example of cultural reterritorialization, a symbolic reappropriation of a space that belongs to them, an indispensable condition for the formation of primordial imagined communities such as the example under consideration.

The activities continue with the presentation of the theater group "Por la Gente" (By People). The play is spoken in Spanglish, accentuated to create more comical situations. The plot involves a condensed recounting of the founding dates of Chicano history, the changes Mexican Americans have experienced as an "ethnic group," and the historical resignification of Chicano-ness, as well as its specific way of perceiving the world.

The play begins with the arrival of Columbus to the Americas, with the Mexico-Tenochtitlan and Cuzco empires, and Latin America in general all remembered. Mention is made of the 500 years of indigenous "resistance." The missionaries and conquerors appear whipping the Indians who they force to work.

Then Maximilian and Carlotta appear in the court, speaking in French about Benito Juárez. This is an important moment precisely because it deals with a celebration of Cinco de Mayo. The performance continues with the Mexican revolution; the actors explain that Zapata is very important for Chicanos because he fought for land and liberty, a Chicano demand. Flores Magón appears as a great ideologue of the Mexican Revolution, forced to seek exile in the United States due to his opposition to the Porfirio Díaz dictatorship. As can be seen, it is the poor

It is the poor and revolutionaries who have sought refuge in the United States, which explains the nationalist and revolutionary undercurrent of the Chicano people.



and revolutionaries who have sought refuge in the United States, which explains the nationalist and revolutionary undercurrent of the Chicano people.

The other moment alluded to is the Great Depression of the 1930s when Mexicans were massively deported. Another significant time is the 1940s, when the Pachucos were at their height in Los Angeles. This moment especially moves the public due to its extraordinary symbolic effectiveness. The famous repression of 1943 is portrayed on stage and the actors shout slogans such as "Viva la Raza!" "Orale carnal, órale carnala!" "We've been here for a long time, La Raza united will never be defeated!"

The use of imagery —incorporating many elements from television which can be appreciated in the gestures and expressions used— in this political ritual continues to have an important pedagogical effect. The local, regional, ethnic, national and transnational come together around a symbolic unity of a polysemical character, in which comedy and double entendre occupy a central place as a way to narrate political events. The performance ends with ballads of the Mexican revolution.

Immediately afterwards, Mexican objects, authentic Chicano symbols, are raffled. The first prize is a serape; the second, an Aztec calendar; the third, a representation of an Aztec deity; the fourth, a photograph of Emiliano Zapata.

Then Aztec Underground returns to the stage, beginning its set with an emotional number whose lyrics repeat "Aztlán, Aztlán" to a rap rhythm. This time, the music is a mix of indigenous flute melodies and synthesizer. This is a true ode to Chicano identity that goes from aggregation to disaggregation. There are moments of differentiation of the flute with incense spreading through the room during the prayer to Aztlán –pre-Hispanic indigenous elements; rap, the Black rhythmic style that Chicanos have appropriated; and the electronic synthesizer, the true "cultural apparatus" of contemporary societies.

Here hi-tech music comes together with sounds made with the most rudimentary objects. Music is used to tell stories of poverty and unemployment; colonial oppression is emphasized; yet the contradictions within the Chicano community do not appear. An idealized unity is invoked: they say "Chicano is indigenism," "I'm not Hispanic, I'm a Mechicano Indian."

They protest against the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" because they consider them European-based; the same holds true for the label "mestizo," in which they see a colonial connotation. These affirmations are conveyed in music:

I am Chicano,
I am Indian,
I'm not Hispanic,
I'm of pure Mechicana blood,
I have my brown skin.

The event closes with music from the group María Fatal Band, *rock en español de Los Angeles*. Through this ritual, the Chicanos show their capacity to creatively reconfigure the past with an eye to the future, as a testimony in which they leave their mark on a country whose dominant culture seeks to erase them. VM

NOTES

[1] The myth of Aztlán contends that the Aztecs were the last of the seven tribes of Aztlán, the place from which it derives its name. According to prophecy, the Aztecs were to travel south to establish their communities and their culture in central Mexico, accompanied in this pilgrimage by Huitzilopochtli, the god of war. The sign identifying the place where Mexico-Tenochtitlan was to be founded was to be an eagle perched on a cactus, devouring a serpent (Mexico's current national emblem).

[2] Mona Ozuf, "La fiesta bajo la Revolución Francesa," *Hacer la historia* 3 (Barcelona: Laia, 1980), p. 265.

[3] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983).

[4] When I speak of "creolization," I am referring to cultural processes of appropriation, re-appropriation and resignification that take place in the cultural order, crossed not only by asymmetries of class, but also of race, the product of a colonial situation.

[5] See National Council of La Raza, *State of Hispanic America 1991: An Overview*. According to the data provided by this document, the composition of the Hispanic population in the United States is as follows: Mexican-Americans, 63 percent; Puerto Ricans, 11 percent; Cubans, 5 percent; Central and South Americans, 14 percent; and other Hispanics, 8 percent.

[6] See Anáhuac González, "Los concheros; la (re)conquista de Mexico," mimeograph, p.1.

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A Dream Called Nunavut

*Felipe Soto Anaya**

The list of this century's most important political events —the majority regional and international wars— is still incomplete. The year 1999 will have its milestone: the world map will change once again, but this time not because of the break-up of a nation caused by the distension that emerged from the end of the Cold War, or because of the many inter-ethnic civil wars that have made us witness to the birth of new countries, particularly in the last decade. A very special national event which undoubtedly will have worldwide repercussions is approaching, the result of the process of maturation of political relations between Canada's government and one of its indigenous peoples.

The birth of a third official territory will forever change the map of Canada. It will conclude a long but successful, peaceful negotiation process between the Canadian federal government and the Inuit people (wrongly called "Eskimos"), almost forgotten by the rest of the country, perhaps because of their distance or the great differences between their way of life and that of the majority of the Canadian population.

As of April 1, 1999, Nunavut is the new home of the Inuit who live today in the eastern part of the Northwest Territories. It will contrast in important ways with the other provinces and territories of the country. Nunavut —which in Inuktit, the Inuit language, means "Our Land"— is not only the largest sub-national entity in Canada, but in the entire hemisphere, and is the first Canadian autonomous territory with an indigenous self-government.

Richard Harrington/Public Archives Canada

Nunavut, a hope for new Inuit generations.

Nunavut comes out not only of the urgent need to restructure relations between the federal government and the indigenous groups who live in the country's Arctic northeast, but also of the national clamor for breaking with the federal government's anachronistic, paternalistic model of social policy. For decades, this model has been a heavy fiscal burden for society at large in the southern part of the country and has created a harmful dependence of the indigenous peoples on public funds, which has mutilated the aspirations and will of the inhabitants of the Canadian Arctic.

For the last 50 years, the Inuit Arctic community suffered under an immense wave of colonialism with military, commercial and religious aims that broke the equilibrium and stability in which these peoples had lived for more than 4,000 years. This, together with high tech capitalism, industrialization, etc., led the government to decide unilaterally that the "savage" inhabitants of the polar region were very ignorant and therefore did not deserve to possess and live in a territory so rich in natural resources, much less to allow them to control and benefit from those resources. For that reason, official policy proclaimed that they should be assimilated into the Western way of life, economic model and "morals." In 1953, many Inuit communities were relocated (a euphemism for deportation) in order to populate certain areas of the Arctic that the government considered a priority.[1]

Despite the rigors of the climate, before the arrival of the Euro-Canadian colonizers, the Inuit had never known hunger, poverty (in cultural terms), social imbalances, chronic diseases, family violence or the loss of their language, their values or their traditions.[2] The social costs the Inuit have had to pay as a consequence of the cultural offensive have been very high. Prolonged government policy with an eye to Inuit assimilation and the extinc-

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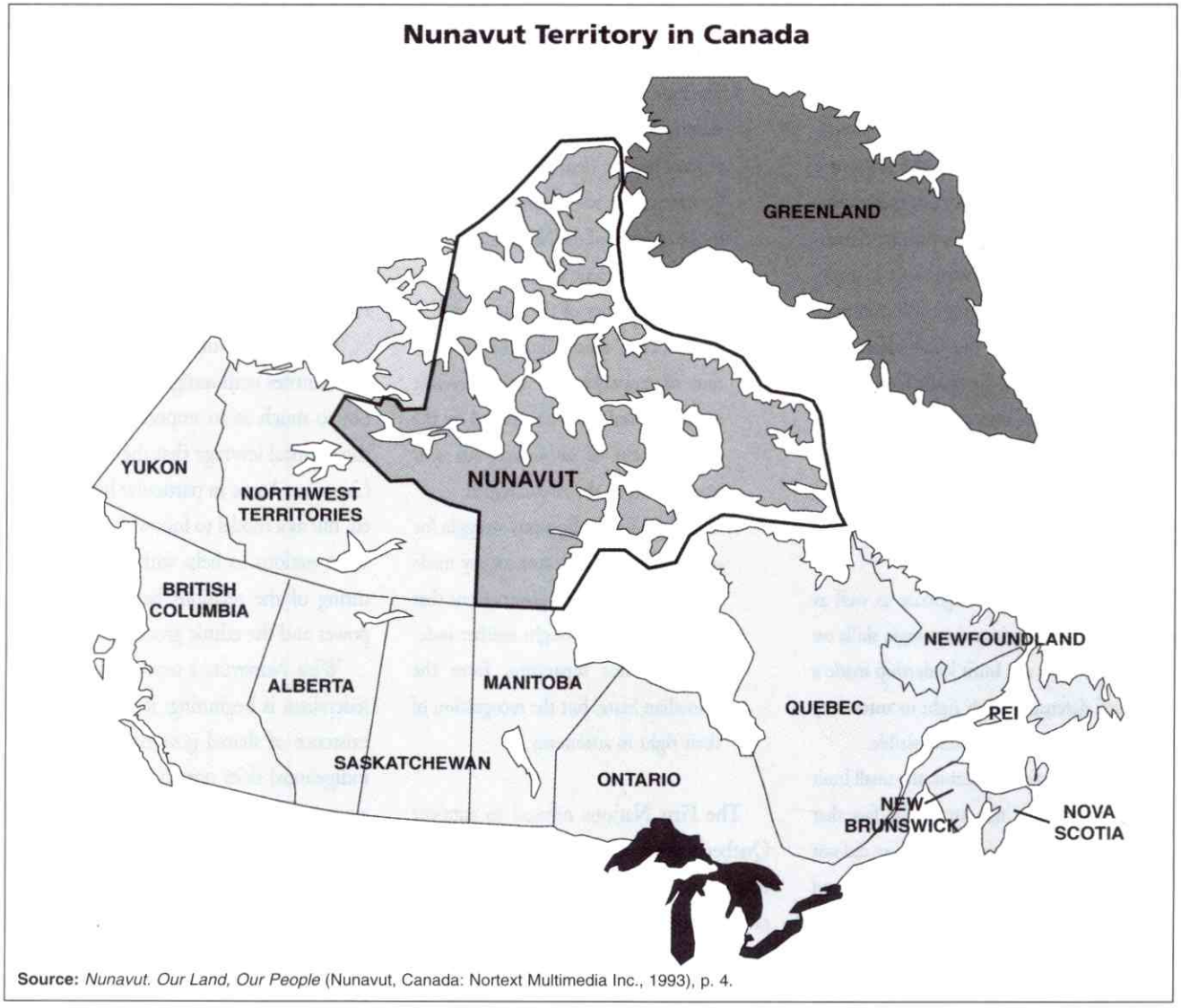


Source: *Nunavut. Our Land, Our People* (Nunavut, Canada: Nortext Multimedia Inc., 1993), p. 4.

tion of their own spirituality, as well as the progressive substitution of values has damaged the indigenous Arctic community.

The creation of Nunavut is not the magic solution to the Arctic's socioeconomic situation, but it is the opportunity —through the first self-government of an indigenous majority in the country's history— to recover experiences, traditions and values that guaranteed the stability and harmony of the inhabitants of that part of our planet for thousands of years.

Advances in societies' health and well being are achieved and consolidated when all their structures —social, economic and cultural— are perfected. The majority indigenous government will write a new Nunavut Constitution and legislation in accordance with traditional indigenous parameters in matters of politics, the economy, health, education, justice, etc.

Generally speaking, Nunavut is the product of a political and territorial agreement between the Canadian government and the indigenous groups who live in the Canadian Arctic. That agreement gives the Inuit the right to political autonomy within a predetermined geographic space. It is the conclusion of all the territorial claims and it gives the right to possess that space as well as the renewable and non-renewable natural resources to be found in the soil and the subsoil of certain preestablished areas.[3]

The final Nunavut accord was not the result of the mere bureaucratic procedure or a quest for power by a specific political group. It was, rather, the fruit of 25 years of negotiations between the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, their representative

body, and the federal government. The accord stipulates the awarding of a sum of Can$1.12 billion[4] so that the Inuit population in the new territory has the financial resources to create the structure necessary to efficiently carry out the administrative functions under a public, democratic, decentralized government in a territory of 2.2 million square kilometers.

During the talks, the Canadian government recognized six main factors that made it possible to come to political agreements with the Inuit Arctic groups and negotiate a just territorial and political reintegration:

1. A marked will to negotiate as well as solid diplomatic and strategic skills on the part of the Inuit leadership made a real defense of their right to autonomy and self-determination possible.
2. Distance, climatic factors, the small Inuit population in the Arctic, the fact that the indigenous Nunavut project did not seek independence from Canada, and the government's need to show, exercise and maintain its presence in the region were all determining factors in making the Inuits' political-territorial negotiations move forward in different ways and at a different pace from those of the rest of the First Nations in Canada.
3. The degree of consensus and unity among the Inuit leadership guaranteed not only continuity of the process, but also made it very clear to the federal government that under absolutely no circumstances nor given any other offer would the Arctic First Nations renounce their political-territorial claims.
4. The signing of important national and international accords on indigenous autonomy and rights were important factors in favorably advancing and concluding the Nunavut project.
5. The Inuit autonomy movement acquired validity and legitimacy given two important factors: first, the vote in a public referendum was absolutely favorable to the creation of the Nunavut territory and self-government; secondly, the seriousness and viability of the Nunavut project proposals, which stated that exploitation of renewable and non-renewable resources would not be affected by the establishment of an indigenous self-government in the Arctic region.
6. The Canadian indigenous struggle for recognition as a different society made it clear to the federal government that the First Nations sought neither independence nor separation from the Canadian State, but the recognition of their right to autonomy.[5]

The First Nations refused to support Quebec independence at the Charlottetown and Meech Lake constitutional talks, and the Inuit made statements to the effect that those of them who live in northern Quebec, in the Nunavik region, would unify with Nunavut if Quebec separated from the Canadian State. Both these positions reduced the political turbulence that could have led to the total rejection of the Nunavut project to a simple debate about self-determination of the Arctic indigenous groups.

Nunavut is much more than a simple indigenous territory with an autonomous government. It is a prototype of political progress and the result of the merger of ancient and modern forms of doing politics. Inuit society must find the ways forward to achieve the equilibrium of this amalgam.

Undeniably, the international indigenous community always shares the same fate and the same objectives: political autonomy and self-government to recover traditions and values[6] regardless of the enormous cultural differences that may exist among the First Nations who inhabit Canada, Mexico, Brazil, the Philippines, Finland, etc.

The case of Nunavut can be taken up by countries with indigenous populations, not so much as an important example of the political leverage that the Inuits of the Canadian Arctic in particular have achieved, but as a model to follow that may serve other nations to help with a real restructuring of the relations between those in power and the ethnic groups there.

With Nunavut, a new phase of world federalism is beginning; it shows that the existence of shared governments (federal-indigenous) does not endanger the sovereignty of a nation-state like Canada. At the same time, it is no longer possible, particularly in countries like Mexico, to put off opening up new avenues for democracy that truly recognize the right of indigenous peoples to practice their traditional forms of government within the territorial base that has always belonged to them. VM

NOTES

[1] Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *The High Arctic Relocation* (Ottawa: Canada Communication Group, 1994), p. 7.

[2] Diane Engelstad and John Bird, *Nation to Nation, Aboriginal Sovereignty and the Future of Canada* (Concord: House of Anans Press Ltd., 1992), p. 14.

[3] Nunavut Implementation Commission, *Footprints in New Snow* (Ottawa: Bradda Printing Services Inc., 1995), p. A-22.

[4] Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, *Our Land, Our Future* (Ottawa: TFN, 1990).

[5] Ovide Mercredi and Ellen Trupell, *In the Rapids* (Toronto: Penguin Books, Canada Ltd., 1993), p. 189.

[6] Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *People to People, Nation to Nation: Highlights from the Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Ottawa: RCAP, 1977).

PUEBLA DE LOS ANGELES

To really know Puebla,
you would have to go back more than 460 years in its history
and unhurriedly observe the scenes, the men and the celestial beings
that made it exceptional from the day of its founding.
To admire its lay-out and architecture, you would have to walk through
street after street searching meticulously on all four points
of the compass for the immense possibilities of the different
architectural styles from both the colonial and *Porfirista* periods,
which in the hands of indigenous artisans took on their own character.
To savor the endless sweets and dishes invented centuries ago
in its convent kitchens, you would have to discover
the profoundly earthly inclinations underlying the austerity,
contemplation and mystique of women
who hoped for eternal salvation.

Founded in 1531, Puebla de los Angeles was a unique social experiment in the Spanish colonies: it was established in a place where there was no indigenous settlement with the aim of populating it with European-born Spaniards, artisans and farmers. The idea was to forego the *encomienda* system, that is, not give the new colonists the right to extract tribute from nor use indigenous labor, the source of many injustices and conflicts between Spaniards and the indigenous peoples in all of New Spain.

Although the *encomienda* system could not be completely eliminated, since the city itself had to be built with the aid and skills of indigenous laborers, Puebla did honor to the expectations of its founders. Intense agricultural and commercial activities, its strategic location on the Veracruz-Mexico City route, as well as the majesty of its buildings, soon turned it into the second most important city of the colonial period, surpassed only by Mexico City. It would maintain that place until well into the twentieth century.

The streets, plazas and buildings in Puebla's historic downtown area are a lesson in urban planning, as well as a concert of architectural styles and colors, a wealth of materials and imagination, used by both ecclesiastic and civic architects for four centuries. All this explains why it was declared a World Heritage Treasure in 1987.

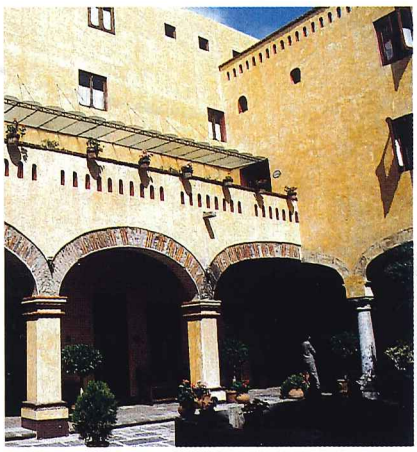
The Dome of the Rosario Chapel. Totally covered in gold leaf, the chapel has been called "The Eighth Wonder of the World."

Main altar of Puebla's Cathedral, designed by Manuel Tolsá.

Puebla's facades. Mastery in colonial architecture.

Puebla's city hall.

Patio of Tiles.



Camino Real Hotel, a former convent.

Santa Mónica Convent Museum.

The Palafoxiana Library.

Its churches and former convents are witness to the efforts of Franciscan, Dominican, Augustinian and Jesuit friars to realize the Christian ideal of displaying the majesty and blessings of God's kingdom on Earth. Buildings like the Cathedral, the Rosary Chapel, the San Francisco Church and the Santa Rosa Convent, among many others, have defied the passage of the centuries and retained their splendor to testify to it.

The convents, where austerity, isolation and penitence were prerequisites for eternal salvation, opened a window on Earthly concerns to become the headquarters of culinary creativity. Sophisticated dishes and sweets of all kinds were fashioned in their kitchens to please distinguished visitors. Their recipes went beyond their thick walls to become a vital part of Puebla's cultural heritage.

Together with other craft and agricultural techniques brought from the Iberian Peninsula, Talavera pottery came to Puebla in the middle of the sixteenth century and soon acquired permanent resident status. It covered facades, fountains, patios, kitchens and domes in perfect harmony with the architecture, scenery and other decorations until it turned the entire city into a continuous medley of colors.

It is said that the site for founding Puebla was chosen by the angels themselves and that they were charged with watching over it. It is also said that these same celestial beings drew the first outlines of the city and put a four-ton church bell in the tower of its majestic cathedral; that they were in the convent kitchens inspiring the creation of strange dishes like *mole*. Whether we believe in their intervention or not, clearly, in this city of miracles, the idea is by no means unreasonable. **VM**

Text: *Elsie Montiel*
Photography: *Dante Barrera*

Multi-colored fountains grace Puebla's patios.

The Palafoxiana Library

*Arturo Córdova Durana**

Photos by Raúl Cortez

He who finds himself without books, finds himself in solitude without consolation,
on a mountaintop without company, on a road without a staff,
in the fog without a guide....This brought upon me the desire to leave the library
I have gathered since I began serving Your Majesty,
already one of the largest I have seen in Spain, adjacent to these ecclesiastical houses,
and leave it to the public good so that it may be useful
to all manner of professions and persons.

Juan de Palafox y Mendoza
September 6, 1646.

Puebla de los Angeles, founded in 1531 "by Spaniards and for Spaniards," nurtured among its inhabitants through the years a feeling of nobility that led it in the colonial period to rival Mexico City, the capital of New Spain.

One of the great gems of the colonial period is the Palafoxiana Library, now a museum, declared a historic monument July 31, 1981, and today considered a World Heritage Treasure.

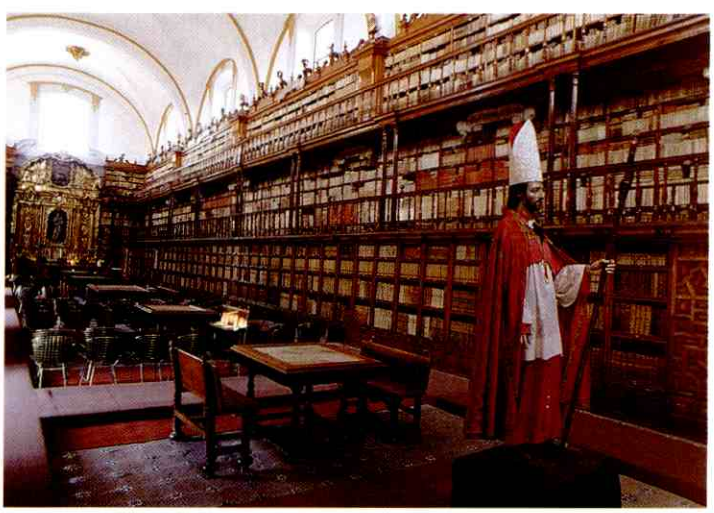
The library is named in honor of the venerable Juan de Palafox y Mendoza (1600-1659), ninth bishop of the Puebla diocese, who donated his personal library to the Saint John, Saint Peter and Saint Paul Tridentine colleges to aid in the education of their seminary students.

Palafox was born in Fitero Navarra June 24, 1600, into the family of the Marquisate of Ariza. Educated in the Universities of Huesca, Alcalá and Henares, before becoming a bishop, he was a man of the world who traveled throughout Europe and served at the court of Felipe IV, achieving the post of senior prosecutor of the Royal Council of the Indies.

In New Spain, in addition to being bishop, he was first judge and visitor of the provinces and later viceroy and temporary captain general. He would have been archbishop of Mexico if he had not refused the post.

Palafox's most important achievement as patron of architecture, besides the magnificent cathedral of Puebla, consecrated in 1649, was the founding of the Royal Pontifical Conciliar Seminary (also called the Royal Pontifical Tridentine Seminary because it was created based on the dispositions of the Council of Trent). Palafox based himself canonically and legally on the Saint John College (founded in 1596 by Bishop Diego Romano and Juan Larios) to set up the Seminary College August 22, 1644, before the notary and scribe Pedro Ruiz Sobrino and "put it under the protection of the prince of the apostles, the glorious patriarch, Saint Peter."[1]

At the entrance to the library is a full-length statue of Palafox y Mendoza dressed in his bishop's robes.



The building was constructed across from the southern end of the cathedral, between Saint John's College (today the Cultural Center) and the Episcopal Palace (now the post office). These two colleges, together with Saint Paul's —which Palafox also founded— became a center of religious learning: Mexican-born Spanish diocesan priests were trained there and they in turn trained others giving priority to "those born in the diocese, with preference for the poor over the rich, and above all, for members of indigenous groups."[2]

It was for these students that Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza purchased out of his own pocket "a library of canons, laws and philosophy, medicine and *bells lettres* which comes to 5,000 tomes more or less."[3] These he donated to Saint Peter's College, together with the bookshelves, two celestial and earth globes, a magnet and a mirror for burning steel, among other mathematical, astronomical and chemical instruments.

The library was to be used by the students and any person who wished to study, whether clergy or lay person, from 8 to 11 a.m. and from 3 to 5 p.m. They were allowed to copy anything they pleased, but it was totally prohibited for anyone to sell or remove the books or their adornments.

In October 1649, the Tridentine course of studies began and the Palafoxiana Library opened its doors. Its first librarian was Bartolomé de Sos y Vergara, the secretary of the chamber of Bishop Palafox.

The Palafoxiana Library, built on what was then Saint John Street —later San Pantaleón Street and now 5 Oriente— is on the upper floor of the building that

* Philosopher and assistant director of the Puebla Cathedral Sanctuary Archives.

housed Saint John's College. Up the stairs on the extreme left of the patio, the library can be seen on the right, with its baroque marble facade and its wooden doors fit together totally without nails, carved with the crests of the House of Ariza and Bishop Palafox.

The great vault with lunettes which holds the library was built on the initiative of Bishop Francisco Fabián y Fuero in 1773. He also added two levels of beautifully worked ceder shelves depicted by José de Nava in his late eighteenth century copperplate engravings. The third level of shelving, done in the original baroque style of the first two, was added by Bishop Francisco Pablo Vázquez in the first third of the nineteenth century.

The fine cabinet-work is set off by a stucco and transparent marble altar dedicated to Our Lady of Trapana, whose image is painted in oils at the center between four columns. The four columns also set off an oil painting of Saint Thomas of Aquinas, also known as Dr. Angelicus, who, with the sun on his chest, radiates wisdom, and with pen in hand invites us to reflect and study as the road to perfection, guided by the Holy Spirit, also depicted on the altar.

All this makes for an impressive whole: a parallelogram, 43 meters long and 11.75 meters wide holds 824 sections covered with wire mesh, perfectly symmetrical with the six marble and wood tables, donated by Bishop Pedro Nogales Dávila. The entire room is very well lit thanks to 10 large windows —five to the north and five to the south— and five doors onto the balconies which also face south.

The library's initial collection of books has been added to over the years with donations from the cathedral assembly, Bishop Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz and His Excellency Francisco Fabián y Fuero, who in addition to donating his personal library, made a gift of those of the Jesuit colleges (the Holy Spirit, San Jerónimo, San Ildefonso, San Ignacio and San Francisco Javier) after they were expelled from New Spain in 1767. Later contributions were the libraries of Bishop Francisco Pablo Vázquez Sánchez Vizcaíno and the canon José Francisco de Irigoyen. The Palafoxiana Library has held 43,000 volumes since the mid-nineteenth century.

The altar dedicated to Our Lady of Trapana.

The oldest text in the library, the Chronicle of Nuremberg, written by Hartman Schedel, dates from 1493. This *incunabula*, printed by Anton Koberger and illustrated with 2,000 engraved figures by Wilhelm Pleydenwuff and Michael Wolgemut, Albrecht Dürer's first painting teacher, is written in gothic characters on sober linen paper that gives it a permanently fresh appearance. Some of the pages are illuminated in color, depicting charts, military feats, towns, maps, etc.

Other valuable books are the *Doctrina Cristiana* of 1575, written in Spanish and Náhuatl by the Augustine monk Friar de la Anunciación, and the *Biblia Políglota* or *Biblia Regia*, written by Benedicto Arias Montaño in Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Chaldean between 1569 and 1573. Its Hebrew characters were engraved by Guillermo Lewbe.

Among the maps is the *Atlas de Ortelius*, by Abraham Ortelius, celebrated Flemish cosmographer and cartographer, the royal geographer of Felipe II and author of the *Theatrus Orbis Terrarum* and the 1578 *Synonimia Geographica*.

Today, the Palafoxiana Library is still consulted by specialists familiar with the classic languages and houses the Institute for Bibliographical Research, which has recently printed *Los impresos de la Biblioteca Palafoxiana* (The Publications of the Palafoxiana Library), confirming the value of the bibliographical museum's collection.

At the entrance to the library is a full-length statue of Palafox y Mendoza, dressed in his bishop's robes. From there, he seems to survey with satisfaction his achievement of having "left a seminary to the church and a source of light to the state."[4] VM

NOTES

[1] *Autos fechos con motivo de la fundación del Colegio de San Pedro 1649*, anonymous MSS in Palafoxiana Library Historical Archives, Puebla (n/fol.).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

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Platter from Dolores Hidalgo, 31 cm, ca. 1820.

Photos by Dante Barrera

Archangel, 17 x 17 x 52 cm, ca. 1900.

Plate with Chinese influence, 21 cm, second half of the eighteenth century.

TALAVERA
A Symbol of Puebla

*Francisco Pérez de Salazar Verea**

The seventeenth century, the golden age of Puebla, saw its religious establishments prosper, Bishop Palafox y Mendoza[1] take vigorous cultural initiatives and people and capital flow in from Mexico City, fleeing from its constant flooding. This made for economic stability, fertile ground for many ceramics, glass, wax and ironmongering workshops to spring up.

Different religious orders —Dominicans, Augustinians, Franciscans and Jesuits— established themselves within the city limits. It was the Dominicans who prompted artisans to come to Puebla from the Spanish cities of Puente del Arzobispo and Talavera de la Reina, after which the tin-based glazed pottery, today known as Talavera, is named.

Several chroniclers praised Talavera pottery, saying that it could compete with Chinese porcelain. Its good quality made it famous not only in New Spain, but in Guatemala and other parts of Central America.

The eighteenth-century chronicler Fernández de Echeverría y Veytia said, "The city has some very creditable factories that make the white china called Talavera. With the white clay they use to make it they fashion...every sort of piece, polished, curious, well glazed and painted, that would compete with any brought from Europe, which they imitate perfectly."[2] As is clear here, white china and Talavera were already synonymous.

According to Leonor Cortina, recently the hypothesis has been stated that the term "Talavera" began to be used in Puebla after several additions were made to the pottery ordinances in 1682.[3] One of the new stipulations ordered that "fine china" should have the same qualities and characteristics as that from Talavera de la Reina. Until the mid-seventeenth centu-

* Mexican architect. Specialist in monument restoration.

Vase with Ventosa and Pedro Sánchez schools influence, 18 x 26 cm.

Barrel, 26 x 28 cm, ca. 1870.

Pharmacy container, 12 x 25 cm, eighteenth century.

ry each potter in Puebla had fashioned his wares using only his own judgment and wishes. When the ordinances for the potters' guild were written in 1653, they specified the conditions for becoming a master potter and separated pottery into three categories, by quality: fine, ordinary and yellow, specifying mixes, proportions, decorative norms and details of manufacture.

How Talavera Is Made

The manufacture of Talavera ceramics is simple. The clay is stirred and tamped down to remove any foreign bodies. Then it is shaped on a potter's wheel or manually, after which it is dried in the shade.

Later, it is fired for over six hours and then submerged in a recipient of glaze made of a four to one mixture of lead to tin, water, sand and a little molasses. Once it dries, the piece is decorated with metal oxides and fired again for over 36 hours.

One of the most attractive traits of this kind of ceramics —also known as Hispano-Moorish ware— was its decoration, which gave it a metallic sheen, acquired in fine china at the third firing.

The formula for this pottery is international; we find traces of it in Italy, France and Portugal. However, Mexico's closest influence was the pottery from Seville, a jumping-off point for emigration to New Spain and a teeming manufacturing center of pottery and tiles with Mudéjar influence.

Several chroniclers praised Talavera pottery, saying that it could compete with Chinese porcelain. Its good quality made it famous not only in New Spain, but in Guatemala and other parts of Central America.

Distinctively Regional

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the age of the rise of Talavera. The mastery of its designs, the quality of its enamels and the beautiful proportion of its large china jars, tubs and oversized flowerpots took on their own character and became unmistakable.[4]

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Talavera tiles alternated with stucco and brick to adorn domes, facades, patios and the inside walls of religious and civic buildings. Puebla and its environs took on a chromatic identity. Several of the best examples of the religious use of Talavera are the dome of the Rosary Chapel (whose interior has been called "the eighth wonder of the world" because of its exuberant gold leafing); the San Francisco Church, whose sixteenth century structure is decorated with pilasters in the form of reversed pyramids and tiles; the El Carmen and San Miguel churches and the Santa Rosa and Santa Clara convents. An example of civic architecture is the so-called "House of the Dolls,"[5] decorated by the Ovando family, whose facade represents different scenes from the life of Hercules.

Decline and Resurgence of an Art

The turbulence of the War of Independence led Talavera china production to drop, and what was made lost much of its good taste and sheen. In addition, in 1832, a factory opened in Puebla to make

imitation Davenport china, which also hastened the decline.

For 60 years, both Talavera's quantity and quality deteriorated, until the talented Catalonian painter Enrique L. Ventosa gave it new impetus by introducing a mix of Gothic, Catalonian and Persian decorations with Mexican motifs. A contemporary, the Spaniard Pedro Sánchez, incorporated scenes of activities like bullfights and the figures of great men.

Center tile, 21 x 21 cm, seventeenth century.

Influences and Colors

Several very different influences, many from far-off lands, can be found in Talavera ware: Moorish-Andalusian, Spanish from Talavera de la Reina, Italian, Chinese and Mexican.

The Moorish-Andalusian influence has its roots in the Muslim presence in the Spanish province of Andalusia. It is characterized by geometric decorations with symmetrical, equidistant lines that form stars or polygons, and by its symmetrical profiles in a strong, opaque blue and intense black. The oldest, most admired pieces date from the mid-seventeenth century when the famous black lace decoration was in vogue, a simple but ingenious black design that looked like lace.

China from the Orient, Talavera de la Reina and Manila came to Mexico had great influence among Puebla potters, who imitated their colors and designs during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For example, the influence of Chinese porcelain from the Ming dynasty can clearly be discerned in the colors (blue and white) and the decorations: pagodas, mandarins, the mythological chimeras and even drawings of the Nao.[6]

Niche with ceramic items, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Majolica ware from Genoa and Savona vía Andalusia made the Italian influence felt with the imitation of its styles and the typical multiple colors of the Renaissance that made constant use of greens and yellows tooled in black.

In the last third of the eighteenth century, when Talavera de la Reina china production dropped and therefore lost influence, Puebla artisans began to copy themes from the Alcora factory in the French province of Castellón, whose potters left their mark with wreaths and apples.

The colors from these periods are extremely varied and close to an ultra-baroque: white and blue, blue, orange and manganese and the combination of yellow, blue, green, ocre and black. In the nineteenth century, rococo styles began to appear with prominent figures of the time like the first mayors in independent Mexico, *China poblana* women and *chinacos*, and the Zouave[7] of the French intervention on a pearly blue background. In the twentieth century, the variety is enormous, with a renewed taste for the legacy of the past expressed in the talent of masters like Ventosa and "Pedrín" Sánchez.

The resurgence of Talavera production today is noteworthy and has left its mark on the products of workshops like those of Uriarte in Puebla and Gorky González and Capelo in Guanajuato, who have consolidated that ideological mixture of the nopal cactus, comets, stars and pagodas. VM

Notes

[1] Juan de Palafox y Mendoza arrived in Mexico in 1640 and soon became one of the most important figures of the city of Puebla and the viceroyalty as a whole.

[2] Mariano Fernández de Echeverría y Veytia, *Historia de la fundación de la Puebla de los Angeles en la Nueva España, su descripción y presente estado* (Puebla, Puebla: Ediciones Altiplano, 1963).

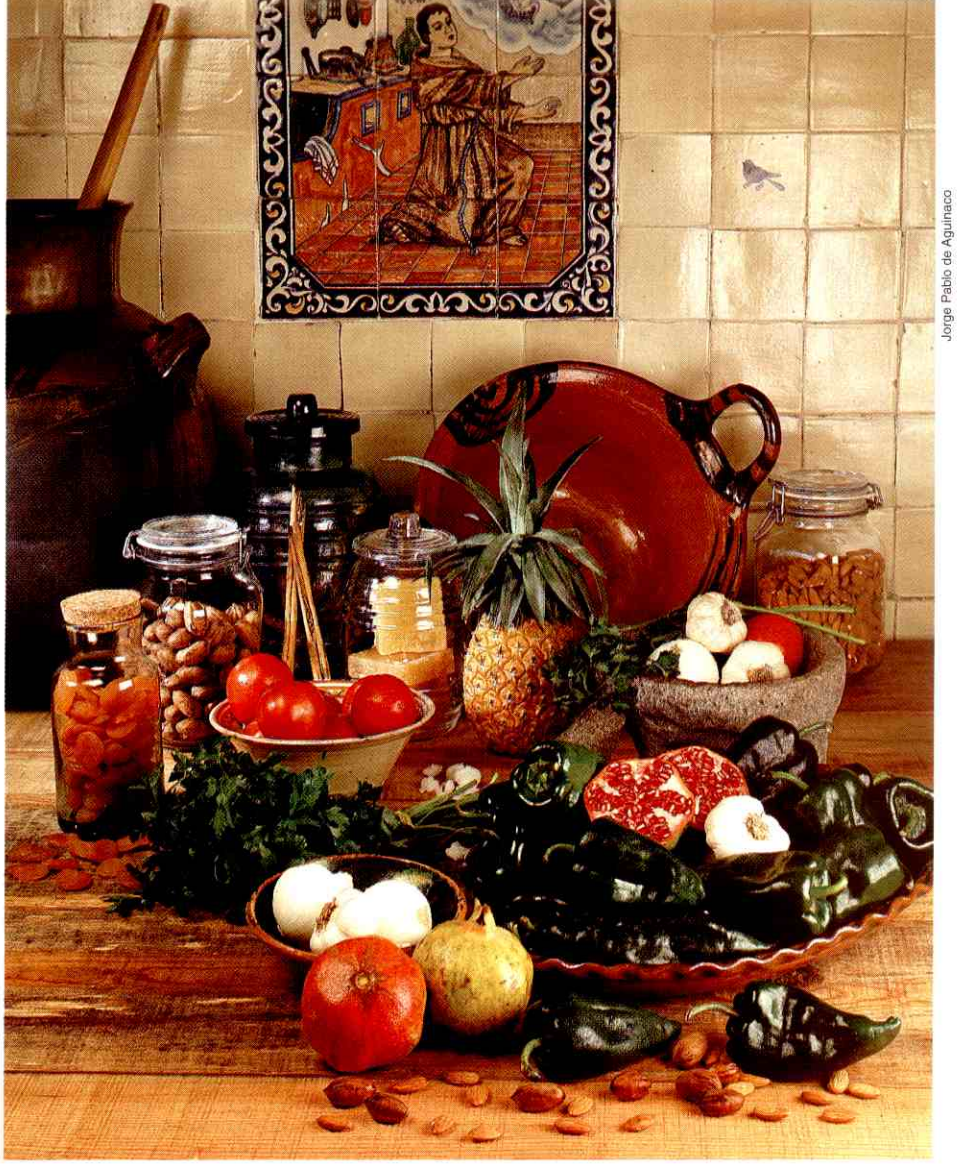
[3] The ordinances were the conditions, penalties and taxes stipulated by the viceroys to ensure each trade carried out its work properly.

[4] At the same time, although for shorter periods, china of the Talavera style was being produced in the cities of Dolores, Hidalgo, and Sayula, Jalisco, as well as in the state of Guanajuato, particularly the green *chorreada* pottery (or "dripped," referring to how the glaze is allowed to drip down the sides) of the first half of the nineteenth century from Dolores, Hidalgo.

[5] Today, this building houses the Autonomous University of Puebla's University Museum.

[6] The *Nao de China* was a trading ship from the Philippines that unloaded its wares in the port of Acapulco.

[7] *China poblana* refers to women dressed in colorful regional Puebla costume. *Chinacos* were irregular combatants who fought side by side with Juárez' liberal troops between 1857 and 1867. Later, all *juaristas* were called by that name. "Zouaves" was the name given to the French troops of occupation.



Jorge Pablo de Aguinaco

PUEBLA
SEEN FROM ITS HEARTHS

*Mónica Pérez-Salazar de Soler**

Like in an enormous pot of *mole* —in which the layman sees only the flavor of the dish and how it looks— for the careful observer, the cuisine of Puebla holds a rich gamut of ingredients; when identified, they make tasting it more enjoyable and the taster a wiser person.

With your first mouthful you will savor the pre-Hispanic indigenous culture in the spiciness of its seasoning, in its condiments, fruits and grains and in the way they are roasted, blistered and ground. You will notice the flavor of the culture of Spain, not only in the ingredients, but in the use of frying in oil or pork lard, the generous servings and the way meals heavily seasoned with cloves and basil, rosemary, pepper, oregano and cinnamon are served several times a day.

Paying closer attention to the taste, you will find among its ingredients the architecture of its kitchens and its dining rooms (non-existent in indigenous homes), the art in their tiles and in their fine Talavera china. You will get the merest hint of the social structure in what the lords, churchmen and scholars ate, in what the servants and merchants ate, and in what the poor and the peasants ate —or did not eat.

* Nutritional consultant.

Dante Barrera

The Santa Rosa Convent Museum's kitchen retains some of the original utensils.

You will recognize in the consistency of Puebla cuisine its cloistered, monastic life, its religious holidays and the custom of making gifts of exotic and delicious dishes: from convents to private homes, from private homes to convents and from either to any figure considered sufficiently illustrious to deserve it.

History as an ingredient is unique in Mexican regional cooking. So, with just a pinch of legend, we can pinpoint when *mole poblano* and *chiles en nogada* were born, which diligent hands invented them and who was meant to be pleased by them.

THE CUISINE OF PUEBLA, NEW SPAIN'S DAUGHTER OF MIXED ANCESTRY

Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the diet of the highland indigenous peoples —inspired by Coatlicue, mistress of the Earth— was thoughtful, frugal and varied. The basic corn and beans were augmented with all kinds of chili peppers and edible vegetables (*quílitl* in Náhuatl) like purslane, *huauzontles*, *quintoniles*, *romeritos* and *epazote*; a great variety of fowl; insects like worms, larvae, grasshoppers and ants; fish and fresh water shrimp; eggs; different legumes and fruits like avocados, tomatoes, zucchini, mammee, *zapote*, the cherry-like *capulines*, as well as flowers, vanilla, honey and cacao.

Puebla in colonial times was the peaceful haven that art needs to cook over a slow fire.

The Spaniards' "discovery" of the Americas led to the conquest, and the conquest led to discovery.

Xocoatl (chocolate) discovered milk, and cheese discovered the *ahuacatl* (avocados) and tortillas; corn discovered pork lard and pork sausage; sugar conquered the sweet potato, the *viznaga* (hundred-year-old cactus) and the gourd squash; chili peppers challenged rice and pork. The lamb brought from across the sea succumbed, wrapped in maguey leaves and was buried in a tomb of hot stones to be reborn from that steam bath as *barbacoa*, a tender, steaming mestiza that, slathered with a sauce of pulque and dried chili peppers, was offered under a warm blanket of tortillas to indigenous people and Mexican-born Spaniards alike.

All these love affairs resulted in numerous and succulent offspring. Specialties were born region by region, according to the products native to each place, the customs of each indigenous people, the tastes brought by the Spaniards from their provinces of origin, and mainly, according to the dedicated, loving imagination of the cooks who brought the sun up every day in their braziers before it poked its head over the horizon.

The sun, the conquistadors, the viceroys and Spanish goods all arrived to Mexico City vía Veracruz, the gulf port. Halfway on that painful journey, amid crags and precipices, a large valley opens up in a place that had been the important ancient land of the lord of Cholula, with its 400 indigenous sanctuaries. The Spaniards immediately understood the expedience of founding a village in such a strategic and friendly location. With unusual forbearance, they decided to respect Cholula and found their city a little further on (a decision which did not impede their later building with architectural fervor a church on top of each pagan sanctuary). This important city was Puebla. Spanish, like the taverns in its center, indigenous, like its *pulquerías*[1] in surrounding neighborhoods.

With the years, mansions with many patios and a profusion of convents sprang up like enormous stone ovens, whose gen-

tle, calming warmth was the leavening for Puebla's sublime cuisine. How could it not be so? The angels themselves, under whose entitlement the city was built, were keeping watch to make sure nothing was missing: it was surrounded by orchards, springs, mills and haciendas.

Well situated, with a temperate climate, Puebla in colonial times was the peaceful haven that art needs to cook over a slow fire.

And art it was, in its magnificent, generously proportioned kitchens, where humble *ayacahuite* pine tables stood side by side with the water jar, the *metate* and the stove, and in a modest home, the walls decorated with toys and little pots made of clay; if the house were wealthy, smooth, decorated tiles, ladles of burnished copper and a ceramic counter representing San Pascual Bailón (the patron saint of cooks) among angels, cabbages and earthenware pots. Today we can see what these kitchens were like in the detailed paintings of everyday life by Pingret and Arrieta: the grinder on its *metate*, foodstuffs on the table, the water carrier deep in conversation with the cook. We also know what they were like thanks to the restoration of a few convent kitchens, the most outstanding of which is the one in the Santa Rosa Convent, a gift from a wealthy lady to her daughter, a nun in that community. It is entirely covered in tiles, including the three domes of the roof, an exception in Puebla architecture.

But it was art above all in its dishes: a delicate balance of sweet, spicy and savory; a balance of suggestive condiments, an unexpected combination of ingredients. Here, the artists were the indigenous cooks and their mistresses. The mistresses, in their homes or their convents, were the ones who

Dante Barrera

Unique vaulted tile ceilings in the Santa Rosa Convent Museum's kitchen.

History as an ingredient is unique in Mexican regional cooking.

made the decisions, the ones who read and wrote recipe books, the ones who savored and made the last adjustments in the taste, the last, delicate detail: they were the ones who came up with the idea of a dribble of sherry in the walnut sauce, the almonds in the tomato sauce and the egg yolks in the frothy chocolate. They were also the ones who distributed what was needed to make the meals; they dispensed the pots to the servants and counted the tortillas. They saw that once a week, from a side door, food was distributed to the poor.

The cooks had their own domain. They knew about smoking, roasting and blistering chili peppers; they knew secrets of old of many *mollis* ("sauce" or "stew" in Náhuatl); they knew how to wring the hens' necks, separate the good mushrooms from the bad and make tortillas, *molotes*, *peneques* and *chalupas* out of corn meal; they peeled the walnuts one by one for the walnut sauce and wore down the pestle of the *molcajete* grinding cloves, cinnamon, cumin and coriander seeds.

In the convents, as of 1774, the nuns rolled up their sleeves and participated humbly, and very successfully, in the details of kitchen work, when by order of the viceroy, they reluctantly resigned themselves to eating together in the refectory and preparing a common meal. This ended the previous practice dating from the first centuries of the colonial period, when each nun had one or more servants, her own apartment and her own kitchen.

SIMMERING FOR YEARS

In Puebla people ate five times a day and went to prayer at least as many times; prayers and food must often have cooked

Jorge Pablo de Aguinaco

Mole poblano is considered one of Mexico's culinary masterpieces.

in the same juices, bringing to mind images of delicious dishes in the middle of their devotions and of heaven in the steaming of the pots. This is the origin of many Puebla specialties like "bones of the Holy Spirit," "angels' gift," "holy water," "bishop's milk" or "angel hair."

Puebla cuisine boasts many dishes like *chilatole* soup, stews like pork in tomatillo sauce or pork and *chipotle* chili *tinga*, stuffed *poblano* chili peppers and appetizers like little sandwiches in white *cemita* bread and the cornmeal-based *chalupas*, *chanclas* and *peneques*. The most famous dishes are *mole* and *chiles en nogada*, to each of which we will give its proper place.

Chiles en nogada were born in August because that is when *poblano* chili peppers, walnuts and pomegranates are all in season.

Tradition has it that the nuns in Puebla invented this dish to please Agustín de Iturbide in 1821 because he was the emperor, because it was his saint's day and because the independence of Mexico had been signed that year. Every family has its own recipe: the chili peppers can be coated with egg batter and deep fried or not; pears can be added to the chopped meat stuffing; or a little goat cheese can be added to the sauce. But what is unacceptable is that the meat be ground instead of chopped, that the walnuts be dry or that cheese made from vegetable cream be used, because then the *chiles en nogada* just would not be what they must be: sublime. A fierce delicacy asleep below a sweet, white sheet of sauce, adorned in patriotic fashion with parsley and a few pomegranate tears.

Mole poblano. When we talk about *mole*, all adjectives must be superlatives. It is a national monument that breached the borders of Puebla to take its place in family and religious festivities in every Mexican home. Making the *mole* is the beginning of the party. In the mills near markets, women can usually be found who have brought mountains of toasted, deveined *mulato*, *pasilla*, *chipotle* and *ancho* chili peppers to be ground together with rolls, fried tortillas, a few peanuts and almonds, sesame seeds and sometimes chili pepper seeds. Back in their kitchens they add roasted garlic and onion, tomatoes, cloves, cinnamon, anise and pepper, a piece of chocolate and each cook's secret touch. This dark, thick, velvety sauce is poured over pieces of turkey and dusted with toasted sesame seeds, thus perpetuating the inspired creation that Sister Andrea de la Asunción, a Dominican nun from Santa Rosa Convent, made to please a viceroy.

Guillermo Prieto compared Puebla to an enormous sacristy. From its hearths, Puebla looks like a splendid kitchen. VM

NOTES

[1] A *pulquería* is a place where *pulque*, a drink made from fermented agave juice, is served. [Translator's Note.]

Reprinted courtesy of the Amparo Museum, in Puebla

José Agustín Arrieta, *San Pascual Bailón* (patron saint of cooks), 68 x 53.5 cm, 1852 (oil on canvas).

THE CUISINE OF PUEBLA

*Angeles Espinosa Yglesias**

Puebla is a crossroads and its cuisine mirrors it more faithfully than a tapestry or a good film. Gastronomical enjoyment satisfies our entire being: it is a joy to the eyes and a stimulant to the imagination through smell, taste and good moods. These are all the privileges of a good cuisine and its accoutrements, wines and spirits, particularly those made of fruit.

The gastronomy of Puebla on the eve of the twenty-first century still includes the cuisines of both the indigenous communities and the mestizos and Mexico-born Spaniards of the colonial era. One example makes this very clear: tamales. There is an enormous variety: ash tamales; bean, maize and *cacahuacintle* corn tamales; chili pepper, mushroom, fruit and curd tamales; and tamales made from squash flowers. *Atole* is the same: sometimes thick, sometimes thin, it is made of fruit, cinnamon, vanilla or chocolate (*champurrado*).

* Director of Puebla's Amparo Museum.

Rice and spices from the Orient both grace Puebla's cuisine. It is also characterized by a combination of sweet, savory and spicy flavors. Recipes that use a small amount of many ingredients, a very Asian custom, are also common. And in Puebla, as in Asia, beauty is always prized in a dish.

Puebla cuisine has created its own utensils: *metates* and *molcajetes*, *cedazos* and sifters, *mole* pots of special colors with dripping black glaze on the sides, big enough for an entire turkey or *guajolote*. And the kitchens are graced with stoves covered in beautiful Puebla Talavera tiles.

Puebla's cookery produces its own ingredients and then puts them to use, from corn down to everything grown and raised in the kitchen garden: every imaginable kind of vegetable, barnyard fowl, and the crowning touch, both fresh and the ineffable dried *poblano* chili peppers. We cannot neglect fermented and distilled beverages: *tepaches*, *chías* and *nevados*. To the long list of centuries-old recipes from Puebla, we have to add three culinary masterpieces of Mexican food: *mole poblano*, or "*mole* from Puebla," *chiles en nogada*, or chili peppers in walnut sauce, and Puebla sweets.

It has been written that *mole poblano* not only provokes sighs and satisfied praises, but elicits virtual paeans in the pages of outstanding authors: Don Artemio de Valle Arizpe; Don Alfonso Reyes, "the Unparalleled One;" and Don Salvador Novo, himself an accomplished cook. *Mole* sauce is ductile, creamy and velvety: sumptuously bathing the flesh of the turkey, the king of the Mexican barnyard, enveloping it in its aroma, it clothes it with spices, trapping the pleasure of a mouthful in the soft texture of the makeshift tortilla spoon.

Mole mixes the inciting flavor of chili peppers: the strong *mulato* chili, the caress of *pasilla*; the sweet aftertaste of the *ancho* chili, with bread; tortillas, almonds and peanuts, interlaced with the ancestral wisdom of cinnamon, pepper, cloves and the consummate fantasy of chocolate. *Mole*, baroque, synthesizes all the flavors of Mexico.

About *chiles en nogada* —exceptional if prepared with walnuts from Calpan and pomegranates from Tehuacán— Alfonso Reyes wrote, "Topped with ruby-red droplets, translucent and bright, a white, almost ermine, nutty cloak barely covers the chilies' intense green. Bitten into, all the baroque splendor of the *picadillo* filling bursts forth wrapped in the fleshy chili pulp and mixes greedily with the soft perfume of the walnut sauce and the sweet and sour flavor that each pomegranate seed envelopes like a closed capsule." [Quoted in Guadalupe Pérez San Vicente, *Comida familiar en el estado de Puebla* (Mexico City: Banrural, 1988), p. 15.]

Sweets from Puebla deserve all praise and poetry, but above all, they deserve to be tasted, one by one: the "nuns' sighs", the *muéganos*, the Santa Clara tortillas, the coconut and brown sugar candies, the "duchesses", the *mostachón*, and the *gaznates*. They are the proof that there really is a celestial presence in Puebla. VM

GLOSSARY

Atole: a thick, hot drink made of corn flour dissolved and boiled in water.

Cedazo: a sieve-like utensil used for separating light ingredients from the heavier ones.

Chía: a seed used to make a refreshing drink.

Gaznates: crunchy deep-fried tubes of egg and shortening batter.

Metate: a rectangular, flat stone surface used for grinding corn, cacao and other grains.

Molcajete: a three-legged stone mortar used for preparing spices and sauces.

Mole sauce: typical of Puebla, is made from different chili peppers and sesame seeds.

Mostachón: almond-cinnamon sugar cookies.

Muéganos: honey-nut cookies.

Nevado: a fermented fruit drink.

Picadillo: a Mexican dish made of ground meat mixed with other ingredients; for *chiles en nogada*, the *picadillo* filling contains generous portions of candied fruit.

Santa Clara tortillas: glazed cookies.

Suspiros de monja ("nuns' sighs"): deep fried dough covered in maple syrup.

Tepache: a fermented beverage made from sugar cane or pineapple juice and brown sugar.

THE BELLO MUSEUM

*Arturo Cosme Valadez**

In the mid-nineteenth century, José Luis Bello y González dedicated the little leisure time he had to assiduously collecting Mexican and European paintings, not always with the best of taste. He was a multifaceted, energetic man born in Veracruz, although he had always lived in Puebla. He was in the military, a lover of the arts and an industrialist, a combination less paradoxical in the last century than in this. He fought the Americans during their invasion and took Porfirio Díaz into his home during the French intervention. He sincerely believed that bravery, good taste and progress were synonymous, but only one of his four sons shared his interests. When he died in 1907 he left him 81 canvases of varying quality by different painters which were the basis for the museum collection.

The true creator of the museum which bears the family name was Don Mariano Bello y Acedo (1869-1938), who inherited his father's insatiable thirst for collecting. Throughout his life, he patiently and persistently accumulated an enormous number of objects. Like his father he was a successful industrialist, which allowed him to invest large sums of money in his uncontrollable hobby. His cigarette factory, the Penichet Tobacco Co., produced

* Mexican writer.

Photos by Dante Barrera

The gallery.

the famous Carmencitas cigarettes, made practically by hand and wrapped in rice paper, that are still sold in some tobacco stands. A passionate devotee of painting and music, Don Mariano spent his free time among oils and paintbrushes. His work may be no more than "correct," that of a talented dilettante, but brandishing a brush himself allowed him to refine his taste and choose the canvases for his collection with exquisite certainty. On Sunday afternoons, he would take his violin out of its case and play music for string quartets with three friends. These social afternoons always took place in his home; the musicians sought inspiration in the multicolored beauty of the furnishings and even the delicate architecture of the *Porfiriato*-style mansion.

This man's love for beautiful things finally pushed him out of his own house. The large living rooms and parlors filled up with silks and large china pots, ivories and furniture, sets of dishes and kitchen ware, chests and religious ornaments, until

Mexican hand-carved, seventeenth-century organ.

the collection displaced the collector: he had to buy the property next door and connect it to his original house to have somewhere to live.

On a certain night in 1930, police came in through the roof and commandeered the house. These were the turbulent postrevolutionary war years, and the Cristera Rebellion (1926-1929), only recently put down, continued to give rise to all sorts of arbitrary behavior. In this case, the pretext was that the collection included a great many religious objects, deemed suspicious by the authorities, who had fought the resistance of the faithful and clergy to some of the articles of the Constitution. The next day, Don Mariano sought an audience with the governor. He showed him his will leaving the building and all its contents to the state. After that, a detailed inventory was made of the property, which was then returned into "custody" of the owner. Despite all this, this generous man continued until his death to buy objects and show them off to anyone who wanted to see them: the fame of the house-museum had already spread and visitors came from other cities to see it.

Don Mariano Bello died in 1938. As promised, he left his laboriously gathered collection to the Fine Arts Academy, and it was later acquired by the government of the state of Puebla, which opened it as an art museum July 21, 1944. From then until now, the permanent collection has contin-

Talavera angel, 116 cm.

Talavera statue, *The Fat Man.*

Portrait of Don Mariano Bello y Acedo in the Damask Room.

ued to grow thanks to the lavishness of other collectors who also understand that beauty is enjoyed more when shared.

It is to be supposed that Don Mariano Bello's profound devotion to antiques was a sort of compensation. Married to Guadalupe Grajales, who was always afraid to travel, this restless man never left his native Puebla except to visit Mexico City. Practical individual that he was, he substituted objects from other places and cultures for the trips he could not or did not want to make. It would be unfair to say he did not know the world: he did in his own particular way, roaming through rooms and galleries, seeing in a single day the passing of historical periods and the vast diversity of beauty created by Man.

THE MUSEUM

The three storey building, located in the middle of the historic downtown area of Puebla, is dominated by a central patio.

Nineteenth century English vertical string piano.

The high roofs and the Frenchified details in baseboards, balconies, frames and borders tell us that its architecture belongs to the second half of the nineteenth century.

The collection is shown in 15 rooms. It is impossible to describe each in detail since their main value lies in their variety. A quick overview would note, however, that the first room, with walls covered in red damask, contains portraits of José Luis and Mariano Bello, a lovely wooden corner table, two exquisite secrétaires, one Indo-Portuguese, finished in ivory, and the other Mexican with bone inlays. The second room displays canvases depicting daily life by Puebla-Tlaxcala painter José Agustín Arrieta, noteworthy because of his use of color and the transparency of their crystal; a delicate nineteenth-century Puebla jewel box with bone and painted glass inlays; a seventeenth-century Philippine chest painted with a view of the walled city of Manila; and the oldest piece in the museum, a Roman urn from the first century B.C., originally from Biblos, donated by the Lebanese government. Outstanding pieces in rooms three and four, dedicated to coppers and calamines (an alloy of gold, bronze and silver) include the painting *Supper among the First Christians* by the priest Gonzalo Carrasco, who decorated the Sacred Family Church in Mexico City; an Italian alabaster statue of La Purísima; and, of course, the

Tenebrario for religious ceremonies.

First century B.C. Roman bust.

Sacred Heart embroidered by Puebla nuns.

Mexican stained-glass ceiling; Italian marble statues in niches.

The Spheres of Life, from China, carved in ivory.

bouquets made of calamine used in churches to adorn the altar. Room five holds one of the world's most complete collections of Puebla Talavera china from its golden age, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. The pair of angels 1.16 meters high, the fine designs on the blue and white Talavera tub, and the mosaics representing Saint Pascual Bailón, patron saint of cooks, all deserve special attention. The next room contains a large collection of lacquered items from Michoacán and little boxes from the town of Olinalá, Guerrero, framed by an altar hanging embroidered by nuns from Puebla.

Up the stairs on the second floor, we encounter delicate multi-colored stained glass windows made in Mexico City by an Italian workshop, as well as Italian marble sculptures and a terra cotta statue by Jesús F. Contreras.

The music room boasts drums from India, a trombone to which Bello himself adapted a Chinese serpent, French and English porcelain, Spanish and Italian paintings, a Chinese banjo, a nineteenth-century English piano with vertical strings that belonged to the Empress Carlotta and a seventeenth-century hand-carved Mexican organ that still works.

Don Mariano's hobby finally pushed him out of his own house. He had to buy the property next door to have a place to live.

Beautiful Mexican, German, Italian, Dutch and Spanish paintings from the sixteenth to the twentieth century hang in the gallery. Continuing our tour, we will happen onto two nativity scenes, one from the Seville School and the other carved in bone by nuns from Puebla. The ivory room displays Asian and European pieces, among them an admirable Chinese work called *The Spheres of Life*, with concentric spheres carved out of a single piece of material, which required the patience of several generations to finish. The same room contains miniatures of silver filigree, French porcelain and an oil by Cristóbal de Villalpando, a Mexican seventeenth-century painter.

The next room is full of ironwork, including three pairs of beautifully wrought sixteenth-century stirrups in the form of a cross, harnesses, locks, whips, reins, keys and spurs, as well as a seventeenth-century Spanish strongbox with 13 locks. The porcelain room has items from China, France and Japan as well as Chinese watercolors painted on rice paper and anonymous Flemish oils. The crystal room offers the visitor European and Mexican pieces including a unique French door made of Baccarat crystal. The area dedicated to religious ornaments displays a candlestick, silk priest's robes embroidered in gold, Italian reliquaries and a tiny canvas worked in beads and gold from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Naturally, this list is only a small part of the wonders the Bello Museum holds. Any visitor will also see the collections of coins and watches, Chippendale furniture, cabinets with inlaid work and countless other items. Hopefully, the reader will have the opportunity of going. VM

Crafts, Culture and Nature
In the Semi-humid Tropical Forest

*Carlos Bravo Marentes**

Photos by Fulvio Eccardi

Hats in a market in Chilapa, Guerrero.

Palm (*brahea dulcis*) native to Guerrero mountains.

Boxes from Olinalá, Guerrero.

Mexico possesses an exceptional wealth of biodiversity; here we find almost all the planet's ecosystems and nearly 10 percent of known plant and animal species. This diversity has been enriched with the domestication of species, as a result of the interaction of the ancient Mesomerican peoples with nature. Mesoamerica is one of the few parts of the world where biodiversity, the development of ancient civilization and intensive plant domestication coincided.

Ethno-knowledge

The Mesoamerican peoples learned about, transformed and built their own surroundings. By direct observation, they identified and classified both plants and animals, the sources of energy and soil; they also identified climatic and geomorpho-

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logical phenomena. They characterized the ecosystems' physical, chemical and biological properties to take advantage of their reproductive potential, and they developed fields of knowledge like astronomy, mathematics, medicine, metal working and the arts. This culture survives to a great degree to this day among Mexico's indigenous groups, who possess considerable knowledge about their surroundings. They are the ones who continue to preserve and increase the variety of cultivated species, inherited from their ancestors, and put a great number of wild plants and animals to different uses.

Artisans' use of bulbs and roots shows their close link to their natural surroundings, which led to sophisticated knowledge from which we still have a lot to learn.

View of Tehuacán, Puebla's semi-humid tropical forest.

CRAFT PRODUCTION IN THE SEMI-HUMID TROPICAL FOREST

In warm regions where the rainy season is followed by a dry season several months long, the terrain is naturally covered with low jungles or caduceus forest. This makes production enormously difficult because maximum temperatures make for difficult climatic conditions, and water is scarce during parts of the year. For that reason, a good many of the cultures in these areas established themselves close to cooler, mountain areas or where there is a permanent water supply. Despite

Gourds, known as *jícaros* or *guajes*, from the lower forest, are used to make crafts.

these conditions, this kind of area provides the greatest number of species used in craft production in the country, an indication of the effectiveness of the ethnoknowledge the groups settled there developed.

In 1995, a preliminary inventory of raw materials for craft production listed 308 different species.[1] Semi-humid tropical forests provide 43.5 percent of the total of 134 species, with 43 kinds of wood, 20 different varieties of bark, 18 plants and/or flowers, 13 types of fruit and seeds, 14 bulbs or roots, 12 species of palms, 7 sorts of agave, 4 kinds of rattan or reeds, 1 cactus and two non-identified fibers.

WOOD AND BARK

Outstanding among the different woods are those from copal trees, including more than 10 *Burseraceae* species, and the *zompantle*, which contribute another eight *Erythrina* species. Light and soft enough to carve, they are used to make different kitchen utensils, furniture, masks, toys and other craft products. The *Burseraceae aloexilon* is the plant species whose fragrant wood has become famous because of its use in making little lacquered boxes and trunks in Olinalá, in the state of Guerrero.

But not only is the wood useful. Many kinds of bark, such as that of the mahogany tree (*Swietenia macrophylla*), are used to make dyes and the solvents and fixers used in traditional dyeing techniques. *Liberiana* fiber is employed in making different kinds of cording and twine. But, undoubtedly one of the highest achievements of Mexican artisans' ethnoknowledge from time immemorial is the use of these fibers to make traditional *amate* paper.

NATURAL GLUES

Artisans' use of bulbs and roots shows their close link to their natural surroundings, which led to sophisticated knowledge from which we still have a lot to learn. This is the case of the *tzacuhtli* (in Náhuatl) or *tatzingue* (in Purépecha), generic names in pre-Hispanic times for the glue extracted from the *Sobralia citrina* orchid bulb still used in Michoacán to make cornstalk paste figures. More than 10 kinds of orchids have these properties

Undoubtedly one of the highest achievements of Mexican artisans' ethno-knowledge from time immemorial is the use of fibers to make traditional *amate* paper.

and most continue to be used in Michoacán, although occasionally this kind of glue is used to make *amate* paper in Puebla's northern mountains.

HARD FIBERS FOR HATS AND MATS

Palms and agave fibers are probably the materials used for the longest time in Mesoamerica for weaving. Hats, baskets (*tenates*, *chiquihuites*, etc.), mats, fans and toys in a multiplicity of forms are only a few of the objects made by weaving different palm leaves together, including the *Brahea dulcis* and the *Sabal spp.*

Ixtle fiber, used from time immemorial by indigenous peoples to weave clothing like *ayates*, is extracted from agave leaves. Although native to arid and semi-arid areas, some agaves grow in hotter, more humid regions. Two of these, the *zapupe* (*Agave lapinasei*, *A. deweyana*) from the Gulf of Mexico, and sisal (*A. fourcroydes*, *A. angustifolia*, *A. sisalana*) from the Yucatán Peninsula, are utilized extensively in craft production and in the past were important industrial raw materials.

LET TRADITIONS FLOURISH

This succinct panorama of the uses that Mexican artisans make of semi-humid tropical forest raw materials shows the urgent need to recover, revalue and disseminate the knowledge that these groups have about their surroundings, the plants and animals which thrive there, as well as the techniques for improving and using both cultivated and wild species.

Respect for these cultures' wisdom and promotion of their sustainable use of resources by offering them new options for commercialization could be the basis for a flourishing cultural tradition as rich as nature itself. VM

NOTES

[1] Research by the Mexican Association for Art and Folk Culture, A.C. (Amacup), with support from the National Commission for the Use and Knowledge of Biodiversity.

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Murder As Installation Art

*Juan Villoro**

La muerte de un instalador (The Death of an Installation Artist), an exceptional first novel by Alvaro Enrigue, begins at a party where all the voices join together in one weave. The narrator is alert to every possibility, like a quarterback who takes the ball and studies the path of three or four possible receivers. We still do not know what the novel is about; the scene is a postmodern bohemian apartment where someone threatens to throw himself off the terrace, and there is a hint of a very serious portrait of the end of the millennium. A few pages later it becomes obvious that Enrigue has a marvelous feeling for parody, for the distance between events and the ironic voice commenting on them. The initial scene ends with the death of Simón, alias "The Utopia-ist," but the incident lacks drama because it comes to us through the imperturbable eyes of Aristotle Brumell-Villaseñor, virtuoso of distance, dandy cum laude, irrepressible collector and one of the best exotic voices of Mexican literature.

Eccentric on a par with Raymond Roussel, Brummell-Villaseñor has the main prerequisite for refinement to the point of cruelty and making sure that all his interests are useless: he is obscenely wealthy. Brumell spends days on end smoking and reading comic books. He shuns all activities that produce sweat and is only happy if he looks conveniently ill. In society, he lives up to the principles that Baudelaire assigned to the dandy: "the pleasure of astonishing and the proud satisfaction of never being astonished." Pale and exorbitantly cultured, he does not fall into the vulgar trap of getting excited about anything: he is on the return leg of a trip to all orgies and avant gardes. His particular star, however, can still withstand a cataclysm. *La muerte de un instalador* is the last adventure of Aristotle Brumell-Villaseñor, the most absolute of his safaris. Sick to death of his possessions, he decides to collect a man, Sebastián Vaca, a mediocre installation artist, one of the many surpluses produced by a government that organizes biennials of careerists and retrospective exhibits of cretins. "Once public stipends for young artists go out of fashion, the genre will have come to an end: there are no installations without scholarships," writes Enrigue on the first page. Brumell the Maecenas hires the installation artist as his pet avant garde. Once in the mansion, Vaca goes through different scales of degradation: servant, pariah, grotesque and, finally, corpse.

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In *The Loved One* Evelyn Waugh satirized the funeral aesthetic that often interests the powerful. The "Rich & Famous" also aspire to success at their burials; at the funeral, the body should look as though it were going to be presented with an Oscar. The pomp surrounding the illustrious and wealthy dead found an indelible expression in Alberto Savinio: "the flirtatiousness of the corpse." In *The Loved One* a troupe of make-up artists make death seem like a topic for the boudoir. If Waugh transformed cosmetology into taxidermy, Enrigue transforms the avant garde into funereal art. In both

* Mexican writer and editor.

cases, fashion, aestheticism and the prestige of appearances inspire entertaining varieties of the ridiculous.

In a world where a hot dog wagon is a hot dog wagon, but six hot dog wagons are an installation, obviously, modern art is not always on top of things. Andy Warhol felt this confusion when he saw the peculiar work he received from Joseph Beuys: a box with two bottles of mineral water in it. When he got home, Warhol discovered that the bottles had broken. With incomparable candor, he wrote in his *Diaries*, "Now I can't open the box because I don't know if it will continue to be a work of art, or just two broken bottles."[1] Enrigue uses this loss of reference points to show us the charlatanism of art that presents itself as something definitively new.

Brumell-Villaseñor commits the perfect murder, technically speaking, at least in Mexico. The District Attorney's Office also has the habit of following the fads, and one of the most recent is exonerating suspects by explaining that the victim was not murdered, but "helped to die." The idea of "shared suicide" is fully expressed in *La muerte de un instalador*. Sebastián Vaca voluntarily submits to the deal that will make him his host's work-in-progress, which advances toward his ruin.

For the dandy, nothing is as important as style and nothing so vulgar as having aims in life. His misdeeds must be art for art's sake. In the words of Baudelaire, "If [the dandy] commits a murder, he may not feel the less for it; but if the crime is committed over something trivial, his dishonor would be irreparable." Brumell is incapable of killing for jealousy or financial gain; his crime is an aesthetic event, the culmination of a code of honor which proclaims, "It is in terrible taste to look alive." If the collector aspires to look like a corpse, his works can do no less than be corpses.

In his mansion hung with paintings by Duchamp and Frida, Brumell lives to make his mistakes divine. In literature, one of the richest veins of satire is found in characters in love with their own failings. While Conrad's heroes embark on enterprises with no future and Fitzgerald's live only to ruin seemingly assured happiness, the exquisite, extravagant creatures of Firbank, Pitol, Savinio, Vila Matas, Roussel or Enrigue are intensely satisfied with themselves. In contrast with Fitzgerald, who speaks with "the authority of the failure," Brumell the egotist says between mouthfuls of smoke, "I really abhor failure, the unknown."

Narrating eccentricities has very specific risks. In characters who have no sense of the ridiculous, any outburst is justifiable. This can precipitate the narrator into excessive ornamentation and an unbridled carrousel of whims and aberrations. What is the tolerable size of a monomaniac? To what point may a deliberately outrageous voice be maintained? Alvaro Enrigue knows that he is traveling with the taxi meter running and, to a certain extent, the very brevity of his novel can be explained by the urgency of finishing the story before the narrator's singularity becomes predictable. No fiasco would be greater than the "normalization" of maddened surroundings. In *La muerte de un instalador*, certain sub-plots could be developed more (like the operation to fraudulently reappraise Mexican painting in a New York gallery, or what happens to Enano —the midget— who disappears as though by magic). However, if Enrigue kept on any longer with the voice he wields so well, his eccentricity could become routine.

In a world where a hot dog wagon is a hot dog wagon, but six hot dog wagons are an installation, obviously, modern art is not always on top of things. Enrigue uses this loss of reference points to show us the charlatanism of art that presents itself as something definitively new.

Two narrative planes flow through the novel. Enrigue uses the third person to tell the story of his operatic cast, alternating it with an old-fashioned typewritten "rough draft" penned by Brumell in first person. Although the two narrators share a few tics (like a preference for the word "infamous"), Enrigue gives his protagonist a different tone from his own. If passion can lead us to complications like falling in love with someone because of his faults, nothing is as eloquent in the exalted romance of Brumell with his own mirror than the song to his neurosis. With libational narcissism, he reviews the appropriate elixirs for each of his moods: "For a feeling of loneliness with deep unhappiness with myself: rum. Musical joy: gin. Musical enthusiasm: vodka. Musical tempestuousness: tequila. Sarcastic joy that even I can't stand: brandy. A desire to go outside myself: Grand Marnier. Excessive objectivity: whisky. To merge with nature: wood alcohol." The

strip tease also takes place in the unconsciousness, and the nightmares he reports in his workbook are kitsch superproductions: Felipe Angeles appears dressed as a Roman consul in the taking of Zacatecas. Brumell-Villaseñor's pen distills a corrosive mercurochrome: the world is sick and he is planning to cure it with poison.

Lastly, *La muerte de un instalador* is a singular reflection on the exercise of power in Mexico. If, in a society obsessed with fame, Andy Warhol promised a future where everyone would be famous for 15 minutes, in a country dominated by corruption and the trafficking in influence, no dream can equal that of enjoying impunity for 15 minutes. That is the paradise of Aristotle Brumell-Villaseñor.

Brummell-Villaseñor has the main prerequisite for refinement to the point of cruelty and making sure that all his interests are useless: he is obscenely wealthy.

The allusions to the history of Mexico are not fortuitous, just as the cyclical meaning of death is not: the actions performed in the house of the collector have a corollary in reality, and nothing can stop them.

Although Enrigue writes with genuine sympathy for the devil, he leaves no room for doubt about his protagonist's twisted temperament. *La muerte de un instalador* is a tool to calibrate the era of Mexican cynicism, in which murder belongs to installation art.

Enduring literature does not reflect reality "as it is." It reinvents it in a symbolic order. The unequalled example in our century is Kafka's Prague. With humor and nonchalance, Alvaro Enrigue has begun his own assault on the castle. VM

NOTES

[1] Andy Warhol, *Diarios* (Barcelona: Anagrama, 1992).

Drawings by Felipe Ugalde

Death Of an Installation Artist

(Fragment)

*Alvaro Enrigue**

Aristotle Brumell-Villaseñor sat down at the table at 3 o'clock sharp. Adela heard him getting comfortable in his chair just as the soup began to simmer. As she came into the dining room, tray in hand, Aristotle was finishing decanting the wine. The boy —she still called him that in public— had inherited his grandfather's punctuality and obstinacy.

She went to the side table, left the tray and advanced on him, tureen in one hand and ladle in the other. Aristotle stared —as though he didn't know it by heart— at the Motherwell that adorned the wall across from his chair; he looked at it with those bovine eyes that Don Andrés, his grandfather, used to have when he was thinking that something of somebody else's should be his. The woman served him with less formality than usual. She left the basket of fresh baked bread on the table, poured water into the glass, covered the soup tureen and turned to go. She was just picking up the tray when Aristotle came out of his stupor and said, Adela? She turned back with a deep sigh. What? Nothing, but I was thinking. That's what I was afraid of. Am I that transparent? Yes. Wouldn't you like a vacation? No.

Despite her impeccable professionalism, Adela was far from devoted to her work. Her aunt used to tell her that you mustn't let the Brumells feel more important than you, because right away they'll look down on you. If she never left the house, it was simply because she didn't feel like it. She had been born in Zacatlán, Puebla, the only daughter of the last of a long line of cider manufacturers, Maximilian and Carlotta brand. By the 1930s, what for decades had been a modest but generous cottage industry distillery had become a withered relic unable to compete with the other cider producers that survived on government subsidies to machinery imports. Adela's mother died a few weeks after giving birth to her, the victim of a chill that under other economic circumstances would have been nothing more than a cold. The father, already showing the first signs of alcoholism, thought to send the little girl to Mexico City to be raised by her aunt, who worked as housekeeper to Andrés Brumell-Villaseñor. While it was true that in the capital the little girl would lack for nothing (in the service of the Brumells, said the aunt in her correspondence, you live better than most professionals in this country of donkeys who think that cider is the champagne of children), it was also true that iniquity and infamy flourish in big cities, and even more so in the proximity of great fortunes. In addition, thought the grieving father, the house of Brumell-Villaseñor had a terrible reputation. Around the time the child was born, a reporter from the daily *El Universal* had been murdered in a street fight the day after he published a scandalous account linking the origin of Don Andrés' growing fortune with the sale of rifles and munitions manufactured at the National Arms and Cartridge Factory —whose production was for the exclusive use of the Federal Army— to certain groups of rebels during the Cristera War. According to his inquiries, the ammunition had gone through a bordello Don Andrés owned in the time of President Calles in the Zapopan area of Guadalajara. These and other more alarming reports about the way Brumell had made his economic ascent delayed the little girl's trip to the capital, until the aunt, in desperation, went to pick her up. Adela arrived at the mansion, pale and skinny, a little more than two months old.

At the beginning of the 1960s, just when it began to be clear that Aristotle's father was never coming back from Cuba, the aunt died. Adela took her place without being asked.

MEMORY OF DECADENCE

It's hard for me to imagine the mansion in its years of glory. I don't remember it without the austere contours that I enjoy so much. During my adolescence, the servants quarters, which had housed up to 10 workers, was gradually left with only the indispensable staff: Adela, of course, and a woman from Oaxaca who still helps in the kitchen. There was also a sickly young boy — nobody knew where he had come from, although rumor had it that he was the offspring of my calamitous grandfather— who took care of the garden until an infection that originated with an epileptic attack among the rose bushes expelled him from this world. Adela, a perfectionist, had manias that by the time of the death of that improvised gardener had concentrated so much that no one was hired to watch over the plants. She herself took charge of keeping their disordered growth more or less at bay. One morning at the time, my grandfather looked out his bedroom window and considered the garden with attention. The romantic scene of that jumbled, dark expanse seduced him to the point that he began to receive his mid-afternoon guests

* Mexican novelist awarded the Joaquín Mortiz Prize for a First Novel in 1996 with *La muerte de un instalador* (Mexico City: Joaquín Mortiz, 1996), 163 pp. This fragment was translated and reproduced by permission of Editorial Planeta.

in a set of leather *equipal* chairs installed in the corridor that gave onto it. As the years passed, his visitors became fewer, and so Adela put his *equipal* and the little table with a plate full of *pico de gallo* (chopped chili peppers, tomatoes, onions and coriander), a bottle of Herradura tequila and two shot glasses —in case I came home in time— in the sunny part of the broken down old garden. He spent his last afternoons at the center of the garden, protected from the sun by a decrepit creeping vine. He dreamed, he told me when my duties allowed me to be with him, about bringing Edgar Allan Poe's remains from Baltimore to bury them right there.

The sharp "no" Aristotle got as an answer didn't even faze him; he was obstinate and Adela knew it. You've never taken vacations, have you? he insisted, playing with his spoon. What for? I don't know. To visit your family. You're my family, Aristotle. That's sad. Very. Anyway, I need the house empty for a couple of months. Are you sure you wouldn't like to see Zacatlán from end to end? Adela swallowed her laughter. No. What about Salzburg? Your trip would coincide with the Mozart Festival. Then you could go on to the opera season in Berlin. All expenses paid?

A week before going to Brazil, Aristotle Brumell-Villaseñor gave a party to show for the last time the selection of paintings that the next day would be shipped off to New York. When he spoke to the installation artist —he was the only one he called personally by phone— he made sure to repeat three times that he should invite his closest friends.

By that time, the millionaire had a pretty clear idea of the kind of friends the artist frequented. In previous weeks he had managed to attend the cocktail parties where he would run into him, and more than once he was right. Aristotle wanted to make sure with these investigations that when left alone in the mansion, the installation artist would organize gatherings that would have a negative effect on the house decorations. "I'm going to need reasons to keep him locked up here." From his previous inquiries, he had learned that success depended on the zeal with which you leave a minimum number of things to chance.

He spent his days imagining the possible ways for his prey to escape and planning ways to prevent them before they happened. At the rare times when the simple genie of hope installed itself with its dusky halo in the millionaire's mind, he dreamed about the easy world of the old Villaseñors of Jalisco. He imagined himself, then, setting up galleries like haciendas, where artists —the sons and fathers of artists— would shop at a modern company store for the best quality materials, Armani jackets and ties, Osh Kosh overalls, food stamps for Frenchified restaurants. In that prodigious world, Aristotle would ride his horse down Río Rhin street and local merchants would doff their hats as he went by. In the evenings, as he enjoyed a hot chocolate in a gigantic kitchen full of servants willing for him to feel them up, the painters would go to over-designed bars where they would run up unpayable tabs from generation to generation.

MEMORY OF DISSIPATION

The best thing about the unfettered consumption of stimulants is that it gives the

skin a persistent yellowish hue that allows the debauched to recognize each other. The installation artist, it should be said in his favor, possessed this elegant characteristic. At the end of his life, he had acquired another, even more elegant one, one which I enjoy from time to time: extreme sweatiness.

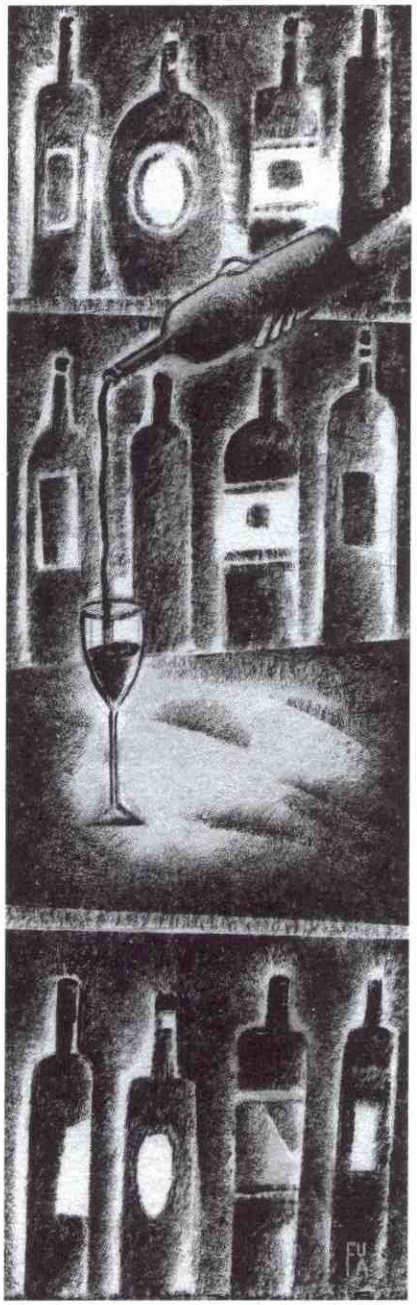
The difference between my artist and myself was that I never use substances that require a syringe; I'm not afraid of the substances, but of needles. This, I know, makes me unfashionable, but it really doesn't worry me at all: nothing further from true nobility than depending on others to change drugs or wardrobe. About the latter, I must

say that I never run the risk of appearing in public badly dressed. I have a very safe method: I always wear the cut that was in fashion a century ago. My contemporaries buy rags like *The Face*; I consult the encyclopedia.

Under no circumstances do I drink water, that abominable mineral. I think beer displeasing: you burp a lot when it's cold. Well administered, however, it can be useful; it allows you to savor the most capricious tastes of a spicy meal all afternoon. I also should say in favor of this beverage that the city of Baltimore —I have a strange fixation for that port, not worth commenting on here— has a series of neighborhoods once inhabited by sailors. On their streets, there are still taverns identical to the ones Edgar Allan Poe must have visited in his voluntary ascent toward delirium tremens. In those places, they preserve the good Irish custom of drinking stout at room temperature.

With wines, I usually follow Hoffmann's counsel: champagne when my soul is wandering in an ambience of operetta and Burgundy when I'm feeling heroic. For religious experiences, the romantic German recommends Rhine wines. There I draw a line; my grandfather taught me that sweet drinks are for faggots. I prefer wines from Rioja for solemn occasions and De Toro for matters of life and death.

I also drink spirits according to the state my soul is in. I have categorized the relationship between moods and drinks on the basis of Hoffmann's considerations also. He says that the possible feelings are: 1. A slightly ironic humor tempered with indulgence. 2. A lonely humor, profoundly unhappy with myself. 3. Musical joy. 4. Musical enthusiasm. 5. Musical tempestuousness. 6. Sarcastic joy that even I can't stand. 7. A desire to go outside myself. 8. Excessive objectivity. 9. Merging with nature. I have come to think, as I think the divine Baudelaire did, that this barometer of the soul is nothing more than a reasoned description of a drunken debauch. Following in the steps of my teachers, I have designed a table of spirits that lend me their souls. To reach a light state of irony tempered with indulgence: dry anise. For a feeling of loneliness with deep unhappiness with myself: rum. Musical joy: gin. Musical enthusiasm: vodka. Musical tempestuousness: tequila. Sarcastic joy that even I can't stand: brandy. A desire to go outside myself: Grand Marnier. Excessive objectivity: whisky. To merge with nature: wood alcohol. When aspiring to more complicated moods, a mixed cocktail suffices.



I use non-alcoholic stimulants less frequently: two or three times a week. I would never ever smoke marihuana, that magnet for idiocy. When I want to softly decrease velocity, I take valium. When melancholy makes me excessively languid: Prozac. I take no acids: the idea that my visions have been prepared in a modern laboratory horrifies me. On special occasions, I lie down on an old divan that has been gathering dust for who knows how long in the greenhouse and take a few grains of laudanum. Lately I have tried —with little success, I must admit— to drop this luminous custom. A few months ago as I enjoyed a dreamy vision in which General Felipe Angeles appeared dressed as a Roman consul in the middle of the taking of Zacatecas, Adela came in to wake me: a Malaysian was waiting for me at the door with who knows what invitation from the embassy of his country. I sent him back to the hell from whence he came, not without first treating him to a goodly dose of the narcotic I was enjoying at the moment. VM

María Asúnsolo
Patron of the Arts (1916-1999)

Reprinted courtesy of Raúl Anguiano

Raúl Anguiano, *Portrait of María Asúnsolo*, 100 x 80 cm, 1942 (oil on canvas).

In an age when women were relegated to second place, María Asúnsolo —with her startling beauty, exceptional intelligence and warm and open nature— became muse, friend, protectress and confidant of intellectuals, particularly painters. Painted again and again by many, some canvases were masterpieces, like those by David Alfaro Siqueiros (*The Abduction*), Juan Soriano (*Portrait of María Asúnsolo, Woman and Child*) and Raúl Anguiano (*Portrait of María Asúnsolo*).

She was not only of material aid to artists in precarious economic straits, but, more importantly, she imbued young creators with enthusiasm and the conviction that they had substantial talent and abilities and that, if they persevered, they would be successful in their work. Once she took someone under her wing, she dedicated herself completely to promoting him, introducing him to art gallery owners, publishing houses, art and literary critics. She also promoted the sale of his work among her acquaintances and friends; she occupied an important place in the intellectual and political world, and she was a very tenacious promotor of her protegees. In the mid-1930s, she turned her apartment on Reforma Avenue into the María Asúnsolo Art Gallery (GAMA), where she exhibited prestigious artists like painters David Alfaro Siqueiros, María Izquierdo and Manuel Rodríguez Lozano, and sculptor Luis Ortiz Monasterio, as well as newcomers. María hosted script readings and discussions about film projects to attract possible buyers. However, she was not very interested in the commercial side of things and a verbal agreement was enough to seal an agreement between painters and herself. In addition to being a patron of the arts, during the 1930s and 1940s she was an anti-fascist activist and a promoter of anti-racist campaigns.

The Muse's Secrets

Very little is known about her childhood. She always refused to divulge her age, but it was discovered that she was born in 1916, the same year as her friend, painter Roberto Berdecio. She even forged her birth certificate at the public registrar's office changing her birthplace to the state of Guerrero in order to affirm her Mexican-ness. Actually, she had been born in the United States, the daughter of a French-Canadian mother, Marie Morand, and a Mexican father, Manuel Dolores Asúnsolo, who died in the defense of the Zapatista cause when María Asúnsolo was a child.

She was also always silent about her love affair with Siqueiros, who awoke in her a grand passion for the visual arts, despite the tragedy it caused. After her divorce from the German Auguste Diener, she entered into a relationship with Siqueiros; when her ex-husband discovered it, he obtained custody of her son Agustín and took him away to Germany. Siqueiros' painting *The Abduction* depicts this experience.

She never stopped being a patron of the arts, although she was particularly active between the 1930s and the 1960s. In June 1987, she donated all her paintings to the National Art Museum and went to live in Cuernavaca. Until the end of her days, she continued to enjoy receiving her friends at her table. In recent years, despite illness, she kept abreast of the details of the news from Chiapas and the new Zapatistas. "How is Marcos? Please tell him that when he comes through Cuernavaca, he has a home with me. We will welcome the Zapatistas with rice, chicken and *mole* sauce. Do you think there'll be room for them?" she asked Rosi, her nurse and confidant.

"María Asúnsolo is like the last angel who ascends to heaven, or the last one who comes down to earth....One day she will vanish like the mist that disappears in the swirl of the wind," said her friend, writer Ermilo Abreu Gómez. María Asúnsolo died February 25. VM

María Cristina Hernández
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Reviews

The Estados Unidos Affair
Cinco ensayos sobre un "amor" oblicuo
(The United States Affair.
Five Essays on an Oblique "Love")
Jorge G. Castañeda
Aguilar
Mexico City, 1996, 126 pp.

The last 12 years have witnessed a transformation of considerable magnitude in the bilateral relationship between Mexico and the United States. The intensification of relations between the Mexican government and its northern neighbor have raised, however, a series of questions about the nature of both the new bond being forged and the methods used to strengthen it. For example: What mechanisms have Mexican authorities designed for approaching the United States? Under what conditions has the bilateral negotiation developed? And, finally, have the means used resulted in a real benefit for Mexico? These questions are posited in a collection of essays published in *The Estados Unidos Affair. Cinco ensayos sobre un "amor" oblicuo,* a book presenting a critical, evaluative and forward-looking view of the way Mexico has positioned itself vis-à-vis- the United States from the perspective of our own political, economic and social weaknesses.

There is no question that this analysis will help readers grasp the complexity of the intimate and problematic proximity of Mexico and the United States. In this sense, the book proposes a series of alternatives on how to benefit from it and how to achieve better mutual understanding.

The book is divided into five essays that, when read together, reveal some of the most important aspects of what the author calls an oblique "love," that is to say, a relationship of unavoidable closeness, but based on a system of marked differences and visible inequalities.

In the first chapter, Castañeda critically evaluates the way in which Mexico, particularly the Mexican elite, has favored a greater approximation to, though not understanding of, the United States. The author believes that the weakening of the Mexican government in the last few years with regard to its neighbor to the north can be seen in phenomena such as migration and the negotiation and subsequent signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between profoundly disparate partners.

Based on this, the author highlights the urgent need for new strategies and increased awareness between both countries. An objective diagnosis of Mexican reality would allow us to identify the weak points in our economic and socio-political structure that place us at a disadvantage during negotiations. In this way, he alludes to the necessity of fostering a greater democra-

tization of Mexico's political system, generating a greater unity and cohesion in Mexican society, as well as forging appropriate political leadership.

In the second chapter, the author evaluates American democracy in the context of bilateral relations given the challenges it currently faces. He argues the need to transform (or adapt) the United States political system and its institutions in light of both domestic and external changes in recent years. Using the growing heterogeneity of U.S. society as a backdrop, Castañeda alludes to three issues he feels to be crucial: the revival of accountability to the voters, the political system's lack of representation and its insensitivity to the demands of a diversified society and, finally, the deterioration of political debate and intellectual diversity with regard to major national problems. All of these would result in a biased, unilateral vision of the issues shared by the United States and Mexico.

The third chapter, "The Mexico-U.S. Migratory Crossroads," looks at the situation of Mexican emigrants and U.S. authorities' violent reaction against them, without refraining from pointing to the responsibility of Mexican authorities in the matter. What is more, the author formulates a series of proposals related to the Mexican government's capacity for negotiation and decision making.

The fourth part of the book, "Vive la Différence: Inequality?," conceived explicitly for the U.S. public, presents a panorama of contemporary Mexico. The author starts by recognizing that Mexico and the United States are not only two diametrically opposed countries, but that they will always be so. This understood, he reviews the strong differences of economic, social and, above all else, cultural origin that have often been ignored on the assumption that the negotiations were between two equals. These differences lead us, rather, to question how to reconcile a relationship with the United States given such contrasts. The article emphasizes that accepting these fundamental and permanent asymmetries will become the true test of the future of our bilateral relationship.

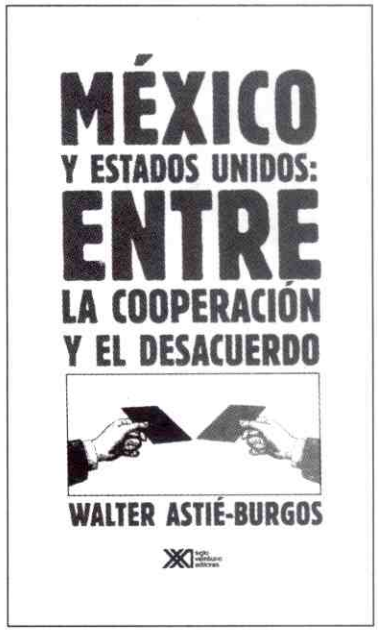
The last chapter, "New Cycles of Mexican Affliction," analyzes the moment that Mexican society is experiencing. Here he describes the achievements that, from 1994 on, have given the country a new and complex reality, maintaining that transforming the Mexican political system is imperative. Castañeda concludes that the true challenge for Mexico lies in how it will manage to resolve its dilemmas over the long term: economic crises, lack of leadership, paralysis of the elite, political violence, corruption and governmental inefficiency are the big obstacles that will have to be surmounted to secure a truly democratic life.

Despite the fact that the events have surpassed some of the author's ideas, the analytical and pro-active nature of *The Estados Unidos Affair. Cinco ensayos sobre un "amor" oblicuo,* makes it a fine compilation that contributes to a better comprehension of the relationship Mexico has with the United States.

Bibiana Gómez Muñoz
International relations specialist

Translated by Dianne Pearce

México-Estados Unidos
Entre la cooperación y el desacuerdo
(Mexico and the United States.
Between Cooperation and Disagreement)
Walter Astié-Burgos
Siglo XXI
Mexico City, 1998, 316 pp.



México-Estados Unidos: Entre la cooperación y el desacuerdo analyzes one of the most complex and difficult periods of contemporary Mexico-U.S. diplomatic relations: the years between 1982 and 1988. Walter Astié-Burgos explores the bilateral relationship not only through his experience as a participant in Mexico's diplomatic mission in the United States, but also with the help of opinions and evaluations of various political figures who, in either country or another, played a leading role during their careers.

Astié-Burgos reviews the great changes in the world during the 1980s: the rising tensions between Washington and Moscow, the problems in Central America, the complex Mexico-U.S. relations and their intricate agenda and the conservatives taking office in the United States. All this constituted the frame of reference for the problems we confronted, and in many ways determined the course of our diplomatic relations.

In a context like that, the bilateral agenda in those years was especially complex. The general difficulties revolved around five main areas: different points of view on the Central American dilemma, diverse issues of multilateral diplomacy, drug trafficking, migration and the rising debt.

Regarding Central America, Astié-Burgos states that one of the substantial disagreements during the time was rooted in the fact that U.S. "conservative politicians" conducted their foreign policy with the goal of preventing the "advance of communism." Based on this, the U. S. government sought all possible means, including the military preparation of the Nicaraguan Contras, to avert the victory of communism in Central America. Meanwhile, the Mexican government, based on its principles of foreign policy and fully aware of how counterproductive war would be for the country, sought a peaceful solution in Nicaragua through dialogue, negotiation and the formation of the Contadora Group.

According to Astié-Burgos, disagreements arose not only because of the different visions but also due to the conduct of Mexican diplomats in the multilateral arena: the conservatives criticized them for repeatedly voting against the U.S. proposals in the various multilateral fora.

By contrast, however, the author emphasizes that cooperation did take place, especially in the field of economics and on issues such as drug trafficking and migration in which, beyond isolated tensions, understanding prevailed.

In the field of the economy, Astié-Burgos says that not only was the foreign debt, which by the end of 1982 came to U.S.$91,000, successfully renegotiated, but sectorial agreements were also made with the United States to complement the gradual economic opening in accordance with national and international conditions.

The author notes that despite the assassination on Mexican territory of Drug Enforcement Administration agent Enrique Camarena, "By the end of the period, cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking had improved without commitments that could potentially damage national sovereignty," such as the ones the more conservative wing of the Reagan government had at one time pushed for.

With respect to migration, the violation of human rights of Mexicans living in the United States were included on the bilateral agenda.

Based on the above, Walter Astié-Burgos leads us to conclude that, in reality, this stage of bilateral relations was no more or less distressing than any other. From 1982 to 1988, the traditional common denominator of our bilateral relations was, in effect, maintained: moments of significant cooperation and understanding, combined with others marked with strife and friction. According to the author, however, "What one can consider a distinct feature of the period were the noticeable, acute differences between the two governments." This was due to public debate, repeatedly voiced criticism, indirect messages and extensive information through the media, etc.

For the author, what should be emphasized is that, despite the tremendous external and internal complexities, in the end the essential relations were not harmed: with notable pragmatism and an deep sense of responsibility when faced with important vested interests that impeded progress, understanding was sought and achieved when most needed. In the midst of disagreements, bilateral cooperation continued to be a priority. VM

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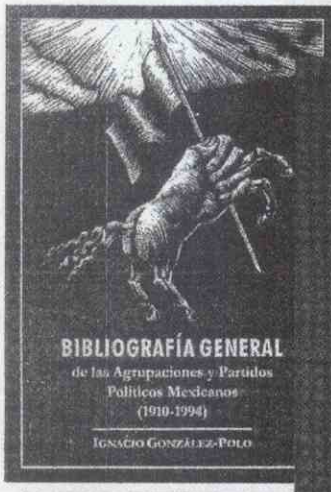

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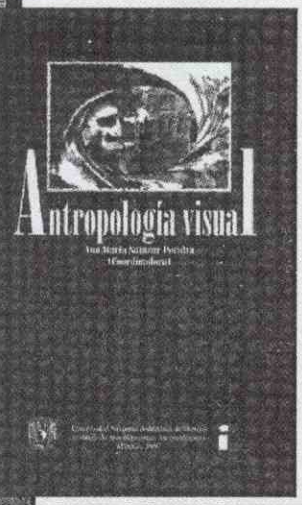

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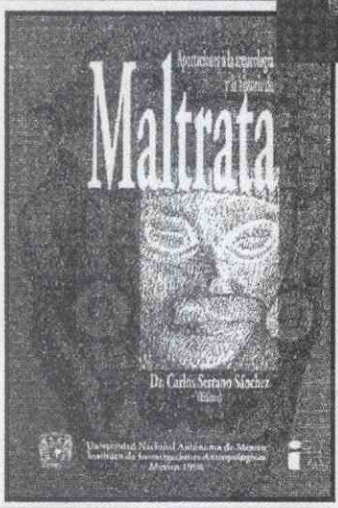

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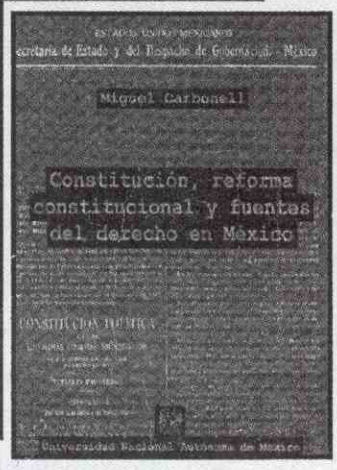

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Arte y Cultura...

en el Centro de la Ciudad de Puebla

Uno de los artistas que ha renovado el significado de las palabras inspiración y originalidad es Alejandro Colunga, artista originario y residente de la ciudad de Guadalajara. Su apasionada expresión visual y atracción por lo inexplicable se conjugan en su obra hasta alcanzar situaciones donde lo no común y la fantasía, son fuentes de estímulos, expresadas en una continuada fascinación por la transformación de lo animado en inanimado, o bien de lo inerte a lo vivo.

Colunga goza y se identifica con la figura del Mago, quien por profesión es agente de transformación; de ahí su afán casi obsesivo de encontrar formas humanas en los objetos inanimados, en un acto artístico y mágico que en su escultura se revela con fuertes cargas simbólicas y reconstrucciones de su memoria que conserva y proyecta con soluciones estéticas impactantes, pues como él mismo dice: *"es ahora cuando tengo los medios para hacer arte con las imágenes que tenía en mi mente cuando era niño"*.

En **"El Mago que se convirtió en silla"**, Colunga propone y nos enfrenta a una metamorfosis en donde el cuerpo del Mago se transforma en una silla, haciendo referencia al misterio de la petrificación del agente vital, que es el mismo Mago, quien queda atrapado en su propio acto de magia.

Esta obra representativa de Alejandro Colunga forma parte de la colección de arte contemporáneo del Museo Amparo de Puebla, donde se propicia el *Encuentro con Nuestras Raíces* y se da impulso y estímulo a los creadores mexicanos, por ser una institución viva, dinámica y vigente, que se encuentra en continuo crecimiento y actualización, para responder a las demandas de las nuevas generaciones.

El Mago que se convirtió en silla. 1985 Mixta

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