UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE REVOLUTION IN CRISIS: A HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MEXICO, 1970-1980

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

ARIANA QUEZADA
Norman, Oklahoma
2016

Downloaded from SHAREOK. Persistent Handle URL: https://hdl.handle.net/11244/34707

THE REVOLUTION IN CRISIS: A HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MEXICO, 1970-1980

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

_____
Dr. Terry Rugeley, Chair

_____
Dr. James Cane-Carrasco

_____
Dr. David Chappell

_____
Dr. José Juan Colín

_____
Dr. Sterling Evans

© Copyright by ARIANA QUEZADA 2016
All Rights Reserved.

Para Aurora

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Aproximadamente un mes antes de entregar un borrador de esta tesis a mi comité, leí un articulo sobre la primera mujer latina que llego a ser socia de un prestigioso buffet de abogados en Nueva York. Como muchos latinos en Estados Unidos, Damaris Hernández provenía de una familia humilde y obtuvo el éxito profesional—de trabajar en una bodega a una triunfante carrera como abogada. Dada la temática de la nota periodística, me conmovió la historia y algo en particular llamó mi atención: "*When I was the only one of color or the only woman in the room, I had the confidence to believe in my ability*." Lo cual entiendo perfectamente bien. Desde que llegué a Oklahoma con mi familia en septiembre de 1994, he tenido cierta conciencia de no pertenecer, de fuereña. Pero lo que más me conmovió fue lo siguiente: "*When you are the first, you need someone to have your back*." Efectivamente, para llegar y sobrevivir en cualquier contexto, siempre se necesita ayuda, y más cuando es uno de la primera generación en asistir a la universidad. Eso dicho, está nota es para agradecer a todas las personas que me han apoyado en mi trayectoria en la Universidad de Oklahoma, y en la vida en general.

Pareciera ser coincidencia, pero estoy empezando a creer que no hay tal cosa como casualidades. En el otoños del 2001, una compañera de prepa nos dijo a un grupo de amigas que su hermana, que en ese entonces asistía a la OU, nos mandaba decir que ya teníamos que aplicar para la universidad. Yo sabía que quería seguir estudiando, pero desconocía el proceso de admisión. Aplique a la OU, y me aceptaron. Brenda Palomino Grant fue esa persona, y en este momento sigue ayudando a estudiantes de la comunidad para que lleguen a la universidad. Gracias. A mi tía-

prima, Yuriana Covarrubias quien me llevo el primer día de clases y quien fue un ejemplo.

Igualmente, uno pensaría casualidad que llegue a un programa de posgrado, pero no—fue con la ayuda del Dr. Terry Rugeley. No se como decirle, quizá mi *Padrino* o mi *Padre intelectual*. Le agradezco las horas que invirtió al programa y por los esfuerzos que hizo para formar a cada uno de nosotros. Yo en particular, tendré esa deuda con usted—porque yo no hubiera pisado un programa de posgrado, y mucho menos sobrevivirlo sin su apoyo. Les agradezco a usted, y a su linda esposa Margarita Peraza-Rugeley, por introducirnos a las bellezas arqueológicas de la Península de Yucatán, por llevarnos prácticamente de la mano a los archivos del Distrito Federal y algunos de la península, y por pasearnos por los lugares históricos de la Ciudad de México. Al Dr. James Cane-Carrasco le doy gracias por empujarme a pensar críticamente. Al Dr. José Juan Colín por sus consejos después de la defensa de mis exámenes y su apoyo. Al Dr. Sterling Evans por su entusiasmo y por compartir artículos cada que eran pertinentes a nuestros estudios y por introducirnos al mundo de la historia transnacional y fronteriza. Y un saludo y agradecimiento al Dr. Karl Offen. *To Dr. David Chappell, I thank you for introducing me to the literature on human rights, for making corrections in just about every page of the dissertation, and for encouraging me to publish,* gracias.

A mis compañeros del programa de historia que indudablemente fueron parte de nuestra formación académica. A Teryn Piper, Gary Moreno, y Matt Caire les agradezco su amistad durante este tiempo. También a Justin y Angela Castro, con quienes viví en mi estancia en México, y a Michele Stephens que fue mi primera colega del programa de historia de México. Un especial agradecimiento a mi hermana de vida, Erika Serrato—me diste casa en innumerables veces, en Norman y en Atlanta.

Mi estancia en México de mayo 2011 a septiembre 2012 fue un pilar en mi formación personal. A mi compañera de viaje, Teryn Piper, por siempre estar dispuesta a conocer nuevos lugares en México y por nuestras aventuras en la frontera de Belice, en la capital de Guatemala, en Santiago de Atitlán, y en Antigua—y por tocar en mi puerta en Norman para invitarme a salir (eso porque me rehusaba a tener celular). A Gloria Luz Escribando y a Mónica de Loera que me introdujeron al mundo de la lectura infantil por medio del *International Board of Books for Young People* (IBBY-México). A meses de llegar, me hice de buenos amigos que ahora considero mi familia; esto en la inauguración del café "El Quintal" [dónde conocí a quién sería mi futuro esposo & *partner in crime*]. A David Nolasco, Omar Olivera y a Héctor Colín les agradezco la buena fiesta y por llevarme a conocer lugares lindos de México. A los hermanos Tanuz y a su mamá Lilia Robles Garibay por siempre recibirnos tan lindamente en El Quintal—el lugar que sirve no solo buen café pero que es un oasis de amistad. A la familia Albarrán, en especial a Dulce Albarrán Bernal, a Paulina, y Omar por tratarme como familia cada vez que pasé días festivos con ustedes. A Paul Solis y Ana López los quiero mucho. Ana gracias por tus consejos después de que nació Lázaro. A Jackie Garza, por compartir ideas y autores sobre los derechos humanos, y por guardar las cosas que tuve que dejar en el Distrito. A mi Padrino Juan y a mi tío Jaime Quezada por cargar otro tanto de libros…y finalmente enviármelos a Oklahoma. A Rosario Quezada por recibirme en Virginia, un viaje que me dio la oportunidad de visitar *The National Archives* (Washington, D.C.) y encontrar un documento de John P. Humphrey—lo cual me llevo a buscar más de él en el Distrito Federal.

Agradezco a todas las personas en el Distrito Federal que abrieron sus puertas para charlar conmigo y los archivistas que pacientemente me explicaron y ayudaron a

encontrar documentos. Al Dr. Sergio Aguayo Quezada, a la Dra. Erika Pani, a la Dra. Luz Fernanda Azuela, al Dr. Francesco Gerali, a Beatriz Torres (CAMeNA/Archivo Gregorio y Marta Selser), a la Dra. Silvia Dutrénit. A los archivistas del Archivo General de la Nación, del Archivo Histórico Diplomático Genero Estrada, y de la Hemeroteca Nacional, de la Biblioteca Presidencial Jimmy Carter. Muy en especial a las archivistas de la biblioteca de la Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia por permitirme que viera el material de CENCOS cuando aun lo estaban catalogando, a los de la hemeroteca de la Universidad Iberoamérica—quienes cuentan con unas colecciones de revistas sumamente completas, y a los bibliotecarios del ITAM. También a Clara Ruiz de CENCOS por ponerme en contacto con personas claves en la historia de la organización, y por ayudarme a encontrar material. En Guanajuato, le doy gracias a el Dr. Corona Fernández, Mtra. Ana Madrigal y al Dr. César Federico Macías de la Universidad de Guanajuato por darme la oportunidad de dar una serie de charlas históricas.

Muy en especial a todos los que me brindaron su historia por medio de una entrevista. Al Dr. Alberto Saladino García, Andrés Magalla Trujillo, Clara Ruíz, Mtro. Emilio Álvarez Icaza, Francisco Barrón Trejo, Luzma Longoria, María Inés Jurado, Mtra. Mariclaire Acosta, Dr. Miguel García Murcia, Roció Culebro y Romeo Ricardo Flores Caballero. *I also want to thank Peter Bourne and Valerie Pettis for answering my questions via Email.*

Much appreciation to the institutions that made the research and writing possible through their funding. The History Department at the University of Oklahoma covered part of my travel expenses through the following: Bea Mantooth Estep Scholarship (2009), Radar Travel Grant (2010, 2011), and the Latin American Program Travel Fund monies for the summer of 2011. In the spring of 2015,

I received the Nancy L. Mergler Dissertation Completion Fellowship—which proved a tremendous help in order to finish this project.

From August 2013 to July 2014 I was lucky enough to have been one of the Underrepresented Minority Dissertation Fellows at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). My stay in Murfreesboro made me a better student and a better teacher. I learned a tremendous amount from teaching and from the faculty in the History Department. As soon as I arrived, I was welcomed beyond what I ever expected. Special thanks to Janice Lewis, Dr. John Omachonu, Dr. Thomas Bynum and Dr. Brittany Davis (who was also a fellow). In the History Department, I thank Dr. James Beeby and Kristine McCusker for mentoring me through the teaching process and my stay at MTSU. I felt very welcomed. Dr. Pippa Holloway and Dr. Amy Sayward (and for lending me your office) I thank for meeting with me and chatting about your work and my work. To Dr. Robert Hunt for all our chats in the library Starbucks. Dr. Emily Baran, Dr. Michael Paulauskas, Dr. Kelly Kolar and Dr. Benjamin Sawyer for hosting and including me. Dr. Rebecca McIntyre for taking me around and introducing me to Brad Wright, now a good friend and his wife Alicia Sahagun-both welcomed me in their home. Dr. Stephen D. Morris (Political Science) and Dr. Christopher Rosenmüller for your time, the ride to New Orleans, and the discussions on Mexico at SECOLAS. Thank you Dr. Doug Heffington, Dr. Susan Myers-Shirk, and Dr. Martha Norkunas for our chats. Dr. Norkunas, thank you for introducing me to Eridany and for teaching me about your work. To Dr. Rebekka King (Political Science), Dr. Judith Iriarte-Gross (WISTEM Center), and Dr. Brian Ingrassia. I made great friends and always felt welcomed—thank you Amy Alayne and Dr. Jeremy Aber for being great hosts during the holidays. To my good friends from the library, especially Fadia Mereani and Dennis Wise. I am especially thankful for everything I learned while teaching a U.S. History Survey and a course on Human Rights in Latin America. The MTSU Library was such a lovely place to work—from the coffee shop, the printing, to the great ILL services. The office I received as a fellow was wonderful. My stay at MTSU was such a

great learning and personal experience—thank you for this opportunity and for allowing others to come through your diversity fellowships.

Este proyecto no hubiese sido posible sin mis familias. A mi padre y madre que han dada toda su vida por mi hermano Steve y por mi. Desde que llegamos a Oklahoma en septiembre de 1994, nos inculcaron la importancia de la educación—mi padre decía "quiero esa pared llena de diplomas." Y aunque no pudieron ayudarnos con nuestra tarea y cosas de ese estilo, siempre estuvieron con nosotros y nos han apoyado. A mi padre José Nicandro Quezada Ramírez que ha pasado la mayoría de su vida trabajando en un país y añorando a otro, el de su tierra natal—México. Quizá de ahí me nace mi amor por México. A mi madrecita querida a quién dedico esta tesis. A meses de entregar este trabajo, cuando aun me faltaba escribir la conclusión y editar dos capítulos, llegó a mi vida mi hijo Lázaro Colín-Quezada. Fueron días difíciles y gracias a su ayuda termine. Mi niño, si un día lees esta tesis, de ella quiero que sepas que tu puedes hacer cualquier cosa—busca tu llamado. Perdona el tiempo que no estuve contigo mientras estaba terminándola. Muy en especial a mi familia Colín. Le doy gracias a Doña Gloria Anaya y a Don Odilón Colín. Pase muchas semanas con ustedes, escribí en su casa, viaje al D.F., y disfrute sus historias. He pasado lindos momentos con ustedes y los quiero mucho—les agradezco todo su apoyo mientras terminaba esta tarea, la cual parecía que no tenía fin. Finalmente, y con un agradecimiento desde el alma, a mi amado Carlos Augusto Colín Anaya. Mi amor, respeto, y admiración por ti solo ha crecido desde que nos casamos. Este proyecto es tuyo también. Como disfruto nuestras conversaciones, nuestros viajes al D.F. a comprar "chácharas"—siempre aprendo de ti. Quién iba a pensar que te interesaba tanto la historia. A una vida de amor por la familia y por México.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments iv

List of Illustrations xi

Abstract xiii

Introduction: *Dawning the Age of Human Rights:* The Nationalization of Human Rights Concepts in Mexico, 1970-1980 1

PART I: *Forging a Global Rights Agenda: Individual vs. Economic States' Rights*

Chapter 1: *The United Nations' Rights Experiment*: Constitutionalism in John P. Humphrey's 1961 Human Rights Seminar in Mexico City 20

Chapter 2: *Universalizing Nationalism*: Luis Echeverría's *Carta de Derechos y Deberes Económicos de los Estados*, 1972-1974 64

Part II: *Nationalizing Human Rights and the Rise of Civil Society*

Chapter 3: *Women's Rights, NOT Human Rights:* The 1975 United Nations International Women's Year (IWY) and Conference in Mexico City 128

Chapter 4: *From Liberation Theology to Human Rights:* José Álvarez Icaza, the Catholic Church, and CENCOS' Propagation of Human Rights in Mexico 217

Part III: *The Triumph of Human Rights in the Age of Oil and Mass Communications*

Chapter 5: *Julio Scherer García's Proceso:* Human Rights in the Liberalization of the Mexican Press, 1976-1977 277

Chapter 6: *A Black Valentine*: Human Rights in U.S.-Mexico Relations, and the Burden of Oil in Jimmy Carter's 48-Hours in Mexico, February 14-16, 1979 357

Conclusion: *The Revolution in Crisis*: Human Rights in a Neoliberal Mexico 424

Additional Illustration 436

Bibliography 451

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUS. 1.1. "Professor John P. Humphrey, Director of the Division of Human Rights of the United Nations Department of Social Affairs," 6 January 1948, United Nations, Lake Success, New York. 19

ILLUS. 1.2. "Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Professor John P. Humphrey at the second session of the Human Rights Commission," United Nations, Lake Success, New York. 19

ILLUS. 3.1. "Mrs. Patricia Hutar, Representative of the United States, making a statement [at the opening of the World Conference of the International Women's Year," 19 June 1975, Juan de la Barrera Gymnasium, Mexico City. 127

ILLUS. 3.2. Mexico's official International Women's Year logo. 436

ILLUS. 3.3. Rafael Freyre, "PRI's Poultry Farming" 436

ILLUS. 3.4. Rogelio Naranjo, "Ah, What a Good *Puntacho*!" 437

ILLUS. 4.1. "The Sacking." Police raid the offices of CENCOS. 216

ILLUS. 4.2. "The Return." CENCOS staff unloads files previously taken by police and returned, 7 July 1977, Mexico City. 216

ILLUS. 5.1. "Luis Echeverría, former president of Mexico, next to Scherer." 276

ILLUS. 5.2. "Golpe de *Excélsior.*" 438

ILLUS. 5.3. Abel Quezada, "¿Por qué?" 438

ILLUS. 5.4. Heberto Castillo, Naranjo, and Magú, "Pinochetazo a Exc[é]lsior." 439

ILLUS. 5.5. "La Solidaridad." 439

ILLUS. 5.6. Rius, "The Biggest Seller." 440

ILLUS. 5.7. Rius, "Institutional Amnesia." 441

ILLUS. 6.1. Naranjo, "Under the Water." 442

ILLUS. 6.2. Naranjo, "Symmetric Graph." 443

ILLUS. 6.3. Naranjo, "Paganini." 443

ILLUS. 6.4. Naranjo, "A Natural Client." 444

ILLUS. 6.5. Naranjo, "Cactus." 445

ILLUS. 6.6. Naranjo, "Sale." 446

ILLUS. 6.7. Naranjo, "Suicide." 447

ILLUS. 6.8. Naranjo, "Cyrus y van-seis." 448

ILLUS. 6.9. Naranjo, "Nightmare." 449

ILLUS. 6.10. Naranjo, "Wide, Open and Honest." 450

ILLUS. 7.1. Rius, "Aniversario." 423

ABSTRACT

This work looks at the proliferation of human rights in Mexico in the 1970s. By looking at how the term entered Mexico, one can determine that individualistic notions of rights (human rights) proliferated in Mexico in the late 1970s as a result of the arrival of South American refugees, the rise of a freer press, through Mexico's first NGO (CENCOS), and the 1979 Jimmy Carter visit to negotiate an oil deal. The diffusion of internationalist notion of rights reveals a shift from a corporate protection of rights to more individualist conceptions of rights--particularly as Mexico made a shift to Neoliberal economic politics. The consequences of human rights development in Mexico have had numerous consequences, one being that Mexico avoided international scrutiny for its human rights violations until the 1990s. It avoided such scrutiny precisely because of its relationship with the United States and also because it appropriated the language of rights protections by welcoming South American political refugees fleeing military dictatorships. As such, this work reveals the unique trajectory of the rise and usage of international human rights.

INTRODUCTION:

Dawning the Age of Human Rights:
The Nationalization of Human Rights Concepts in Mexico, 1970-1980

"*The tragic irony of this age of human rights –*
where greater numbers are enjoying human rights
than perhaps ever in history –
is that it has been repeatedly darkened
by outbursts of indiscriminate violence
and organized mass killings."
Kofi A. Annan[1]

Cada quién habla de la feria según le va en ella, as the old Spanish proverb puts it: "Everyone talks about the fair according to how it went for them." Something like this applies to the much-discussed concept of human rights. After Amnesty International (AI) won the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize, a journalist asked Arturo Zama if awareness of human rights existed in the world and whether the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was widely known. As a former political prisoner of Mexico's 1968 student movement and a member of his country's AI section, Zama was uniquely qualified to offer a perspective on the matter. He as much as anyone had been to the *feria,* and he offered this laconic reply: "Obviously not." The long-time activist believed that often people considered human rights mere formalities and that it was important for the population to "realize they are entitled to human rights." For example, if stopped by the police, "there is a set of procedures that ensure the physical and spiritual integrity of people."[2]

[1] Kofi A. Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations (1997-2006), makes reference to the phrase "Age of Human Rights" in an article by the same title. Kofi A. Annan, "The Age of Human Rights," *Project Syndicate,* 26 September 2000 <www.project-syndicate.org>.

[2] "Premio Nobel de la Paz: Amnistía Internacional, defensora de los prisioneros olvidados," *Proceso* (No. 50), 17 October 1977, 9.

What lay at stake here was more than simply a matter of public education. Rather, attempts to understand and implement something called "human rights" involved something more than curbing heavy-handed police behavior. Rather, the question and its brief answer touched on a set of concepts whose interpretation had been in a state of rapid evolution for the better part of a quarter-century. Both Zama and Amnesty International employed the term human rights to refer to a selected set of civil and political guarantees established in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and utilized in the organization's global campaign on behalf of political prisoners. Prior to the 1960s, most people in Mexico (if not the world) would have interpreted the term "human rights" to refer to vague abstract principles to be born in mind when making basic decisions about our lives, much in the same way that we might say, "Everyone has a right to be happy." In the 1970s, however, the term came to signify something more specific: individual rights, primarily civil and political, and imbedded not in national constitutions, bur rather in international covenants. Zama had something like this latter concept in mind when he stated that few people around the world knew of the "human rights" protections that safeguarded individuals from a state overextending its use of violence on its citizens. But how was it that human rights came to signify primarily political and civil rights, as Amnesty International promoted them and as Zama understood them? What happened at the *feria* that changed so many minds?

This work seeks to understand how *human rights* became the global lingua franca of rights demands in the 1970s. Building on a growing historiographical trend regarding the genesis of those rights, I incorporate Mexico into the larger debate by looking at the process by which the term entered the intellectual set, the political sphere,

and the national press. Samuel Moyn's *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* has been the guiding model for attempting to answer why human rights "emerged in the 1970s seemingly from nowhere." According Moyn, the triumph of the concept can best be understood in the context of its "struggle against internationalist rivals old and new"—like revolutionary communism and nationalism. Once other universalist ideologies phased out, human rights emerged as the last utopia, and in the context of the 1970s these rights came to refer not to groups rights or to national emancipation, but rather to "individual protection against the state."[3] Unlike thinkers who place the genesis of human rights in ancient philosophies as far back as Buddhism and Christianity, in natural law, in the American and French Revolutions, in the international abolitionist movement, in World War II, in the U.S. civil rights movement, or even in the 1960s and 1970s anticolonial movements,[4] Moyn looks to human rights as a struggle beyond those movements that sought citizenship rights within the framework of the nation-state.[5] In other words, "the central event in human rights history is the recasting of rights as entitlements that might contradict the sovereign nation-state from above and

---

[3] Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 3-10.

[4] See, Paul Gordon Lauren, *The Evolution of International Human Rights: Visions Seen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001), Micheline Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2007), Jean Quataert, *Advocating Dignity: Human Rights Mobilizations in Global Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

[5] Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States." *The Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999), 1231-1250, Kenneth Cmiel, "The Recent History of Human Rights," *American Historical Review* 109:1 (February 2004), 117-135, Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), Samuel Moyn, "Human Rights in History," *The Nation,* 30 August/6 September 2010 (No. 291), 31-38, Snyder, Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011, Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012).

outside rather than serve as its foundation."[6] As such, human rights movements of the 1970s went beyond the state and into the universal realm questioning the states' sovereignty over the individual, and, as I will argue, Mexico was no exception to that trend.[7]

Reconciling the Global (Macro) with the Particular (Micro)

The rise of human rights in Mexico seeks to compliment the global narrative of their emergence. By looking at the actors, processes, and the local context that allowed for the diffusion of a concept of rights at a national level, the global narrative is not only enriched but also complicated when scholars look for protagonists beyond western philosophy, the United States, and European countries. A number of scholars, including Moyn, retell a historical narrative that only furthers the idea that human rights derived from the West and were designed for their application abroad, particularly in developing countries. While this is true to a certain extent, we need to move away from this somewhat limiting approach and seek to incorporate the role developing countries and a select number of citizens played in globalizing human rights—particularly when the so-called Third World became a prime recipient of governmental and non-governmental policies. When looking at the micro-narrative of their development, as the case of Mexico will show, human rights can be understood as a construct particular to the social, political, and economic context of each country—and contingent on the time and global geopolitics exerted toward a particular region. For instance, Mexico was not directly targeted by President Jimmy Carter's human

[6] Moyn, *The Last Utopia,* 13.

[7] For an example of a linear approach to historical analysis, in this case of liberal democracy, see Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

rights foreign policy or by Amnesty International's campaign on behalf of political prisoners in the same measure as its South American military counterparts. In Mexico, human rights emerged as a response to a more diverse set of problems—not exclusively state violence—and this difference has led to some important distinctions in the way the country responds to human rights cases today. Initial reference to the terms in the Mexican press and the actors behind the diffusion of those same terms reveal a confluence between an amenable global and national context that made it possible to replace previous rights terminologies and promote individual rights in what had been a guarded corporatist system in which its citizens demanded rights through their group membership.[8]

Moreover, by exploring their genesis and development at a national level, scholars can best discern on their legacy. For instance, a comparable student movement in the United States that unfolded in the fall of 2015 at the University of Missouri did not utilize the universalist language embedded in international rights. Rather, Missouri students demanded the fulfillment of citizenship rights much in the same form their predecessors did during the Civil Rights movement. Meanwhile, mobilizations in 2015 on behalf of forty-three missing students from Ayotzinapa, Guerrero employed a language beyond national citizenship that exemplifies the legacies of international human rights policies produced and manufactured for developing countries—this, while the United States advanced public policies centered on citizenship, rarely if ever appealing to universalist conceptions of rights. Other examples include mobilizations on behalf of journalists, mobilizations that have moved beyond citizenship and into the

[8] Historian José C. Moya employs the macro/micro mythology in his study of Spanish immigration to Argentina. See José C. Moya, *Cousins and Strangers: Spanish Immigrants in Buenos Aires, 1850-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

international realm as a measure of self-preservation with organizations like *Artículo 19* (Article 19) that reference not an article of the Mexican constitution, but rather freedom of speech as delineated in article nineteen of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Today, most Latin Americans employ the term "human rights" and the guarantees embedded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to advance their cause. The legacy of their usage in Mexico reveals that human rights came from the international community transforming previous rights terminologies and conceptions; however, they were appropriated and shaped as they best fitted the needs of the local population and the government at the time. Their development in the country remains particular to Mexico, and the various particularities from Latin America merit greater incorporation into the macro narrative of their explosion in the 1970s—revealing that although seemingly universalist, human rights retain nationalist elements in their form.

The Tumultuous 1970s

Alongside the ascent of individualistic notions of rights in the 1970s stood the breakdown of Mexico's revolutionary system and its accompanying economic model. Not only in Mexico, but also in most of Latin America, state-directed economic policies sanctioned after the 1930 world depression up to the 1970s ultimately lost much of their promise and appeal. Technocrats, many of whom had been educated in the United States, made their way into the ranks of Mexico's governing party, *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI) as early as the 1970s and certainly led the structural reforms toward a system of free-market economics by the 1980s.[9]

[9] Chile is perhaps the most studied case on the implementation of neoliberal economic policies in Latin America, particularly the role of the so-called Chicago Boys, a group of monetarist economists

Mexico's debt, inflation, peso devaluation and trade deficits also paved the way for the International Monetary Fund to place the country on a path toward recovery by slashing state budgets, promoting foreign investment and deregulation, supporting funding for the extraction of oil and gas, and forcing an overall slimming of the state. Years later, Mexico's economic crisis of the 1980s (known as the "Lost Decade" in Latin America) proved so severe that state-directed economic policies not only lost ground, but so did nationalism and its revolutionary project of corporatist representation. In this context, and just as Mexico opened itself to the outside world during the 1970s, abandoning decades of isolationism, human rights emerged amid the breakdown of a revolutionary structure of social justice in which the state had balanced the interests of diverse social groups. The corporatist arrangement began to erode as the country moved toward a more individually based society: individual in initiative, individual in terms of access to state protection from hardship and abuses. By focusing primarily on the 1970s, this work places the rise of human rights in the context of Mexico's structural changes and those taking place at a global scale, such as large-scale transformations transcending the nation-state—many of which resulted in an international shift away from Keynesianism toward Neoliberalism.[10]

Likewise, the 1970s proved one of the most tumultuous politically for the revolutionary leaderships. After the 1968 student massacre in the Plaza of Tlatelolco,

---

working mostly out of the University of Chicago. For Mexico see, Miguel Ángel Centeno, *Democracy Within Reason: Technocratic Revolution in Mexico* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994). For Chile see, Philip J. O'Brien and Jacqueline Roddick, *Chile, the Pinochet Decade: The Rise and Fall of the Chicago Boys* (London: Latin America Bureau, 1983), Juan Gabriel Valdés, *Pinochet's Economists: The Chicago School of Economics in Chile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Miguel Lawner and Orlando Letelier, *Orlando Letelier: el que lo advirtió: los Chicago Boys en Chile* (Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2011).

[10] A recent work pioneering research on the global transformations of the 1970s is Niall Ferguson's edited book *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

the PRI struggled to reign in political dissidence and regain the political legitimacy it had enjoyed since the 1930s. After 1968, the revolutionary government found itself on the offensive. While Mexico has a long tradition of social mobilization, by the 1970s the government moved away from its traditional negotiated, carrot-and-stick approach to dissidence and employed its national security apparatus to combat civil and armed resistance much in the same form as South American military governments—through violence. While this project analyzes how social groups mobilized on behalf of Mexico's political prisoners, it does not directly contribute to the growing historiography of Mexico's Dirty War.[11] Many scholars label the happenings in 1968 and the assault of leftist groups, particularly Cuban-inspired guerrilla movements, as one of the gravest assaults on human rights of the post-war period. Interestingly enough, the term has been retroactively applied to the Tlatelolco student movement, yet at the time no one utilized "human rights" when discussing the military assault.[12] It was not until the late 1970s that the press and other activists began utilizing the term "human rights" to reference the internal violence of the country's counterrevolutionary measures. This change came about in part due to the efforts of Amnesty International (Mexico section), leftist leaning journalists and the nascent non-governmental organizations like Comité

[11] For recent works on Dirty War see, Tanalís Padilla, *Rural Resistance in the Land of Zapata: The Jaramillista Movement and the Myth of the Pax Priísta, 1940-1962* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), Adela Cedillo and Fernando Calderón, eds., *Challenging Authoritarianism in Mexico: Revolutionary Struggles and the Dirty War, 1964-1982* (New York: Routledge, 2012), Jaime M. Pensado, *Rebel Mexico: Student Unrest and Authoritarian Political Culture During the Long Sixties* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), Alexander Aviña, *Specters of Revolution: Peasant Guerrillas in the Cold War Mexican Countryside* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[12] At the time not even the most prominent newspaper in Mexico, *Excélsior,* utilized the term human rights to refer to the happenings in Tlatelolco on October 2, 1968. It was not until the late 1970s that journalists and civil society began employing the term human rights to refer to the government's repressive measures toward political dissidents—this after it had long been utilized to refer to the happenings in South American dictatorships. Prominent human rights scholar, Sergio Aguayo Quezada has commonly used the term to reference the violations that took place in the Plaza de Tlatelolco in 1968. See, Sergio Aguayo Quezada and Javier Treviño Rangel, "Neither Truth nor Justice: Mexico's De Facto Amnesty," *Latin American Perspectives* 33 (2006): 56-68.

¡Eureka! (Defense Committee for Political Prisoners, Disappeared Persons and Exiles).[13] While not exclusively centered on leftist or guerrilla movements of the period, this work does build on recent scholarship on the post-1968 presidencies of Luis Echeverría (1970-1976) and José López Portillo (1976-1982).[14] After all, it was this turbulent decade, in combination with a political and economic crisis to the revolutionary system that provided the contextual ground for the rise and proliferation of human rights in 1970s Mexico.

Liberal Democracy and the Non-Violent and Non-Institutionalized Left

Mexico's human rights genesis, therefore, is linked to the rise of a non-violent and a non-institutionalized democratic left. Scholars like Jorge G. Castañeda associate the rise of human rights with the fall of the Latin American left; while to an extent true, in Mexico those rights conceptions derived from an emerging middle current swayed by liberal democracy, on neither side of the communist or nationalist divide, sympathetic to the victims of the armed struggle and relatively far removed from traditional party politics. Leftist parties did manage to sway remnants of the early human rights struggle, but not until the late 1970s and certainly by the 1980s, as proved the case of Rosario Ibarra (founder of Comité ¡Eureka!) and José Álvarez Icaza (leader of what began as a Catholic press organization, CENCOS)—two key figures and founding members of

[13] In Spanish, Comité Pro-Defensa de Presos Perseguidos, Desaparecidos y Exiliados Políticos de México.

[14] Gabriela Soto Laveaga, J*ungle Laboratories: Mexican Peasants, National Projects, and the Making of the Pill* (Durham [NC]: Duke University Press, 2009), María L. O. Muñoz, "'We Speak for Ourselves': The First National Congress of Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Indigenismo in Mexico, 1968-1982," (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Arizona, 2009). Amelia M. Kiddle and María L. O. Muñoz, eds., *Populism in Twentieth Century Mexico: The Presidencies of Lázaro Cárdenas and Luis Echeverría* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010), Louise E. Walker, *Waking from the Dream: Mexico's Middle Classes After 1968* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

non-governmental organizations (hereafter NGOs), who joined the ranks of leftist parties.[15] The middle democratic leftist current converged with Presidents Echeverría and López Portillo's foreign policy toward South American dictatorships, a fact that aided both leaders in forging an international image of rights protectors rather than violators. Saltalamacchia Ziccardi and Covarrubias Velasco described it as taking an "ambiguous position before the international human rights agenda: supporting and even ebullient in discourse but in practice suspicious and even obstructionist…"[16] Their diplomacy also included the welcoming of Argentine, Chilean, and Uruguayan political refugees to Mexico; these figures played a significant role in disseminating individual rights conceptions in the press as they shunned the military dictatorships of their home countries from abroad. The politicization of progressive Catholics, particularly Jesuits, and media organizations created to broadcast the sessions of Vatican II also engaged the language of human rights, in part due to their connection with international and religious-based media networks. Finally, a brief democratic opening in the press resulting from a government assault on Mexico's most important daily in 1976, *Excélsior,* allowed for the proliferation of new print sources that devoted significant coverage to the atrocities committed in South American dictatorships and consistently reproduced President Jimmy Carter's human rights foreign policies toward the region. By late 1978 and 1979, the term "human rights," which had originally been linked exclusively to happenings in South America, journalists and non-governmental organizations began to

[15] Rosario Ibarra joined the *Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores* (Workers' Revolutionary Party, PRT), while Álvarez Icaza supported the *Partido Mexicano de los Trabajadores* (Mexican Workers' Party, PMT), the latter one of several parties that joined to form a single leftist party for the 1988 election, the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (Party of the Democratic Revolution, PRD).

[16] Natalia Saltalamacchia Ziccardi and Ana Covarrubias Velasco, "La trayectoria de los derechos humanos en la política exterior de México (1945-2006)," in *Derechos humanos en política exterior: seis casos latinoamericanos,* edited by Natalia Saltalamacchia Ziccardi and Ana Covarrubias Velasco (México, D.F.: ITAM, 2011), 164.

apply and associate to the counterrevolutionary measures within Mexico—long after its dissemination and appropriation in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.

Without Anachronisms: Anthropology of the Term in Print Media

As in the studies by Moyn, this work also attempts to study the diffusion of human rights in Mexico through a non-linear and non-teleological narrative of moral progress.[17] Rather than ascribing their genealogy to a build-up or continuation of previous social movements, this work seeks to differentiate the dissemination of human rights in the 1970s from previous social movements that sought to protect the rights of citizens within national borders, with little or no interaction with networks outside the nation-state framework. That is not to say that movements on behalf of rights did not exist before, but rather that people proclaimed constitutional guarantees and mobilized for the advancement of group rights, often demanding reconfiguration in the relationship between the state and the group in question through negotiated, localized, and at times violent mobilization. Moreover, social movements in the decade, like guerrillas or workers strikes, did not engage on individual rights either because they were not entirely aware of such or if they were because they perceived human rights to be an imperialistic construct deriving from the United States and counterintuitive to the social and economic rights espoused by nationalist or communist ideology. Human rights, thus, emerged as part of what correspondent Alan Riding described as a "non-violent Left [which] sought to grow in the narrow space between the 'armed struggle' and cooptation by the government."[18] Rather than looking exclusively within the left,

[17] Moyn, *The Last Utopia,* 11-43.
[18] Alan Riding, *Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 103.

this project builds on a growing historiography of the 1980s and on the work of scholars who have attempted to historicize Mexico's modern human rights movement by tracing their links to non-governmental organizations and South American exiles in Mexico. However, this work takes a somewhat different perspective by looking to an earlier decade than most.[19]

The following chapters represent historical moments in which individuals utilized human rights terminologies. By following the language of rights in print media, the research will attempt to capture the various actors engaged with the language of human rights and the ideological transformations taking place in Mexico regarding individual guarantees. Print media can serves as one of the key chroniclers of capturing the usage of the term and its transformation over the course of a decade. But most importantly, the approach seeks to capture a broad spectrum of players consciously and unintentionally disseminating the universalist concept of human rights in Mexico: from U.N. representatives, Jesuit priests, journalists, women, government representatives, and exiles, to President Jimmy Carter. This work seeks a diverse set of voices; however, it

---

[19] Joy Lee Peebles Lane, *Las organizaciones no gubernamentales de derechos humanos en México: su formación y esfuerzos para realizar cambios socio-políticos* (Master's thesis, Estudios Latinoamericanos, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Universidad Autónoma de México, México, 1993), Edward L. Cleary, "Human Rights Organizations in Mexico: Growth in Turbulence," *Journal of Church and State* 37:4 (Autumn 1995): 793-812, Sergio Aguayo Quezada, "Auge y perspectiva de los derechos humanos en México," in *México a la hora del cambio,* Luis Rubio et al., 355-384 (México, D.F.: Aguilar, León y Cal Editores: Centro de Investigación para el Dersarrollo: Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, 1995), Edward L. Cleary, *The Struggle for Human Rights in Latin America* (Westport: Praeger, 1997), Kathryn Sikkink, "The Emergence, Evolution, and Effectiveness of the Latin American Human Rights Network," in *Constructing Democracy: Human Rights, Citizenship, and Society in Latin America,* edited by Elizabeth Jelin and Eric Hershberg (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 59-84, Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), Mariana de Heredia Romo, "México en la red transnacional de defensa de los derechos humanos en Uruguay (1973-1985): Estrategias y acciones representativas" (Bachelor's thesis, Relaciones Internacionales, ITAM, México, 2011). The following works also explore human rights, but specifically in foreign policy. See, Lars Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy Toward Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), Ana Covarrubias, "La política exterior 'activa'…una vez más," *Foro internacional* 48: 1-2 (Enero-Junio 2008), 13-34, Natalia Saltalamacchia and Ana Covarrubias Velasco. *Derechos humanos en política exterior: seis casos latinoamericanos* (México, D.F.: ITAM, 2011).

does exclude many others that rightfully deserve their incorporation into the larger narrative of those forging what has become the lingua franca of rights movements in the world.

Chapter One follows the work of Canadian diplomat John P. Humphrey and his attempt to keep the United Nations' Human Rights program alive. One way he promoted human rights at a national level was through seminars. By exploring the 1961 conference in Mexico City the chapter reveals how early UN human rights promoters sought to strengthen national laws for the protection of individual rights without questioning or threatening state sovereignty. For Humphrey and other jurists at the conference, the protection of human rights lay primarily in constitutions and had to be processed through national courts. In this reading, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stood merely as reinforcement, something that would no longer be the case decades later. The 1961 conference also illustrates the disassociation between the legal promotion of human rights and the attempt to dissociate from social movements. For example, protests arose in Mexico City while the conference took place demanding the release of muralist painter David Alfaro Siqueiros. At the time, John P. Humphrey and his human rights program avoided intervening in a country's internal affairs. The efforts by Humphrey reveal that by 1961 the UN Rights Program in no way questioned or meddled in national matters, and that in fact it deeply respected state sovereignty.

Chapter Two illustrates how President Luis Echeverría Álvarez (1970-1976) sought to utilize the emerging international system to promote his Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, while appropriating the language of human rights for his cause. The Mexican government responded fiercely against President Richard Nixon's economic policies, especially his 1971 ten percent import surcharge, which gave rise to a

movement for the creation of a more equitable economic world system. This chapter explores how the Mexican government believed its citizens' rights could not be protected unless the state countered the advantages of its more powerful adversaries. As such, the Mexican press believed that Echeverría's proposal for the Charter would surpass the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in importance. This was another moment when Mexican journalists actively engage the term "human rights." Moreover, Mexico's unique positioning in the international community permitted the government's appropriation of human rights. President Echeverría, in search of political legitimacy after the crisis of 1968, projected what Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink described as a "progressive stance on international human rights."[20] Echeverria did this by introducing the rhetoric of human rights into his policy of Third-worldism; he denounced human rights violations in places like Chile and Spain and welcomed South American political refugees to Mexico. In 1973 Echeverría also broke diplomatic relations with Chile after the overthrow of democratically elected Salvador Allende, under the similar pretexts. Of the three hundred prisoners released from Chile in 1975, 163 settled in Mexico.[21] And so long as Mexico's national security did not pose a threat to the United States, then the country would remain outside Carter's human rights concerns.[22]

---

[20] Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 111.

[21] Gabriela Díaz Prieto, "Un exilio venturoso: chilenos en México (1973-1990)," in *Revolución y exilio en la historia de México: del amor de un historiador a su patria adoptiva: homenaje a Friedrich Katz,* edited by Garciadiego Dantan, Javier, Emilio Kourí, and Friedrich Katz (México, D. F.: El Colegio de México, 2010), 806.

[22] Sergio Aguayo Quezada, "The Uses, Misuses, and Challenges of Mexican National Security: 1946-1990," in *Mexico: In Search of Security*, edited by Bruce Michael Bagley, and Sergio Aguayo (Coral Gables, Fla: North-South Center, University of Miami, 1993), 99.

Chapter Three explores the competing understandings and definitions of human rights in the 1975 International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City. The conference moved locations several times, from a communist country to Colombia, and finally to Mexico as a result of President Echeverría's relationship with UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim. By following the various discussions regarding women's rights, this chapter shows how representatives from European countries and the United States steered away from human rights concepts given their association with rights they did not see as gender-specific. Latin American women, on the other hand, were more likely to engage the concept of human rights in association with their demands for economic reforms in their home countries, while women from industrialized nations focused on gender specifics, from sexual to reproductive rights. For many western women, the language of human rights carried too much political baggage they perceived as distracting from rights particular to their gender, while women from developing countries gravitated to human rights because these for them implied significant structural changes for their country which they deemed as key to their immediate needs for survival.

Chapter Four explores the role Liberation theology played in mobilizing Catholics toward the internationalist human rights cause, in this case through the life and work of José Álvarez Icaza, founder of one of Mexico's first modern human rights organizations. CENCOS emerged as a media organization reporting to Mexico from the Vatican. However, as the organization grew more critical of the government, Álvarez and his team were forced to break with the Catholic Church, although not completely abandoning its Catholic social teachings. The organization published a human rights magazine focusing on Latin American dictatorships, often with exiles as

contributors. This chapter demonstrates how human rights were initially linked with state terror in South America, and not with events in Mexico. However, over time human rights publications began to look to Mexico's own repressive measures toward leftists and guerrillas. From the CENCOS building emerged Comité ¡Eureka!, an organization created by Rosario Ibarra, whose son was killed by the government. Both José Álvarez Icaza and Rosario Ibarra helped diffuse human rights in Mexico and worked closely with secular and religious international organizations. Both eventually supported and mobilized for leftist political parties seeking to derail the PRI. This chapter captures early human rights organizations that pioneered yet eventually engaged in party politics.

Chapter Five follows the emergence of new print sources and a brief moment of liberalization of the press after the government removed the editor of the cooperative-owned newspaper *Excélsior,* one of Latin America's most important papers in 1976. In July 1976 the director Julio Scherer García and his assistant general were removed from their post through a cooperative meeting. The paper had grown in prestige, but also in its critical stance toward the government. As such, Scherer and those who left with him, including poet Octavio Paz, created new print sources. Scherer and others began the political magazine *Proceso* ("Process"), thus becoming one of the first publications in the country to actively disseminate the term "human rights." *Proceso* published reports no one else bothered to look at, such as those of Amnesty International, and rendered significant coverage to Latin American dictatorships. While *Proceso* initially utilized the term to refer to repression in South America, eventually journalists began to associate the concept to happenings within Mexico. The ascent of human rights concepts in *Proceso* reflect the rise of a non-violent, democratic left that sought transformation in

Mexico through a modern human rights movement, and not necessarily through violent or traditional party politics.

Chapter Six traces how Mexico avoided international scrutiny for its human rights violations, and in particular how it managed to be excluded from Jimmy Carter's rights initiatives. While President Jimmy Carter's short visit to Mexico in February 1979 proved key in diffusing the human rights concept in the Mexican press, his trip to resume talks on natural gas purchase did not force discussions regarding human rights violations in the country. While in Mexico, Carter chose not to force the discussion on human rights. His speech to Congress made no reference to the term. The consequences have been long lasting. Carter's 1979 trip and his notorious silence established a precedent by which economic and drug eradication negotiations have been given priority over those of human rights. As such, the U.S. government's human rights stance toward Mexico has differed from other Latin America, especially as both countries have grown closer together economically. Consequently, Mexico avoids public scrutiny for its violations, and has been a large receptor of military aid for the Drug War. I argue that this has been a consequence of both Mexico's attempt to forge an image of a rights protector and the United States and international organizations' failure to look to the Dirty War crimes until decades after similar pressure was exerted on its South American counterparts. The consequences have been long-lasting and have only furthered the climate of impunity in the country, with little or no public shaming to demand internal reform

PART I:

Forging a Global Rights Agenda: Individual vs. Economic States' Rights



ILLUS. 1.1. "Professor John P. Humphrey, Director of the Division of Human Rights of the United Nations Department of Social Affairs," 6 January 1948, United Nations, Lake Success, New York. Photo from the United Nations Secretariat, United Nations Photo Archive, Photo #324084 <http://www.unmultimedia.org>. (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 1.2. "Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Professor John P. Humphrey at the second session of the Human Rights Commission," United Nations, Lake Success, New York. Photo from the Human Rights Commission, United Nations Photo Archive, Photo #292444 <http://www.unmultimedia.org>. (Reproduced without permission)

CHAPTER 1:

The United Nations' Rights Experiment:
Constitutionalism in John P. Humphrey's 1961 Human Rights Seminar in Mexico City

"Why human rights now,
when human rights violations
have been part of the Latin American
condition for decades?"[1]

Introduction: Promoting Individual Rights in a Corporatist State

As in so many countries, Mexico's own human rights debate began amid the competing global and national rights projects in the postwar period. The global rights project derived from the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which attempted to fortify individual rights outside the context of the nation-state. Yet, for several years after the drafting of the declaration, very few people utilized the term "human rights," a concept that would eventually become synonymous with individual and international rights. This notion of protections promised by sources outside of the nation-state "died in the process of being born," as an NGO leader put it.[2] In the 1950s and 1960s, then, the term so commonly tossed around in today's world remained largely confined to diplomats and professionals in legal circles.

Initially, the international human rights initiative faltered against competing national projects. In the case of many Latin American countries, Mexico included, promotion of individual rights failed to gain currency within systems of state-directed industrialization that negotiated conflict through corporate relationships. Under this latter model, it was assumed that individuals demanding justice would do so through

[1] Edward L. Cleary, "Struggling for Human Rights in Latin America," *America,* 5 November 1994, 20.

[2] Samuel Moyn, "Human Rights in History," *The Nation,* 30 August/6 September 2010 (No. 291), 34.

group struggles involving both peaceful and violent confrontations with the state. When dealing with peasants, industrial workers, or salaried employees, the dominant party mitigated rights demands through a carrot-and-stick approach. Any suggestion at resolving national conflicts through international mitigation was thus perceived as an infringement upon the much-guarded notion of sovereignty.

Yet, the United Nations through its Human Rights Division promoted individual rights as opposed to group rights. This global UN project offered a legal and non-violent "third way" between the political rights underscored by constitutional democracies and the social and economic rights ascribed by its socialist counterpart. In other words, the human rights approach aimed at filling the gaps left by constitutional governments in matters of individual protections. Under the auspices of Canadian diplomat John P. Humphrey, the United Nations sponsored a series of country seminars on human rights. In the case of Mexico City, the seminar focused on two constitutional instruments imperative in the protection of individual rights: *amparo* and *habeas corpus* (and to a lesser extent on the Brazilian *mandado de segurança,* or write of security, often mistaken for the writ of mandamus).[3]

The 1961 meeting in Mexico City underscores how UN representatives shaped the meaning of "human rights" in the postwar era through national seminars. In this meeting, attendees discussed constitutional remedies to individual rights protections,

[3] The writ of security was added to the 1934 Brazilian Constitution. According to one author, the writ of security is often mistranslated as the writ of mandamus. The writ of security "is a unique summary constitutional remedy that combines aspects of the Anglo-American writs of mandamus, injunction, prohibition and quo warranto, as well as the motion for summary judgment. The writ of security can be brought by an individual or legal entity to protect a 'liquid and certain right' unprotected by habeas corpus or habeas data against actual or threatened illegality or abuse of power." Interestingly enough, the writ of security can be used by government agencies against other public entities. Moreover, "The writ can only be brought against a public authority or an agent of a legal entity performing public duties." Keith S. Rosenn, "Procedural Protection of Constitutional Rights in Brazil," *American Journal of Comparative Law* 59 (Fall 2011), 1024.

which at the time most country representatives interchangeably referred to as human rights. Yet, in the context of this seminar, human rights had yet to become synonymous with universalities, but rather remained at the level of greater enforcement for existing constitutional protections. Owing in part to this confusion over concepts and definitions, the global approach in diffusing human rights concepts initially stalemated.

Designing Human Rights: John P. Humphrey's Seminars

In very many ways, the introduction of human rights into post-revolutionary legal and political discourse dates from the watershed 1961 visit of John P. Humphrey. After a series of travels between Australia, New Zealand and Romania, John P. Humphrey prepared for a summer trip to Mexico. With a cast on his foot, the then director of the United Nations Human Rights Division arrived in the Mexico City. His colleague John Male picked him up from the airport and updated Humphrey on the arrangements for a two-week seminar on human rights. From what Male explained, Humphrey "gathered the Mexican government was not being overcooperative."[4] Perhaps he hoped the Mexico City experience would compare with that of its South American counterparts. When he traveled to Chile in 1957, Humphrey wrote in his memoir he had no trouble "getting the Chileans to agree to host the seminar in 1958." Not only that, given his connection to Hernán Santa Cruz, prominent Chilean representative to the UN, he even had the pleasure of dining with a future president of

[4] John P. Humphrey, A. J. Hobbins, and Louisa Piatti, *On the Edge of Greatness: The Diaries of John Humphrey, First Director of the United Nations Division of Human Rights* (Montreal: McGill University Libraries, 1994), 279.

Chile, Salvador Allende. And the following year he visited another president-to-be, political centrist Eduardo Frei, in his home.[5]

Humphrey's experience in Mexico nonetheless proved different. He later confessed that the seminar had not gone as well as he hoped. And neither had the Chilean nor the Argentine meetings years earlier. Characterized by rhetoric-filled speeches, the conferences had simply not reached the standards of those held in Asia.[6] In this particular forum, however, Humphrey hoped to impress the American participant in the seminar, Nicholas deBelleville Katzenbach, State Department representative that went on to serve as Attorney General during the Lyndon Johnson administration (1963-1969).[7] If the Mexico City Human Rights Seminar impressed Mr. Katzenbach, that meant one less battle for Humphrey in defense of the rights program, under threat of dissolution almost since the 1948 UDHR adoption.

Undaunted, Humphrey fervently pursued regional seminars as the only strategy likely to bear any fruit. Ever since the drafting the UDHR, of which Humphrey was the main author, the priorities within the UN regarding the rights program lost momentum. And with every year that passed, Humphrey became discouraged, frustrated, and at times depressed by the constant disregard for his work. When he first accepted the directorship of the rights division in 1946, at the invitation of his friend Henri Laugier, then Assistant Secretary-General of the UN Department of Social Affairs, optimism prevailed. In those early years of hacking out the plans of what the nature of the UN would be, many of the organization's original staff acted with unprecedented optimism.

---

[5] *Ibid*., 238.

[6] *Ibid*., 279, 261.

[7] Humphrey mistakenly titles Katzenbach U.S. Deputy Attorney General. In 1961 Katzenbach served as U.S. Assistant Attorney General of the Office of Legal Counsel but was not assigned as U.S. Deputy Attorney General until 1962.

But over time Cold War politics soon displaced human rights. After his friend Henri Laugier left the Secretariat, Humphrey found few allies within the United Nations as interested in promoting the rights program. When the threats of dissolution came from the very top and especially from Dag Hammarskjöld, the Secretary General (1953-1961), Humphrey disputed the Secretariat's claims that the rights program only "increased international tensions."[8] Humphrey continued to promote human rights while in a hostile global environment and carved a structure and a space for its growth. He defined what the program would do, and more importantly its role within the United Nations.

While the pioneer NGO leader Moses Moskowitz claimed human rights "died in the process of being born," John P. Humphrey's trajectory at the United Nations suggests otherwise.[9] Human rights within the United Nations remained in gestation but still very much alive. Humphrey's work in keeping UN Division of Human Rights solidified an international structure for human rights promotion. The seminar program he established and passionately carried out opened a space for discussion at a national level without disregarding established constitutions. While many political leaders remained adamant about human rights and the threat to sovereignty, they nevertheless tolerated these seminars. As the Mexico Seminar would show, this became the first of many meetings where constitutional issues collided with more universal concerns. And it would also show why universal ideas of rights did not prevail until decades later.

---

[8] See footnote 39 in A.J. Hobbins, "Humphrey and the High Commissioner: the Genesis of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights," *Journal of the History of International Law* 3 (2001), 45.

[9] Moyn, "Human Rights in History," 34.

1961 Mexico City: Amparo and Habeas Corpus

The seminar took place on August 15-28 in the Hotel del Prado, located in the heart of Mexico City's commercial center and famous as the original home of one of Diego Rivera's most important murals, "*Sueño de una tarde dominical en la Alameda Central*" (Dream of Sunday Afternoon in Alameda Park), relocated after the 1985 earthquake. Most of the delegates resided in the hotel during the event, and just a few days after their arrival many ended up getting sick with intestinal problems. In order for the seminar to proceed as scheduled, John P. Humphrey made a trip to the World Health Organization "and returned to the hotel with a flight bag filled with antibiotics" for everyone, a step that took care of the problem. The participants, who represented over twenty-five European and American countries, discussed the English concept of *habeas corpus* and the Latin American institution of writ of *amparo,* a complicated practice of staying orders against potentially unjust or arbitrary legal decisions. In the course of the discussion, delegates analyzed both recourses as important constitutional instruments in the protection of individual rights. For that reason Humphrey thought it "useful to compare the two institutions and appropriate…that this should be done in Mexico, where amparo has had an especially interesting development."[10]

At least initially, UN seminar discussions on human rights tended to take place among men of law. The Mexico City meeting proved no different, pulling legal specialists from around the globe. At least fifteen jurists made up the Mexican delegation headed by Dr. Felipe Tena Ramírez, minister of the Supreme Court of Justice. Their ideological viewpoints and nationalist allegiances varied, and while some

[10] John P. Humphrey, *Human Rights & the United Nations: A Great Adventure* (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Transnational Publishers, 1984), 279.

seemed protective of their constitution, others spoke freely against articles they thought in violation of individual rights. Of the attendees, many went on to play prominent roles in human rights in the 1980s, including Héctor Fiz-Zamudio and César Sepúlveda, the latter a founding member of one of Mexico's first NGOs, the Mexican Academy for Human Rights (*Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos*). Others, like the Sinaloan jurist Raúl Cervantes Ahumada, who published a book on amparo the same year as the conference, contributed to international law or human rights topics.[11]

Among the delegates most recognized for their human rights work today stands the only official female representative, María Lavalle Urbina. In 1973 the United Nations awarded Lavelle Urbina with the UN Prize in the Field of Human Rights. Today she rests among other distinguished women in the cemetery of the Rotunda of Illustrious Persons (*Rotonda de las Personas Ilustres*) alongside writer Emma Godoy and actress Dolores del Río.[12] Other women participants were those from non-governmental organizations. One attendee represented the Friends World Committee for Consultation and five others the International Federation of Women Layers.[13]

In the opening remarks, the Mexican delegates underscored the importance of the writ of amparo. Tena Ramírez stated Mexico's posture "would stress the need for countries to include in their legislation juridical systems for the protection of the rights of man, in semblance to the writ of amparo in Mexico."[14] The following day, Tena also

---

[11] "25 Países en la Junta Sobre Derecho: México Hará Amplia Explicación de su ley de Amparo," *Excélsior,* 14 August 1961, 1, 8; "Hoy, Seminario de Derechos Humanos: Se Inaugurará a las 10, con Delegados de Toda la América," *Excélsior,* 15 August 1961, 1, 5.

[12] "Hoy, Seminario de Derechos Humanos: Se Inaugurará a las 10, con Delegados de Toda la América," *Excélsior,* 15 August 1961, 5.

[13] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, "Seminar on *Amparo, Habeas Corpus* and Other Similar Remedies" (New York, N.Y.: United Nations, 1962), 5.

[14] "25 Países en la Junta Sobre Derecho: México Hará Amplia Explicación de su ley de Amparo," *Excélsior,* 14 August 1961, 8.

emphasized that no resolutions would be made: rather, the seminar would only be an exchange of experiences excluding all political issues, and chiefly concerned with technical matters. Yet other members declared their desire for the adoption of jurisdictional recourses similar to that of amparo across the globe. Attorney General Fernando López Arias affirmed Mexico's unique legal instrument stood as an effective remedy for mending any violation to the rights and liberties of man. Standing in for President Adolfo López Mateos, the attorney general explained that Mexico's desire was not simply to make of amparo an article for export, "We have never pretended to be a model for any nation on earth. There should be no misunderstanding on that fact," he declared. Yet he proposed close scrutiny on the concept that became the basis for Article Eight of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the efforts of the Mexican delegation to the San Francisco conference in 1948, where the "writ of amparo was elevated to the category of an international legal instrument."[15]

John P. Humphrey then proceeded with his own remarks. "It is uniquely suited to hold a human rights seminar on *amparo* and habeas corpus in Mexico," he stated, "the country where the great institution of amparo was born over a hundred years ago." Humphrey saw these two instruments as the most effective in law for protecting human rights. While familiar with the criticisms directed toward the United Nations, he assured his audience that it was hard to measure the exact progress the organization had made in the terms of human rights. The Canadian then acknowledged that perhaps the "most important contribution has been in changing certain traditional attitudes in these matters and the contribution in creating, both in the national as well as in the

[15] "Derechos de Amparo en Todas las Naciones: Tesis de México al Inaugurarse el Seminario de Derechos Humanos," *Excélsior,* 16 August 1961, 1; Héctor Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," *Lawyers of the Americas* 13:3 (Winter 1981), 363.

international sphere, the climate of public opinion conducive for the respect of human rights." These seminars certainly opened a space for discussing individual protections framed in human rights terms.[16]

Humphrey also worked toward keeping the seminar free of political oration. Noting a certain cultural affinity among the Latin American delegates for sidetracking important issues, he wrote, "Latinos ran true to form; their speeches were unusually brilliant and sometimes erudite and well documented, but they were inclined to skate around reality." Regarding this particular Chilean seminar, Humphrey also mentioned "he would have been happier to hear one of them say, for example, that the reason a particular institution didn't work was that the judges were poorly paid or that there was political interference."[17] Perhaps with the performance of past seminars in mind, he reminded the Mexico City delegation that although their governments selected them, they should engage as guests of the United Nations and of the Mexican government, as citizens of the world, as men of good will, as experts basing their opinions on their great expertise. In other words, Humphrey hoped to minimize political bickering that surfaced when delegates acted as ideologues of their home countries. In his experience, that had often been the case when Soviet and U.S. delegates sat in the same room discussing human rights.[18]

Certainly, Humphrey hoped for concrete resolutions. From the very beginning, these seminars focused on a particular legal instrument native to the host country. Often times this approach proved invaluable. The young UN Human Rights

---

[16] "Derechos de Amparo en Todas las Naciones: Tesis de México al Inaugurarse el Seminario de Derechos Humanos," *Excélsior,* 16 August 1961, 15. UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 12.

[17] Humphrey, *Human Rights & the United Nations,* 248.

[18] "Derechos de amparo en todas las naciones: Tesis de México al inaugurarse el Seminario de Derechos Humanos," *Excélsior,* 16 August 1961, 15.

Commission and its leaders, had to tacitly negotiate spaces for non-imposing rights promotion during a volatile political climate of leftist revolutionary movements. They advocated a national, legal, and institutional approach, contrasting that of social leaders demanding change from urban streets or rural backwaters. Nevertheless, by framing the seminars as neutral legal conferences, Humphrey hoped the participants would return home and develop legislation pertinent to institutional reform for the protection of rights. At the time he cited as precedent for action the establishment of a parliamentary commissioner (ombudsman) in New Zealand, an idea that grew out of a seminar in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).[19]

Probably to the organizer's displeasure, these human rights conferences also opened a space for demonstrators. In Mexico City, "leftist militants protested in the streets against the incarceration of the painter, David Alfaro Siqueiros," wrote Humphrey in his memoir. In the 1940s, the Mexican public came to know Siqueiros both for his monumental frescos and for his part in an attempt on Leon Trotsky's life. At the time Siqueiros, a staunch Stalinist and Mexican Communist Party member, was one of Mexico's most renowned political prisoners, incarcerated in 1960 for criticizing the Mexican government in defense of the teachers' and electricians' unions.[20] Yet, UN leaders did not seek association with social movements, nor did they feel compelled to engage in local controversies. On the contrary, Humphrey kept human rights debates among professional men and within the confines of the private spaces of hotel conference rooms.[21]

---

[19] "Derechos de amparo en todas las naciones: Tesis de México al inaugurarse el Seminario de Derechos Humanos," *Excélsior,* 16 August 1961, 15.

[20] Anthony White, *Siqueiros: Biography of a Revolutionary Artist* (U.S.A.: Booksurge, 2008), 381-392.

[21] "Derechos de amparo en todas las naciones: Tesis de México al inaugurarse el Seminario de Derechos Humanos," *Excélsior,* 16 August 1961, 15.

Nor did Humphrey resent the Mexican government's lack of "official entertainment." Humphrey suspected the administration downplayed the seminar due to the Siqueiros protests. At least for him, government disengagement proved "a relief." Less time mingling with presidential representatives meant more travel. Humphrey's diaries reveal him to have been an avid local traveler with a passion for bird watching. While on official trips he most often toured alongside his wife Jeanne Godreau, whom he met while sailing to France soon after graduating from McGill University Law School in Montreal. In this particular trip, he and Jeanne took a trip to the Teotihuacán archeological site located on the outskirts of Mexico City, last visited by both in 1940. That same weekend, one of the Mexican delegates invited the couple and other seminar attendees to a ranch where Humphrey and Jeanne drank tequila and tasted turtle for the very first time. The latter proved "unappetizing", but "thanks perhaps to the tequila, we ate it with no bad results," wrote Humphrey.[22]

With the unraveling legal discussions surfaced representatives' divergent understandings of human rights. For instance, U.S representative Assistant Attorney General Katzenbach brought up the importance of placing limits on public power as key in the protection of the "rights of man," which he used interchangeably with "human rights." He argued human rights should be guaranteed by making sure that public officials correctly applied laws, and added that authorities should also be vigilant of the actions of the executive branch. Katzenbach's insistence on the executive

[22] "Derechos de amparo en todas las naciones: Tesis de México al inaugurarse el Seminario de Derechos Humanos," *Excélsior,* 16 August 1961, 15.

perhaps referred to Latin America's history with powerful leaders whose administrations had more than once resulted in overreaches and dictatorial governments.[23]

Then came the first order of business, calling for the identification of "judicial remedies" for individual rights. In this case, the scope of protections happened to center on political rights, such as those involving the

> right to freedom of movement; right to be free from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile; right to be free from torture and from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; right to a fair trial; right to freedom of opinion and of expression; right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association . . .

And lastly mentioned were "social and economic rights," which were largely absent from the discussions. The promptness and effectiveness of these remedies also generated concern. In this legalistic consideration, the "authority or person against whose acts these remedies" applied spurred the most debate. Finally, participants discussed the protection of individual rights under "emergency situations," which given the Latin American political context of the 1960s most likely meant military dictatorships.[24]

Particularities in Collectivities: Genealogy of Amparo

Thereafter, the discussion centered mainly on amparo. Since its inception in 1840s, the writ of amparo had failed to spur the interest of Mexican legal scholars, probably until the second half of the twentieth century. In the early 1980s Héctor Fix-Zamudio, a conference attendee and well-respected research professor from the

[23] "Con la aplicación de las leyes deben garantizarse los derechos humanos: La autoridad judicial debería vigilar al ejecutivo, dice el Procurador Katzenbach," *Excélsior,* 17 August 1961, 1; UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 34.

[24] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 6, 9-10.

National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), admitted that it had been US scholars who had "written most extensively on the Mexican amparo." At least the conference's president, Felipe Tena Ramírez, had published an article on the writ in 1955, and most of the Mexican delegation possessed basic knowledge of amparo.[25] Tena Ramírez and Fix-Zamudio both went on to publish material on the subject in the succeeding decade. While amparo stands as an important judicial remedy today, as a tool for human rights protections it remains unknown or misunderstood and in large part absent from the language used by human rights leaders in the country.[26] For scholars underscoring the writ's peninsular heritage, the origin of amparo dates to the mid-thirteenth century. Rooted in Spanish law, both "amparo" and *amparamiento* first appeared in a Castilian legal code established during the reign of Alfonso X of Castile, also known as Alfonso "*El Sabio*" or the "The Wise" (1221-1284).[27] *Las Siete Partidas* or The Seven Parts, included provisions regarding local laws (*fueros*), codes of conduct for royal leaders, war, justice, family relationships, trade, and criminal law. The latter even delineated the mischiefs of practices such as those of sorcery and fortune telling. References most closely resembling the modern notion of amparo can be found in the third *partida,* which provides a clause for appeals by "taking matters to higher courts or through asking the king's mercy."[28]

By the sixteenth century, amparo as an instrument informing individual rights had emerged from complaint hearings in the region of Aragón in northeastern Spain. At

---

[25] Felipe Tena Ramírez, "The Mexican *amparo* procedure as a means of protecting human rights," and "El aspecto mundial del amparo. Su expansión internacional," *México ante el pensamiento jurídico-social de occidente,* edited by Luis Chico Goerne (Mexico: Edit. Jus, 1955).

[26] Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 361 [see footnote 1].

[27] *Ibid.,* 364.

[28] Madaline W. Nichols, "Las Siete Partidas," *California Law Review* 20:3 (March 1932), 275; Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 364.

least one scholar links this Aragonese procedure of *manifestación de personas*, or "demonstration of persons," to the modern-day amparo writ used in defense individual rights as outlined in Latin American constitutions. As such, peoples' demonstrations hearings transferred to the Spanish colonies indirectly through the Law of the Indies, a colonial blueprint crafted during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabel.[29] Subsequent forms of amparo emerged in colonial Spanish-America to safeguard real property. Referred to as "royal" or "colonial" protections (*amparos reales* or *coloniales*), in theory these legal provisions protected indigenous communal landholdings from illegal seizures by Spanish officials.[30]

Most Latin American scholars underscore the Spanish genealogy of amparo, as opposed to linkage to the British habeas corpus. Most will also argue that the Latin American writ affords a broader set of protections than the British equivalent, which does little more than safeguard against arbitrary detention. If indeed the modern writ of amparo derives from colonial Spain, then Víctor Fairén Guillén argument regarding complaint hearings achieving "a wider scope of protection than did its contemporary, the British habeas corpus," would somewhat explain the modern-day differences of both legal instruments.[31]

Nevertheless, tracking the exact origin of amparo requires deciphering Latin America's broader legal tradition. The latter proves a challenging task given the varying ideological influences. After the revolutionary wars, independence leaders forged new constitutions by borrowing principally from the North American founding

[29] Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 365-366.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid.*

fathers and their own Spanish predecessors.[32] For example, historian Jaime E. Rodríguez O. underscores continuity between the colonial legal practices and those established after independence. In the case of Mexico, Rodríguez writes of the Spanish heritage in Mexico's Constitution kept "with Hispanic constitutional practices" of "a powerful legislature and a weak executive." Conversely, John Lynch's work on the origins of Spanish American nationality speaks to the role the United States played in exciting "the imagination of Spanish Americans" through various forms of economic and cultural contact. Lynch cites the writings of Thomas Paine, John Quincy Adams and Thomas Jefferson, as well as copies of the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution, all circulating in Spanish America in the decades preceding the revolutionary wars, as sources of ideological influence. For Lynch, it is no coincidence that "Constitutions in Venezuela, Mexico and elsewhere would be closely modeled on that of the United States." Yet, Mexico's first constitution of 1824 proved more of a synthesis of the U.S. and the Spanish Constitution of 1812.[33]

Still, the modern-day amparo did not become an immediate fixture of Latin American constitutions until the mid-nineteenth century. Much like other Latin American legal frameworks, Mexico's constitution evolved to become a distinctly nationalist construct. After independence, Latin American liberal elites had "succeeded in introducing the notions of constitutionalism and modern representative government

---

[32] Hilda Sabato recognizes "ideas and concepts originating in the Iberian and French Enlightenment, Anglo-Saxon liberalism and civic humanism, and French Jacobinism" in some of Latin American countries first constitutions. Hilda Sabato, "On Political Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century Latin America," *The American Historical Review* 106:4 (October 2001), 1292.

[33] Jaime E. Rodríguez O., "The Emancipation of America," *The American Historical Review* 105:1 (Feb. 2000), 149; John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826* (New York: Norton, 1973), 29; José Antonio Aguilar Rivera, *El manto liberal: los poderes de emergencia en México, 1821-1876* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 2001), 3.

in the context of traditional political systems."[34] At least early in the nineteenth century, among the competing ideas of citizenship, the liberal notion of "the modern citizen" entailed "the abstract and universal individual, free and equal to the rest."[35] It was precisely during this early form of political liberalism in Mexico, that the writ of amparo emerged as an instrument for the protection of individual rights: that is, as a mechanism that legal thinkers recognize as a distinctly Mexican invention, or "indigenously Mexican."[36]

The writ of amparo emerged during the long and turbulent nineteenth century. The various groups of people making up the Mexican republic had lived through an unending series of civil wars, local rebellions, foreign invasions and at least one territorial succession. In the course of a single century, political and military leaders forged, altered, and reformulated their country's constitutions to meet the social and political needs of the time. In the words of the renowned Mexican intellectual Daniel Cosío Villegas, Mexico's constitutional history proved "long and painful."[37] He, like many scholars, partly attributed this to the fact that "liberal ideas were applied in countries which were highly stratified, socially and racially, and economically underdeveloped, and in which the tradition of centralized state authority ran deep."[38] Until 1855 liberalism remained very much a minority movement that consistently

---

[34] Gabriel L. Negretto and José Antonio Aguilar-Rivera, "Rethinking the Legacy of the Liberal State in Latin America: The cases of Argentina (1853-1916) and Mexico (1857-1910)," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32: 2 (May 2000), 361.

[35] Hilda Sabato, "On Political Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century Latin America," 1292.

[36] Richard D. Baker, *Judicial Review in Mexico: A Study of the Amparo Suit* (Austin: Published for the Institute of Latin American Studies by the University of Texas Press, 1971), xii.

[37] Daniel Cosío Villegas, *La constitución de 1857 y sus críticos* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998), 16.

[38] Charles A. Hale, "Political and social ideas in Latin America, 1870-1930," *The Cambridge History of Latin America, Volume IV c. 1870 to 1930,* edited by Leslie Bethell (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 368.

clashed with the "inherited colonial order of institutions and social patterns."[39] Two of these institutions, the Church and the military, often intervened on behalf of their special juridical privileges (*fueros*) established during the colonial period.[40]

Attempts to forge a judicial system governed by an individualist conception thus failed to take root prior to the 1860s. The social and political unrest frightened the governing elites and the "initial liberal drive was soon replaced by a more conservative mood."[41] While the Liberal revolution of Benito Juárez and Miguel Lerdo de Tejada between 1855 and 1867 may have nipped at the old corporations (church, communal land, military), new "collectivities" emerged in their place.[42] Just as the Spanish colonial authorities had dealt with the "rural village as a corporate, legal unit of the empire," a new and more conservative liberal consensus emerged in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, one that incorporated individuals into the national polity as groups, "construing the individual as an integral part of the social organism."[43] The scientific, positivist infused version, which Alan Knight refers to as developmental Liberalism, "provided the language of political consensus as well as a 'unifying myth'" with just enough social and political satiability that allowed for the economic growth seen during the thirty-five-year reign of President Porfirio Díaz (1876-1880; 1884-1911). With the emergence of the era of the so-called *científicos,* a faction of men who based their claim to

---

[39] Guy P. Thomson argues that Liberalism prior to 1855 was a minority movement that only became a "national political consensus" between 1855 and 1867. Guy P. Thomson, "Popular Aspects of Liberalism in Mexico, 1848-1888," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 10:3 (1991), 267-68; Charles A. Hale, "Political and social ideas in Latin America, 1870-1930," 369.

[40] Frank Safford, "Politics, ideology and society in post-Independence Spanish America," *The Cambridge History of Latin America, Volume III, From Independence to c. 1870,* edited Leslie Bethell (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 348, 352.

[41] Hilda Sabato, "On Political Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century Latin America," 1292-93.

[42] Thomson, "Popular Aspects of Liberalism in Mexico, 1848-1888," 280.

[43] William B. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979), 2; Charles A. Hale, "Political and social ideas in Latin America, 1870-1930," 369.

authority on technical knowledge and training, ideas regarding individual rights soon digressed into rights through polity membership in a way strongly reminiscent of Mexico's colonial past.[44]

Within a traditionally corporatist or collectively organized Mexico, the amparo stood as one of the few instruments for individual rights protections. And as procedural instrument, other Latin American countries adopted this same writ, but not in its exact form. Oddly enough, though, its actual authorship remains somewhat unclear. José Emilio Rabasa (1856-1930), the well-respected liberal diplomat, historian, jurist, and occasional novelist, eulogized and credited the *tapatío* Mariano Otero (1817-1850) as the author of the writ of amparo, which eventually became Article 101 and 102 of the 1857 liberal constitution. Rabasa admired the American Constitution. While in the United States he carefully studied the country's system of constitutional law. In the words of Charles A. Hale, Rabasa idealized the way Anglo-American constitutionalism had developed. Probably for that reason, Rabasa argued that Otero had taken "the path of the American Constitution, found the formula to enforce individual guarantees and established, in a masterful way, the writ of *amparo*." Although he also expressed concern over the writ's limitations, which he believed had derived as a "carelessly formulated version" of the Due Process Clause found in the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.[45]

Perhaps Rabasa was correct in crediting Otero as the original author of the constitutional writ. When Felipe Tena Ramírez gave his acceptance speech as the

---

[44] Thomson, "Popular Aspects of Liberalism in Mexico, 1848-1888," 267-68.

[45] Mariano Otero "tomó el sendero de la constitución americana, encontró la formula para hacer efectivas las garantías individuales y fundó de un modo magistral el juicio de amparo." Charles A. Hale, Lucrecia Orensanz and Dra. María del Refugio González, "La tradición del derecho continental europeo y el constitucionalismo en el México del siglo XX: el legado de Emilio Rabasa," *Historia mexicana* 48:1 (Jul.-Sep. 1998), 107-109.

newly elected Chairman of the Mexico City Human Rights seminar, he "noted that the institution had originated a little over a century ago," which in 1961 would have meant he too looked to Otero as the true author to the modern version of amparo.[46] A committed liberal, Otero aimed "to protect the individual in federal tribunals against legislative, administrative or jurisdictional acts in violation of individual rights included in the first 29 articles of the Constitution." Interestingly, once the amparo became a constitutional institution its scope broadened to prevent "federal interference with State sovereignty and vise versa." It was also in 1867 that amparo acquired similar protections as those of the writ of habeas corpus, which protects against "illegal arrest and confiscation." Rabasa was indeed correct about the U.S. influence on amparo, given that the latter's use as an instrument of due process was apparently "taken almost verbatim from the Fifth Amendment."[47]

Even so, another regional statesman receives credit with its authorship at a state level. Seven years before Mariano Otero added his version of the amparo to the Reform Act of 1847, Manuel Crescencio Rejón (1799-1849) had already designed and named the amparo judicial procedure for the 1841 Yucatecan Constitution.[48] Rejón, along with Pedro C. Pérez and Darío Escalante, headed a committee that drafted a number of amendments for the state constitution. From this project emerged the writ of amparo when Rejón proposed that the Supreme Court have the power "to defend (*amparar*) individuals in the enjoyment of both their civil and political rights."[49] These individual protections would be afforded through the defense against "the application of

[46] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 12.

[47] Pedro Pablo Camargo, "The Right to Judicial Protection: 'Amparo' and Other Latin American Remedies for the Protection of Human Rights," *Lawyers of the Americas* 3:2 (Jan. 1971), 202-203.

[48] Richard D. Baker, *Judicial Review in Mexico: A Study of the Amparo Suit*, 12-13; Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 368.

[49] Baker, *Judicial Review in Mexico*, 13.

unconstitutional laws and decrees of the legislature and illegal actions of the executive." Perhaps Rejón's amparo spoke to the local quest for legal defense mechanisms against federal encroachment upon a region that continually rejected incorporation into the yet unconsolidated Mexican nation-state. According to Pedro Pablo Camargo, when broadened into a constitutional remedy, it served "also as a means of preventing federal interference with State sovereignty and vice versa." In the context of nineteenth-century Yucatán, the amparo proved less an institution of individual rights protections and more of an instrument for state rights framed in an emergent liberal language of universal suffrage, sovereignty, and individual representation.[50]

Regardless of the amparo's origins, by the mid-twentieth century, UN representatives like John P. Humphrey identified it as instrument for individual rights protections. But unlike the North American or British habeas corpus, the Mexican writ had evolved within a society where rights discussions revolved around group membership, not all that different than a century earlier. Furthermore, the use of amparo within Mexico's legal community differed significantly from its originally intended goal and "has a much broader scope and field of application than" its habeas corpus counterpart.[51] Nevertheless, amparo by 1961 had been selected by international representatives to mean individual representation as understood by the Western and First World countries. That is precisely the perspective Mexican scholars adopted thereafter. Felipe Tena Ramírez described the utility of amparo "as a means of challenging the abuses committed by the public authorities, the venality of the judges

---

[50] Pedro Pablo Camargo, "The Right to Judicial Protection: 'Amparo' and Other Latin American Remedies for the Protection of Human Rights," *Lawyers of the Americas* 3:2 (Jan. 1971), 202-203; Richard D. Baker, *Judicial Review in Mexico: A Study of the Amparo Suit*, 12-13, 17.

[51] Carlos Sánchez Mejorada, "The Writ of Amparo. Mexican Procedure to Protect Human Rights," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 243 (Jan. 1946), 107.

and violations of the laws."[52] In the context of the UN seminar, representatives discussed amparo in the context of individual protections, knowing little of the abuse of the writ in the latter decades—particularly by private companies and corporations.

Flirting with Universalities: Promoting Human Rights in 20th Century Corporatist Mexico

Humphrey and his fellow activists may have drawn inspiration from the example of twentieth-century Europe's terrible ideological wars, but as the foregoing material demonstrates, they were in fact entering a nation with a long history of debate regarding rights and their legal formulation. The chief difference was between those espousing individual vs. corporate rights. Within the international context of the 1950s and 1960s, the early definition of the term "human rights" had come to signify the protection of the individual from the excesses of the state. In the backdrop of Latin America in the 1960s, where the state placed economic and social rights above political guarantees, the United Nations promoted a collage of applications under the term's insignia, especially in political matters. Within the UN internationally driven campaign at fortifying the position of the individual rights within more collectively based societies, the initial definition of human rights meant individual and political rights. This emphasis paved the way for the infusion of human rights into U.S. foreign policy in the 1970s. Within the Cold War conflict, human rights often functioned as a weapon against the Soviet Union, whereby the U.S. government attempted to underscore its role as a "protector" of rights and simultaneously counter any arguments regarding communist policies as empathic toward social and economic rights. However, rights policy could also be used to challenge criticism regarding American backing of dictators.

[52] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 12.

In the face of these ambiguities, John P. Humphrey promoted individual rights found within liberal constitutions. His original idea initially used the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to fill constitutional gaps regarding individual rights. This meant safeguarding individual and internationalist notions of rights, first through the traditional and constitutional avenues, without necessarily recurring to avenues outside the context of the state. Even legal scholar Fiz-Zamudio continually emphasized that a prerequisite to resorting to international provisions included the exhaustion of domestic avenues.[53] For that reason the 1961 Conference on the amparo and other legal mechanisms focused primarily on debating the application of national juridical instruments for safeguarding individual rights, which at least Carlos Sánchez Mejorada in 1946 believed that human rights in legal terminology were "incorrectly called 'individual guarantees.'"[54] In the case of the amparo, the focus on the individual tended to downplay its potential for group protections; according to Fiz-Zamudio "one common purpose of the amparo is to protect . . . whether in individual or group form."[55] Although initially centered on the local approach, by the 1970s this legal selectivity gave way to a new view that conceptualized human rights as individual, universal, in antagonism with group demands, and often seen as anti-national.

The first clash between individual and group rights arose during a discussion on the variations of the amparo in Latin America. Mariano Azuela, judge of the Supreme Court of Justice, attempted to bring the debate back to the essentials of these legal

---

[53] "…en cuanto se ha establecido el principio del agotamiento previo de tales medios de impugnación internos como requisito previo e indispensable para acudir ante la vía internacional." Héctor Fiz-Zamudio, "Introducción al estudio procesal comparativo de la protección interna de los derechos humanos," in *Veinte años de evolución de los derechos humanos: seminario internacional* (México: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 1974), 172.

[54] Carlos Sánchez Mejorada, "The Writ of Amparo. Mexican Procedure to Protect Human Rights," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 243 (Jan. 1946), 107.

[55] Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 366.

instruments, instead of getting caught up on the diverse applications of the amparo throughout the region. Azuela began by stating "leaders of the French Revolution had ingeniously believed that it was sufficient to proclaim the rights of the individual and that infringements of personal liberty were rooted in ignorance." In scorn of the French approach to consecrating rights simply through the creation of states and the drafting of constitutions, Azuela spoke of the institutions needed to actively protect these codified rights. In the case of workers, he believed that rights should "be achieved through special organizations" (trade unions). It was only when an individual lacked membership in a union that he or she could turn to the writ of amparo for protection. In this reading, the amparo functioned as a last resort that "did not leave the worker undefended, but operated as an indirect safeguard for him." But even then, the worker first had to appeal a type of union conciliation and arbitration board (*juntas de conciliación y arbitraje*). The union then deliberated and decided upon non-member and individual worker's rights, and only after exhausting that avenue could a person request protection through the amparo writ.[56]

Azuela's reading had deep historical roots. Since the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the government negotiated rights through institutionalized means. President Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928), while exercising power behind the scenes, created the *Partido Nacional Revolucionario* (National Revolutionary Party, PNR) in 1929, which eventually became the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI) establishing a non-armed and negotiated approach for the country's political leadership through a single-party structure. By the time of populist Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) came to power, he consolidated the corporatist system of

[56] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 45.

representation by incorporating the populace into the official party through group membership. Indeed, Cárdenas relied on this system to help carry out his landmark policies of land reform and the 1938 nationalization of the foreign-dominated petroleum industry. Cárdenas successfully incorporated three broad social groups into the party structure: *campesinos* (rural peasants), the middle classes, and urban industrial workers. The military successfully resisted formal incorporation, but over the course of the next thirty years was professionalized and depoliticized to the point that it no longer represented a challenge to civilian control. In that form, the government retained a comfortable level of stability from 1940 until 1968. When instances of rural or urban protest skirmishes emerged, as in the case of the height of the railroad workers in 1958-1959 or the brutal assassination of agrarian leader Rubén Jaramillo in 1962, the government, operating through official or non-official channels, resolved conflict through a combination of negotiation and subtle repression.[57]

As for worker demands, the government operated – and continues to operate – through the arbitration and conciliation board system that Mariano Azuela referenced. Its legal function includes "registering collective labor agreements, resolving individual and collective labor disputes, and (in local-jurisdiction economic activities) registering labor unions." The board representatives include business, government, and labor representatives. As a type of intermediary between workers and businesses, these boards determine "the legality of strike petitions, and enforce a variety of specific legal requirements regarding collective labor contracts, working conditions, minimum wages,

[57] For additional information on the professionalization of politics in Mexico through the removal of the military from politics and the establishment of intelligence services in the country see Aaron W. Navarro's *Political Intelligence and the Creation of Modern Mexico, 1938-1954* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010); for more on Jaramillo see Tanalís Padilla, *Rural Resistance in the Land of Zapata: The Jaramillista Movement and the Myth of the Pax Priísta, 1940-1962* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

and so forth." In some cases, both at the federal and local level, they stand as the main administrative channel for employee demands after workers and employers fail to reach an agreement. One of the largest local arbitration boards in Chihuahua, created in 1936 and located in Ciudad Juárez, has jurisdiction over grievances varying from the construction and agricultural sector to that of the university. Whatever their original intention, these boards over time came to favor management. Even today, places like the border *maquiladora* region possess an air of anti-unionism whereby government authorities consistently work to attract foreign investment by promising a progressive labor environment.[58]

It is possible that northern Mexico border states may possess more individualist driven approaches to rights demands than more union embedded places like Mexico City or Veracruz. This historical phenomenon predates the Revolution. In his work on salaried workers on haciendas, Friedrich Katz describes the northern region as one possessing very distinct labor patterns in comparison to southern or central Mexico. Workers in the "North," according to Katz, showed a certain independent streak from their *hacendado,* such is the case of laborers who served as armies for their bosses. These "resident peons on northern haciendas had managed to secure a large measure of autonomy from the hacienda." Other factors offering wage autonomy included the growth of the Southwestern economy in the United States and the expansion of the railroads. With larger labor markets and more opportunities for mobility, Mexican *hacendados* had to offer better wages in order to secure a stable workforce.[59] In other

[58] Kevin J. Middlebrook and Cirila Quintero Ramírez, "Protecting Workers' Rights in Mexico: Local Conciliation and Arbitration Boards, Union Registration, and Conflict Resolution in the 1990s," *Labor Studies Journal* 23:1 (Spring 1998), 22-32.

[59] Friedrich Katz, "Labor Conditions on Haciendas in Porfirian Mexico: Some Trends and Tendencies," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54:1 (Feb. 1974), 31-32.

words, the north has tended to possess a far more mobile workforce and one inevitably linked and often persuaded toward the North American labor market. This certainly played into the formation of the business culture characteristic of northern cities like Monterrey and Chihuahua City and the border's *maquiladora* belts.

While Azuela focused on the amparo for workers left out of a union, the Brazilian delegate discussed the breach of power by union leadership. Unlike *habeas corpus* and *amparo*, the Brazilian *mandado de segurança* gave legal jurisdiction over mishaps committed by labor leaders. Mr. Antonio Calvo, Attorney General of the Federal Government, believed "the acts of labour leaders were subject to the jurisdiction of the *mandado de segurança.*" But Calvo recognized that some legal scholars believed unions functioned under public law, while "others still considered them as mixed institutions of both private and public law."[60] If indeed labor leadership were treated as public officials and held liable for ill or unjust decisions, then that would in some form reconfigure the internal workings of union leaderships and their relationship with the government. In the case of Mexico, amparo did not possess such jurisdiction over unions like the protections afforded by the Brazilian legal instrument for individual rights protections.

Additional debate emerged regarding the inapplicability of amparo to other Revolutionary corporate pillars: education, land, and water rights. It all began when a Venezuelan Professor of Constitutional Law, José Guillermo Andueza Acuña, called attention to inconsistencies within Mexico's 1917 Constitution. "I found parts that are incongruent with Latin American public law," and some of which "drew my attention" said the Professor. On this fourth day of the conference, he hoped the Mexican

[60] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 1, 46.

delegates could explain how they interpreted those articles that denied any type of legal protections, whether it be amparo or some other legal construction. For Andueza these articles stood in divergence with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[61] Ignacio Burgoa, Professor of Law of the UNAM responded to the contradictions Andueza found in a paragraph of Article three and another from Article twenty seven of the Mexican Constitution "which precluded the remedy of *amparo* in any form whatsoever in cases concerning education or the apportionment or restitution of lands or waters."[62]

Education and land reform stood as two key institutions of the revolutionary process of nation-building. For that reason they have attracted heated criticized and equally heated defense. Mr. Burgoa seemed chiefly concerned with clarifying some historical precedents for the articles' air of unconstitutionality. The Canadian and Costa Rican rapporteurs of the seminar, Eldon M. Woolliams and Carlos Bolaños Morales, summarized Burgoa's comments regarding education, which he argued "had been considered an essential human freedom by the Constituent Congress of 1850-1857 but in 1934 had become an obligation of the Government and not a right of the governed." Although Article three remained within the section of guarantees of the constitution, the article "embodied no guarantee and recognized no right" and for that reason the recourse of amparo was not applicable.[63] With Article three as an obligation and not a right, the government became the principal educator of the Mexican urban and rural populace, superseding the position of the Catholic Church. Through a federally directed system under the auspices of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública*

---

[61] "Parte del Artículo 3º es Intromisión Dictatorial, Dijo el Ministro Azuela," *Excélsior* 19 August 1961, 5; "En contra del Artículo Tercero," *Excélsior,* 21 August 1961, 6.

[62] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 2, 50; *Excélsior,* 19 August 1961, 5.

[63] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 50.

(Secretariat of Public Education, SEP), today one of the largest bureaucracies in all of Latin America, revolutionary planners brought education to the most remote corners of the countryside. Created in 1921, the SEP represented "the most important institution of social engineering during that critical period of State and nation formation," according to Stephen E. Lewis.[64]

This program aimed at forging a national ideology did so at the expense of certain freedoms commonly associated with education. Or at least that seemed to be the consensus for those that upheld the third section of Article twenty-six of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children." And even while Burgoa explained, "it was purely a historical accident of copyright that the article had remained in the section of the Constitution which dealt with guarantees," he rightly clarified that "education could be given privately in Mexico in accordance with the freedom of expression, in which case article 3 was without effect."[65] While Burgoa recognized constitutional imperfections, he nonetheless used historical explanations to justify what the Venezuela delegate, at least, had deemed a contradiction and possible infringement upon individual rights.

---

[64] Stephen E. Lewis, "Una victoria pírrica en el México posrevolucionario: los finqueros alemanes, las escuelas Artículo 123 y la formación del Estado en la costa de Chiapas, 1934-1942," *Anuario de estudios americanos* 67:2 (July-December 2010): 446. For additional readings on educational policies during the revolutionary period see: Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997); Stephen E. Lewis, *The Ambivalent Revolution: Forging State and Nation in Chiapas, 1910-1945* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Jocelyn Olcott, *Revolutionary Women in Postrevolutionary Mexico* (Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 2005); Ana María Kapelusz-Poppi, "Educación socialista, modernización científica y organización sindical durante el gobierno de Lázaro Cárdenas en México (1934-1940)," *Temas de historia argentina y Americana* 11 (2007): 119-151; Andrés Ríos Molina, "'Dictating the Suitable Way of Life': Mental Hygiene for Children and Workers in Socialist Mexico, 1934-1940," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 49:2 (Spring 2013): 142-166.

[65] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 50.

On the other hand, Mariano Azuela fiercely criticized Article three for representing juridical legacies of the Revolution. What Burgoa saw as a constitutional "imperfection," the Supreme Court of Justice Azuela described as a "dictatorial imposition." Azuela began by stating that in the context of this international seminar, he was not going to defend his rights as a Mexican when responding to the important inquiry made by the Venezuelan delegate. As a private citizen, and not as a representative of his government, he argued, "the people of Mexico were living under a precarious system so far as freedom of education was concerned."[66]

Ghosts of Mexico's ideological past stood behind much of this discussion. Azuela himself was the grandson of the Jalisciense author by the same name, famous for his revolutionary novel *Los de abajo (The Underdogs)* published in the United States in midst of the conflict. The installments were first printed by the *El Paso del Norte* newspaper and published in book form in Mexico in 1920, receiving positive reviews.[67] The novel faithfully reflected the elder Azuela's profoundly porfirian views, contemptuously portraying revolutionary soldiers as ignorant masses carried along by forces they neither understood nor desired. The younger Azuela's viewpoint kept faith with his family's roots. He argued that simply because Article three belonged to the revolutionary sector, that it should not be unfalteringly upheld.[68] For Azuela the government had too much educational oversight, and Article Three gave the Mexican government unfettered power to suppress any institution it deemed unfit. Any proposals for new schools required "official permission, which was granted at the whim of the authorities," and

---

[66] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 51; *Excélsior,* 19 August 1961, 1.

[67] Benjamin Lytal, "War & Peace: Azuela's 'Underdogs' and Bosman's 'Mafeking Road,'" *The New York Sun* 23 July 2008 <http://www.nysun.com/arts/war-peace-azuelas-underdogs-and-bosmans-mafeking/82420/>; *Excélsior,* 17 February 1920, 4.

[68] "En Contra del Artículo Tercero," *Excélsior,* 21 August 1961, 6.

inevitably "tied to the official programmes laid down by the Government." The amparo could be utilized to challenge Article Three of the constitution, even if the freedom of education was clearly violated, or schools unjustly closed.[69] Interestingly enough, the delegates themselves recognized that even while not judicially recognized, the revolutionary government did tolerate freedom of education, a fact evidenced by the number of private institutions across the nation. Nevertheless, this article spurred significant debate and disagreement for its historical links to the revolutionary and nation-building process.

Azuela's recycled porfirian attitudes naturally resonated with people for whom the revolution had in one way or another proved unsatisfactory. Political discontent cloaked by the so-called Mexican Miracle (the rapid economic growth between the 1940s and1970s) surfaced in popular culture. It was Daniel Cosío Villegas' 1947 essay, "*La crisis de México,*" or "The Crisis of Mexico," that opened up the arena for public debates regarding the failed promises of the Mexican Revolution.[70] On the big screen, Luis Buñuel's 1950 film *Los olvidados* (*The Forgotten Ones*) "exposed and criticized the fissures, cracks and failures of Classical Mexican Cinema," a genre that Buñuel disliked for its tendency to deal in revolutionary, yet folkloric images of Mexico. This highly acclaimed film underscored the ideological vacuum of the revolutionary project to the artist and intellectual classes.[71]

---

[69] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 51.

[70] "México viene padeciendo hace ya algunos años una crisis que se agrava día con día; pero como en los casos de enfermedad mortal en una familia, nadie habla del asunto, o lo hace con un optimismo trágicamente irreal. La crisis proviene que las metas de la Revolución se han agotado, al grado de que el término mismo de la revolución carece ya de sentido." Daniel Cosío Villegas, "La crisis de México," *Cuadernos americanos* XXXII:2 (March-April 1947), 29.

[71] Ernesto R. Acevedo-Muñoz, *Buñuel and Mexico: The Crisis of National Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 58.

Literary figures too had begun to question the Mexican social order. The author Carlos Fuentes punctured revolutionary discourse in his well-received first novel titled *La región más transparente* (*Where the Air is Clear*). This 1958 work delivers vignettes of characters living side-by-side in Mexico City, a place whose persistent inequalities and sharp class distinctions typify the revolution's ambiguous legacy.[72] Another key work capturing the gaps of the revolutionary myth was the 1961 best-seller by North American anthropologist Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sánchez.* This book proved profoundly controversial when it first appeared in Spanish by the *Fondo de Cultura Económica*, one of the leading publishers since 1934 created by Cosío Villegas himself. The *Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, for example, considered Lewis's study "obscene, defamatory, subversive and antirevolutionary."[73] In fact, the Fondo's Argentine editor, the socialist-leaning Arlando Orfilia, received loud criticisms that led to his ouster from the publishing house he had directed since 1948. This episode led to the creation of a new publishing house in 1966, *Siglo XXI,* which began its trajectory with Lewis' book. *The Children of Sánchez* even made it to the theater under the direction of screenwriter Vicente Leñero, at the request of Lewis himself. These and other contemporary cultural productions portrayed a Mexico City starkly different from the optimistic ideology of the revolutionary party.[74]

The other revolutionary issue that figured into the seminar's conversations included land reform. After 1915 every single president had carried out some version of agrarian reform. President Cárdenas in particular distributed vast amounts of land

---

[72] Carlos Fuentes, *La región más transparente* (México, D.F.: Alfaguara, 1998).

[73] Virginia Bautista, "Los Hijos de Sánchez, un escándalo de medio siglo," *Excélsior,* 7 August 2011.

[74] *Excélsior,* 7 August 2011. Yanet Aguilar Sosa, "La editorial Siglo XXI cimbró el pensamiento," *El Universal,* 28 June 2011.

through the *ejido* system, communally administered and federally controlled land grants. This system, marred by conflict from the beginning, "considered that the engine of agrarian production had to be the *ejido* and reiterated the need to support it with credit and infrastructure." Ideally, the countryside would become the breadbasket for urban centers. However, many peasants concentrated on cultivating for their basic needs (maize) and not commercial crops, and when the plots distributed were of unfertile land without access to water, these thwarted reform expectations for higher agricultural output.[75]

For those Mexicans organized under the land system of collective representation, the amparo writ often proved more an obstacle than a protection. At least ideally, the ejido was created to "arm the peasants and create self-defense units that would enable them to defend their rights," whereby this collective unit would form the basis of social and political organization for the rural countryside.[76] But this collectivity also obstructed a path to individual rights protections. When the Venezuelan representative raised this point to the Mexican delegation, Ignacio Burgoa responded first by stating "the unfair distribution of land had been one of the major evils afflicting the country in the course of its history." While the situation of the rural farmer had deteriorated to some extent since Cárdenas golden age of land reform, many families benefited significantly from land distribution, while others had outgrown the small plots, thus

---

[75] Héctor Aguilar Camín and Lorenzo Meyer, *In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution: Contemporary Mexican History, 1910-1989* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 142-143. For additional readings on land reform in Mexico see: Paul Friedrich, *Agrarian Revolt in a Mexican Village* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); Marjorie Becker, *Setting the Virgin on Fire: Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán Peasants, and the Redemption of the Mexican Revolution* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1995); Adrian A. Bantjes, *As If Jesus Walked on Earth: Cardenismo, Sonora, and the Mexican Revolution* (Wilmington, Del: Scholarly Resources, 1998); Christopher R. Boyer, "Old Loves, New Loyalties: Agrarismo in Michoacán, 1920-1928," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 78:3 (Aug. 1998): 419-55; Jennie Purnell, *Popular Movements and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico: Agraristas and Cristeros in Michoacán* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999).

[76] Aguilar Camín and Meyer, *In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution*, 142-143.

forcing migration upon the succeeding generations. Nevertheless, Burgoa concluded by recognizing that individual rights were not protected under the ejido system. "The 1917 Constitution had prescribed that no petition for *amparo* should be receivable in matters of land tenure, but only in relation to the apportionment or restitution of lands or water to towns," and "that irreceivability had later been restricted for the benefit of small landowners."[77] Whatever the truth behind these politically charged comments, they clearly struck a nerve among national intellectuals. Soon after Burgoa's commentary the seminar's president, Tena Ramírez, announced the change of topic, and Mexico's revolutionary collectivities were not discussed thereafter.[78]

The following day, at least one Mexican delegate came to the defense of the Constitution. Just before the conference attendees left for the city of Cuernavaca in the state of Morelos, located an hour south of Mexico City, UNAM professor Luis Araujo Valdivia defended Mexico's rule of law. Araujo underscored that Article Fourteen and Sixteen of the Mexican Constitution protected human rights with the guarantees afforded by legality and constitutionality.[79] A newspaper article in *Excélsior* stated that Araujo's words seemed in "warm defense of our Constitution, which two days ago was harshly criticized for its article three." Interestingly, the delegate indicated that in addition to these constitutional guarantees for the protection of human rights stood those safeguards afforded with the perpetuation of state sovereignty. A state would

---

[77] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 50-51.

[78] *Excélsior,* 19 August 1961, 5.

[79] "The purpose of article 16 of the Constitution was not to prevent the violation of fundamental rights, such as life, freedom, property or the like, but to protect the individual against any interference; it laid down that it was unlawful to molest any person, or his family, domicile, papers or possessions except under a written order made by a competent authority that set out the legal cause of the proceedings and state the reasons." UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 60; Dos Artículos Constitucionales Protegen los Derechos Humanos: Declaraciones del Catedrático Luis Araujo Valdivia en el Seminario," *Excélsior,* 20 August 1961, 4.

therefore need to seek protection (amparo) when violations of sovereignty occurred. If such were the case, the need to guarantee citizens' rights would proceed through the restitution of constitutional order.[80] Araujo underscored the state's obligation toward protecting human rights by maintaining the rule of law. Yet, this proves especially problematic to individual rights when governmental authorities deem civil unrest as a threat to the rule of law and state sovereignty, as was the case for hundreds of thousands of Latin Americas during the wave of military dictatorships that was soon to engulf most of the region.

Emergency Powers

As observers of Latin American affairs understand, leaders' unwavering defense of sovereignty during the Cold War often justified the restitution of order by calling upon emergency powers. Such was the case that by the 1990s most Latin American countries had come under emergency powers at one point or another as a way to remedy internal dissidence deemed a threat to national security. "Full-blown emergencies typically deploy violence against real or imagined opponents even before the threatened violence by others emerges," according to one author. That proved the case in Uruguay in 1968 and 1970, Argentina in 1976, and Colombia in 1979.[81] Probably the most well-known case of extended use of emergency decrees to govern include those invoked in Guatemala after the 1954 overthrow of Jacobo Árbenz, and in Chile by Augusto Pinochet after overthrowing democratically elected Salvador Allende

[80] *Excélsior,* 20 August 1961, 4.

[81] Kim Lane Scheppele, "Exceptions That Prove the Rule: Embedding Emergency Government in Everyday Constitutional Life," in *The Limits of Constitutional Democracy*, edited by Jeffrey Tulis and Stephen Macedo (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010), 142.

in 1973. Other examples include that of Brazil in the 1960s, Nicaragua in the 1970s, Guatemala in the 1970s and 1980s, or Peru in the 1990s. However, Latin American was certainly no stranger to military coups before 1961, and given the relevance of the topic, conference attendees discussed the extent of juridical remedies for individual rights protections, like amparo, under emergency situations. "All the participants recognized, at least implicitly, that there were in the lives of nations exceptional situations, known as 'state of emergency,' in which it was necessary to restrict the rights of the individual in order to safeguard the security of the state," stated the UN report.[82]

In the case of Mexico, emergency powers were left out of the first constitutions. A group of men led by the priest Miguel Ramos Arizpe (1775-1843) opposed such exclusion from the 1824 Mexican Constitution. Since his participation in the drafting of the 1812 Constitution of Cádiz, Ramos Arizpe stood as a proponent for emergency powers as a realistic response for the context of the time. Yet, this minority group was defeated, mostly because of the reaction against Spanish authoritarianism and the short-lived empire of Agustín de Iturbide (1822-1823). According to one author, emergency provisions were finally incorporated in 1857, after the first constitutions failed to bring order to Mexico and the numerous extrajudicial attempts to bring stability. Thereafter, numerous leaders, most notably Benito Juárez himself, invoked and liberally employed emergency powers.[83]

But prior to delving into discussions regarding individual rights under emergency situations, the delegation met with the president. The August 21 morning session of the seminar concluded at 11:30 a.m., at which point the participants headed

[82] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 25.

[83] José Antonio Aguilar Rivera, *El manto liberal: los poderes de emergencia en México, 1821-1876*, 10; 90-118.

to the National Palace located in Mexico City's main plaza, the Zócalo.[84] President Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964) welcomed the delegation. Often regarded as the last of the authentically popular *prísta*[85] presidents, López Mateos was a highly intelligent man, a notorious *bon vivant*, and a witty conversationalist capable of immense charm. He also suffered from chronic ill health, and in fact died in a coma a mere two years after leaving the presidency. The president (who was in fact rumored to have been born in Guatemala) listened to a brief presentation by Dr. Raúl Cervantes Ahumada on amparo and emergency legislation.[86] Ahumada detailed the long history of Mexico's emergency situations, most of which he attributed to a turbulent nineteenth century and a revolution. In speaking about the last time Mexico lived under such a state, Ahumada paid homage to President Manuel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946), who had invoked emergency powers due to World War II. Ahumada expressed gratitude and admiration for the manner in which Ávila Camacho exercised these; "gently, without extreme violations and in accordance with the laws."[87]

Yet most agreed that under such emergency situations, individual rights remained threatened. Attendee Fiz-Zamudio wrote years later "it can be generally established that the writ of amparo, as consecrated in several Latin American constitutions, is diminished in practice because of constant declarations of emergency."[88] In the opening remarks for this section, Venezuelan Andueza Acuña mentioned, "If *habeas corpus* and *amparo* were suspended during states of emergency, the two remedies could not be used…but they were available for the protection of other

[84] "Urge proteger los derechos humanos: Llamado del delegado de Venezuela en la reunión sobre amparo," *Excélsior,* 22 August 1961, 1.
[85] A person associated with the PRI party.
[86] Soledad Loaeza, "El Guatemalteco que Gobernó México," *Nexos,* 6 July 2009.
[87] *Excélsior,* 22 August 1961, 11.
[88] Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 388.

rights not subject to the state of emergency."[89] But in most cases each state determined the extent of rights subject to limitations. Dr. Jean Marie Cotteret of Martinique (A French Department in the eastern Caribbean Sea) spoke about the state of emergency in France, which had been in place since April 1961. "He explained that they entailed a suspension of all the constitutional rights of the individual and that no appeal lay against decisions of the President of the Republic during the state of emergency," meaning "states of emergency had a total effect," diminishing legal avenues for individual protections.[90] Both Andueza Acuña and Cotteret served as the rapporteurs for the seminar discussions on emergency powers and individual rights.

The problems generated by emergency state powers did not end there. Even after emergency situations receded, some governments, including highly democratic ones, prolonged the restriction of rights. The Canadian delegate, Eldon M. Woolliams, explained that after World War II ended the Canadian government "was not greatly disposed to abandon the powers it had acquired by virtue of declaration of state of emergency" until 1960. Because states of siege are temporary, the delegates agreed on the importance of criteria for determining when they have ended. At least for Cotteret "they should terminate when the reasons justifying them had ceased to exist." On the other hand, Panamanian delegate Camilo O. Pérez, Professor of Political Science, explained that people should have the right to revolt if sieges extend and as a way "to regulate states of emergency." Professor Pérez was the only delegate in the seminar who advocated extrajudicial paths to individual rights protections through "collective violence." Given the predisposition for governmental abuse of emergency powers,

[89] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 100.
[90] *Ibid.,* 99-101.

Pérez rightfully expressed the role of the people on restitution the rule of law once deemed appropriate.[91]

Next to address the problem of emergency situations was the Argentine delegate, who spoke on the role of judges. Genaro R. Carrió, Law Professor at the National University of Buenos Aires, concluded that political institutions should determine the particularities of emergency situations; however, he considered the possibility that judicial "authorities might intervene to rule on the propriety of a declaration of state of emergency in certain special circumstances." Carrío believed judicial control and the use of the special remedies like habeas corpus and the amparo were justified when, for example, unauthorized government institutions overextended restrictions or when "administrative authorities adopted measures which clearly had no connections with the causes of the state of emergency." Ideally judicial oversight could prevent extreme violations of individual rights, yet the invocation of emergency powers most often voided any constitutional remedies like amparo.[92] Therefore, "Only if the amparo is admissible under emergency situations can one speak of true procedural safeguards for human rights in Latin America," wrote Fix-Zamudio.[93]

As the conference came to an end, the delegates expressed their expectations. The outspoken Venezuelan delegate, Andueza Acuña insisted the seminar's guiding principle "is that legal institutions should be effective for the protection of human rights."[94] Dr. Benjamín Laureano Luna of the International League for the Rights of Man, early NGO working for individual rights, took on a more internationalist stance

---

[91] *Ibid.,* 99-103.
[92] *Ibid.,* 104-105.
[93] Fiz-Zamudio, "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America," 389.
[94] *Excélsior,* 22 August 1961, 11.

regarding human rights. Luna made reference to Europe and argued that tensions resulted from the "negotiation of one human right: peoples' right to self-determination."[95] Luna surprised the assembly with his intervention and was advised to keep his comments brief. His examples of recent self-determination victories included a number of African states and Germany, where the work of the United Nations has been vital. Nevertheless, Luna insisted the extralegal and legal states of emergency compromised human rights and asked delegates to contemplate the role international preoccupation accomplished for protecting basic liberties of populations under dictatorships. And he recommended to the seminar organizers that attendees sign some kind of human rights convention with which member states should comply; without such an agreement and without international law there would be little progress.[96]

Mr. Luna also spoke for international avenues for human rights protections. Seminar participants focused on the exhaustion of constitutional remedies without making reference to alternatives outside the context of national courts. Luna argued that a person should be "granted the right of direct appeal to international bodies to assert their dignity or to protest against transgressors of their fundamental rights."[97] Yet, attendees did not discuss international avenues after the exhaustion of instruments such as amparo and habeas corpus. On the contrary, seminar discussions encouraged legal thinkers to return home and appraise internal judicial remedies for individual rights protections by working "in their respective countries for the adoption,

[95] "Sugiérese que la ONU intervenga en Berlín y exija elecciones libres," *Excélsior,* 25 August 1961, 1, 12.

[96] *Ibid.,* 12.

[97] *Ibid.,* 12.

maintenance and improvement of all remedies and judicial procedures necessary for the protection of human rights."[98]

Nevertheless, there existed an understanding that the UN sponsored seminar was to impart ideas of human rights as delineated in the UDHR. And the "men of law" had an "inescapable duty to fight for the rule of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," thus appealing "to all jurists of the world to intensify their efforts" for the recognition, enforcement, and effectiveness of human rights for all peoples.[99] While Luna proposed the recognition of international law as an additional source, aside from the state, in rights protections, delegates themselves made little reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or to cases of international jurisdiction.[100] Raúl Cervantes Ahumada (Mexico) rightfully encapsulated the purpose of the meetings, which he believed "was to promote the establishment of a psychological climate in which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could hold full sway."[101] Even while the social, political, and economic climate proved uncongenial for individual rights, a concept gradually replaced the notion of human rights.

And this nationalist approach to rights violations proved inefficient and legalistic. Pedro Pablo Camargo in 1970 wrote that certainly the Mexican amparo filled a number of constitutional gaps in relation to "individual rights" by often serving as a "writ of *habeas corpus*, [or] as an indirect means of judicial review" to name a few. But on another note, Camargo pointed out the ill use the writ resulting in the obstruction of justice in some cases, important mishap prominent Mexican legal scholars failed to

---

[98] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 28.
[99] *Ibd.,* 112.
[100] *Excélsior,* 25 August 1961, 12.
[101] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 113.

mention in their work. Camargo pointed out that certainly it was not "as quick and efficient as it had been claimed to be," and rather than a source of protection many saw it as the "last bastion of the administration of justice in Mexico." And Camargo even cited Fiz-Zamudio to exemplify that when Mexican intellectuals "refer to the *amparo*" they do so to endorse its importance. Fiz-Zamudio wrote extensively on amparo and also served in key administrative positions in the university and within the government. In many ways it makes sense that he believed this writ to be "the most efficient and adequate procedural instrument for the specific protection of human rights stipulated in the Constitution," but very often left out the abuse of this important instrument.[102]

"Minimum Flying Speed": Why universal approach to rights failed…momentarily?

What to make of the 1961 Mexico City conference? It is difficult to escape the conclusion that it represented a rights approach of at best limited appeal. The United Nations as a global rights experiment clearly did not gain the desired momentum or influence its promoters had desired. Nor did the project of universal human rights, at least initially. John P. Humphrey took on the rights program at the United Nations, and his friend Laugier assured him it would be a "great adventure."[103] In some ways this turned out to be correct, but tangible results proved more elusive. Indeed, there had been moments when Humphrey expressed his displeasure, stating, "My position was becoming impossible and perhaps I should have resigned from the Secretariat there and then." During those difficult periods, in one instance the Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld asked him into his office where they discussed the faith of the rights

[102] Pedro Pablo Camargo, "The Right to Judicial Protection: 'Amparo' and Other Latin American Remedies for the Protection of Human Rights," *Lawyers of the Americas* 3:2 (Jan. 1971), 201.
[103] John P. Humphrey, *Human Rights & the United Nations: A Great Adventure*, 74.

program at the UN. "There is a flying speed below which an airplane will not remain in the air," explained Hammarskjöld, "I want you to keep the program at that speed and no greater."[104] By keeping this minimum flying speed, Humphrey "saved the Human Rights Division, which Hammarskjöld wanted to replace," and in large part with country seminars as the one held in Mexico City in 1961.

Most fundamentally, campaigns such as Humphrey's initially failed because they could not compete with existing social and political realities. In Mexico, at least, that meant the corporatist arrangements that had emerged from the country's history. Historian Samuel Moyn has argued that human rights are a relatively new phenomenon, distinct from citizenship rights. Even while a number of individuals and international organisms championed human rights in the postwar period, these failed to arouse the attention of the majority. It was not until the 1970s that once other ideological utopias failed, like communism, an alternative ideology emerged, that of human rights as "the last utopia."[105] The Mexico City human rights seminar of 1961 captures the reception toward internally promoted notions of rights that, as Moyn points out, legal scholars understood simply failed to become an alternative language for rights demands or avenue for rights protections. As John P. Humphrey's rights seminar shows, human rights initially did not adhere to universalist notions of rights and did not transcend constitutional citizenship. Even while the Universal Declaration of Human Rights factored into the discussions, the seminars almost immediately focused on national remedies for rights violations.

---

[104] *Ibid.,* 199-205.
[105] Moyn, *The Last Utopia.*

Yet, rights leaders in the 1960s framed their demands in nationalist terms. The relatively new and internationalist language of rights remained obscure and absent from any movement in the country. And the dominant party negotiated the allotment of rights. This corporate practice dated back to the Mexican Revolution in 1910, and clearly had its limits. At the same time, demanding individual rights as promoted by the United Nations in the height of military dictatorships in Latin American seemed futile, given the absence of legal mechanisms outside the context of the state. This probably explains why leftist leaders in Latin America, especially in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, never adhered to internationally framed notion of individual rights. Nevertheless, as Mariano Azuela put it, "Mexican jurists had a paternal affection for the institution of *amparo* and were averse to any change in its characteristics."[106] In sum, initial human rights campaigns failed to gain popularity with either defenders or opponents of statism.

The United Nations initially proclaimed the exhaustion of internal protections, but offered little or no international alternatives for redressing rights violations. The dormancy of human rights in the 1950s and 1960s also owed to the fact that international networks were in their embryonic stages. Human rights fed off extended networks of communications in the 1970s, which were also developing in the decades earlier. Thereby, human rights discussions in Latin America proved less about individuals and far more about easing the excesses of the state. And that is how in early post-war era rights debates centered on provincial approaches to the global theme of human rights, and not the other way around. In Mexico, human rights discussion could not take root given its revolutionary structure of negotiating rights through corporate

[106] UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12, 45.

relations. Entirely absent from these discussion were the movements for rights on the ground, especially those of indigenous peoples, a population traditionally relegated to a second-class citizenship. Nevertheless, when those corporate relationships began to show signs of wear in 1968, a Catholic satellite organization became the first national institution to appropriate the language of human rights.

CHAPTER 2:

Universalizing Nationalism:
Luis Echeverría's *Carta de Derechos y Deberes Económicos de los Estados*, 1972-1974

"*Ya quería el país una política exterior autónoma, activa y de apertura*."
--Emilio O. Rabasa[1]

Third Worldism and International Justice…for States

The second key appearance of the term "human rights" in the press ensued from President Luis Echeverría Álvarez's pro Third World politics. In April 1972, the Mexican leader proposed the creation of the *Carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los Estados* (Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States) to the III United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Santiago, Chile. Echeverría's suggested idea for a charter in protection of States' rights launched his engagement with "Third Worldism," an internationalist ideology espousing state directed-development. Echeverría's new engagement with global politics ensued from what his Secretary of Foreign Relations, Emilio O. Rabasa, described as Mexico's desire to partake on a more active foreign policy. In that sense, the president launched Mexico into the era of global politics with close engagement with a growing inter-American system—leaving behind decades of isolationism. And it would be this same initiative that helped create a national atmosphere in which the concept of human rights could mature.

In the early 1970s, Echeverría's revolutionary nationalism took on the international scene. With the success of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1970, for example,

[1] Spanish for "The country wanted an autonomous, active, and open foreign policy." Statement by Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Carlos Rico, *México y el mundo: historia de sus relaciones exteriores. Tomo VIII. Hacia la globalización* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 2010), 22.

and President Echeverría's campaign on behalf of the rights of States for more equitable economic relations—surfaced a type of revolutionary internationalism that many world leaders gravitated towards by supporting the *Carta.* By 1974, the press compared the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States to what many perceived as the failed project of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Many suggested the Charter was destined toward the same faith of an abandoned international document filed away with so many other non-binding agreements that lacked the legal apparatus of enforcement. However, others suggested Echeverría's Charter project proved far more realistic and could indeed contribute to the establishment an alternative model to the failed Bretton Woods monetary system by serving as the basis for the New International Economic Order (NIEO). Since the Charter essentially called for the continuation of the developmentalist and state-directed model espoused by Latin American economists for decades—the project was largely abandoned at home and abroad after 1976. The idea of protecting States' rights in order to safeguard social justice initiatives at home faded away. Yet, the international system to which Echeverría and others looked to in the 1970s paved the way for the revival of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of another internationalist experiment—human rights as an individual based alternative to social and economic justice espoused by nationalist governments, and one far more complementary of neoliberal systems of governance. It was then in the context of the 1970s that Echeverría's *Carta* gained prominence, but also lost against what Moyn described as other competing universalist schemes.

The Man of the Hour

The economic charter emerged as a measure of renewal for Mexico's failing economic and political revolutionary project. After decades of economic success, the state-directed model of industrialization began to falter; this while the political legitimacy of the governing party took a powerful blow after 1968—a moment intimately tied to President Luis Echeverría. While his presidential legacy includes many dimensions, above all he remains closely linked to Mexico's 1968 Olympic massacre. Echeverría served as the Secretary of *Gobernación* (Interior or Government) when the 1968 student protests broke out in Mexico City. Although most of the blame fell on President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970), the blood of Tlatelolco also tainted Echeverría, for he served as the president's right hand.[2] But his involvement did not keep him from inheriting the presidency. Upon taking office in December 1970 he sought to repair the image of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI), while ridding Mexico of its radical elements, a campaign that included a violent sequel to 1968—the Corpus Christi massacre on June 10, 1971, named after the feast day celebration. The violent assault on students marching toward the *Instituto Politécnico Nacional* (National Polytechnic Institute, IPN), in the historic Casco de Santo Tomás in the suburbs of Mexico City, left twenty-nine protestors dead. However, Echeverría made efforts to distance himself from the errors of 1968.[3] That evening Echeverría offered televised announcement that his administration would investigate the incidents that resulted in the deaths of the young students.[4] Although Echeverría's administration is not known for its amicable relationship with youth

[2] Enrique Krauze, *Mexico: Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico, 1810-1996* (New York, NY: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1997), 737.

[3] The *Politécnico* is a leading and one of Mexico's largest institutions with secondary, undergraduate, and postgraduate students.

[4] Krauze, *Mexico*: *Biography of Power*, 746; Julia Preston, and Sam Dillon, *Opening Mexico: The Making of a Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004), 87.

movements, he nonetheless made an attempt in 1971 briefly to recognize the violence against the students.

Indeed, Echeverría's official response to Corpus Christi significantly contrasted with that of his predecessor. Unlike Díaz Ordaz, who went to extreme measures to conceal the police shootouts against the students, Echeverría's administration did precisely the opposite by acknowledging the attack. The new president did not have to conceal the events from the international community because the spotlight was not there, and there was no Olympic press mania to worry about. Instead, the press continued with its daily duties, "published freely, and reported on the Falcons, or Los Halcones," the paramilitary group created to harass political dissidents. The relative freedom of the media gave the impression that the orders did not come from the president himself; rather, the use of violent force appeared to result from misconduct among lower-level party members. Two high-ranking officials resigned as a result of the Corpus Christi attack: Alfonso Martínez Domínguez, regent (appointed mayor) of the Distrito Federal, who later became governor of the state of Nuevo León, and Rogelio Flores Curiel, Chief of Police, who went on to fill the governor's post in the state of Nayarit.[5] By publicly shunning the events, Echeverría commiserated with the victims by sacrificing two officials, rather than actually carrying out an investigation; but as the case of Martínez and Flores demonstrates, these political misdeeds rarely ended careers, instead often served as catapults for better posts.

Who exactly was this chameleon that led the Mexican political system through one of its most difficult moments? Aside from the dark episodes of 1968 and their 1971 echo, historians know little about the man himself. There is not a single scholarly

[5] Krauze, *Mexico*: *Biography of Power,* 746.

biography on Luis Echeverría, even though texts on Tlatelolco massacre abound.[6] Born in 1922, he grew up in a middle-class family in the Colonia del Valle in Mexico City and studied law in the country's largest public university, the UNAM. Echeverría followed the conventional path to power, gradually rising through the ranks of the PRI, which he joined in 1946. He served in the *Secretaria de Educación Pública* (Ministry of Public Education) during the administration of Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958), and in 1958 President Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964) appointed him Assistant Secretary of *Gobernación*, which he became head during the following Díaz Ordaz administration.[7] In *Gobernación* he learned the ropes of the intelligence apparatus and in fact served as one its contributing architects. Some charge that Echeverría ordered the "creation, training, and financing" of the Halcón paramilitary group in charge of sweeping student dissidents off the streets of Mexico City and other metropolitan areas.[8] Whatever the truth of this latter accusation, Echeverría's historical legacy still remains intimately tied to Mexico's *Guerra Sucia* (Dirty War) and the violent assaults on student movements. For Echeverría, the Charter served as an international expression of a revolutionary project

---

[6] For more on the 1968 Student Movement see, Elena Poniatowska, *La noche de Tlatelolco; testimonios de historia oral* (México: Ediciones Era, 1971), Elena Poniatowska, *Massacre in Mexico* (New York: Viking Press, 1975), Julio Scherer García and Carlos Monsiváis, *Parte de guerra, Tlatelolco 1968: documentos del general Marcelino García Barragán: los hechos y la historia* (México, D.F.: Nuevo Siglo/Aguilar, 1999), Eric Zolov, *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), Sergio Aguayo Quezada, *La charola: una historia de los servicios de inteligencia en México* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2001), Julio Scherer García, Carlos Monsiváis, and Julio Scherer García. *Parte de guerra II: los rostros del 68* (México, D.F.: Aguilar, 2002), Julio Scherer García and Carlos Monsiváis, *Los patriotas: de Tlatelolco a la guerra sucia* (México, D.F.: Aguilar, 2004), Elaine Carey, *Plaza of Sacrifices: Gender, Power and Terror in 1968 Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), Carlos Monsiváis, *El 68: la tradición de la resistencia* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2008), Ramón Ramírez, *El movimiento estudiantil de México, julio/diciembre de 1968* (México, D.F.: Era, 2008), Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *Calling All Heroes: A Manual for Taking Power: A Novel* (PM Press—Digital text, 2010), Sergio Aguayo Quezada, *De Tlatelolco a Ayotzinapa: Las violencias del Estado* (México, D.F.; Proceso, 2015).

[7] Alan Riding, *Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 61; Krauze, *Mexico*: *Biography of Power,* 740-741.

[8] Jesús Ramírez Cuevas, "Echeverría, detrás de la génesis, auge y disolución de *los halcones*: Femospp [Fiscalía Especial para Movimientos Sociales y Políticos del Pasado]," *La Jornada* 4 March 2006, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2006/03/04/index.php?section=politica&article=025n1pol>.

he attempted to save at home, and an escape valve for the rising dissidence at home—whereby abroad he stood as a champion of social justice.

"Rupture and Continuity"

When Echeverría took office, he prepared to revamp the four-decade long revolutionary system. The president held deep loyalty to the political structure that made his career. As Enrique Krauze puts it, Echeverría was a child of the PRI, whose corporatist structure had singlehandedly-sustained Mexico's political system since the 1930s, a system "he wanted to preserve."[9] Given the rift of 1968, the president also understood the importance of reforming the PRI and distancing it from the Díaz Ordaz years, if only for the sake of its survival. Writer José Agustín, in describing the inauguration ceremonies in the *Auditorio Nacional* (National Auditorium) in Mexico City, best captures the tension between "rupture and continuity" in Echeverría's nationalist project. According to Agustín the invitation included "four old Indians" whose presence symbolized a newfound preoccupation for indigenous matters. Wearing a lavish leopard coat, actress María Félix embodied the appendage of state-driven cultural projects like the muralist movement and the mass film productions later dubbed the Mexican Golden Age of Cinema (1930s-1960s). On the development and foreign end, the industrial mogul Henry Ford, Jr., also made an appearance—yet all signaling continuity.[10] However, by far the clearest act of defiance and rupture arose when Echeverría announced an accord with the students and his so-called political opening or

---

[9] Krauze, *Mexico*: *Biography of Power,* 741.
[10] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2. La vida en México de 1970-1982* (México: Grupo Editorial Planeta, 1992), 7-9; Jesús Orozco, and Francisco J. Núñez, *Ideología y programa de gobierno en los discursos de toma de posesión de los presidentes de México, 1928-1982* (Guadalajara, Jal., México: ITESO, 1983), 26.

apertura, signaling a break with his predecessor yet well within the party's well-founded tradition of negotiating conflict though the incorporation of dissidents into the political machine. Echeverría sought "to lower the repressive profile of the regime and improve its adaptiveness," argued scholar Yoram Shapira.[11] Certainly the president's predecessor Díaz Ordaz was stunned by Echeverría's sudden transformation from a "stiff, reserved and servile man" to "a loquacious leader of the youth."[12] The acclaimed journalists Julio Scherer García wrote: "From one day to next he appeared in the scene eloquent, lively, jaunty. He learned to smile, lost weight. If he had been rigid, he threw suits and ties into the wardrobe and put to use the *guayabera*."[13] Echeverría's transformation, or better said, repairs to the political system continued with the longstanding tradition of diffusing conflict through institutional means, only this time it attempted to repair its severed image by kindling relations with a group previously left out of the revolutionary pact: the recent constituency of educated youth.

Despite his work in increasing Mexico's visibility within the world, Echeverría by no means became what might be called a beloved leader. His presidency was closely scrutinized. Intellectuals, for example, observed the changing nature of Mexico's presidential post. Daniel Cosío Villegas, an intellectual who easily navigated both the academic and public waters, became one of the first in the country to analyze publicly the changing role of the Mexican presidency. In 1974 Cosío Villegas published the literary essay *El estilo personal de gobernar* (The Personal Style of Rule), the sequel to *El sistema político mexicano* (Mexico's Political System, 1972), where Echeverría stood as the

---

[11] Yoram Shapira, "The Impact of the 1968 Student Protest on Echeverría's Reformism," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 19:4 (November 1977), 566.

[12] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2*, 7-9.

[13] "De un día para otro apareció en escena elocuente, vivaz, desenvuelto. Aprendió a sonreír, perdió peso. Si había sido tieso, arrojaba sacos y corbatas al guardarropa y ponía en circulación la guayabera," Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Grijalbo, 1986), 10.

object of analysis. The text immediately became a best seller, edited five times in a single year with some 70,000 copies sold. In the text Cosío Villegas sarcastically deciphered the contradictions and incongruences of the Echeverria presidency, something that must have prompted an uncomfortable reaction from the president. Even if Echeverría felt resentment toward Cosío Villegas, he nevertheless managed to conceal his true feelings in the many private gatherings that brought both men together, or when Echeverría himself invited Cosío Villegas to Los Pinos, the presidential residence. Echeverría tolerated this to an extent, but carried out a slander campaign against the renowned academic.[14] Cosío Villegas, on the other hand, openly expressed his views of the president. Cosío Villegas explains their relationship as such:

> Since becoming acquainted, we both strive to make a clear distinction between public relations and personal relations, to where he may consider me a good friend, but a bad writer, and I, in turn, can esteem him more as a friend than as a governing leader.[15]

Historian Enrique Krauze, Cosío Villegas's pupil and biographer, reveals that President Echeverría had "assiduously courted" the scholar. Echeverría went so far as to award the "eminent and aged intellectual" the *Premio Nacional de Letras* (National Price for Arts and Sciences, 1971), one of the country's loftiest prizes, after the completion of the multivolume series, *Historia moderna de México* (Modern History of Mexico, 1954-1974)

---

[14] Roderic A. Camp, *Intellectuals and the State in Twentieth-Century Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 201.

[15] "…desde que entramos en relaciones, ambos nos empeñamos en trazar una clara distinción entre las relaciones públicas y las relaciones personales, de modo que él puede considerarme un buen amigo, pero un mal escritor, y yo, a mi vez, puedo estimarlo más como amigo que como gobernante," Daniel Cosío Villegas, *El estilo personal de gobernar* (Mexico City, D.F.; Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, S. A., 1974), 13. *La sucesión presidencial* (The Presidential Succession) was the last of the series, published in 1975.

under the editorship of Cosío Villegas.[16] While the president successfully wooed other intellectuals and veterans of the 1968 student movement into his government, Cosío Villegas instead "observed him at first with cautious respect and then with growing astonishment."[17] The tiff between these two high-profile individuals embodied the problems inherent in the post-1968 government's attempt to harness the hearts and minds of dissent groups and prominent intellectuals into the revolutionary political machine.

Nevertheless, Cosío Villegas's indifference and curiosity eventually changed under provocation. In an attempt to clamp down on an emerging free press, the Echeverría government financed propaganda that caricatured Cosío as a puppet for the U.S. government. Attacks included a booklet titled "*Dany, el sobrino del Tío Sam"* ("Danny, Uncle Sam's Nephew").[18] Julio Scherer García and Carlos Monsiváis explain, "At the time books circulated *sin madre* (without origin), born of the wind, without legal registration, no copyright, without a publisher responsible, anonymous."[19] Julio Scherer García too had been subjected to Echeverría's political ploys for breaching the level of accepted press criticism of the government, ousted in 1976 as editor of *Excélsior*, one of Mexico's leading newspaper. As in the case of Cosío, an anonymous booklet titled "*El*

---

[16] The *Premio Nacional de Letras* is short for *Premio Nacional de Artes y Ciencias* (México). The prize began in the 1940s and is currently awarded annually by the government to the most outstanding individuals in the categories of History, Social Sciences, and Philosophy; Physics, Mathematics, and Natural Sciences; Language and Literature; Technology and Design; Popular Arts and Traditions; and Fine Arts.

[17] Krauze, *Mexico: Biography of Power,* 746-747; Stanley Robert Ross, "Cosío Villegas' *Historia moderna de México,*" *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 46:3 (August 1966), 274.

[18] Krauze translates the title of the publication to "Danny the Disciple of Uncle Sam," Krauze, *Mexico*: *Biography of Power,* 749.

[19] Scherer, on the other hand, translates the title to "Danny el Travieso." Meanwhile, the text on Julio was titled, "*El Excélsior de Scherer García.*" Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007), x; Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Memorias* (México: J. Mortiz, 1976), 288; Lorenzo Meyer, "Daniel Cosío Villegas: El estudio del poder y el poder del estudio," *Letras Libres* (May 2001), 80-83.

Excélsior de Scherer" slandered Scherer.[20] It is likely the government's campaign to discredit Scherer may have inspired Cosío Villegas to think more deeply about the president's proclivity for political dirty tricks, especially as related to the enlargement of the Mexican presidency. In doing so, Cosío Villegas did not hold back. In *El estilo personal de gobernar*'s unapologetically caricatured prose, the Mexican scholar takes his readers through the intricacies of an emerging political system with an ever-growing presence of savvy technocrats, epitomized by Echeverría himself—a contradictory figure flirting with democratic orotundity while debasing Mexico's liberal institutions. By 1973 Cosío had dubbed Echeverría *El Predicador* (The Preacher) and had diagnosed him with "an incurable case of loquacity, monomania, and genuine mental disturbance."[21] Other intelligentsia left out of the immediate circle of power contributed to the image of incompetency and idiosyncrasies of the Echeverría presidency, including poet Salvador Novo, who chronicled daily entries of Echeverría's presidential activities blended with narrative. *Life in Mexico During the Presidency of Luis Echeverría* is one of six presidential texts where Novo, like many of his generation, uses literature to disguise the political discontent of a nation when it was not yet permitted to openly criticize a Mexican leader through journalistic means.[22]

Nevertheless, Daniel Cosío Villega's image of a politically schizophrenic president has deeper political meanings. Echeverría's governing inconsistencies derived

---

[20] Translates to "Scherer's *Excélsior*." Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007), x;

[21] Krauze, *Mexico*: *Biography of Power*, 747.

[22] Salvador Novo, *La vida en México en el periodo presidencial de Luis Echeverría* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2000); Other presidential chronicles include: *La vida en México en el período presidencial de Lázaro Cárdenas* (México: Empresas Editoriales, 1964), *La vida en México en el período presidencial de Manuel Avila Camacho* (México: Empresas Editoriales, 1965), *La vida en México en el período presidencial de Miguel Alemán* (México: Empresas Editoriales, 1967), *La vida en México en el período presidencial de Adolfo Ruiz Cortines* (México, D.F.: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1996), *La vida en México en el periodo presidencial de Gustavo Díaz Ordaz* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998).

from his attempt to juggle political reforms within a national context of social upheaval and a crumbling development model. The president inherited a country in the midst of a new social revolution. First, the 1968 student massacre marred the ruling party and its well-crafted political system of social control dating back to the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). Second, maintaining the state-directed agricultural and industrial project that had brought prosperity, together with social and political stability, meant plunging the country further into debt. Given that reality, Echeverría revived his own version of the political system by stepping into the presidency as the redeemer of the Revolution. Just before taking office, the opportunity arose for Echeverría to engage in nationalist rhetoric when General Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) died, the latter being one of the country's premiere revolutionary statesmen.[23] Attempting to ride Cárdenas' legacy, the president "returned to the nationalist, peasant origins of the Revolution and its concern with social justice," or at least tried to do so.[24] Responding to the social context that welcomed him, he first called for an "*apertura democrática*" (democratic opening), which initially entailed amnesty of student and labor dissidents. At first, the brief democratic opening offered some tolerance for a free press. While nationally Echeverría presented himself as a redeemer of the Revolution, his political style inevitably served as fodder for intellectuals to taint him as erratic.

Isolation Interrupted: Echeverría and the World

With little luck at home, Echeverría looked to the international realm for legitimacy—where he seemed to have had better luck in selling his revolutionary

[23] José Gutiérrez Casillas, *Jesuitas en México durante el siglo XX* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1981), 384.

[24] *Ibid.*, 741.

project. Echeverría's assertive foreign policy should also be understood as an extension of his nationalist policy of *apertura* and his attempt to revive the revolutionary economic project. Abroad Echeverría fostered a gallant persona. In 1970 began "in Mexico the search for an active foreign policy, as well as greater participation in international affairs," explained eminent scholar Mario Ojeda Gómez. Since the 1910s the country had remained largely isolated from major international engagements, political or economic, in part due to its revolutionary past but also in response to the crisis of capitalism after the market crash of 1929. The Revolution and the 1938 nationalization of foreign-owned American and European oil companies drove the government towards greater focus on matters in the home front.[25] Also pursuant to nationalist policies of the time and the global depression, Mexico, along with such Latin American countries as Argentina and Brazil, remodeled its economy inward through a constellation of programs known as Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI), or *desarrollo estabilizador* (stabilizing development). These policies further isolated Mexico in the interwar years and placed the country on a bilateral relationship with the United States. The revenues from raw materials supplied during World War II "created an independent stimulus to continued import substitution."[26] For Mexico it meant the extension of a declining state-directed model in desperate need of capital by the 1970s, and this fact pushed Echeverría to search abroad for a better economic position for Mexico. The *echeverrista* foreign policy's most emphatic initiatives called for the reconfiguration of the international economic system, a structure that he believed disadvantaged developing

[25] Mario Ojeda Gómez, *México: el surgimiento de una política exterior activa* (México: CulturaSep, 1986), 9.

[26] Rosemary Thorp, "A Reappraisal of Origins of Import-Substituting Industrialisation 1930-1950," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24:S1 (March 1992), 186. See also Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Economic History of Latin America Since Independence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

countries. This argument was much favored by the developmentalist theories of 1970s, including Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory.

Echeverría's foreign policy also suggests he saw international cooperation as a possible relief valve for problems at home. Indeed, if Mexico's involvement in World War II had opened "a window to the exterior," the 1970s opened a door.[27] Part of this opening to the outside derived from an economic compression marking the crisis of the *desarrollo estabilizador* model. Rosario Green explains that it was in the early 1970s that "the first negative effects of the '*desarrollo estabilizador*' appeared in the Mexican economy." Inflation and the "contraction of private investment," according to Green, proved the two most severe limitations signaling the model's exhaustion.[28] Echeverría responded by expanding Mexico's diplomatic relations with sixty-seven countries to almost 130 by 1976.[29] "We are not a walled country. Our borders are open to human, economic, and cultural communication," stated Echeverría upon taking office.[30] Even though he initially claimed he would be doing little traveling abroad ("I really do not plan on leaving the country in the next two or three years"), he did express his desire for visiting "*la provincia mexicana*," that is, provincial México. But the reality proved different.[31] In similar manner, Echeverría's North American contemporaries—that is, Richard Nixon and Pierre Trudeau—also traveled extensively in the midst of intractable problems at home. By the end of his presidency Echeverría and his

---

[27] Ojeda Gómez, *México*, 9.

[28] Rosario Green, *La deuda externa de México, 1973-1987: de la abundancia a la escasez de créditos* (México, D.F.: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1988), 16.

[29] Ojeda Gómez, *México*, 64.

[30] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso de toma de posesión," *Tiempo,* 7 December 1970, 11-22, cited in Ojeda Gómez, *México*, 63.

[31] Ricardo Valero, "La política exterior en la coyuntura actual de México," *Foro internacional* 12: 2 (October-December 1972), 294, cited in Ojeda Gómez, *México*, 64.

entourage embarked on some twelve international trips to some thirty-six countries, a traveling frenzy foreshadowed by his extensive pre-election campaign mingling.[32]

Both at home and abroad, Echeverría displayed a flair for social gatherings. After fifty-two days of campaign, and having spent Christmas and New Year with "*ejidatarios"* and miners, Echeverría and his wife María Ester Zuno made their way to the San Angel neighborhood in the southwest of Mexico City, popularly known for its historic buildings and markets, and home to some of Mexico's wealthy elite. There the president-to-be engaged with over 250 guests made up of "banking, commerce and industry magnate, artists, intellectuals, and professionals."[33] Mogul guests included one of the country's premiere bankers, Anibal de Iturbide Preciat, along with Manuel Espinosa Yglesias a man whom John Womack Jr. in 1970 dubbed one of the "virtual barons" of the country, representative of power elite managing "half of the national income."[34] From the artistic realm, present were cellist Carlos Prieto, actress Fanny Cano Damián, and the renowned Zapotecan painter, Justo Rufino Tamayo. Other prominent guests included diplomats José Gallástegui and Luis Quintanilla, as well as muralist Diego Rivera's daughter, Guadalupe Rivera Marín. As guests of Emilio Rabasa, the son of *Porfirian cientifico*, and then director of the *Banco Cinematográfico* (Cinematography Bank), an artistic branch of the National Bank of Mexico funding the nation's film industry, Echeverría and his wife drank *ponche de frutas*, or the traditional winter hot fruit punch, served in the clay mugs known as *jarritos,* while feasting on

---

[32] Ricardo Valero, "La política exterior en la coyuntura actual de México," *Foro internacional* 12: 2 (October-December 1972), 294, cited in Ojeda Gómez, *México*, 64.

[33] Francisco Cárdenas Cruz and René Arteaga, "'México Necesita una Revolución Estructural': Gómez Morín," *Excélsior,* 9 January 1970, 1.

[34] See footnote 2 in Roderic A. Camp, "Informal and Formal Networking among Elite Mexican Capitalists and Politicians," *Comparative Sociology* 2:1 (2003), 141; John Womack Jr., "The Spoils of the Mexican Revolution," *Foreign Affairs* 48:4 (July 1970), 680-681.

tamales, reported Mexican columnist Francisco Cárdenas Cruz and Salvadorian in exile, René Artega. [35] Extensive traveling and mingling, along with emphasizing regional wear at home and abroad, became a hallmark of the president and the First Lady's populist legacy.[36]

The Third World Mobilized

Along with his famous *guayabera* shirts, Echeverría also traveled clothed in a grand idea. The Mexican leader thrived in the international spotlight, pitching a project for more equitable relations for the Third World after a spring trip to Chile in 1972. The focus on seeking new markets would ideally move Mexico away from its almost exclusive bilateral relationship with the United States—one that had provided Mexico and Canada with preferential economic terms in the height of the Cold War. In the early years of the war, Washington leaders offered favorable terms to the United States' neighbors as part of national security strategy to safeguard its adjoining territories from Soviet intrusion by plane. With the emergence of intercontinental ballistic missiles (IBM) and nuclear submarines, the threat of attack on U.S. soil expanded to include its neighboring countries. But as the threat of nuclear warfare diminished and U.S.-Soviet tensions subsided, Mexico's privileged relationship with Washington, or what had been referred to as "preferential [economic] rights," fractured when President Richard Nixon (1969-1974) announced on August 15, 1971 a ten percent hike on import taxes, a "measure decided on unilaterally and one to be applied

[35] Francisco Cárdenas Cruz and René Arteaga, "'México Necesita una Revolución Estructural': Gómez Morín," *Excélsior,* 9 January 1970, 1.

[36] Bill Beezley, "Conclusion: Gabardine Suits and Guayabera Shirts," in *Populism in Twentieth Century Mexico: The Presidencies of Lázaro Cárdenas and Luis Echeverría*, edited by Amelia M. Kiddle and María L. O. Muñoz (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010), 198-205; Cárdenas Cruz and Arteaga, "'México Necesita una Revolución Estructural,'" *Excélsior,* 9 January 1970, 1

to all countries in the globe indiscriminately."[37] In an evening address to the nation on August 15, Nixon explained the ten percent tax as "an action to make certain that American products will not be at a disadvantage because of unfair exchange rates. When the unfair treatment is ended, the import tax will end as well."[38] Nixon hoped his policies could protect American products and relieve the population from the effects of growing inflation and unemployment. As for neighboring countries, Nixon's policies signaled Americans' "growing protectionism," especially when the U.S. administration refused to negotiate the tax for any one country.[39]

According to Ojeda Gómez, Mexico and Canada were the only two countries that bilaterally tried to negotiate with Washington and failed.[40] In an August 30, 1971 memorandum, to Secretary of Foreign Relations Emilio O. Rabasa (1970-1975), Ambassador to the United States, José Juan de Olloqui y Labastida (1971-1976) noted President Nixon summoned ambassadors to the White House for a 10:00 p.m. meeting "to be informed more widely by Undersecretary of Treasury for International Affairs, Paul A. Volcker [1969-1974], of the measures announced by President Nixon." Two days later, on August 17, De Olloqui was asked to report to the State Department with President Echeverría's response to the Nixon measures. Echeverría noted that it was evident that the policies suggested by its North American neighbor were not aimed at developing countries, but rather at First World powers (European countries and Japan). Nevertheless, the Mexican Ambassador manifested Echeverría's inconformity, especially

---

[37] Mario Ojeda Gómez, "México y Canadá," in "Documentos y comentarios en torno al viaje del Presidente Echeverría (Marzo-abril de 1973), *Foro internacional* 14:1 (July-September 1973), 3.

[38] Richard Nixon, "Address to the Nation Outlining a New Economic Policy: 'The Challenge of Peace,'" 15 August 1971, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3115>.

[39] Ojeda Gómez, "México y Canadá," 4; Carlos Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," *Foro internacional* 14:4 (April-June 1974), 509.

[40] Ojeda Gómez, "México y Canadá," 4; Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 509.

since "Mexico is the most candid friend of the United States." The American president was reminded that Mexico supported the dollar as a currency reserve, the majority of which were held by American banks and for that reason had not purchased gold. And unlike Canada, which held important trade relations with China and Cuba, Mexico was severely battered by the import surcharge when two-thirds of its exports went exclusively to the United States—not even Argentina or Brazil were hurt due to their diversified exportations.[41] De Olloqui noted several State Department officials sympathized with Mexico's position, including Secretary of the Treasury John B. Conally (1971-1972), who noted to the ambassador his concern especially for Mexico and Canada. Two weeks later, in promoting Mexico's case, De Olloqui included a newspaper clipping from the *Washington Post* noting the unintended weight of Nixon's policies on Latin America. "The extreme examples are Mexico and Brazil. Mexico does more business with the United States than any other country in Latin America and will be more severely damaged by the surtax than any other." As the article noted, "The United States did not really intend to harm the Latin economies last month when it imposed its 10 per cent surtax on imports." Yet, for the Nixon administration Latin America was not an economic priority; however, the president was pressured to respond to the unintended consequences of his policies on its southern neighbor.[42]

---

[41] Memo, "Medidas tomadas por el Presidente Nixon tendientes a mejorar la situación económica de Estados Unidos," José Juan de Olloqui to Emilio O. Rabasa, 30 August 1971, Mexico-United States Embassy Exchange Papers, File III/510 (73) "71"; III-3155-5, 1-5, Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE) [hereinafter "AHGE"].

[42] "Who Pays the Tariff?" *Washington Post,* 15 September 1971, A 14, attachment, Memo, "Medidas tomadas por el Presidente Nixon tendientes a mejorar la situación económica de Estados Unidos," José Juan de Olloqui to Emilio O. Rabasa, 15 September 1971, Mexico-United States Embassy Exchange Papers, File III/510 (73) "71"; III-3155-5, 1-5, AHGE.

Nixon's economic policies also had a ripple effect on competing markets like Japan and Germany. Nixon's Executive Order 11615 closed "the gold window" that allowed the exchange of dollars to gold.[43] In order to protect the dollar, the United States ended its commitment "to backing every dollar overseas with gold." By the 1960s, the circulation of dollars in Asian and European countries had grown exponentially mainly due to foreign aid, the Vietnam War, and other investments. By the time Nixon took office, the U.S. Treasury could no longer back every dollar to gold, as had been the standard in the Bretton Woods monetary system that fixed foreign currencies to the dollar at the price of $35 per ounce. Although the economic practice had worked well for the United States all through the post-war period, by 1971 the country lacked sufficient gold for convertibility demands. On August 12, for example, Britain had asked the U.S. government to guarantee a total of $750 million. Three days later, Nixon and his advisers, including Treasury Secretary John Connally, drafted the economic package in secret in the presidential retreat home at Camp David.[44] In an August 15 evening address, Nixon introduced the proposed reforms. He explained to the world it was time for its "strong competitors" to "bear their fair share of the burden of defending freedom around the world." In deference to the American people, the president argued the time had "come for exchange rates to be set straight and for the major nations to compete as equals. There is no longer any need for the United States

[43] The third measure of reform included a 90-day wage and price controls at home; an unprecedented policy for peacetime.

[44] Lewis E. Lehrman, Opinion: "The Nixon Shock Heard 'Round the World: By severing the dollar's convertibility to gold in 1971, the president ushered in a decade of inflation and economic stagnation," *The Wall Street Journal,* 15 August 2001 <http://online.wsj.com>; Roger Lowenstein, "The Nixon Shock," *Bloomberg Businessweek Magazine,* 4 August 2011 <www.businessweek.com>.

to compete with one hand tied behind her back."[45] The "Nixon Shock," as these policies became known, did precisely that—they shook the Bretton Woods monetary system and opened the age of floating currency.

As for Mexico, the ten percent tax also struck at the already economically strapped economy. Like any other country, Mexicans felt the economic nip of the global retrenchment of the 1970s. Even before the import tax, the "contraction of public spending and the decline of investments" hurt economic growth, especially when coupled with import pressures from its northern neighbor. "Atony," as this financial slump became known, also compromised Mexico's project of state-centered industrialization, which Echeverría ardently endorsed as part of his nationalist politics. Nixon's tax, coupled with domestic economic and political frictions, thus convinced the hard-pressed Echeverría that the solution lay in the international community. The Mexican leader embarked on a series of tours seeking to diversify the country's economic and political relations, with hopes of courting foreign investors "to collaborate in the development of Mexico's export industry."[46] For the rest of the world, unilateral policies like the Nixon reforms intensified demands for an alternative international economy, especially energizing underdeveloped countries' engagement with the politics of *tercermundismo*, or third worldism. President Echeverría engaged with the nascent language of international law to demand economic protections for developing countries. As such, the president made appearances and when possible gave speeches in regional and international forum in hopes of rallying discussion on the disadvantageous position

---

[45] Richard Nixon, "Address to the Nation Outlining a New Economic Policy: 'The Challenge of Peace,'" 15 August 1971, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3115>.

[46] Olga Pellicer de Brody et. al.,"Documentos y comentarios en torno al viaje del Presidente Echeverría," *Foro internacional* 14 (March-April, 1973), 1.

of underdeveloped countries within the post-war international economy.[47] It was in this form that an alternative universalist project emerged, one spearheaded by Mexico, one that promoted state sovereignty in States' control over their economic model and natural resources, social and economic justice derivative from equitable trade relations between countries—this while engaging with international mechanisms and demanding the strengthening of international law.

Initial inklings of Echeverría's newfound embrace of Third World ideology stood out as early as October 5, 1971.[48] Only months after Nixon's reforms, Echeverría gave a speech to a UN General Assembly meeting in New York in which he denounced the great powers and their exclusive control over world affairs. He maintained peaceful relations would not be possible unless economic relations were significantly altered. For Echeverría more equitable relations lay in the reformulation of post-World War II "regulatory mechanisms" that privileged the interests of powerful countries, including a financial institution "notoriously favorable to a dominant economy," and not designed to satisfy the long-term needs of the international community. As the post-war tensions eased, the Mexican leader warned that unless an international alternative materialized, a new global threat could emerge from the polarization between privileged and underdeveloped countries.[49] With an incisive use of social justice terminology, particularly in relations to States' rights, he expressed hope for the fulfillment of "a

---

[47] Third World countries pushed a series of policies in the 1970s known as the New International Economic Order (NIEO), and Echeverría's *Carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los Estados* eventually became part of the NIEO project.

[48] Echeverría's discussions regarding the economic disparities for developing countries are also present as early as August 7, 1971 in a speech he gave in honor of Nicaraguan leader visiting Mexico, Anastasio Somoza [given in Cozumel, Q.R.], Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado durante la comida ofrecida en honor del Presidente de Nicaragua, general Anastasio Somoza, Debayle," in *México ante el mundo* (México: Secretaría de la Presidencia, 1974), 29-35.

[49] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su XXVI Período Ordinario de Sesiones," in *México ante el mundo*, 50-51.

genuine international democracy, both politically and economically," while calling on underdeveloped countries to join efforts in order "to obtain better terms of trade."[50] Echeverría did envision developing countries spearheading a movement of global proportions, seemingly taking lessons from the recent wave of what he termed "political decolonization," and like the leaders of that wave he hoped an era of "economic decolonization" would follow.[51] As expressed to his General Assembly colleagues, Echeverría's considerations offered an embryonic version of an idea for an international charter for the protection of States' rights, one that gained footing just months later in the Third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Santiago, Chile.[52]

UNCTAD: Latin American Developmentalism Internationalized

In its 1970s heyday, many world leaders were drawn to UNCTAD forum because it stood as one of the last international bastion of state-directed growth initiatives. Established in 1964 as an "appendage" of the United Nations General Assembly, the Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) grew from the

[50] "Mi presencia en esta asamblea es para ratificar la adhesión de México a los principios de las Naciones Unidas y manifestar su confianza en el pronto advenimiento de una genuina democracia internacional, tanto en lo político como en lo económico," Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su XXVI Período Ordinario de Sesiones," in *México ante el mundo*, 46; Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 510.

[51] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su XXVI Período Ordinario de Sesiones," in *México ante el mundo*, 43, 50.

[52] See, Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007); Thomas G. Weiss, *Multilateral Development Diplomacy in UNCTAD: The Lessons of Group Negotiations, 1964-84* (London: Macmillan, 1986); Michael Zammit Cutajar, ed., *UNCTAD and the South-North Dialogue: The First Twenty Years* (London: Pergamon, 1985); Robert L. Rothstein, *Global Bargaining: UNCTAD and the Quest for a New International Economic Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979); Joseph S. Nye, "UNCTAD: Poor Nations' Pressure Group," in *The Anatomy of Influence: Decision Making in International Organization,* edited by Robert W. Cox and Harold K. Jacobson (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1973); Branislav Gosovic, *UNCTAD: Compromise and Conflict* (Leiden, Netherlands: Sijthoff, 1972); Diego Cordovez, *UNCTAD and Development Diplomacy: From Conference to Strategy* (London: Journal of World Trade Law, 1970); and Kamal Hagras, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: A Case Study in UN Diplomacy* (New York; Praeger, 1965).

demands of newly decolonized UN member states—"feeling marginalized in the decision-making process of the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as in the GATT negotiations"—for a more inclusive international forum attentive to their economic needs.[53] Developing countries' collective voice had grown in strength since swelling the ranks of the United Nations, constituting about 70 percent of the organization's membership by the mid-1970s. According to UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim (1972-1981) "some people were shocked to see the UN reflect the 'entirely new balance of power in the world.'"[54] The UNCTAD, and other institutions of its kind, represented the United Nations shift in focus toward the needs of the "the South," especially during the reign of Burmese U Thant as Secretary-General (1961-1971), the first Third World representative to hold such post.[55] UNCTAD member states, of which also included the Holy See, sought solutions to developmental problems of the time, particularly an international market that historically seemed to give preferential trading terms to industrialized countries.[56]

Until the global shift to neoliberal politics, UNCTAD pushed for an alternative to the Bretton Woods system. The organization's first session took place in Geneva in

---

[53] UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat, *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview* (Geneva: [UN], 2006), 1,3; Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 1.

[54] Glenda Sluga, "The Transformation of International Institutions: Global Shock as Cultural Shock," in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, edited by Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 223-224.

[55] Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 9; Glenda Sluga, "The Transformation of International Institutions: Global Shock as Cultural Shock," in *The Shock of the Global,* 225.

[56] TD/180, Vol. I, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Third Session, Santiago De Chile, 13 April to 21 May 1972, Volume I (Report and Annexes)* (New York: United Nations, 1973), 1.

1964, and the second in New Delhi four years later, in 1968.[57] From its inception, revising international codes governing global commerce became one of the organization's key strategies. In the post-war period one of the most important multilateral agreements was the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, most commonly known as the GATT. For UNCTAD members the incorporation of the Third World into the world economy demanded alterations to the GATT. Many developing nations argued the agreement restricted their bargaining power since the "negotiating structures" lay "in the hands of the developed world," where negotiations usually took place between key producers and consumers; developing countries "rarely accounted for major market shares either as producers or consumers."[58] As key producers of staple foodstuffs and raw materials, they experienced few benefits. GATT further disadvantaged poor countries by failing "to incorporate provisions dealing with commodity agreements."[59] Given the economic hurdles for countries still attempting to industrialize in the 1970s, the GATT and other multilateral agreement proved "inimical to their development."[60] Thereby, for most of the 1960s and 1970s UNCTAD representatives tackled GATT's "ground rules" and sought "an alternative system of international trade" more favorable to emerging economies.[61]

---

[57] TD/180, Vol. I, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Third Session, Santiago De Chile, 13 April to 21 May 1972, Volume I (Report and Annexes)* (New York: United Nations, 1973), 1.

[58] Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 7; UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat, *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview* (Geneva: [UN], 2006), 4.

[59] UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat, *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview* (Geneva: [UN], 2006), 4.

[60] Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 6-7.

[61] Thomas G. Weiss, "Forward" in Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), ix.

Up to the 1970s, Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch's dependency theory held sway over UNCTAD's governing ideology. Especially in the period when Prebisch served as secretary-general (1964-1969), the "ideological mix of global Keynesianism and dependency theory" that characterized the organization in its first decades held Prebisch's imprint.[62] Some have even called him "Latin America's Keynes."[63] Ousted from his government post in Argentina shortly after the 1943 military overthrow of the disreputable Ramón S. Castillo (1942-1943), Prebisch joined the United Nations in 1949 and from 1950 to 1963 he led the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) or CEPAL, which since 1984 has come to include the Caribbean (ECLAC). As ECLA's headquarters, Santiago, Chile served as a Latin American epicenter for dependency theory, discussions largely spearheaded by Prebisch himself.[64] Dependency theory emerged in the 1950s from studies regarding the relationship between industrialized and poor countries, whereby, men like Prebisch and many of his contemporaries explained underdevelopment by observing the place of poor countries within the international structures of economic exchange that presumably kept them

---

[62] Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 11-13; UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat, *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview* (Geneva: [UN], 2006), 4.

[63] Edgar J. Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 4.

[64] Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986*, 3-6. A critical text that also came out of 1960s socioeconomic context in Santiago was that of Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina*; *Ensayo de interpretación sociológica* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1969). Henrique Cardoso and Faletto wrote the text as they worked for the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (*Instituto Latinoamericano de Planificación Económica y Social* [ILPES], an organization that "originated from ECLA" in 1962 as a project of the United Nations Special Fund for research as well as training for the region's advancement, "Preface to the English Edition," Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and development in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), vii; Juan Jesús Morales, "De los Aspectos Sociales del Desarrollo Económico a la Teoría de la Dependencia: Sobre la gestación de un pensamiento social propio en Latinoamérica," *Cinta de moebio* 45 (2012), 238, <www.moebio.uchile.cl/45/morales.html>.

from advancing industrially.[65] Prebisch put these ideas into practice in ECLA, from where economists, including the often forgotten work of Spanish sociologist José Medina Echeverría, put forward the "paradigm for the analysis of development [Developmentalism], which became the most influential theory in Latin American social sciences since the early fifties." True, some thought that ECLA analyses failed to consider the role of "imperialist relationships between countries," or matters of class, and thus criticized for its "narrowness" in its approach.[66] Nevertheless, the developmentalism that Prebisch and ECLA proposed stood midway between Marxist and classical liberal orthodoxy and meshed well with UN thought of the time. When the opportunity to head UNCTAD came, Prebisch accepted whole-heartedly, for he believed this new commission had been "deployed through the United Nations on the basis of activities in ECLA." Most importantly, UNCTAD offered Prebisch the space to internationalize his Latin American development project, "to forge a new organization just as he had molded ECLA into a powerful regional secretariat."[67] Undoubtedly, both organizations shared Prebisch's vision of integration and fair access to global markets, at least up until the 1980s and 1990s, when UNCTAD gave "way to a slightly modified version of liberal orthodoxy," embracing and promoting neoliberalism worldwide.[68]

---

[65] Annabelle Mooney, and Betsy Evans, eds., "Dependency theory," in *Globalization: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2007), 65. Dependency theory, as defined by the Brazilian intellectual Theotonio Dos Santos, is a "historical condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favors some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economics...a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected," "The Structure of Dependence," in *Readings in U.S. Imperialism,* edited by K.T. Fann and Donald C. Hodges (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1971), 226, cited in *Globalization: The Key Concepts,* 65.

[66] "Preface to the English Edition," Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and development in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), viii-ix.

[67] Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986*, 383.

[68] Thomas G. Weiss, "Forward" in Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), x.

Although well intended, Prebisch's hopes for Latin America did not come to fruition. His economic philosophy reflected a deep concern for the developmental gap between industrialized countries and the rest of the world. The region's state-directed initiatives generated more social ferment than long-term industrial sustainability. And as commodity prices, these continued to spiral downward owing to the now-increased global production, Prebisch acknowledged that Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) "had been costly and inefficient." The probability of closing the economic gap through mass importation of commodities seemed unlikely, for him developing countries required of specific protections and guarantees. By 1972, like Prebisch, UNCTAD's goals reflected a global reorientation toward protecting the descending price of commodity markets through tariffs, a loss that had been costly to developing countries, especially as first world technological advancement replaced some primary products with synthetics.[69] If such conditions persisted, Prebisch warned, the long-term effects would include increased disparities of wealth, a "polarization between rich and poor."[70] Indeed, by the 1970s, with the easing of Cold War tensions, for many leaders it seemed as though "the problems of relations of industrialized rich and agricultural poor had replaced the problem of relations between western capitalist and eastern Communist."[71] Under this consideration, the third session of UNCTAD proved timely. UNCTAD III echoed Third World trepidations, and stood as one of the few organizations in which the "global South" could articulate "its needs and problems and

[69] UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat, *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview* (Geneva: [UN], 2006), 4-5.

[70] Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986*, 4.

[71] Charles L. Robertson, "The Creation of UNCTAD," in *International Organization: World Politics,* edited Roberto Cox (London: Macmillan, 1969), 258, cited Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 14-15.

where international development is firmly on the agenda."[72] Moreover, developing countries' participation in UNCTAD and other similar summits signaled the Third World's engagement with the nascent international system for the purpose of asserting economic rights needed for national development, in contrast with Western countries that employed the international bureaucracy to promote individual guarantees, and most commonly political rights.

UNCTAD thus proved the perfect forum for Echeverría to flesh out his emerging economic vision. In his New York speech, Echeverría expressed satisfaction that in the convocation for the III UNCTAD meeting, the General Assembly "warned of its deep concern over the trend of some countries toward growing protectionism that harms the vital interests of less advanced nations," thus impeding the organization's goals for development.[73] The Mexican leader's delight ensued from what he perceived as the assembly asserting concern over the Nixon administration's monetary policies enacted just months prior to the New York meeting. In his speech, Echeverría took the opportunity to reiterate their probable effect: "I think my duty to point out that the imposition of an additional tax of 10 percent *ad valorem* on American imports harms the interests of my country, and those of all developing nations."[74] With such policies, he argued, the volume of manufacturing products—barely making inroads into industrialized nations—was necessarily limited. In addition to a contraction of these products, emerging economics had to deal with the trickling effect of great powers'

---

[72] Ian Taylor and Karen Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)* (London: Routledge, 2007), 1.

[73] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su XXVI Período Ordinario de Sesiones," in *México ante el mundo*, 52.

[74] "Creo mi deber señalar que la imposición de un gravamen adicional del 10 por ciento *ad valorem* a las importaciones norteamericanas vulnera los intereses de mi país, así como los de todas las naciones en vía de desarrollo," Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su XXVI Período Ordinario de Sesiones," in *México ante el mundo*, 52-53.

inflation, balance of payment deficit, and unemployment problems. In this evident outcry against American protectionist policies, Echeverría consistently reminded his audiences of the long-term consequences of an ever-growing economic disparity between nations and he did so in the context of Cold War politics, warning of the political volatility of an unjust international system and its detriment to world peace: "An arms race should be accompanied by a race to protectionism." In the UNCTAD Echeverría saw a forum for encouraging hemispheric cooperation, especially for Latin America, and more specifically, for Mexico he sought agricultural and industrial resolves, but not limited to social matters like the redistribution of wealth and access to education.[75] Like Echeverría, other Third World leaders voiced their economic concerns and their demands for more equitable relations through conferences like UNCTAD.

¡Viva México! ¡Viva Chile! ¡Viva Latinoamérica Unida![76]

For President Echeverría the site for UNCTAD III could not have been more politically fortuitous. State representatives met in Santiago, Chile, from April 13 through May 21, at the time the Latin American center of revolutionary changes.[77] Chile was the home of President Salvador Allende (1970-1973), the world's first

[75] "Sus objetivos están centrados fundamentalmente en los campos de la productividad y de la modernización de la economía agropecuaria, en la reorientación de la política industrial, la redistribución del ingreso, la formación de recursos humanos, el saneamiento de las finanzas públicas y el acceso de todos a la educación," Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su XXVI Período Ordinario de Sesiones," in *México ante el mundo*, 54.

[76] Translates to "Long Live México, Long Live Chile, Long Live Latin America United!," Salvador Allende, "Discurso pronunciado por Salvador Allende en la Universidad de Guadalajara," 2 December 1972 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1dUBDWoyes>. Transcript of speech provided for download by Publicaciones Anuies, <http://publicaciones.anuies.mx/pdfs/revista/Revista19_S2A2ES.pdf>.

[77] Since 1984 the organization is known as the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

democratically elected Marxist, and the experimental grounds for the socialization of national industries, land, labor, and politics—a country on the path to socialism. Chile's experiments coincided admirably with Echeverría's own attempt to revamp Mexico's revolutionary project. Overall, Chile was the fertile space for intellectual discussion regarding Latin America's development. Although it had only been a few years since having left his post as the organization's secretary-general, Raúl Prebisch still held important sway over the region, and Santiago served as his laboratory since it was the home to ECLA. For the 1972 meeting of UNCTAD, the international monetary system proved the overarching theme of the conference. Just as Echeverría stressed in New York, the 131 participating countries "argued that while they were in no way responsible for the monetary crisis, they had to bear the brunt of the economic uncertainty engendered by the crisis, and the subsequent currency realignments contributed to the depletion and erosion of the value of their foreign reserves."[78] For Echeverría, UNCTAD served as an outlet for his ideas on development, which came to define elements of his foreign and national policies after 1972.[79]

Echeverría also sought to strengthen his relationship with Allende in hopes of levering legitimacy among discontented leftist groups. His 1972 trip to Santiago signaled "the highest expression" of Mexico-Chilean entente, to the point that the head of the oppositional party, *Partido Acción Nacional* (National Action Party, PAN), affirmed Echeverría attempted to "*allendizar*" Mexico.[80] For Echeverría "the support of the Popular Unity government proved extremely important due to President Allende's

---

[78] UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat, *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview* (Geneva: [UN], 2006), 14.

[79] Luis Malpica de Lamadrid, *La influencia del derecho internacional en el derecho mexicano: la apertura del modelo de desarrollo de México* (México: Noriega, 2002), 202; Ojeda Gómez, *México*, 66.

[80] Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 507.

personal prestige and the global interest the Chilean experience prompted."[81] Echeverría landed in the Pudahuel airport on the afternoon of Monday, April 17, and immediately heaped praise on the Unidad Popular experiment. "Here advances one aspect of Latin America's liberation," said Echeverría to those welcoming him, including President Allende.[82] He explained he had come to observe Chileans efforts to overcome underdevelopment, the same way "a brother comes to see their problems up close to find in them and in their solutions" the model for the region's deliverance. While "some" questioned the timing of the trip, the Mexican president insisted that it was an opportune moment to observe how Chileans responded to the difficulties major transformations entailed, and of which Mexico's Revolution had already faced. Finally, the Mexican leader explained the UNCTAD conference as the other leading reason for his trip and where he sought to join his voice to those of other developing nations in the struggle the liberation of the Third World.[83] Allende then escorted Echeverría to the Mexican Embassy where a journalist from Radio Balmaceda awaited him for an interview.[84] Echeverría legitimized his own project of revitalizing Mexico's revolution by linking his policies to those of Allende's, and spoke of the undergoing changes in the country as an older brother having already lived through similar struggles and as one seeking to provide support.

Orderly Revolution

---

[81] *Ibid.*, 510.

[82] Guillermo Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile* (México: Centro de Información Política, 1972), 11; Luis Echeverría, "Palabras pronunciadas por el Presidente de México a su arribo al aeropuerto Pudahuel [Santiago de Chile, 17 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 97.

[83] Luis Echeverría, "Palabras pronunciadas por el Presidente de México a su arribo al aeropuerto Pudahuel [Santiago de Chile, 17 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 97.

[84] Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 69, 110-114.

The following day, Echeverría gave a speech to Congress in which he stressed the importance of legality and non-violence within revolutionary change. After visiting La Moneda Palace, the president's official seat, and the monument to independence leader Bernardo O'Higgins, Echeverría proceeded to the Chilean Congress. In his discourse, the Mexican leader featured Chile as the embodiment of lawfulness. He also drew parallels between both countries democratic heritage, yet recognized Mexico had "lived a difficult transit to democracy," since its institutions grew out of a revolutionary process, a revolution that today signified "the fulfillment of the legal order." Echeverría explained he had visited the country thirty years earlier, and in 1972 he returned with the same enthusiasm—"to become acquainted with its institutions."[85] As a nineteen year-old law student at the UNAM, he had won a scholarship to attend a series of conferences at the University of Chile. Echeverría recalled that the then President Pedro Aguirre Cerda (1938-1941) and "revolutionary" leader had a keen interest for Mexico, explaining the Chilean government's grant sponsorship. On board the "*El Maipo*" petroleum tanker, Echeverría and another student left the port of Tampico, Veracruz, crossed the Panamanian isthmus, and arrived on the Pacific coast of Valparaíso, Chile thirteen days later on the second of January 1941, "just as General Lázaro Cárdenas had left office."[86] Following his speech Echeverría paid a visit to the Mexico Sports and Cultural Club, and then made his way to the municipality of Santiago that awarded him a medal. The evening concluded in the Moneda Palace where President Allende and his wife Hortensia Bussi threw a dinner in honor of

[85] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante el Congreso de la República de Chile [Santiago de Chile, 18 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 101-103.

[86] Luis Echeverría and Héctor Arenas, "Documento No. 2, Embajada de México en Chile: Entrevista Radiofónica, Abril 17, 1972," in *Reportaje en Chile,* 112-113.

Echeverría and First Lady Esther Zuno and where both leaders gave speeches.[87] Echeverría's trip to Chile, thereby, extolled Mexico's revolutionary project while also tying its roots to the social and economic transformations transpiring in Chile in 1972.

While both leaders rooted their projects in their respective countries' revolution, and democratic institutions, they asked for order from their populace. Echeverría, nonetheless, recognized that both countries still called for "profound" changes of which could be implemented through "peaceful means and within an institutional framework."[88] But he insisted that this fact did not diminish the importance of criticizing political leaders and for the government to practice self-criticism, actions constituting "living elements of a democracy."[89] Echeverría promoted a type of dialogue with civil society rather than outright confrontation, the latter characterizing the youth mobilizations common during his administration. And Allende supported Echeverría in "condemning violent youth activities" and argued for the electoral politics: "There we fight for change within the framework of bourgeois democracy."[90] In his trip to Mexico in December 1972, Allende gave a speech to the students of the University of Guadalajara where he argued that learning and work were youth's key responsibility. While he deemed their participation important, he underscored the notion that young people were indeed the movers of the revolution and affirmed; however, that the "Revolution does not pass through the University."[91] In Mexico of the 1970s existed a dual revolutionary discourse; one historically linked to the official

---

[87] Guillermo Ochoa, "Hechos y Fechas: Martes 18 de abril," *México ante el mundo*, 69.

[88] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante el Congreso de la República de Chile [Santiago de Chile, 18 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 101-103.

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] Salvador Allende quoted in Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 524.

[91] Salvador Allende, "Discurso pronunciado por Salvador Allende en la Universidad de Guadalajara," 2 December 1972. Transcript of speech provided for download by Publicaciones Anuies, <http://publicaciones.anuies.mx/pdfs/revista/Revista19_S2A2ES.pdf>, 9, 6.

party, and the other embraced by the leftist groups influenced by Marxist ideologies running counter to the government. Public dissidents were, thereby, perceived in defiance of the revolutionary process.[92] At least for some in Mexico, like writer Carlos Monsiváis, "Allende came to collaborate…in the international and national legalization of the advertising process of echeverrismo as *restoration of the Mexican Revolution.*"[93] Allende, thereby, exported the Chilean model of revolution abroad and Echeverría hoped to legitimize his project of reviving Mexico's revolutionary institutions, including the economic project of "balanced development," while embracing legality and order—a peaceful state-sponsored notion of revolution.

Most importantly, Echeverría and Allende presented the Chilean revolution as a model of economic justice. The Mexican leader explained, "Mexico has chosen the path of development in democracy," and he suggested the same for the international community, for a "democratic order in the international life." For Echeverría, Chile epitomized a country's right to self-determination, in this case meaning "Free election…over the economic model that best suits each nation." Respect for the Chilean model signaled an inclusive and democratic international community, and "the only path leading to a balanced international system."[94] In his trip to Mexico, Allende emphasized the region's dire position: "we are mono producing countries within the immense majority: we are the countries of cacao, bananas, coffee, tin, copper or oil. We are commodity producing countries and importers of manufactured goods; we sell

[92] Luis Echeverría quoted in Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 512.

[93] Carlos Monsiváis, "Allende en la FEG fascista," *Punto Crítico* 1:12, cited in Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 525.

[94] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado ante el Congreso de la República de Chile [Santiago de Chile, 18 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 101-105.

cheap and buy dear."[95] While Echeverría underscored Chile as a model for the Third World, both leaders called for a more inclusive and respectful system for countries on the path to industrialization, for "potentially rich countries" that live in poverty and must borrow "To stay alive."[96] Finally, Allende concluded with: "I know, from what I have experienced, that Mexico has been and will be—thanks for that—a friend of my country."[97] The comradery between both leaders called for other countries to emulate and recognize the Chilean revolution as a model of economic liberation but also probed the support of developing countries so it would manage the counterrevolutionary challenges posed by its capitalist adversaries, or what Pablo Neruda described as a "silent Vietnam," meaning an economic blockade rather than a military one.[98]

The language of legality and the constitutionality of Chile's economic project suited Echeverría's own engagement with developing nations and legitimized Allende at home. "When the President of Mexico reached Santiago, the political crisis of the Popular Unity government had already begun."[99] According to Mexican correspondent in Santiago Guillermo Ochoa, five days before the UNCTAD conference "Greece Avenue had been roamed by the highest human concentration," a manifestation led by the president of the Senate at the time and future president of the country, Patricio Aylwin and Allende's predecessor Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970), both Christian Democrats. "Hundreds of thousands of people expressed their discontent with the regime of the Socialist Salvador Allende," wrote Ochoa.[100] Echeverría stood behind

---

[95] Salvador Allende, "Discurso pronunciado por Salvador Allende en la Universidad de Guadalajara," 2 December 1972, 3.

[96] *Ibid.,* 4.

[97] *Ibid.,* 9.

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 517.

[100] Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 12-13.

Allende and argued Chile acted "within a legal framework with liberties." The Chilean press ran the comments of support: "*Momios*, did you hear what the President of Mexico said: in Chile exists democracy and all-embracing liberty."[101] Another newspaper published "Mexico supports Chile in its copper dispute with the USA," and Echeverría is "officially in favor of the Chilean position on expropriations."[102] The latter comment came as Chileans negotiated their foreign debt in Paris, as the UNCTAD conference was in session, and as the United States was suggesting a line of credit with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) if Chile agreed to a series of guidelines—a proposal they rejected.[103] Allende too gained from the political rapprochement with Echeverría and the Charter's call for the right of States to define their economic models and the manner in which they disposed of their natural resources—and certainly from Mexico's allegiance as the Chilean president faced pressures from the home and foreign fronts.

Yet, for Echeverría his proposal for a charter proved the most fruitful outcome of his Chilean voyage. Almost a week into the conference, Echeverría addressed UNCTAD members and called for a new economic relationship between industrialized and developing countries. However, prior to his evening address the president spent the day exploring the Huechun farm organization, followed by a visit to the Supreme Court of Justice.[104] Echeverría then proceeded to the UNCTAD tower, today the Gabriela Mistral Cultural Center, renamed after the first female Nobel laureate of Latin America, a building at the time referred to as "La plancha" (The Iron), and constructed especially for UNCTAD III. "An extensive short structure…a tower whose floors I did not stop to

---

[101] *Momios* is Spanish for right-wingers or reactionaries. *¡Puro Chile!,* 21 April 1972, cited in Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 519.

[102] *¡Última Hora!,* 21 April 1972, cited in Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 519.

[103] *El Mercurio,* 19 April 1972, cited in Arriola, "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno," 518.

[104] Ochoa, "Hechos y Fechas: Martes 19 de abril," *México ante el mundo*, 70.

count," built in "only eight months and fourteen days," and by some referred to as the "*Muro de Lamentaciones*" (The Wailing Wall), wrote Mexican correspondent Ochoa, and he speculated on the name since no one seemed to know the real origin.[105] In reality, it was more like 275 days for its completion and the tower remains an archetype of Latin American modernity—and a relic of UN edifices—bearing the imprint of various architects, engineers, mathematicians and pupils from universities across Chile, as well as an air of corrosion from its Pinochet-era military tenancy. In the fall of 1973 the Ministry of Defense took possession of the building, alongside the scavenging of other public buildings, when the military junta "decided to use the best and most modern public infrastructure that was available at that time for its new seat of Government," thus becoming the Diego Portales Building.[106] Yet the evening of April 19, the attendees entered a brand new building, and made their way toward "an enormous hall of ivory colored walls and an olive green tribune," customary colors for many official buildings of the time. Immediately in front of Echeverría stood "representatives from the Holy See, the USSR, the United States, and the People's China."[107] Echeverría opened with "Mexico reiterates its confidence in the high resolves of this Conference," and amid "the oscillating purr of exhaust fans and the low drone filming cameras," he continued with one of the most abiding speeches of the conference.[108]

---

[105] Ochoa, *México ante el mundo*, 29.

[106] David Maulén de los Reyes, "Cohesión social como programa arquitectónico: genealogías tentativas del edificio UNCTADIII/CCMGM," *Revista de Humanismo* [Universidad de Chile-Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo] 25 (Fall 2011), 92, 93; David F. Maulen de los Reyes, "Proyecto Edificio UNCTAD III: Santiago de Chile (junio 1971- abril 1972)," *Revista de arquitectura* 13 [Universidad de Chile-Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo], 86, 91.

[107] Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 35.

[108] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado durante la Reunión Plenario del Tercer Período de Sesiones de la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Comercio y Desarrollo (UNCTAD) [Santiago de Chile, 19 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 111; Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 35.

"Economy of Peace": Protracted Developmentalism

Echeverría's speech to UNCTAD members launched him into the international spotlight. He called for an international charter or rights and duties amicable to emerging economies, a document that eventually consolidated into the *Carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los Estados* and become a hallmark of his foreign policy. "We must strengthen the precarious legal foundations of the international economy," stated the Mexican leader. For many present at the UNCTAD forum, his proposal seemed like a viable response to economic climate of the time. Echeverría essentially called for a set of "obligations and rights to protect weaker states." Without codifying economic guarantees, a "just and stable world order" could not prevail. Echeverría further emphasized the need to detach "economic cooperation from the realm of goodwill to place it in the realm of law."[109] Since the creation of UNCTAD few things had changed; a decade of hope had passed and "developing countries had journeyed through a long road of frustration," said Echeverría. Nevertheless, he recognized enough groundwork existed "for what could well become a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States."[110] While the Mexican leader may have spoken of the need for a Charter in the passing, his idea solidified during the Santiago meeting.

Echeverría underscored the dire need for addressing international disparities of power and income through international law. "We did not come to negotiate with the major industrial countries advantages for economic oligarchies of the underdeveloped

---

[109] Víctor L. Urquidi, "La carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los estados: la cuestión de su aplicación," *Foro internacional* 20 (October-December 1979), 181.

[110] President Luis Echeverría cited in Romeo Flores Caballero, "La elaboración de la carta. Antecedentes de un Nuevo orden internacional," in *Justicia económica internacional: contribución al estudio de la Carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los Estados* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976), 40-41; Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado durante la Reunión Plenario del Tercer Período de Sesiones de la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Comercio y Desarrollo (UNCTAD) [Santiago de Chile, 19 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo* (México: Secretaría de la Presidencia, 1974), 111-124.

world." Rather, and among various points made, Echeverría called for adjustments to the international standards and institutions, such as those regulating funding, the transfer of technology, the environment, and a country's right to self-determination. Regarding the International Monetary Fund, he saw as necessary the democratization of the voting making process "through greater participation of developing countries," so the developing world could have greater access to funding. On matters of technology, Echeverría argued one of the conditions of foreign direct investment should be the "transfer of technological innovation" and he expressed high hopes for the UNCTAD working group researching the problems behind the transfer of technology. Echeverría also made the case for States' rights over their natural resources, and, recognized "a close link between environmental problems and industrial progress." Within all the proposals, the right to political and economic self-determination resonated, beginning with the "the right of every people to adopt the best suitable economic structure," the end of "economic instruments and political pressures" that impinge on a country's sovereignty, the prohibition of "transnational corporations intervention in the internal affairs of nations affairs," as well as the "abolition of trade practices that discriminate against exports from non-industrialized countries." Echeverría believed in an "integrated regional economy" fostered development, alongside the fortification of the "precarious legal foundations of the international economy," and declared his support for less developed countries, yet affirmed "special treatment" for Latin American countries. Echeverría thus proposed legality, collectivity, and justice in international relations in order to forge "an economy for peace," which he deemed the "the primary duty of the international community"—this in contrast to the individual rights proposals

emanating from organizations like the United Nations Human Rights program and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[111]

The charter proposal garnered immediate support and press coverage. After the speech and while Echeverría met with Latin American delegates, reporters took note of the various impressions his ideas had made. According to Guillermo Ochoa, among the first to support "Echeverría's proposal in its initial phase" included delegates from four major South American countries: Chile, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay. In Chile, "The next morning, Santiago's major newspapers featured the proposal on their front pages." Meanwhile in Mexico, Secretary of Foreign Relations Emilio O. Rabasa held meetings with various ambassadors.[112] On May 12 and on behalf of Group 77—a coalition of developing nations created in the first UNCTAD session meeting in 1964 and key advocate of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States—Ethiopia took "note of the suggestion made by Mexico, introduced a draft resolution to the Conference which proposed to draw up such a charter." Six days later, conference attendees "decided to establish the Working Group on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, composed of 31 member States," and nine other members subsequently added.[113] A total of 90 votes passed the resolution, with 19 abstentions and not a single opposing vote.[114] An overwhelming majority of developing countries supported the initiative, whilst representatives from industrialized economies responded with cautionary abstentions.

---

[111] Luis Echeverría, "Discurso pronunciado durante la Reunión Plenario del Tercer Período de Sesiones de la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Comercio y Desarrollo (UNCTAD) [Santiago de Chile, 19 abril 1972]," in *México ante el mundo*, 117-124.

[112] Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 38.

[113] United Nations, "General Assembly Resolution 3281 (XXIX), Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States," United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, <http://www.un.org/law/avl>.

[114] Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 39.

The United States proved one such abstainee.[115] Since the conference's announcement, U.S. officials held an air of caution toward UNCTAD. In planning for the conference, Under Secretary of State John N. Irwin, II (1972-1973), a post created under the Nixon administration superseding the Under Secretary of State, "sent a memorandum to [Assistant Secretaries] Julius Katz and Charles Meyer, which set out the recommended approach the Department of State should take in preparation for the [UNCTAD III] Conference."[116] Irwin suggested the US strategy should be one of "low profile" for UNCTAD.[117] Irwin based his suggestions on a study he requested from the Bureau of Economic Affairs on the symposium, which acknowledged the importance of the event: "UNCTAD will be one of the longest and largest international economic Conferences of recent years…and it will be a major event in the evolving dialogue between developed and developing countries."[118] At the same time, the study made State Department officials aware of the possible demands to be expected from developing countries, at the time referred to as Less Developed Countries (LDCs), on a number of outstanding issues like: "aid volumes, LDC participation in monetary reform, the SDR link, negotiation of a cocoa agreement, improved market access for LDC exports, investment problems, etc."[119] Anticipating criticism of Nixon's ten percent

---

[115] Ochoa, *Reportaje en Chile*, 39.

[116] Julius Katz served as Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs (1976-1979) and Charles A. Meyer held the post of Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (1969-1973) during the Nixon administration.

[117] "144. Editorial Note," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV: Foreign Assistance, International Development, Trade Policies, 1969-1972,* edited by David S. Patterson and Bruce F. Duncombe (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), 368.

[118] "CIEP Study Memorandum 16—UNCTAD III," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV,* 373.

[119] SDR, or Special Drawing Rights, "is an international reserve asset, created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement its member countries' official reserves." International Monetary Fund Factsheet, "Special Drawing Rights (SRDs)," *International Monetary Fund*, 25 March 2014 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/sdr.HTM>; "Memorandum From the Chairman of the Council on International Economic Policy Operations Group (Samuels) to the President's Assistant for

import tax, the report recognized antagonisms toward the United States may have eased as a result of the "lifting of the surcharge" and proposals for Congressional tariff legislation.[120] Secretary of State William P. Rogers (1969-1973) also informed President Nixon "the conference would be difficult because the United States had little to offer the developing world and the venue posed a special problem because of the sensitive U.S.-Chile relations."[121] From the onset, department officials prepared a defensive approach—"our posture will be defensible"—toward major demands or possible criticism from the Third World at UNCTAD.[122]

State Department officials also sought to keep conference aims within the limits of "constructive discussion."[123] Rogers underscored the role of UNCTAD as a "consultative rather than a negotiating or decision making mechanism."[124] Rogers also maintained the United States too shared concerns with Latin American countries on the matter of tariffs, and cited "European preferential arrangements" as an example. Yet he emphasized UNCTAD was not the place to negotiate "international commodity arrangements"; rather, these questions should be "resolved in the framework of the Agreements, not at international Conferences."[125] Investment banker and Deputy

---

International Economic Affairs (Flanigan), [Washington, March 3, 1972]," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV,* 372.

[120] A little over a month after the initial announcement of the 10 percent import surcharge for all countries, President Nixon retracted and "announced the lifting of the 10 percent import surcharge during his Summit meeting with Prime Minister Heath in Bermuda on December 20, 1971," "CIEP Study Memorandum 16—UNCTAD III," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV,* 375.

[121] "144. Editorial Note," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV*, 369.

[122] "CIEP Study Memorandum 16—UNCTAD III," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV,* 376.

[123] *Ibid.,* 373.

[124] "144. Editorial Note," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV: Foreign Assistance, International Development, Trade Policies, 1969-1972,* edited by David S. Patterson and Bruce F. Duncombe (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), 368.

[125] "Telegram from the State Department to the Embassy in Colombia [Washington, February 16, 1972]," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV*, 371.

Under Secretary for Economic Affairs Nathaniel Samuels (1969-1972) too argued the United States "should firmly resist pressures" to make UNCTAD "more operational and a forum for negotiations."[126] Rogers added developing countries "should be realistic in their expectations."[127] Even while economic frustration existed among developing countries, the conclusions drawn from the study predicted no major new agreements, considering that developing countries appeared not to be "prepared to undertake important new development commitments at this time of uncertainty and transition." Although State Department officials expressed their understanding of the economic difficulties developing countries faced, their support was limited to encouraging studies and development programs. Finally, the study recommended representatives "avoid confrontation" by insisting that the conference should be kept as an "institution for discussion and consultation" and not to succumb to "pressures to make it more operational and a forum for negotiations," while keeping "political attacks against the US out of the UNCTAD forum when possible." It was clear enough that a hard line of such attacks could come from the radical postures of some developing countries, which appear to have unrealistic expectations of the conference.[128] In brief, Echeverria's charter proposal proved too radical and too contradictory to U.S. economic interests, and thus found little support from State Department representatives in Chile.

---

[126] "Memorandum From the Chairman of the Council on International Economic Policy Operations Group (Samuels) to the President's Assistant for International Economic Affairs (Flanigan) [Washington, March 3, 1972]," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV,* 373.

[127] "Telegram from the State Department to the Embassy in Colombia [Washington, February 16, 1972]," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV*, 371.

[128] "CIEP Study Memorandum 16—UNCTAD III," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV,* 374-376.

Undeterred, Echeverría and his aide began to promote the Charter after its approval. "President Echeverría and Mexican officials" took on the task of "widely disseminating the basic principles on which the document rested," recounted Romeo R. Flores Caballero, a Mexican academic with a long career in public posts. Before leaving Chile, the president even agreed to a press conference in the nation's capital, where he outlined his vision of the perceived struggle involving Third World countries, and one in which Mexico stood in the fight due to its unique revolutionary past. By underscoring the country's famous struggle to reverse age-old social problems, Echeverría included yet differentiated Mexico from other developing countries. Nevertheless, he recognized that other countries suffered the effects of the widening gap in economic and development standing when compared with the more advanced sphere of the world. Finally, Echeverría added, "I think if what is happening in countries seeking to harmonize their views is not understood, the essence of the problem would go uncomprehend."[129] The intensive lobbying for the Charter embodied the climate of the time when leaders like Echeverría sought solutions to national problems through a type of a Third World power block sanctified through international law—espousing States' rights over individual rights promoted by Western countries. Echeverría's proposal seemed as one of the last bastions of developmentalist projects of the twentieth century, one promoted amid a competing free market model that grew from the tearing down of state-directed initiatives and protectionist politics of industrialization.

Echeverría's proposals were by no means mere nuance. The ideas in the Charter bore the imprint of Latin American developmentalism. Many of the

[129] Romeo Flores Caballero, "La elaboración de la carta. Antecedentes de un Nuevo orden internacional," in *Justicia económica internacional: contribución al estudio de la Carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los Estados* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976), 41-42.

discussions regarding inequitable structures of trade, development, and transfer of technology embedded in the *Carta* built on Prebisch and other Latin American economists' observations on the region's underdevelopment. While presiding over ECLA, Prebisch encouraged leaders to pursue ISI, an approach to development that could initially entail mass exportation of primary products until these countries could eventually accumulate sufficient capital goods.[130] On April 26 Prebisch spoke in Santiago, he reminded participants of the previous UNCTAD meetings—"I could not take my place at this third session of the Conference without calling to mind the two previous sessions, especially the first," and recounted, "Each of them was the scene of a confrontation of ideas." For Prebisch, Echeverría's proposals, alongside discussions regarding the Bretton Woods system as discriminatory international economic model at UNCTAD, only confirmed what ECLA scholars had been publishing for years. "Many of these [ideas]—strongly opposed and rejected at the time—have been gaining ground. They are now accepted universally, I would say." The Latin American economic pioneer saw beyond the "monetary crisis" as the source behind the international economic context in derail. For Prebisch another reason for the crisis lay in technological advancements, "with its never ending innovations has fed the massive flow of trade in manufacturers in which the developing countries have participated hardly at all."[131] Yet, Prebisch's model and its many updates had partially reached a new dead end in the 1970s. Thereby, Echeverría's proposal stood as one of the many schemes of the 1970s to rescue Latin America from economic stagnation resulting from the

---

[130] Raúl Prebisch, *The Economic Development of Latin America and Its Principal Problems* (Lake Success: United Nations Dept. of Economic Affairs, 1950).

[131] TD/180, Vol. I, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Third Session, Santiago De Chile, 13 April to 21 May 1972, Volume I (Report and Annexes)* (New York: United Nations, 1973), 5, 365.

decadent industrialization projects of the previous decades—yet still well within Prebisch's developmentalism.

The Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Interest in the Charter thus served as a protracted form of Prebisch's developmentalism. The difference; however, lay in that Echeverría sought to utilize the emerging global context in which human rights discussions proliferated, that of international law. But rather than focusing on the protection of individuals, he lobbied for the rights of entire States. Echeverría also went a bit further. He underscored the duties of States. Meaning the developed world had obligations, and the Third World had rights, and the violations of such duties impinged on the rights of other States. Thereby, the Charter of Rights and Duties of States proved a new legal recourse for Latin American developmentalism, one bearing similarities in language with the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While countries like the United States employed the language of human rights to protest the violation of individual rights—particularly political guarantees and under communist regimes—Third World countries espoused the language of rights of countries in order to strengthen nationalist economic policies. Thus, promoting the *Carta* using the emerging language of international human rights briefly served the interest of developing nations, for it functioned as a counterweight to first world countries' lobby for economic liberalism and individual rights at the cost economic nationalism and group rights.

Moreover, the Mexican press made comparisons between the Charter and what they deemed the obsolete Universal Declaration of Human Rights. By 1974, when academics drew parallels between the Charter and the UDHR, the latter seemed to be

categorized as a document that raised many expectations and hopes but was eventually filed away with so many other forgotten UN edicts. This certainly became evident when UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim traveled to Mexico to award Echeverría the UN Medal of Peace for advancing UN causes. He noted: "It is very important because all the world is aware that there can be no political stability without economic stability and one of the best steps toward achieving economic stability is the Charter of Duties and Economic Rights of Nations." The *Lancaster Farming,* a Pennsylvania newspaper, reporting on Waldheim's visit interestingly enough referred to the Charter as the "Economic Declaration of Human Rights"—a title closely resembling that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, yet the note recognized the document's formal name as that of the "Charter of Duties and Economic Rights of Nations."[132]

Meanwhile, in Mexico the air seemed less optimistic about the Charter's success. In the press conference held after the award, intellectuals and correspondents inquired into the possibilities of success given the elapsed Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Gloria Bello from the UNAM asked:

> Mr. Waldheim: The Mexican proposal to establish a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States has been welcomed by more than one hundred countries: however, has the United Nations foreseen the creation of a body to monitor and control compliance and apply sanctions to violators, this in order to prevent the Charter from suffering the same fate as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is constantly violated, as is currently the case before the powerlessness of the world organization?

[132] "America Enters 200th Year of Independence," *Lancaster Farming,* 20 April 1974, 6.

The UN Secretary General welcomed the reference to the UDHR, and added, "It is better—I must say—to be patient and thus produce an instrument that is binding and one that engages all countries…" Moreover, he added lessons were learned from the UDHR, particularly from the limitations brought forth by article two, paragraph seven of the United Nations Charter—which prevents the United Nations from intervening in "internal affairs of any Member State." This restriction, Waldheim acknowledged, proved limiting to the human rights cause since these require any action necessary for their protection. "We do not succeed because there are countries that have not ratified the agreements that the human rights declarations entails." Waldheim believed the right approach had been taken with the Charter, which sought the approval of not only UN Member States but of all countries, otherwise no such instrument would ever really be observed.[133] The optimism for the *Carta* underscored the limitations of international agreements that could predispose it to the same faith, yet reflected opinions regarding the obsoleteness of the UDHR—which by 1974 seemed outshined by Echeverría's proposal.

Others also used Waldheim's visit to comment on the failure of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Spanish-exile Ramón de Ertze Garamendi in his *Excélsior* column "*Suma y Resta*" (Sum and Minus) probed the Declaration in its twenty-fifth anniversary celebrated on December 10, 1973. "The usefulness of this kind of documents lies in the obligations assumed by States to respect individual rights and to draw on them to standardize their performance," wrote de Ertze Garamendi. Yet, he believed their protection should be less dependent on the good will of "a few simple

[133] "Entregó el Secretario Kurt Waldheim la Medalla de la Paz de la ONU, ayer, al Presidente Luis Echeverría," *Excélsior,* 5 January 1974, 13.

declarations"—the same to be said of the Charter, which "involves general principles and positive agreements."[134] César Sepúlveda, jurist scholar of international law, added some would deem the Charter as another document like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "that is often slighted." Unlike the UDHR, Sepúlveda believed the *Carta* was far more "pragmatic and less romantic in content," it had greater applicability, particularly because its implementation could be required by one State to another, and its provisions could easily be included in bilateral and multilateral agreements. "In other words, the coveted Charter will be like a an arsenal of principles and rules which can be selected and inserted into particular treaties." In that sense, state sovereignty would still prevail. Most importantly; however, Sepúlveda celebrated this original idea by President Echeverría—an idea that made it into the universal realm, and one that "constitutes a valuable Mexican contribution to the rights of peoples."[135] Meanwhile, Jorge Hernández Campos asked, "To what extent will the Charter resist the brutal realities of international politics?" That is, since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "is practically useless in the socialist sphere, where the values are different." Or, for that matter, what would happen to the deceased Allende's revolutionary aspirations upon different North American aspirations. In that sense, Hernández Campos wondered what would be of the Charter under competing global economic and monetary aspirations—and how would the document be applied and by which states and against what ideologies?[136] In that form, the commentaries stemming from Waldheim's visit underscored the failure of similar documents, particularly the UDHR,

[134] Ramón de Ertze Garamendi, "Suma y resta: sociedad internacional," *Excélsior,* 8 January 1974, 6.

[135] César Sepúlveda, "Waldheim en México: Hacia la Aprobación de la Carta," *Excélsior,* 8 Enero 1974, 7.

[136] Jorge Hernández Campos, "La Caja de Pandora: Pobres de Segunda," *Excélsior,* 28 January 1974, 7, 8.

but also acknowledged an emerging Mexican diplomacy evidenced by the global support for the Charter.

The Charter Without Allende: The Mexican Revolution and Political Refugees

From 1974 onward, Echeverría's justice rhetoric in support for the *Carta* broadened. Initially, the origins of the Charter had been intimately linked with the UNCTAD III meeting in Chile; legitimized and strongly supported by Salvador Allende's own Socialist Revolution, in part due to the support it rendered to the idea that Chilean cooper was the property of the State.[137] Political leader Porfirio Muñoz Ledo felt compelled to explain Mexico's rapprochement with Chile by noting that the "interest in Salvador Allende's Chile has been much criticized."[138] The simple answer for the countries' links, he added, would be that Chile stood as the leading State pushing progressive goals—through a democratic approach—"based on the nationalization of its basic resources." Muñoz Ledo recognized that the connection with Chile only furthered Mexico's relations with other progressive Latin American countries "consequently, a Third World consciousness arises, precisely from our visit to Chile."[139] While Mexican diplomats initially built on the Chilean Revolution and gave Allende due credit for his support and contribution to the idea and materialization of the

[137] Archivo General de la Nación [hereafter AGN], Archivos Particulares, Personas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Lazo la Vaga, Cargos en la administración pública federal o estatal, Embajador o Representante permanente de México ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, Informe, Caja 154-2, Exp. 1, Folio 1-20.

[138] Muñoz Ledo served as Secretary of Labor under President Echeverría and a brief tenure as Secretary of Education under José López Portillo (1976-1982). From 1978 to 1985 he represented Mexico in the United Nations.

[139] AGN, Archivos Particulares, Personas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Lazo la Vaga, Cargos en la administración pública federal o estatal, Embajador o Representante permanente de México ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, Informe, Caja 154-2, Exp. 1, Folio 1-20.

Charter, after Allende's overthrow in 1973 Echeverría moved toward a more immediate and nationalist predecessor for the *Carta*: the Mexican Revolution.

As the Charter neared its completion, for its promoters the Mexican Revolution factored as a key model of inspiration. Article Two, which notes "Every State has and shall freely exercise full permanent sovereignty, including possession, use and disposal, over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activities," according to Ledo originated in Mexico's 1917 Constitution. The right "to dispose of its natural resources" he deemed as originating in the Mexican Constitution—the first document to embody such a right, a guarantee that made the Article Two of the Charter the most contested.[140] For the creation of this document Ledo credits Mexican diplomat Jorge Castañeda—a man he deemed a "great negotiator, a great talent…" who worked diligently for two years, particularly evident in getting Article Two approved. He explained how the group of forty representatives responsible for drafting the *Carta* initially met in New York and then moved to Geneva, and in this process Ledo underscores industrial countries' efforts to keep the article on a State's sovereignty over its natural resources out. These representatives "proposed all kinds of formulas, how to dispose of natural resources within International Law, when this did not really exist."[141] However, the Mexican Constitution of 1917 clearly stated the right of the State over its natural recourses, from the subsoil, water and natural resources, which cannot be

[140] United Nations, General Assembly, "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States," Twenty-ninth session, A/RES/29/3281, 12 December 1974; AGN, Archivos Particulares, Personas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Lazo la Vaga, Cargos en la administración pública federal o estatal, Embajador o Representante permanente de México ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, Informe, Caja 154-2, Exp. 1, Folio 1-20.

[141] Castañeda eventually went on to serve as López Portillo's Secretary of Foreign Relations. AGN, Archivos Particulares, Personas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Lazo la Vaga, Cargos en la administración pública federal o estatal, Embajador o Representante permanente de México ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, Informe, Caja 154-2, Exp. 1, Folio 1-20.

owned by private individuals, that is a guarantee coupled with the right to nationalization and indemnization to be processed by national tribunals. Ledo finally added that for those reasons the Charter proved particularly important to Chile when the country struggled to sustain ownership over its cooper.[142] Rooting Article Two of the Charter in Mexico's Constitution furthered Echeverría's nationalist cause in the international realm, although with little ideological success at home.

Mexican journalists too presented the Charter as an extension of a Revolution and a model of futuristic schemes. For some, like the Director of International Organizations of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs Sergio González Gálvez the Charter confirmed a newfound Mexican diplomacy, one that compelled the country to leave behind a its defensive policy.[143] Jorge Hernández Campos writing for *Excélsior* saw the Charter within the tradition of the Mexican Revolution—"appears as an offshoot on the trunk of this Mexican tradition." Most importantly, the global context of the oil crisis had given the government an "unprecedented historical justification" to act on justice foundations.[144] Canadian Chancellor Mitchel Sharp argued that inflation and the energy crisis "had caused major problems for industrialized countries which have potentially catastrophic results for developing countries," this he said in support of the Charter and better norms of international conduct.[145] Spanish-exile Ramón de Ertze Garamendi added that the oil crisis demanded new forms of cooperation in a context

[142] AGN, Archivos Particulares, Personas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Lazo la Vaga, Cargos en la administración pública federal o estatal, Embajador o Representante permanente de México ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, Informe, Caja 154-2, Exp. 1, Folio 1-20.

[143] R. Torres Barrón, "Explica Rabasa la Carta Económica," *Excélsior,* 29 January, 1, 5.

[144] Jorge Hernández Campos, "La caja de Pandora: pobres de segunda," *Excélsior,* 28 January 1974, 7, 8.

[145] R. Torres Barrón, "Explica Rabasa la Carta Económica," *Excélsior,* 29 January, 1, 5.

where traditional and unequal forms of exchange could no longer be sustained.[146] According to journalist Alejandro Avilés the "energy scarcity alerted human consciousness about the problems that many futurologists had not realized."[147] The Charter also opened a discussion in *Excélsior's* editorials on the various possible futures and the futurists who predict them. Avilés explained it took "an intense imaginative effort to anticipate and consider not one, but several possible futures."[148] Genaro María González commented on the juridical thesis for the possibility of a more just world accompanied by a scientific thesis supporting the idea that "that" imagined world could be possible. Yet, he believed that what Mexico promoted did not suffice to be considered one of the many futuristic schemes for the future. Moreover, these "futures" and their positive projections had an immediate function in the present—to "detract from immediate conflicts and vaccinate against alarms and pangs of conscience for the injustices of the present."[149] Scholar Pablo Latapí noted the Charter would "reach its full meaning when confronted with a vision of the future that accepts that our planet is subject, today, to the violence of domination"—an unlikely admission by the developed world and its models for the future.[150] The Charter; nevertheless, engendered a discussion about Mexico's revolutionary past coupled with one regarding the many possible scenarios for a better and global future—at times these prodded ideas for a better future and in others the Charter and its rhetoric felt much like past, utopian, and failed projects.

---

[146] Ramón de Ertze Garamendi, "Suma y resta: Canadá-México," *Excélsior,* 30 January 1974, 6.

[147] Alejandro Avilés, "Prospectiva humanista: De Cocoyoc a Salzburgo," *Excélsior,* 24 January 1974, 7.

[148] *Ibid.*

[149] Pablo Latapí, "El Presidente en Salzburgo: México y los futuros alternativos," *Excélsior,* 26 January 1974, 7, 8.

[150] *Ibid.*

Along with the revolutionary rhetoric other diplomats also placed the Charter within the post-World War II context of political decolonization. Muñoz Ledo, for instance, explained the *Carta* culminated "a long process of awareness of the profound injustices that survived political decolonization and deepened inequalities between nations." Mexican diplomats, including Echeverría, believed the Charter complimented and coupled political liberalization with that of economic sovereignty—the latter that seemed to have been largely inaccessible to many newly freed countries. Moreover, the 1970s "exhausted" and repressive economic model of development offered a space for a type of "international rearrangement" for a more just participation in the global economy, added Ledo, signaling the opportunity for a "new social contract" embodying "the progress of all in the dignity of each." Building on this justice terminology, the Mexican diplomat interrelated the struggle for economic liberation with the defense of the "fundamental rights of man," which he also deemed inseparable from state sovereignty. Seemingly building on the internationalist language of individual rights, Ledo too called for the legal fortification of the international economy, in contrast with the legal apparatus brewing on behalf of individual civil and political guarantees—not economic.[151] While Ledo spoke of the Charter almost ten years after its official approval and passage from memory, he looked to the context of political decolonization to grasp the importance of the document—then already deemed forgotten. However, even then, he still noted the rights engendered in the Mexican

[151] Address, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, "Declaración formulada por el Representante Permanente de México ante las Naciones Unidas, Embajador Muñoz Ledo, durante la ceremonia del Décimo Aniversario de la adopción de la Carta de los Derechos y Deberes Económicos de los Estados," Sesión Plenaria de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, New York, NY, 12 December 1984; Box 138, File 126, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, AGN, Archivos Particulares, Personas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo Lazo la Vaga, Cargos en la administración pública federal o estatal, Embajador o Representante permanente de México ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, Discursos, Caja 138, Exp. 126, Folio 2-6.

Revolution as a foundation for an entirely different world context, that of the 1970s.

The political optimism behind the Charter was also subject to critical commentaries in *Excélsior.* Journalists and intellectuals challenged President Echeverría to look inward as he engaged in his international and economic justice crusade. Samuel I. del Villar thought it pertinent to look into the "economic rights and obligations of Mexicans" given the government sought support from the international community for the rights embedded in the Charter. In looking into inequalities at a national level, Del Villar believed that the country's economic relations left the majority of Mexicans without a "right to an opportunity to lead an independent existence of human dignity."[152] Hernández Campos noted the Charter's Pandora's box lay in the fact that the president should first set "an example on what should be done to carry out order internally."[153] Journalist and playwright Vicente Leñero, on the other hand, perceived the Charter as the government's attempt to forge a good image and portray good intentions, a "naïve desire to believe that the system can be moralized and that the interests of those who wield political power will yield to the imperative of public needs." Leñero saw the government's efforts as somehow not believable or convincing enough.[154] Even so, the president continually exalted the humanism behind the Charter, and his cause on behalf of the poor, the more the 1,500 million human beings that "suffered the tragedy of malnutrition and misery," and the existence of an

---

[152] Samuel I. del Villar, "Mirar hacia adentro: nuestros derechos y deberes económicos," *Excélsior,* 22 January 1974, 6, 8.

[153] Jorge Hernández Campos, "La Caja de Pandora: Pobres de Segunda," *Excélsior,* 28 January 1974, 7, 8.

[154] Leñero quoted Secretary of *Gobernación* Jesús Reyes Heroles—"*El poder público no es el privilegio de mandar, sino el privilegio de servir*." Leñero's response to the statement: "*Algunos hechos hacen pesar que se entiende y se practica justamente al revés*." Vicente Leñero, "El Poder por el Poder," *Excélsior,* 23 January 1974, 6, 8.

underdeveloped world that had been accepted as natural.[155] This moralistic and economic justice rhetoric became bedrock of his travels and speeches abroad, which clashed with the economic and political realities at home—yet he broadened the Charter cause by supporting South American exiles, particularly Chilean.

Human Rights and Political Refugees

Echeverría thus avoided international scrutiny for the state's political repression by promoting the Charter and welcoming refugees. Echeverría's Charter, the death of Allende, and the global context allowed for the government's appropriation of the internationalist language of human rights. Even when the government confronted rural and urban guerrilla movements—repressed through violent means—Echeverría appeared as a promoter of human rights by supporting Latin American leftist through a generous asylum program. These efforts deemed the Mexican government as a promoter, rather than a violator of political rights, to not only to the U.S. government but also to the emerging system of international human rights monitoring. Mexico, thus, projected what Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink described as a "progressive stance on international human rights."[156] Of all the political refugees that arrived in Mexico during his presidency, Chileans were believed to have been the president's most privileged group. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), some 10,000 South American exiles lived in Mexico in 1980. One source estimates a total of 10,000

[155] Alejandro Avilés, "Prospectiva Humanista: De Cocoyoc a Salzburgo," *Excélsior,* 24 January 1974, 7-8.

[156] Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 111.

refugees just from Chile, while another notes a total of 3,345.[157] The Secretary of *Gobernación* estimated that in 1976 no more than 1,800 Chileans lived in Mexico.[158] Nevertheless, it was clear that Echeverría had taken immediate action after the overthrow of his ally Allende. In 1973, he broke diplomatic relations with the Chilean government and of the 300 prisoners released from the country in 1975, 163 settled in Mexico.[159] The Mexican government also welcomed Allende's widow Hortensia Bussi and financed the creation of the "Casa de Chile en México" (Chilean House in Mexico), a gathering and cultural center that at one point included a printing press.[160] The national responsiveness toward exiles was such that Echeverría and his wife Esther Zuno opened an office to aid in the settling process in Mexico, an entity headed by the first lady's sister, Bertha Zuno "La Chiqui."[161] "However, at the end of his administration, Echeverria was severely criticized for the fact that many Chilean refugees were occupying better paid and even politically important jobs to the disadvantage of Mexican nationals," according to Hans Wollny.[162] By supporting the Latin American left, Echeverría exalted Mexico's tradition of asylum as a tool of international legitimacy. By forging an image of rights protector by opening its door to those who suffered under military dictatorships, Mexico separated itself from the repressors and

---

[157] See Hans Wollny, "Asylum policy in Mexico: A Survey," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4:3 (1991), 226.

[158] Claudia F. Rojas Mira, "La Casa de Chile en México," in *Exiliados, emigrados y retornados: chilenos en América y Europa, 1973-2004*, edited by José del Pozo (Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores, 2006), 111.

[159] Gabriela Díaz Prieto, "Un exilio venturoso: chilenos en México (1973-1990)," in *Revolución y exilio en la historia de México: del amor de un historiador a su patria adoptiva: homenaje a Friedrich Katz*, edited by Garciadiego Dantan, Javier, Emilio Kourí, and Friedrich Katz (México, D. F.: El Colegio de México, 2010), 806.

[160] Rojas Mira, "La Casa de Chile en México," 107. Also see, Claudia Rojas Mira and Alessandro Santoni, "Geografía política del exilio chileno: los diferentes rostros de la solidaridad," *Perfiles Latinoamericanos* 41 (January/June 2013), 123-142.

[161] Díaz Prieto, "Un exilio venturoso: chilenos en México (1973-1990)," 798.

[162] Hans Wollny, "Asylum policy in Mexico: A Survey," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4:3 (1991), 227.

became a player in the international community of human rights monitoring—this as he hoped to appease armed revolutionary movements at home.[163]

The Latin American left took notice of Echeverría's efforts toward Chileans, even if to legitimize his faltering nationalist projects at home. Guatemalan writer and politician exiled in Mexico since the overthrow of Jacobo Árbenz in 1954, Mario Monteforte Toledo commented on Echeverría's asylum policy toward persecuted Chileans, and concluded:

> this is giving a hand to the Latin American left, one which must be convinced of the democratic opening and the sustainability of popular representation, one which must be convinced of his progressiveness and its revolutionary spirit against imperialist manipulation and rightist dictatorships, one which must be convinced within national territory of his well intentioned populism. Any aid granted to oppressed peoples by national and international rightists, renders the government honorable and gives credit before the nation.

While Monteforte Toledo understood Echeverría sought legitimation from Mexico's left, he however could not grapple with the government's desire to strengthen its links to the Department of State and transnational corporation—links with an inveterately adversary power.[164] His policy resonated worldwide. In February 1974, a group of Chilean exiles in Austria cheered Echeverría's arrival and greeted him with a letter of

---

[163] The use of human rights in his foreign policy was not exclusive to South America. Echeverría also made use of the language of human rights as he denounced violations in Spain. "In defense of human rights and anguish on the threat to peace, we denounce before the United Nations the serious events that took place in Spain last year." The Mexican leader noted that he along with progressive sectors in Mexico were watchful of Spain's "democratization progress." See, Yoram Shapira and Yolanda Meyer. "La política exterior de México bajo el régimen de Echeverría: retrospectiva." *Foro internacional* 19:1 (73) (Jul. - Sep., 1978), 62-91.

[164] Ricardo Garibay, "Riesgos, conveniencias, urgencias y aspavientos," *Excélsior,* 29 January 1976, 7, 8.

gratitude. Among the sections of the letter reproduced by *Excélsior* included: "The Mexican people, and you personally, Mr. President, have been able to show in an exemplary manner the high spirit of solidarity with the Chilean people," and hoped that other countries would follow Mexico's example. Meanwhile, one within the crowd cried out "*Viva Allende, viva el Presidente de México, Viva Austria*" (Long live Allende, long live the President of Mexico, and long live Austria).[165] These positive reports in the press certainly exalted Echeverría's own legacy toward the international community of political dissidents, even while his own government persecuted leftist guerrilla movements at home.

The arrival of political exiles to Mexico, nevertheless, played an important role in disseminating human rights concepts in the country. In many ways it was South American political exiles in the 1970s that helped disperse to the general population the emergent language of individualist notions of human rights. Upon their arrival in Mexico, many had already had links with international human rights organizations; others joined networks once they arrived. Exile's were familiar with and employed the language of human rights in Mexico to voice their frustrations with the atrocities committed in their home countries. That is one of the ways in which the term reached the Mexican mainstream and how "the Mexican community familiarized itself with the victims of repression and the manner in which they used the concept of human rights as a measure of self-defense."[166] Interestingly, exile's cause was aided by transformations

---

[165] Rafael Cardona, "El Grito 'Viva México, Viva Chile, Viva Austria', Saludó a LE en Viena," *Excélsior,* 12 February 1974, 1, 9.

[166] "La presencia de los refugiados sur y centroamericanos, tuvieron un impacto en México en cuanto a sus ideas sobre derechos humanos. Con los exiliados del Cono Sur, el pueblo mexicano conoció a las víctimas de la represión y la manera en que ellos usaban el concepto de los derechos humanos para autodefenderse." Joy Lee Peebles Lane, *Las organizaciones no gubernamentales de derechos humanos en México: su formación y esfuerzos para realizar cambios socio-políticos* (M.A. thesis, Estudios Latinoamericanos, Facultad de

within the Mexican press, which provided them with new avenues of political expression, and the establishment of new universities where many found teaching posts.[167] However, their use of the concept to press their governments on military atrocities took much longer for scholars, activists, and journalists to employ the term human rights to the happenings in Mexico. Exile's use of the concept solidified the notion that what took place in South American countries were indeed "human rights" violations, while what transpired in Mexico remained off the international radar—a long-lasting legacy of Echeverría's politics of *apertura,* of Mexico's leftist revolutionary government, as well as Mexico's opening and linkages with the emergent international system (like the United Nations).

Conclusion

Echeverría's Charter; nevertheless, proved one of the various international schemes of the 1970s. As such the *Carta* became a formal component of the New International Economic Order (NIEO). Because the NIEO project sought to change the international economic order, more specifically the Bretton Woods system codifying economic relations since World War II, the *Carta* became a suitable working document of support sometime after the 1972 meeting in Chile. Yet, the proposal for NIEO is in itself an extension of Latin American developmentalism: a regional model of development broadened in scope and applied on a global scale for the Third World, and in some ways the culminating project of developmental schemes dating to the

---

Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM, 1993), 50.

[167] For the role of Uruguayan's in the dissemination of human rights concepts in Mexico, see De Heredia Romo, "México en la red transnacional de defensa de los derechos humanos en Uruguay (1973-1985): Estrategias y acciones representativas."

1950s. Although some scholars contend "that NIEO ideology is not rooted only in Third World acceptance of Prebisch's views on trade" but rather in the crisis of the Bretton Woods system and countries' attempt to find an alternate international mechanism.[168] The idea for the *Carta*; nevertheless, derived from the 1972 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Chile. [169] A month after the Santiago meeting, the UNCTAD passed a resolution on May 18, 1972 "stressing the urgency to establish generally accepted norms to govern international economic relations," just as President Luis Echeverría had suggested.[170] By December of the same year a Working Group made up of representatives from forty Member States began working on the drafting the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. While the *Carta* became a component of the NIEO by 1974, its initial inkling was nonetheless a byproduct of the UNCTAD, and influenced by regional thinkers, especially since the conference took place in Santiago—the headquarters of ECLA, a city with thinkers forging developmentalism.

Above all, the idea for the Charter is most often attributed to Mexican President Luis Echeverría. Yet, little scholarly material exists on the actual drafting process. The Charter, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, required a working committee for its design. Very unlike the historical narrative available on the prolonged and contentious process on the writing of the UDHR, and whose planning committee chairwoman included none other than former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, little historical insights exists on the profile of the Charter's designers. Yet, the original idea

---

[168] Craig Murphy, *The Emergence of the NIEO Ideology* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), iii.

[169] United Nations, General Assembly, "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States," Twenty-ninth session, A/RES/29/3281, 12 December 1974.

[170] United Nations, General Assembly, "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States," Twenty-ninth session, A/RES/29/3281, 12 December 1974.

scholars overwhelmingly associate with President Echeverría's speech in Santiago. However, the draft approved by the UN General Assembly in December 1974 procuring the Charter for Economic Rights and Duties of States an official component of the NIEO suggests a Working Group "composed of forty Member States."[171] Even then, Echeverría's contribution to the *Carta* stands out above that of his contemporaries. This is probably because unlike any of his counterparts, President Echeverría made the Charter a keystone of his foreign policy, explaining the attribution of the *Carta* to the Mexican leader.

Although optimism for an alternative international economic system remained high, by 1976 it was clear the idea would not prevail. However, the *Carta* introduced discussions and comparison to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the Mexican press—this at a time when few referenced the term. Most importantly, the Charter emanated from a nationalist government projecting a revolutionary model into the international realm. The *Carta* advanced within international law and mechanisms that did not reject but competed with other universalist projects—especially that of individual human rights and its equivocal partner—free market economics. The Charter stood as one of the last bastions of state-directed initiatives and as one of the leading schemes for the rights of States, not individuals. While many deemed the UDHR practically obsolete as discussions for the Charter arose, the turn toward reducing the role of the State, the crisis of Keynesianism, and the globalization of markets inevitably led to the downfall of Echeverría and the Third World's hopes for more equitable relations. The individual, not the State, prevailed and the Charter

[171] United Nations, General Assembly, "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States," Twenty-ninth session, A/RES/29/3281, 12 December 1974.

became another UN edict archived away. Meanwhile, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which had been largely forgotten and systematically violated since 1948, took on a more central role when utilized by a transnational network of activist working on behalf of political dissidents; thus, threatening the much guarded state sovereignty of previous decades. In the case of Mexico, the promotion of the Charter stood as one of the isolated instances of usage of the term human rights, and of a project that placed economic rights of States above civil and political rights of the individual.

Part II:

Nationalizing Human Rights and the Rise of Civil Society



ILLUS. 3.1. "Mrs. Patricia Hutar, Representative of the United States, making a statement [at the opening of the World Conference of the International Women's Year]," 19 June 1975, Juan de la Barrera Gymnasium, Mexico City. Photo from the World Conference of the International Women's Year, United Nations Photo Archive, Photo #122985 <http://www.unmultimedia.org>. (Reproduced without permission)

CHAPTER 3:

Women's Rights, NOT Human Rights: The 1975 United Nations International Women's Year (IWY) and Conference in Mexico City

"*She and the air are alive with possibilities.*
It's our world.
It's our year.
But where is our voice?"[1]

Introduction: Nationalizing Human Rights

The term "human rights" reappeared in the Mexican press with the 1975 United Nations International Women's Year Conference (IWY). From June 19 thru July 2, thousands of women from across the globe convened in Mexico City for the UN-sponsored event. The gathering served as a platform for divergent currents of nationalist and internationalist feminist thought. Official and unofficial print coverage linked many, at home and abroad, to the first gender-specific and internationalist gathering of its kind with the "presence of 1,600 newspeople" making the "IWY Conference the most widely covered U.N. meeting ever held."[2] Characterized by the wave of decolonization, civil rights, and other such movements, the 1970s had also proved a tumultuous yet exciting decade for women. For example, activists in the United States witnessed the historic 1973 Supreme Court case of *Roe vs. Wade* that

[1] "Birds are eternal optimists, and the traditional symbol of peace is the dove. Look at that beak, so proudly and expectantly raised. One can almost feel the tension, the listening, the stirring going on within her. One can almost sense her anxiousness to soar aloft, to get started on her mission of development and equality, so that true peace can come to our fretful and anxious world. She and the air are alive with possibilities. It's our world. It's our year. *But where is our voice?*" Marie Whitesell Balboa, NAWL United Nations Representative, on the "stylized dove" and official emblem for the 1975 United Nations International Women's Year and icon of the Women's Rights Movement, "Annual Conference for the Non-Governmental Organizations," *Women Layers Journal* 61:2 (Spring 1975), 79.

[2] United Nations, *Meeting in Mexico: The Story of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico City, 19 June-2 July 1975).* New York: United Nations, 1975. Jocelyn Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," *Journal of Women's History* 24:4 (Winter 2012), 25.

broadened control over reproductive rights by providing legal access to abortion. As women continued to gain ground within their home countries, the 1975 UN International Women's Year helped launch various strands of women's rights demands onto international politics. The IWY Conference thus offered the space for different conceptions of feminism to converge and debate, and for the institutionalization of a space for subsequent global discussions within the United Nations. At a national level, however, print coverage of the 1975 IWY Conference proved another key moment wherein Mexican activists, intellectuals, and government officials engaged with internationalist conceptions of rights.

Mexico's host of the first international women's conference reveals varied meanings of the emerging lexis of "human rights." First World organizers attempted to disassociate human rights from women's rights. According to Jocelyn Olcott, "In the 1975 context, the New York group [of organizers] saw the introduction of human rights as raising the specter not only of the NIEO (New International Economic Order) but also of fraught UN debates over Zionism and apartheid—political issues that they feared would eclipse debates about women's rights."[3] Meanwhile, Third World participants placed the advancement of women within the larger framework of socioeconomic development of their home countries. At least for the outspoken Bolivian activist Domitila Barrios de Chugara, the Mexico City conference displayed "two types of liberation—one for 'moneyed women who wanted to imitate the vices of men' and the other for 'our class condition.'"[4] For that reason, Olcott described the Conference as a

[3] Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 31-32.

[4] Domitila Barrios de Chugara is often quoted as the representative voice of dissenting Latin American women clashing over American or European feminists' gender-specific rights demands. For more on Barrios de Chungara see her autobiographical work *La mujer y la organización* (La Paz, Bolivia:

"petri dish for the conflicts that roiled the global 1970s."[5] In the context of the 1970s, Latin American women gravitated to human rights precisely because these rights encompassed political and economic issues, such as prisoners of Pinochet's Chile or discussions regarding the NIEO—rights themes pertinent to the regional context.

While most accounts on the IWY event examine the divergent feminist currents voiced at the gathering, this chapter will explore how the UN event prompted greater engagement with internationalist and individualistic conceptions of rights in Mexico.[6] Press coverage of the IWY Conference demonstrates the dawning of human rights nationalization in the 1970s, which proved both a product of international reform currents as well as Mexico-specific contingencies.

"We pressed for our women's year": IWY and the Internationalizing of Women's Rights[7]

The idea for an International Women's Year (IWY) originated from a group of NGOs closely connected within the United Nations. According to Arvonne Fraser, "a group of traditional women's organizations who had consultative status within the UN

UNITAS; CIDOP; CIPCA, 1980). Domitila Barrios de Chugara cited in Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 42.

[5] Jocelyn Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective,* edited by Niall Ferguson, Charles Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel Sargent (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 286.

[6] Most accounts of the 1975 International Women's Year Conference, in some form or another, describe the gender discourses between First World and Third World attendees regarding what encompassed "women's rights." The most extensive coverage of the event has been done by Jocelyn Olcott. Also see, Pamela Jeniffer Fuentes Peralta, "La Conferencia Mundial del Año Internacional de la Mujer y la Tribuna de las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales de 1975. Una aproximación a las discusiones en torno al género" (Masters thesis, History, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, UNAM, 2008) and Pamela Fuentes, "Entre reivindicaciones sexuales y reclamos de justicia económica: divisiones políticas e ideológicas durante la Conferencia Mundial del Año Internacional de la Mujer. México, 1975," *Secuencia. Revista de historia y ciencias sociales* 89 (May-August 2014): 163-192.

[7] Mildred Emory Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," *Journal of Women's History* 24:4 (Winter 2012), 188.

Commission on the Status of Women [CSW]" proposed a women's year.[8] Fraser, spouse to Congressman Donald M. Fraser from Minnesota and key player in human rights trials limiting foreign aid to military regimes, served on a number of academic and governmental posts dedicated to the advocacy of women's rights, and participated in the IWY Conference in Mexico City as a US delegate.[9] By the 1970s, women's influence within the UN system had grown considerably. Historical accounts focusing on influential American and European female figures in the making of the IWY underscore the role of Mildred Persinger and other NGO participants. Persinger represented the World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), a London-based organization created in 1894 "by women from seven western nations to develop social services for women, girls and families and to promote women's rights in the workplace." The YWCA held consultative status, or official clearance by the United Nations, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in part due to their work with "displaced persons in Austria during World War II through the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration."[10] Persinger details how "For some time the UN had been declaring special 'Years' to publicize world problems in urgent need of resolution on issues ranging from tourism to human rights."[11] Although prior events like the International Women's Day gained attention and were celebrated in nations such as Russia and Germany, Persinger and others clearly understood what an official year of

[8] Karen Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 9:1 (September 2007), 212-216.

[9] Challen Nicklen, *Rhetorics of Connection in the United Nations Conferences on Women, 1975-1995* (Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 2008), 16.

[10] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 217-218.

[11] Mildred Emory Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," *Journal of Women's History* 24:4 (Winter 2012), 188.

advocacy and research entailed. "We pressed for our women's year," wrote Persinger.[12] "In 1972, on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary session, the Commission on the Status of Women decided that since 1975 was the midpoint of the Second UN Development Decade," it was the right time to request a year. The UN General Assembly consequently approved the CSW resolution for an International Women's Year (IWY): 1975.[13]

Interestingly enough, some of the ideas for the IWY programming grew from the blatant absence of gender in development forums. The 1974 World Population Conference held in Bucharest, Romania was one such instance of prominent CSW members seeking to incorporate women into global discussions. "I was representing the World YWCA at the UN Population [Conference Planning] Commission. The delegates, mostly men except for a couple of female demographers, were debating the draft of the World Population Plan of Action to be adopted (they assumed) the following year at the Bucharest World Population Conference," chronicled delegate Mildred Persinger. According to Persinger the participants "did not seem to know that women had anything to do with fertility rates."[14] John R. Mathiason, Deputy Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women in the UN Secretariat (1987-1996), explained that gender did not factor into the 1970s population debates "because demographers were the intellectuals behind the issue and population was considered a technical subject," meaning that women were thus excluded from population policy debates.[15] Taking lessons from the preparation discussions, the CSW authored a "Statement for

[12] *Ibid.*, 188-189.
[13] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 215-216.
[14] *Ibid.*, 215.
[15] *Ibid.,* 214.

the Commission on the Status of Women, Study of the Interrelationship of the Status of Women and Family Planning" for the Bucharest forum.[16] Fraser credits the Finnish diplomat Helvi Sipilä for the landmark study that challenged "the UN to include women participants and to consider women's concerns in population policy debates." Sipilä, head of the Girl Scouts of Finland and long-time member of the CSW, also went on to serve as the Secretary-General for the UN Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the 1975 IWY Conference in Mexico City.[17] By the 1970s, NGOs helped "counter patriarchal structures and attitudes that inhibited consideration of women's needs," thus launching a new wave of international women's movement and instigating national debates on gender rights through the designation of International Women's Year.[18]

Upon the announcement of the IWY, the Commission on the Status of Women designed the year's agenda. With the primary goal being "the encouragement of the full integration of women in the total development effort," the CSW decided upon an international conference, and eventually the launching of the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985).[19] Margaret K. Bruce of Great Britain and Helvi L. Sipilä led the IWY programming. Sipilä, a lawyer and a Finn representative to the General Assembly since 1966, also served as the Secretary General the IWY Conference in Mexico City.[20] Yet,

---

[16] *Ibid.*, 215.

[17] Arvonne Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations," *Women and Social Movements, International—1840 to Present,* <http://wasi.alexanderstreet.com>; Karen Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 9:1 (September 2007), 215-216; Helvi L. Sipilä, "Women's LIB: 30 years of progress," in *The UNESCO Courier* [issued devoted to International Women's Year], March 1975, 4.

[18] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 215.

[19] Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations."

[20] Bruce served as the Deputy Director of the UN Branch for the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. Sipilä, in September 1972, became the first women Assistant Secretary General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 216.

the idea for the conference seems to have arisen from Commission on the Status of Women's consultative representatives from communist countries, for much of the organizing followed the 1972 announcement of the IWY Warsaw Pact countries planning a conference in East Berlin for October 1975.[21] Some scholars also credit the Romanian representatives, who were particularly influenced by the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), for introducing the idea for an International Women's Year to the Commission on the Status of Women. The WIDF, "an Eastern-bloc-headquartered organization," held important sway within ECOSOC, and had been among one of the oldest women's organization given UN consultative status (lost in 1954 and regained in 1967). According to Carolyn M. Stephenson, "It was the work of women's NGOs, particularly the International Council of Women and WIDF, consistently lobbying governments on the subject which ensured that the proposal did not get dropped at any stage."[22] As such, the venue designation for the IWY Conference in East Berlin could also have been a by-product of the Eastern European NGOs within the CSW. As one of the year's key events, "[c]arefully planned and well funded, it was scheduled for October and had already attracted registration by thousands of women from all world regions," the setting for the IWY Conference did not suit all involved.[23]

Saving the Conference: From East Berlin to Mexico City

---

[21] Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 283.

[22] Carolyn M. Stephenson, "Women's Organizations and the United Nations," in *Multilateral Diplomacy and the United Nations Today,* edited by James P. Muldoon, Jr., JoAnn Fagot Aviel, Richard Reitano, and Earl Sullivan (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2005), 209-210; Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 283.

[23] Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 189.

Given the many conflicts, the organizers decided upon an alternative location for the conference. Mildred Persinger detailed how the preparations had successfully begun—"The bad news: the venue was to be in East Berlin."[24] At least the U.S. State Department objected, until "CSW delegate Patricia Hutar pointed out that the only major IWY event would take place behind the Iron Curtain."[25] Hutar, a former model, worked with the Girl Scouts of America but also held important precedents within the Republican Party as a campaigner for Eisenhower in San Diego, as co-chairwoman of the 1964 Illinois Goldwater for President, and as volunteer director for the Committee for the Re-election of the President, CRP (Nixon), and later nicknamed "CREEP."[26] Alongside her role as the assistant chairwomen of the Republic National Committee (1964 and 1965), Hutar has been described as a skilled negotiator in the drafting of the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).[27] Even while U.S. opposition to the location subsided, Hutar approached the Colombian delegate Aurelio Caicedo Ayerbe and managed to move the conference to Bogotá. Even with a new location and approved budget, organizers sought an alternate host once more due to "political uncertainty in Colombia."[28] Indeed, Colombians had lived through their share of political violence from the mid-1940s up to 1958, a prolonged

---

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 27; Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 283.

[26] Trevor Jensen, "Republican activist Patricia Hutar dies at 84," *Chicago Tribune,* 13 May 2010 <http://articles.chicagotribune.com>; Michael Winship, "Nixon, CREEP, and Watergate: They're Baaacck!," *Moyers & Company,* 13 April 2012 <http://billmoyers.com/2012/04/13/nixon-creep-and-watergate-they're-baaacck/>.

[27] Jensen, "Republican activist Patricia Hutar dies at 84"; Lisa Baldez, "What U.S., Iran share on women's rights," *CNN Wire,* 8 March 2013.

[28] Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 27; Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 283.

period of clashes between Liberal and Conservative factions also known as *La Violencia*.[29] In 1974 President Misael Pastrana Borrero (1970-1974) led a National Front government, "Colombia's attempt to end intense fighting between Liberals and Conservatives" started in 1958, agonized by armed attacks from the M-19 guerilla movement in response to the president's supposed fraudulent election.[30] The violence in the 1970s; however, by no means reached the level of *La Violencia.* Nevertheless, 1974 marked the end of the National Front coalition governments with the election of centrist Liberal Party candidate Alfonso López Michelsen (1974-1978), and a critical transition period that could have contributed to Colombia's withdrawal from the UN event.[31] According to Persinger, from the outset "Colombia was pressed to host it." As such, the government announced its inability to accommodate the NGO segment of the conference that ran parallel to the official IWY Conference. Once López Michelsen took office, "Colombia withdrew the invitation" as host altogether. After being moved from East Berlin to the Western Hemisphere, and succeeding Colombia's withdrawal, the conference faced threat of cancelation—that is, until Mexico City became the final selectee for the IWY meeting.[32]

"For reasons of its own, Mexico came to the rescue," noted Persinger.[33] Mexico's appointment as host of the IWY Conference likely ensued from President Luis Echeverría's rapprochement to the United Nations, especially to UN Secretary-General

---

[29] For more on *La Violencia* see Mary Roldán, Blood *and Fire: La Violencia in Antioquia, Colombia, 1946-1953* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

[30] Diana Jean Schemo, "Misael Pastrana Borrero, 74, President of Colombia in the 70's," *The New York Times* [Saturday, Late Edition], 23 August 1997, Section 1, 10.

[31] In 1977, under the Alfonso López Michelsen administration, "a national strike gripped the country and rioting in Bogota, the capital, left dozens dead. He left office with little popular support, having failed to improve the economy, and he was hounded by persistent accusations of corruption from his opponents," The Associated Press, "Alfonso López Michelsen Dies at 94; Led Colombia in Unstable 1970s," *The New York Times* [Friday, Late Edition], 13 July 2007, Section C, 10.

[32] Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 189.

[33] *Ibid.*

Kurt Waldheim (1972-1981). Since Luis Echeverría proposed the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, Mexico's profile within the United Nations had risen significantly. On January 4, 1974 Waldheim even traveled to Mexico and personally awarded Echeverría with the UN Peace Medal, "awarded to heads of state and eminent personalities for their special contribution to the work of the United Nations in the advancement of peace." In his address, Waldheim paid tribute to Echeverría's contribution to the Charter but also the "humanitarian aid," the asylum given to more than five hundred political refugees from General Augusto Pinochet's Chile. As both leaders discussed international politics, the UN Secretary-General found that he and Echeverría shared viewpoints on the solutions to global conflicts. Before presenting the medal to the Mexican head of state, Waldheim offered his gratitude to Echeverría for the invitation, evidence of Mexico's desire to be an active player in international undertakings, and for his contribution, through concrete actions, to the efforts of the United Nations. Waldheim also noted the efforts of prominent Mexicans to the UN cause, individuals such as Ambassador Antonio Carrillo Flores, serving as secretary general to matters of population, and Spanish exile living in Mexico Bibiano Fernández Osorio y Tafall, the UN representative in the conflict in Cyprus. "I am also extremely grateful to Mr. President for giving me the opportunity to visit parts of this beautiful country, I mean Yucatán. Yesterday I spent the day there and was deeply impressed by what I saw in this historic land." Waldheim also expressed his confidence that the General Assembly would approve the Charter in the upcoming fall elections.[34] On December 10, 1974 (Human Rights Days), two days before the UN passed the Charter

[34] "Entregó el Secretario Kurt Waldheim la Medalla de la Paz de la ONU, Ayer, al Presidente Luis Echeverría," *Excélsior,* 5 January 1974, 4, 13.

of Economic Rights and Duties of States resolution, the General Assembly made the official invitation for the World Conference of the IWY in Mexico.[35] Although, Echeverría sought the UN Secretary General post, in addition to a Nobel Peace Prize as his critics jested, Mexico's rescuing of the IWY Conference stemmed from Echeverría's voracious efforts to buff his international persona and to elevate Mexico's position in world politics.[36]

1975: "Equality, Development, and Peace"[37]

Aware of the opportunities the IWY offered, leaders deliberated on ways of making the year transformative for women across class, social, and national lines. Helvi Sipilä, Secretary-General of the IWY Conference, "understood that in 1975 a majority of the world's women lived in rural areas and a high percentage were illiterate." In preparation for this worldwide observance Sipilä had an emblem designed.[38] The "stylized dove" with a "biological symbol for women, and mathematical sign for equality," became the 1970s global icon for women's rights (see Illustration 3.2).[39] Graphic artist Valerie Pettis created the famed image found in official UN paraphernalia or plastered in buttons and t-shirts, at that time a designer for the Henry Dreyfuss Associates studio in New York. Known as "one of the 'big four' godfathers of US industrial design," Dreyfuss worked on iconic projects from the Bell 300 telephone

[35] Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 189.

[36] Vicente Leñero, *Los periodistas* (México: Joaquín Mortiz, ©1978, 1994), 129. The following sources also note Echeverría's desire to serve as Secretary-General of the United Nations: Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2*, X; Sara Sefchovich, *La suerte de la consorte: las esposas de los gobernantes de México: historia de un olvido y relato de un fracaso* (Océano exprés; 1 edition, 2014), Kindle Electronic Edition, 8534; Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 27; Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 283.

[37] Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations."

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] Marie Whitesell Balboa, "Annual Conference for the Non-Governmental Organizations," *Women Layers Journal* 61:2 (Spring 1975), 79.

(1937) to the redesign of *Time* magazine (1943), making him part of the emerging world of "modern design business, complete with pitches, retainers, press releases, hyperbole and hordes of itinerant freelance design staff following the work around town."[40] Pettis recounts that in 1974, at the age of 28, one the managing partners (Niels Diffrient) assigned the design task to her. "I was a very young designer working for Henry Dreyfuss Associates…had worked on projects like the Princess Phone, American Airlines and Polaroid Cameras." It had been UN Officer Sally Swing Shelley who contacted the design firm to request a symbol for IWY.[41] The official mandate was for the symbol to "promote equality between men and women, ensure integration of women in economic development efforts and promote the contribution of women to the strengthening of world peace." The broad criteria did not prove a problem, the task, however, was not an easy one. "The biggest problem was that the symbol had to utilize imagery that would be broadly understood across many cultures, languages, and continents. Owing to the very nature of the UN, universality was fundamental," details Pettis. The three elements (peace, equality, and development) came together into a "single iconographic" image, one that traveled across the global and became a key symbol for women's liberation movements of the 1970s, and quite fitting that it was a

[40] Helvi L. Sipilä, "Women's LIB: 30 years of progress," in *The UNESCO Courier* [issue devoted to International Women's Year], March 1975, 6; "4 HENRY DREYFUSS 1904-1972," *Design Week,* 17 December 1999, 23.

[41] Sally Swing Shelley had served as the Chief Information Officer for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. In 1972, she became the Chief of Education Information Programs for the UN Secretariat. Michael A. Scarcella, "Shelley by the shore," *Sarasora Herald-Tribune,* 7 August 2003, 11-12; Valerie Pettis, "Re: My role in International Women's Year Logo," Message from Ariana Quezada, 9 September 2014, E-mail. It is also likely that Shelley served as Chief of Information for International Women's Year (1972-1986), see "Sally Swing Shelley," *Prabook.com,* <http://prabook.org/web/person-view.html?profileId=513701>.

woman that gave life to the icon that embodied such hearty aspirations for their advancement.[42]

The symbol served precisely the role the IWY Secretary-General had envisioned. Sipilä understood the value of images, especially for the millions of women who "would be unable to either attend the conference or read any document produced by it."[43] As "the highest-ranking woman staff member of the U.N. Secretariat," Sipilä had extensive experience in UN policy making, as well as in passing legislation in her own home country.[44] The Finnish delegate had a strong desire to empower women through the 1975 IWY efforts, believing that "[t]he significance of the Year will be what we make of it. It could be a truly historic year—a landmark not only in the history of women's advancement but also in the advancement of humanity as a whole."[45] The historical remnants of the IWY logo speak volumes to the legacy of the year, conference, and decade. In reminiscing on the creation of the symbol, Pettis remembers "picking up *Ms*. magazine and seeing page after page of my emblem on everything." She added, "It has been on the cover of *Time* Magazine, been made into a commemorative pin by Tiffany, and appeared on countless coins and stamps from many countries. I found it being used as the pattern on material in an African bazaar." Like the symbol Valerie saw "had taken on a life of its own…truly owned by the world," the international women's movement too gained momentum through the efforts of thousands

---

[42] "Ultimately, I used the dove of peace as the gestalt for the symbol. From mathematics, I chose the equal mark, assigning it to the negative space of the dove's wing. In the interior space of the dove's body, I used the ancient symbol for Woman. The idea of development was expressed by the color which was originally green." Valerie Pettis, "Re: My role in International Women's Year Logo," Message from Ariana Quezada, 9 September 2014, E-mail

[43] Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations."

[44] Helvi L. Sipilä, "Women's LIB: 30 years of progress," in *The UNESCO Courier* [issue devoted to International Women's Year], March 1975, 4; Arvonne S. Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), 18.

[45] Sipilä, "Women's LIB: 30 years of progress," 7.

representing official UN institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the thousands of women who engaged the language of women's rights from that point forward.[46]

Keeping with the theme of equality, development and peace, the U.S. government too made preparations for the IWY at home.[47] On January 4, 1975 President Gerald R. Ford (1974-1977) signed an executive order creating the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year (NCOIWY). "Americans must now deal with those inequities that still linger as barriers to the full participation of women in our Nation's life," read Executive Order 11832. A year earlier, on January 30, 1974, through a Presidential Proclamation, the president had called upon all members of society—from NGOs to government officials—to observe IWY "with practical and constructive measures for the advancement of women in the United States." President Ford credited the United Nations' proclamation of International Women's Years with offering "an exceptional opportunity" to bring attention to the "rights and responsibilities" of women. Set to disband after 1975, the NCOIWY became responsible for organizing the 1977 National Women's Conference in Houston after an amendment extended the commission's tenure.[48] The conference,

---

[46] Pettis has spent much of her career developing visual communications for social issues and for organizations like the United Nations, Amnesty International, and UNICEF (Children's Rights & Emergency Relief Organization). Her dedication to the cause continues to this day. Pettis is currently working on designing human rights posters for the organization *Posters for Tomorrow*. She has worked closely with young designers in Bolivia, individuals directly engaged in human rights causes. For more on the current project, visit http://www.pettisdesign.com/founder.html. Valerie Pettis, "Re: My role in International Women's Year Logo," Message from Ariana Quezada, 9 September 2014, E-mail.

[47] Fraser argues the themes of 'equality, development, and peace' of the IWY (Conference and Decade) had been "longstanding themes" of the International Alliance for Women (IAW), an NGO with historic links to the League of Nations, Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations."

[48] Document 1: "Executive Order Establishing a National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, 1975," Executive Order 11832 signed by President Ford, 9 January 1975, reprinted in National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, "… *To Form a More*

"The Spirit of Houston," an outgrowth of the United Nations IWY "marked a historic moment in women's political history." In the height of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) discussions, with some twenty thousand attendees and a $5 million in Congressional appropriation, the goal of the meeting included the drafting of official recommendations to enact legislation in an effort to bring women into equal partnership with men.[49] Former U.S. House Representative Bella Abzug headed the event and the voting process on twenty-six propositions that eventually made it into the National Plan of Action presented to President Jimmy Carter. Among the polemic discussion on lesbian rights and the passage of the "sexual preference resolution," keynote feminists made impressible deliberations, "foremothers" like Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique,* 1963) and Kate Millet (*Sexual Politics,* 1970). In a Hyatt cocktail reception, First Lady Rosalynn Carter alongside Betty Ford and Lady Bird Johnson also made an appearance.[50] The creation of the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year (NCOIWY) and the subsequent 1977 National Women's Conference in Houston provided activists with an avenue by which to affect public policy signaling a concrete effort on the part of the US government toward greater incorporation of women into society, while emphasizing "women's responsibilities."

"Programa de México": International Women's Year Programming in Mexico

---

Perfect Union…": Justice for American Women (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 117-20, included in *How Did the National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977 Shape a Feminist Agenda for the Future?,* edited by Thomas Dublin, Stephanie Gilmore, and Kathryn Kish Sklar. *How Did the National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977 Shape a Feminist Agenda for the Future?* (Binghamton, NY: State University of New York, 2004)

[49] Danelle Moon, *Daily Life of Women during the Civil Rights Era* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011), 184; Anne Taylor Fleming, "That Week in Houston," *New York Times Magazine,* 25 December 1977, 10-13, 33.

[50] *Ibid.*

Given this extraordinary mobilization, it is perhaps not surprising that President Echeverría endorsed International Women's Year programming in Mexico. Gloria Brasdefer Hernández served as one of the coordinators for the "*Programa de México para el Año Internacional de la Mujer*" (Mexico's Program for International Women's Year, PMAIM). Brasdefer Hernández explained that the Mexican government conjoined with the United Nations in the preparations for international events for the IWY, while at a national level leaders organized a series of programs in order encourage the integration of women into public life. "A new era for women has begun," one in which "more and more women prove their unwillingness to accept the role of subordination," added the law graduate from the UNAM with a long trajectory in public service for the PRI in posts within the Secretariats of the Presidency and Labor prior to her IWY work.[51] "Strong foundations are being forged so that each time, in a greater proportion, women can be agents of development."[52] Brasdefer and the Mexican government alike deliberated the advancement of women's rights in contingency with economic development, characteristic of many gender discussions in Third World countries, whereby leaders focused on the structural mechanisms that stymied women's participation in economic expansion.

Mexico's IWY programming committee also published a monthly newspaper in form of a magazine. The "glossy monthly tabloid," as Olcott describes, served as the official publication by the IWY *Programa de México* titled "*México 75: año internacional de la*

[51] "15 mil de las más destacadas mujeres se congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS; "Brasdefer Hernández, Gloria," in Roderic A Camp, *Mexican Political Biographies, 1935-1993* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 87.

[52] "15 mil de las más Destacadas Mujeres se Congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS

mujer" (Mexico 75: International Women's Year).[53] Its logo *México 75* incorporated the United Nations IWY dove (see Illustration 3.2). Alongside Gloria Brasdefer, Pedro Ojeda Paullada served as the General Coordinator of Mexico's programming. Appointed as *Procurador General de la República* (Attorney General, PGR) by President Echeverría, Ojeda a modest but experienced lawyer, known for his ability to "form teams of capable people, leaders and clearly indicate the course of action to achieve set objectives."[54] Ojeda has been credited with incorporating capable women into key posts, including Gloria Brasdefer into IWY *Programa de México* as Executive Coordinator.[55] María Eugenia Moreno, or better known as "Kena," served as director of the *México 75* publication.[56] In 1963 Moreno, a pioneer in women's editorial work, founded the women's magazine *Kena*, "the first of its kind made by and for Mexican women." *Kena* included content on fashion and beauty alongside writings by key Mexican authors like Dolores Castro Varela, Rosario Castellanos, Guadalupe Dueñas, Emma Godoy, Margarita Michelena, as well contributions by Griselda Álvarez (1979-1985), and journalist María Luisa "La china" Mendoza. In January 1973, María Eugenia Moreno became the first businesswoman to appear in the cover of *Expansión* magazine. As an entrepreneur and founder of *Armonía* publishing house, Moreno's work encouraged women to prepare themselves academically and enter the workforce,

---

[53] Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 30; Programa de México, *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1974), Front matter (México, D.F.: Juventud, S.A., 1975). All copies of *México 75: año internacional de la mujer* were shared by Jocelyn Olcott.

[54] Fundación Miguel Alemán, "Preface," *Ochenta y más: Pedro Ojeda Paullada: visión de Estado* (Puebla, México: Editorial Las Ánimas, 2014), cited in Juan Arvizu Arrioja, "Rinden homenaje póstumo a Pedro Ojeda Paullada," *El Universal,* 6 February 2014 <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx>.

[55] Clara Jusidman, "Opinión: Pedro Ojeda Paullada," *Cimacnoticias,* 15 January 2013 <http://www.cimacnoticias.com.mx/node/62378>; Programa de México, *México 75: año internacional de la* mujer, no. 1 (January 1974), Front matter.

[56] For nick name "Kena" see, Alejandra Mendoza de Lira, "Kena, el altruismo, su bandera," *El Universal,* 12 April 2002 <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/estilos/22192.html>.

making her a fitting candidate to head International Women's Year *Programa de México*'s official publication.[57] Since 1973, Moreno had a joint effort with the *Juventud* lithographer and press, which happened to be the publisher of *México 75.*[58] In the editorial council served three intellectuals: María del Carmen Millán, Ricardo Garibay and Griselda Álverez, the latter served as a senator from Jalisco and eventually governor of Colima.[59] Mexico's government publication for International Women's Year echoed Echeverría's public policies regarding population control and women's incorporation into the national economy, while serving as an official promoter of his Presidency and the volunteer work of his wife Esther Zuno.

Programa de México Locally

At a local level, the *Programa de México* coordinators assisted government and civil organizations with IWY programming. Pedro Ojeda Paullada and Gloria Brasdefer worked from the *Centro de Orientación, Información y Documentación* (Training, Information and Documentation Center), the official headquarters for the year's programming designated by President Echeverría, located on Minerva 63, in the Benito Juárez Delegation of Mexico City—one of the sixteen boroughs, or administrative units, that make-up the Federal District. The Center offered information for collaborating in the IWY programming and housed a documentation center for individuals interested in

---

[57] After more than 30 years of editorial work, *Armonía* announced its closing in the summer of 2014 due to financial troubles, Lorena Martínez Rodríguez, "Kena," *Crisol Plural,* 18 February 2011 <http://crisolplural.com/2011/02/18/kena/>; "Cierra por Quiebra Editorial Armonía," *El Publicista* <http://elpublicista.info/cierra-por-quiebra-editorial-armonia/>.

[58] Patricia Ruvalcaba, "Kena Moreno, pionera editorial," *CNN Expansión,* 28 January 2009 <http://www.cnnexpansion.com/expansion/2009/01/27/kena-moreno-pionera-editorial>.

[59] Programa de México, *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1974), Front matter; William Stockton, "For Women of Mexico, A New Political Beacon," *New York Times,* 6 November 1986, Section C, 1.

general information regarding the "economic, social, and cultural" condition of women. Pedro Ojeda Paullada's job included managing every federal agency's programming for International Women's Year. "We talk with the people who have been designated by each of the various government and private branches." According to Ojeda, the Center did not promote anything in specific; rather, public and private entities at a federal, state and municipal level carried "out the *Programa de México*." By January, the coordinating office had sent out over five thousand invitations with basic information regarding International Women's Year and its objectives of judicial equality and greater participation of women in the development and peace process, of which only five hundred went to government entities and the rest of civil organizations. As the *Programa de México's* key leader, Ojeda and his team carried out the nation's International Women's Year in Mexico in line with President Echeverría's national and foreign agendas.[60]

Moreover, other governmental organizations observed International Women's Year through commemorative events or programs for women. In the case of Mexico City, Angela Alessio Robles distributed a general agenda for the sixteen delegations of the Federal District, which included evaluating changes already in place and formulating and carrying out programs for the advancement of women. As coordinator for the city, Alessio Robles explained that each delegation had the freedom to carry out the IWY program as desired, yet each had to provide a monthly report for programmed and past.[61] The events truly varied across the city. For example, the Benito Juárez

---

[60] "Hay que hacer énfasis en que el trabajo del Año consistirá en seguir la línea que el Presidente Echeverría ha marcado…" Blanca Haro, "Esto es un movimiento de solidaridad humana: dijo el Licenciado Pedro Ojeda Paullada," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), 3.

[61] "El Departamento del Distrito Federal nos contesta…Esto es lo que se está haciendo a favor de la mujer," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 4 (April 1975), 8-9.

Delegation, in conjunction with Parents Association of the *Centro Urbano Presidente Miguel Alemán* school*,* the latter a tower block housing unit designed by the renowned architect Mario Pani (1911-1993) and emblematic of the urban designs of the Mexican Miracle, unveiled plaques in remembrance of outstanding women.[62] Among these honored were Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, Rosario Castellanos, and María Lavalle Urbina, the latter the only female diplomat present in John P. Humphrey's human rights seminar in Mexico City in 1961 and also a prominent leader of IWY in Mexico.[63] Similarly, the *Comisión Nacional de Fruticultura* (National Commission of Pomology, CONAFRUT) set up a course for thirteen peasant women. CONAFRUT hoped to encourage rural homemakers to make use of fruit grown domestically, including those of their home patios. CONAFRUT believed that after the harvest season, agricultural workers could engage in the industrialization of fruit in order to supplement their income and also contribute to the national economy through the production, elaboration, and conservation of marmalades, jellies, and ice cream. After the course, CONAFRUT predicted women would return home with practical

[62] "'Tower Block Housing Estate 'Presidente Miguel Alemán,' Mexico's first large housing estate was commissioned in 1948 and consists of nine buildings, each with 13 stories, and six buildings each with three stories. Seven of the 13-storey buildings are linked in a zigzag to form a large structure that runs diagonally from the southwest of the site to the northeastern corner. Only 20 percent of the total footprint is used for buildings. This leaves a great deal of space for communal areas, parks and playgrounds. The ground floors house all manner of services for the inhabitants. Moreover, the ground floor areas function as the pedestrian link between the various buildings on the estate, which is otherwise free of cars. There are only pedestrian walkways, and the cars are parked outside the estate," Von Sophia Walk, "10 OF THE OVER-40S," *Stylepark*, 21 March 2014 <http://www.stylepark.com/en/news/10-of-the-over-40s/349324>; "Homenaje a Mujeres Ilustres en la Delegación B. Juárez," 2 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 11, Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social, CENCOS [hereafter "CENCOS"].

[63] Others included: Margarita Maza de Juárez, Carmen Serdán, Leona Vicario, María Hernández Zarco, Amalia G. de Castillo Ledón, María Caso, Eulalia Guzmán and Celia Espinosa Jiménez. "Homenaje a Mujeres Ilustres en la Delegación B. Juárez," 2 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 11, CENCOS.

knowledge of conservation and nutrition that they would share with their neighbors.[64] Even if on small scale, government institutions, often times in collaboration with private organizations, mobilized their local communities toward the intended efforts of International Women's Year of incorporating and commemorating women.

Similarly, state and city governments honored IWY. Documentation exists on the states of Nuevo León, Sinaloa, and Tlaxcala observing International Women's Year as early as January 1975. The three Mexican states published "International Women's Year" in official documents, text usually found at the bottom of the page in large font.[65] In Mexico City, the Coyoacán Delegation carried out a series of lectures in occasion of the year. The conference's theme centered on Mexico's democratic institutions as an outgrowth of its nationalist past, including the Revolution. According to some of the speakers, many structural inequalities disappeared with the Revolution, while those remaining tended to be byproducts of a recent past. The debates on Mexico's democratic shed positive light on the work of President Echeverría, particularly "tireless efforts to end inequalities and social imbalances that many Mexicans still endure." While matters on the status of women seemed the primary themes of these events, often the speakers regressed to general themes about Mexico's historical past or the praising of the Echeverría administration.[66] However, the events at a state and local level reveal the coordinating efforts of the *Programa de México* leaders toward integrating public

---

[64] "Cursos en Materia Frutícola a la Mujer Campesina Para Combatir la Desocupación," 4 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[65] Periódico Oficial de Nuevo León (Monterrey), Tomo CXII, 18 January 1975; Periódico Oficial de Sinaloa (Culiacán), Tomo LXVII-2a Época, 15 January 1975; Periódico Oficial de Tlaxcala, Tomo LXIX, No. 4, 22 January 1975, 4. Hemeroteca Nacional de México, UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliográficas, Digital Library, <http://hnm.unam.mx/>.

[66] "Denuncian la existencia de intereses contrarios al camino democrático del país: ciclo de conferencias con motivo del Año Internacional de la Mujer," 5 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

institutions into the wider IWY programming, which fomented additional coverage in the press on women's issues.

Yet, Mexico's programming for IWY also met criticism. "*Feria de Vanidades en el Año de la Mujer*" (Vanity Fair on Women's Year) wrote Yolanda Cabello about the *Programa de México.* Cabello reported on a meeting for women organized in *Colonia* Florida of the Álvaro Obregón Delegation by coordinator Pedro Ojeda Paullada. First, the street Minerva did not meet the parking demand required for those driving to the event, implying those invited were well-to-do women. "There was a bit of everything: the 'early birds' who arrived promptly at 9 in the morning and those who arrived on the scene more than an hour late…sporting the latest hat in style or trendy makeup." After two discussions, Aída González followed by Ojeda Paullada, the crowd's attention dispersed, those sitting comfortably inside the building, with some of their counterparts outside in the garden, "talked a little of everything, and occasionally listened to their speakers." Cabello found the women's lack of attention deplorable given their attendance of an event themed on a matter one would think concerned them, "otherwise they wouldn't have attended the engagement."[67] Meanwhile, the following day Clara Elena Molina Enriquez, adviser for the *Programa de México*, gave an interview detailing women were not yet trained for full participation in society. Molina Enriquez also rejected the notion of IWY as a "vanity fair," arguing that while some women "flaunt their eccentricities" one must consider, reported the journalist, they are familiarized with social events and "are not accustomed to participating in conferences

[67] Yolanda Cabello, "Feria de vanidades en el Año de la Mujer," 7 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

of such importance," noting the unfairness of the generalization.[68] While Molina's comment belied women's capability or readiness to engage in Mexico's political life, North American feminists too noticed Latin American women's fashion opulence.

Meanwhile, for some non-governmental organizations IWY proved key for making legal demands. The *Movimiento Nacional de Mujeres,* MNM (National Women's Movement, MNM) assembled a petition for the removal of the civil marriage epistle authored by nineteenth-century legal reformer Melchor Ocampo (1814-1861) and traditionally read to couples during civil ceremonies. MNM President Esperanza Brito de Martí indicated "The epistle is an unnecessary aggregate to the marriage contract, urging its suppression because, if it its original intent was good, today it proves offensive to the feminine sex."[69] A journalist and feminist writing for national publications like *Novedades, El Universal,* magazines *Siempre* and *Fem,* the latter she edited for some time, Brito along with twenty-three other women formed the *Movimiento Nacional de Mujeres* in 1972, an organization that during 1975 IWY served as key promoter of women's rights.[70] Among the clauses from the epistle noted by the feminist group, one particularly targeted asked that women "should give and will give her husband obedience, pleasantness, support, comfort and advice, always treating him with the veneration that is due to the person who supports and defends."[71] For the MNM, and

---

[68] "Clara Elena Molina: la mujer no está capacitada aún para participar en la vida activa del país," 8 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[69] "Las feministas pedirán a LE que se suprima la epístola de Melchor Ocampo. Ofensiva e innecesaria, aseguran," 3 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 11, CENCOS.

[70] "Falleció Esperanza Brito, periodista y feminista," *El Universal,* 17 August 2007 <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/153389.html>.

[71] For more on the Melchor Ocampo Epistle, see Article 15 of the Civil Marriage Law (1859). "Que el hombre cuyas dotes sexuales son principalmente el valor fuerza, debe dar, y dará a la mujer, protección, alimento y dirección, tratándola siempre como a la parte más delicada, sensible y fina de sí mismo, y con la magnanimidad y benevolencia generosa que el fuerte debe al débil, esencialmente cuando este débil se entrega a él, y cuando por la sociedad se le ha confiado.

other groups in support of the proposed petition to President Echeverría, the reading of Ocampo's words "[a]ssigns women a position of inferiority, of submissiveness, and supports the idea that being a women means being weak," added Brito. Given the year's theme on women, the organization asked that the president draft a new document for the betrothal making it clear that no one sex is superior to the other, but rather they both hold equal status upon the law.[72] While the Ocampo text may have not been removed in 1975, in March 2013 on the eve of International Women's Day, the Mexico City government announced the upcoming removal of the 1859 nuptial epistle.[73]

María Esther Zuno Arce and IWY

Perhaps more than anyone else, it was First Lady María Esther Zuno Arce who served as one of the country's key icon of IWY. Zuno Arce came from a Jalisco political family, her father having been governor of the state from 1923 to 1926. She was also a woman of professional experience, for before serving as First Lady she had managed a poultry farm. Her love for indigenous culture also led her to create *"Las Palomas*" (the Doves) dancing group in order to preserve and display Mexico's indigenous dances. She was also popularly known and criticized for her use of indigenous wear. While at the home of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, Esther met the then law student and future

---

Que la mujer cuyas principales dotes son la abnegación, la belleza, la compasión, la perspicacia y la ternura, debe dar y dará al marido obediencia, agrado, asistencia, consuelo y consejo, tratándolo siempre con la veneración que se debe a la persona que nos apoya y defiende, y con la delicadeza de quien no quiere exasperar la parte brusca, irritable y dura de sí mismo." "Ley de matrimonio civil. Julio 23, 1859," *500 Años de México en Documentos* <http://www.biblioteca.tv/artman2/publish/1859_146/Ley_de_matrimonio_civil_258.shtml>.

[72] "Las feministas pedirán a LE que se suprima la epístola de Melchor Ocampo. Ofensiva e innecesaria, aseguran," 3 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 11, CENCOS.

[73] "Epístola de Melchor Ocampo ya no se leerá en bodas civiles del DF," *Vértigo Político,* 7 March 2013 <http://www.vertigopolitico.com>.

president of Mexico, Luis Echeverría.[74] Once in the presidency, Zuno Arce preferred being called "*compañera,*" which translates to 'companion' and a term with socialist connotation, as opposed to "First Lady," which she deemed a cultural derivation from the United States equivalent to Coca-Cola.[75] As the president's wife, and mother of eight, she made appearances at a number of IWY public and private events leaving an extensive paper trail of press reportage of positive notes.[76]

Like her husband, Esther Zuno reveled in nationalist orotundity on development. For many public officials, the betterment of women's position in society went hand-in-hand with overall advancement of the economy. In the same sense, Zuno believed the oppressive circumstances that kept women from advancing were intimately linked with the country's internal and external constraints to development. Her proposals; therefore echoed the ideas of President Echeverría, especially those imbedded in the *Charter of Economic Rights of Duties of States*. In the seminar "*Orientación Política Femenil*" (Female Political Orientation) organized and hosted at the PRI's headquarters, Esther argued, "Mexico needs decisive and courageous women." The ceremony began at 10:30 a.m. in the Plutarco Elías Calles Auditorium filled, with key party functionaries and congressmen, as well as the PRI's party president, Jesús Reyes Heroles, his wife Gloria González de Reyes Heroles, and Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada. In the event commemorating IWY, Esther emphasized women's path to full citizenship

---

[74] Sefchovich, *La suerte de la consorte,* Kindle Electronic Edition, 8198-8199. For other texts on Echeverría Zuno see Beatriz Bustos, *Compañera María Esther: vida y época de María Esther Zuno Arce de Echeverría* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2010), Rosa María Valles Ruiz, *Yo no soy primera dama* (México: DEMAC, 2006), and Sara Sefchovich, and Carlos R. Martínez Assad, *Las primeras damas* (México, D.F.: Cultura Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1982).

[75] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 15; Sara Sefchovich, *La suerte de la consorte: las esposas de los gobernantes de México: historia de un olvido y relato de un fracaso* (Océano exprés; 1 edition, 2014), Kindle Electronic Edition, 8482-8487.

[76] Sefchovich, *La suerte de la consorte,* Kindle Electronic Edition, 8223.

would be determined by her contribution to the "service of collective enterprises of social change, guided toward the structuring of an economic system, whereby justice, democracy, and national independence and peace reign."[77] Meanwhile, the keynote presenters added to the discussions on development. Congressional delegate Demetrio Ruiz Malerva presented a 20-page paper on "Historical Development of Institutional Revolutionary Party," and Jorge Pinto Mazal an even longer paper on Mexico's political economy and international politics.[78] Official leaders like Zuno and functionaries kept their discussions regarding women well within revolutionary and developmentalist rhetoric.

While the official PRI event did not discuss gender issues exclusively, it opened a forum to prominent women within politics. Hilda Anderson Nevárez, leader of the women's division of the PRI applauded the party's struggle "for the incorporation of women had been fruitful."[79] Anderson served as the secretary for the women's section of the *Confederación de Trabajadores de México* (Confederation of Mexican Workers, CTM), founded the *Agrupación Nacional Femenil Revolucionaria* of the PRI, served as senator, and in 1984 became the first coordinator of the Secretariat of Gobernación women's program.[80] "I think that without neglecting the home, women can engage in the creative task of politics." As a prominent female voice within the party, Anderson reminded the audience that "In our country, women's suffrage was not gracefully

---

[77] "La Mujer debe eliminar las tendencia conservadoras que la ven como un refuerzo a la sociedad de consumo," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[78] "Responsabilidad común para dar a la mujer el lugar que merece," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[79] "La Mujer debe eliminar las tendencia conservadoras que la ven como un refuerzo a la sociedad de consumo," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[80] Patricia Muñoz y Ciro Pérez, "Falleció Hilda Anderson, impulsora de reformas en favor de la mujer," *La Jornada,* 6 July 2011, 13.

obtained: it was a tenacious struggle of revolutionary women."[81] Although Zuno and Anderson were not the keynote speakers, the press gave greater coverage to their discussions, and in the case of the first lady, one newspaper piece applauded her participation in the event, having stayed at the PRI headquarters "over eight hours."[82]

Alongside the many duties that call on first ladies, Esther Zuno also headed a key welfare institution. Her work in this regard was more evolutionary than radical, for by the late nineteenth century the Mexican government had begun to fill the care-giving role hitherto occupied by the Catholic Church and private organizations. By 1910 women presided over institutions like "shelters to reform prostitutes, networks of mothers' clubs to train poor women in hygiene and child care, and child care centers and orphanages." Likewise, after the Revolution, women played key roles in carrying out state projects, especially in health and education. As such, Esther Zuno's own public work can also be placed within the post-1960s "reorganization" or institutionalization of welfare services. Zuno Arce, like her predecessors Eva Samano de López Mateos and Guadalupe Borja de Díaz Ordaz, broadened and in some cases simply re-named existing post-revolutionary organizations. In the case of Esther Zuno, while presiding over the *Instituto Nacional de Protección a la Infancia* (National Institute for Child Protection, INPI)—a state-funded school breakfast institution dating to 1929—she also headed the INPI's 1976 transition to the *Instituto Mexicano para la Infancia y Familia* (Mexican Institute for Children and Family, IMPI). The institution's renaming reflected

---

[81] "*Creo que sin descuidar el hogar, la mujer puede realizar esa tarea creadora que es la política*." "*En nuestro país el voto femenino no se dio graciosamente: fue una lucha tenaz de las mujeres revolucionarias*." "Responsabilidad común para dar a la mujer el lugar que merece," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[82] "La mujer debe eliminar las tendencia conservadoras que la ven como un refuerzo a la sociedad de consumo," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

"her view that it was impossible to attend to children without addressing entire families, including their main pillar: women." In 1977, the INPI merged with the *Institución Mexicana de Asistencia a la Niñez* (National Institute for the Attention of Children, IMAN), becoming the present-day premier family welfare institute, *Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia,* (National System for the Integral Development of the Family, DIF), an amalgam prompted by her successor Carmen Romano de López Portillo.[83] Esther's work with the INPI and other social organizations gained special attention in 1975 as the press sought to profile the country's prominent women, while the DIF functions as a central component of Mexico's social safety net to the present day.

México 75 especially lauded Zuno's volunteer work. The author Lorenza Martínez Sotomayor showcased Esther Zuno's work as exemplary model for emulation, the "story of a gigantic labor of love by a woman, and many other women who follow her." Sotomayor noted that although INPI dated to 1929, the organizations philosophy had certainly broadened beyond the care of the child to one that included the family and the community, whereby "[t]he family receives, in that form, responsible parenthood programs and, society, responsible community programs." An integrated family would function as a "unit capable" of solving the problems of all its members. According to the author, INPI's new philosophy sought to eliminate paternalistic ideas regarding the caring of the child and instead proposed that "it be society as a whole that

---

[83] "Women and Social Welfare (Mexico)," in *Encyclopedia of Social Welfare History in North America*, edited by John Middlemist Herrick, and Paul H. Stuart (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), 444-446. Sefchovich notes the transition from INPI to IMPI took place in 1974; however, Ezequiel Toledo Ocampo claims the change took place in 1976. See Sefchovich, *La suerte de la consorte*, Kindle Electronic Edition, 8256 and Ezequiel Toledo Ocampo (Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco), "El sistema para el desarrollo integral de la familia (DIF): Expresión de una política social del estado mexicano," 10 November 2003 <http://www.publicaciones.ujat.mx/publicaciones/horizonte_sanitario/ediciones/2003_sep_dic/hsv2n3_asistencia_social_dif.pdf>.

affords protection."[84] The over seventy social service programs carried out by INPI held legal basis under the Echeverría Decree for the Protection of Children, as well as local legislation, although she did not identify the actual decrees. In the countryside, Sotomayor underlined the work of over 178,000 rural women promoting health through the *Programa de Orientación Familiar* (Family Enrichment Program), also part of INPI. As the "moral authority of volunteerism," Esther Zuno served as a key governmental persona for the promotion of International Women's Year and President Echeverría's national projects, including population control.[85]

"La familia pequeña vive mejor": IWY and Echeverría's Population Control Program[86]

For President Echeverría population control proved a key national objective lauded during IWY. The Mexican government's concern over the population explosion most likely derived from the rapid urbanization, itself a consequence of rural hardships, with Mexico City's population almost doubling from "nearly 7 million in 1970 to 13 million by 1977" being the most stark example.[87] However, given Echeverría's overt commitment to world politics it is also likely that the population control programs he implemented grew directly from Mexico's participation in the 1974 UN World Population Forum in Bucharest, Romania, in which Mexican delegate Antonio Carrillo Flores served as the conference's secretary-general. The population forum proved an

[84] Lorenza Martínez Sotomayor, Programa de México, "Actividad femenina: un ejemplo y un camino," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1974), 4.

[85] "Decreto Echeverría de protección a la infancia," Lorenza Martínez Sotomayor, Programa de México, "Actividad femenina: un ejemplo y un camino," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1974), 5.

[86] "The Small Family Lives Better," Title of population control campaign in Mexico during the Echeverría administration, see Sefchovich, *La suerte de la consorte,* Kindle Electronic Edition, 8315; Gabriela Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer': Soap Operas, Contraception, and Nationalizing the Mexican Family in an Overpopulated World," *Sexuality Research and Social Policy: Journal of NSRC* 4:3 (September 2007), 25.

[87] Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer,'" 20.

outgrowth of a series of issues the United Nations globalized in the 1970s. In a General Assembly meeting in April 1974, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim outlined the following as the most pertinent matters: "mass poverty, food supplies, the utilization of energy, military expenditures, the world monetary system and the unprecedented rate of population growth." In the closing ceremony of the population meeting, Waldheim described the matter of demographics as one having "intruded roughly on our attention." Thereafter, Carrillo Flores described the Mexican government's "family-planning" initiatives begun in 1972 as a "programme developed in support of human rights" and ones that could "moderate Mexico's population and bring it more into line with the number of new jobs which the country's favourable rate of economic growth can be expected to assure."[88] Carrillo Flores' association of human rights to population control exemplifies the Mexican government's observance of UN initiatives, often in attempts to project upon the international community an image of compliance, and a model Third World country for its Latin American counterparts.

As such, the Mexican government gracefully implemented the conference's plan of action. According to Soto Laveaga "Mexico had so successfully modeled its population policy on the 1974 World Population Plan of Action that it was often cited as an example for other countries to follow."[89] During IWY, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim announced his satisfaction that Mexico, as a UN member state, acted so quickly in adopting the Bucharest population plan of action.[90] Given Mexico's key position in Latin America, some world leaders hoped that Carrillo Flores' selection as

---

[88] Stanley Johnson, *World Population and the United Nations: Challenge and Response* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 91-93.

[89] See notes in citation two, Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer,'" 20.

[90] "Conferencia Internacional de la Mujer: En pos de la auténtica igualdad," 15 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

secretary-general of the population forum would render other countries to implement the plan of action: "Carrillo-Flores' position as a Mexican . . . might be expected to encourage certain Latin nations to adopt a warmer attitude towards the Conference and its deliberations, than they might otherwise have done."[91] But for years some intellectuals had questioned these global initiatives. Like many leftists of the time, individuals living in the midst of military dictatorships in South America, Uruguayan Eduardo Galeano criticized the World Bank, the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, as well as the Johnson and Eisenhower administrations' efforts to curb birth rates. In the "120 Million Children in the Eye of the Hurricane" introduction to *Open Veins of Latin America* (1971), Galeano described the imperialist nature of population control and noted no country in the region had a "real surplus of people," rather the "global offensive plays a well-defined role." According to the author "Its aim is to justify the very unequal income distribution between countries and social elites, to convince the poor that poverty is the result of the children they don't avoid having, and to dam the rebellious advocate of the masses." Given the revolutionary context in the continent, Galeano probed family planning initiatives through a Cold War prism—as a counterrevolutionary measure—whereby "in Latin America it is more hygienic and effective to kill *guerrilleros* in the womb than in the mountains or the streets."[92] Likewise, the Catholic Church, traditionally an opponent to birth control, also opposed such

---

[91] Stanley Johnson, *World Population and the United Nations: Challenge and Response* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 94.

[92] Eduardo Galeano and Cedric Belfrage, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997), 5-6. Before its translation, Galeano's text originally appeared as 1971 as *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*. The book circulated widely and was printed in various countries throughout Latin America and Europe that same year. Some of the 1971 publishers included, Universidad de la República, Departamento de Publicaciones, Montevideo; Siglo veintiuno Argentina editors, Buenos Aires; Casa de las Américas, La Habana; Siglo Editores, Madrid; Siglo XXI, México; Arca de Noé, Bogotá.

initiatives—especially by disseminating didactical material on natural family initiatives through the Billings Ovulation Method (BOM) where women learn to monitor their fertility.[93] While some questioned demographic explosion fears, others like President Echeverría, responded precisely the way international organizations hoped, by promoting public policies on population control, or better known by the precept of "family planning."

By seeking to manage demographic growth, Echeverría departed from his predecessors' attempts to populate Mexico. President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) enacted the very first *Ley General de Población* (General Population Law) in 1936, which built on previous regulatory measures dealing with citizenship, migration, and general matters of nationality. Regarding population, the law encouraged natural demographic growth and the general uplifting of the population through measures like better health services or —which it deemed as a way of advancing development. The law primarily responded to the internal realities of the country, like a child mortality rate of over 20 percent and an average life expectancy of less than 38 years in a country of approximately 16 million inhabitants in 1930. The *Ley General* also sought to manage migration and encourage the repatriation of Mexicans abroad, especially after the Revolution's "demographic cost of 2.1 million" in deaths, lost births, and emigration.[94] The second population law of 1947 also encouraged demographic growth, "created

[93] See popular animated booklet distributed in the 1970s and which specifically warns against official population control policies and offers an alternative and natural family planning method like "God's intends." María del Carmen D, *Hijos si, pero cuando queramos* (México D.F.; Buena Prensa, 197x).

[94] Robert McCaa, "Missing Millions: The Demographic Costs of the Mexican Revolution," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 19:2 (Summer 2003), 396; Paloma Villagómez Ornelas, "Evolución de la situación demográfica nacional a 35 años de la Ley General de Población de 1974," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 11.

regulations prohibiting the sale and use of contraceptives and criminalizing abortion."[95] President Miguel Alemán Valdés (1946-1952) focused on limiting child mortality, for which his successor, Manuel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946) paved the way though the creation of health institutions like the *Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social* (Mexican Social Security Institute, IMSS), the *Instituto Nacional de Cardiología* (National Institute of Cardiology), and the *Hospital Infantil* (Children's Hospital). By 1960, the country had fully recovered from its revolutionary decline by reaching an estimated 35 million, and about 58 million by 1974, a 3.5 percent increase that frightened the Echeverría administration.[96] "The country needs to rationalize the population increase for the benefit of present and future generations," declared the President.[97] President Echeverría's population policies echoed global discussions on population as a menace for development, thus departing from the revolutionary government's traditional stance on demographics.

In 1974 Echeverría passed the third *Ley General de Población,* one of his administration's key population initiatives. In the *Ley General's* promulgation remarks, Secretary of *Gobernación* Mario Moya Palencia outlined the country's gloomy situation, echoing the 1970s American and international stance toward demographics. "Mexico has one of the highest population growth rates in the world," explained Palencia. Like Echeverría, the Secretariat exemplified the dire need for family planning by employing

---

[95] Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer,'" 23.

[96] Paloma Villagómez Ornelas, "Evolución de la situación demográfica nacional a 35 años de la Ley General de Población de 1974," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 11-12.

[97] Consejo Nacional de Población [CONAPO], *México demográfico, breviario 1975* (México, D.F.: Consejo Nacional de Población, 1975), cited in Raúl Romo Viramontes and Miguel Sánchez Castillo, "El descenso de la fecundidad en México, 1974-2009: a 35 años de la puesta en marcha de la nueva política de población," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 23.

statistical figures in his discourse. Palencia presented startling numbers, digits repeated during the International Women's Year. According to Palencia, with 2.5 million Mexicans being born each year, the "equivalent of all the inhabitants of the States of Nuevo León, Morelos and Colima combined," by the year 2000 the population would reach 155 million, or 135 million if the country took action. While after the Revolution "a pro-natality policy was indispensable" to sow progress and for Mexico to "regain its geography," that was no longer the case—"Today we are, I repeat 56 million Mexicans."[98] A decrease of birth rates by one percent by the year 2000; thereby, became one of the bedrocks of the *Ley General de Población,* along with the creation of the federal entity *Consejo Nacional de Población* (National Population Council, CONAPO).[99] By the inauguration of 1975 as International Women's Year, the government full-heartedly endorsed family planning initiatives and widely publicized CONAPO as fulfilling not only a couple's right to decide, but most importantly the rescuing of "women from compulsory fecundity."[100]

To manage population, the government had to battle traditional ideas regarding the family. Article Five of the *Ley General,* which created the institution, noted the CONAPO would "be responsible for managing the country's demographic planning," as well as incorporating the general population into government formulated programs of

---

[98] "Texto del discurso pronunciado por el Secretario de Gobernación ante los Diputados de la XLIX Legislación, con motive de la presentación de la iniciativa de la Ley General de Población de México," *Demografía y economía* 8:1 (1974), 110.

[99] Raúl Romo Viramontes and Miguel Sánchez Castillo, "El descenso de la fecundidad en México, 1974-2009: a 35 años de la puesta en marcha de la nueva política de población," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 23.

[100] Programa de México ,"Declaración del Presidente Echeverría," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), 1.

social and economic development with the goal of managing demographics.[101] With women having an average of six children in 1974, the CONAPO focused on disseminating information regarding contraceptives and reformulating the duties of men and women within the family; in other words, by underscoring the couples "rights" in reproductive matters and their "responsibilities" toward the state through responsible parenting.[102] In his remarks on the *Ley General,* Mario Moya Palencia explained the "Mexican couple consisting of free citizens," were the "only capable of regulating its own fertility," not the state.[103] As such, the CONAPO, in conjunction with other health institutions, would primarily provide the resources and the information, but the rights of decision lay with the man and woman, a right over family planning garnered by the government and one challenging the cultural Catholic ethos of accepting all the children God sent.[104] The various CONAPO campaigns on family planning, which included *Telenovelas* (soap operas), according to Gabriela Soto Laveaga, "redefined the role of active mothers and fathers and chose to break with the stereotype of a large, fertile citizenry."[105] The *Ley General* went even further, suggesting family planning initiatives improve the quality of life and "enrich the existence of all Mexicans."[106] Moreover, the Mexican government ratified Article 4 of the Constitution in December 1974, deeming

---

[101] "Ley General de Población," *Diario Oficial de la Federación*, 7 January 1974, Tomo CCCXXII, México, DF, 2.

[102] Raúl Romo Viramontes and Miguel Sánchez Castillo, "El descenso de la fecundidad en México, 1974-2009: a 35 años de la puesta en marcha de la nueva política de población," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 23; Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer,'" 23-25.

[103] "Texto del discurso pronunciado por el Secretario de Gobernación ante los Diputados de la XLIX Legislación, con motive de la presentación de la iniciativa de la Ley General de Población de México," *Demografía y economía* 8:1 (1974), 112-113.

[104] Sefchovich writes of the government's challenge to the cultural habits of Catholic teachings on fertility, *La suerte de la consorte,* Kindle Electronic Edition, 8315.

[105] Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer,'" 20.

[106] "Texto del discurso pronunciado por el Secretario de Gobernación ante los Diputados de la XLIX Legislación, con motive de la presentación de la iniciativa de la Ley General de Población de México," *Demografía y economía* 8:1 (1974), 113.

that "Men and women are equal under the law." The couple's right to decide was also enshrined in the article, which stated, "Every person has the right to decide in a free, mature and informed way, the number and spacing of their children," making Mexico the second in the world and the first in Latin America to legally constitute such right.[107] Echeverría's population initiatives placed the couple at the forefront of family planning, while simultaneously arguing demographic control as eminent to the country's development process, and as initiatives that broadened the rights of men, women, and children.

During IWY, Echeverría extolled the reforms as representative of Mexico's dedication to women's rights. On January 3 at the National Palace, the President inaugurated International Women's Year. In his Friday night speech, Echeverría explained Mexico's selection for the IWY Conference, and key UN event for 1975, as recognitions of the "salient interest of our country for collaborating in the maximum global forums to fulfill the yearnings of humanity." The introductory paragraph to the official speech featured in the cover page of *Mexico75* listed Echeverría's various aid organisms for women, such as CONAPO, which rescued "women from compulsory fertility," and the constitutional reforms opening "for women the doors to judicial freedom."[108] Regarding the treatment of women, the president argued, "In Mexico you can no longer encourage complacency nor, still less, tolerate undue physical and mental subordination to which some still want to subject women."[109] International Women's Year thus offered the opportunity to further initiatives already undertaken and fortify

---

[107] *The Political Constitution of the Mexican United States,* translated by Carlos Peréz Vázquez (Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, UNAM, 2005); Félix Vélez Fernández Varela, "Presentación," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 9.

[108] Programa de México ,"Declaración del Presidente Echeverría," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), 1-2.

[109] *Ibid.,* 2.

the programs already in place, as well as the space for showcasing "the efforts of a people and its government that jointly strive to eradicate in justice in the domestic and international realms," Echeverría declared.[110]

Moreover, *México75* contained a double spread introducing women to the CONAPO and the importance behind family planning: "The problem is complex but it is very important that we all understand even if simplistically because it is one of the most serious of our country," explained the article. "But why have family planning? Ah! Simply because there is a problem called 'population explosion.'" As the article describes the duties of the CONAPO, "helping Mexicans make rational use of their procreation," an interview with the Secretary General of the commission followed.[111] Luisa María Leal Duk headed CONAPO and has even been credited with drafting two sections of the amendment to Article 4 of the Constitution, as well as the *Ley General de Población.*[112] Leal left behind a series of texts on the rights of women, including those dealing with reproduction and abortion.[113] As a woman heading one of the country's leading commissions in the spotlight given the celebration of International Women's Year, Luisa María Leal Duk exemplified to the international community, attentive on México, that the Echeverría administration indeed sought the social and economic advancement of women.

By March 1975, the Echeverría administration spoke of population control as part of the national platform on economic development and state sovereignty. A follow-

---

[110] *Ibid.*

[111] Programa de México, "Un buen consejo," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), 8.

[112] *Ibid*; Cimac, "Piden al gobierno mexicano cumplir con acceso al aborto legal," *CN-Cimacnoticias,* 11 July 2003 <http://www.cimacnoticias.com.mx/node/29465>.

[113] Texts by María Leal include: *Políticas de población y planeación familiar* (México: Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia, 1975); *El proceso histórico de la Ley General de Población de México* (Bogotá; UNESCO, 1975); and with Elena Azaola Garrido, *El problema del aborto en México* (México, D.F.: M.A. Porrúa, 1980).

up article in the March issue of *México75* featured a note on the Second Latin American Meeting on Population held in Mexico City on March 3-7 in which President Echeverría described the problem of being "stuck in old preconceptions and disparaging the dangers of a disorderly multiplication of mankind."[114] However, he emphasized, programs of population control managing "disorderly" reproduction must "must be implemented honoring freedom," a freedom meaning the "right of all human beings to self-actualize in an integral manner"; and not a type of individual sovereignty based on the "prerogative of privileged groups." For Echeverría, a manageable populace, one that did not exceed a country's economic possibilities, offered a government the opportunity equalizing distribution of wealth. Echeverría also defended population control as part of a sovereign state's freedom of decision, and even that of the individual, and not as imposed from groups of states or international organizations upon a people.[115]

For International Women's Year, the government particularly resonated the state's efforts in advancing women's rights through population control. After Echeverría's remarks to the population forum in Mexico City, Moya Palencia announced a major media initiative on matters of "population and development" not only geared toward "rationalizing the variable of natality," but also focused on uplifting the overall condition of women in society, including opposing *machismo*—"Latin American women should be considered as a productive being and not just as one that reproduces." To an audience of prominent male figures, like Norman E. Borlaug,

---

[114] Missie French, "Mosaico Informativo: Conferencia Internacional de Población," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 14-15; Economic Commission for Latin America, "Second Latin American Meeting on Population—Information document no. 1," 17 January 1975, ST/CEPAL/Conf. 54/D.1.

[115] Missie French, "Mosaico Informativo: Conferencia Internacional de Población," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 14-15.

Noble laureate and key pioneer of the 1960s mechanization of agriculture, and UN Assistant Secretary General Raúl Prebisch, the president and others defined women's rights as part of a larger program of national development, one intimately linked with demographic control.[116] In the same form, activists, intellectuals, and feminists engaged in IWY gender discussions placed the needs of women jointly with other oppressed classes, including workers. Because the Mexican government framed women's rights as part of Third World struggles, the 1975 IWY Conference in Mexico City offered a space for the *Carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los Estados* among discussions by Mexican diplomats and Latin American women. The IWY Conference thus involved a convergence of different interests and agendas. The Echeverría administration used it to showcase its national policies on population. The president hoped to frame Mexico as a model Third World country, and his government as intimately concerned with advancing the UN-IWY objectives of equality, development, and peace. Meanwhile, women from across the world struggled to define not only women's rights, but also human rights.

Mexico City, June 1975

As the conference opening neared, the press noted the prominent figures expected and the overall magnitude of the event. "15 thousand of the most Prominent Women will Gather in Mexico" read the headline announcing the IWY Conference set for June 19. Among those leaders expressing approval for the event were Indira Gandhi, at the time Prime Minister of India; Argentine President Isabel Martínez de

[116] Missie French, "Mosaico Informativo: Conferencia Internacional de Población," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 14-15.

Perón; and the First Ladies of the Philippines, Imelda Marcos (both of whom were complicit in massive human rights abuses that included the torture and disappearance of thousands of women); and her counterpart from Egypt, Jehan Sadat.[117] Other confirmed attendees included Princess Ashraf Pahlavi of Iran, the Shah's twin sister; Dr. Katharina Focke, Germany's Federal Minister for Youth, Family, and Health; Russian Valentina Vladimirovna Nikolayeva Tereshkova, the first woman in space; and Françoise Giroud, journalist, imprisoned in France during WWII and later assigned French Secretary of State for the Condition of Women.[118] An erroneous report announced South Vietnam opted for sending a male as its representative; Ma Thi Chu, a reported member of the Central Committees of the Women's Liberation Union of Vietnam.[119] As it was common for journalists to misspell attendees' names, in this case, it was the gender of Ma Thi Chu that subsequent publications revealed was indeed a female delegate.[120] Four days before the IWY Conference inauguration, the South African delegate Emily O'Meara reported Mexico had yet to authorize her visa. O'Meara a prominent journalist and editor of the women's section of the *Star* daily, had apparently been among others from her country to have been denied a visa, a list that included high-profile tennis players Frew McMillan and Bob Hewitt (naturalized citizen originally from Australia).[121] All the 138 official delegations set to confer in the Foreign

---

[117] "15 mil de las más destacadas mujeres se congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS.

[118] "Viene Indira a la Junta Femenina," 11 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "China starts training its first group of women astronauts," *Xinhua News Agency,* 27 July 2005; "El Año de la Mujer no es 'para saldar cuentas' ni extremismos: Ojeda P.," 13 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[119] "Un chino al Año Internacional de la Mujer," 15 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[120] "Ya se escucha a la mujer en los gobiernos," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[121] "Negativa de visa a la delegada sudafricana," 15 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

Relations Building were part of the official conference made up principally of government representatives. Separate from the official UN Conference, a tribune of non-governmental gathered in the *Centro Médico Nacional* (National Medical Center).[122] Just days before the inauguration ceremonies, Attorney General Ojeda Paullada informed the press that Mexico spent some 1,750,000 pesos, the equivalent to $175,000 dollars, with the United Nations covering the largest share of the Conference expenditures.[123] Once more, the Mexican government prepared for an international event with a prominent journalist presence, and with specific and divergent expectations from attendees, participants, and the government.

Five days before the conference, the *Programa de México* organizers made final arrangements for the expected ten thousand participants. Pedro Ojeda Paullada and Aída González led the official team. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs assigned González as coordinator of the "*Oficina de Enlace*," a type of liaison office between Mexican and UN officials made up of some 150 individuals working around the clock reserving hotel rooms, sending out final invitations, answering unwavering streak of phone calls, testing the sound and lighting system, checking Red Cross ambulances in case of an emergency, and picking up foreign correspondents from the airport, detailed a newspaper piece. As any major event requires, teams divided between organizing artists involved in the cultural activities, from recruiting multilingual hostesses, to managing the architects conditioning the conference rooms. Some tended to the special guests, whether from governmental or non-governmental organizations, while others accredited

---

[122] "15 mil de las más destacadas mujeres se congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS.

[123] "Anuncia Pedro Ojeda Paullada: En la Conferencia del Año de la Mujer se Plantearán Formulas Para 'un Nuevo Orden Económico y Social,'" 12 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

national journalists before the United Nations. Given the media presence, the 1,600 foreign correspondents also received assistance from the *Programa de México* coordinators. At Minerva 63, the headquarters of the IWY Office, another twenty people tended the needs of foreign attendees and sent out five thousand invitations for the inauguration ceremony. Six months of preparations culminated in specialized tasks, "From buying a *'torta'* to waiting for a functionary." Meanwhile, in the Juan de la Barrera gym of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Thirty men laid the vintage-gold colored carpet" while others "painted the International Women's Year logos and set the flags of the [participating] 138 UN member states." With eight chairs set for the podium, and hundreds of others to the right, center, and left for national and international functionaries, the gym displayed a humble ambiance devised by architects Mario and César Sosa. As host, Mexican authorities satisfied the structural needs for such a singular event, "in short, everything needed to make it into a magnum UN stage," planners accomplished.[124]

Public officials too played their part. At the international airport in Mexico City, First Lady Esther Zuno, Secretariat of Foreign Relations Emilio O. Rabasa and his wife Socorro Gamboa de Rabasa, as well as Pedro Ojeda Paullada and wife Olga Cárdenas de Ojeda, among others, awaited the arrival of the Shah's twin sister, Ashraf Pahlavi and daughter Niloufar Pahlavi. Pahlavi served as the president of the Women's Organization of Iran and vice-president of the Imperial Organization of Social Services, and headed three universities in the country. Journalist Nidia Marín described the Pahlavi's elegance yet noted the Iranian leader did not travel with as much luggage as

[124] "150 personas preparan las actividades de 10 mil," 15 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

one would expect for someone of her stature. In the official lounge of the international airport, Pahlavi also gave an interview in which she spoke on the progress of women's rights in Iran.[125] Others welcomed included Margaret Whitlam, spouse of Australian First Minister Gough Whitlam, and Elizabeth Reid, the Minister's advisor on women issues and a prominent rights leader.[126] Both women discussed the abortion legislation in Australia, with Reid elaborating on the limited participation of women in the country's political life and on the marginalization of homosexuals in society.[127] Likewise, Vilma Espín de Castro, a prominent Cuban revolutionary and at the time married to Rául Castro, received a warm welcome from Secretariat of Education official Rosa Luz Alegría de Echeverría, the president's daughter-in-law wedded to his eldest son Luis Vicente Echeverría Zuno, and the Cuban ambassador to Mexico, Fernando López Muiño.[128] Dubbed "*doncella casadera*" by novelist José Agustín for her alleged affair with President José López Portillo (1976-1982) during his presidency, Alegría also stands as the first woman to head a state ministry.[129] Hospitable welcomes by key government officials for some of the most prominent international leaders figured into the government's public relations strategy and one that entailed forging a specific image of Mexico for both national and foreign consumption.

---

[125] Nidia Marín, "Lucha por liberarse la mujer de Irán," *El Universal,* 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[126] "Decenas de delegados a la junta, en México," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[127] "Legalización del aborto en Australia," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[128] Alegría served as the Director of the *Centro de Estudios Medios y Procedimientos Avanzados en la Educación* (CEMPAE), an institution for adult education and part of the Secretariat of Public Education. "La mujer cubana ha logrado su total emancipación: Vilma Espín de Castro," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "Ya se escucha a la mujer en los gobiernos," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "Caminos para el cambio: México opina," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 13.

[129] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 138.

Three days before the IWY Conference, Mexico City also served as the location for two pre-conference meetings. The first being the Women and Development seminar organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), co-sponsored by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and Mexico's Conacyt (National Council of Science and Technology), ran from June 16 through 18, concluding just a day before the IWY meeting. At the Mexico City Convention Center on the *Paseo de la Reforma* Avenue, Esther Zuno joined the opening ceremony on the evening of June 15.[130] The AAAS, a non-governmental organization made up of scientific organizations, event invited science and engineering organizations to engage on the themes of women and development, with a special emphasis on "exchanging documentation on the role of women in society, referring to the fields of technology, food processing, health, nutrition, housing, cooperative association, education and communication."[131] The science-themed event counted with the presence sixty participants, including prominent leaders in the country for the IWY meeting, and included a closing event speech by Helvi Sipilä in which she engaged matters ranging from education to dispelling rumors that the spouses of key mandatories came to Mexico in place of their husbands.[132]

The other pre-conference event focused on matters of communications. The journalistic meeting, organized by the United Nations Information Center, ran parallel

---

[130] "Viene Indira a la junta femenina," 11 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "15 mil de las más destacadas mujeres se congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS; "Caminos para el cambio," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 13.

[131] "Diversas actividades con motivo de año internacional de la Mujer," *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 28, CENCOS.

[132] "Decenas de delegados a la junta, en México," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "15 mil de las más destacadas mujeres se congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS.

from June 16-20 in the Conference Unit of the *Centro Médico,* rallied some four to five thousand journalists selected by the United Nations according to one report, yet another print source noted only 150 journalists attended the first session.[133] Colombian writer and diplomat Esmeralda Arboleda Cuevas coordinated the first International Journalists' Meeting, with Ojeda Paullada, Sipilä, Rafael Segovia (Director of Mexico International Studies Center of the *Colegio de México*), and Dr. Hoda Badran (UNESCO consultant) presiding over the opening ceremony.[134] With the goal of providing the press with information about the IWY Conference, the journalists' seminar sought widespread coverage for the conference in order to engage women worldwide with the Mexico City meeting and its themes.[135] Yet, at least one source noted the lack of questions meriting news and described the meeting as the place where "disorganization reigned" and "The heat inside the room proved unbearable."[136] Six Latin American women were asked not to intervene in the question session given that UN reporters had preference, resulting in a narration of personal stories rather than serious questions pertinent to the condition of women, complained the Mexican delegates in attendance.[137] The conclusion of the development and press events gave way to the final and key 1975 meeting on women, both for Mexico and the United Nations.

---

[133] "Viene Indira a la junta femenina," 11 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; Rosa María Campos, "Mosaico informativo: los periodistas con el coordinador del AIM," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 2 (February 1975), 13; "Tiene más éxito solteras y divorciadas: Esmeralda A.," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[134] "Empezó ayer el Encuentro Internacional de Periodistas," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "Para poder realizarse, la mujer ha tenido que renunciar al matrimonio," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[135] "Diversas actividades con motivo de Año Internacional de la Mujer," *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 28, CENCOS.

[136] "Tiene más éxito solteras y divorciadas: Esmeralda A.," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[137] "Quejas por la desorganización del encuentro de mujeres periodistas," 18 June 1975,

June 19, 1975: International Women's Year Conference

The inauguration of 1975 International Women's Year Conference commenced at 10:30 a.m. Named after one of the six cadets killed during the 1847 U.S. invasion of the Castle of Chapultepec, the Juan de la Barrera gymnasium of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, seated thousands of women from diverse backgrounds, from activists, intellectuals, political leaders, workers, to homemakers.[138] The Panamanian delegation, led by Carmen Crespo de Pinzón, included—"an ironer, a fried food vendor, secretaries, workers, professionals as well as the cook of the general himself," wrote Victoria Azurduy, an Argentine journalist exiled in Mexico.[139] "Television cameras captured the scene at the opening ceremony held in an enormous indoor arena constructed for the Olympic Games of 1968," a scene full of "faces bearing every complexion from the palest shades of pink to the richest and darkest brown."[140] Arvonne Fraser described the event as "the largest meeting in history to deal with the problems and concerns of women," and where female representatives represented a majority, constituting about seventy percent of attendees.[141] By 11:05, when President Luis Echeverría, Esther Zuno, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, Olga Cárdenas de Ojeda Paullada, Secretariat of Foreign Affairs Emilio O. Rabasa and Socorro

---

Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[138] Luz María T. de Hernández, "Solemne y emotiva resultó la inauguración de la conferencia mundial," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 1.

[139] Azurduy is the author of *Petróleo y soberanía* (México, D.F.: Proceso, 1981), *Amores contrariados: grandes pasiones de la historia argentina* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ameghino, 1998), and, co-edited with Alejandro Dorrego and Rodolfo Puiggrós, *El caso argentino: hablan sus protagonistas* (México: Prisma, 1977). Victoria Azurduy, "La Mujer panamena tiene ante sí el problema de la ocupación del canal," 19 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[140] Helen McCarthy, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat* (London, England: Bloomsbury, 2014), 249-250.

[141] Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), 17; United Nations, *Meeting in Mexico: The Story of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico City, 19 June-2 July 1975)* (New York: United Nations, 1975), 12.

Gamboa de Rabasa arrived, between 5,000 and 8,000 spectators filled the seats. A few minutes later, at 11:07 Waldheim opened with a twenty-minute inauguration speech, in which he claimed, "Equality of opportunity for men and women is essential, if the establishment of a more equitable international economic and social system is truly desired."[142] Thereafter, Echeverría took the stage, with his full speech later appearing in the press and government publication *México75*. He was followed by Assistant Secretary-General, Helvi Sipilä.[143] Echeverría noted the principles he outlined as being the ideological framework of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Meanwhile, Sipilä reminded attendees of the importance of time: "We count on only two weeks to devise the appropriate strategy to overcome centuries of oppression and discrimination."[144] Finally, Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada expressed his confidence in a positive outcome for the event, while also highlighting the contribution of the Charter to the creation of a new economic world order. The ceremony concluded at 12:45 p.m., an opening ceremony journalist Luz María T. de Hernández described as "solemn and very emotional," while others deemed Echeverría's attitude as "exquisite male chauvinist insensitivity."[145] Although disagreements and varying expectations proliferated, those present understood, to different degrees, the importance and the high stakes hinging on the IWY gathering in Mexico City.

---

[142] Waldheim's words translated from Spanish. Luz María T. de Hernández, "Solemne y emotiva resultó la inauguración de la conferencia mundial," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 3.

[143] Luis Echeverría, "Por un mundo más justo," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 1-3.

[144] Sipilä's words translated from Spanish. Luz María T. de Hernández, "Solemne y emotiva resultó la inauguración de la conferencia mundial," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 3.

[145] Luz María T. de Hernández, "Solemne y emotiva resultó la inauguración de la conferencia mundial," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 1, 3; Joan Beck, "Women find no lib even at their summit," *Chicago Tribune,* 27 June 1975, Section 2, 2.

Two days after the IWY Conference inauguration, NGO opened a parallel meeting referred to as the "Tribune." From the UN sponsored "conscious raising" conferences of the 1970s—such as those on the environment, women, and population—originated non-governmental section to the official meetings, evidence of the growing influence of NGOs in global forums.[146] According to Judith Zinsser the first non-governmental meeting alongside a major UN summit took place in 1974 at the Population Conference. The attending non-governmental associations; however, required official authorization from the United Nations, or "consultative status," meaning "these organizations could attend UN meetings with properly accredited representatives and could submit information on topics being discussed."[147] These citizen-based meetings "were freer bodies, unconstrained by official government policy," given that they are independently funded, and attendees do not officially represent their home countries.[148] In the case of IWY Tribune, Mildred Persinger argues the Mexican government agreed to the NGO forum in anticipation to protests.[149] The General Assembly approved the proposal for the NGO portion of the event separately from the IWY Conference.[150] Five months prior to the inauguration of the IWY meeting, President Echeverría invited the organizer of the Population NGO meeting, Rosalind Harris, along with Persinger to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he instructed both to "write down a detailed description of the tribune program." Although the planning committee did not yet count with a program draft, Persinger remembers keeping that

---

[146] Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*, 9.

[147] Judith Zinsser, "Untold Stories: The United Nations Decade for Women, 1975-1985," *Women and Social Movements, International—1840 to Present,* <http://wasi.alexanderstreet.com>; Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 189.

[148] Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*, 9; Arvonne Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations."

[149] Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 189.

[150] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 216.

information from the president.[151] The organizers, however, eventually completed their task for the opening of the NGO meeting on July 19. The Mexico City Tribune took place in the auditorium of the *Centro Médico,* the national hospital, about five miles from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[152] Persinger, Rosalind Harris, and Marcia Bravo planned the Tribune program for an audience of a reported six thousand attendants, including participants.[153] Bravo joined the group in March as director.[154] About 670 NGOs participated, the majority from the Western Hemisphere.[155] A key outcome of the non-governmental IWY meeting was the International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC), presided by Persinger from 1976-1982, a non-profit "keeping the 6,000 Tribune participants in communication with one another" and archiving the Decade for Women records of the forum designs.[156] While many journalists dedicated their attention to the Tribune meeting, the Mexican government focused on the official Conference. The government newspaper, *México75,* dedicated only one spread to the Tribune, evidence of the government's disregard and indifference to the parallel meeting.[157]

---

[151] Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 190.

[152] Helen McCarthy, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat,* 250.

[153] Both Arvonne and McCarthy estimate the attendance at the Tribune at 6,000 people. Carolyn M. Stephenson, "Women's Organizations and the United Nations," in *Multilateral Diplomacy and the United Nations Today,* edited by James P. Muldoon, Jr., JoAnn Fagot Aviel, Richard Reitano, and Earl Sullivan (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2005), 211; Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations"; Helen McCarthy, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat,* 250.

[154] Persinger, "Unfinished Agenda," 190.

[155] Rosa María Campos, "Mosaico Informativo: Los Periodistas con el Coordinador del AIM," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 2 (February 1975), 13; Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations."

[156] Challen Nicklen, *Rhetorics of Connection in the United Nations Conferences on Women, 1975-1995* (Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 2008), 74; Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 212.

[157] Margarita García Flores, "la tribuna del año internacional de la mujer," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 7 (July 1975), 14-15.

Press coverage proved another key component of the Conference. The IWY organizers from all sectors understood the importance of communications for the transcendence of women's issues during International Women's Year. The United Nations, for instance, employed the *Antiguo Convento de Santiago Tlatelolco* as their communications headquarters, an old convent across from the Ministry of Foreign Relations. The entire building served as a Press Center for the Conference, with journalists reporting for print media, radio, and television in five distinct languages—Spanish, English, French, Russian, and Chinese—with Noreen Maxwell heading the UN Information Department for the IWY Conference, and Gloria Peniché presiding as the Mexican official. According to Ángel Gómez Granados, the U.S. delegation reported from a press center in the María Isabel Sheraton Hotel located in the Mexico City business district on *Paseo de la Reforma*, and about three miles from the Conference location.[158] The latter could have been the United States Information Agency (USIA) press office, sponsored by the State Department, in response to a possible "public relations challenge" according to Mildred Marcy, "an old USIA hand who coordinated IWY efforts," according to Olcott's publication specifically on the Conference's media politics.[159] Evidence of the growing consciousness of the role of communication, NGOs and official institutions capitalized on emerging media tactics for globalizing the event and its themes, whereby even "Some groups deliberately created media events to get their points across to a worldwide audience," explained Arvonne Fraser.[160]

---

[158] Ángel Gómez Granados, "Mujeres del Mundo en México…," *Excélsior,* 18 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 28, CENCOS; Rosa María Campos, "Mosaico Informativo: Los Periodistas con el Coordinador del AIM," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 2 (February 1974), 13.

[159] Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 30.

[160] Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*, 10.

Pedro Ojeda Paullada is a Man: Third World 'economic justice' vs. Western World 'liberation'[161]

Most importantly; however, the Mexico City event served as a platform for defining women's rights. While some participants deemed international politics as intimately linked with women's liberation, others regarded global concerns as diverging from gender specific matters. Or what Olcott describes as, "'Third World women,' who tended to focus on structural problems of economic inequality, and 'western feminists,' who concentrated their energies on sex-specific issues such as reproductive freedom, wage equity, and women's educational and professional opportunities."[162] For Arvonne Fraser, the context of the conference predisposed the event to divisions: "The fact that this conference was held in the developing world, in a country contiguous to one of the mostly highly industrialized nations of the world, graphically illustrated and symbolized the divisions that would be felt and discussed at this conference."[163] Because most studies underscore the ideological rifts at the conference, the voice of Latin American women emerge in juxtaposition to that of fervent feminists. However, when analyzed independently their demands reveal a desire to define their own needs, rather than echoing those of their counterparts: pioneers of the 1970s women's movement, or second-wave feminists. For example, Lita Paniagua wrote in *México75,* "Up until now in the movement to create awareness and improve the condition of women, ideas arising from highly industrialized Western countries have taken the lead." Moreover, Paniagua argued that if indeed women from across the world shared certain "aspirations and

---

[161] Helen McCarthy, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat,* 250.

[162] Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 284-285. Also see: Olcott, "Cold War Conflicts and Cheap Cabaret: Sexual Politics at the 1975 United Nations International Women's Year Conference."

[163] Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*, 17.

concerns" that these were manifested differently. "The leaders of the feminist movements in other regions do not always express our yearnings, nor our reality."[164] Unlike other *México75* reports, Paniagua featured IWY expectations of women from across the region, including that of indigenous women.[165] Her daughter, Alma Guillermoprieto, followed her journalistic footsteps.[166] Finally, she added: "It is time for women of Latin America to direct ourselves toward our own truth, that we listen, and together define who we are and what we can do to create a world of peace, development and equality."[167] Thereby, the demands voiced at the IWY Conference reveal a history of temporal and region-specific attempts to define women's rights. The convergence of dissenting voices reveals a struggle for appropriating the mediums of discussion, between women's rights as individuals or groups, between those making demands restricted in their home countries, or those simply utilizing the meeting as a medium for internationalizing nationalist politics.

In these discussions, the first matter of disagreement arose from the choice of a man for the presidency of the conference. Just before the inauguration's concluding remarks, Waldheim explained Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada's anonymous selection.[168] Ojeda Paullada also presided over Mexico's IWY Program and the country's delegation at the conference. Waldheim's statement seemed to respond to the

---

[164] Lita Paniagua, "Panorámica de la mujer latinoamericana," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 1.

[165] *Ibid.,* 1,3.

[166] Guillermoprieto is the author of numerous books, including: *Samba* (New York: Knopf, 1990) and *Looking for History: Dispatches from Latin America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2001). The following article notes the relationship between Paniagua and Guillermoprieto, Victor Núñez Jaime, "Entrevista con Alma Guillermoprieto: 'Los reporteros no escuchan,'" *Sala de Prensa,* 11:5 (June 2009), 116 <http://www.saladeprensa.org/art844.htm>.

[167] Lita Paniagua, "Panorámica de la mujer latinoamericana," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 1.

[168] Luz María T. de Hernández, "Solemne y emotiva resultó la inauguración de la conferencia mundial," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 3.

widespread objection over the selection. Yet, for some, Ojeda's selection only verified that the meeting focused on mere politics and not on women-specific issues. "Next time there won't be a man in charge. Next time women won't allow themselves to be used for political ends that have nothing to do with women's rights," exclaimed "angry feminists" according to the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*. Even Ojeda's pick factored into the list of the so-called conference's shortcomings: "In retrospect, it seemed to many observers that the International Women's Year Conference…was always meant to be a political exercise in power politics manipulated by men—from the conference president, Mexican Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada, to the men running the governments back home."[169] Chicana attendee Yolanda M. López witnessed how "…Mexican feminists boycotted the conference. Many delegates from other nations were visibly dismayed when Señor Paullada was also selected as president of the IWY Conference."[170] In the *Chicago Tribune,* Joan Beck argued that the steering committee's selection of Ojeda meant "The United Nations thinks there isn't a woman in the world capable of running a big international gathering."[171] Perhaps the brassiest dissenting voice came from North American feminist Betty Friedan: "Only two weeks before this conference, two students had been shot in the back of the head; the police involved were under the direction of the Attorney General of Mexico. And now this Attorney General, Pedro Ojeda Paullada, had just been named president of the conference, without a dissenting vote." In her first day in Mexico City, Friedan claimed at least a

---

[169] "Feminists Are Angered over Outcome of Women's Year Meet," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune,* 11 July 1975, 1C.

[170] Yolanda M. López, "A Chicana's Look at the International Women's Year Conference," in *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings,* edited by Alma M. García (New York: Routledge, 1997), 182.

[171] Joan Beck, "Women find no lib even at their summit," *Chicago Tribune,* 27 June 1975, Section 2, 2.

dozen women approached her about their displeasure over a man's selection, "and a policeman at that!"[172] The choice of Ojeda as head of the women's conference outraged many women—most aversions coming from First World representatives from the United States and Australia—and previewed the ideological rifts between divergent expectations for the two-week meeting in Mexico City.

Those deeming the conference a failure placed the blame on men and politics. According to some North American feminists the politicization of the conference derived from men's co-optation of the event through attendees that simply paid lip service to their governments. In some cases, that proved precisely the case, especially when their governments devised the agendas for discussions.[173] In an interview journalist Elena Poniatowska conducted with Pedro Ojeda, he commented that: "First of all, in the World Conference women did not speak, countries spoke and countries are asexual."[174] For those attendees concerned with debating more women-specific issues, Ojeda confirmed their anxieties that "The delegations are representative of governments, not of women, because governments are not representative of women," as Australian feminist Germaine Greer claimed.[175] As such, North American attendees like Friedan protested actions like Ojeda's selection, "I think it's very sad. It's pitiful that

---

[172] Betty Friedan, *It Changed My Life: Writings on the Women's Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 443.

[173] President Luis Echeverría, for instance, prepped several official representatives about not diverging from what he deemed truly important, structural changes to the international system and as outlined in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Moreover, several of the official spokeswomen or key women featured during International Women's Year held government posts; thereby, obliged to represent Mexico's official stance on the advancement of women.

[174] Elena Poniatowska: "Se dice mucho que la Conferencia Oficial en Tlatelolco fue puramente política, que las mujeres no plantearon problemas femeninos sino políticos que actuaron exactamente como lo harían los hombres en problemas políticos como el apartheid y la condena del sionismo…" Pedro Ojeda Paullada: *"En primer lugar, en la Conferencia Mundial no hablaron las mujeres, allí hablaron los países y los países son asexuados.*" Elena Poniatowska, "Habla el Presidente de la Conferencia Mundial Lic. Pedro Ojeda Paullada," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 7 (July 1975), 1, 12-13.

[175] "Delegates at women's confab object to too much politics," *Lodi News-Sentinel,* 26 June 1975, 14.

no government delegation raised hell about it," adding "It's an insult to all the women in the world that no Mexican woman could head the conference," most Third World delegates dissented on other matters.[176] Moreover, American feminists seemed ever more disturbed by the issues that gained notoriety in the conference, which they deemed too distant from women-specific matters or too politicized. Journalist Joan Beck noted the conference focused on "what one U.S. woman called 'political issues that represent the male mentality,' on arms limitations, neocolonialism, economic development, and national boundary disputes, rather than on the stated aim of the meeting—to improve the status of women." Beck included Friedan quoting a woman describing the event as a "paternalistic affair which has nothing to do with what women really think." She concluded her article by expressing disappointment that "not even a single conference can be devoted wholeheartedly to that subject without men trying to coopt it for their own purposes."[177] However, bungled representations of the conference—deeming political issues discussed at the IWY event as evidence of "callous manipulation of women by their governments"—undermine Third World representatives' ability to engage global issues independently of official indoctrination and discount the urgency of what some Latin American women deemed as categorically "women's rights" in the 1970s.[178]

Foreseeing ideological clashes, many 'Third World' women prepared to face what they deemed radical, 'First World' feminists' demands. For instance, the Mexican daily *Excélsior* quoted Guissoh Josephine, delegate and researcher for the African

---

[176] "Betty Friedan Says Men Won't Give Up Power Easily," *The Evening News,* 21 June 1975, 2A.

[177] Joan Beck, "Women find no lib even at their summit," *Chicago Tribune,* 27 June 1975, Section 2, 2.

[178] Betty Friedan quoted in "Delegates at women's confab object to too much politics," *Lodi News-Sentinel,* 26 June 1975, 14.

Development Studies Association, saying "The III World needs a terrible force of willpower not to be swayed by industrial countries, by the great powers that always have decided their path."[179] Josephine embodied many of the official delegates' standpoints on what they deemed distant and radical issues like "abortion, rape, women's right to vote, job equality and so on," key concerns a Native American newsletter, *AKWESASNE News,* noted for U.S members of the National Organization for Women (NOW), an association Friedan co-founded in 1966.[180] The same article described the absence of opportunity for Native Americans to voice their demands, and explained that those attended the Tribune "were denied any voice at the official UN conference." Moreover, they argued that "well-known and media savvy Western feminist organizations [like NOW]…represented primarily white Western women narrowly defined women's issues to include only issues of gender power inequalities and to exclude discussions of global misappropriations of power based on colonial legacies."[181] Ideologically speaking, minority groups from the United States were more likely hinged to global concerns of Third World women. Meanwhile, women like Ma Thi Chu of South Vietnam, for example, noted imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism as threats to not only women's rights, but also national rights.[182] Coming from South Vietnam, Thi Chu noted the harmful effects of war on women.[183] These ideological divisions, explains Challen Nicklen, of First World activists framing women's rights as

---

[179] Federico Ortiz Jr., "El III mundo necesita fuerza de voluntad para no dejarse llevar por las potencias," *Excélsior,* 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[180] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 222; Manon Parry, "Betty Friedan: Feminist Icon and Founder of the National Organization for Women," *American Journal of Public Health* 100:9 (September 2010), 1584-1585.

[181] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 221-222.

[182] "Ya se Escucha a la Mujer en los Gobiernos," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[183] "No Habrá Liberación de la Mujer Mientras Subsista el Neocolonialismo en el Mundo," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "Panorama de opiniones: Vietnam del Sur," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 7.

"universal concerns" while "Southern women and women of color argued that women's concerns must be understood in the context of their particular circumstances and experiences."[184] Many global activists; thereby, claimed "women's issues were continually submerged by international politicizing...Mexico wanted to promote a new world economic order. Panama reasserted its rights to the Canal Zone. The Arabs wanted to fight the Jews," etc.[185] On the other hand, women from developing countries framed discussions in statist terms, often in Marxist, and were more likely to appeal to their country's "particular" circumstances, especially calling for economic and political structural changes deemed necessary for substantial social change—of which included women's rights—unlike the gender-derivative universalist claims of representatives from Western industrialized countries.

Universal vs. Particular: Latin American Women and Human Rights

Despite the frequent emphasis on nationalist and developmentalist themes, Latin Americans also engaged in universalities when it came to political and economic matters, especially that of human rights. Although deemed "political," the demands of women from the region reflected their realities of political repression, economic disparity, and social inequalities; in other words, their appeals reflected those of wider social movements seeking democratization in an era of state terror. The case of Chilean political repression as a violation of women's rights emerged as a key subject on various instances. Just a day before the inauguration of IWY Conference and during the

[184] Challen Nicklen, *Rhetorics of Connection in the United Nations Conferences on Women, 1975-1995* (Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 2008), 3.

[185] "Feminists Are Angered over Outcome of Women's Year Meet," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune,* 11 July 1975, C-1.

International Journalists Meeting in Auditorium No. 5 of the *Centro Médico*, Chilean journalist and radio personality exiled in Mexico Ximena Ortuzar decried the Military Junta's "concentration camps" that held forty-nine journalists, five of whom were women, two already dead due to the 'inhumane system,' and all subject to torture. Ortuzar, working for Channel 13 in Mexico, denounced the yelled out from her seat the names of Diana Aarón and Gladys Díaz Armijo who died at the hands of the Junta's *Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia* (National Intelligence Directorate, DINA) in the Tres Álamos camp.[186] "The Chilean Military Junta has closed all media that does not tally to the junta's interests," concluded the news piece.[187] Women from Latin American countries under military dictatorships often framed women's rights within nationalistic debates, often in terms of democratization; conversely, when cases of political violence, they more typically appealed to the universalist language of human rights.

Lending importance to these issues was the fact that Chile's former First Lady, Hortensia Bussi de Allende, served as a key IWY spokesperson against her country's military Junta. As the widow of Socialist President Salvador Allende (1970-1973), Bussi participated as an unofficial representative of the Mexican government, often attending events alongside Esther Zuno. Bussi, for instance, welcomed the Russian delegate at the Mexico City airport. There the Chilean exile told reporters she did not wish to answer any questions, but ended up giving a speech in the traffic room in which she noted the condition of women under the Pinochet regime, a government where women have been incarcerated and forced into prostitution. As long the "yoke of imperialism" prevailed,

[186] According to the newspaper report, Gladys Díaz Armijo was the president of *Sindicato de Locutores de Radio y Televisión* (The Radio and Television Broadcasters Union).

[187] She then proceeded to list names of other prisoners, Fireley Elgueta (condemned to eight years in a city in Southern Chile, Osorno), Bernardita Wieser, Pilar Espinosa Rivas, and Martha Neira, María Liliana Osorio Solis. "La Junta Tiene Cinco Periodistas Presas, en Chile," 18 June 1974, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

no one, in any country could live at peace. She added, "The Chilean woman repudiates the fascist military junta."[188] In a Tribute session dedicated to the application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Bussi spoke of the need of not only gender but also class equality, and for a people's right to self-determination. At this event, she also denounced the Chilean Junta's torture of women, claiming it often occurred in front of their children, and added with a note of irony, "the only aspect where women are equal to men, is in that of persecution and torture."[189] Both Bussi de Allende and Russian delegate Valentina Tershkova suggested women lived better under socialist systems. Bussi claimed that under Salvador Allende, women factored into the workforce in a dignified and just manner, and with a spirit of spirit of fellowship.[190] Cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova "declared that women's real and informal equality depends on the socioeconomic system of each country," and the Soviet Union incorporated women into the development process since the October Socialist Revolution. Argentine attendee, Fanny Edelman, argued that socialist countries had achieved greater appreciation for women's potential and had incorporated rights into the revolutionary social process.[191] Gustavo G. Velázquez, candidate to the *Partido Popular Socialista* (Popular Socialist Party, PPS) to the governorship of the State of Mexico too made the case that in countries where private property has been suppressed men

[188] Juan Manuel Juárez Cortés, "Se aproxima el fin de la junta militar chilena," *La Prensa,* 18 June 1978, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[189] Margarita García Flores, "la tribuna del año internacional de la mujer," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 7 (July 1975), 15.

[190] Juan Manuel Juárez Cortés, "Se aproxima el fin de la junta militar chilena," *La Prensa,* 18 June 1978, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[191] "Modificar a fondo las estructuras sociales para lograr la igualdad," *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

and women live on more equal grounds.[192] It was in the voices of protest that lay Latin American women's contribution to the construction of women's rights as interconnected to the emerging universalist language of human rights, which in the context of Latin American in the 1970s had principally come to signify principally political, and secondly economic, rights.

Moreover, international organizations with local chapters served as key players in globalizing discussion of political violence, especially torture, as human rights violations. The Mexican section of Amnesty International (AI) tackled the themes of torture and unjust imprisonment. Two of the organization's key members, Alicia Escalante de Zama and Marieclaire Acosta, gave a press conference days before the IWY Conference in which they discussed the need to use the forum to bring attention to the women imprisoned on alleged political crimes, and tortured for that matter. Acosta explained that "For women, sexual atrocities comprised an important part of the catalog of torture and we have many examples of these in Chile, where it has been abused." Escalante de Zama added that AI would intervene so that the declaration of human rights could serve as a compliment to the enunciated denunciation of sexual torture.[193] Although claims on behalf of women political prisoners fell on deaf ears, many journalists went on to press their own governments about political prisoners. For example, in Elena Poniatowska's interview with Ojeda Paullada, she inquired about the numerous mentions of political prisoners during the conference. She proceeded to ask him why nothing had been done on behalf of Mexican female prisoners, "Why you, as

---

[192] Aquiles Fuentes, "En los países socialistas, mujeres y niños reciben grandes atenciones," *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[193] "'Amnistía Internacional', en la Conferencia del Año de la Mujer: Chile, ejemplo de la forma en que se tortura a mujeres presas por supuestos delitos políticos," *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

Attorney General, haven't released them?" Ojeda allured to the discriminatory nature of freeing a woman simply on matter of her gender, and thereby would place her above the law. Ojeda Paullada added that "Precisely one of the issues for which women are fighting to achieve equality in all fields," thus evading Poniatowska's allusion to political repression in Mexico.[194] Of all the Latin American demands placed upon the IWY forum, those related to political violence and torture activists were more often linked to universalist language of rights, and especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Moreover, while some women complained about discussions on torture or economic disparity not being feminist enough, those themes drew press coverage to the little known and rarely utilized terms of 'human rights.'

Human Rights in the Mexican Press

References to human rights in the Mexican press during the IWY Conference emerged in relation to repression in Chile. An article dedicated to the changing role of women in society noted the development of science and technology as spurring greater rights, as well as the "universal recognition of human rights," the journalist quoted Chilean participant at the First Seminar on Women and Development, Teresa Orrego de Figueroa.[195] Moreover, the Popular Socialist Party, PPS, launched the "*Manifiesto a las Mujeres Mexicanas*" (Manifesto to Mexican Women) in occasion of the IWY, where it demanded the full integration for women into the "economic, political, social and cultural" life of the country—until she enjoys the same rights as men. The PPS also

[194] Elena Poniatowska, "Habla el Presidente de la Conferencia Mundial Lic. Pedro Ojeda Paullada," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 7 (July 1975), 1, 12-13.

[195] Figueroa is the author of *La juventud en América Latina: realidad y expectativa* (Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat, Organization of American States, 1974), "Están cambiando las condiciones que definían el papel de la mujer," 18 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

called for support toward the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, claiming it garnered countries the right to benefit over their own natural wealth. Among the many bulleted points, the party demanded the United Nations exclude the Chilean military junta from international forums, especially during IWY. And "Also, to intervene in order to obtain the release of all political prisoners, the respect for human rights and the end of repression."[196] In other instances, the term was linked to international organizations working to advance 'human right,' like the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), of which two Mexican organizations were members of, the *El Comité Coordinador Femenino para defensa de la Patria*, and the *Unión Nacional de Mujeres Mexicanas* (UNMM).[197] Although the term human rights did not exclusively denote violations in Chile, often times the press employed the words explicitly in reference to the state terror in South America, where exiles and activists there commonly appealed to international organizations and forums for protection; thereby, more familiarized with the universalist language of human rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Other journalists made additional references to human rights when writing about the UDHR. Gloria Brasdefer, coordinator for *Programa de México,* gave an interview where the reporter concluded her note on IWY with: "Now governments, at a national and international level, by endorsement of the United Nations have solemnly committed to the goal of equal rights for all, men and women, as proclaimed by the

[196] "Incorporación plena de la mujer a la vida del país, demanda el PPS," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 11, CENCOS.

[197] Yolia, "Ellas y la vida," 18 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights."[198] In *México75,* the IWY government's official newspaper, the poet, one-time senator of Jalisco, and first governor in Mexico for the state of Colima (see Illustration 3.3), Griselda Álvarez wrote an article about the future of women where she drew attention to the UDHR, which "prohibits discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." With the hope of the Declaration's fulfillment, Álvarez then quoted the Argentine screenwriter Ulyses Petit de Murat (1907-1983) on the difficult condition of women in Argentina and Uruguay.[199] The last page of the first issue of *México75* included a one-page explanation of the United Nations and its goal of promoting universal respect and observance of human rights, and made reference to the rights embedded in the UDHR with several uses of the term.[200] In an interview with Clara Elena Molina Enriquez, adviser for *Programa de México*, the reporter noted the IWY event was "the beginning of a joint effort that will eliminate discrimination and will link together human rights within and without each country."[201] It is difficult to discern whether the journalist appropriated the terms from their interviewees—who were very likely more familiarized with internationalist terms given their connection to the IWY planning and by default the United Nations—or if the subject matter of their interviews predisposed them to such vocabulary. Nevertheless, press reports show that women from the United Nations or IWY event ranks were more likely to employ the terms

---

[198] "15 mil de las más destacadas mujeres se congregarán en México," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 17, CENCOS.

[199] Griselda Álvarez, "Nuestro futuro," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), 6-7.

[200] "Las Naciones Unidas y la discriminación femenina," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), 16.

[201] "Clara Elena Molina: La mujer no está capacitada aún para participar en la vida activa del país," 8 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

human rights, as Helvi Sipilä so frequently did.[202] Thereby, the rise of human rights in the press during IWY and its Conference reveals greater national awareness toward rights embedded in international rights documents during the 1970s, and especially those associated with the United Nations system.

Betty Friedan was Right: The Case of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States

Nevertheless, the IWY Conference also served as an official forum for government- propagated politics. Certainly, as Sipilä explains "There are political issues which women have to deal with. If it had been only a question of women and women's problems, then the conference would not have fulfilled its purpose."[203] However, at other moments 'bourgeois' women reflected their class ideology, which at times predisposed them to serve as official mouthpieces for their governments, and such proved the case for a number of Mexican official delegates to the conference. The class standing of many of the attendees seemed strikingly noticeable, to where a British woman bore the following questions: "You realize that 90 percent of us here are obviously bourgeois? Apart from some of the rural Mexican women, where are the proletarians of the world? Is this to represent women?"[204] Indeed, the women most featured in the press during IWY in Mexico were seldom representative of the general population, such as First Lady Esther Zuno, María Lavalle Urbina, and other women in public posts. Attorney General Pedro Ojeda, the head leader for the *Programa de México*

---

[202] One such article quoted the following: "*En esta Conferencia los derechos humanos de las madres y de los niños son tan importantes como la lucha femenina de la igualdad*." "Helvi Sipila y la prensa," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 13.

[203] "Feminists Are Angered over Outcome of Women's Year Meet," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune,* 11 July 1975, 1C.

[204] "Miscelánea: frases que se grabaron al azar," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 14.

and the IWY Conference, proved the most overt representative and promoter of President Echeverría's Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, more so as the conference neared.[205] Leaders from around the globe anticipated Echeverría's use of the IWY Conference to further his political agenda. Olcott details how "The U.S. delegation to the UN reported with alarm from a Caracas planning session that the Mexican delegation planned to rally support for an IWY conference endorsement of the NIEO."[206] At least at a national level, organizations and public figures linked to the government, from the *Confederación de Jóvenes Mexicanos* (Confederation of Mexican Youth, CJM) to Mexico's ambassador to Finland, Bernardo Reyes—endorsed the Charter.[207] In what seemed like a prep meeting for the Mexican delegation to the Conference, warned about possible voices that would stir the debates toward scandalous and extravagant themes—and away from the social and economic condition of women. "We have to think about the need to create, to fight to install—to the extent of our possibilities—, an international economic and social order a bit closer to what we consider convenient and fair, but also feasible."[208] Echeverría encapsulated his idea regarding the condition of women and how the Charter responded to such needs: "There is no woman in the world more discriminated against than one who has no

[205] "Anuncia Pedro Ojeda Paullada: En la Conferencia del Año de la Mujer se Plantearán Formulas Para 'un Nuevo Orden Económico y Social,'" 12 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[206] Olcott, "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year," 27; Olcott, "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics," 283.

[207] "Que la conferencia no se convierta en foro de vanidades: pide la CJM," 18 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "La Conferencia del Año Internacional de la Mujer no se perderá en discursos líricos," 14 June 1975, *Respuestas prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[208] Alejandro Iñigo, "Se intentará atraer hacia lo escandaloso," *Excélsior,* 18 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

bread, school, or medicines for her children."[209] As the host, and with Pedro Ojeda as the president of the Conference, the Mexican government held enough sway to place the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties on the IWY agenda.

As early as the preliminary meetings for the Conference, the Mexican delegation endorsed the Charter. In a March session in the UN headquarters in New York, the representative countries analyzed proposals for the World Plan of Action for the next ten years and a cornerstone of the 1975 Conference.[210] Another advisory committee followed in Venezuela the next month, sponsored by the CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America, ECLA).[211] In the New York meeting, and while working on the World Plan of Action, the president of the Mexican delegation Pedro Ojeda Paullada proposed the *Carta de derechos y deberes de los Estados* as a document for analysis, and the committee accepted.[212] Thereafter, Ojeda, his assistant Raúl Ortiz and Ambassador Sergio González Gálvez met in Kurt Waldheim's office. The UN Secretary General too expressed his gratitude toward the government but especially for President Echeverría. Journalist reporting on the UN meeting noted Ojeda argued obstacles women faced in developing countries often derived from unjust global politics; such that, "the problem of equality cannot be separated from the problem of development" wrote González Muñoz. Ojeda also quoted Echeverría from a speech he

---

[209] "Pan y trabajo para todos," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 4.

[210] Servando González Muñoz, "Reunión preparatoria en la ONU," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 1.

[211] Rosa María Campos, "Mosaico Informativo: Los Periodistas con el Coordinador del AIM," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 2 (February 1975), 13.

[212] The Mexican delegation also included: Sergio González Gálvez (Ambassador), Victor Manuel Barceló (Ambassador), María Lavalle Urbina, Carlos Rico Ferrat, Aída González Martinez, Dr. Rosa Luz Alegría, Ruby Betancourt, Dr. Miriam Muñoz de Chávez, Dr. Martha Cándano, Hilda Hernández Araiza, Elena Jeannetti, María del Carmen Elú de Leñero, Esperanza Brito de Martí, Clara Elena Molina, Guadalupe Mendoza, Juanita Parker B., Antonieta Razcón, and Zadalinda González. Servando González Muñoz, "Reunión preparatoria en la ONU," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 16.

gave a month earlier: "we must ensure that the International Women's Year Conference does not become a forum for enumerating economic and social problems women suffer." Ambassador González Gálvez spoke about international cooperation and concluded with a reference to a new international economic order—"the basic purpose of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States."[213] Though, for most IWY attendees, Echeverría's speech at the inaugurating ceremony crystalized the Mexican government's key posture toward women's rights.

However, the Charter's endorsement garnered President Echeverría fierce criticism. Joan Beck wrote in the *Chicago Tribune* "It isn't that Echeverria gives women's liberation such low priority"; rather, what proved most infuriating was "his machismo message that women are so stupid and inferior that they can contribute nothing to help in achieving economic and political goals except to sit passively on the sidelines until men get the world changed to their liking."[214] Meanwhile, Australian feminists believed that women could not wait for a new economic world order to better their lives, nor could women continue tolerating paternalism that "deprives us of our identity."[215] Helen McCarthy, a British participant, deemed Mexico a "land of machismo," a place "where millions of women lived in dire poverty, trapped by illiteracy, repeated childbearing and errant husbands."[216] The context for the event as well as President Echeverría's own insistence on the Charter, made him exemplary of "male chauvinistic insensitivity," where women, again, must wait "until worldwide redistribution of wealth

---

[213] Servando González Muñoz, "Reunión preparatoria en la ONU," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 16.

[214] Joan Beck, "Women find no lib even at their summit," *Chicago Tribune*, 27 June 1975, Section 2, 2.

[215] Norma A. Pastrana, "1a. sesión plenaria en Tlatelolco," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 7 (July 1975), 5.

[216] Helen McCarthy, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat* (London, England: Bloomsbury, 2014), 249.

and power wipes out imbalances between rich and poor nations"—a proposal compared to African Americans' having to wait for their full citizenship dispensation after global problems have been addressed.[217] Nevertheless, UN Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim seemed sympathetic toward the Mexican government's stance in the conference and admitted it was difficult to determine priority between two matters that are interlined, that of the rights of women and the transformations to the global socioeconomic system.[218] Although to the displeasure of many feminists, the Mexican government converted women's rights into a Third Worldism issue, prioritizing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties as a structural reform alternative for ensuing gender guarantees.

Moreover, Third World women endorsing the Charter reflected their own suspicions toward the First World, and vice-versa. Judy Klemesrud, reporting for the *New York Times*, wrote on First World women's concern over NIEO, being that "Many Western women here are afraid that the third world women will want to concentrate on the 'new economic order'—the redistribution of the world's wealth and resources…"[219] On the other hand, Venezuelan journalist Evangelina García Prince, lauding the Charter and proposals for a NEIO, regarded Echeverría as one of the most outstanding leaders of Latin America. In response to the rumors of Echeverría succeeding

[217] Joan Beck, "Women find no lib even at their summit," *Chicago Tribune,* 27 June 1975, Section 2, 2.

[218] "Los periodistas con Kurt Waldheim," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 6.

[219] Judy Klemesrud, "International Women's Year World Conference Opening in Mexico," *New York Times* 19 June 1975.

Waldheim as Secretary-General, García Prince added the Mexican leader would adequately represent the Third World.[220]

The ideological divisions between those who supported and those who repudiated the Charter embodied the contending strands of feminism of the 1970s. In ideological terms, demands from representatives of industrialized nations exemplified a type of *liberal feminism*, which Mexican scholar Alma Rosa Sánchez Olvera argues did not promote major structural changes, nor does it study women's position within the larger capitalist system.[221] However, representatives concerned with what western women deemed "political" issues could be placed within the strands of *radical* or *socialist feminism,* ideological frameworks influenced by the militant left, working class struggles, or other leftist organizations seeking major transformation to the capitalist system as a form of social redemption.[222] Antagonisms engulfing the IWY Conference not only represented a rift between feminist ideologies between First and Third World women, but also from class or even cultural divisions at a national level. The shocks at the Mexico City meeting displayed a microcosm of the struggles between the various strands of feminism that would prevail through most of the century and to some extent to this day, and one with a certain type of rejection towards foreign or First World attempts at imposing a singular definition of feminism.

Nevertheless, by 1975 liberal feminist writings from Europe and the United States undoubtedly reached activists everywhere engaged in movements for women's rights. *México75,* for example, ran articles contextualizing what many deemed the lobal

---

[220] "Venezuela se adhiere a la candidatura de LE a la ONU," 18 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[221] Alma Rosa Sánchez Olvera, *El feminismo mexicano ante el movimiento urbano popular: dos expresiones de la lucha de género (1970-1985),* 21.

[222] *Ibid.,* 22-24.

feminist movement. The prominent Spanish-born Guatemalan intellectual Alaíde Foppa wrote an article titled "What is feminism?" in which she dates the liberation movements to the 1960s, and deriving from the United States where women could vote and attend higher education institutions, yet had been relegated to their homes. Foppa credited Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* (1963) and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) as two key texts that radicalized demands for women's liberation.[223] Sadly, Foppa's prominent voice in Mexico came to an abrupt end with her kidnapping and murder in Guatemala City on December 19, 1980, in the midst of Romeo Lucas García's (1978-1982) repressive military rule.[224] While Friedan and kindred writers influenced the Latin American social milieu, exclusive focus on their movements undermined the Latin American women's movements, which existed and were well on

[223] Alaíde Foppa, "¿qué es el feminismo? *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 1-2.

[224] The story of Foppa's family is truly a tragic one. Her only surviving son, Julio Solórzano Foppa has been engaged in trying to find his mother's remains, along with the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala, FAFG). He is the son of President Juan José Arévalo (1945-1951), which he did not find out until after his mother's kidnapping. Julio was born from a romance between Foppa and Arévalo, thereafter; she fled to Mexico where her son was born. She subsequently married Guatemalan Alfonso Solórzano, a playwright and state official for both the Juan José Arévalo and Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán (1951-1954) administrations, and both agreed to maintain the paternity of Julio's biological father a secret. Foppa lost two sons during Guatemala's civil war, Mario and Juan Pablo, both members of the *Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres* (EGP). Surviving daughter Silvia was also engaged with the EGP. Juan Pablo was killed in Nebaj, Quiché, and Mario died in Guatemala City a year later, in 1981. Silvia, Laura, and Julio survived. Her husband, Alfonso Solórzano was killed Mexico City. Foppa was fully involved in the intellectual life of Mexico and contributed significantly to the feminist movement. Foppa's life is the subject of a recent documentary by Mexican film maker, María del Carmen de Lara, titled *¡Alaíde Foppa, la sin ventura!* (2014). The film opens in celebration of Foppa's 100th anniversary of her birth. "Premia Festival de Cine a documental sobre Alaída Foppa," *Diario Rotativo: Noticias de Querétaro,* 3 December 2014 <http://rotativo.com.mx/entretenimiento/cultura/367313-premia-festival-de-cine-documental-sobre-alaide-foppa/>; Francisca Gómez Grijalva, "Alaída Foppa," *Prensa Libre,* 12 December 2014 <http://www.prensalibre.com/opinion/Alaide-Foppa_0_1263473886.html>; Julio Solórzano Foppa, "Memoria de su familia: Los que fueron muertos y desaparecidos y los que sobrevivieron," *Granito,* 20 July 2012 < http://granitomem.com/justicia/por-julio-solorzano-foppa-memoria-de-su-familia/>; Elías Barahona, "33 años del secuestro y desaparición de la periodista Alaide Foppa," *América Latina en Movimiento, ALAI,* 19 December 2013 <http://alainet.org/active/69953&lang=es>; Kenneth Monzón, "Julio Solórzano Foppa: Hijo de Alaída Foppa y Juan José Arévalo," *Nuestro Diario* (Edición Dominical), 26 July 2009, 7.

their way in 1975, although unique and reflective of their national realities—yet with links to other global liberationist movements.

Nevertheless, national histories on women's rights surfaced in the press during IWY and days leading up to the Conference. Javier López Moreno, for instance, wrote an article on Mexican feminism listing many of the "firsts" in the country's history, from the first female surgeon to obtain a medical degree, Matilde de P. Montoya, to activist Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza—"defender of the Indians," or the contemporaneous writer Rosario Castellanos, who died in Tel Aviv only a year before the IWY event. The list of Mexico's illustrious women continued. Moreno concluded with: "On this International Women's Year, Mexico can participate with decorum. With the endorsement of the women who made possible the current countenance, less iniquitous than yesterday but still streaked with concerns."[225] Although Moreno showcased prominent women of Mexico, his writings excluded any mention of a women's movement in Mexico or as women contributing to the countries historical narrative. However, journalist Adelina Zendejas wrote on Mexico's feminist movement, while clearly noting she summarized from an upcoming book titled *Las Luchas de la Mujer Mexicana* ("The Struggles of Mexican Women").[226] In a two-part piece, Zendejas linked prominent women to the nation's movements, including working class movements, political parties, and other organizations, secular and religious—she herself involved in the Mexican Communist Party (PCM), and founder of the *Frente Único Pro Derechos de la*

[225] Javier López Moreno, "Feminismo (II) Mujeres que no envejecen ni mueren," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[226] Zendejas wrote a series of essays, *Desorganización de la familia antisocial, La guerra: delincuencia infantil y juvenil, La crisis de la educación en México* (1958) and *La mujer en la intervención francesa* (1962), and two books, *Las luchas de la mujer mexicana (1776-1975)* and *Frida Kahlo en la preparatoria.* Josefina Hernández Tellez, "Adelina Zendejas: precursora de la escritura y periodismo femeninos," *Fem* Vol. 22, Issue 187 (1 October 1998), 13 (2); Adelina Zendejas, "El Movimiento Femenil Mexicano," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

Mujer (United Front for Women's Rights).[227] Zendejas' historical narrative of women as protagonists and historical movers did not go beyond the 1920s and only listed a few key female leaders for the 1940s and 1950s.[228] Therefore, when journalists attempted to historicize Mexico's feminist movement in celebration of IWY, and beyond the influence of the U.S. women's movement, many gaps surfaced regarding the 1950s, 1960s, and beyond, precisely because such a movement —or at least one akin or comparable to its North American or European counterparts—was still in the making well iunto the 1970s—and Zendejas herself part of that movement. In other words, Internal Women's Years commemorations transpired just as Mexico's own feminist movement unraveled.

Particularly during the IWY, Mexican intellectuals, activists, and even political leaders contributed to the national debate on feminism. In these varying stabs at forging, defining, and documenting Mexico's own women's movement, abortion seemed one of the consistent issues projected onto a national platform, although not the only one. In a *New York Times* article on Beatriz Paredes Rangel from Tlaxcala, the second woman to hold a Mexican governorship (1987-1992) William Stockton dated the "fledgling feminist movement" in the country to the 1970s, "it was class conscious." The women spearheading the movement, Stockton noted, "were of the upper and middle classes" and their concerns "were focused on [the right to] abortion, which is

[227] Josefina Hernández Tellez, "Adelina Zendejas: precursora de la escritura y periodismo femeninos," *Fem* Vol. 22, Issue 187 (1 October 1998), 13; Adelina Zendejas, "El movimiento femenil mexicano," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.
[228] Adelina Zendejas, "El movimiento femenil mexicano," 16 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS; "El Movimiento Femenil Mexicano," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS. For more and Zendejas see: Josefina Hernández Tellez, *Ellas y la vida periodística de Adelina Zendejas Gómez* (Pachuca de Soto, Hidalgo, México: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, 2013), and "Adelina Zendejas: precursora de la escritura y el periodismo femeninos" (M.A. thesis, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM, 2001).

illegal in Mexico, rape, pornography and lesbianism."[229] In the Casa de Coahuila, a civil society organization in Mexico City seeking to keep people connected to the northern state, held an event in commemoration of IWY. The organization's president, Atanasio González Martínez invited Planning Director for the Secretariat of *Gobernación,* Luisa María Leal to give a speech titled "Family Planning." Leal allured to the 600,000 annual abortions in Mexico, a number only documenting women who received medical care for complications, suggesting the actual number exceeded official estimates.[230] Abortion also factored into the governments family planning campaigns, although indirectly and sanctioning CONAPO initiatives encouraging responsible parenting. However, for activists, the criminalization of abortion became a matter of importance, and one with a national forum in 1975, and one intimately linked to Mexico's 1970s women's movement.

As in most countries, public debates on abortion proved polemical. A prominent scholar at the *Centro de Estudios Internacionales* (Center for International Studies) at the Colegio de México (COLMEX), Rafael Segovia spoke openly on the matter of abortion. Religion became one of Segovia's key targets in this predominantly Catholic country; indeed, he deemed Catholic influence as one of the gravest problem women faced in developing countries. Segovia questioned the moral justification for Mexico's ban on abortions; a service that he argued liberated women from the hazards of childbearing. Alongside religion, he also noted "machismo" as a detriment to women's liberation—a problem inherited from Europeans countries when they colonized

[229] William Stockton, "For Women of Mexico, A New Political Beacon," *New York Times,* 6 November 1986, Section C, 1.

[230] "La paciencia, única solución para el problema demográfico," 13 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

America. Finally, Segovia, true to his role as scholar, deemed a legal study necessary in order to solve the questions surrounding the polemic matter of abortion, which along with other problems facing women would not be resolved by the International Women's Year.[231] Similarly, general coordinator of auxiliary prosecutors from the District Attorney's Office, Dr. Olga Islas de González Mariscal presented the talk "Women Against the Mexican Penal Law," and from a criminal stance point, called for the clarification of the law that criminalizes abortion. The longtime professor at the UNAM suggested a norm that standardized the scope of limitations for prohibited and non-prohibited abortions, one that clearly determined an abortion is not punishable if procured for therapeutic or accidental loss of pregnancy, or one for women who have been sexually assaulted—so the criminalization is not left to the "subjective speculation" of the judge.[232] At a governmental level, however, discussions of family planning overshadowed those on decriminalizing abortion, where government officials optimistically insisted that "the discussion over legalization of abortion will not even be a topic in twenty years if family planning programs have their desired results, because each woman will exercise absolute and perfect control over her fecundity."[233] In April 2007 the Mexico City government legalized "elective" abortion in the first twelve weeks of the pregnancy; a service to woman originally implemented in fourteen hospitals. By

[231] "El Año Internacional de la Mujer no resolverá sus problemas: R. Segovia," 17 June 1975; "Tiene más éxito solteras y Divorciadasdivorciadas: Esmeralda A.," 17 June 1975; "La ley asegura la igualdad a la mujer, pero la realidad es distinta," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[232] David García Salinas, "Urge fijar normas del aborto: expresamente y sin ambigüedad debe decidirse lo que es punible o no ante la ley: Olga Islas," *La Prensa,* 4 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[233] Diana Steigerwald reporting from an article by Esperanza Brito de Martí in the magazine *Siempre!*, "abortion in Mexico," *Off Our Backs* 4:9 (August-September 1974), 12.

October 31, 2012 close to 90,000 legal abortions has been conducted.[234] Although no major legal updates to law took place in 1975 or thereafter, the IWY discussions and press coverage on abortion led to further research on the subject and mobilizations for its decriminalization in the succeeding years—and illegal and unsafe abortions still a key women's issue to this day.[235]

Mexican intellectuals also opined on the IWY and the women's liberation movement. "The status of women in society cannot be understood without considering the structure of the family," wrote prominent sociologist Rodolfo Stavenhagen. The longstanding Colegio de México academic examined women in peasant communities, where the family serves as a "unit of production and consumption, permanent institution that brings together several generations," fulfilling important social functions, like providing education, caring for the elderly and the sick, just to name a few. Common for Latin American scholars at the time, Stavenhagen placed women's shifting role in society as deriving from the changing role of peasant households as a result of structural transformations, especially those affecting subsistence agriculture, a phenomenon affecting the family structure in most Third World countries. "[I]n the process of economic development peasant family units tend to disintegrate and the roles of men and women tend to differ more and more," and thereby the family structure

---

[234] According to article, oher countries in the region that decriminalized abortion in 2012 include Cuba, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Guyana. Davida Becker, and Claudia Díaz Olavarrieta, "Decriminalization of Abortion in Mexico City: The Effects on Women's Reproductive Rights," *American Journal of Public Health* (February 14, 2013), e1.

[235] Leopoldo Aguilar García, *El aborto en México y en el mundo: un enfoque sociológico* (México: B. Costa-Amic, 1973), Azaola Garrido Elena and Luisa María Leal, eds., *El problema del aborto en México* (Mexico City: Miguel Angel Porrúa, 1980). Recent scholarship on abortion include: Margarita M. Valdés, *Controversias sobre el aborto* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de investigaciones Filosóficas, 2001), Adriana Ortiz Ortega, *Si los hombres se embarazaran: ¿el aborto sería legal?* (Col. del Valle, Mexico: EDAMEX, 2001), Alicia Márquez Murrieta and Yasmín Chombo Sánchez, *El aborto en el México del siglo XXI: acontecimiento y problema público en el caso Paulina: de víctima a protagonista* (Mexico City; Instituto Mora, 2014).

changes and some of its previous social functions relegated to urban and specialized social institutions. "The monetary economy, migration, wage labor generates strong tensions in the traditional family institution, which is linked to subsistence farming," resulting in the shift of women's role in society—thus necessitating "new social institutions and new ways of connivance" yet to be devised. "It is unlikely that the International Conference of Women will devote itself to such creative activity, but it would be a great opportunity."[236] In the press, cartoonist Naranjo captured the realities of gender inequality deeply imbedded in Mexican culture (see Illustration 3.4). It would not be the last time that Stavenhagen's writings would serve as the lonely voice for the needs not only of the peasant, but also of the indigenous woman, a voice consistently calling for substantial changes.

Although the indigenous voice remained largely absent, when present it differed from that of urban or middle class women. Lita Paniagua, for example, seemed to have specifically looked for the indigenous woman during IWY. In *México75* she featured their voice and expectations for IWY, their discussion regarding cultural preservation as well as their desire to manage their fertility, discussions particular to their context and largely absent from the official IWY forums. "The indigenous woman must break free of prejudice toward herself that she has internalized from ladinos," detailed Modesta Miza Bal, and described how when young women left her community for the cities and then returned they felt ashamed of their native language and no longer wished to speak in Cakchiquel, nor did they want to wear their traditional wear.[237] "They have

[236] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Redefinir la Función de la Familia," 17 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS.

[237] "Ladino" is a (largely Central American) term commonly used to refer to someone of indigenous descent; Cakchiquel is one of the many ethnic and linguistic groups of the Maya peoples.

accepted the idea that being indigenous is to be inferior. I wish IWY would value the equality between men and women, but also between women." Modesta Mza Bal also added to the discussion of population control by saying "indigenous women want and should have access to family planning," and that the campaign need not wait for the indigenous woman to come for instruction, as proved the case for the majority in 1975.[238] While neither the government nor feminists groups took on the needs of indigenous women in a large way, they were nevertheless sporadically represented; still, they remain among the most vulnerable peoples in the country, and one of the three groups with the highest risk of having an unsafe abortion.[239]

Finally, in a section dedicated to men's opinion of IWY for *México75*, Octavio Paz proved critical of the women's movement approach to equality. When asked his opinion about the women's liberation undertakings, Paz expressed his ideas regarding two parallel movements: "There is a feminine and masculine erotic rebellion; moreover and independent, there is a political rebellion of women." According to Paz, the two should not be confused. "I have read that the leaders of the women's movement think that the sexual act is an act in essence political." Yet, he maintained that as a theory, given that "[a]ll social acts, all human actions are tinted with politics, everything is contaminated by history, but what defines the sexual act are not relations of domination but biological relationships." The sexual act was defined not by "history but nature: the body." On a second note, Paz believed women's enslavement ran parallel to that of all of humanity, and that position shouldn't be compared to that of the proletariat or

[238] Lita Paniagua, "Panorámica de la mujer latinoamericana: 'Que las mujeres indígenas nos enorgullezcamos de serlo'" *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 3.

[239] Davida Becker and Claudia Díaz Olavarrieta, "Decriminalization of Abortion in Mexico City: The Effects on Women's Reproductive Rights," *American Journal of Public Health* (February 14, 2013), e1.

blacks, like North American leaders of the women's movement did—because women were neither "a class nor a race." Paz believed the placement of women within distant historical or political categorizations served as a "new form of alienation." Moreover, he expressed disbelief in an equality that meant identity or homogeneity. Like many other intellectuals, Paz claimed the liberation of women rested alongside that of the working class, and one linked to structural problems. He concluded with his own idea regarding the feminization of eroticism. "I mean, also *another liberation,* a liberation that only women can carry out: transform western eroticism, feminize our aggressive civilization, provide us with different erotic archetypes different from those of modern industrial society, on its two fronts: the capitalist and the communist, has imposed on the planet…" Paz's criticism of western ideas regarding liberation, femininity, and love reflected a questioning of incoming ideas from abroad, borrowed and tossed out at a national level—often in a different context—and one that for him, at least, further constrained women.[240]

Although the struggle to define feminism continued, the IWY proved critical for the women's movement in Mexico. The year 1975 remains a watershed moment for women's rights in Mexico, even if limited to urban centers—principally Mexico City—and middle class women.[241] The countryside, for the most part, remained isolated from the event's themes and discussions. However, even if the IWY debates had reached the

[240] "Pero yo me refiero, además a *otra liberación,* una liberación que sólo la mujer puede realizar: cambiar el erotismo occidental, feminizar nuestra agresiva civilización, darnos arquetipos eróticos distintos a los que la sociedad industrial moderna, en sus dos vertientes: la capitalista y la comunista, ha impuesto en todo el planeta…" "Los hombres opinan: Octavio Paz," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 5 (May 1975), 1, 10.

[241] Alma Rosa Sánchez Olvera, *El feminismo mexicano ante el movimiento urbano popular: dos expresiones de lucha de género (1970-1985)* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Campus Acatlán, 2002), 114; Adriana Ortiz-Ortega and Mercedes Barquet, "Gendering Transition to Democracy in Mexico," *Latin American Research Review* (Special Issue, 2010), 109.

rural sector, the needs of women from agricultural communities differed significantly from those of the city. In the states of Jalisco and Zacatecas, for example, young women from large households engaged in outdoor activities traditionally intended for men. Husbands, sons, and brothers migrated to the United States and the women remained to take care of the farms and crops. The women left behind not only remained isolated from national events, due to the absence of communications or social programs, but also proved far more aware of their immediate municipal context and that of their siblings in the United Sates. Family planning or women's rights discussions circulating in Mexico City during IWY remained spatially remote; of equal importance, it was culturally foreign, for many rural women lived in fervently Catholic cultures. For twenty-year old Antonia and ten-year old Aurora Covarrubias Covarrubias, sisters from a family of eleven siblings from the municipality of Atolinga, Zacatecas—harvesting crops and tending the cattle after their four eldest brothers migrated to California became a norm in the region. Although oblivious to the changing gender roles, they too lived through a transformative period in Mexico, one that witnessed the migration of large portions of the population from central states, and especially those based predominantly around agricultural production. Many of the women in these isolated communities often married men laboring north of the U.S.-Mexico border.[242] While their liberation, or more precisely "awareness of rights," derived from living in US soil, they too were part of a women's movement as they entered the North American labor force—although a

[242] Discussions with Aurora and Antonia Covarrubias Covarrubias, and Elpido Quezada Gaeta in Romita and Totolco, Municipio de Totatiche, Jalisco, December 2014. Aurora Covarrubias Covarrubias (my mother) married José Nicandro Quezada from Jalisco (my father), who had been working in California and periodically traveled back to his community. After marrying Aurora, both made their home California, and eventually moved back to Mexico. In September 1994, they again migrated to the United States, this time to Oklahoma. Antonia Covarrubias Covarrubias, on the other hand, married and stayed in Mexico. However, one of her children settled in California and two others have since migrated to Oklahoma.

different process of rights cognizance than that of their urban counterparts.[243] Finally, although not all-inclusive or all encompassing, the IWY and Conference provided a national platform for nascent women's groups in Mexico. The event drew even more women toward feminist and human rights themes; many of the event's official representatives and attendees subsequently went on to serve long careers, often in public posts, advancing women's rights.

Conclusion: The Conference Failed Us

By the conference's conclusion, the coverage on the IWY meeting reflected mixed feelings about the overall accomplishment. The event concluded on July 2, 1975 with a World Plan of Action "on what should be done to deal with the many problems of women." Prior to the Conference a draft had been articulated by a committee in New York, headed Princess Ashraf Pahlavi of Iran, with intention of amending during the IWY Conference.[244] The Plan of Actions provided guidelines for advancing women's rights through governmental, NGOs, political parties, unions, and other organizations and for the duration of the Decade of Women, running from 1975

[243] While presenting his book *Mañana is Forever?* in the talk show *Ventaneando* (TV Azteca) with Paty Chapoy on August 19, 2011, Jorge G. Castañeda discussed positive outcomes of Mexican women entering the labor force in the United States, especially regarding their independence as a result of having their own money. "La mujer mexicana, cuando llega a trabajar a los Estados Unidos, y son muchas, ya son 5 o 6 millones mujeres llegadas en los últimos 15 años, se transforman en una manera extraordinaria. Tiene su ingreso, su lana, su casa, su entorno, sus amigas. Y hay de aquel, que la empiece a fastidiar: el marido, el novio, el papá [Paty-De patitas en la calle]—*te me vas*…La mujer mexicana en Estados Unidos, incluso la indocumentada, le tiene confianza a una policía racista, represiva, mala onda, pero le tiene suficiente confianza para hablarle a la policía—*oye este inbécil novio me golpeó ayer, llévenselo.* Y no se lo llevan al bote, lo mandan directo a Michoacán. Entonces son cosas, una experiencia libertadora que viven las mujeres mexicanas en Estados Unidos, que nos muestra que también podemos cambiar nosotros aquí." Full video available in Jorge Castañeda's web page. <http://jorgecastaneda.org>. See: *Mañana Forever?: Mexico and the Mexicans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), and *Ex Mex: From Migrants to Immigrants* (New York: New Press, 2007).

[244] United Nations, *Meeting in Mexico: The Story of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico City, 19 June-2 July 1975)* (New York: United Nations, 1975), 28-29.

through 1985.[245] While the intent had been for women to return to their home countries "motivated" and "empowered," and to a large extent that proved the case, though many returned angry and disappointed.[246] The expectations hinged on a singular event seemed somewhat paramount and reaching a consensus on women's needs was not an easy task. For instance, U.S. Representative Patricia Hutar recapped on the event with the following remarks: "The U.S. delegation regrets that this conference must conclude with a declaration which remains unacceptable to a number of countries." Hutar, headed the U.S. delegation in Mexico City along with Daniel Parker from the Agency for International Development, expressed her dismay at the inability negotiate the language in the World Plan—which the U.S. delegation along with United Kingdom and Germany "made repeated efforts to enter into serious negotiations about other political and economic points in the Group of 77's draft…"[247] Elena Poniatowska, in a 1976 discussion on abortion, noted "International Women's Year did not respond to any real women's problems. How many nurseries have been built in the Federal District? How many family diners?" Poniatowska illustrated how little of the Plan of Action—which included concrete proposals for improving women's condition in areas like education or health—had been fulfilled in Mexico, and the deficiencies in the government-sponsored family planning initiatives.[248] Others, like British delegate John Macrae held a more realistic outlook on the conference. "I did

---

[245] "A World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of International Women's Year," in *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*, edited by Arvonne S. Fraser (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), 37.

[246] Karen Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 9:1 (September 2007), 217.

[247] U.S. Department of State, "U.N. World Conference of the International Women's Year Held at Mexico City," *The Department of State Bulletin,* Vo. LXXIII, No. 1886 (18 August 1975), 237.

[248] "Opiniones," in *El aborto en México,* edited by Mariclaire Acosta, Flora Botton-Burlá, Lilia Domínguez, Isabel Molina, Adriana Novelo and Kyra Núñez (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976), 40-41.

not leave Mexico City in a deep state of depression at the outcome," he wrote, "[t]he world is a very large and complicated place and the aspirations of women in different parts of it differ to a marked degree."[249]

Despite all the flaring disappointments, the positive outcomes of International Women's Year and Conference must not be minimized by the negative press coverage, especially that of women from the First World. For the Mexico the UN call for a women's year and the conference proved critical, especially for the country's feminists. For one, Mexico's engagement as host pressured the government to act on matters of gender. President Luis Echeverría's administration carried out public policies on behalf of women's rights and proudly showcased its legislative changes during IWY and after. Since the suffragist movements of the first half of the twentieth-century, civil organizations nor the government had engaged little with gender issues—that is until 1975 by providing forums for controversial thus allowing for the flourishing of Mexico's feminist movement. Women's organizations, like *Coalición de Mujeres* and the *Frente Nacional de Lucha por la Liberación y Derechos de las Mujeres*, came to the forefront voicing key demands. Meanwhile, the government passed constitutional amendments making men and women equal under the law. The creation of CONAPO and its family planning campaigns proved the most marketed government initiative designed to improve women's lives. Although Mexico came short of fulfilling its goal of less than 100 million Mexicans by the year 2000—making the Echeverría a Third World model country for its commitment to UN population control initiatives and hosting the Second Decennial

[249] Helen McCarthy, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat,* 253.

International Conference on Population in 1984—the official endorsement of women's issues invigorated activism, particularly in cities.[250]

Mexico75, the country's official IWY publication, not only opened a space for female journalists, photographers, but also for artists. The publication featured prominent artists in the country with brief biographies and samples of their work. The list features such luminaries as Pilar Castañeda, Beatriz Caso, Elvira Gascón, Martha Chapa, Fanny Rabel, Consuelo Revueltas, Leticia Arroyo, and Helen Escobedo.[251] In a two-page spread of the August issue of *México75,* Argentine art critic exiled in Mexico, Raquel Tibol wrote on an art exposition at the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City. In commemoration of IWY, the *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes* (National Institute of Fine Arts), institute responsible for the arts in the country, presented "*La mujer como creadora y tema del arte*" (Women as maker and subject of art) featuring eighty-three pieces by thirteen female painters and sculptors—Frida Kahlo, Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, and Olga Costa amongst the group.[252] During the IWY Conference the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided a space for the exposition "*Veinticuatro mujeres en la plástica*

---

[250] Raúl Romo Viramontes and Miguel Sánchez Castillo, "El descenso de la fecundidad en México, 1974-2009: a 35 años de la puesta en marcha de la nueva política de población," in *La situación demográfica de México 2009*, edited by CONAPO (México, D.F.; Consejo Nacional de Población, 2009), 23; see footnote on page 20 of Soto Laveaga, "'Let's Become Fewer,'" 20.

[251] Isabel de la Mora, "La pintura de Pilar Castañeda: artista mexicana," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no 2 (February 1975), 11; Olga Harmony, "Las raíces de Beatriz Caso," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 3 (March 1975), 7; Olga Harmony, "Elvira Gascón," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 4 (April 1975), 11; Olga Harmony, "El realism de Martha Chapa," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 5 (May 1975), 11; Raquel Tibol, "Fanny Rabel a treinta años de su primera exposición," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer,* no. 9 (September 1975), 14-15; Raquel Tibol, "Consuelo, de los Revueltas," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer,* no. 10 (October 1975), 6-9; "Las formas en material textil de Leticia Arroyo," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer,* no. 11 (November 1975), 8-9; Raquel Tibol, "La escultora Helen Escobedo y su conflicto arquitectónico," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer,* no. 12 (December 1975), 8-9.

[252] The thirteen featured artists included: Frida Kahlo (13 pieces); Leonora Carrington (11 pieces); María Izquierdo (9 pieces); Remedios Varo (8 pieces); Alice Rahon, Cordelia Urueta, Lilia Carrillo and Olga Costa (together 7 pieces); Marysole Worner Baz and María Lagunes (together 4 pieces); Helen Escobedo, Geles Cabrera and Angela Gurría (together 2 pieces). Raquel Tibol, "la mujer como creadora y tema del arte," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 8 (August 1975), 8-9.

mexicana" (Twenty-four Women in Mexican Plastic Art) funded by the *Instituto Mexicano del Café* (Mexican Coffee Institute, INMECAFE), and coordinated by Tómas Gandy and Elia Carnabal as part of the Fausto Cantú Peña program of "Café y Arte," which sought foment interest for Mexican art. "IWY has helped me, as well as other artists, diffuse my work, and to exchange ideas with other *compañeras*," said painter Nieves Moreno. Yvette Boulet believed it was about time for an IWY, which for her proved "a very effective way to promote art and women artists."[253] With a distribution of 30,000 copies, *México75* proved a governmental publication for International Women's Year largely written and edited by women—and one that opened its pages to Mexican artists, many of which were little known, and to other professionals.[254]

Most importantly; however, IWY and Conference powered discussions on gender, both nationally and internationally. The event presenters, like many other actors at the time—activists, journalists, diplomats, intellectuals, UN institutions, NGOs—engaged the emerging mass media, from the print press to radio and televised means. When Arvonne Fraser began representing the United States in international forums she realized the importance of the United Nations for the global women's movement. Fraser had been active in US feminist activism, but did not realize "there was an international cadre of skilled, experienced, and committed women within the U.N and within the traditional women's organizations with consultative status to the

[253] Nieves Moreno, Yolanda Quijano, Julia López, Celia Cherter, and Yvette Boulet, Fany Rabel, Alicia Saloma, Marie Calire de Souches, Sara Liberman, María Teresa Campos, Magdalena Chemali, Esther González, Macrina Krauss, Irma Griza, Olga Dondé, Lourdes R. de Martínez, Elena Massad, Ma. Luisa Parraguirre, Lorraine Pinto, Herminia Euffo, María Teresa Vieyra y Tina Villanueva were the artists exposing their work at the Ministry of Foreign AffairsPerla Schwartz, "Mujeres en la plástica mexicana," *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 6 (June 1975), 14.

[254] The front matter page of the January issue of *México75,* of a bound edition, notes the collection is made up twelve issues of the newspaper. The edition consists of 2,000 regular and 1,000 luxe copies. *México 75: año internacional de la mujer*, no. 1 (January 1975), Front Matter.

U.N…."[255] She not only participated in global women's efforts, but also witnessed what she described as a "burgeoning worldwide feminist movement."[256] By 1975, not only did governments make use of nascent means of global communications, but also the burgeoning group of international feminists. From Helvi Sipilä to the women representatives and participants showed their awareness in the importance of mass media to push their cause worldwide. Fraser described some of the women as "highly sophisticated lobby[ists], aimed, in the short term, at influencing the conference and the world's media, and, longer term, at influencing national governments."[257] The disparaging press coverage, even after the conference concluded and written by participants themselves, embodies the empowerment of women engaged in the forging of an international agenda for the betterment of half of the world's population and for one of its most vulnerable group. The 1970s, and in particular 1975, energized national feminist movements and also internationalized women's movements. The "global feminists," often working through UN networks, catapulted a rights crusade distinct from its suffragist predecessors, one with activists voracious for change, but one with divergent conceptions of feminism and women's needs. Nevertheless, in the case of the IWY Conference, governments like Mexico's provided forums for debating women's issues, forums with national and international audiences, which proved unprecedented.

The IWY and Conference; however, has thus far remained absent from the history of the globalization of human rights in the 1970s—even while the women and the event served as a catalyst for its national and international diffusion. This silence

---

[255] Arvonne S. Fraser, *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), x.

[256] *Ibid.*

[257] Garner, "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women," 217.

does little justice to the event's real importance in the rights sphere. Even while many feminists hoped to avoid Third World issues or human rights, Latin American women embraced human rights concepts and by default contributed to their diffusion. The IWY Conference reveals attempts to disassociate women's movements from Third Worldism or human rights issues. Fear that "men's issues" sidetracked from women-specific needs postponed the association of women's rights as human rights to the 1990s, that is, after the conclusion of the Decade of Women, 1976-1985, and two subsequent conferences: one in Copenhagen, Denmark (1980) and the other in Nairobi, Kenya (1985).[258] Several authors also note the importance of the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights Conference in Austria. Ara Wilson, for instance, argues that "The interpretation of sexual rights as a form of human rights consolidated in the 1990s over a span of UN conferences." Wilson lists the 1993 Vienna Conference, along with the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, the 1995 Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development, and like other authors, also lists the 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women.[259] The latter event consolidated debates regarding the recognition of 'women's rights as human rights', a phrase popularized by a speech First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton gave at the event. "If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights once and for all."[260]

---

[258] Arvonne Fraser, "UN Decade for Women: The Power of Words and Organizations," *Women and Social Movements, International—1840 to Present,* <http://wasi.alexanderstreet.com>; Arvonne S. Fraser, "Becoming Human: The Origins and Development of Women's Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 21:4 (1999), 903.

[259] Ara Wilson, "The Transnational Geography of Sexual Rights," in *Truth Claims: Representation and Human Rights*, edited by Mark Bradley and Patrice Petro (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 253.

[260] Michael Tomasky, "Hillary," *Newsweek Global*, 1 February 2013, Vol. 161, Issue 5. Hillary R. Clinton, "Video Recording of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton Delivering a Speech at the United

However, at a regional level many Third World, and in this case Latin American activists, proved more accepting of human rights concepts and embraced them in response to state repression in their home countries, especially Chilean women. The timing of the IWY Conference offered Latin American women a national, regional, and international forum to voice their demands, which in the case of Chile tended to be about political violence given that the event occurred just as the realities of Pinochet's regime came to light. The IWY Conference thus reveals Latin American women forging their own definitions of human rights, one meaning political and economic rights, rather than gender-specific rights as espoused by First World women, thus contributing to the forging of human rights definition and practice. Latin American women's demands reflect their contribution to the construction of human rights meanings in the 1970s.

The IWY and Conference, for Mexico, reveals the initial appropriation and usage of the term human rights in the press. Unlike other women's conferences in the country's history, the IWY event brought women from across the globe and allowed them to engage in defining what constituted women's rights. In the process, the appearances of human rights in the press reveal their usage and meaning prior to their full-flung dissemination into mainstream society by the late 1970s. The PPS utilized the expression in reference to Chilean violations, and cried out "*Sin mujeres no hay democracia*" (Without women there is no democracy).[261] Antonio Carrillo Flores, Secretary-General of the 1974 World Population Forum, also used the phrase, more likely due to his links

---

Nations' Women's Conference in Beijing, China, 09/05/1999," Series: Off - The - Air Broadcast Network Video Recordings Relating to the Clinton Administration, 01/20/1993 - 01/20/2001. Collection WJC-WHCA: Video Recordings of the White House Communications Agency (Clinton Administration), 01/20/1993 - 01/20/2001. National Security Archive.

[261] "Incorporación plena de la mujer a la vida del país, demanda el PPS," 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, 11, CENCOS.

with the United Nations and participation in international discussions where it was likely to engage universalist language of rights, especially that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Chilean journalists exiled in Mexico yelled out the names of their comrades incarcerated in Pinochet's prisons and called for human rights protections. The Mexican section of Amnesty International followed suit and demanded protections for political prisoners by reminding their audiences of international rights. Female journalists writing for the nation's newspapers or for *México75* wrote about the United Nations and its various functions, they explained the rights of women as guaranteed in the UDHR, and went as far as adding a few notes about the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. For Latin Americans, women's rights were to be demanded any way possible, by utilizing the emerging international system to push for basic needs—from housing to labor rights—and in their demands laid the sanctification of human rights as a modern tool for demanding change, and one that did not require using the political system nor taking up arms. Latin American women, and journalists working in national print sources, should be remembered as constructors and disseminators of the global concept of human rights.



ILLUS. 4.1. "The Sacking." Police raid the offices of CENCOS. Photo from CENCOS Archive. (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 4.2. "The Return." CENCOS staff unloads files previously taken by police and returned, 7 July 1977, Mexico City. Photo from CENCOS Archive. (Reproduced without permission)

CHAPTER 4:

From Liberation Theology to Human Rights:
José Álvarez Icaza, the Catholic Church, and CENCOS' Propagation of Human Rights in Mexico

"*The press remained almost totally servile; the Church was for the first time publicly and steadily in favor of the Mexican Revolution that under Díaz Ordaz gave their educational, charitable, and pastoral work considerable room to grow; and the businessmen confidently rode in 'the same boat' with their explicitly 'anti-Communist' president.*"[1]
--Enrique Krauze

Introduction: Localizing Universalities

In the 1970s, the non-governmental organization CENCOS became one of the first in the country to actively engage the language of human rights. The press organization originated in 1964 as a Catholic institution and official communications organ for the Mexican Episcopate, that is until it broke with the Church hierarchy in 1969. Thereafter, *Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social* (National Center for Social Communication; CENCOS), its founder and president engineer José Álvarez Icaza, and a team of journalists offered an alternative source of secular and ecumenical source of news for the Mexican populace. CENCOS opened its doors to student mobilizers, South American exiles, indigenous peoples, and just about any group that needed an outlet to voice their sufferings. As a result, CENCOS contributed to the localization of the 1970s emerging universalities, that of human rights.

It was through the transformations in the Church after Vatican II that organizations like CENCOS emerged. During the meetings between 1962 and 1965, some "2,000 and 2,500 bishops and thousands of observers, auditors, sisters, laymen

[1] Krauze, *Mexico: Biography of Power,* 734.

and laywomen" gathered in four different sessions, and produced sixteen documents.[2] José and his wife also attended. In these meetings, the Church sought renovation, a sort of modernization, in order to bring the institution closer to the people. As a result, the Vatican came to endorse "the political rights tradition, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of organization," however, it did not directly engage in the growing vernacular of human rights—like some scholars retroactively apply to encompass all the rights mentioned.[3] The Vatican II meetings; however, did place particular emphasis on economic rights, unlike the promoters of human rights in the 1970s that compacted their definition to mean civil and political guarantees as delineated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Vatican did however seek to advance its engagement with social communications, and from that compromise CENCOS came to fruition.

While the Vatican may not have directly engaged the language of human rights, CENCOS and adherents of Liberation theology did. Liberation theology promotes a more radical reading of the gospel so as to focus more acutely on the needs of the poor and originated in Latin America.[4] While some scholars contend that Liberation theology initially avoided the concept, the work of José and CENCOS on behalf of political prisoners in the 1970s proves otherwise.[5] The brutal repression brought on to

---

[2] Jordan G. Teicher, "Why Is Vatican II So Important?" *NPR*, 10 October 2012 <http://www.npr.org/2012/10/10/162573716/why-is-vatican-ii-so-important>.

[3] Gregory Baum, "Human Rights and Liberation Theology," *Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice,* no. 6 (1986), 328.

[4] For more on Liberation theology see: David Tombs, "Latin American Liberation Theology: Moment, Movement, Legacy," in *Movement or Moment?: Assessing Liberation Theology Forty Years After Medellín*, edited by Patrick Claffey and Joe Egan (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 29-53; Phillip Berryman, *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts About the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America—and Beyond* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 24-26, 42-44.

[5] "The first major works of liberation theology did not take up human rights as a theological theme. Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation* mentioned human rights very few times. The work's index offered no entry for the concept, an absence made conspicuous by the fact that it was first published

Catholics in South and Central America drew individuals like Pepe to the human rights cause, this because of its association with international organizations working on behalf of political prisoners and the arrival of exiles in Mexico, many of which passed through the Álvarez Icaza home and through CENCOS.

Moreover, Liberation theology adherents possessed the necessary international networks to transition effectively to the human rights cause. As the socialist path toward justice wavered, human rights became a middle ground between armed struggle and a non-violent approach to local needs. Rights scholar Ariadna Estévez López argues "the Mexican human rights discourse emerges in the eighties as a result of an eclectic fusion of the discourses regarding the democratic transition and liberation theology."[6] Yet, the Church spurred by the Second Vatican Council and Liberation theology contributed to the dissemination and nationalization of the global language of human rights in the 1970s, a decade prior to the proliferation of non-governmental organizations in the 1980s.

Initiated as an informational gateway between the Catholic hierarchy and the Mexican populace, CENCOS served as an official proxy for the Mexican Episcopate in Mexico City until 1969, when the organization condemned the massacre of students in the Plaza of Tlatelolco. Its founder broke with the Church hierarchy but engaged with numerous regional and international conferences that advanced Liberation theology

---

in 1971, eight years after the Catholic church endorsed human rights with *Pacem in terris*, an encyclical in which Pope John XXIII gave theological justification to a long list of rights that virtually mirrors those set forth in 1948 in the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*." Mark Engler, "Toward the 'Rights of the Poor': Human Rights in Liberation Theology," *Journal of Religious Ethics,* 28:3 (2000), 339-341.

[6] "[E]l discurso de derechos humanos en México surge en la década de los ochenta como resultado de una fusión ecléctica de los discursos de la transición a la democracia y la teología de la liberación," Ariadna Estévez López, "Transición a la democracia y derechos humanos en México: la pérdida de integralidad en el discurso," *Andamios* 3:6 (June 2007), 7. Dr. Estévez López is also the author of *Human Rights and Free Trade in Mexico: A Discursive and Sociopolitical Perspective* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

and that established the international networks that fostered human rights debates in the 1970s. Álvarez Icaza's CENCOS stands as one of Mexico's first non-governmental organizations and human rights centers, and the very first institution to engage actively the universalist language of human rights in Mexico. CENCOS thus contributed to the process of localization and nationalization of an internationalist concept that was initially associated with violations in South and Central America, and eventually came to mean repression in Mexico as well.[7]

José Álvarez Icaza

Located on Medellín #33 of Colonia Roma, a mixed district of newly renovated and dilapidated colonial buildings, the National Center of Social Communication (CENCOS) has persisted through the decades as one of the country's original non-governmental human rights social press organization. Far removed from the early tradition of newspaper clippings, CENCOS is virtually a paperless organization that works primarily through social and news media networks. José "Pepe" Álvarez Icaza, its founder, inherited the three-story building in 1964 from his aunt, whose framed picture still hangs above an idle fireplace. What used to be a residential home, today provides offices for national and international NGOs. Press conferences take place in an old dining room, with a colonial double door to the noisy street. If a large crowd of reporters appears, the staff sets out long tables with green cloths in an old auditorium space towards the back of the building, now converted into a pastured backyard.

[7] See Raquel Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano* (Ph.D. dissertation, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales con orientación en Sociología, UNAM, 2004), 394.

Cameras and reporters disappear in a moment's notice from the squeaky wooded-floor building, and off to the next press conference.

While serving the human rights cause through a modern approach, the building still holds links to its early foundation. Francisco Barrón Trejo, the assistant director, has worked there for more than two decades and personally knows many of the people that come to see him. Barrón activism dates to his youth participation in the Catholic grassroots movement of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs), which encouraged local and faith-based organizing.[8] Clara Ruíz Juárez, one of the oldest of the CENCOS members and devout swimmer, screens calls and signs people in, familiar with the protocol for safeguarding information. She lived through police raids of the building, and now sits in a desk a level above the main entrance door that is opened only after visitors identify themselves through an intercom system. A mix of technology-savvy generation of young professionals dedicated to the human rights cause walk, and at times sprint, up and down the various sets of staircases. Then director, Brisa Maya Solis Ventura, in a permanent state of haste common to the territory, tends to the many obligations necessary for keeping up with the minute-to-minute issues of the day and maintaining a building and staff with a tight budget. The office spaces rented out to other organizations include rights activists of all ages and diverse professional backgrounds. The Europeans and Americans in the building work for international organizations, and in some cases cooperate with other NGOs housed there. From time to time, Clara and Francisco work with undergraduate and graduate students looking to use CENCOS material to write their bachelor's thesis, a graduation requirement for many enrolled in public universities. These students consult what is left of the

[8] Interview with Francisco Barrón Trejo, 18 May 2012 (Mexico City).

organization's archive after some ten tons of material were donated to the *Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia* (The National School of Anthropology and History, ENAH) archive in Mexico City, which also houses other Catholic collections. Ample material remains in bound texts, including original newsletters up to the early 1990s, many with the personal imprint of its founder José Álvarez Icaza and his team.

Born a year after the armed phase of the Revolution (1910-1920), José Álvarez Icaza Manero lived a lifelong struggle for human rights in Mexico. "Pepe," as his close friends called him and a common nickname for those named José, was born the 21 of March 1921 in Mexico City, and died in the same city where he labored so hard to publicize injustices. The religious persecution his family endured during the Church-State armed struggle, better known as the *cristiada* or the Cristero War (1926-1929), shaped his ideological outlook toward destitute populations.[9] For some, the cause of the conflict lay in an incessant State seeking "to legislate in matters" of the Church.[10] Since independence, the government sought to reduce the Church's intrinsic role in society. After the Revolution, leaders included a number of articles in the 1917 Constitution curtailing the power of the church, one of which secularized education. While the articles were not immediately implemented, they caused great havoc when President Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928) attempted to do so. Historians continue to debate the degree of pious inspiration behind the Cristero conflict and to what extent the rural armed struggle reflected the Church's response to federal encroachment, particularly the land reform policies that pitted landowners and the clergy against the receptors of

[9] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 103.

[10] Matthew Butler, "The Church in 'Red Mexico': Michoacán Catholics and the Mexican Revolution, 1920-1929," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 55:3 (July 2004), 520-521.

the *ejidos*, the *agraristas.* Yet, to Catholics the State was undoubtedly in violation of their rights and overextending its power—such was Icaza's stance on the conflict.[11]

Álvarez Icaza's account provides an intriguing insight into the lived experience of practicing Catholics in the city. "Our family lived the cristero war intensely…we were with the cristeros, wholly,"[12] said Álvarez Icaza in a 1999 interview with his daughter-in-law, whose work remains the most in-depth on CENCOS. When people from their homes in the countryside, or as he called them *rancherones,* fleeing the violence arrived in his parents' home, his family opened their doors to them. The Álvarez Icaza's home must have been a known shelter, either self-established or designated by the Mexico City Church hierarchy, especially since his home served as a type of provisional chapel for mass, baptisms, and weddings. He tells the anecdote of a guest who when attending his aunt's wedding accidently knocked on the door of a general, a potentially fatal mistake given the fact that the war was underway. But the official responded, "No, the wedding's not here, it's next door." Since churches remained closed, priests performed religious services in private, probably in similar manner to Álvarez Icaza's home, where his family sheltered at least one priest throughout the conflict. "We lived in a constant state of tension," explained Álvarez Icaza, and "Every evening, immediately after mass, we would put away ornaments and sacred glasses and everything in the basement of the

---

[11] For more on the Cristero War see: Jean A. Meyer, *La cristiada* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1973-1974); David C. Bailey, *¡Viva Crísto Rey! The Cristero Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974); Jim Tuck, *The Holy War in Los Altos: A Regional Analysis of Mexico's Cristero Rebellion* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1982); Barbara Miller, "The Role of Women in the Mexican Cristero Rebellion: *Las Señoras y las Religiosas*," *The Americas* 40:3 (Jan. 1984): 303-323; Jennie Purnell, *Popular Movements and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico: The Agraristas and Cristeros of Michoacán* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Matthew Butler, *Popular Piety and Political Identity in Mexico's Cristero Rebellion: Michoacán, 1927-29* (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2004); Matthew Butler, ed., *Faith and Impiety in Revolutionary Mexico* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

[12] "*En mi familia vivimos intensamente la guerra cristera. Mi familia era muy mochilona, por supuesto que estábamos con los cristeros, pero así, totalmente*." José Álvarez Icaza interview cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 110.

house, in an inaccessible place, so that we wouldn't get caught." They took precautions since it was common for the authorities to search suspected Catholics in the *colonia* Santa María, where the family lived, just northwest of the historic center.[13]

While there may have been a certain level of tolerance, the overall climate pushed devout Catholics to worship in private. One of his aunts worked for the Secretary of Public Education (SEP) and disguised her missal readings. She "had copied the book of mass in SEP official paper and she would go to mass with her public education file," to avoid getting caught.[14] The authorities sent those suspected of worshiping to *El Moro,* one of Mexico City's first skyscrapers, today the Lottery building located on *Paseo de la Reforma*, a main boulevard begun during the reign of Maximilian (1864-1867) in order to link his Chapultepec Castle residence to the National Palace, and to give the city a more modern, European look. Originally called *Calzada de la Emperatriz*, in honor of his wife Carlota, a group of Juárez's "francophile progressives" renamed the *calzada* after Sebastían Lerdo de Tejada took office in 1872.[15] Respectable people, Álvarez Icaza recounted, ended up in this inundated building, an experience they remembered with considerable disdain.[16]

From an early age, Pepe's parents encouraged social participation. Although his parents may have been disengaged or "cowardly" as he put it, when it came to matters

---

[13] "Constantemente vivíamos con una tensión horrible. Todos los días en la noche, inmediatamente después de la misa, a guardar los ornamentos y los vasos sagrados y todo en el sótano de la casa, en un lugar que era inaccesible, para que no fueran a pescarnos," *Ibid.*

[14] "había copiado el libro de misa en hojas de oficio de la SEP e iba a misa con su expediente de educación pública," *Ibid.*

[15] Barbara A. Tenenbaum, "Streetwise history: the Paseo de la Reforma and the Porfirian State, 1876-1910," *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico,* edited by William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, and William E. French (Wilmington, Del: SR Books, 1994), 129-130. Also see Carlos R. Martínez Assad, *La patria en el Paseo de la Reforma* (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2005).

[16] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 110.

of the faith they were "very courageous" and saw their children's participation as a duty. On one occasion, Icaza's mother told him, "Look, José, there will be a demonstration of Catholics, you have to go there because it is an obligation, but if you hear a shot, run like a greyhound."[17] A certain expectation of violent confrontations lurked in the back of Catholic dissenters. Pepe's accounts of urban skirmishes borderline caricatured acts of wily Catholics outsmarting dopey police. When the "very witty people" saw the horse-riding police coming their way they would roll out pallets or marbles skidding the horses and the officials along with them. As for the firefighters breaking up the crowds, those targeted would cut their hoses. In one instance of heightened persecution, Álvarez Icaza remembers his family participating in a peaceful protest where they released balloons the same day at the same time. For him, the balloons hovering over the city displayed "a formidable manifestation of strength." Given the prolonged persecution of faith-based groups during the cristiada, Pepe's account in some ways represent eulogies formulated through oral histories and born out of persecution.[18]

The long-term consequences of the conflict were many. At least for Icaza, the country's faith increased due to the persecution. "Don't think that we were so religious in Mexico, no. The persecution shock things up."[19] This was certainly the case for many parts of Mexico, especially in the rural countryside, places like Jalisco, Michoacán, and Guanajuato, where martyred cristeros and priest reconditioned local religiosity. The Church as an institution did not wither away after the cristiada, but instead negotiated its survival, at times co-existed and in others legitimized the ruling

[17] "Mira José, va a haber una manifestación de católicos, tú tienes que ir allí porque es una obligación, pero si oyes un tiro, corres como galgo," *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.,* 111.

[19] *Ibid.*

party. Yet, the long-term effects of the relationship built between urban and rural Catholics during the conflict remains largely unexplored. Álvarez Icaza explains this connectedness made the struggle possible. Although not always the case, according to Icaza, those in the city worked on the logistics, organization, propaganda, and provisions: "[c]ities and the countryside were constantly intertwined, constantly communicated and mutually supported the action of the cristeros." After the conflict ceased, the brief association between these two groups could not survive. Over time, the legacy of the cristiada was confined to the countryside, where the conflict endured in the rural populace's imagination, and where most of the fighting took place. In urban spaces, the memory of the rebellion withered away and a less folksy brand of Catholicism prevailed. Many of the urban Catholic groups, like the right-wing *Sinarquista* movement, grew out of the discontent with the Bishops' negotiations with the government to end the conflict.[20]

Meanwhile, in 1929 the Álvarez Icaza family finances took a turn for the worse, as was the case for many landowning families. Pepe's father lost an hacienda to the government, expropriated for land reform purposes. With this, the family was placed in a difficult situation . . . suddenly there was no more income," remembered Pepe. Until then the family had lived in comfortable home in Mexico City's center. Thereafter, Álvarez Icaza explains, they moved to a large but ugly house, and their residences progressively worsened. His father ended up suffering from liver problems as a result of the expropriation, but once he dedicated himself to selling onions the family's income improved. "I have sad memories of the house on Pino #120 where we lived with a lot

[20] "Ciudades y campo estaban constantemente enlazadas, constantemente comunicadas y mutuamente apoyada la acción de los cristeros," *Ibid*.

of poverty," said Pepe regarding that time period. From that lived experienced surged the family's governing principles, two of which related to the government and the United States. "Everything that comes from the government is bad and politics is a dirty thing that you should not be polluted by." Moreover, "Everything that comes from the United States is bad," given that it is "the land of flavorless fruit, odorless flowers, men without honor and women without shame." The latter further substantiated, in his parents' minds, by the shameful films that derived from the country, and the "invasion of Protestants," among other things. As the devout Catholics that they were, Álvarez Icaza remembers his father celebrating the assassination of General Álvaro Obregón in 1928, which Pepe recognized was not a very Christian thing to do. But for their family the Catholic assassin José de León Toral was a hero.[21]

From Engineer to Catholic Social Activist

Pepe's faith-based upbringing unquestionably shaped his ideological outlook. But it was not until his adult life as an engineer that he was shaken by the social realities of his workers, an episode that changed the course of his life. His wife, Luz María (Luzma) Longoria Gama explained, that her husband went from being a civil to a sort of human engineering "concerned more about people than things." At the time Pepe started a contracting company with his brother in-law Eduardo Saucedo Siller. All of her brothers-in-law attained degrees; one was a doctor, the other a lawyer, and Pepe an engineer. The company had been quite successful through the 1940s and 1950s, characteristic of the economic growth of the country. On one particular occasion José took on an excavation project. Given the time limitations, he could not gather the

[21] *Ibid.,* 116; Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

required machinery for the work. He asked one of his workers if he could assemble a team of some thirty or more workers to complete the project. "Of course, I will take you to my town," responded his laborer. According to Luz María, he brought all the working-age men from a town in Veracruz.[22] "All brought with them bags or *morrales* carrying, each one, their food for fifteen days. This consisted of corn and chile *gordas*[23] they heated with firewood and wasted scrap wood from the construction projects," recounted José. None of these men spoke Spanish fluently. As time passed, Pepe noticed they had left and confessed he asked his foreman, "What happened to your Indians, they don't last, they have abandoned the project…[this] is going to delay us." The workers left without notice and without their salaries, embarrassed for not having been able to complete the project, said Pepe.[24] His foreman responded, "Oh, boss, let me tell you there almost none left. They were not eating well, they did not have anywhere to sleep, and they were just in bad shape." According to Pepe, this opened his eyes to some of the country's realities, so he renounced his post as a contractor and abandoned the culture of exploitation he believed characteristic of construction companies at the time.[25]

From that point forward, José sought more involvement with disadvantaged populations of Mexico. The episode with his workers left Pepe with a sense of remorsefulness. He believed he had been very inhumane toward the men when he focused on finishing the project without regard for the workers' welfare and he believed

---

[22] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[23] *Gordas,* or *gorditas,* are oval-shaped fried or toasted thick tortilla often stuffed with fried beans, cheese, or other traditional foods.

[24] In this case Icaza is making reference to a traditionally rural bag, most often made of cloth, worn across one shoulder. Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 138.

[25] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

he had to change completely.[26] He did so by increasing his involvement in the religious organizations of which he was already a member. One of these was the *Congregación Mariana* (Marian Congregations), a youth association established around 1563 by Belgium Jesuit Jean Leunis as an institution of spiritual formation, and dedicated to the cult of the Virgin Mary.[27] Álvarez Icaza joined the congregation in 1937 through the church he regularly attended; at the time Father Benjamín Pérez del Valle led the Congregación Mariana. Initially José had reservations about joining the *Marianas*: they seemed "too devout, too bourgeois," in part because Father Pérez del Valle tended to invite those students that came from well-to-do families.[28]

Despite these early reservations about the organization, José joined. "We were doing charitable works: we taught catechism, we visited juvenile correctional schools, prisons and hospitals, we did a number of charities, especially at Christmas," said José. His spirit, however, tended to be a bit more rebellious than father Pérez del Valle would have liked. Pepe recognized that he never excelled within the Marianas, and that in some way they lacked political fervor characteristic of other religious-based organizations for the youth. He did acknowledge that the Congregación Mariana kept his generation "out of trouble."[29] And he excelled within the ranks of an organization known as *Los Conejos* (The Rabbits). Initially he served as the university section of *Los Conejos*, and eventually held the presidency. Just before enrolling in a five-year engineering program in 1939, Pepe joined the organization, one that sought independence from other university organizations linked to the church hierarchy. Due

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Alfredo Verdoy, SJ, "La confederación nacional española de las Congregaciones Marianas o la movilización de la juventud de la Virgen (1919-1923)," *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 85:334 (June 2010), 550.

[28] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 123-125.

[29] *Ibid.*

to their mysterious and mute nature, other students dubbed them the "rabbits." According to Pepe, "It was a group that participated in student elections and to be more effective we went underground, no one knew who was a rabbit, we did not have any particular appearance or a public front, everything was kept between us, which allowed us to make alliances with a lot of people and cause a lot of mischief."[30] Nevertheless, they still functioned as a religious-based student organization, but with a tint of political militancy.

In some cases, *Los Conejos* operated contrary to the goals of other Catholic organizations on campus. For instance, the Jesuit-led National Catholic Student Coalition (*Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos,* UNEC) sought to forge a "class of leaders made up of Catholic intellectuals with cultural and political weight," according to Raquel Pastor Escobar, scholar on the Church in Mexico.[31] A generation of leaders pushing Christian democracy principles throughout Latin America proved a key goal of this institution and their efforts bore fruit, high profile political representatives included Eduardo Frei and Manuel Garretón of Chile.[32] *Los Conejos* on the other hand sought to combat communism within the University, while the UNEC proved far less interested in the anticommunist crusade and instead pushed the objectives of the Mexican Revolution, unlike other groups that "satanized" the revolution. While labeled as part of the extreme right by leftists groups, the UNEC students tended to defend social Christian movements and often found themselves in controversial positions with the church hierarchy and with traditional postures of the Catholic right. Just before their

[30] *Ibid.,* 126-127.

[31] *Ibid.,* 127.

[32] Bernardo Barranco, "La iberoamericanidad de la Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos (UNEC) en los años treinta," *Cultura e identidad nacional*, edited by Roberto Blancarte (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994), 188-189, also cited in Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 127.

dissolution in 1945, many of the UNEC militants became founders of the *Partido Acción Nacional* (National Action Party, PAN), right wing and one of main oppositional party of the PRI during its 71-year reign.[33] Icaza's distance from the Christian democratic movements in Mexico and Latin America remained; yet, he expressed greater affinity for religious organizations with a social and activist tint.[34]

His wife Luzma's social development had too been shaped by the Catholic faith. According to José, Father Pedro Velázquez had been key in her spiritual formation, particularly in fostering a sense of social responsibility. Father Velázquez was part of the Catholic movement commonly associated with the work of Jesuit Alfredo Méndez Medina who led the *Secretariado Social Mexicana* (Mexican Social Secretariat, SSM) since its inception in 1920 until his removed in 1925. This Mexican Episcopate created this institution to coordinate social action organizations reinstituted after the Mexican Revolution. Méndez Medina "helped mobilize thousands of workers in competition with the state-directed unionization drives," following "a third or middle way between capitalism and socialism," in which he applied medieval Catholic corporatism to the SSM. Méndez Medina seemed particularly preoccupied with the conditions workers lived in Mexico, and focused on easing the effects of capitalist expansion on labor. This happened through a number of programs, one included a lending system for workers called *Cajas de Ahorro León XIII.* Father Velázquez also concerned himself with the working classes and their needs, even when the episcopate did not always approve, and

[33] Bernardo Barranco, "La iberoamericanidad de la Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos (UNEC) en los años treinta," 189.

[34] In 1970, Álvarez Icaza responded to an editorial published by *El Sol de México* by stating his organization CENCOS was not part of the "*Democracia Cristina*" (Christian Democracy) nor did it possess a political agenda or political aspiration—his staff simply wanted to be journalists. He also clarified that CENCOS was a non-profit civil organization. "Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 21 September 1970, 19:00 hrs," AGN, Dirección General de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales [hereafter DGIPS], 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1-2.

he carried a project of small, low-interest small loans accompanied by trainings through a system of *Cajas Populares* while he served as the Mexican Social Secretariat from 1948 until his death in 1968, with a brief interim in 1957 when he was removed him from the position. The work of these men profoundly shaped Catholics' stance toward the needs of the urban working class.[35] Before marrying, Luzma attended a church that belonged to the Mexican Social Secretariat where Father Velázquez served. "In his homilies he talked a lot about the social doctrine of the Church and the rights of workers and all of that; it caught my interest." According to Luzma, in all of this Father Velázquez attempted to arouse the consciousness of Catholic businessmen on their obligations as Christians and as citizens.[36]

Luzma passed the teachings she learned from Father Velázquez down to José. "Through her I realized that I treated construction materials, iron, cement, etc., better than the men working them," recounted Álvarez Icaza, "I fell off my 'individualist horse' when I discovered the poverty my workers lived, a requirement for inciting my social involvement." The couple met in 1944 and married a few years later in 1947, "we had fifteen children, which is an awful lot," confessed Álvarez Icaza. He also confessed having lived a long and happy marriage with "an admirable woman, much more socially restless than I."[37] After they wed, Luzma and José continued their social involvement through the Marian Congregation. The organization broadened the

---

[35] Stephen J. C. Andes, "A Catholic Alternative to Revolution: The Survival of Social Catholicism in Postrevolutionary Mexico," *The Americas* 68:4 (April 2012), 530-557; Kristina A. Boylan, "Mexican Social Secretariat [Secretariado Social Mexicano]," *Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Politics, Volume II, L-Z,* edited by Roy P. Domenico and Mark Y. Hanley (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 376-377. Pedro's brother, Miguel, also published a type of biography, *Pedro Velázquez H.: apóstol de la justicia* (Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1978). Pedro wrote a book on the SSM, *El Secretario Social Mexicano (25 años de vida)* (Mexico: Secretario Social Mexicano, 1945).

[36] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[37] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 130-138.

membership to include spouses, since most of the original members in José's group found it difficult to keep attending after they wed. Traditionally the Marian Congregations divided members by gender and age, with the help of Jesuit Father Francisco Marín and Luis G. Hernández, the clergy created various groups for couples. From that point forward Álvarez Icaza left his career as an engineer, and along with Luzma they dedicated themselves to furthering social causes through these Church organizations that eventually became the *Movimiento Familiar Cristiano* (Christian Family Movement) in México.[38]

The Sense of Community and the Christian Family Movement

The *Movimiento Familiar Cristiano* (MFC) grew out the some fifty-five couples organized by 1958 under the direction of Father Marín and Hernández. The movement initiated in Uruguay and Argentina in 1948 under the direction of Father Pedro Richards CP,[39] a central figure of the MFC in Latin America. After Richards' conjugal spiritual retreat in Mexico, the attending couples created their own section of the Christian Family Movement.[40] At its centerpiece stood the family. "The MFC hinges upon a notion of service as a form of sanctification; marriage itself is a responsibility of mutual sanctification between husband and wife."[41] José liked the focus on the family as the motor of social change, "because he thought it was through the families that the elements of solidarity and respect for the community and caring for others and the social matters in general should be taught." The middle and upper class

[38] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[39] CP stands for the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ.

[40] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 144-145.

[41] Valentina Napolitano, "Between 'traditional' and 'new' Catholic church religious discourses in urban, Western Mexico," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 17:3 (1998), 331.

families of the MFC worked through the assembly of married couples, ranging from groups of five or six. Even though the family proved the cornerstone of the MFC, Luzma made the point that teachings had a "community projection" and did not simply stay within friends and the groups.[42] Contact with other Latin American Catholic organizations led the couple to establish their own religious-based and grassroots movement in Mexico, one that would eventually bring them closer to Mexican Episcopate and leaders of the Church hierarchy.

The MFC pushed the family to engage ecclesiastically and with civil society. In the case of Mexico, both Luzma and Pepe came in contact with underprivileged populations of Mexico, including indigenous peoples; "the Family Catholic Movement broadened our outlook," said Luzma. In response to an invitation to Huasca, Hidalgo, a town about two hours northeast of Mexico City, the Álvarez Icaza couple met with rural peasants of indigenous background. In these travels Luzma "realized, for example, that rural women were truly enslaved." This sort of obliviousness of Mexico's social realities was fairly typical attitude of the country's urban middle class, but at the same time did reflect Luzma's crusading temperament. Since then the couple worked on establishing a group with less affluent members, a unique task given that the MFC had been primarily made up of middle to upper class Catholics. The undertaking proved extremely difficult. Given the traditional social norms, Luzma recounts how they struggled to get the women to engage since they were reluctant to sit at the table, much less eat or converse alongside their husbands. For the movement's leaders, the

[42] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012; María Martha Pacheco Hinojosa, *Iglesia, Familia, y Sociedad: una aproximación al Movimiento Familiar Cristiano en México (1958-1971)*, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 146-147.

experience opened their eyes to a Mexico known to them, with Luzma taking particular notice of women's condition.[43]

Soon after, the couple took on important leadership roles within the *Movimiento Familiar Cristiano.* The Archbishop of Guadalajara and the Episcopal Commission president assigned them to the national presidency for two consecutive terms, from 1958 until 1964.[44] By that point, Pepe had resigned from his position on the construction firm he led alongside his brother-in-law. He dedicated himself fully to the designing the basic structure of the MFC. His business partner suggested Pepe focus on the movement while still receiving a salary from the company for a couple of years until other sources of economic support solidified. Once they became the regional presidents of the MFC, Luzma and Pepe traveled widely.[45] "We traveled throughout the world promoting the movement," said Pepe. They were responsible for expanding the movement to Central America: Guatemala, Panamá, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras. "It was very nice because wherever we arrived, there would be a married couple we did not personally know waiting for us at the airport and they would take us to their home," recounted Pepe, "within a week or in a matter of three days we were very well-known by a multitude of married couples of that country." Their regional work in MFC raised the couple's profile within the religious community in Mexico, and set the stage for their participation in international forums—not exclusively Catholic.[46]

Second Ecumenical Council (Vatican II) and the Media of Social Communications

[43] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[44] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 147.

[45] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[46] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 148.

As such, the Álvarez Icaza couple rose within the ranks of international religious faith-organizations linked to the Catholic hierarchy. Due to their exposure and visibility, Church officials selected them in late 1963 to audit the last session of the Second Vatican Council meetings in the fall of 1965, becoming the only lay couple to hold such privilege. This had been by invitation of Monsignor Emilio Abascal y Salmerón of Veracruz. At the time of the invite, in 1963, Abascal served as the head of the Episcopal Commission for the Seglar Apostolate when he approached Monsignor Luigi Raimondi, Apostolic Delegate to Mexico, suggesting that someone from Mexico be chosen as a lay observer for the council sessions. Raimondi, who up to that point had been the only connection between Vatican II and Mexico, accepted the proposal but asked that whomever was chosen have some kind of international position. According to Pepe, Abascal responded, "I have someone, Engineer Álvarez Icaza who is the Latin American president of the Christian Family Movement." Monsignor Raimondi accepted. Yet Abascal's invitation did not extend to Luzma. Pepe then explained that he shared the presidency of the MFC with his wife and made his case by saying, "curious thing, as you know mothers are the ones that teach the faith to children," and Monsignor Abascal agreed with Pepe. Although an uncommon practice at the time for both husband and wife to attend, Luzma too secured an invitation.[47] Just before their departure, the Icazas had a going away celebration in Cuernavaca, Morelos. After the mass in the Cathedral, a small picnic took place in the *Centro de Investigaciones Culturales*, with both Monsignor Illicht and Méndez Arceo—prominent leaders.[48]

---

[47] *Ibid.,* 149, 170.

[48] CENCOS, "Despiden con una Misa al Matrimonio Álvarez Icaza," *La Prensa* 16 August 1965, 3.

Once in Rome, José and Luzma recount the social infrastructure that segregated attendees by gender. For instance, they were not allowed to take communion together, so Pepe went first and she followed right behind. Two bar-cafés served as the socializing grounds in two chapels of the Vatican . . . for men of course. The women attended a nice café near a Pope's tomb.[49] When Luzma tried to enter the bar alongside Pepe, they guards stopped her. They then tried to enter the women's café, and initially the guards denied him the entrance. But in one instance when Pepe invited a Protestant observer to the women's bar they managed to get in, "come, lets go to the women's bar, which is smaller and they give out better things . . . we will be more comfortable," he told his companion. For two or three days the men mingled along with Luzma in the women's bar until the guards denied them the entrance any further.[50] When Pepe put in a special request to enter together as a couple, the secretary of the council ignored the claim on the basis of more important business to tend. Eventually José made fuss and the secretary ceded to the request. "It was a problem for them for me to drink a coffee with my wife, and we are talking about in the Council, at that moment a sign of the times."[51] One thing both took away from the Vatican II meetings, regarding the role of women, was "that there were many well-educated and capable people, yet with an extremely *machista* mentality."[52]

Despite some disenchantment, the Vatican trip proved intellectually transformative for the Álvarez Icaza couple. "We had a really good experience at the

---

[49] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City); José Álvarez Icaza interview, 24 February 1999, Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 177.

[50] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[51] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 24 February 1999, Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 177.

[52] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

Council," said Luzma. The Second Vatican Council was convened on January 25, 1959, yet the meetings did not initiate until October of 1962 and concluded three years later in December 1965. Almost three thousand priests from more than 140 countries attended, along hundreds of experts, and about 160 observers, of which 101 were non-Catholic.[53] This international reunification for the purpose of renovation ignited a series of transformations for the Catholic Church and its followers. Particular attention was given to the role of lay people and missionary work toward impoverished populations, including liturgical and linguistic openness for indigenous populations. It was a type of social update of the Church to the realities of the fast-changing and tumultuous world of the 1960s.

Within the council, Luzma and José became interlocutors of their own experiences. The Vatican Council sessions comprised of 168 general assemblies held in the span of four sessions; one per year since its inauguration in 1962.[54] "We were invited to work on some commissions to contribute some of our experience as a married couple and as the leaders of the Christian Family Movement."[55] In preparation for this grand appearance in Rome, Luzma and José, in conjunction with MFC members, gathered documentation, conducted research, and essentially studied the Vatican process up to that point, given they had missed the first three sessions. A questionnaire survey proved the most exceeding task. By asking a series of questions regarding family life, the couple hoped to capture the most accurate representation of families' expectations for the Vatican meetings. Data collected from questions such as "What do

---

[53] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 163.

[54] For basic facts on Vatican II and to access the Council's documents see "Vatican II: 50 Years Later— A guide to the Second Vatican Council in honor of the 50th Anniversary of its opening," The Loyola Libraries' Research Guides <http://libguides.luc.edu/vaticanii>.

[55] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City).

you expect from the Council regarding family life?" to "What do you take to be the best aspect of the Church in its current position?" informed the Álvarez Icazas' on the needs of the demographic they represented.[56] However, José's expectations regarding their role as auditors seemed removed from reality: "We were so foolish that we did not realize we were appointed lay 'auditors', meaning our job was to 'listen,' and it is clear that role offered little opportunity to participate."[57] While the couple hoped for greater participation, the realities of the Church's hierarchy revealed they would have little impact in Rome—but a greater role in their home country.

Nevertheless, Luzma proved something of a rarity for the Vatican. Not many married women attended in the first place, and probably not many were as outspoken as Mrs. Longoria. José explains that both he and Luzma attended a mixed theological commission where everyone went to defend their proposals. The Mexican couple attended that session precisely for that reason, "That is where Luzma became very famous." Pepe recounts that during a discussion by priests, Luzma jumped in: "I am frankly displeased by what you are saying." Given the institutional disregard for couples up to that point, Luzma grew annoyed at the way the clergy spoke about marriage, and their tendency to dismiss the husband and wife relationship for anything beyond mere procreation.[58] While it is hard to measure the extent of the Álvarez Icaza contribution to the conciliar meetings, Luzma's attendance, nevertheless, offered an audience of men a poised voice regarding the needs of women, mothers, and wives. By the end of the Vatican II sessions, Pope John XXIII recognized Luzma as a "representative of the

---

[56] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 171.

[57] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 24 February 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 168-169.

[58] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 24 February 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 179-180; 183.

mothers of the world," at the time a mother of twelve children and the first female lay observer.[59] What a better place to have a female expression, especially when decisions made by Church authorities affected the lives of millions of Catholic kin across the globe.

Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social (*CENCOS*)

In addition to their contribution to committee work the Icaza couple took on the role of publicizing Vatican II sessions through a telex machine. In a previous Vatican meeting, the Church recognized the utility of mass communications for the purpose of Christianizing.[60] This was a direct outgrowth of the Decree on the Media of Social Communication, also known as the *Inter Mirifica*, promulgated by Pope Paul VI at the end of the Second Session of the Council, which ran from September thru December 1963. In two chapters, made up of approximately twenty-four points, the articles articulate the Church's relationship with media technologies. The opening statement reads:

> Among the wonderful technological discoveries which men of talent, especially in the present era, have made with God's help, the Church welcomes and promotes with special interest those which have a most direct relations to men's minds and which have uncovered new avenues of communicating most readily news, views and teachings of every sort. The most important of these inventions are those media which, such as the press,

[59] *Ibid*; CENCOS, *Índice cronológico clasificado de la información de CENCOS en el año 1965*, 44, CENCOS Archive.

[60] Also see Jesús Iribarren, *El derechos a la verdad: Doctrina de la Iglesia sobre prensa, radio y televisión (1831-1968)* (Madrid, Spain: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos (BAC), 1968.

> movies, radio, television and the like, can, of their very nature, reach and influence, not only individuals, but the very masses and the whole of human society, and thus can rightly be called the media of social communications.

In this rather brief text, in comparison with the various declarations that came out of this council, the Vatican leaders also maintained the access to technology and information as a right. In the first chapter, the decree upheld it was "an inherent right of the Church to have at its disposal and to employ any of these media insofar as they are necessary or useful for the instruction of Christians." As far as the populace was concerned, "in society men have a right to information…about matters concerning individuals or the community." Films, art and radio were no entirely constrained to pastoral duties, but should also be employed for entertainment purposes as long as this media of social communication served "the cultural and moral betterment of audiences."[61] From MFC and the Vatican experience, José and Luzma gained social media experience, which they immediately applied upon their return to Mexico.

With the aid of the Mexican Church hierarchy, José and Luzma launched a religious-based press organization in character with the *Inter Mirifica.* The decree established a role for the laity in "the use of these media," and the creation of "good press," a "truly Catholic press," under the "watch" of bishops and managed either by the "ecclesiastical authorities or by Catholic laymen."[62] That is precisely what the Álvarez Icaza offered the Vatican and its Mexican public. On June 22, 1964, the Mexican Episcopate, with the economic resources of José, created the *Centro Nacional de*

---

[61] See the Introduction, Article 1 and 2; Chapter I, Article 3 and 5, "Decree on the Media of Social Communications, *Inter Mirifica,* Solemnly Promulgated By His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963," Documents of the II Vatican Council Archive (Online) <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm>.

[62] See Chapter II, Article 13 and 14, *Ibid.*

Comunicación Social (CENCOS), the first social communications organization of its kind in Latin America.[63] With the creation of CENCOS all other Catholic organizations previously working in cinema, the press, radio and television ceased their functions to the newly formed press organization.[64] José recounts the organization's first assignment, which included covering Cardinal Eugène Tisserant's visit to Mexico.[65] At the time of his visit in August 1964, the 80-year-old Tisserant ranked "second only to Pope Paul in the Catholic hierarchy." In this highly publicized event, a California newspaper noted Tisserant would stay in México for eighteen days. Upon his arrival on the airport on the 17 of August, the report stated over fifty thousand people welcomed him. Some speculated his presence in the country was to restore diplomatic relations between the Mexican government and the Vatican. Given the tone of the reporting, it is likely that this was indeed Tisserant's mission. However, the government was not as anti-clerical as suggested. To illustrate the supposed bleak Church-State relations in Mexico, the article noted that the country was so anticlerical that the president-elect, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970), "reportedly a deeply religious man, did not even enter the chapel when his daughter was married a few years go." Rather, the relationship between the Church and the government had been at best ambiguous, with low points during the mid-1800s and in the 1920s with the Cristero Rebellion. However, the anti-clerical fervor of the post-Revolutionary period had waned by the time of the Second Vatican Council—and the government did not have an official stance against the Church—the

[63] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 17 March 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 165-166.

[64] Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, "CENCOS Aclara su posición, en relación con el Episcopado Mexicano a raíz de sus recientes declaraciones. Declaraciones de su presidente, Ing. José Alvarez Icaza a la prensa Nal." AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1.

[65] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 17 March 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 165-166.

relationship rather proved one of duality: distance with a tint of reverence. Nevertheless, whatever the purpose of the cardinal's visit, one of CENCOS' first tasks as an official communications institution of the Mexican Episcopate was to cover this event.[66]

CENCOS in many ways grew out of José's organizational experience with the *Movimiento Familiar Cristiano.* As leader of the MFC, the Mexican engineer had acquired a building on Aristótles No. 279, with a printing press on the very first floor, purchased with the help of members.[67] Following a similar organizational model as the MFC, CENCOS grew out a desire to reach out to more people. José explains that overtime they looked for a more efficient method in fomenting social responsibility, one that worked alongside but beyond the family circle. "And we discovered and ventured into the field of social communication, as the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council had just approved their respective document and called on all countries to promote, social media centers for the apostolate."[68] It is not clear how Pepe learned about this communications decree years before his appointment as auditor. It is likely that through his work in the MFC and its press services, he came across the Vatican's plans regarding social media.

CENCOS became economically feasible only after Pepe made use of an inheritance left to him by his aunt María Elisa Icaza. Her father, José's uncle, had been a prominent doctor, and she herself a very good manager and austere person. She planned to leave all her possessions to José's father, for he had been perhaps the only

---

[66] "Anti-Church Feeling Improves In Mexico," *Lodi News-Sentinel,* 29 August 1964.

[67] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 3 March 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 150.

[68] José Álvarez Icaza, "Experiencias de los laicos mexicanos en la fe y política" (paper presented at the *Foro Internacional "Cristianismo y política,"* Quito, Ecuador, May 7-8, 1998), cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 158.

person who visited her while she was in bed for four years due to a hip injury. "I suddenly found that I was heir to a very important fortune." Pepe then sold some of the valuables, "with the money I did two very important things," by instruction of his aunt that her possessions be put "for the greater glory, splendor and diffusion of the Christian faith": the expansion of the Christian Family Movement, whose Secretariat's office for Latin America opened where his aunt had lived, and thereafter the establishment of CENCOS in a home María's father had purchased. "That is how I journeyed across the Latin American continent and founded CENCOS," concluded José.[69] CENCOS, thereby, grew out of both private funding—that of the Icaza's—and from resources of the Mexican Episcopate.

By the time of the fourth session of the Council, CENCOS provided the infrastructure for relaying news from Rome to Mexico. Just before the inauguration, José's CENCOS received the blessing of Monsignor Luigi Raimondi, the Apostolic Delegate to Mexico, on September 13, 1965.[70] From a home they leased from the Italian ambassador to Spain, the Álvarez Icazas' along with a team of about twenty people transmitted weekly updates on the sessions in Rome.[71] In turn, those working at CENCOS in Mexico City published information in a bulletin titled *Esta semana en el Concilio* (This Week at the Council), and whose first number came out on September 26, 1965.[72] The CENCOS team also translated documents produced during the Council.

---

[69] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 17 March 1999, *Ibid.,* 165.

[70] CENCOS, *Índice cronológico clasificado de la información de CENCOS en el año 1965*, 31, CENCOS Archive.

[71] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 168-178, CENCOS Archive.

[72] The second number of the bulletin appeared on October 3, the third on October 10, and the fourth on October 17, the fifth on October 24, the sixth on October 31, 1965; five issues in a single month. CENCOS, *Índice cronológico clasificado de la información de CENCOS en el año 1965,* 33, 35-37, 38, CENCOS Archive.

Any information José or Luzma required, the team would transmit back to Rome. In their limited Latin, the couple also made numerous proposals on the family for the Mexican Bishops to present in their committees, but these never successfully made it into the discussions, instead it was the "French and African bishops who took it with much enthusiasm," recounted José. The Chilean Monsignor Manuel Larraín Errázuriz, president of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM), also took great interest in the Icazas' work.[73] The CENCOS team gained experience in Catholic media communications—knowledge they would later apply to their social and political activism.

CENCOS also transformed the way journalists wrote about the Church in Mexico. According to Álvarez Icaza, "[a]t the time [CENCOS opened] the relationship between journalists and the bishops were fatal." José explains that very few journalists ventured outside of the traditional coverage of the Catholic Church, often characterized as "subjects out of focus," proving little insight into the progressive and social stance of Catholics since Vatican II. Likewise, the religious realm attracted few journalists, those getting the assignments "were those punished, the bad behaved, the absent, or those that got drunk, etc. and as punishment they were sent to the religious source, it was extremely boring, there was nothing to report, say, a function in the Basilica or the seventieth coronation of the Virgin of Tlalpujagua and things of that sort." Not only that, but "[j]ournalists had a lousy notion of bishops and bishops thought that journalists were like Juan Charrasqueado, drunks, rowdy and gamblers." In Mexican folklore Juan, nicknamed Charrasqueado due to a scarred face, exemplifies

[73] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 168-178.

a horse-riding and daring character commonly the subject of popular ballads. "In that sense CENCOS did work that, I believe, few people appreciate: the Church's rapprochement to media and the media to the Church."[74] CENCOS made links with journalists and eventually served as an intermediary between the official Church hierarchy and the Mexican mainstream press.

From its inception, CENCOS and the Icazas' filled many roles. On January 1967 Monsignor Luigi Raimondi confirmed Pepe to the Pontifical Council for the Laity.[75] The couple also traveled extensively across continents as representatives of the Christian Family Movement and for conferences on communications. Only in the month of April the Icazas toured through Chicago, Rome, Madrid, Barcelona, and Brussels.[76] In the home front, the *Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social* served as the headquarters for press conferences for Catholic personalities, like Pedro Velázquez from the Mexican Social Secretariat.[77] In other ways CENCOS functioned as an official public relations office circulating news and events, but many with José's personal imprint and especially geared toward the fomentation of the media. In January, CENCOS announced a conference "on the importance for the media in Latin America, to be at the service of their communities."[78] The following month Pepe's team organized a meeting on social communication.[79] On March 4, the organization embarked on a major campaign to publicize the "Church and Social Communication: First World Communication Day," instituted by the Pope for May 7, 1967. In all of this, José strived to present an updated

[74] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 17 march 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 166.
[75] CENCOS, *Índices* 1967, 4, CENCOS Archive.
[76] CENCOS, *Índices* 1967, 27, CENCOS Archive.
[77] CENCOS, *Índices* 1967, 27, CENCOS Archive.
[78] CENCOS, *Índices* 1967, 7, CENCOS Archive.
[79] CENCOS, *Índices* 1967, 12, CENCOS Archive.

version of Catholicism to the Mexican population, this while the secret police of the Secretary of *Gobernación* kept tabs on CENCOS and José Álvarez Icaza at least since 1967.[80]

1968: Responding to Latin American Political Repression

In 1968 social mobilizations and government response took a turn for the worse—and CENCOS drew closer to news of political repression. Mexico's social climate tensed alongside that of the United States and other parts of the world. The widespread wave of radicalization drew from increased prosperity, global decolonization pressures, a bulging youth population, and clear inconsistencies in the Cold War values and policies of western democracies. In this context, the CENCOS team chronicled the major events of the decade. For the year 1965, CENCOS documented Martin Luther King's march through Montgomery, Alabama with a reported 4,000 people, the United States refusal to accept any more *braceros,* and nationally the doctors mobilizations: "Once again doctors, residents and internes stopped working, given that the presidency has failed to fulfill its promises."[81] In the early years of its existence, CENCOS proved an alternative source of global news for Mexicans—from Malcolm X's assassination to events unfolding in Cuba and Yugoslavia—this a time when other organizations too steered away from frontally criticizing the government.[82]

However, by 1968 Pepe seemed to have taken consciousness of dictatorship and its excesses in South America. That year he joined the Pontifical Council of the Laity—

[80] CENCOS, *Índices* 1967, 17, CENCOS Archive; See AGN, José Álvarez Icaza, DGIPS, 1967-1981, File 5-8, Box 1779-B.

[81] CENCOS, *Índice cronológico clasificado de la información de CENCOS en el año 1965*, 12-13, 15, CENCOS Archive.

[82] CENCOS, *Índice cronológico clasificado de la información de CENCOS en el año 1965*, 20, 22, CENCOS Archive.

designed during the Vatican II meetings but created until 1967—which assists the Pope on matters of the lay within the Catholic Church.[83] In mid-July the Pope named new members to the Council, including Brazilian Branca de Mello Franco Alves, whose husband had been one of the delegates at the 1945 San Francisco Conference that led to the creation of the United Nations.[84] According to Pastor, De Mello served as Pepe's gateway to the political repression in Brazil and in other parts of Latin America—which he too noted targeted Catholics. José had a good Brazilian friend, Marcos Zabuda, whose work on the torture technique of "*pau-de-arara*" (torture technique involving the tying of individuals to a pole) informed him about the situation in the country. Nevertheless, De Mello's accounts of the condition of political prisoners presented to the Council of the Laity, which she obtained from her son who was a journalist, shock Pepe.[85] Despite the denunciations made, "the Council did not act with the courage we wanted," believed Pepe. Within the Council existed a type of censorship coupled with accredited diplomats ready to act on any denunciations—as had been the case for Brazil and the many condemnations made by De Mello.[86] Pepe believed many religious authorities kept silence, including a Dominican bishop he had known from the MFC in Brazil (Lucas Moreira das Neves). When he approached Moreira das Neves about the torture of Fray Tito de Alencar, he "[d]id not answer."[87] Given the often lack of

---

[83] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 211-212; "Pontifical Council of the Laity," *The Roman Curia, Pontifical Councils, La Santa Sede,* <http://www.laici.va/content/laici/en/profilo.html>.

[84] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 212; *Bulletin of The New York School of Social Work: Annual Report* (New York: Community Service of the City of New York), 11.

[85] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 212-213.

[86] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 24 march 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 213.

[87] According to Pastor, which cites Enrique D. Dussel, *De Medellín a Puebla: una década de sangre y esperanza, 1968-1979* (México, D.F.: Edicol, 1979), 202, by 1969 some eleven Dominicans had been

denunciation by Vatican officials toward military dictatorships, many priests and lay people joined a growing national and international network of individuals far more vocal about condemning political repression—as became the case of Pepe.

Ideas that shaped and reformed Latin America's Church toward the disadvantaged and the politically repressed—Liberation theology—solidified in 1968. Many religious leaders, including Samuel Ruiz García who worked on behalf of indigenous in Chiapas, attended the Conference of Latin American Bishops, also referred to as CELAM (*Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano* or the Latin American Episcopal Council), in Medellín, Colombia. There, the Latin American Catholic community gathered "to discuss the implications of Vatican II for the continent," a key event defining the direction of the Church in the region. According to David Tombs, Gustavo Gutiérrez—who shook the Church with the publication of his text *Teología de la liberación: perspectivas* (1971) or best known as *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (1973)—served as theological adviser at the conference. By CELAM, Gutiérrez had already presented an embryonic version of his ideas for a Church that looked more to the condition of the poor, this in a paper he gave in Chimbote, Perú, titled "Toward a Theology of Liberation."[88] For many, including Gutiérrez, CELAM served to broaden ideas regarding the Catholic Church's response to the realities of Latin America—as also proved the case for Pepe who attended the Bishops Conference given his position in the Laity Council.

---

arrested, including Tito de Alencar, which was tortured with "*pau-de-arara*" technique. Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano*, 214.

[88] The first CELAM meeting took place in 1955 (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), the second in 1968 (Medellín, Colombia), the third in 1979 (Puebla, México), and the fourth in 1992 (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic). See, David Tombs, "Latin American Liberation Theology: Moment, Movement, Legacy," in *Movement or Moment?: Assessing Liberation Theology Forty Years After Medellín*, edited by Patrick Claffey and Joe Egan (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 33-34.

The Medellín gathering coincided with heightened student mobilizations in Mexico City. In Colombia, he witnessed first-hand how Father Pedro Velázquez came to a meeting where Pepe, the Mexican Bishops and other priests gathered. Having arrived late because the bishops did not invite him, Velázquez brought notice of the student mobilizations taking place in the Zócalo (main square) in Mexico City and the military's use of tanks to dismantle the camps and pursue the protestors. According to Pepe, Puebla's archbishop immediately phoned President Díaz Ordaz letting him know that they knew about the "communist" agitators and that they fully supported him.[89] This particular moment, which he narrated to Pastor, helped Pepe see how the Mexican Bishops' stance on the political and social happenings back home—which they did not support—eventually led him to distance himself from the Church hierarchy. Although initially removed from the national mobilizations, after CELAM José proved more sympathetic of students' cause that questioned the government.[90]

Upon his return to Mexico, students approached CENCOS about using the organization's printing press. José feared for his institution's reputation—he and the Episcopate being conservative entities that did not question Mexico's governing entity. Nevertheless, he negotiated with the students and allowed them to print fliers under the conditions they be done outside working hours and without leaving a trace that could lead to the source—recounted Pepe. "That is what we agreed, but the next morning there was a line of University boys asking, is it true this is where free flyers are made?"[91] Interestingly enough, Pepe believed the student movement proved a watershed moment

[89] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 14 April 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 216, 223-224.

[90] Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 224.

[91] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 14 April 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 224.

for him, just like it had been for journalist and editor of *Excélsior* Julio Scherer García. The latter told Pepe it had been those arriving at his desk and telling him what they saw in 1968 that changed him.[92] As such, the rise of student mobilizations awoke in Pepe a political consciousness that diverted from the Church's postures regarding the path towards a peaceful world through development, and one that condemned student mobilizations and armed revolutionary movements as the means for achieving justice.

Nevertheless, the summer mobilizations only served as the prelude to what unfolded not long after. In the fall 1968, Mexicans awaited the opening of the 1968 Olympic games. Among the many things at stake during this international event was "[n]othing less than the reputation of the 'Mexican Miracle' itself." Presidential oversight of the games fell inadvertently on Díaz Ordaz yet had been the "obsession" of his predecessor, Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964). When the latter, now in declining health, resigned his position as the Chairman of the Mexican Organizing Committee of the XIX Olympic Games in June 1966, Díaz Ordaz assigned a prominent architect to the position, Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, celebrated for his 1963 design of the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City.[93] As the first Olympiad held in Latin America, Ramírez Vázquez explained that Mexico strived to recover an ancient Greek tradition whereby "young participants from developing countries can show their culture, take pride and satisfaction and not simply applaud the winners of the more developed countries."[94] Given what had been seen as Mexico's prolonged economic

---

[92] José Álvarez Icaza interview, 14 April 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 225.

[93] Eric Zolov, "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics," *The Americas* 61:2 (October 2004), 160, 164.

[94] "Pedro Ramirez Vazquez 1919-2013," *Phaidon* 17 April 2013 <http://www.phaidon.com/agenda/design/articles/2013/april/17/pedro-ramirez-vazquez-1919-2013/>.

prosperity, the October 1968 games seemed the well-deserved platform to showcase an up-and-coming regional force.

Nevertheless, the games fell short of their national aim. The era's political tensions found their way into the event as two black athletes, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, made of the games a platform of protest against racial discrimination by wearing no shoes and lifting their right hands decked with black gloves.[95] Even while a peace dove was among the Mexican Olympiad cultural production, the events leading up to the inauguration were anything but peaceful. The dove icon, designed by famed Monterrey-born satirist Abel Quezada, was in part rooted in the image Mexico forged internationally as a mediator, especially when it refused to break relations with Cuba after 1959. An image paraded "along principal thoroughfares, as well as along wide tree-lined avenues, narrow streets, residential areas and in working-class communities." Together with the dove stood the Olympic motto: *Todo es posible en la paz* ("Everything is Possible in Peace").[96] Yet, the summer protests continued in the city. Urban and middle class students questioned the legitimacy of the governing party. Left out of the revolutionary structure of representation, these protesters were in themselves a product of the success of the Revolution, one that opened way for a mass project of education and industrialization. However, they symbolized the failure of the system to adequately incorporate and represent emergent political groups. Breaking with its tradition of carrot-and-stick, whereby the government alternately rewarded and castigated its way through social upheaval, the PRI used military force indiscriminately against student protestors in the Plaza of Tlatelolco on October 2, 1968, days before the inauguration of

[95] Zolov, "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow,'" 159.
[96] *Ibid.,* 169-172.

the games. The violent repression severely fractured the legitimacy of the official party, the heir of the Mexican Revolution and the force that for decades had fostered social, political, and economic authority. For many like Pepe, the happenings on October 2, 1968 served as the first and final straw toward the awakening of a political consciousness.

CENCOS Breaks with the Mexican Episcopate

Even while 1968 opened a decade of political questioning, the Church hierarchy stood still. Like in many other parts of Latin America, Mexican Church officials did not condemn the military assault on student protestors in the Plaza of Tlatelolco in Mexico City. Roderic A. Camp explains, "while this social violence marked a critical departure in the evolution of the Mexican political model, affecting an entire generation, it produced little reaction from the Mexican episcopate." Nevertheless, a small group within the Episcopate publicly denounced the Church for it indifference. Bishop of Cuernavaca Sergio Méndez Arceo condemned the 1968 episode and he also called the "Mexican Conference of Bishops to explore the affair." Not surprisingly, Father Velázquez and the Mexican Social Secretariat also went against the general trend of apathy.[97] In reality, the August before the Tlatelolco massacre, a number of institutions and Catholic representatives formed a group to reflect upon the student movement. The Mexican Social Secretariat, CENCOS, professors from the Iberoamericana and UNAM universities, clergymen, and Sergio Méndez Arceo made up the group. Together these representatives drafted a document to educate the diverse Catholic

[97] Roderic A. Camp, *Crossing Swords: Politics and Religion in Mexico* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 29-30.

sectors on the meaning and demands of the student movement. On September 10, 1968, thirty-seven priests published a spread in the mainstream newspaper *Excélsior* in which they summarized the findings of the Catholic-led group.[98] Even so, those willing to condemn the governing party proved a small minority, while the hierarchy maintained its anti-communist stance and support for the PRI.

Nevertheless, the approach taken by the dissenting members of religious groups and intellectuals was terribly misunderstood. The Catholic hierarchy assumed the committee's declarations as officially representing those of the Mexican Social Secretariat, and as such, an official Church institution that had been tainted by communist ideologies. This episode pitted various conservative groups against Catholic intellectuals who spoke on behalf of the student mobilizers, and who in turn were depicted as a "Marxist infiltration" in the Church. Despite this controversy, after the student massacre on October 2, 1968, Monsignor Adalberto Almeida y Merino and Pedro Velázquez worked arduously with representatives of the *Comité Permanente de la Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano* (CEM), an organization of Mexican bishops under the leadership of Ernesto Corripio y Ahumada, to issue a statement regarding the events of 1968. The government interpreted the CEM declaration "as a public censure against the government's" efforts "to impose the official truth." As such, conservative bishops rightfully presumed that Velázquez and the Mexican Social Secretariat were behind the CEM statement regarding Tlatelolco.[99]

1968 had longstanding effects for Catholic organizations in the country. The October events fractured the relationship between the hierarchy and the more

---

[98] Carlos Fazio, *Algunos aportes del Secretariado Social Mexicano en la transición a la democracia* (México, D.F.: Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos, 1997), 32-33.

[99] *Ibid.;* Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano (CEM), <http://www.cem.org.mx>.

progressive Catholic leaders and organizations. In many ways, 1968 radicalized and officially opened way for the adherence of a more radical interpretation of Catholic doctrine through Liberation theology. Tlatelolco polarized adherents of the Catholic Social Doctrine from those that sympathized with Mexico's emergent social mobilizers. Mendez Arceo, years later dubbed the "Red Bishop," alongside Pedro Velázquez and Bishop Samuel Ruiz García of Chiapas stood as the archetypes of radical Catholicism in Mexico and part of the wave of adherents of Liberation theology. Meanwhile, the Mexican Episcopates' tepid response to '68 marked CENCOS' shift toward the left and its engagement with Latin American political prisoners. However, CENCOS initial solidarity with student mobilizers most likely initiated a rupture with the Episcopate.

After several rumors of estrangement, CENCOS announced it no longer served as a spokesman organization for the Episcopate. On April 21, 1969 Pepe offered a press conference in which he officially announced CENCOS ceased the services it rendered. Pepe explained the hierarchy determined "unnecessary" the "supplementary" services CENCOS had provided the Episcopate, given that a new, more official and appropriate organ had been created (Executive Secretary of the Episcopal Conference). Pepe's declarations came after Mons. Ernesto Corripio Ahumada, President of the *Conferencia Episcopal* (Episcopal Conference), had informed Pepe of the organization's release from its official Church duties on April 9, 1969. For five years, "CENCOS has been providing daily, multiple services to social communications in Mexico, and has been broadcasting official messages that for that purpose the Episcopate delivered."[100]

[100] Pepe used the terms "*medios de comunicación social*," which could roughly translate into any of the following: "media," "social media," or the "press." Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, "CENCOS Aclara su posición, en relación con el Episcopado Mexicano a raíz de sus recientes declaraciones. Declaraciones de su presidente, Ing. José Alvarez Icaza a la prensa Nal." AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1.

During that time period, CENCOS was responsible for tasks like organizing the World Day of Social Communications established by Paul VI in 1967, and in accordance with Vatican II accords. CENCOS had also issued "[h]undreds of statements and press interviews of personal nature, as has been always explicitly explained."[101] The latter statement denotes a diversity in its reporting that drew CENCOS away from being exclusively at the service of the Episcopate. "In recent years we have served as a forum of expression to various ministries" and Catholic organs—according to Pepe, as the spirit of the Church had called for since the Vatican II meetings.[102] While not exclusively in service of the Mexican Episcopate in 1969, from that point forward CENCOS initiated its second phase of social communications, offering an alternative source of news—both secular and ecumenical in nature.

Discussions regarding the break placed the cause of the rift on 1968 and on financial matters. "Thus ends, therefore, a first stage of CENCOS' life," explained Pepe in the press conference, this while he thanked the various leaders of the Church for the opportunity and his desire to continue serving the "the Church, its hierarchy, and the people and Social Communications mediums in Mexico."[103] Álvarez Icaza also recognized differences existed between CENCOS and the Episcopate, and these were "often caused by the lack of adequate financial support that could never be fully

---

[101] From the press conference, Pepe seemed to indicate CENCOS was involved in the World Day of Social Communications for the year 1967 and 1968, although he did not specify if the work done was for the Vatican or merely for the Mexican Episcopate. Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, "CENCOS Aclara su posición, en relación con el Episcopado Mexicano a raíz de sus recientes declaraciones. Declaraciones de su presidente, Ing. José Alvarez Icaza a la prensa Nal." AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1.

[102] Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, "CENCOS Aclara su posición, en relación con el Episcopado Mexicano a raíz de sus recientes declaraciones. Declaraciones de su presidente, Ing. José Alvarez Icaza a la prensa Nal." AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1.

[103] Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, "CENCOS Aclara su posición, en relación con el Episcopado Mexicano a raíz de sus recientes declaraciones. Declaraciones de su presidente, Ing. José Alvarez Icaza a la prensa Nal." AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 2.

achieved as anticipated and initially planned"—that is as specified in CENCOS' constitution and in the Decree on the Means of Social Communication (*Inter Mirifica,* II-17 & 18).[104] Miguel Concha Malo, priest and longtime human rights activist, too noted the schism between the Bishops of the Mexican Episcopate and CENCOS first emerged over finances. The Church hierarchy began by demanding an audit and economic statements. Tensions arose as a result of these requests; nevertheless, this did not inhibit the "concession of additional loans in 1966." Yet, the deep-seated conflict arose in 1968, and it is no longer economic but an ideological one, when bishops perceived the work performed through CENCOS to surpass the limits delineated by the Episcopate. When Pepe's organizations took on issues of broader public interest, meaning secular and political, having a bearing on "public opinion," the Catholic hierarchy took the opportunity to disassociate itself on the basis that the organization compromises the episcopate.[105] Raquel Pastor denotes the 1968 episode and CENCOS' official stance toward the student movement as the Bishops' reasoning for ceasing to recognize the press organization as official entity of the Episcopate. Pastor's analysis and 1999 interview with Álvarez Icaza, whose work remains the most in-depth on the life of Pepe and the work of CENCOS, places all emphasis on the 1968 ideological rift without expanding on the matter of funding.[106] Nevertheless, both elements seemed to have played a key role in the eventual rupture with the Episcopate.

---

[104] Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, "CENCOS Aclara su posición, en relación con el Episcopado Mexicano a raíz de sus recientes declaraciones. Declaraciones de su presidente, Ing. José Alvarez Icaza a la prensa Nal." AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 2.

[105] Miguel Concha Malo, *La Participación de los cristianos en el proceso popular de liberación en México, 1968-1983* (México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1986), 82-83.

[106] Pastor is also the daughter-in-law of the late Pepe. Pastor married Emilio Álvarez Icaza, former president of Mexico's National Human Rights Commission, and since 2012 the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). José Álvarez Icaza interview, 14 April 1999, cited in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 225, 227.

1970s: "Information as a Service"[107]

From 1969 on, CENCOS diversified its functions, yet the organization's focus remained well within its tradition of social communications. After much consideration, Pepe concluded the Bishops' had made the right decision in releasing the organization of its duties, which allowed CENCOS to delve into a new field of activities. "It will no longer be CENCOS spokesman of the hierarchy…but instead, we will become a medium of expression and dialogue of the non-hierarchical Church." As lay people, there was a message to be disseminated and a people that wanted to hear it, and many which also wanted to voice their own—and CENCOS according to José would become the channel of expression. In this second stage in the service of the organization, the ideological basis for the work of its staff and journalists would remain Christian in essence—following the Papal edict on communication which sought to utilize new technologies (cinema, film, press, television, radio) to spread the gospel but also to shape "the critical judgment of the reader and spectator."[108] José quoted two Church leaders, Pope Pius XII (1939-1958), the first pope to have spoken on television: "Public opinion is patrimony of all society…Where there is no expression of public opinion and above all, where we must recognize that it does not exist, it must be said that there is a void, a frailty, an illness of social life." José also built on this argument by including Pius' successor's message on journalism, John XXIII (1958-1963), in which he argued "The

[107] Words of José Álvarez Icaza, quoted in Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 22 de junio de 1970, 19:00 hrs [possible report by police on a press conference held at CENCOS]. AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B.

[108] Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, Adjunto, AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 2; Paul VI, "Message of the Holy Father for the World Social Communications Day," 7 May 1976, Documents of the Vatican Archive, Libreria Editrice Vaticana (Online) < http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/messages/communications/documents/hf_p-vi_mes_19670507_i-com-day.html>.

Catholic journalist should be taught to defend truth and justice, and integrity, before religion and the Gospel."[109] Pope John XXIII also reminded Catholics that among universal guarantees stood the right to "freedom in investigating the truth…to freedom of speech and publication…and to be accurately informed of public events."[110] The inspiration for CENCOS after its separation from the Bishops, and as explained by Pepe, indicated a philosophical and ecumenically supported shift toward a type of reporting and journalism for the people—with no regard of religious orientation—and one in the service of an audience that grew more critical of its government.

The transition from an official Catholic institution-in-origin to a religious and socially compromised NGO proved logistically feasible but economically difficult. The building from where CENCOS' staff worked belonged to José, inherited from his aunt. However, the funding had been established as a result of the organization's links to the Church hierarchy. After the break, the private funding from Catholic individuals dwindled. Pepe's wife, Luzma, often traveled to pick up the donations, and in one particular instance she arrived only to be told by a donor that he would no longer be making any other payments. Luzma explains that funding from private individuals

---

[109] Quotes translated from the text in Spanish; thereby, it may differ from the official English translation of the Church. Original text in Spanish: Pope Pío XII: "La opinión pública es el patrimonio de toda la sociedad normal compuesta de seres humanos. Donde no hay expresión de la opinión pública y sobre todo, donde hay que reconocer que no existe, debe afirmarse que ahí hay un vicio, una debilidad, una enfermedad de la vida social." Juan XXIII: "El periodista católico debe ser enseñado a defender la verdad y la justicia, y la integridad, antes que la religión y el Evangelio." "Entre los derechos universales inviolables de la persona humana, está el derecho a la libertad de búsqueda de la verdad y en la expresión y difusión del pensamiento" (discurso de la Unión Católica de la prensa Italiana en 1961. Citas textuales de "Desomenization of the Catholic Church"). Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, Adjunto, AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 2; Enrique Maza, *La libertad de expresión en la iglesia* (México: Oceano, 2006), 32-35.

[110] Pope John XXIII, "*Pacem in Terris*," 11 April 1963, Documents of the Vatican Archive, Libreria Editrice Vaticana (Online) <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html>. A variation of this quote can be found in Spanish in Boletín 2894 (CENCOS), 21 April, 1969, Adjunto, AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 2 and in Enrique Maza's *La libertad de expresión en la iglesia* (México: Oceano, 2006), 32-35.

decreased considerably, and many failed to make contributions on the claim the organization had taken a leftward turn.[111] Nevertheless, CENCOS survived. Certainly there had been a leftist turn considering that reporting on repression in Mexico or in Latin American was a subversive act. While Pepe had adhered to anti-communism thought for most of his life, he eventually grew sympathetic of the mobilizations—particularly as the counterrevolutionary initiatives claimed the lives of many Catholics.[112]

Soon after the separation, CENCOS collaborated with international organizations in publicizing the repressive realities of military dictatorships. As early as 1969, CENCOS disseminated information on political prisoners, primarily those of South America. On April 23, the Mexican daily *El Día* reported via CENCOS, in conjunction with the Spanish organization *Juventud Obrera Católica* (JOC, Catholic Workers' Youth) and the *Movimiento Obrero de Chile* (Chilean Labor Movement), released a clandestine notice regarding the arrest of Tibor Sulik, Czech-born Brazilian Catholic labor union activist held by the military in Guanabara.[113] From 1969 onward, CENCOS reported on social justice issues of Mexico and Latin America and joined a growing network of organizations dedicated to the cause of political prisoners—all while still adhering to Catholic ideology whereby "Information [is] a service," believed Pepe.[114]

A June 1970 espionage report noted CENCOS' newfound reporting on political

---

[111] Interview with Luz María Longoria, 28 March 2012 (Mexico City). The same story recounted by Luzma can also be found in Pastor Escobar's *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 166.

[112] For more on Pepe's ideological converstion see Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "Del 'Comunismo no' al compromiso con el pueblo," *Proceso* 14 April 1980, 10-11.

[113] "Notas Religiosas: Denuncian la aprehensión de Tibor Sulik," *El Día,* 23 April 1969, 2. AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B. For more on JOC, see Angel Smith, *Historical Dictionary of Spain* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 372.

[114] Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 22 de junio de 1970, 19:00 hrs, AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B.

prisoners. Álvarez Icaza explained, in a press conference, "we talk about everything that concerns the people, even when we have to deal with being attacked." Pepe explained their reporting was carried out with objectivity and broadened in coverage, now they informed "of the serious problem of political prisoners who remain in prison, after the student unrest of 1968."[115] The following month, the police documented how several groups "from the right and the left," including CENCOS and the Mexican Communist Party (PCM), planned a "*Jornada*" or week to demand the release of political prisoners from July 7-14.[116] A few months after, the espionage report quoted Álvarez Icaza's stating, this in response to supposed rumors spread by the daily *El Sol de México*, "From Mexico and publicly CENCOS has said many times—and repeats—that such a situation is a national disgrace."[117] At the time few institutions, press organizations, or newspapers reported on political prisoners in Mexico nor did the challenge or question the governing party—those publications that did so were deemed subversive, communist, or merely yellow journalism ("*nota roja*").[118]

Pepe and his team also offered corporativism groups linked to the PRI a forum to voice their demands. Such proved the case of workers left out of Mexico's national labor confederation and the bargaining power joining the federation entailed. Urban transportation drivers from the *Sindicato Único de Trabajadores del Transporte del Distrito Federal* (Trade Union of Transport Workers of the Federal District) forced Fidel Velázquez, the leader of the *Confederación de Trabajadores de Mexicanos* (Confederation of

---

[115] Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 22 de junio de 1970, 19:00 hrs. AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B.

[116] "Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 1 July 1970, 18:00 hrs," AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B.

[117] "Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 21 September 1970, 19:00 hrs," AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1-2.

[118] See interview statements by journalist Blance Petrich on her experience while working for *El Día* in Elvira García's *Ellas, tecleando su historia* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2012), 169.

Mexican Workers; CTM), to respond to their claims of subjugation—accusations made by forty-two drivers in the facilities of CENCOS. The CTM leader, which both he and the union had been intimately linked to the ruling party, argued the lack of direct relations resulted from the existence of other intermediary bodies that took care of their demands, plus he added, "that union does not exist. It's a ghost union." This, according to Velázquez, could be verified by looking at the Federal District's Attorney General's police records.[119] In that sense, offering dissident groups (including indigenous) a forum of expression proved an act of defiance and a direct assault on the legitimacy of the governing party, on its revolutionary pillars (workers, peasants, middle classes, the military), and on corporativism. And while Pepe recognized that CENCOS' new direction to information conflicted "traditional religious approaches," and while no longer official spokesman of the Church, Pepe believed they were serving the people, social communication mediums, and the Church like never before—with informing the people representing an ecumenical service.[120]

José Álvarez Icaza could not have imagined the stark turn of events for his family and CENCOS. Pepe had been an anti-communist all his life, until he grew sympathetic with the leftist cause.[121] In 1972, Icaza attended a conference of Christians for socialism that took place in Chile and was profoundly moved by President Salvador Allende. His work from that point forward embodied a rhetoric far more removed the official Church, but very much rooted in the teachings of Vatican II, Liberation theology, and

---

[119] Boletín de CENCOS A/C/No. 4229, 25 June 1970, 15:00 hrs., "Responde Fidel Velázquez a las acusaciones lanzadas ayer en CENCOS por 42 operadores del Sindicato Único de Trabajadores del Transporte del D.F. AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B, 1-2.

[120] Pepe's exact words were: "La información como servicio" (information as a service). Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, 22 de junio de 1970, 19:00 hrs [possible report by police on a press conference held at CENCOS]. AGN, DGIPS, 21 April 1969-30 August 1978, File 6, Box 1779-B.

[121] For more on Pepe's ideological converstion see Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "Del 'Comunismo no' al compromiso con el pueblo," *Proceso* 14 April 1980, 10-11.

social justice.[122] Thereafter, his press organizations embarked on a political journey as one of Mexico's first human rights organizations to engage the language of human rights, a journey characterized by economic difficulties and continued police sacking of the CENCOS offices.[123] In 1975 Clara Ruiz began working for Pepe. During her tenure there CENCOS came to have as many as twenty people working in the building, rushing from one floor to the next—this with an entire floor dedicated to international news, she and others organized magazines that came in the mail (among many other duties), an auditorium in the back where press conferences often took place, a printing press in the lower level, as well as space designated for breaks (given the intensity of the work) and "light" reading where one could find some of Mexico's most popular comics like "*La Familia Burrón*"(all donated).[124] And thus began CENCOS new trajectory as Mexico's first modern-day non-governmental and human rights organization.

So when did CENCOS begin to engage in the work and with the language of human rights? In a commemorative event celebrating fifty years of the UDHR and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the magazine *CENCOS-Iglesias* (created to provide coverage on the 1979 papal visit to Mexico), Pepe's son Emilio Álvarez Icaza looked to the printed trajectory of the organization. Emilio explained that the "first publication related to our human rights work is a publication from 1966 by the International Commission of Jurists [ICJ]" on the European Commission on Human Rights, a tribunal that existed between 1954 and 1998.[125] As the case of Mexico reveals, early

---

[122] Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "Del 'Comunismo no' al compromiso con el pueblo," *Proceso* 14 April 1980, 10-11, 13.

[123] Pastor is the first to dub CENCOS Mexico's first non-governmental organization. Pastor Escobar, *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano,* 394.

[124] Interview with Clara Ruíz, 16 February 2012 (Mexico City).

[125] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive; Riddhi Dasgupta, *International Interplay: The Future of Expropriation Across*

references to the term human rights derived primarily from reporting on international events or rights organizations and not in association to happenings at home, at least not until the latter half of the 1970s. Emilio also deemed October 2, 1968 a "brutal turning point" for the work of CENCOS, whereby the organization gave their support to the students and reporters "involved in that process." Moreover, added Emilio, October 2 "also meant an awakening in our work and from there then came the whole process of becoming an independent center…"[126] Those closest to the repression at home sympathized with Latin American movements, drew closer to international organizations, and learned the language of human rights from their South American counterparts arriving in Mexico.

South Americans appropriated the nascent and internationalist language of human rights years before activists in Mexico. For decades, and unlike its South American counterparts, Mexico avoided international scrutiny for its internal repression, this in part resulting from a "declarative commitment" toward the international human rights discourse, from which the country "obtained international prestige."[127] Meanwhile, homegrown social movements did not take up the language until the latter half of the 1970s when local groups joined the growing international network on behalf of political prisoners, this coupled with the arrival of South American exiles. Argentines, Chileans, and Uruguayans, for example, appropriated the language of human rights and joined international networks denouncing dictatorship as a

---

International Dispute Settlement (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 262.

[126] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

[127] Natalia Saltalamacchia Ziccardi and Ana Covarrubias Velasco, "La trayectoria de los derechos humanos en la política exterior de México (1945-2006)," *Derechos humanos en política exterior: seis casos latinoamericanos*, edited by Natalia Saltalamacchia Ziccardi and Ana Covarrubias Velasco (México, D.F.: ITAM, 2011), 174.

measure of self-preservation. Upon the arrival of many exiles to Mexico, activists in the country learned the language of human rights from the stories and experiences recount. As the case of CENCOS illustrates, the more the organization leaned toward the Latin American cause on behalf of the politically repressed, the more they adhered to the internationalist language of human rights—eventually applied to the situation of prisoners at home. "[W]e nourished ourselves and at the same time we suffered the brutal repression unleashed in Latin America," said Emilio, and from that point forward CENCOS became a "repository of processes of hope but also a call for solidarity and support."[128] When he was young, many individuals visited Pepe and Luzma's home, and there he listened to discussions on the "human rights issue," and shared "their pain, the loss of their family, wealth, and all those assaults that entailed brutal dictatorships." Some of the individuals that made their way to his parents' home included the renowned Liberation theology forefather, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and others who found a voice and refuge in Mexico. From Mexico, exiles narrated their stories, in other instances they participated in print media disseminating testimonies on the atrocities committed; thus, indicting their home governments from outside their countries' in the independent and official press, while engaging the language of human rights.[129]

In March 1977, CENCOS edited a newsletter exclusively on human rights in Latin America. The first issue of the magazine *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* edited in conjunction with the *Comisión Evangélica Latinoamericana de Educación Cristiana* (Latin American Evangelical Commission for Christian Education; CELADEC), became one

[128] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

[129] For more on the specific role of Uruguayans in the promotion of human rights in Mexico, see De Heredia Romo, "México en la red transnacional de defensa de los derechos humanos en Uruguay (1973-1985): Estrategias y acciones representativas."

of the first publications in the country to actively utilize the term *human rights*, this to denote political violence.[130] While many credit President Jimmy Carter's foreign policy (1977-1981) for the proliferation of human rights in the 1970s, the issue reveals that by early 1977 organizations like CENCOS were already associating the concept of human rights to political violence—in large part due to the campaign carried out by Amnesty International on behalf of prisoners. Nevertheless, the editors recognized that since the election of Carter there had been an increase in the global discussion on matters of human rights, yet they underscored the ironies behind the United States taking on such a cause given their history of imperialism. In noting a long trajectory of rights violations in the world since conquest, the editorial page argued that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (UDHR) principles remained null in fostering "national and international coexistence." However, the editors believed the reverence and promotion of the cause was certainly not an "amusing concession" from President Carter, nor a "clever maneuver"; rather, human rights were an exigency for all—for that reason *América Latina: Derechos Humanos* sought to "participate in the promotion and diffusion of the Human Rights cause."[131] As such, the use of the term human rights appeared with references of political violence, President Jimmy Carter, or the UDHR—and by 1977 signaled a gradual replacement of other nationalist rights terminologies, including constitutional guarantees and economic rights upheld under nationalist state-driven development.

Early references to human rights in independent printings in the 1970s, like those

[130] CENCOS-CELADEC, *América Latina: Derechos*, no. 1-6 (March 1977-September 1978), Mexico City, CENCOS, Catholic collections, Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia Archive [hereafter ENAH].

[131] "Editorial," *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 1 (March 1977), 1-3, ENAH.

of CENCOS, reveal the sudden and global monopolization of political and civil rights. In the magazine's feature article by Jesuit Enrique Maza, who also wrote for *Proceso,* he refers to human rights as universalities and as the inherent rights of man. However, the sudden "rekindling of the international conscious" revealed contradictions—especially regarding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which he deemed "decorative." Maza recognized the individual rights embedded in the UDHR, but deemed these rights vulnerable unless social and economic freedoms were also guaranteed, the latter required significant structural changes to the existing social, political, and economic institutions. Maza's analysis in *América Latina* and in *Proceso* proved the most concrete and suspicious of the rise of an individualist cause that left out mayor institutional reform and echoed adherents of Liberation theology and armed revolution.[132] Although Maza questioned the global human rights cause, he nevertheless, proved one of the first in the country to actively write on the subject—thus further disseminating the concept. Likewise, the magazine reproduced the global concern for political and civil rights evident in its exclusive coverage of political prisoners, from cartoons depicting the loss of individual freedoms through incarceration and torture, individual and NGO-collected testimonials of the disappeared and tortured, to the long lists of *desparecidos* (i.e. eight-pages of Argentine journalists and six-pages of civilians from Nicaragua).[133] Notes and testimonials filled the pages of *América Latina*, such as the arrival to Mexico of fifteen-day-old Ana born in the embassy in Uruguay.[134] While its editors primarily

[132] Enrique Maza, "Derechos Humanos: declaraciones y realización," *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 1 (March 1977), 7-10, ENAH.

[133] "Prisión, secuestro y asesinato de periodistas en Argentina," *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 1 (March 1977), 15-23; "Lista de desaparecidos en el departamento de Zelaya [Nicaragua]," *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 1 (March 1977), 29-34, ENAH.

[134] "Trajeron a México a la pequeña Ana, nacida en la Embajada de Este país en Montevideo," *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 1 (March 1977), 12, ENAH.

focused on Latin America, Mexico also received scant coverage in the last pages of each issue; however, clearly the intention of *América Latina: Derechos Humanos* was to denounce *desparecidos,* incarcerations, extrajudicial killings, and torture primarily outside of Mexico.[135] The magazine reveals the López Portillo administration's tolerated published material on political prisoners so long as they were not Mexican, and this too signaled a wider availability and circulation of reporting about repression on the outside rather than internally, which was a direct outcome of the networks whose intensive data collection focused on the political terror in the Southern Cone, and to a lesser extent in Central America.

Such brutal realities in Latin America, nevertheless, linked CENCOS to local struggles. The experience of exiles and key individuals passing through Pepe's home and CENCOS, rendered credence to the general climate of violence in the region and helped CENCOS "find in Mexico processes of struggle for freedom and for the defense of human rights in Mexico."[136] CENCOS went on to provide spaces for other organizations, such as that of Rosario Ibarra de Piedra who founded in 1977 *Pro-Defensa de Presos, Perseguidos, Desaparecido y Exiliados Políticos de México* (Committee for the Defense of Prisoners, the Persecuted, the Disappeared and Political Exiles in Mexico; Comité ¡Eureka!), an organization akin to Argentina's *Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo*. After the disappearance of her son, Jesús Piedra Ibarra detained by the police and disappeared in the state of Nuevo León, Rosario pioneered a national movement demanding the

[135] The majority of the issues were edited by Bertha Trejo Delarbe, although a few of the initial issues also listed Luis Cervantes Luna as contributing editor. See *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 1-6 (March 1977-September 1978), ENAH.

[136] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

government give answers on the families' missing relatives.[137] The following year, Ibarra collaborated in the *Frente Nacional Contra la Represión* (The National Front against Repression; FNCR), "a coalition of human rights groups from throughout Mexico."[138] Pepe opened his doors to the FNCR and other organizations, and to this day CENCOS houses offices for a number of international human rights organizations. Emilio reminisced on Ibarra and the creation of the National Front Against Repression in the facilities of CENCOS—in the same room as the commemorative conference of *CENCOS-Iglesias,* with "long hours of struggle" to *prove* the repression the government so vehemently denied.[139] The emergence of Comité ¡Eureka! openly and abrasively challenged the government on the question of Mexico's missing, disappeared, and imprisoned, revealing the excesses of Mexico's own Dirty War.

Little by little CENCOS took on diverse causes, including those of workers and indigenous peoples. Pepe's organizations become an active participant in the social transformations taking place in Mexico in the latter half of the 1970s. As early as 1978, the CENCOS team put together testimonial material on the military repression in the state of Guerrero, a region rippled by counterrevolutionary violence. The Secretary of Defense received a copy of the declarations of military violence.[140] Through the 1970s, CENCOS carried out numerous campaigns on behalf of disadvantaged groups from throughout Mexico—community radios, journalists—and the massive quantities of print

[137] "Desaparecidos políticos en las cárceles clandestinas de México," *América Latina: Derechos Humanos,* no. 5 (May 1978), 60, ENAH; Juan U. Hernández and Eduardo Cervantes, "Frente Nacional Contra la Represión [FNCR]: Entrevista con Rosario Ibarra," *espacios,* no. 2 (July-Sept. 1983), 41-47, CENCOS Archive. Rius, "Los desaparecidos de Echeverría y sucesores…" *Los Agachados* (Year I, No. 4), 20 December 1978.

[138] Neil Harvey, *The Chiapas Rebellion: The Struggle for Land and Democracy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 136.

[139] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

[140] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

material donated to the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH) in Mexico City that bears testimony to the long trajectory of social work in print communications.

The legacies of CENCOS as Mexico's first modern human rights organization have been long lasting. Pepe and Rosario Ibarra were part of the wave of mobilizations for democracy in Mexico. As demands for political reform grew stronger, Pepe and Rosario eventually expanded their efforts into the political realm. Pepe became a militant of the *Partido Mexicano de los Trabajadores* (Mexican Workers Party; PMT), a party that drew from diverse sectors of the population in the 1970s and 1980s, but failed to obtain official registry until the mid-1980s. Pepe worked closely with the party's key leader Heberto Castillo; a teacher who had been incarcerated during the 1968 student was at the head of the party. Even while Pepe had links to the PMT and its collaborators, CENCOS retained its journalistic independence but grew increasingly critical of the government, most likely leading to police sackings of the building. CENCOS came under surveillance soon after its creation, and would be monitored for almost two decades. It is very likely police retained CENCOS' documents today housed Mexico's National Archive during the sackings of the building (see Illustration 4.1 and 4.2). During the July 7, 1977 intrusion, the police began in the last floor that housed the Latin files—according to Emilio—and by the time they reached the top they were too tired to take the most important documents. Nevertheless, the happenings "served as a great trigger to restore hope and to strengthen the alliance, the relationship, CENCOS' commitment with popular, social, and civil causes for the transformation of this

country."[141] After José passed away, CENCOS continued as an apolitical NGO and still serves a similar function in the field of social communications; however, with a vastly different forms of social media. Since then, Pepe's son has presided over the *Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal* (Mexico City's Human Rights Commission; CDHDF) from 2001-2009 and since 2012 serves as the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. CENCOS today serves as an information outlet for individuals and organizations—from the victims of political repression, conferences on health, to indigenous peoples who travel great distances to the place they have known and trust.

Conclusion: "Streams of ink and kilos of paper"[142]

The life of José Álvarez Icaza bears witness to the political radicalization of the Latin American continent in the 1960s, including the Catholic Church.[143] In the latter part of his life, Álvarez Icaza questioned the official anti-communist stance of the Church. In an interview published by *Proceso* magazine in 1980, Pepe revealed that although he was not a Marxist, he believed that the "future world would be socialist." He criticized the Church for being "closed, repressive, and ideological."[144] He was not was not alone. Individuals within the Church, like Jesuit Enrique Maza, dedicated their entire lives to challenge the Church's stance on freedom of expression and encouraged

[141] Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

[142] Statement by Emilio Álvarez Icaza to describe the long trajectory of CENCOS, "Ríos de tinta y kilos de papel." Emilio Álvarez Icaza, "Aniversario Revista Cencos-Iglesias," 9 December 1998, audio recording CENCOS Archive.

[143] For more on Pepe's ideological conversion see Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "Del 'Comunismo no' al compromiso con el pueblo," *Proceso* 14 April 1980, 10-11.

[144] Ortiz Pinchetti, "Del 'Comunismo no' al compromiso con el pueblo," *Proceso* 14 April 1980, 10-11.

readers to look deeper into the structural problems plaguing Latin American countries as a way of protecting all categories of rights, not just political.[145] Just like CENCOS distanced itself from the Church hierarchy, so did the Mexican Social Secretariat (SSM) that Father Pedro Velázquez headed for many years, acquiring its independence from the Episcopate in 1971.[146] The SSM was created in 1920 and initially served as a response to the "growing revolutionary syndicalism," and perceived a threat by traditional confederations of labor unions.[147] The Episcopate's leaders feared the social transformations in Mexico and Catholics feared the reinsertion of former president of Mexico, Lázaro Cárdenas, to the national scene after the Cuban Revolution. As such, all Catholic organizations gathered under the auspices of anti-communism through the CON.[148] Yet, the Latin American revolutionary scene, coupled with transformations brought on after Vatican II, drove many Catholics toward the social justice cause, including that of political prisoners.

The Catholic's leftist turn, as reflected in Liberation theology, inspired mobilizers mirrored revolution. This turn led many Catholics to the universal language of human rights. Driven by the teachings of a socially progressive and Marxist infused Catholic branch termed Liberation theology, adherents took on the cause and language of human rights in the height of the Cold War and thereafter. In Latin Americas as a whole this change began with a wave of critical publication on class relations and power

---

[145] For more on Enrique Maza, see chapter on Julio Scherer García (his cousin) and *Proceso* magazine. Enrique Maza, *¿Podemos opinar en la iglesia? opinar es construir* (México: Obra Nal. de la Buena Prensa, 1968), Rosendo Manzano and Enrique Maza, *México, Iglesia y movimiento estudiantil* (Montevideo: Centro de Documentación, Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos, Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional, 1969), Enrique Maza, *La libertad de expresión en la iglesia* (México: Oceano, 2006).

[146] Roy Palmer Domenico and Mark Y. Hanley, *Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Politics* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2006), 375-377.

[147] For more on the *Secretariado Social Mexicano* see Roberto Blancarte, *Historia de la Iglesia Católica en México*. México: Colegio Mexiquense; Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 130-134.

[148] Ortiz Pinchetti, "Del 'Comunismo no' al compromiso con el pueblo," *Proceso* 14 April 1980, 10-11.

structures along the lines of Frantz Fanon's *Les damnés de la terre* (1961), translated as *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), a meditation on the evils of colonialism and the best ways to oppose it. Latin Americans too produced critical Marxist publications reflecting regional realities of underdevelopment, poverty, and oppression. On education in Brazil, Paulo Freire wrote *Pedagogia do oprimido* (1968) translated in 1970 into *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* a work still on the reading curriculum of many aspiring teachers. In the theological realm, Gustavo Gutiérrez's *Teología de la liberación: perspectivas* in 1971, the translated version *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (1973), shook the Catholic Church for its interpretations. Three years later, Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart opened discussions on cultural imperialism and ideology by exploring Disney comics in *Para leer al Pato Donald* (1972), published as *How to Read Donald Duck* in 1975.[149] This leftward intellectual turn had a profound impact on social justice matters in Latin America.

Liberation theology, in particular, had long-lasting effects. The death of Salvadoran Bishop Óscar Romero, assassinated in 1980 while saying mass, alerted many to the violent realties in Central America. Romero, considered an adherent of Liberation theology, embodied the movement's institutional engagement with social and political issues through a more radical interpretation of the scripture, but one that brought priests, laymen, and laywomen closer to people in need, including indigenous groups. It is no coincidence that those actively engaged with Liberation theology in the 1960s and early 1970s eventually pioneered human rights institutions in the succeeding decades. The list includes Bishop Samuel Ruiz (1924-2011) who championed the rights

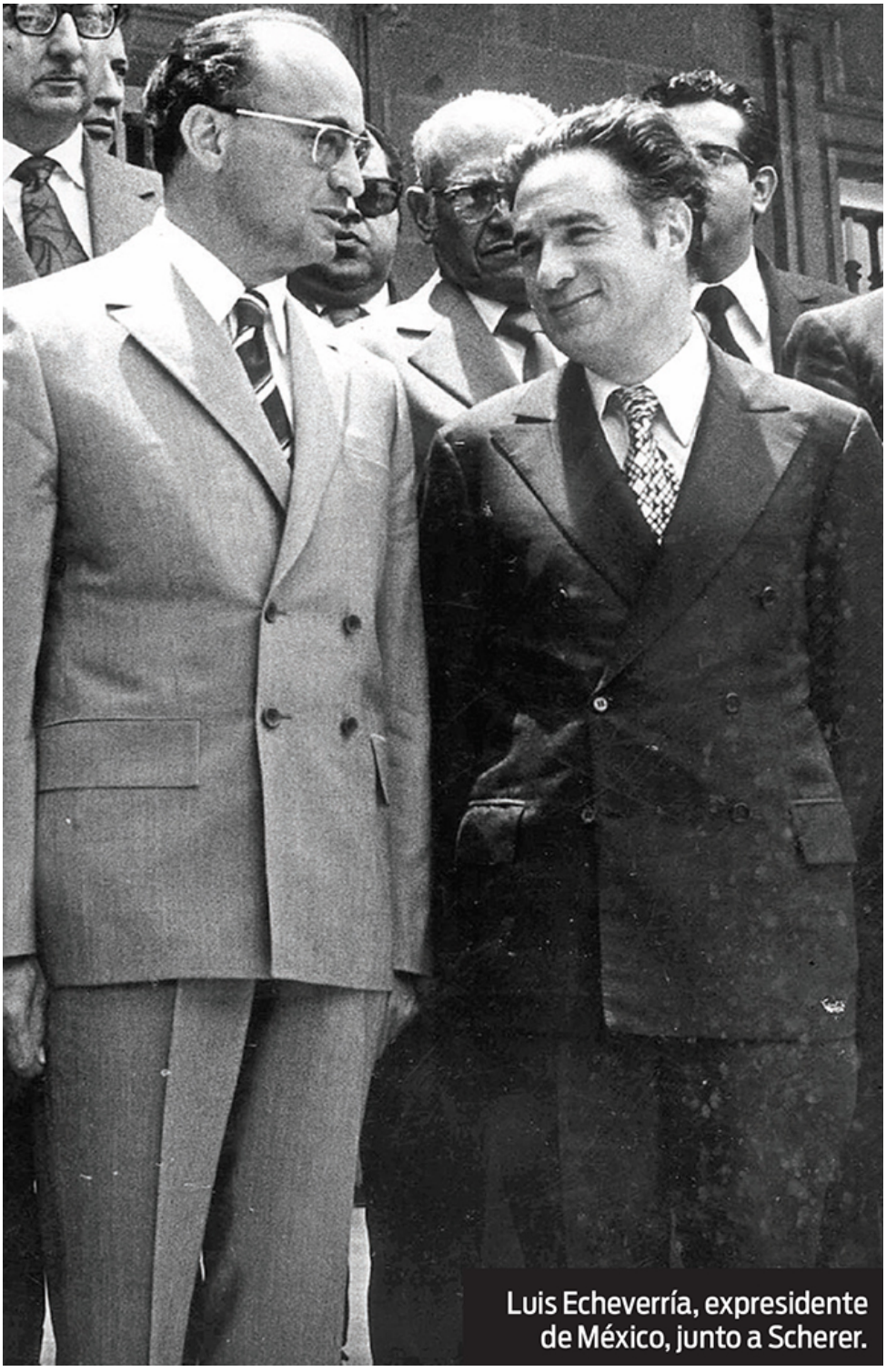
[149] These publications were discussed in HIST 6300-900 Latin America, 1810-Present (Fall 2010) course taught by Dr. James Cane-Carrasco (University of Oklahoma, Norman).

of indigenous peoples in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, including those of Guatemalan refugees fleeing the Central American Civil Wars. Another prominent individual was Ruiz's counterpart in the state of Morelos, Bishop Sergio Méndez Arceo (1907-1992), who promoted a form of grassroots Catholic organization, known as the *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* (CEB) or Basic ecclesial communities (BECs); Méndez was also famous for his support for Dr. Ivan Illich, founder of the polemic *Centro de Investigaciones Culturales* (CIC) in Cuernavaca and another in Anápolis, Brazil.[150] Mexico's incipient human rights dialogues therefore have a strong rooting Vatican II and Liberation theology, especially after 1968. The story of Pepe and CENCOS reveals how emerging non-governmental organizations collaborated with international ecumenical organizations and secular networks working on behalf of political prisoners and other causes, and through rising media communications challenged traditional institutions and disseminated the rising language of human rights.

[150] Jon Igelmo Zaldívar and Patricia Quiroga Uceda, "Ivan Illich and the Conflict with Vatican (1966-1969)," *The International Journal of Illich Studies* 2:1 (2010), 3.

Part III:

The Triumph of Human Rights in the Age of Oil and Mass Communications



ILLUS. 5.1. "Luis Echeverría, former president of Mexico, next to Scherer." Juan Carlos Talavera, "Alistan homenaje póstumo a Julio Scherer García (1926-2015)," *Excélsior,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/expresiones/2015/01/08/1001502#imagen-1>. (Reproduced without permission)

CHAPTER 5:

Julio Scherer García's Proceso: Human Rights in the Liberalization of the Mexican Press, 1976-1977

"*La cirugía y el periodismo*
remueven lo que encuentran.
El periodismo ha de ser exacto,
como el bisturí."[1]
–Julio Scherer García

Introduction

Thus far diverse groups – UN, Catholic, feminist – had struggled to establish new ways of seeing the individual's relation to the Mexican state. Ultimately, however, it was the transformation of the Mexican press in 1976 and the rise of Amnesty International that forced the diffusion of the human rights concepts in Mexico. In the summer of 1976, just months before leaving office, President Luis Echeverría retreated from what had been a brief moment of liberalization for one of the country's leading newspaper, *Excélsior.* Dating to the armed phase of the revolutionary period, the daily never truly enjoyed complete freedom of expression; however, when Julio Scherer García took over as director in 1968, *Excélsior* became one of the most important papers in Mexico and came to enjoy a growing stature in Latin America.[2] However, on the 8th of July 1976 and amid sexennial elections, Echeverría ousted Scherer. The famous image taken just outside the installations of *Excélsior,* with Scherer in the center, shows a display of solidarity as colleagues walk out in protest alongside their beloved editor—to his respective left and right stand journalist Gastón García Cantú and cartoonist Abel

[1] Translates to "Surgery and journalist remove (or stir) what they find. Journalism must be precise as the scalpel." Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007), 20.

[2] Julio Scherer García, "El periodismo frent al poder," *Proceso,* no. 1993, 11 January 2015, 26.

Quezada (see Illustration 5.2).[3] Novelist Octavio Paz and Scherer's close friend and playwright Vicente Leñero as well as his first cousin, Jesuit priest Enrique Maza, also abandoned the paper (and many others).[4] Interestingly enough, Echeverría's assault on the press followed the government's usual approach toward a critical media—that is, co-opting, rather than censoring or nationalizing print sources, all measures that figured prominently in the long history of Mexico's government-media relations. This system of media control dated to the 1940s and 1950s, and "permitted ideological pluralism and occasional criticism of the government without compromising official control of the press."[5] President Echeverría's attack on *Excélsior,* Julio Scherer García, and his team—for exceeding the allotted level of government criticism—led to the establishment of new print sources that were less susceptible to co-optation and far more critical, and thereby contributed to increased media democratization in Mexico.

Of the various publications that grew from the "Golpe de *Excélsior*" (blow to *Excélsior*), it was the news magazine *Proceso* that most actively employed the term "human rights." The first issue of *Proceso* (Process) came out in November 1976, just before

---

[3] According to Vicente Leñero, Juan Miranda took the famous photograph. See cover and copyright page in Vicente Leñero, *Los periodistas* (México: Joaquín Mortiz, ©1978, 1994). Also see Julio Scherer García's first chapter on Gastón García Cantú in *La terca memoria* (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 2007), 13 and "Índex de Ilustraciones," in Humberto Musacchio, *Historia gráfica del periodismo mexicano* (México: Gráfica, Creatividad y Diseño, 2003), 203; Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007), 225.

[4] Leñero worked as a journalist, but is also recognized for his playwrights. He wrote screenplays for some of Mexico's top grossing films (adopted from books), like *El callejón de los milagros,* 1994; *La ley de Heroles*, 1999; and *El crimen del Padre Amaro,* 2002. Leñero also wrote a theater play based on the work of anthropologist Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sanchez*, 1961. Lewis asked Leñero if he was interested in doing the theater adaptation. Leñero spent two years writing, but Lewis died before its completion. The theater Jorge Negrete performed the play for almost half a year. Gustavo Ambrosio, "Vicente Leñero y su legado en el cine," *Milenio-Hey,* 3 December 2014 <http://www.milenio.com/hey/cine/Vicente_Lenero_legado_peliculas_cine-muere_Vicente_Lenero-muerte_Vicente_Lenero_0_420558139.html>; Virginia Bautista, "Los Hijos de Sánchez, un escándalo de medio siglo," *Excélsior-Expresiones,* 7 August 2011 <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/node/759087>; Luciano Concheiro San Vicente and Ana Sofía Rodríguez, "Vicente Leñero: fragmentos de una conversación," *Nexos,* 3 December 2014 <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=23559>.

[5] Chappell H. Lawson, *Building the Fourth Estate Democratization and the Rise of a Free Press in Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 26-27.

Echeverría left office. Julio Scherer García, along with Vicente Leñero, Enrique Maza, and other contributors, created the publication very much in the style of *Time* or *Newsweek* magazine. The "*golpe*" intended to discipline a group of journalists and their daily, thus resulted in a profoundly important moment for freedom of the press in Mexico. For cultural writer José Agustín, the attack on the daily and the subsequent establishment of *Proceso* proved an acute historical moment, given that "it broke with the practice whereby the victims of presidential arbitrariness resign or reintegrate into the system."[6] Scherer and his colleagues, on the other hand, defied co-optation tactics and proved that their work could survive with the support of their readers, thus ignited a new era of print production in Mexico of investigative journalism, one that still continues today, despite pressures from the government, the private sector, and now organized crime.[7] In this context, Scherer and his team engaged internationalist conceptions of rights by systematically covering regional justice-themed stories, like South American government repression and Amnesty International's campaigns on behalf of political prisoners. *Proceso* reporting that includes the terms "human rights" between 1976 and 1978, prior to the visit of President James Carter to Mexico in 1979, demonstrate a slow progression toward the replacement of an earlier social justice terminology for that of human rights, which in the late 1970s became synonymous for political and civil rights (especially those of prisoners), largely due to the Amnesty International's 1977 Prisoners of Conscience Year campaign. The story of Julio Scherer

[6] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 121.

[7] See comments by Sergio Aguayo Quezada on the repercussions of Julio Scherer Garcia's death, which according to Aguayo Quezada the mass reporting's on Scherer's career reflect the journalist's relevance. For the COLMEX intellectual, Scherer passed away just when Mexico's press is assaulted by various fronts: government officials, businessmen, and organized crime. Moreover, Aguayo Quezada reminds viewers that Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists. See "Julio Scherer García," *Primer Plano,* Canal Once (Instituto Politécnico Nacional), XEIPN, Mexico City, 12 January 2015 (Television) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zA5WjopsKKg#t=237>.

García's *Proceso* tells of a struggle for freedom of the press in Mexico, but also the growing nationalization of internationalist conceptions of rights, especially human rights, as delineated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"Plaza San Jacinto número 11, San Ángel": Before the Olivetti Typewriter[8]

Tall and robustly built, and with a presence that filled the room, Scherer García descended from a number of prominent Mexican families. Julio Scherer's grandfather was Hugo Scherer, a German banker who migrated to Mexico in the mid-nineteenth century.[9] The German-born technocrat's son, Pablo Scherer, was born in Mexico, but actually soldiered on behalf of Kaiser Wilhem during the First Word War. Julio Scherer's youthful comforts derived the family fortune, and "thanks to a job in relation to the stock market" his father Pablo had, that is according to his friend Leñero. The Scherer García residence located in Plaza San Jacinto number 11 of the affluent neighborhood of San Ángel, which today houses the Saturday Bazaar, famed destination for countless Mexico City artists and tourists.[10] But Julio's background included other prominent families as well. He often complained when people failed to reference his maternal last name of García, which he inherited from his mother Paz

[8] Leñero provides the exact location of Julio Scherer García's childhood home in the prominent neighborhood of San Ángel in Mexico City. Vicente Leñero, "Julio Scherer: Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," in *Scherer, Salgar, Clóvis Rossi, Sábat: Premio Homenaje CEMEX+FNPI,* edited by CEMEX+FNPI (México: FCE, Fundación Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007), 15; *Proceso* reprinted portions of Leñero's essay in "Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," *Proceso,* no. 1993, 11 January 2015, 29.

[9] Hugo directed the *Banco Nacional de México* (National Bank of Mexico, today Banamex) when the institution first arose after a merge between the old *Banco Nacional Mexicano* and the *Banco Mercantil* during the presidency of Manuel González Flores (1880-1884)—a fuse designed "to open to the government itself new sources of funds and loans." Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[10] Vicente Leñero, "Julio Scherer: Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," in *Scherer, Salgar, Clóvis Rossi, Sábat,* edited by CEMEX+FNPI, 15; Vicente Leñero, "Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," *Proceso,* no. 1993, 11 January 2015, 29.

García Gómez—daughter of the prominent jurist Julio García Pimentel from Guanajuato, who served as president of Mexico's *Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación* (Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, SCJN).[11] From Pablo and Paz, an aristocratic mix between prominent and multinational families, Julio Scherer García was born, on April 7, 1926 in Mexico City, making him the third and last son of couple, a child born into many of the critical currents of a post-revolutionary Mexico.[12]

Scherer's upbringing and education resembled that of children from other well-to-do families. His initial formation grew out of his schooling in the *Colegio Alemán "Alexander von Humboldt,"* a German primary through high school established by migrants in 1894 so their children retain linguistic and cultural practices from the home country.[13] At the *Colegio Alemán* he thought himself "clumsy, incapacitated for life," and he left halfway through middle school.[14] The remainder of secondary and high school he completed in the Jesuit school *Colegio Bachilleratos*, extension of the *Instituto Patria*, where Scherer "learned the pragmatism of the Society of Jesus, the anticommunist fury, the ignoble passion for Francisco Franco, *el Caudillo*."[15] Among Schere's contemporaries were Pablo Latapí, expert in the study of education, and with journalist Manuel Buendía, remembered for his writings on police corruption and its links to the CIA,

---

[11] It was García Pimentel's high position that first brought the family to Mexico City. This same Julio García briefly acted as Undersecretary of Foreign Relations during the ill-fated governance of Francisco I. Madero (1911-1913). Elia Baltazar, "Homenaje biográfico a Julio Scherer, *Periodismo en tiempo real*, 16 January 2015 <http://periodismoentiemporeal.tumblr.com>; Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007), 74; Julio Scherer García, *La terca memoria* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007), 146.

[12] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada*, 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[13] Julio Scherer García, *Vivir* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2012), 12; Colegio Alemán Von Humboldt, "Historia del Colegio," <http://www.humboldt.edu.mx/index.php/prueba/hijo-2>.

[14] Julio Scherer García, *Vivir* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2012), 11-12.

[15] *Caudillo* translates to strongman, political boss. Scherer García, *Vivir*, 11; Julio Scherer García, *La terca memoria* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007), 144.

which resulted in his brutal assassination in 1984.[16] However, the comforts of a privileged upbringing came to an abrupt end with the family's sudden economic downturn.[17] But life continued for the Scherer-García family. In 1945, after graduating from the *Colegio Bachilleratos*, Julio enrolled in law school in what had been the *Escuela Nacional de Jurisprudencia* (National School of Jurisprudence), in the *Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso* located in Mexico City's historic center.[18]

Scherer's early life, however, remains a mystery due to his reticence for public exhibition and longstanding refusal to be interviewed. "*Ni madres* (…) I am a reporter and I ask the questions," was his famed 1971 response to an Associated Press reporter seeking an interview after Scherer accepted the María Moors Cabot Prize granted by Columbia University.[19] "My father has insisted, and rightly so, that his work speaks for him: his interviews, his reports," wrote his daughter María Scherer Ibarra upon Julio's death.[20] Indeed, Scherer García's journalistic trajectory continues to speak volumes not only about his career, but the transformation of the press, journalists' defiance of the long-standing system of a "*prensa vendida*" (co-opted press) that legitimized the

---

[16] Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, *Buendia: el primer asesinato de la narcopolítica en México* (México, D. F.: Grijalbo, 2012). Julio Scherer García, *La terca memoria* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007), 143-144. For the material on Scherer's early schooling see Blanche Petrich, "Scherer, 1926-2015," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/002n1pol>.

[17] Vicente Leñero, "Julio Scherer: Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," in *Scherer, Salgar, Clóvis Rossi, Sábat,* edited by CEMEX+FNPI, 15, Vicente Leñero, "Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," *Proceso,* no. 1993, 11 January 2015, 29-30.

[18] When the government began the construction of the UNAM, the Faculty of Law moved to the current campus in *Ciudad Universitaria* (University City, or CU). Thereafter, he spent over a year in the *Centro Cultural Universitario* (University Cultural Center), the predecessor to the Iberoamericana UniversityJulio Scherer García, *La terca memoria* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007), 97.

[19] *Ni madres* is slang and vaguely translate to "hell, no" or "no [fucking] way." Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[20] María Scherer Ibarra, "Julio Scherer García: Mi padre," *Letras Libres,* October 2014 [Reprinted 7 January 2015] <http://www.letraslibres.com/blogs/polifonia/julio-scherer-garcia-mi-padre>.

revolutionary government. As Elena Poniatowska wrote, "How to understand the reality of Mexico without the journalism of Julio Scherer García?"[21]

Reforma 18: "De profesión, periodista."[22]

It was at *Excélsior* that Scherer emerged as one of the country's foremost journalists. His first contact with the daily took place in 1947 when he began working as a *"mandadero,"* an errand or messenger boy.[23] At the age of twenty-one he entered as an apprentice.[24] After various failed attempts at a college degree, his father spoke to him about his future and both concluded Scherer liked to write and how years earlier he had edited texts for the Jesuit editorial the *Buena Prensa* (Good Press). Together they visited the general manager of *Excélsior*, at the time Gilberto Figueroa, an acquaintance his father made at the Rotary Club. It was then that Scherer became an apprentice of Enrique Borrego Escalante, director of *La Extra,* the second printing of *Excélsior's* noon edition *Últimas Noticias* (Latest News). Demand for frequent news reporting during World War II had led to *La Extra*'s creation, and the section continued for several years thereafter.[25] Soon, Julio could be described "journalist, by profession," as the *Dirección Federal de Seguridad* (Federal Security Directorate, DFS) officer wrote in his 1977 surveillance file.[26] By the 1960s, very little of the errand boy remained; Scherer now

---

[21] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[22] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 43.

[23] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[24] Granados article was originally published on December 4, 2005 in issue 1518 of *Proceso.* Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, "La obra editorial de Julio Scherer," *Proceso*, no. 1993, 11 January 2015, 74-75.

[25] Scherer García, *Vivir*, 15; Julio Scherer García, *La terca memoria* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007), 93, 147-148.

[26] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el

conducted exclusive interviews with world leaders when "Don" Manuel Becerra Acosta (senior) directed the daily and when Carlos Denegri stood as one of the paper's most polemical and "sold-out" to the government journalist—who met justice from an unexpected source when he was shot by his wife in 1970.[27] In fact, the unrelenting search for the interview characterized Scherer throughout his career. In 1979 he asked his beloved friend Vicente Leñero how they were different, journalistically speaking. Frustrated with Leñero's responses, Scherer finally replied: "In that if we were in front of Picasso, you would observe his paintings and I would interview him."[28] It was his journalistic drive, his interaction with the powerful and defiance of power, as well as his astute nature that led to his ascension to the directorship of *Excélsior.*

Just as his father had predicted, Julio Scherer García became director of *Excélsior* in 1968, amid boisterous student protests. In 1963 he entered management of the paper as its sub-director, and just five years later, amid boisterous student protests and an increasingly defensive national political order, he became director.[29] "The day of the appointment President Díaz Ordaz called me by phone. Congratulations. After him, all his secretariats, governors, senators, representatives." Scherer took leadership of the newspaper on August 31, and *Reforma 18* became his second home, short for the famous *Paseo de la Reforma*—an elaborately designed avenue that runs across Mexico City—and

---

espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 48.

[27] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>; "La cooperativa que le amargaba el desayuno a Luis Echeverría," *La Coperacha,* 10 July 2012 <http://www.lacoperacha.org.mx/cooperativa-excelsior-recuento.php>; Manuel Ajenjo, "El chayote, origen y paternidad," *El Financiero* [Opinión y Análisis], 7 October 2013 <http://eleconomista.com.mx/columnas/columna-especial-politica/2013/10/07/chayote-origen-paternidad>.

[28] Vicente Leñero, "Julio Scherer: Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," in *Scherer, Salgar, Clóvis Rossi, Sábat,* edited by CEMEX+FNPI, 27; Vicente Leñero, "Treinta y cinco años alrededor de Julio," *Proceso,* no. 1993, 11 January 2015, 32.

[29] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

for the *Excélsior* headquarters.[30] All seemed well between *Excélsior's* leadership and the government, especially since Díaz Ordaz had made a trip to the paper's installations a month earlier on September 12 "to launch some new equipment."[31] However, public protests disturbed the relationship between the press and the government. On the balcony of the third floor of the *Reforma 18* building where Scherer often chatted with journalists, he witnessed crowds of students indicting the press with the slogan "*prensa vendida*" (sold out press), signifying journalists' complicity with the government. These cries deeply disturbed Scherer, yet he also sympathized with the protestor's cause.[32] The protestors indicated that the *Excélsior* of 1968 differed little from other print sources. Scherer initially seemed aloof and more like an observer preoccupied with his newly assigned duties, and indeed much like the rest of the country that often showed itself insensitive and indifferent toward the demands of a generation of young people with considerably more privileges and opportunities than themselves.

All of this changed when soldiers fired on student protesters in the plaza of Tlatelolco. The assault shocked many, transformed some, and muted most. The *Excélsior* photographer commissioned for the October 2 meeting in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* (Plaza of Three Cultures) arrived frantic that evening and "stormed" into Scherer's office. "It was awful…I stepped on corpses. Soft. I sank." Scherer questioned Jaime González on the happenings, "What did you see? Tell me."[33] According to Claire Brewster, one of *Excélsior's* October 3 front-page pieces noted the paper's dismay toward the acts of Tlatelolco, where photographer González had been reportedly hurt,

---

[30] Julio Scherer García, *Los presidentes* (México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007), 18.

[31] Claire Brewster, "The Student Movement of 1968 and the Mexican Press: The Cases of "Excélsior" and "Siempre!," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 21:2 (April 2002), 176.

[32] Scherer García, *Vivir,* 33-34.

[33] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 20-21.

a "bayonet wound in the left hand and his camera destroyed by blows from a rifle butt." His colleague Ricardo Escoto's camera was destroyed.[34] The October 3 morning edition also included eight columns on the happenings, while hours later the front page of the *Últimas Noticias* published a photo by Jorge Villa Alcalá showcasing "a chilling photograph: shoes and clothing left on the grass in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas.*" Political cartoonist Abel Quezada would send three illustrations every day to *Reforma 18*, "I don't want to be left out. If a cartoon does not work, you'll have others to choose from."[35] *Excélsior* published Quezada's graphic titled "*¿Por qué?*" (Why?), and below a complete blackout in the space designated for the comic (see Illustration 5.3).[36] Meanwhile, Elena Poniatowska dubbed October 3 as "the day on which the Tlatelolco massacre was practically silenced."[37] With the exceptions of some emblematic stories that filtered into press days following the killings, the majority of the Mexican media remained conspicuously silent about the October 2 assault, while the dailies that dared to report on the events in question were immediately reprimanded.

In the days following, the Díaz Ordaz administrations sought to contain hostile media coverage and to reign-in undisciplined journalists. On October 4, the president summoned editors and key media representatives to a noon meeting in the building of the Organizing Committee for the Olympic games. The press convocation served as a routine measure, a simple reminder to communication representatives of their

---

[34] Daniel Cazés, *Crónica 1968*. México, D.F.: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 1993), 218; Brewster, "The Student Movement of 1968 and the Mexican Press: The Cases of "Excélsior" and "Siempre!," 182.

[35] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 20-21.

[36] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[37] Translation by Claire Brewster ["el día en que prácticamente se silencia la matanza en Tlatelolco"]. Elena Poniatowska, "La prensa en tiempos de Díaz Ordaz," *El Nacional,* 8 February 1993, 1, cited in Claire Brewster, "The Student Movement of 1968 and the Mexican Press: The Cases of "Excélsior" and "Siempre!," 173.

responsibility toward the "*Patria*" (homeland) and the Revolution. President Díaz Ordaz never arrived. "We all understood. Tlatelolco weighed on the presidential mood," wrote Scherer. In the luncheon, Secretary of the Presidency Emilio Martínez Manautou (1964-1970) reminded everyone in attendance about the importance behind the Olympic games set for October 12.[38] This was Mexico's moment, and it was important for journalists to pay their part, to comply, to practice "patriotic language," and to foment a positive image of the country for the world, emphasized the Secretary. The government planned on compensating all for their compliance; Martínez Manautou "told us that after the Olympics, the government would punctually pay our bills," and "[h]e asked for discretion."[39] Those in attendance hailed Díaz Ordaz's actions as patriotic. Some believed "[h]is firm hand had saved the Olympiad and had preserved a clean image of Mexico to the world."[40] Others murmured that the "students" and "brawlers" had cornered the government, leaving it with no other choice. For Scherer, these professionals served as spokesmen of their companies.[41] Conversely, it seemed to the government that Scherer and his team had acted against the homeland. Martínez Manautou relayed a message to the *Excélsior* director, "You betrayed the President."[42] Thus began the "trying days" for the paper's director, initially welcomed but soon after repudiated for his supposed "assault" on the president, one of the three pillars of Mexican society of which the press was not to speak ill of—"the President and his family, the Army and the Virgin of Guadalupe"[43] For Scherer,

[38] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 21-22.
[39] Scherer García, *Vivir,* 34.
[40] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 21.
[41] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 21.
[42] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 21-22.
[43] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 21-22; Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015.

the working days of October 1968 signaled "the beginning of a long battle between submission and freedom," with himself at the forefront of a team divided between those who supported the director's purported affront to presidentialism and those who respected President Díaz Ordaz's 1968 pacification measures.[44]

The Press Under Media Tycoons[45]

While these events were playing out, other voices entered into the process. By 1968 important business interests monopolized the Mexican media, and for that reason, the October government-press meeting served to remind a critical branch of the private sector of its responsibility toward the "*Patria*" (homeland) and the Revolution… a responsibility all the more pressing, given the historic link between entrepreneurs and the federal government. Indeed, according to journalist Blanche Petrich, the "¡*Prensa vendida*!" slogans had little effect on the media barons: "At the banquets most media owners, the O'Farrill and García Valseca, the Azcárraga and Alarcón, were inclined to applaud the 'firm hand' and the 'exemplary response' of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz to the 'conspiracy,' without acknowledging in any way this popular indictment."[46] Who were the O'Farrill, the García Valseca, the Azcárraga, and the Alarcón that Petrich so easily identified as the media barons? The families represented Mexico's communication dynasties, consolidated in the post-revolutionary period. The O'Farrill and the Azcárraga families were pioneers of radio and commercial television in Mexico. Both groups had amassed significant amounts of wealth and industrial and political

[44] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 21.

[45] Spanish for the Grand Press, term coined by Fátima Fernández Christlieb. See *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 81.

[46] Blanche Petrich, "¡*Prensa vendida*!" *La Jornada [Suplemento Especial],* 2 October 2008 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2008/10/02/6.html>.

clout through government concessions, particularly during the Miguel Alemán Valdés administration (1946-1952), the latter deeply involved in Mexico's media enterprises. [47] Meanwhile, the O'Farrill's diversified economic portfolio combined with alliances in the private and public sector, typifies the trajectory of powerful families in Mexico, dynasties whose affluence depend on the management of information which they regulate through the ownership of print media sources.

Unlike its media counterparts, the García Valseca print empire met nationalization. While he had ventured into the print world with comics, *Paquito,* and sports, *Esto,* García Valseca's media enterprises did not take off until the late 1940s, when he obtained economic support from Maximino Ávila Camacho, older brother of President Miguel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946), as the latter was aspiring to the presidency.[48] Regional strongman and former governor of Puebla (1937-1941), Maximino aided his friend García Valseca in 1940 in financing the chain's initial publications, debuting in the border region with *El Fronterizo* in Ciudad Juárez, followed by the purchase of *El Heraldo de Chihuahua* and the creation of *El Sol de Puebla.* Soon after, García Valseca acquired *El Continental* in El Paso.[49] By 1972 the *Cadena García Valseca* or *El Sol de México* chain, as it became known, included "32 dailies, 36 color offset presses, 64 black and white presses and 23 newspaper buildings," with several *El Sol*

---

[47] Efraín Pérez Espino, "El monopolio de la televisión comercial en México," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 41:4 (Oct.-Dec. 1979), 1440-1442.

[48] *Poblano* refers to a person from the state of Puebla. Salvador E. Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida* (Iztacalco, D.F.: Editorial Tradición, 1985), 7, 9-10. Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 77.

[49] Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2006), 85; Salvador E. Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida* (Iztacalco, D.F.: Editorial Tradición, 1985), 35, 39. For more on Maximino in Puebla see Sergio Valencia Castrejón, *Poder regional y política nacional en México: el gobierno de Maximino Ávila Camacho en Puebla (1937-1941)* (México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1996).

versions in key regional cities.[50] Likely contributing to the chain's rapid growth was access to credit through the state's financial institution the *Nacional Financiera* (National Financer, NAFIN).[51] Created in 1934, NAFIN financed state-driven development projects (construction, irrigation, electric power, etc.), and stood as second in importance in Mexico behind the *Banco de México.* Due to World War II shortages and limited response from the private sector the *Nacional Financiera* expanded investments to "paper, cement, and steel."[52] State-directed initiatives in the post-revolutionary period, alongside banking institutions like NAFIN, spurred the development of privately owned media conglomerates like the *Cadena García Valseca* which grew tremendously under the Alemán administration, making it a primary producer of news in Mexico, with a pro-government and nationalist stance.

It is hardly surprising, then, that media companies proved susceptible to government intervention under subsequent PRI administrations. By the Díaz Ordaz administration, the *El Sol* chain stood as a powerful media force in the country; from 1964 to 1970 it stood at its peak.[53] García Valseca and President Díaz Ordaz had been good friends, both coming from the state of Puebla; however, the relationship strained

---

[50] Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2006), 88.

[51] Peter Schenkel, "La Estructura de Poder de los Medios de Comunicación en cinco países latinoamericanos," in *Comunicación y cambio social,* edited by Peter Schenkel and Marco Ordóñez (Quito, Ecuador: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, ILDIS; Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina, CIESPAL, 1975), 35, 38.

[52] Douglas Bennett and Kenneth Sharpe, "The State as Banker and Entrepreneur: The Last-Resort Character of the Mexican State's Economic Intervention, 1917-76," *Comparative Politics* 12:2 (January 1980), 175-176; Pablo J. López, "Nacional Financiera Durante la Industrialización Vía Sustitución de Importaciones en México," *América Latina en la Historia Económica* 19:3 (September-December 2012), 130.

[53] Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 13.

for no apparent reason.[54] Because Valseca still held important contacts within the government he secured an endorsement from the *Nacional Financiera* for a ten million dollar loan, one offered to Valseca from the Casa Karl Loeb Rhoades.[55] In 1970, however, Valseca sought a government buyer for his cattle ranch "*El Sol*" to meet the ten million dollar loan obligation. Representatives from the *Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería* (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock) appraised the property, yet months before leaving office Díaz Ordaz broke off negotiations and notified Valseca that the deal needed the president-elect's approval.[56] In early 1971, Echeverría implied interest in aiding the chain, yet the purchase of the ranch never formalized. Instead, Valseca signed a trust giving part ownership of his newspapers to the government on March 28, 1972.[57] Clearly a powerful media source, totaling thirty-seven dailies and representing twenty-two percent of Mexico's newspapers, the 1972 government response to the *Cadena García Valseca's* economic crisis signposted Echeverría's nationalist agenda or what Borrego referred to as attempts to "*estatizar*" (statization) the chain.[58]

Not long after, Echeverría nationalized the García Valseca newspaper enterprise. Indeed, in 1972 the government assumed control of the *Cadena García Valseca* when one of the state's financial institutions, *Sociedad Mexicana de Crédito Industrial*

---

[54] Years later, the media magnate asked those close to the President why Díaz Ordaz distanced himself from Valseca, and came to believe it had been due to criticisms the *Sol* newspapers published of Dr. Rafael Moreno Valle when he served as governor of Puebla from 1969 to 1972. Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 82, 87.

[55] Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 85, 87.

[56] Today the *Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación* (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food, SAGARPA). Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 87.

[57] Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 89.

[58] The number of newspapers ranges between thirty-two and thirty-seven, with the latter number provided by Salvador E. Borrego. Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 76, 91.

(Mexican Society of Industrial Credit, SOMEX), collected on Valseca's debt in the amount of 400 million pesos.[59] In 1962 the state bailed out SOMEX, thus becoming proprietor of "a second major industrial development bank" and an investor in some forty firms.[60] Through SOMEX, the state took ownership of several private entities. Valseca, however, sought to settle his loan with the government and gain back full control of his chain. Northern industrialists' attempts to rescue García Valseca signaled the private sector's aggravation with Echeverría's government. Disturbed by government affront to private property, like other business leaders, Eugenio Garza Sada (1892-1973) offered Valseca help. Eugenio expressed desire to help García Valseca secure a loan to pay off the government and retain full control of his newspaper chain. While negotiations proceeded, the assassination of Garza Sada on September 17, 1973 permanently stalled the rescue attempt.[61] On October 24, 1973, García Valseca sold his share of the chain to SOMEX for 125 million pesos to be paid over two years. "I did it against my wishes and my interests," recounted Valseca.[62] While Echeverría announced the García Valseca Chain would remain national patrimony, many

---

[59] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 77-78. Also see Peter Schenkel, "La Estructura de Poder de los Medios de Comunicación en cinco países latinoamericanos," in *Comunicación y cambio social,* edited by Peter Schenkel and Marco Ordóñez (Quito, Ecuador: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, ILDIS; Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina, CIESPAL, 1975), 35.

[60] Douglas Bennett and Kenneth Sharpe, "The State as Banker and Entrepreneur: The Last-Resort Character of the Mexican State's Economic Intervention, 1917-76," *Comparative Politics* 12:2 (January 1980), 179.

[61] See Promissory Note of Eugenio Garza Sada to First National Bank for 14 million dollars with the percentage distribution among the various Monterrey Group industries on page 118 and 119. Salvador E. Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, (Iztacalco, D.F.: Editorial Tradición), 93-101.

[62] Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*, 104.

suspected the president had masterminded the takeover, and improbably enough, "whom the *vox populi* blamed [for] the murder."[63]

The García Valseca episode exemplifies the private and governmental scuffle over control and management of information. Most narratives note Echeverría "purchased" the newspaper franchise implying no ill intent, touting the take-over as a nationalist measure, representative of his sexennial's populist politics.[64] Other, like Carlos Monsiváis, believed Echeverría needed the press to compensate for his lack of holdings in television—a need all the more important for the president's "reconciliation project" and for cleaning up his image after serving in *Gobernación* during the Díaz Ordaz government.[65] What better than the Valseca chain. Some even speculated that Echeverría sought an ideological clout in the print medium that was comparable to what Alemán held in television. Whatever the motivation, the nationalization of the García Valseca chain had profound implications on freedom of the press. The ideological clout behind large newspapers chains perpetuates a line of journalism that shields selected private interests and the government sector from any serious criticism, a legacy of a press highly linked to the revolutionary project with official backing that today still selectively omits and misinforms.[66]

---

[63] Andrés Becerrill, "Excélsior en la Historia: Eugenio Garza Sada, el crimen que cimbró al país," *Excélsior,* 17 September 2013 <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/2013/09/17/918931#imagen-4>.

[64] See Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México*, 88.

[65] Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México,* 98-99.

[66] On November 16, 1973, shortly after acquiring full ownership of the thirty-seven newspapers, the administration announced that the government had no intention of selling any publicly owned companies, including the press chain. The front page of *El Nacional* reiterated the official stance that matters of national patrimony were not for sale.[66] Approaching the end of his term, Echeverría sold the chain to the *Organización Editorial Mexicana* (Mexican Editorial Organization, OEM). The key stockowner and close friend of Echeverría, Mario Vázquez Raña (1932-2015) took over in April 1976. Reproduction of front page of *El Nacional* see page 109. Borrego, *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida,* 106-107; Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 77.

Criticism that Legitimizes

While the government sought control over the production of information, political leaders also encouraged criticism as a source of legitimation. In Mario Vargas Llosa's famous 1990 speech in Mexico, when he explained how Mexico was indeed a dictatorship, the Nobel laureate described the PRI as possessing "all the characteristics of a dictatorship: permanence, not of a man, but of a party." Moreover, the "camouflaged" dictatorship depended on state-accepted denunciation, with a "party that concedes enough space for criticism, in the measure that such criticisms serves its purposes; it serves, because it confirms it is a democratic party." Yet, the "criticism that somehow threatens its permanence" the party "suppresses by all means."[67] Through the recruitment of intellectuals, journalists in the case of the press, the PRI appropriately regulated rapprochement. Vargas Llosa noted that he knew of no other Latin American system that so effectively incorporated intellectuals, subtly and through bribery—such as the dispensation of public posts or appointments, for example.[68] As Vargas Llosa alluded, one way the official party and its political leaders secured the appropriate level of criticism was precisely through official funding. The majority of newspapers, as well

---

[67] "*México es la dictadura perfecta. La dictadura perfecta no es el comunismo. No es la Unión Soviética. No es Fidel Castro. La dictadura perfecta es México. Porque es la dictadura camuflada, de tal modo que puede parecer no ser una dictadura. Pero tiene de hecho, si uno escarba, toda las características de la dictadura: la permanencia, no de un hombre, pero sí de un partido. Un partido que es inamovible. Un partido que concede suficiente espacio para la crítica, en la medida que esa crítica le sirva, le sirve, porque confirma que es un partido democrático, pero que suprime por todos los medios, incluso los peores. Aquella crítica que de alguna manera pone en peligro su permanencia. Una dictadura que además, ha creado una retórica que lo justifica, una retórica de izquierda, para la cual, a lo largo de su historia recluto, muy eficientemente, a los intelectuales, a la inteligencia.*" See video "Vargas Llosa y la dictadura perfecta," *YouTube* [Dr. Carlos Altamirano Cano] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu60OuwuZtg>.

[68] "*Yo no creo que haya en América Latina ningún caso de sistema de dictadura que haya reclutado tan eficientemente al medio intelectual, sobornándolo de una manera muy sutil, a través de trabajos, a través de nombramientos, a través de cargos públicos, sin exigirle una duración sistemática, como hacen los dictadores vulgares. Por el contrario, pidiéndole mas bien una actitud crítica, porque esa era la mejor manera de garantizar la permanencia de ese partido en el poder*." See video "Vargas Llosa y la dictadura perfecta," *YouTube* [Dr. Carlos Altamirano Cano] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu60OuwuZtg>.

as numerous journalists on the state payroll, could not subsist without the regime's monies, and so they engaged in self-censorship for the sake of their existence.[69] Without official subsidies newspapers would have to sell sufficient publicity ads and secure wide circulation, something they could not yet secure.[70] In that form of economic aid the government operated as both a client and "'pressure group' over the journalistic publication's general politics, with all the grave consequences imaginable."[71] As Fátima Fernández Christlieb argues, these co-optation measures revealed the Mexican press as "an element that corporativized [*corporativizador*], a neutralizing instrument of demands and dissatisfactions."[72] Up to the 1970s, both private and publicly owned print sources displayed elements of modernization in their design (technology, distribution, content) alongside components associated with a dictatorial or militaristic system of governance (economic dependence on public funds, suppression if the limits of criticisms exceeded admissible levels).

State involvement in media production was in the form of official bulletins, and control of front-page spaces for official news. The use of bulletined news resulted in two vices: "the passivity of the reporter who, instead of going after the news and investigate, awaits the official version, and the so-called 'bribe,' as the reward in cash or payment in kind that often accompanies the bulleting to ensure its dissemination is known."[73]

---

[69] Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, "[A]proximación a la prensa mexicana (notas sobre el periodismo diario)," *Revista Mexicana de Ciencia Política* 69, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM (July-Sept. 1972), 49-50.

[70] Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, "[A]proximación a la prensa mexicana (notas sobre el periodismo diario)," *Revista Mexicana de Ciencia Política* 69, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM (July-Sept. 1972), 50.

[71] Daniel Cosío Villegas, "Mordazas: de oro y de hierro," *Excélsior,* 7 March 1969, 6, cited in Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, "[A]proximación a la prensa mexicana (notas sobre el periodismo diario)," *Revista Mexicana de Ciencia Política* 69 (July-Sept. 1972), 51.

[72] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 80.

[73] "*Sin embargo, la práctica de los boletines genera, al menos, dos vicios que desde entonces lastran la labor*

Moreover, the government press agencies instituted a system whereby newspaper editors employed their front pages on the "official version of national events" probed by bulletined news.[74] While editors printed criticisms, they relegated them to other pages, especially reserved for the editorial section, often ideologically in opposition to front-page news, however, the newspaper could not replace or discard the bulletin information altogether. The exception to the front-page rule arose from small and independently funded print sources and from newspapers owned by powerful private business distressed by a particular government policy.[75] In the case of *Excélsior,* conflict arose when criticisms in its editorial pieces grew in prestige, readerships, and its criticalness of the government.

Excélsior

This was an era of the controlled, centralized, and "sold-out" press, and *Excélsior* proved not totally an exception to those tendencies. A cooperative ran the newspaper, yet like most other print sources *Excélsior* depended of government funding, whether through ads or paper. Yet, Julio Scherer García and his team plastered critical pieces from 1968 until the *golpe* in July 1976, primarily through editorials by Mexico's leading intellectuals. In many ways, *Excélsior's* published criticisms served as a source of the legitimacy for the government. In 1960, a report by the *US News and World Report* included Mexico among the forty-four countries with evidenced freedom of

---

periodística: la pasividad del reportero que, en lugar de ir tras la noticia e investigarla, espera la versión oficial, y el llamado 'embute', nombre con que se conoce la gratificación en dinero o en especie que suele acompañar al boletín para asegurar su difusión." Silvia González Marín, *Prensa y poder político: la elección presidencial de 1940 en la prensa mexicana* (México, D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores: UNAM-Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliográficas, 2006), 122.

[74] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 80.

[75] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 81.

expression—the latter "understood as the absence of run-ins between newspapers and the public administration." Similarly the Inter American Press Association, IAPA (*Sociedad Interamericana de Prensa,* SIP), activist pressure group, "invariably points to Mexico as a country where freedom of the press reigns," wrote Granados Chapa in 1972.[76] Because "every newspaper responds to defined economic or political interests," *Excélsior's* rested in being critical of the government, to the measure it served its interests, yet when his team posed a national and international threat to the image of the Echeverría administration he was ousted.[77] Meanwhile, from the outside, co-optation or subtle repressive measures like the expulsion of Scherer from *Excélsior* through a cooperative maneuver, kept Mexico from the list of countries where open despotism against reporters prevailed, deeming it a country where journalists enjoyed freedom of the press. In other words, the PRI's corrosive measures transpired largely unperceived given their subtleness, and the national press served as it conspirator by turning a blind eye. While the government afforded Scherer García with privileged information, with some level of control and awareness over the paper's publications, *Excélsior's* growing readership signaled an audience receptive to critical news—exemplifying a political opening, the forging of a space for a style of journalism that transcended co-optation measures and defied and threatened presidentialism.

Yet, *Excélsior*'s trajectory proved similar to other newspapers of the revolutionary period. *Excélsior* surged as part of the second generation of modern newspapers drawing from the Porfirian paper *El Imparcial*'s use of new print technology, formatting, and

---

[76] Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, "[A]proximación a la prensa mexicana (notas sobre el periodismo diario)," *Revista Mexicana de Ciencia Política* 69, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM (July-Sept. 1972), 49.

[77] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 69.

commercial advertising.[78] For many, *El Imparcial* marked the rise of a modern Mexican press, with North American influence and exhibiting characteristics of industrialized nations.[79] Its founder, *oaxaqueño* Rafael Reyes Spíndola introduced the rotary linotype, the first newspaper to employ the technology in Mexico. During the constitutional skirmishes of the revolutionary period, two key publications emerged on opposing sides, *El Universal* in 1917 by *tabasqueño* Félix F. Palavicini and promoter of the Constitution, and *Excélsior* surged a few months after in opposition.[80] From the state of Puebla, Rafael Alducín stood behind the creation of *Excélsior* on March 18, 1917, akin to North American newspapers. Alducín also played a key role in the institutionalization of Mother's Day in México (*Día de las Madres*), and popularized newspaper sections like the best newborn photo, or nativity scenes.[81] However, the initial success of *Excélsior* proved short lasting. As Alducin exited the Chapultepec Park in Mexico City an electric car whistle startled his horse, causing the pioneering editor to fall and break his skull. The injury resulted in Alducin's premature death in 1924.[82] Nevertheless, from its inception until his death, *Excélsior* enjoyed considerable success and reached a national audience.

However, 1963 marked a new era for *Excélsior* and the cooperative, one marred by direct confrontations with the government. Since 1933 and up to the 1960s, under the restitution of Rodrigo de Llano as director with Gilberto Figueroa as general manager, *Excélsior* proved a conservative, non-confrontational, and complacent source;

---

[78] Enrique E. Sánchez Ruiz, "Los medios de difusión masiva y la centralización en México," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 4:1 (Winter 1988), 32.

[79] Claudia I. García Rubio, "Radiografía de la prensa diaria en México en 2010," *Comunicación y Sociedad* [*Departamento de Estudios de la Comunicación Social, Universidad de Guadalajara*], No. 20 (July-December, 2013), 66.

[80] *Tabasqueño* is a person from the state of Tabasco. Petra María Scanella, *El periodismo político en México* (Barcelona, España: Editorial Mitre, 1983), 11-12.

[81] Petra María Scanella, *El periodismo político en México* (Barcelona, España: Editorial Mitre, 1983), 31.

[82] Teodoro Torres, *Periodismo* (México: Ediciones Botas, 1937), x. Héctor Minués Moreno, *Los cooperativistas: el caso de Excélsior* (Mexico: Editores Asociados Mexicanos, S.A., EDAMEX, 1987), 29.

yet, managed to obtain a steady readership and prestige in part due to its role during "relevant political moments."[83] The deaths of De Llano in late 1962 and Figueroa's in early 1963 ended thirty years of relative stability ensued from a joint partnership of centralized leadership over the cooperative and the paper.[84] This administrative adjustment succeeding their deaths opened a brief interval for the rise of a left leaning and progressive group, counterpart to the longstanding conservative leadership, and representative of the 1960s global rejection of traditional bearings and state institutions—a group to which Julio Scherer García belonged. Granados Chapa describes the moment as a sort of reawakening to the country, whereby *Excélsior's* "renovating tendency" sought to dispel the propagandist myth of a society without conflict and inform the new urban middle class of the "true nature of Mexican social processes."[85] Fronting this period of transition stood "Don" Manuel Becerra Acosta as director, with José de Jesús García de Honor presiding as general manager, and Enrique Borrego Escalante, who for many years directed the second edition *Últimas Noticias,* serving as president of the board of directors.[86] However, soon after Becerra Acosta's ascent in February 1963, thirteen days after the death of De Llano, discords arose.[87]

The transformation to *Excélsior's* content and editorial mirrored rising social tensions. The paper's critical stance under Becerra Acosta, with Scherer García as

---

[83] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 76.

[84] Granados Chapa, *Excélsior y otros temas de comunicación,* 13.

[85] Granados Chapa, *Excélsior y otros temas de comunicación,* 14.

[86] "Don" is a formal prefix for Mr. used to infer respect toward a highly respected or esteemed individual, a man of advanced age, or someone with an assumed position of power. Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 67. According to Scherer's successor as director of *Excélsior,* Regino Díaz Redondo, Becerra Acosta was eighty-six years old but it is more likely he was between eighty-four or eighty-five since at the time of his death he was eighty-seven, see *La gran mentira, ocurrió en "Excelsior", el periódico de la vida nacional* (México, D.F.: EDAMEX-Libros para Todos, 2002), 17.

[87] Julio Scherer García, *La terca memoria* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007), 99.

assistant director, did not go unperceived among the majority of the nation's newspaper editors, who were accustomed to turning a blind eye to key happenings in service to the nation and the president. Within *Excélsior,* at least, the incipient push for more progressive reporting dated to 1965 with a group within the cooperative that pressured Becerra Acosta. Under his leadership, initial efforts for a more open informative culture emerged; however, by the 1968 summer student mobilizations, Becerra Acosta was eighty-seven years old, sickly, only sporadically at the *Excélsior* office; for those reasons Julio Scherer García presided over much of the administrative decision making. Becerra Acosta died on August 9, 1968. Julio Scherer García succeeded him as director of the paper, voted into the position by the cooperative on August 31.[88] But even by the standards of 1968, *Excélsior* was not considered part of the leftist press, as were radical publications like *Política* (1960-1967) directed by Manuel Marcué Pardiñas, incarcerated in 1968, or Mario Menéndez Rodríguez' ¿*Por qué?* (1968-1974), which Carlos Monsiváis deemed superfluous, lacking investigative rigor, that is with the exception of *Siempre!,* he thought. Monsiváis also noted that in 1968 "[t]he criticisms are minor, investigative journalism barely looming, and the most innocuous and tedious rhetoric is exercised (no one reads the editorials, something the editors know well)."[89] The post-1968 *Excélsior,* however, provided a space for investigative journalism, a moment where an entire team of journalists and intellectuals jointly pushed the limits of criticisms taking advantage of the press crevasse of President Luis Echeverría's project of "*apertura democrática.*"

---

[88] Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones,* 121.

[89] Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2006), 93-97. For information on Menéndez's ¿*Por qué?* magazine see Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993), 121, and Petra María Scanella, *El periodismo político en México* (Barcelona, España: Editorial Mitre, 1983), 20.

El Excélsior que no se vendió[90]

Under the directorship of Julio Scherer García and a new cohort of intellectuals and young writers, *Excélsior* legitimized the crisis of the PRI. Since becoming general manager, the right hand of Don Manuel Becerra, Scherer "invited to the editorial pages writers with their own lives and work," that is with the authorization of the editor. Amongst those incorporated stood Jesuit Enrique Maza, epitome of Liberation theology—"believed in the God of love and loathed the God of power." Adolfo Christlieb Ibarrola—then president of the main oppositional party to the PRI, *Partido Acción Nacional* (National Action Party, PAN)—also joined *Excélsior.*[91] Among others that contributed to the paper include: Alejandro Gómez Arias, often remembered for his links to Frida Kahlo and the letter paper trail documenting their relationship, journalist-writers Ricardo Garibay and José Alvarado, novelist and playwright Hugo Hiriart, poet and feminist Rosario Castellanos, Ignacio Chávez—famed doctor who headed the UNAM in the 1960s and pioneered cardiology institutions in México, as well as journalist Froylán López Narváez who contributed to the creation of *Proceso* after Scherer's ousting in 1976.[92] In early August 1968, the prominent academic Daniel Cosío Villegas approached Scherer García about writing for *Excélsior's* editorial—"From day one the historian warned he would subject the president to judgment."[93] In 1973 sociologist and expert on indigenous peoples, Rodolfo Stavenhagen of the *Colegio de México*, joined the editorial team per Scherer's invitation, his column appearing every

[90] Spanish for the *Excélsior* that did not sell out.
[91] Scherer García, *La terca memoria*, 100.
[92] Valmantas Budrys, "Chapter 10 – Frida Kahlo's neurological deficits and her art," *Progress in Brain Research* 203 (2013), 248; Scherer García, *La terca memoria*, 100.
[93] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 41-42.

Tuesday and ending in July 1976.[94] In 1971, after leaving his post as Mexican Ambassador to India 48 hours after the October 2 massacre through the legal recourse of "*disponibilidad*" or availability—not formally relinquishing his position or pay until 1973—Octavio Paz joined *Excélsior* as head and founder of the cultural magazine *Plural*, a publication that bore from idea voiced by Scherer.[95] Paz recounted that Scherer "never asked us to suppress a line or add a comma," even while *Plural's* viewpoints at times did not concur with those of *Excélsior.*[96] *Excélsior's* notoriety grew with the new cadre of prominent writers and the acute pen of intellectuals like Cosío Villegas, contributors whose writings "enriched the editorial pages during critical times," while they challenged the government at a time when few dared.[97]

And so the 1970s marked a new era for *Excélsior.* "He ended that sold-out and brown-nosing journalism, which pays homage to the government, and the corrupt press," wrote Elena Poniatowska in a written elegy to Scherer.[98] Several accounts attest to his actions upon taking the directorship of *Excélsior,* and his efforts to clean house by targeting corruption within the paper.[99] He ended the tradition of selling the "*segundo titular de la primera página*" or second headline of the front page, which usually sold for

---

[94] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Testimonios* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978), 5.

[95] Jacinto Rodríguez Munguía, "La renuncia que nunca fue: La trampa de Octavio Paz," *Emeequis,* 6 April 2015, 46-57; Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 83; Malva Flores, *Viaje de Vuelta: estampas de una revista* (Mexico DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011), 29.

[96] Octavio Paz, "El caso de *Excélsior*: Declaración de *Plural,*" *Siempre!* 28 July 1978 (No. 1205), 5. Full text also reproduced in Scherer García's *Los presidentes*, 216-217.

[97] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 41-42.

[98] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[99] See the fictional work by Leñero in which he delves into the inner workings of *Excélsior* under Scherer García, the animosities his leadership fomented, and the eventual ousting of the director. Vicente Leñero, *Los periodistas* (México, D.F: Joaquín Mortiz, 1978).

8,000 pesos.[100] Scherer "ultimately cancelled of the practice of selling the eight columns" and reversed the paper's rightist tendency—"anticommunism as persecution of attempts at social justice."[101] In other words, Scherer tackled the culture of "*embute*," or "funneling," the acceptance of money, favors, or influence by journalists. [102] Over time, the editorials became known for their criticalness and plurality, the paper as a whole took on a new life denouncing some of the most acute social, political, and economic problems plaguing the country.[103] Changes to the leaderships and subject matters in *Excélsior* derived in part from the journalistic culture Julio and his team fomented. Upon Scherer's death in January 2015 most memorandums corroborated and underscored a legacy of "incorruptibility."[104] Raúl Cremoux, who contributed to the editorials, believed "Julio Scherer's great merit was to train young cadres and also guide those that were not so young."[105] But perhaps his best attributes were his managerial abilities, his vision for recruiting talent and knowing where to place writers based on their expertise.[106] The combined efforts of recruiting prominent intellectuals

---

[100] Petra María Scanella, *El periodismo político en México* (Barcelona, España: Editorial Mitre, 1983), 31.

[101] Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2006), 105.

[102] Manuel Ajenjo, "El chayote, origen y paternidad," *El Financiero* [Opinión y Análisis], 7 October 2013 <http://eleconomista.com.mx/columnas/columna-especial-politica/2013/10/07/chayote-origen-paternidad>.

[103] Fátima Fernández Christlieb, *Los medios de difusión masiva en México* (México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984), 67, 76.

[104] See Carmen Aristegui, "Julio Scherer deja una escuela, con periodistas tocados por su trabajo," *Aristegui Noticias,* 8 January 2015 <http://aristeguinoticias.com/0801/mexico/julio-scherer-deja-una-escuela-con-periodistas-tocados-por-su-trabajo-aristegui/>; Carmen Aristegui, Denisse Dresser, Sergio Aguayo, and Lorenzo Meyer—Mesa de análisis político, "Julio Scherer, un personaje al que al que le tenían aprecio y temor," *Noticias MVS,* 12 January 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU8RXCrvjps>; María Amparo Casar, Sergio Aguayo, Lorenzo Meyer, Leonardo Curzio, José Antonio Crespo and Francisco Paoli Bolio, "Lunes 12 de enero de 2015," *Primer Plano,* Canal Once (Instituto Politécnico Nacional), XEIPN, Mexico City, 12 January 2015 (Television) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zA5WjopsKKg#t=237>.

[105] Elena Poniatowska, "Llanto por Julio Scherer García," *La Jornada,* 8 January 2015 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/01/08/politica/004a1pol>.

[106] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 226.

into the ranks, helping young journalists grow as thinkers and critics, and tackling some of the deeply rooted traditions of corruption evidently infused the paper's content.

However, *Excélsior* lived through a series of assaults by the private and governmental sector, the last that permanently ousted Scherer. By the time of the June 10, 1971 assault on students, Scherer was close to the administration, "I was at that time a regular at the presidential home," recounted Scherer.[107] As a regular at *Los Pinos* gatherings "were the ideal setting for my work. There I ran into whomever I hoped to see and met with those I never imagined, there I set appointments and interviews to nourish the daily with privileged information."[108] However, by the following year, the business sector plotted against *Excélsior* pulling all their ads. After their offensive, "the government appeared like the guardian angel," wrote José Agustin, and filled the marketing void with ads of state owned companies, like *Aceros Ecatepec* and *Cananea Mining Co*.—noted Scherer García.[109] Four months later, in December 1972, the private business ads resumed. For Granados Chapa, *Excélsior* managed to get by due to the paper's economic stability and the different types of work that came out of its commercial workshops, in addition to the government aid in the form publicity for public companies that usually did not partake in any marketing.[110] Up to 1973, the private sector's economic affront stood as one of the most difficult moments for the paper; yet, for the Echeverría administration—at a sexennial's midpoint—an apt

---

[107] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 47.

[108] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 46, 48, 116.

[109] Original phrase: "*Ustedes tienen el pandero mano*" quoted in *Los presidentes,* 125. Agustín, *Tragicomedia Mexicana 2,* 119; Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 124-128; Julio Scherer García, *La terca memoria,* 119.

[110] Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, *Excélsior y otros temas de comunicación* (México, D.F.: Ediciones el Caballito, 1980), 15.

gesture in defense of freedom of expression, intrinsically part of his politics of *apertura democrática*—an act of altruism that would not be repeated.

The assaults on *Excélsior* did not cease. Scherer, however, seemed confident the president would not dare scheme for the termination of the paper, at least once responded to León Davidoff that the paper had "a double life insurance." The first was the Nobel Peace Prize and the second the UN Secretary General, two honors Echeverría sought—these, Scherer believed were *Excélsior*'s assurances.[111] Echeverría did not win the Nobel, nor did he succeed Kurt Waldheim as UN Secretary General; at the same time, neither did Scherer García remain director of Mexico's top daily. While *Excélsior* was not terminated, the government scheme orchestrated ended a long streak of newsprint criticisms against Echeverría. The Echeverría administration complotted with a group of cooperative dissenters led by Regino Díaz Redondo, at the time head of the second edition of *Últimas Noticas*, led those questioning Scherer's leadership.[112] The general consensus was that *Excélsior's* "intransigent managers"—Scherer García and Rodríguez Toro—were gambling with the workers' and their families' patrimony.[113] Díaz Redondo orchestrated a prolonged land invasion of cooperative-owned land located in Paseos de Taxqueña. Print and televised coverage portrayed those in the Paseos de la Taxqueña as victims, indigenous peoples, *ejidatarios* (communal land holder) whose rights the cooperative violated by failing to pay them for their land. Scherer asked for a meeting with the president, but instead directed to the Agrarian Reform

---

[111] Vicente Leñero, *Los periodistas* (México: Joaquín Mortiz, ©1978, 1994), 126-129. According to José Agustín, Waldheim received fourteen votes in his favor and Echeverría zero, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 136.

[112] Agustín, *Tragicomedia Mexicana 2,* 119; Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993), 171.

[113] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 209.

Minster Félix Barra García. Subsequent attempts at resolving the conflict failed.[114] Finally, Díaz Redondo group called for a cooperative meeting.

By time of the July 8 cooperative meeting, the opposing group's power had grown. The assembly began at 11:00 a.m. with approximately eight hundred of the some 1,300 cooperative employees meeting to vote on the dismissal of the director, Julio Scherer García, and the general manager, Hero Rodríguez Toro, reported a DFS espionage agent, on the happenings on July 8.[115] Confrontation spewed between those for and against Scherer. The DFS agent noticed a pronounced division among workers.[116] The leader of the opposing group, Regino Díaz Redondo, and Manuel Becerra Acosta "*se mentaban la madre con los labios*"—were swearing at each other while Hero Rodríguez remained calm, "stoic"—with a clear understanding of "what it was all about." The Boards of Directors and Surveillance denied Scherer and Rodríguez Toro the opportunity to speak.[117] Moreover, a group of cooperative members had prevented the printing of a full page, according U.S. Ambassador Joseph J. Jova, a paid advertisement of a declaration signed by some forty-eight supporters of Scherer—"which was to have been published in the July 8 edition but which under threats of violence was not printed." The page was left blank.[118] The cooperative meeting

---

[114] For more on CONASUPO see Antonio Yúnez–Naude, "The Dismantling of CONASUPO, a Mexican State Trader in Agriculture," *The World Economy,* 26:1 (January 2003), 97-122. Vicente Leñero, *Los periodistas* (México: Joaquín Mortiz, ©1978, 1994), 151-163.

[115] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 48.

[116] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 48.

[117] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 227.

[118] Some of those that signed included: Heberto Castillo, Salvador Elizondo, Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa, Jorge Ibargüengoitia, Pablo Latapí, Vicente Leñero, Enrique Maza, Carlos Monsiváis, Rogelio Naranjo, Luis Ortiz Monasterio, José Emilio Pachecho, Carlos Pereyra, and Abel Quezada, but was not limited to these members. Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 212-213; Joseph J. Jova, "*Exc[é]lsior* leadership ousted," American Embassy (Mexico) to Secretary of State (Washington), 9 July 1976, Canonical ID: 1976MEXICO08820_b, Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic

concluded at 4:30 p.m., by that time Julio Scherer García and Hero Rodríguez Toro had been displaced from their posts as a result of the voting.[119]

The assault against the progressive wing of *Excélsior* succeeded. Scherer García left the assembly hall at 2:30 p.m., according to the DFS police, before the cooperative meeting concluded and with some 130 workers by his side. The famed photo of the "*Golpe de Excélsior*" captured Scherer and forty employees from various departments—from photographers, correspondents, to editorial staff—exiting the building around 5:00 p.m.[120] "I saw around me old friends, young comrades," reminisced Scherer. "I do not remember at what point Abel Quezada took me by the arm nor when Gaston García Cantú did so, Abel on the right, Gastón on the left. On Paseos de la Reforma I moved between the two the afternoon of July 8 of 1976 without knowing where to." Burdened by the memory of having been treated like a "thief" after what Julio deemed thirty years of honest work, he said to have left with "pockets free of others' money."[121] On the corner of Paseos de la Reforma Avenue and Morelos St., the group exchanged contact information, yet planned to meet on July 21 at 11:00 a.m. It was 6:20 p.m. by the time the group dispersed—Scherer looked "notably afflicted and tearful," typed the espionage officer.[122]

Immediately after, numerous intellectuals, public figures, and journalists declared their indignation against the ousting of Scherer. Manuel Marcué Pardiñas published an open letter to Echeverría denouncing the assault—"in today's Mexico

---

Review 04 MAY 2006, *Wikileaks* <https://wikileaks.org/About.html>, 1.

[119] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 48.

[120] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 48.

[121] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 225.

[122] Jacinto Rodríguez, Munguía, "Julio Scherer García: Una historia intervenida por el espionaje," *emeequis,* 19 January 2015, 48.

there is no freedom of expression. You have abolished it in a rash, violent, and illegal manner," under his old magazine logo of *Política.*[123] Marcué directed the radical publication *Política* (Politics, 1960-1967).[124] Political cartoonists Eduardo del Río ("Rius"), Rogelio Naranjo, Bulmaro Castellanos Loza ("Magú") and political leader Heberto Castillo collaborated in a special issue of the *historieta* (comic) *Los Agachados* (The Crouched) titled "Pinochetazo a *Excélsior,*" referring to the Augusto Pinochet military coup of 1973 that overthrew the democratically elected Salvador Allende in Chile, but in this case the act of intervention in *Excélsior* (see Illustration 5.4).[125] Castillo, Naranjo, and Magú narrated their version of the rise and fall of a progressive *Excélsior* and toward the end of the cartoon strips the collaborators questioned Echeverría's denial of government involvement—"The president denied 'having a candle at the burial.' Surely he thought us naïve…What do they have in store for the democratic trend?"[126] Finally, the issue of *"El Pinochetazo a Excélsior"* reproduced Alan Riding's *New York Times* articles on the ousting as well as other relevant press reports.[127]

By far, the magazine *Siempre!* provided the most extensive print coverage of the July 8, 1976 episode. Like Scherer and others, José Pagés Llergo started *Siempre!* after the government censored the magazine *Hoy* (Today) when he decided to publish a

---

[123] Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993), 121, 171.

[124] Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2006), 93; Alan Riding, *Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 104. For more on Manuel Marcué Pardiñas' links to Cuba see: Juan Rafael Reynaga Mejía, *La revolución cubana en México a través de la revista Política: construcción imaginaria de un discurso para América Latina* (Toluca, México: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, 2007) and Carlos Perzabal, *De las memorias de Manuel Marcué Pardiñas* (México, D.F.: Editorial Rino, 1995).

[125] Heberto Castillo, Naranjo, and Magú, "Pinochetazo a Exc[é]lsior," *Los Agachados,* Year IX, No. 270, 25 August 1976, front matter, ENAH.

[126] Heberto Castillo, Naranjo, and Magú, "Pinochetazo a Exc[é]lsior," *Los Agachados,* Year IX, No. 270, 25 August 1976, 22, ENAH. Part of the quote also found in Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993), 172.

[127] Heberto Castillo, Naranjo, and Magú, "Pinochetazo a Exc[é]lsior," *Los Agachados,* Year IX, No. 270, 25 August 1976, 25-26.

photograph of the newlyweds Carlos Girón Peltier and Beatriz Aléman, former President Miguel Aléman's daughter, while at a Paris cabaret in 1953.[128] In the July 21, 1976 issue of *Siempre!*, Sergio Méndez Arceo ("The Red Bishop") offered his support to Scherer and wrote that many Catholics from his state of Morelos sought *Excélsior* and looked for his published Sunday homily.[129] The following Thursday issue of July 28, 1978 featured a statement by Octavio Paz and collaborators of *Excélsior's* cultural magazine of *Plural* condemning the ousting of Scherer, signed by some seventeen individuals, including Gabriel Zaid, Rafael Segovia, Luis Villoro, and Enrique Krauze.[130] The August 4 edition of *Siempre!* printed four large photographs of the Scherer and his team in the magazine's building, alongside with Pagés Llergo (see Illustration 5.5).[131] Pagés Llergo acted with public solidarity with *Excélsior's* exiles by offering the team the offices of *Siempre!* in order for them to resume their projects and for those seeking to offer their support a forum to critically explore the happenings of July 8 while most other media outlets—print, radio, and television—vaguely rendered coverage to the intellectual purge of one of Latin America's most important daily.[132]

Meanwhile, news about Scherer made the international scene. The *New York Times* reporter Alan Riding followed the story, most likely due to his knowledge of

---

[128] Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, ©1980, 2006), 88-89; Enrique Montes García, "Historia," *Siempre!* <http://www.siempre.com.mx/historia/historia.html>. Also see, John Mraz, *Nacho López, Mexican Photographer* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 38.

[129] Sergio Méndez Arceo, "Excélsior, El Golpismo," *Siempre!* 21 July 1976 (No. 1204), 14.

[130] Octavio Paz, "El caso de *Excélsior*: Declaración de *Plural*," *Siempre!* 28 July 1978 (No. 1205), 5. Full text also reproduced in Scherer García's *Los presidentes*, 216-217.

[131] "Excélsior en Siempre!" and "La Solidaridad," *Siempre!* 4 August 1978 (No. 1206), 4-5.

[132] Both Monsiváis and a caption of one of the photos published in *Siempre!* note Pagés Llergo's offering of the magazine's building space to the journalists in order for them to plan out their future endeavors. "La Solidaridad," *Siempre!* 4 August 1978 (No. 1206), 5; Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, ©1980, 2006), 89.

Mexico and acquaintance with Julio.[133] The international coverage of Julio Scherer and his team fingered the president and contended the assault on Mexico's most liberal paper—acknowledging the general absence of media outlets critical of the government.[134] On July 14 President Echeverría countered the indictment rendered by the foreign press. In a Channel 13 interview he argued the criticisms that ran afoul abroad did not exist in the Mexican press, nor in the radio or television. Rather, "very wealthy newspapers" of New York City, "newspapers not content with our nationalist outlook" had derived these anti-nationalist stories. According to Echeverría, if those journalists cared to make a trip to Reforma 18 to inquire into what happened they would realize the government did not intervene—and what happened had been an independent cooperative decision.[135] Unlike other direct assaults on individual journalists or government cooptation of publications, the assault on one of Latin America's most important papers resulted in the purge of some of Mexico's best editorialists, cartoonists, correspondents, and journalists—many trained by Julio Scherer—a professionalized team carefully assembled over decades left a significant intellectual gap in *Excélsior.*

Birth of CISA and Proceso Magazine

---

[133] Alan Riding, "Mexican Editor Ousted by Rebels: Excelsior's Chief and Aides, the Target of Right-Wing Employees, Quit Offices," *The New York Times,* 9 July 1976, 5; Alan Riding, "Paper in Mexico Ends Liberal Tone: Conservative View Appears After Ouster of Editor And 200 on Staff," *The New York Times,* 10 July 1976, 8.

[134] Terri Shaw, "'Murder' of Mexican Paper Described," *The Washington Post,* 14 July 1976, A6; George Natanson, "Editor Said Restricted by Mexico," *The Washington Post,* 29 July 1976, A16.

[135] Luis Echeverría, "El Presidente y "Excélsior," *Siempre!* 28 July 1978 (No. 1205), 7; Heberto Castillo, "Agresión a la libertad de expresión," *Los Agachados,* Year IX, No. 270, 25 August 1976, front matter. Also quoted in Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 214.

It was at this point that Scherer embarked on an enterprise that would ultimately exert a huge influence on the growth of human rights in Mexico. The initial idea was somewhat more modest, namely, the creation of a news services such as Associated Press. According to *Washington Post* journalist George Natanson a crowd of some 3,000 people met on July 19 attended the Scherer event paying an admission of about six dollars. The group collected approximately $120,000 dollars for an upcoming project by selling shares at $40 dollars.[136] Those gathered had apparently arrived by word of mouth and some by announcement of provincial newspapers, like *El Tiempo* from northern Mexico.[137] Jova also reported on the July 19 meeting in support of Scherer García and other from his team. Jova estimated a smaller crowd, according to the Ambassador some 1,500 people were noted in attendance, ranging from "second-level GOM officials," intellectuals of the left, Heberto Castillo political leader and contributor of *Excélsior,* as well as Valentín Campa—railway worker leader and member of the Mexican Communist Party, and "a large contingent of Spanish and Chilean exiles."[138] At the reception Scherer and supporters, Jova too reported, raised funds for a new journalistic project by selling shares at $500 pesos, approximately $40 dollars each. "Source reported that shares were selling well among reception," wrote Jova.[139] Scherer revealed to some in attendance his plan for a "News Service" in the model of the

---

[136] George Natanson, "Ousted Mexican Editor Sets Plan for New Newspaper," *The Washington Post,* 22 July 1976, A25.

[137] George Natanson, "Ousted Mexican Editor Sets Plan for New Newspaper," *The Washington Post,* 22 July 1976, A25.

[138] Joseph J. Jova, "The coup at Excelsior: What now? American Embassy (Mexico) to Secretary of State (Washington), 21 July 1976, Canonical ID: 1976MEXICO0935_b, Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006, *Wikileaks* <https://wikileaks.org/About.html>, 1-2.

[139] Joseph J. Jova, "The coup at Excelsior: What now? American Embassy (Mexico) to Secretary of State (Washington), 21 July 1976, Canonical ID: 1976MEXICO0935_b, Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006, *Wikileaks* <https://wikileaks.org/About.html>, 1-2.

Associated Press (AP) or the United Press International (UPI). The organization would provide "reporting services" nationally, similar to the way in which *Excélsior* sold stories to provincial newspapers.[140] In the July 22 and July 29 follow-up articles, the *Washington Post* confirmed the project to be a wire service for "the interior" of the country and a weekly newsmagazine.[141] Although many would have expected the creation of a newspaper, Scherer and those collaborating with him opted for a political magazine and a news agency. For Scherer, creating a news service was easier than starting up a daily given that it avoided competition with others print media in Mexico City and would not depend on the government aid or sources.[142] As such, just ten days after the *golpe* supporters did effectively meet in Hotel María Isabel to announce the project and to sell stocks for what eventually consolidated in *Comunicación e Información, S.A. De C.V.* (communication and information, CISA) and a magazine for which they had yet to title.[143] The 1976 purging of *Excélsior's* varied intellectuals paved the road for the rise of several journalistic projects ranging from literary and political magazines, to a newspaper—inaugurating an era of increasingly critical reportage from a group of writers unwilling to tolerate further restrictions, and pitched to an audience of higher literary tastes willing to read criticism directed at a failing revolutionary project.

---

[140] Joseph J. Jova, "The coup at Excelsior: What now? American Embassy (Mexico) to Secretary of State (Washington), 21 July 1976, Canonical ID: 1976MEXICO0935_b, Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006, *Wikileaks* <https://wikileaks.org/About.html>, 1-2.

[141] George Natanson, "Ousted Mexican Editor Sets Plan for New Newspaper," *The Washington Post,* 22 July 1976, A25; George Natanson, "Editor Said Restricted by Mexico," *The Washington Post,* 29 July 1976, A16.

[142] Joseph J. Jova, "The coup at Excelsior: What now? American Embassy (Mexico) to Secretary of State (Washington), 21 July 1976, Canonical ID: 1976MEXICO0935_b, Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006, *Wikileaks* <https://wikileaks.org/About.html>, 1-2.

[143] "Historia: Se acercaba el final de sexenio," *Proceso* <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?page_id=7>.

As CISA took off and the team prepared the inauguration of the first issue of a magazine, its planners encountered troubles. "In the ill-fated days of July, I [Scherer] was summoned by the *Procuraduría*" (short for General Attorney's Office). *El Heraldo de México* newspapers published that Scherer would "probably appear upon the authorities with an *amparo* in pocket."[144] The new editors of *Excélsior* pressed charges against Scherer immediately after the July 8 ousting; however, the Mexico City Attorney General did not take action until late October. According to a *New York Times* report Scherer had to answer to a charge of embezzling some $650,000 dollars.[145] While the former editor agreed to respond to all allegations, he believed the investigation had been a "politically inspired" ploy to intimidate.[146] As preparations for the first issue of a magazine consolidated, the state-owned paper company, PIPSA, refused to sell paper to the journalists. The *NYT* reported Scherer "was forced to borrow paper from friendly newspapers or to buy it at an inflated cost on the black market."[147] Of the fifteen tons of paper the group needed to print a hundred thousand samples of the first number PIPSA declined the entire order. Scherer and the team refused to wait until the new administration came in to get the paper, it was imminent for the first issue to appear before Echeverría left office—"We were interested in the man in the Palace, not the man back home"—in order to make judgment of the outgoing administration. Moreover, the former *Excélsior* journalists refused for the magazine to be born under the

[144] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 236.

[145] "Ousted Editor in Mexico Faces Hearing Tomorrow," *The New York Times,* 24 October 1976, 9.

[146] "Liberal Editor in Mexico Begins New Magazine and Criticizes President Despite Pressure From Government," *The New York Times,* 7 November 1976, 11.

[147] "Liberal Editor in Mexico Begins New Magazine and Criticizes President Despite Pressure From Government," *The New York Times,* 7 November 1976, 11.

paternalism a new administration entailed.[148] Scherer believed Secretariat of *Gobernación* Mario Moya Palencia and Secretary of National Patrimony Francisco Javier Alejo carried out several ploys to prevent the printing of the first issue of their magazine, including impeding their ability to find a shop for printing.[149] Founder of editorial Posada, Guillermo Mendizábal Lizalde "was the only printer who dared 'challenge' the government, by publishing the first issues of the magazine *Proceso.*"[150] For Scherer, Mendizábal's old printing machines did the job.[151] Despite the official and logistical obstacles imposed to delay the publication, that came to be known as *Proceso* after the process the *Excélsior* journalists lived through on July 8, the 84-page political newsprint appeared on November 7, 1976—just three weeks before President Luis Echeverría left office.

November 7, 1976

As such, *Proceso* served as an indictment against Echeverría. The *New York Times* announced the magazine's inauguration—Scherer "issued a new political weekly today that is highly critical of Mexico's outgoing president, Luis Echeverría [Á]lvarez."[152] The new editorial team pulled together enough paper for the 100,000 copies of the first issue, and another 50,000 of the following edition.[153] Leading the magazine as director stood Julio Scherer García and Miguel Ángel Granados Chapa as his general manager.

---

[148] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 228.

[149] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 228.

[150] "Guillermo Mendizábal, el editor," *Proceso* [online], 22 December 2002 <http://hemeroteca.proceso.com.mx/?page_id=278958&a51dc26366d99bb5fa29cea4747565fec=188792&rl=wh.

[151] Scherer García, *Los presidentes,* 228.

[152] "Liberal Editor in Mexico Begins New Magazine and Criticizes President Despite Pressure From Government," *The New York Times,* 7 November 1976, 11.

[153] "Liberal Editor in Mexico Begins New Magazine and Criticizes President Despite Pressure From Government," *The New York Times,* 7 November 1976, 11.

His good friend Vicente Leñero and Miguel López Azuara stepped in as editors, and María de Jesús García, Carlos Marín, and Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda as coordinators—the latter is the current editor of *Proceso*. Several journalists formerly at *Excélsior* became part of *Proceso's* editorial team, including Scherer's first cousin father Enrique Maza. The leadership had been selected since the July 19 fundraising meeting.[154] In its editorial page its contributors explained their fight against restrictions on freedom of expression, and the birth of *Proceso* as a symbol of "a perennial battle between a press that aspires to be responsible and an authority that does not feel constricted by the law."[155] Interestingly enough, a day after the first issue of the magazine came out a group removed the squatters from the Paseos de Tasqueña lands.[156] Since its creation in November 1976, *Proceso's* style of journalism has varied little; it is considered leftist and at times bordering muck-raking, yet consistently critical of public figures and sympathetic toward social issues—including human rights—making it the first magazine to consistently employ the term.

Meanwhile, Echeverría concluded his term far from the redeemer he wanted to be remembered as. During the *Primer Congreso Latinoamericano de Periodistas* (I Latin American Congress of Journalists) organized by the SNRP (*Sindicato Nacional de Redactores de la Prensa,* National Union of Press Reporters) in Mexico City on June 7, 1976 and whose members criticized Latin American dictatorships, including that of Argentina and Chile, agreed to nominate President Luis Echeverría for the Nobel Peace Prize. During the plenary session of the journalistic event in Mexico City, the *Federación Latinoamericana*

---

[154] "Historia: Se acercaba el final de sexenio," *Proceso* <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?page_id=7>.

[155] "Liberal Editor in Mexico Begins New Magazine and Criticizes President Despite Pressure From Government," *The New York Times,* 7 November 1976, 11.

[156] Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993), 175.

de Periodistas (Latin American Federation of Journalists, or FELAP), an organization created at the Congress, agreed to carry out a request that had previously been suggested by the SNRP months before. FELAP would then introduce the resolution to the prize committee in Norway and promote the candidate through a journalists' commission dedicated to the campaign. The Brazilian delegation at the Congress supported the decision and described Echeverría "as a champion of human rights, peaceful coexistence and universal peace."[157] However, the *golpe* seems to have unleashed a series of misfortunes for Echeverría, including the clouding of his image abroad, one he so carefully cultivated all through his sexennial. Echeverría had many plans for his post-presidential times, and aspired to retain a footing in international affairs, preferably as UN Secretary-General. However, Echeverría succumbed to the post-presidential blues as his national and international profile withered.

The July 8 purging of *Excélsior* journalists, however, gave rise to a variety of new print media. In 1976 Octavio Paz, who directed *Excélsior's* literary magazine *Plural,* created *Vuelta,* meaning "return."[158] After *Vuelta's* August-September 1998 issue*, Letras Libres* continued the tradition with less literature and more politics under the editorships of Mexican intellectual Enrique Krauze, and with a Mexican and a Spanish edition published by Paz' original publishing house *Editorial Vuelta,* S.A. de C.V.[159] In November 1977, the second in command to Scherer and former sub-director of *Excélsior,* Manuel Becerra Acosta, created the newspaper *Unomásuno,* which immediately

---

[157] Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993), 169.

[158] Octavio Paz also published a collection of poems under the same name, *Vuelta* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1976).

[159] Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado, "Claiming Liberalism: Enrique Krauze, *Vuelta, Letras Libres*, and the Reconfigurations of the Mexican Intellectual Class," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 26:1 (Winter 2010), 59-60. Quiénes Somos," *Letras Libres,* <http://www.letraslibres.com/quienes-somos>.

rose to prominence, but toward the mid-1980s suffered from internal conflicts, causing dozens of writers to leave and create the daily *La Jornada* in 1984, today a major paper in the country.[160] Although not directly linked to the *Excélsior* debacle, historians Enrique Florescano and Héctor Aguilar Camín too contributed to the proliferation of intellectual publications with the establishment of the cultural and political magazine *Nexos* in January 1978.[161] However, *Proceso's* proclivity for reporting on Latin America's dictatorship and Mexico's own internal violence rendered the magazine one of the first to actively utilize the term "human rights"—something it did far more often than any of its literary or political contemporaries in the new press.

Indeed, a close reading of *Proceso* reveals the influence of the ideologies that underlay the very concept of human rights. In the 1970s, while activists employed mass communications and the emerging transnational justice networks against repressive military dictatorships in Latin America, journalists engaged the emerging language of international rights. Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay became the three countries the Mexican press most commonly associated with the abuse of human rights, at least until journalists began to describe Mexico's own state violence as human rights violations in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the Mexico of the 1970s, however, a nation that officially welcomed South American exiles, but at the same time forcibly repressed its own urban and rural guerrillas, the government systematically presented itself to the international community as a rights protector—journalists fractured the myth by attempting to disclose Mexico's political violence. In this context, the *Proceso* team

---

[160] Humberto Musacchio, *Historia gráfica del periodismo mexicano* (México: Gráfica, Creatividad y Diseño, 2003), 198.

[161] Sánchez Prado notes Héctor Aguilar Camín as a co-founder of *Nexos,* "Claiming Liberalism: Enrique Krauze, *Vuelta, Letras Libres*, and the Reconfigurations of the Mexican Intellectual Class," 57.

sought to expose and indict governments, while seeking justice and demanding peaceful democratic change as part of its journalistic agenda, while their counterparts, like *Nexos*, retained nationalist and often statist language regarding structural changes and more scholarly-based writings. In sum, the gradual incorporation of new rights terminologies reveals the national diffusion of globalizing ideologies derivative of the 1970s and of a civil society exhausted by traditional party politics and armed guerrilla warfare—and one seeking a transition to democracy often employing new methods and language of social change.

Amnesty International and Human Rights in Proceso

Initial references to human rights in the Mexican press came in conjunction with Amnesty International's (AI) year of the "Prisoner of Conscience." For two months in 1976 and most of 1977, *Proceso* reporters employed the term "human rights" in relation to military dictatorships in other parts of the world, especially in South America, and occasionally made reference to victims of political repression in Mexico. The coverage focused on Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile was in part due to how AI assigned political prisoners to local chapters from countries other than their own. As such, *Proceso's* first article on the subject announced the upcoming commemoration of Human Rights Day on December 10, 1976. The pedagogical expert Pablo Latapí, who was once on the path to the priesthood, published an article entitled "We Are All Prisoners of Conscience" in the fifth issue of *Proceso*.[162] AI opened its year of the Prisoner of Conscience on Human Rights Day, and Latapí announced the national

[162] Scherer García, *La terca memoria,* 144; Pablo Latapí, "Todos somos prisioneros de conciencia," *Proceso* (No. 5), 4 December 1976, 42.

commemoration at the *Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos* (Center of Latin American Studies) of the UNAM created in 1960 by the renowned sociologist Pablo González Casanova.[163] "Every day newspapers inform us of peoples imprisoned, tortured or killed because of their political or religious convictions," wrote Latapí. While he noted these realities had been the unfortunate reality of Latin America due to its military dictatorships, with the latest news at the time coming from Uruguay, he warned of the happenings in Mexico. "As Mexicans believe we are far from widespread repression. Nor did Chileans, Argentines and Uruguayans think a few years ago, how far they have come." Latapí warned that the depoliticized nature of the Mexican society put it at a greater risk against repressive regimes in comparison to other more politicized societies in the hemisphere. He then proceeded to explain the nature of the organization, and the 1,600 local groups worldwide, noting Spanish cellist Pablo Casals and Chilean poet Pablo Neruda as two famed members of the organization.[164] *Proceso's* initial graze with human rights concepts in 1976 came from international organizations and their links with their local chapters, as is the case of Amnesty International—information that proved uncomfortable for most national governments "because repressive regimes fear publicity," noted Latapí.[165]

Although the organization dates to the early 1960s, AI did not gain prominence until the late 1970s. The organization's rise derived from the realities of global repression and its role in conscious building on behalf of political prisoners. Its beginnings date to an article British lawyer Peter Benenson published in the paper *The*

---

[163] Pablo Latapí, "Todos somos prisioneros de conciencia," *Proceso* (No. 5), 4 December 1976, 42; *La democracia en México* (México: Ediciones ERA, 1965) is among González Casanova's most important works. "Estudios Latinoamericanos," *Catalogo virtual de revistas científicas y arbitradas de la UNAM,* <http://www.catalogoderevistas.unam.mx/interiores/e/estudios_latinoamericanos.html>.

[164] Pablo Latapí, "Todos somos prisioneros de conciencia," *Proceso* (No. 5), 4 December 1976, 42.

[165] Pablo Latapí, "Todos somos prisioneros de conciencia," *Proceso* (No. 5), 4 December 1976, 42.

Observer on May 28, 1961 entitled "The Forgotten Prisoners."[166] In the article, Benenson underscored the rights embedded in Article 18 ("Everyone has the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion") and Article 19 ("Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression") of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). His article went on to describe how political prisoners had been stripped of the rights embedded in these articles, giving rise to an international campaign specifically pushing for the application of the articles mentioned. "That is why we have started Appeal for Amnesty, 1961. The campaign, which opens to-day, is the result of an initiative by a group of lawyers, writers and publishers in London, who share the underlying conviction expressed by Voltaire: 'I detest your views, but am prepared to die for your right to express them,'" wrote Benenson. From London the team ventured on fact finding missions—gathering information on prisoners from across the globe, their "names, numbers and conditions." These men and women came to be referred to as "Prisoner of Conscience," whom the organization defined as "Any person who is physically restrained (by imprisonment or otherwise) from expressing (in any form of words or symbols) any opinion which he honestly holds and which does not advocate or condone personal violence."[167] In some sense, AI played a key role in conscribing "human rights" (as expressed in the 1970s) to a selected group of rights associated with political prisoners.

Moreover, Amnesty International, excluded individuals that "conspired with a foreign government to overthrow their own." Their approach promoted four processes: a trial, the fortification of the Right to Asylum (as well as providing refugee services, i.e.

---

[166] Stephen Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame: Understanding Amnesty International* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006), 55.

[167] Peter Benenson, "Prisoners of Conscience," *The Observer,* 28 May 1961, 23.

right to work), and the push for an "effective international machinery" to protect freedoms of opinion. These practices became hallmarks of AI and eventually gaining notoriety for their success in shunning governments to release prisoners, often by offering a face and story to each prisoner in order to influence public opinion regarding prisoners.[168] By December 1961, Amnesty International had solidified as an international organization based in London, but did not gain prominence elsewhere until the following decade.[169] By the 1970s, Amnesty International had opened a new era of rights campaigns focused on individualistic justice for a targeted group—specifically victims of political violence—whereby campaigns demanded that prisoners be processed as individuals through a legal and judicial procedure. The approach broke with traditional and home-grown movements demanding structural and societal transformation, especially those within nationalist governments in Latin America (i.e. guerrilla, labor movements); in so doing, it provided a model and to some extent homogenizing internationally-based justice networks worldwide.

Amnesty International's expansion gave rise to Mexico's local chapter. Three individuals helped establish the Mexico section of Amnesty International in 1971, the very first in Latin America.[170] Alicia Escalante de Zama, whose son was imprisoned during the 1968 student movements, mobilized for an IA local section in Mexico. "My son Arturo was studying law at the National Autonomous University of Mexico

---

[168] Peter Benenson, "Prisoners of Conscience," *The Observer,* 28 May 1961, 23.

[169] Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States," *The Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999), 1231-1250; Jan Eckel, "The International League for the Rights of Man, Amnesty International, and the Changing Fate of Human Rights Activism from the 1940s through the 1970s," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 4:2 (Summer 2013), 183-214.

[170] Cecilia Ugalde Pimienta and María del Carmen Fortes Muradas, "Sección mexicana de Amnistía Internacional: una propuesta para su crecimiento y desarrollo," (B.A. thesis, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1990), 151-152.

[UNAM]." The police arrested Arturo and others at the Café Las Américas on July 26, amid the rising student movements. Zama learned of her son's whereabouts three days after the arrest when *Excélsior* published information regarding the arrest. According to Zama, the UNAM's rector José Barros Sierra rendered support to his son and others imprisoned in the infamous Lecumberri detention center. Zama also appealed to Amnesty International in London, which assigned Arturo's case to the local AI chapter in Canada. When President Echeverría offered amnesty to several students on the condition they leave the country, the AI Canadian section planned Arturo's placement and stay outside of Mexico upon his release on April 24, 1971. Zama then wrote to Amnesty International in London expressing her interest in starting a chapter in Mexico. The international section put Zama in contact with Dr. Héctor Cuadra, who was already a member of the organization.[171] Cuadra had served as the Latin American specialist to the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in Geneva in 1963.[172] During that post, he published reports on dictatorships in Latin America, including Duvalier's Haiti, Nicaragua under the Somozas, Paraguay under Stroessner, the Dominican Republic of Rafael Trujillo, and Batista's Cuba. While working for the ICJ, Cuadra met Seán McBride (1974 Nobel Prize)—at the time president of AI's Board—who encouraged him to begin an Amnesty International chapter in Mexico.[173] After his return to Mexico in 1967, Cuadra along with Alicia Zama and Brígida Alexander, a survivor of Hitler's Nazism exiled in Mexico, and others, remain some of

---

[171] Alicia Escalante de Zama, "Reseña de la historia de Amnistía Internacional México," *Amnesty International México* <http://amnistia.org.mx/conocenosn/index.php?s=10>.

[172] Cecilia Ugalde Pimienta and María del Carmen Fortes Muradas, "Sección mexicana de Amnistía Internacional: una propuesta para su crecimiento y desarrollo," (B.A. thesis, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1990), 151-152.

[173] "Homenaje Héctor Cuadra Moreno-Semblanza," *Artepepan,* <http://www.artepepan.com.mx/homenaje_hectorcuadra/semblanza.html>.

Mexico's AI founding members.[174] Zama; however, notes that despite "sustaining several conversation" with Cuadra, there was little advancement toward creating a chapter—that is, until more people were recruited. According to Zama, the first working group convened on May 28, 1971.[175] As such, the local chapter of the rising AI organization gradually made its way to Mexico with several of its members having had contact with the mounting international justice network that came to characterize the 1970s human rights movement.

Although the local group materialized, the organization had difficulty raising funds and increasing its membership between 1971 and 1976. According to activist Mariclaire Acosta, key non-founding member and sister Magdalena Acosta, the London office expressed its concern over the lack of growth of the Mexican section.[176] The organization's potential had been diminished in part by its inability to register as a civil organization. The government ignored whenever Amnesty International attempted to register as a civil organization, thus obstructing their ability to organize public events. Every time Alicia Zama went to the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs the agency would tell her file had been misplaced. The Amnesty members suspected their file wound up in the Secretariat of *Gobernación* on the claim Amnesty's actions were a matter of national

---

[174] "Homenaje Héctor Cuadra Moreno-Semblanza," *Artepepan,* <http://www.artepepan.com.mx/homenaje_hectorcuadra/semblanza.html>; Cecilia Ugalde Pimienta and María del Carmen Fortes Muradas, "Sección mexicana de Amnistía Internacional: una propuesta para su crecimiento y desarrollo," (B.A. thesis, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1990), 151-152.

[175] Estela Pinto, Alvarez Bravo, *Ing.* [Engineer] Arnaldo Centeno, and Anunnciata Rossi were among those that joined the group. Once her son Arturo returned to Mexico, he too joined. Thereafter, Brígida Alexander, Bertha Palacios, Bertha Fernández, and Magdalena Acosta also became part of the AI section. Alicia Escalante de Zama, "Reseña de la historia de Amnistía Internacional México," *Amnesty International México* <http://amnistia.org.mx/conocenosn/index.php?s=10>.

[176] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City). Information regarding family relationship between Magdalena and Mariclaire see, Amnesty International-Mexico, "Minuta del Comité Directivo de Amnistía Internacional México," 14 December 2014 <http://intranetaimexico.org.mx/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/1a_Reunión_CD_AI_Mex_Dic_2014.pdf>, 4.

security. Even with their small membership, Brigida Alexander, the most active and visionary of its members according to Mariclaire Acosta, had managed to organize some events and also worked with Chilean exiles after the overthrow of Salvador Allende in 1973. Other members, like Ester Zama, focused on keeping the organization alive, but were not necessarily interested in disrupting the government. As such, the local chapter of Amnesty International in Mexico in the early 1970s was small, ran by "serious," women "writing letters and eating cookies." That is, until a new generation joined the team, a group more adept to using print sources to promote Amnesty International's cause.[177]

Thereby, human rights in *Proceso* between 1976 and 1977 coincided with the arrival of a young leadership to Mexico's section of Amnesty International. During those years, Amnesty went from being a largely obscure organization ran by upper class women, to one with more visibility, actively engaged with the press. The shift was in large part due to the arrival of Mariclaire Acosta, a young professional just returning from Essex [E-6] University. "I was a young academic, I had studied sociology and political science, and I participated in the student movement of '68," recounted Acosta. "Just weeks after having returned [to Mexico]…I lived the massacre of the 10th of June," also known as the Corpus Christi massacre in 1971, a sequel of 1968. Those events greatly impacted Mariclaire, "because it was like a nightmare, again they are killing students," she told herself. After the overthrow of Allende in 1973 and the persecution of her friends, she saw an even greater reason to join Amnesty International. For Mariclaire, the organization "offered an alternative to the polarization of the right and the left in the 1970s," a democratizing discourse that resonated with what she had

[177] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City).

learned from her professors in England, "an ideal that transcended political ideologies"—where what mattered most was the individual.[178] Mariclaire Acosta's educational background and Amnesty International's philosophy represented the global shift toward a non-violent, less politicized and legalistic shift toward, and perhaps even revival of, a liberal democratic alternative—one intimately linked or perhaps even fueling the rise of human rights networks in the 1970s.

As of 1975 Mariclaire Acosta, along with other new members gave Amnesty International a new direction. That year, the Legal Adviser of the Internal Secretariat of Amnesty International, Sir Nigel Rodley, arrived in Mexico to investigate allegations of torture in the country. While in Mexico, he met with Mariclaire and asked her to "give the organization leadership." Thereafter, Mariclaire received from London the material to carry out a campaign on torture. She along with her team of five launched a major press campaign on Uruguay. The focus was not on Mexico because local chapters of Amnesty could intervene on issues related to their home country. In no way deterred by their lack of legal status, the Mexican section of Amnesty International used any means at their disposal to disseminate information on the subject of human rights violations in Uruguay. Even while it may have seemed as though human rights was explicitly a South American matter, the few references to Mexico simply reflected Amnesty's strategy to keep out of national matters. Amnesty International's local campaign in Mexico proved one of the reason *Proceso* writers first employed the term 'human rights' to denote violations in South America, and the organization's use of print media willing to publicize notes and data on state violence.[179]

[178] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City).
[179] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City).

Before the end of 1976, one additional article made use of the term human rights. *Proceso* reviewed a piece that Abraham F. Lowenthal published in *Foreign Affairs* regarding the future of US-Latin American relations. At that moment Director of Studies of the Council on Foreign Relations, Lowenthal wrote on the deteriorating nature of relations between the United States and Latin America, especially as leaders rejected the notion of a "special relationship" with their Northern counterpart. As Lowenthal noted the challenges the United States faced in the following decade, including the promotion of more equitable economic relations in the region, another included the protection of 'human rights.'[180] Lowenthal's article responded to the Chile Report of the Senate Select Committee, which revealed "what the United States did in Chile from 1963 through 1973." And he explained Latin America was no longer the passive backwater it used to be and how the United States could no longer forge its foreign policy toward the region based on past assumptions or understandings of the region. While human rights were not the focus of the article, and while the actual terms was used but sparingly, the *Proceso* editorial concluded with a quote from the article regarding the future of human rights in the region. "As a region with long-standing doctrines regarding respect for human rights but one now suffering from a plague of brutal repression, Latin America's evolution will importantly affect the future of human rights and their institutionalized protection or suppression," argued Lowenthal.[181] Less than two months since the magazine's launch, *Proceso* became a forum on behalf of political prisoners in Latin America and a print source ready to shame any government,

[180] "Perfil del nuevo trato," *Proceso* (No. 7), 18 December 1976.

[181] Abraham F. Lowenthal, "The United States and Latin America: Ending the Hegemonic Presumption," *Foreign Affairs* 55:1 (October 1976), 199, 207, 211; "Perfil del nuevo trato," *Proceso* (No. 7), 18 December 1976.

including its own, even if Amnesty International did not do so directly.

1977: The Year of Human Rights in Proceso

Amnesty International's Year of the Prisoner coincided with the beginning of José López Portillo's presidential administration. Coincidently, the United States and Mexico both inaugurated presidents in 1977: that of James Carter (Jan. 1977-Jan. 1981) and López Portillo (Dec. 1976-Nov. 1982), whereby both statesmen sent their wives to their counterpart's inaugurations, Rosalynn Carter attended López Portillo's ceremony in December 1976 and First Lady Carmen Romano de López Portillo assisted Carter's swearing-in on January 1977.[182] Early on in López Portillo's presidency, several groups made political prisoners centerpieces of their campaigns, a fact reflected in *Proceso's* publications since November 1976. By early March, *Proceso* announced the publication of two issues giving special attention to Mexico's political prisoners. "In the past and in this issue, *Proceso* publishes documents, interviews and testimonies on political prisoners or prisoners who committed crimes under the pretext of an idea," announced the magazine. Unlike previous articles making use of the term human rights to reference South America, *Proceso* in the March 8 issue utilized the terms to make reference to political violence in Mexico. Most importantly, the magazine announced the intentions behind the publication of the materials and explicitly their desire to contribute to the "creation of a climate that makes possible, without detriment to true justice and a true coexistence, the freedom of those who attempted to oppose the regime in ways we consider erroneous." An article entitled "Violation of human rights" became one of the

[182] Jimmy Carter, "Visit of President Jos[é] L[ó]pez Portillo of Mexico Remarks of the President and President L[ó]pez Portillo at the Welcoming Ceremony," 14 February 1977, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7877>; Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 138.

first to link human rights to Mexico's political repression. The article focused on the constitutional rights of political prisoners and made no reference to international documents or mandates, rather it explicitly noted the violation of rights based on articles 16, 19, and 20 of the Mexican Constitution.[183] Attorney Guillermo Andrade Greesler provided *Proceso* material on the proceedings of some three hundred prisoners. According to Greesler, Mexico's political prisoners had been illegally arrested and their homes sacked without an official order (article 16), they had been held for over 72 hours without being formally charged (article 19), and had not been tried within four months—if the charge of the offense does not exceed two years—or within a year if the maximum penalty is longer than two years (article 20). According to defender Andrade Greesler, the authorities violated article 20, section VIII of "99 percent of the processes of political prisoners."[184] As such, by 1977 *Proceso* revealed a distinct brand of national defense in Mexico that pushed for an Amnesty Law, spurred by defense lawyers like Guillermo Andrade Greesler, the *Comité de Familiares y Ex-Presos Políticos* (Committee of Relatives and Former Political Prisoners), the Mexican Communist Party (PC), and the *Partido Mexicano de los Trabajadores* (Mexican Worker's Party, PMT).[185]

While Amnesty International, along with leftist groups and lawyers, all fought on behalf of political prisoners, they did so through different means. Mexican groups, with few or no links to the international community, pushed an Amnesty Law proposal for the release of political prisoners. The negotiations started sometime in May 1976 between political groups and lawyers with a congressional committee. However, violent happenings linked to Mexico's guerrilla group *Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre* (September

[183] "Violación de derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 18), 8 March 1977, 12-17.
[184] "Violación de derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 18), 8 March 1977, 13.
[185] "Violación de derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 18), 8 March 1977, 14, 17.

23 Communist League) stalled talks regarding amnesty. These included the death of two people during a dog show at the UNAM and a kidnapping attempt in August on the president-elect's sister, Margarita López Portillo, the latter the same week officials agreed to announce a resolution.[186] Nonetheless, by December 29, 1976 President López Portillo, Secretariat of *Gobernación* Jesús Reyes Heroles, and the Attorney General Oscar Flores all received a copy of a complete draft for the Amnesty Law.[187] Congress approved a version of the law almost two years later, on September 28, 1978.[188] Mexico's section of Amnesty International, however, centered its campaign on media dissemination of the conditions of prisoners in South America. While not directly linked to the national efforts for the passage of amnesty, the organization did raise consciousness on political prisoners by humanizing their condition without directly attacking the Mexican government. However, over time the organization disseminated material from London on torture in Mexico—chipping at the international image of the country.[189] Even while *Proceso* published numerous editorials on torture and the condition of Mexico's urban and rural prisoners incarcerated for their attempts against the government, the writers did so primarily from nationalist perspective—denouncing

[186] "Violación de derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 18), 8 March 1977, 17. For more on the kidnapping attempt see "Secuestro fallido contra la hermana del presidente electo de México," *El País,* 13 August 1976 <http://elpais.com/diario/1976/08/13/internacional/208735206_850215.html> and Gustavo del Castillo V., *Crisis y transformación de una sociedad tradicional* (México: Centro de Investigaciones Superiores del INAH, 1979), footnote 70, 138.

[187] "Violación de derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 18), 8 March 1977, 14; "Secuestro fallido contra la hermana del presidente electo de México," *El País,* 13 August 1976 <http://elpais.com/diario/1976/08/13/internacional/208735206_850215.html>.

[188] Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Nación Unión, "Ley de Amnistía," 28 September 1978 <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/abro/lamn78/LAmn78_abro.doc>.

[189] "Informe de Amnistía Internacional sobre la tortura en México," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 16-21.

the violation of political rights as protected by the Mexican Constitution, and rarely employing the nascent language and universalities of human rights.[190]

However by April 1977 a new brand of criticisms on human rights emerged in the writings of Jesuit Enrique Maza. Founding member of *Proceso,* fierce advocate for freedom of expression within the Catholic Church, and first cousin of Julio Scherer García, Maza's writing reflected certain affinities with the political left.[191] Maza's writings could be placed within Latin America's wave of Liberation theology—alongside the social teachings and work of other prominent Catholics in Mexico like Morelos' Archbishop Sergio Méndez Arceo ("The Red Bishop") and Chiapas' Bishop Samuel Ruiz García for his work with indigenous peoples—both perceived by the Church as radicals but who rose to prominence for their progressive politics.[192] Born to Mexican parents in El Paso, Texas, Maza spent part of his life in the United States, finishing a journalism degree at the University of Missouri. Maza returned to Mexico and at some began working as a journalist for *Excélsior* until 1976 when he too left and became a founding member of *Proceso.*[193] According to Jean Meyer, Jesuit seminaries and training went through a serious transformation around 1969, and in 1970 *Colegio Patria* pioneered a new curriculum, where Pablo Latapí had been asked to evaluate the program and who concluded: "we feed power structures, we contribute to maintaining an order of social injustice." As such a new generation of Jesuits emerged, one influenced by the

[190] José Reveles, "Reos en Morelos: Tortura e intimidación, medios de pesquisa," *Proceso* (No. 18), 8 March 1977, 18-20. Reveles has authored several books on political corruption and the narco traffickers in Mexico. See, *Una cárcel mexicana en Buenos Aires* (México: Proceso, 1980), *Las manos sucias del PAN: historia de un atraco multimillonario a los más pobres* (México, D.F.: Planeta Editorial, 2006), *El cártel incómodo: el fin de los Beltrán Leyva y la hegemonía del Chapo Guzmán* (México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2010), El Chapo: entrega y traición (México, D.F.: Debolsillo, 2014).

[191] See Enrique Maza, *La libertad de expresión en la Iglesia* (México, D.F.: Oceano, 2006).

[192] Teryn Louisa Piper, "The 1974 Congreso Indigena: The Church, the State, and the Emergence of the Indigenous Movement of Chiapas," (M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2011).

[193] Enrique Maza, *Rumores de silencio* (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de Difusión Cultural, Dirección de Literatura, 2008), jacket cover.

work of Brazilian Paulo Freire and Austrian Iván Illich and their teachings on social justice. It is possible that Maza's progressive ideological underpinning derived from this new wave of Jesuit seminary trainings. As early as 1969, Maza dissented with the mainstream Church. That year he wrote an article on the *Buena Prensa* (The Good Press), prominent Catholic press dating to 1936, in which he believed the power of the press could be used for transforming society and not merely for evangelizing.[194] From that point onward, Jesuits left the *Buena Prensa* and began writing for organizations like CENCOS, a media NGO with Catholic origins (and subject of chapter four). In 1978 *Buena Prensa* also ceased publishing the Jesuit theology magazine *Christus*. Between 1978 and 1979, critics accused the magazine of being against the Church and pro-Marxist, among other things. In the north, Jesuit teachers left their posts in one of the country's top private university, the *Tecnológico de Monterrey* (Technological Institute of Superior Studies of Monterrey, ITESM) and at least one supporter of their exit claimed they were the "the Mexican [Herbert] Marcuse who want to make of the TEC a new Berkeley."[195] As such, Maza's criticism of the rising conceptions of international human rights echoed his own affinities with a conception of social justice that seeks advancement of groups through structural transformations of society, and one which questions the effects of capitalism on social relations.

Maza's first article in *Proceso* on human rights sought to bring attention to the condition of indigenous peoples in Mexico. Most importantly, Maza outlined the irony behind Mexican dismay over other countries' human rights violations—like when "an

---

[194] Jean Meyer, "Disidencia jesuita," *Nexos,* 1 December 1981 <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=3966>; "Historia," *Buena Prensa* <http://www.buenaprensa.com/bphistoria>.

[195] Jean Meyer, "Disidencia jesuita," *Nexos,* 1 December 1981 <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=3966>.

author is expelled or a foreigner killed"—while at home "[we] will continue impassive, committing our genocide…"[196] Maza employed the term "human rights" in reference to systematic disregard for the condition of indigenous communities, as expressed through the 1977 Second National Congress of Indigenous Peoples held in the town of Santa Ana Nichi, State of Mexico.[197] According to the Jesuit, while the press ran stories of a single crime, day after day, there existed little alarm regarding the condition of Mexico's most deprived peoples. Maza questioned the roots of this indifference and concluded "we have reduced their human reality, to our materialized interests..."[198] While he criticized the failures of the revolution; Maza also questioned the economic model pursued in Mexico and its social structures.[199] He added: "We have already acquired the coldness of capitalism that sacrifices generations for an economic project and for profit." For the Jesuit the 'scandal of misery' had been muted and replaced by other priorities when the problem should instead foment debate on the "conception of man, of society, of Revolution, and economy." Finally, Maza commented on President José López Portillo's stance on inequality and he advised against the fear of injustice and how it must not distract or slow production—an official stance exemplifying the state's stance toward economic recovery as the path for remedying social ills. Interestingly enough, in his article Maza analyzed human rights from a nationalist perspective by applying the term to indigenous peoples, whilst also recognizing Mexico's fixation with

---

[196] Enrique Maza, "El escándalo de la miseria," *Proceso* (No. 19), 12 March 1977, 36.

[197] Enrique Maza, "El escándalo de la miseria," *Proceso* (No. 19), 12 March 1977, 36; María L. O. Muñoz, *"We Speak For Ourselves": The First National Congress of Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Indigenismo in Mexico, 1968-1982* (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 2009), 203.

[198] Enrique Maza, "El escándalo de la miseria," *Proceso* (No. 19), 12 March 1977, 36.

[199] "*La Revolución Mexicana no sólo no ha mejorado las cosas, sino que las ha acabado de empeorar y ha contribuido y sido parte del crimen y de la vergüenza…Lo que más en el fondo está es que el escandalo de la miseria es consecuencia histórica del modo de vida que hemos escogido, del modo de revolución que hemos hecho, del modelo de desarrollo que hemos adoptado, de las estructuras sociales que hemos creado*." Enrique Maza, "El escándalo de la miseria," *Proceso* (No. 19), 12 March 1977, 36.

other countries' political rights records as it turned a blind eye to those slighted by the revolutionary economic model—an argument framed in structural and social justice terms, and fairly skeptical of the rights crusade emanating from the United States.

Moreover, by mid-March *Proceso's* short columns on international news periodically began employing the term human rights. Most of the sections that utilized the terms reported on U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America. For instance, the first on the "Southern Cone" placed quotation marks around the term "human rights." According to the *Proceso* briefs, the Argentine and Uruguayan military governments protested against U.S. government stance toward "human rights," matters these countries deemed of internal concern. Argentine and Uruguayan officials claimed they would reject U.S. foreign assistance if it was to be used as a tool to intervene in their affairs, as they discerned from statements by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Argentina made the announcement through radio and television, according to *Proceso*, and supposedly came as a surprise to Ambassador Robert C. Hill. Uruguayan officials on the other hand presented a formal letter of protest to Ambassador Ernest V. Siracusa where they documented their frustrations with Carter's human rights politics, which they perceived as U.S. interventionism. Meanwhile, on the 6th of March Ernesto Beckmann Geisel of Brazil (1974-1979) used the chancellor's office to communicate a similar message, a step that further strained relation with the United States, since the latter intervened in the southern country's nuclear negotiations with Germany. Aid to Argentina had been set at $15 million, reduced during Carter's administration, and Uruguay at $3 million—yet these southern dictatorships that had welcomed military and economic aid on the count of combating the spread of communism claimed their

right to sovereignty once U.S. foreign policy sought greater oversight on matters of human rights for countries receiving aid.[200]

Certainly by March 1977, reports of Jimmy Carter's foreign policy on human rights began to seep into *Proceso.* This was also due to Julio Scherer's keen interest in the Chilean and Argentine military dictatorships, a concern dating to his time at *Excélsior.* While editor of the paper Scherer traveled to Santiago, Chile. Of the 1974 trip he noted his longing "to see and listen to General Augusto Pinochet." Although one of his objectives was to talk to Pinochet, another quest included his "search for evidence of the brutality imposed on the country by a bloody regime." At the time he journeyed with contacts provided to him by exiles living in Mexico, most likely friends. In this particular instance, upon his return home met up with Echeverría to inform him of what he witnessed, given the president's keen interest in sheltering exiles as part of his "progressive" foreign policy.[201] Scherer's pursuit of news on Chile after the 1973 coup derived in part from what had been his personal friendship with Allende.[202] Scanella notes Scherer's hard stance toward Latin American dictatorships, but in particular against the "*pinochetazo*" and Spain's "*franquismo.*"[203] Moreover, many South American exiles found refuge in the press and universities in Mexico in the 1970s, particularly the *Universidad Autónoma de Metropolitana* (Metropolitan Autonomous University, UAM) founded in 1974, and FLACSO-México (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias

---

[200] "Cono Sur: Protestan ante EU, Brasil, Argentina y Uruguay," *Proceso* (No. 19), 12 March 1977, 58-59.

[201] Scherer García, *Los Presidentes,* 54-55. Also see, Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 111.

[202] Scherer García, *Los presidentes*, 54.

[203] *Pinochetazo* refers to the dictatorship in Chile, represented by General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990), and *franquismo* to Spain under the terror reign of General Francisco Franco (1939-1975). Petra María Scanella, *El periodismo político en México* (Barcelona, España: Editorial Mitre, 1983), 31-32.

Sociales) created in 1975. Given their presences in the press, many journalists like Scherer and those in his team forged personal relationships with Argentine and Chilean refugees, who often reported on their country's political realities, a fact that in turn predisposed many Mexican journalists to write on the subject of dictatorship.

Often times key stories on state violence derived from the relationships forged between Mexican and exiled journalists. Scherer, for instance, became close friends with Miguel Bonasso, an Argentine exile and resistance member.[204] Bonasso—journalist, author and today political leader—met Julio in 1975 while the latter still headed *Excélsior.* At the time, the Argentine exile had taken leave from his profession in order to "immerse" himself "in the resistance against State terrorism already reigned in the 'constitutional' government of María Estela Martínez de Perón [1974-1976] and her Warlock, José López Rega," wrote Bonasso. When they met, Scherer was getting ready for a trip to Argentina, and Bonasso along with his friend Carlos Suárez visited the director to give him the insights into "the mystery that Argentina has always been to the world." The same year, Bonasso and his family voyaged back to Argentina in clandestine. In 1978 he returned to Mexico as press secretary for the urban guerrilla movement *Movimiento Peronista Montonero*, and it was then that Bonasso reconnected with Scherer.[205] Because the Mexican government wholeheartedly accepted South American exiles in the 1970s, the happenings in Latin America had a strong presence in the press and in the president's discourse on foreign policy. Such was Echeverría's

[204] Bonasso has written extensively on Argentine's military dictatorship and on the country in general. Some of his writings include: *Recuerdo de la muerte* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Bruguera, 1984); *La memoria en donde ardía* (México: El Juglar Editores, 1990); *El Presidente que no fue: los archivos ocultos del peronismo* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1997); *Diario de un clandestino* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2000); *El palacio y la calle: crónicas de insurgentes y conspiradores* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2002); *La venganza de los patriotas* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2010); *El mal*: [el modelo K y la Barrick Gold; amos y servidores en el saqueo de la Argentina] (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2011); *Lo que no Dije en 'Recuerdo de la Muerte'* (Sudamericana, 2014).

[205] Miguel Bonasso, "Don Julio," *Proceso* (No. 1993), 11 January 2015, 69-71.

support that Chileans received a building that served as their meeting ground and to an extent their personal press station for communicating on Pinochet's atrocities, *Casa de Chile* (Chilean Home).[206]

In some ways, Mexico became the platform from which exiles launched their information campaigns against the military dictatorships. Given the government's support for the exile cause, many journalists wrote freely on the subject of Latin America's dictatorships. Moreover, in the case of Argentina, argued Bonasso, "[t]he imminence of the [1978] World Cup enabled us to intensify the reports of the atrocities perpetrated by the military dictatorship." Once in Mexico, Bonasso asked Scherer if he was interested in interviewing the resistance in Argentina, and the former *Excélsior* director gladly accepted. Scherer met with the clandestine resistance—the *montoneros*—in 1978.[207] The story on the guerrilla movement that rocketed Jorge Rafael Videla's dictatorship [1976-1981] appeared as the cover story of the 87th issue of *Proceso* published on June 3, 1978.[208] Of his trip, Scherer remembered Argentina winning the Cup and Videla's inaugural address at the event where the military leader evoked God, an act the journalist "despised." Scherer also concluded "[i]n the blood that stains the Southern Cone, Argentina was the extension of Chile, the agony of nations shared like

[206] At least in the case of Chileans, the Echeverría government offered exiles a home for their cultural or political endeavors, that often unfolded in the form of printed newsletters. The archives of the Casa de Chile eventually transferred to *Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana* (UAM-Xochimilco) and in the process many of the documents were lost. Conversation with Beatriz Torrez who serves as the head of the CAMeNA [Centro Académico de la Memoria de nuestra América]/ Gregorio y Marta Selser Archive located found at the Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México (UACM). Also see, Gabriela Díaz Prieto, "Abrir la casa. México y los asilados políticos chilenos," in *México, país refugio: la experiencia de los exilios en el siglo XX*, edited by Pablo Yankelevich (México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2002), 280.

[207] Miguel Bonasso, "Don Julio," *Proceso* (No. 1993), 11 January 2015, 69-71.

[208] Julio Scherer García, "La Junta Militar, en la vereda de la derrota: Con los montoneros, en Buenos Aires," *Proceso* (No. 83), 5 June 1978, 6-13.

that of two brothers."[209] Finally, in 1984 Scherer invited Bonasso to contribute weekly to *Proceso*. And by the time the Argentine journalist returned home in 1988, wrote Bonasso, he had with him the credentials of having worked for *Proceso,* and Scherer's backing.[210] The relationships forged in Mexico between exiles and journalists strengthened the national and international press networks against the dictatorship and by default disseminated news on Carter's human rights policies toward South American military dictatorships in an effort to help dismantle these—thus seeding individualist notions of rights, particularly those of political prisoners.

Jimmy Carter's Human Rights…and the "Blah, Blah, Blah"[211]

However, Carter's campaign of political pressures on repressive regimes also generated criticism. Enrique Maza initiated the denunciation. In an article entitled "Human Rights and Blah, Blah, Blah," Maza's began with the following remark: "The issue of human rights is complicated . . . [t]he world begins to think of them; because Jimmy Carter has ordered it and so begins his evangelist offensive to defend them in the world."[212] Maza concluded that the new U.S. initiative on human rights was a policy that benefited the United States, because it attempted to prove the capitalist system it represented worked, and served to retract the rising current against democracy since Vietnam. Most importantly, the Jesuit dismissed the sudden adherence to human rights as part of the Cold War ideological struggle against the Soviet Union, insofar as the United States no longer wanted "the socialist countries to be the global defenders of

[209] Julio Scherer García, *Vivir,* 68-69.
[210] Miguel Bonasso, "Don Julio," *Proceso* (No. 1993), 11 January 2015, 69-71.
[211] Title partially from Enrique Maza's article, "Los derechos humanos y el bla, bla, bla," *Proceso* (No. 20), 19 March 1977, 40-41.
[212] Title partially from Enrique Maza's article, "Los derechos humanos y el bla, bla, bla," *Proceso* (No. 20), 19 March 1977, 40-41.

oppressed peoples" or for human rights to remain a weapon wielded against capitalism and "reserved and exclusive" of the Soviet Bloc—"meaning, the oppressive imperialism goes on the offensive and snatches ideological banners." While Maza recognized that Carter's policy in some ways looked inward—inspecting its own policies toward undocumented immigrants, for example—and could be beneficial. However, he believed that the United States lacked the moral authority to carry out these policies, given that the country had been built on the violation of human rights. From the [a]nnihilation of its indigenous peoples; discrimination toward its minorities, which according to Maza the United States "gunned to excess" (most notably Native Americans, Africans and African-Americans, Italians, Polish, Irish, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and Catholics); bribed, corroded, spied, and overthrew governments; promoted and sustained dictatorships they now indicted; engaged in wars and invaded other countries; attempted against heads of state and killed others; pillaged other countries' natural resources; and placed military bases all over the world. In that sense, the United States "Dictated. Perverted. Owned the World," concluded Maza. And if Carter sought to honestly speak out for human rights, the U.S. government would have to start with restitution for all its wrongdoing. Moreover, the human rights policy already in place had been made a condition of foreign aid and applied to countries like the Soviet Union and Uganda, but most notably towards Latin America—from Nicaragua, El Salvador, to Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Cuba. Maza viewed Carter's human rights policy as one conducted, "from the ivory tower as masters of the world," a position acquired ironically through repressive measures. For such reasons, the Mexican theologian viewed the new era of accusations and the "human rights talk"

as "blah, blah, blah, blah."[213] Critical writings like those of Maza proved one key avenue by which human rights concepts made their way into the Mexican press and to readers in urban centers, particularly in Mexico City. However, these writings signaled the difficulties Carter's initiatives faced in the context of the Cold War, whereby hospitality toward the United States ended up in bitter divisions over matters of human rights, even when individuals like Maza supported their advancement.

Other writers explored the sociological currents behind dictatorships, yet still making use of the term "human rights." Spanish exile Francisco Carmona Nenclares, in the same issue, wrote the article "Bad Time to Remember Human Rights," printed next to Maza's on Carter's foreign policy. Carmona, unlike Maza, looked at the reaction of South American military leaders to the sudden interference "in the internal affairs of so many beautiful and healthy tyrannies" and the stumping of the "cheerful genocide perpetrated in the soul and body of their peoples."[214] Nenclares, perhaps reminded of the atrocities of Francisco Franco (1939-1975) in Spain, mocked the Latin American dictators and how they must have been feeling as pressure mounted against their governments.[215] In looking at the psyche of the dictator, Nenclares concluded that these leaders destroy rights precisely because "social consensus of economic power sponsors and promotes the maneuver." These dictators derive their power from violence. Their projects of annihilation of dissidence cannot happen without prior approval and support from society, from what are supposed to be pressure groups.

---

[213] Enrique Maza's article, "Los derechos humanos y el bla, bla, bla," *Proceso* (No. 20), 19 March 1977, 40-41.

[214] Francisco Carmona Nenclares, "Mala hora para recordar los derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 20), 19 March 1977, 41.

[215] For more on Carmona Nenclares' academic trajectory in Mexico, see Julio Requelme, "Francisco Carmona Nenclares. Perfil Bibliográfico," in *Los maestros del exilio español en la Facultad de Derecho*, edited by Fernando Serrano Migallón (México: Porrúa, 2003), 117-138.

Because injustice bears fruits and privileges for sectors of the population, it "integrates" under the premise of security and solidarity. Nenclares exposed the perverseness and the historic nature of dictatorship and violence toward a people—and reminds its leaders of the silent complicity of society itself in the suppression of rights. "Bad time to remember human rights. I suspect foul play," he wrote.[216]

Unlike Maza, the Spanish exile took a historic approach to the subject of military dictatorship and the role citizens played in the preservation of authoritarianism in their home countries, and he questioned Carter's indictments toward South America dictatorships when the United States had previously provided aid to continue repressive measures.

Proceso also began publishing human rights in its international news section—*Proceso Internacional*. In its March 19th "United States" column the magazine reported on a 1977 Geneva meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), since 2006 replaced by the UN Human Rights Council, in which deputy leader of the U.S. delegation, Brady Tyson, publicly apologized for his government's involvement in the overthrow of Chilean President Salvador Allende—"the first such public admission," reported the *Wilmington Morning Star*. The admission came during a resolution proposal on the condition of human rights violations in Chile under Augusto Pinochet.[217] While at the time such admittance seemed consistent with the political values and ideas of the new approach toward the world, the Carter administration quickly disavowed the

---

[216] Francisco Carmona Nenclares, "Mala hora para recordar los derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 20), 19 March 1977, 41.

[217] "Our delegation would be less than candid and untrue to ourselves and our people if we did not express our profoundest regrets for the role some government officials, agencies and private groups played in the subversion of the previous democratically elected Chilean government that was overthrown by the coup of Sept 11, 1973," said Tyson. United Press International, "U.S. apologizes for role in bloody Chilean coup," *Wilmington Morning Star,* 9 March 1977, 2A.

statement, which it deemed as personal to Tyson and not previously authorized by the president. Tyson's remarks, however, have been credited for contributing to the censure resolution passed against the Chilean government, a resolution signed by twenty-six countries. *Proceso* reported that Pinochet's cabinet resigned and that twenty-four hours later he purportedly dissolved the country's political parties, including the Christian Democratic Party, although the magazine did not clarify on whether these actions had been a direct response to the UN resolution of censure against Chile. While the news piece recognized a shift in the way the United States understood Latin America's problems, it nevertheless noted the underlying interests toward the region remained the same.[218] As Carter's presidency progressed, reports on his human rights politics only heightened in *Proceso*—and ranged from general reproductions of U.S. policies toward Latin America, critical pieces on the imperialistic nature behind the human rights initiatives, to cartoons by renown artists.

Meanwhile, leftist illustrators also left their mark in the history of human rights in popular culture. Zamora (Michoacán) native Eduardo "Rius" del Río drew one of a series of political comics mocking Carter's rights agenda. The illustration titled "The Biggest Seller" shows Carter in an outside podium with a flimsy wooden background, and lighting to the backdrop motto: "We Are For Human Rights," in small text and parenthesis "In the USSR" (see Illustration 5.6). Behind the stage stands a five-story building resembling a prison with windows signifying countries targeted by Carter's human rights interventionism—mostly Latin American countries in addition to the Philippines and Korea. From Brazil's window an "Ahh!" cry, from Nicaragua's what

[218] *Proceso Internacional,* "Estados Unidos: Disculpa desautorizada, pero no desmentida," *Proceso* (No. 20), 19 March 1977, 57.

seems as blood drippings, from Chile's a lifeless arm, at the top of the building a billboard reading "The Free World" and at the bottom a barbed wire barrier surrounding the building. In the center bottom, a logo with two hands shaking in a crest of the American flag, the emblem of the US Mutual Security Agency, a 1950s Cold War aid institution responsible for managing foreign economic and military aid, launched by President Harry S. Truman (1945-1953).[219] In the podium, next to a cross, stands Carter wearing a halo with a price tag that reads "For Rent" in English. Meanwhile, his audience is composed of two people turning to Carter, Uncle Sam clapping and a humble woman pondering at the backdrop slogan. Above the political scene, Rius included a sun resembling the all-seeing eye often associated with U.S. surveillance or the eye in the one-dollar bill.[220]

The *Proceso* comic proved a precursor to others that appeared in Rius' comic magazine, *Los Agachados*, and which saw Carter's human rights agenda as merely as a political ploy—one highly strategic and embedded in Cold War geopolitics. In the issue "Do We Really Want to Be Like Them?" Rius dedicates the entire comic to the "good neighbor. Model of what?" He begins by noting many Mexicans' desire to be part of the United States, but then attempts to answer whether the country remains exemplary and prosperous like most people believe. In the first section, the comic opens with one of the main characters, the young "Nopálzin" tries to decide whether to migrate as a *bracero* laborer to the north, while his peers advise him not to leave. Thereafter, Ruis attempts to deflate myths regarding the country's affluence, as featured

[219] C.J. Chivers and John Ismay, "American White Phosphorus Shells in Libya: A Challenge to a Pentagon Chestnut," *The New York Times,* 1 August 2012 <http://atwar.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/08/01/american-white-phosphorous-shells-in-libya-a-challenge-to-a-pentagon-chestnut/?_r=0>.

[220] Rius, "El vendedor más grande," *Proceso* (No. 21), 26 March 1977, 47, ENAH.

in films, and begins by detailing poverty among minorities—especially in ghettos and barrios—the lack of attention for the mentally ill, high rates of urban crime, divorce rates, drug use among the youth, wealth disparity, unemployment, and the "chaos" in public education.[221] In the following section, Rius makes reference to U.S. foreign policy—"For years north American propaganda has sought to portray the USA as the country of freedom, of human rights deference, etc, etc." Below this he places an illustration of political prisoners, and next to a cartoon of the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, accompanied by an unidentified woman. She notes that Americans don't even believe that of the United States anymore, while Young acknowledges the presence of thousands of political prisoners in the country.[222] Ruis then makes references to peace movement and anti-war political prisoners, as well as the effects of police brutally on the society, and CIA involvement around the globe. Finally, Nopálzin concludes the United States is not the paradise he had imagined and asked the "Professor" character how he learned all those things about the United States. He replied he bought Michael Harrington's *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (1962). Nopálzin then asked to borrow the book, and the Professor agreed, but asked that he take care of the book and not to throw it at Mr. Carter in his upcoming visit to Mexico.[223] In this particular issue, Rius explored U.S. society with brief mention of foreign policy; but nevertheless, linked the terms human rights to Carter's policies and political prisoners.

---

[221] Rius, "¿Deveras queremos ser como ellos?" *Los Agachados* (Year I, No. 8), 7 February 1979, 1-20.

[222] Rius, "¿Deveras queremos ser como ellos?" *Los Agachados* (Year I, No. 8), 7 February 1979, 21.

[223] The other text cited include mostly translations from American texts, from Manuel Salvat's *La pobreza en las grandes ciudades* (Poverty in Big Cities, 1973), Leo Hamalian and Frederick R. Karl's *The Fourth World: The Imprisoned, the Poor, the Sick, the Elderly and Underaged in America* (1976), Vance Packard's *The Naked Society* (1964), to *Mother Jones* magazine. Rius, "¿Deveras queremos ser como ellos?" *Los Agachados* (Year I, No. 8), 7 February 1979, 27.

While Rius dedicated several issues to the United States, he only referenced human rights in relation to Carter's presidency. In a 1972 issue titled "More Nixon?" he explored McCarthyism, racism, economic families and their bearing on US foreign relations, Kissinger, and the Vietnam War.[224] In 1974, another appeared titled "Do You Still Believe Democracy Exists in the United States" (The Rockefellers Part 2A) in which he explored CIA interventions in Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), Indonesia (1965), Brazil (1964), Greece (1947 and 1967), Cambodia (1970), Bolivia (1971), and Chile (1973).[225] Just a little over a month prior to his "Do We Really Want to Be Like Them?" Rius devoted the entire edition to the *desaparecidos* (disappeared) of the Echeverría and López Portillo's administrations. Rius included names and photographs of the missing in Mexico, including one of Jesús Piedra Ibarra, whose mother Rosario Ibarra initiated a movement on behalf of political prisoners and *desaparecidos—Comité Pro-Defensa de Presos Perseguidos, Desaparecidos y Exiliados* (Comité ¡EUREKA!). Rius' sources for the magazine's number came from Comité ¡EUREKA![226] While Rius placed Mexico within a larger context of repression in the region, along with Guatemala, his language regarding the happenings remained isolated from his discussion on Carter's human rights policies toward Latin America. Even while U.S. imperialism seemed a common theme covered in *Los Agachados,* Rius did not utilize the terms human rights until 1977, that is only after the election of President James Carter and the shift in U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America, and just before Carter's announced visit to Mexico for 1979. While Rius' socialist inclinations were known, his illustrations reached

[224] Rius, "¿Más Nixon?" *Los Agachados* (Year IV, No. 108), 7 November 1972.

[225] Rius, "¿Usted cree todavía que en Estados Unidos hay democracia?" *Los Agachados* (Year V, No. 151), 15 May 1974, 12-14.

[226] Rius, "Los desaparecidos de Echeverría y sucesores…" *Los Agachados* (Year I, No. 4), 20 December 1978, 1, 15, 27.

a middle class that grew disillusioned by the politics of the time. Most importantly, however, Rius' humor reveals the lefts' skepticisms towards concepts like human rights and ideologies espoused by the United States, and certainly this initial contempt toward "human rights" as promoted by Carter was a byproduct of the polarities of the Cold War.

Proceso also captured the geopolitical difficulties in attempting to define the meaning of human rights. Enrique Maza in "The Two Freedoms, the Two Rights" touched on the use of the term human rights by two separate countries, the United States and the Soviet Union, but signaling different meanings—"Two languages are being used with the same words." While the United States espoused individual freedom with corresponding rights, the Soviet Union promoted social freedom—whose consequential rights varied significantly from those of the American counterpart, argued Maza—this a reflection of the ideological fissure between capitalism and socialism. To Maza these were "two irreconcilable concepts of freedom, of man, of rights, of society." And while some rights were primordial under capitalist countries, such as the right to private property whereby a person could accumulate wealth, under a socialist system these proved a social crime. Moreover, Maza wrote of the transformative nature behind a wholesome system of social justice, one that can transform an individual when becoming a norm, a rule, when it "inspires decisions"—this by the "socioeconomic and legal structure it encompasses, one that conditions and regulates social coexistence." Maza believed communist countries deserved credit for their permanent compromise to social justice, even while they had not achieved it, yet at least attempted. Rooted in Catholic social justice teaching, Maza questioned Carter's individualist path toward the fulfillment of human rights maintaining "[i]ndividual freedom will never be the outset of

justice."[227] Just as skeptical as Rius, Maza's writing on human rights echoed the perceived threat of the changing nature of Mexico's economic model of development that gradually moved toward free market capitalism, and President Carter's employment of human rights in foreign policy as a weapon to deflate the influence of communist countries over countries with nationally-directed models of development and social justice. In that sense, Maza signaled defiance from nationalists' and leftists' at the changing nature of society in the 1970s toward the privatization of the state—resulting in their inability to accept the civil and political rights inherent in the new U.S. foreign policy of human rights that undoubtedly dismissed economic rights and promoted a type of individualism compatible with free market policies that triumphed thereafter in Mexico and in Latin America, known as neoliberalism.

The Point of No Return

By April 1977, the frequent appearance of the term "human rights" in *Proceso* must be credited to President Carter, and as a result dismissed as propaganda. Even while many key stories on dictatorship in South America and other places alike appeared, these often focused on the national context—from including names of the disappeared to their personal stories—thus leaving out any allusions to U.S. foreign policy or human rights.[228] However, when discussions regarding foreign policy arose, most journalists focused on the U.S. human rights agenda toward the Soviet Union or Latin American dictatorships. Alejandro Avilés, who like Maza wrote extensively on the

[227] Enrique Maza, "Las dos libertades, los dos derechos," *Proceso* (No. 22), 2 April 1977, 42-43.

[228] *Proceso Internacional,* "Argentina: Cinco meses de horror secuestrado por el gobierno," *Proceso* (No. 22), 2 April 1977, 51; Heberto Castillo, "Crisis de conciencia, conciencia de la crisis," *Proceso* (No. 27), 9 May 1977, 30-31.

subject, made references to the ideological struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States for control over their meaning.[229] Abelardo Villegas distinguished between Carter's human rights policy toward the USSR versus Latin America, whereby, in the former the U.S. has few pressure points to affect internal policy toward the Jews, for example. Meanwhile, in South American countries like Argentina, the Carter administration could pressure international funding organization like the World Bank or limit U.S. foreign aid through congressional approval, while also benefiting substantially from the publicity—and in that sense Villegas explained twofold purpose Carter's rights policies.[230] More interestingly, however, Abelardo noted the national challenge to adhering to the U.S. rights initiative included the disintegration of the opposition in several countries—"There has been in Chile, in Argentina, in Uruguay, in Bolivia, in Paraguay and even in Brazil no sectors of strong opposition that have been able to capitalize and channel Carter's pose."[231] Moreover, Villegas believed the motivation for the U.S. democratic wave lay in the country's attempt to reverse the adverse effects of previous administrations, particularly the ideological rift away from the United States since Henry Kissinger's years as National Security Adviser (1969-1975) and Secretary of State (1973-1977). "The appeal to the fulfillment of human rights is an attempt to recover a territory that has been lost," wrote Villegas regarding U.S.-Latin American relations. Interestingly, in Villegas' assessment of the region, Mexico again proved an exception. Mexico had not been as affected by the Kissinger policies of economic aid for the anti-communist crusade that resulted in the

---

[229] Alejandro Avilés, "Defensa de los derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 22), 2 April 1977, 50.

[230] Abelardo Villegas, "¿Las dictaduras contra los Estados Unidos? *Proceso* (No. 23), 9 April 1977, 37.

[231] Abelardo Villegas, "¿Las dictaduras contra los Estados Unidos? *Proceso* (No. 23), 9 April 1977, 37

establishment of several military dictatorships in Latin America, this in part to the political stability the country maintained since its Revolution and the reign of a single party. For that reason, the López Portillo administration found it easier to comply with the "international indictment of the U.S. government" through its Amnesty Law that released political prisoners "while preserving its dignity."[232] Additional reports in the *Proceso Internacional* section continued to explore human rights as a concept deriving from the United States, fraught over by the Soviet Union, and estranged from national contexts.[233] In exceptional cases, *Proceso* general news reporting on international issues explored military dictatorship and referenced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and by default utilized the term human rights.[234] No other foreign or national policy issue led journalists to employ the term human rights like that of Carter's rights ideological contest with the Soviet Union over the concept or the economic pressure toward South American dictatorships—this association held long-term consequences for dissemination of human rights ideology in the region and in Mexico.

Paradoxically, by April 1977 the disassociation of human rights from Mexico's national context ceased. Up until April, journalists writing on human rights in Latin America focused on Carter's pressure on South American dictatorships, and did not associate the term with repression in Mexico, or with matters of political amnesty in the country. While *Proceso* rendered considerable coverage to the condition of political

---

[232] Abelardo Villegas, "¿Las dictaduras contra los Estados Unidos? *Proceso* (No. 23), 9 April 1977, 37.

[233] Alejandro Avilés, "Defensa de los derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 22), 2 April 1977, 50. Also see, *Proceso Internacional,* "Vence en Moscú," *Proceso* (No. 22), 2 April 1977, 46; *Proceso Internacional,* "Chile: Un ejército enriquecido," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 51-52; *Proceso Internacional,* "Estados Unidos: Carter ante la OEA," *Proceso* (No. 25), 23 April 1977, 53-55;

[234] *Proceso Internacional,* "Justicia: Terminó la reunión de Acatlán," *Proceso* (No. 23), 9 April 1977, 29; *Proceso Internacional,* "Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala: Testimonios de violación de derechos humanos," *Proceso* (No. 23), 9 April 1977, 51-54.

prisoners in the country, journalists did not link the term to the happenings within national borders—which built on the myth that Mexico was an exception to the generalized violence in the region.[235] However, an Amnesty International report became one of the first publications that fractured the myth by linking Mexico to the larger context of political repression in Latin America. An introductory note to the report explained that two Amnesty International representatives from London visited Mexico in July 1975. With the permission of President Echeverría the two AI members spoke with government functionaries, independent attorneys, while also visiting detention centers where they spoke to prisoners. The note explains *Proceso* obtained the portion of the report published from Amnesty International's central offices in London, further noting that both President Echeverría and President-elect López Portillo had been sent a copy in November 1976. Aside from explaining the objective the mission, the "Amnesty International Report on Torture in Mexico" resulted from complaints to the organization of illegal detentions, disappearances, torture, and delayed judicial processing—among other items listed. Sr. Nigel Rodley, one of the AI representatives, arrived in Mexico City from London on July 13, 1975 and established the necessary contacts to investigate the internal happenings in Mexico. For each section of rights violated, the authors noted an article from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that protected such rights, followed by the articles from the Mexican Constitutions that guaranteed the previously listed entitlements. For example, when listing article 9 of the UDHR on arbitrary detention, the AI representative then listed

[235] For example, an article by Heberto Castillo published as late as May 9, discussed political repression in the country, but does not yet associate the happenings in Mexico with the language of rights deriving from international organization, like Amnesty International, or from Carter's foreign policy, Heberto Castillo, "Crisis de conciencia, conciencia de la crisis," *Proceso* (No. 27), 9 May 1977, 30-31.

Article 19, portions of Article 107, and Article 16 of the Mexican Constitution as jointly protecting Mexicans from violations related to arbitrary detention. Thereafter, proceeded the evidence and testimony on specific happenings related to the subject of detention. The portion of the report published covered a total of three UDHR articles: Article Nine, listed above, Article Three on individual right "to life, liberty and security of person"—which focused on disappearances and executions—and finally Article Five on torture and inhuman treatment.[236] The report broke ground and stands as one of the first by an international monitoring organization sanctioned the Mexican government on its human rights record, and defied what the PRI so preciously guarded for decades—state sovereignly by resisting foreign meddling on matters of internal affairs (see Illustration 5.7).

Moreover, the AI report underscores the Mexican government's method for responding to international criticisms on its human rights records. In the case of 1977, neither did Echeverría or López Portillo respond to the AI findings. Moreover, the president assigned political leaders from key ministries to respond. In the case of the AI report, Echeverría's Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada faced the findings and agreed to discuss the "various aspects of human rights violations in Mexico." AI provided Ojeda with advance notice of their findings, yet he did "not admit to any of the charges," but according to the report, Ojeda showed disposition to listen and respond to any questions the representatives. Moreover, the Attorney General also explained why Mexico had not yet ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or the American Convention on Human Rights, both of which

[236] Amnesty International, "Informe de Amnistía Internacional sobre la tortura en México," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 16-21.

recommended by the AI representatives as means of advancing international human rights.[237] Mexico did not ratify the covenant or convention until 1981, during the presidency López Portillo. The AI report published in 1977 reveals Mexico's apparent willingness to cooperative with international monitoring organizations regarding human rights investigations, in part to portray an image of compliance.

Scherer, however, was not afraid to publish any material that criminalized the government. *Proceso* obtained the torture report due to the relationship between the magazine and the Mexican section of Amnesty International. However, *Proceso* obscured the true source of the report. As president of AI-Mexico, Mariclaire Acosta approached Julio Scherer García, due to the organization's links to *Proceso* since its creation. "From London, we received a report on torture in Mexico…no one wanted to publish it, so I went to see Julio Scherer and I offered him the report," said Mariclaire. Scherer, according to Acosta, replied "give it to me, I'll publish it." Mariclaire gave the report to Scherer with one condition: "I am going to give you the report, but I do not want it to be known that I gave it to you…I can be expulsed from the [AI] section and I just do not want any problems." In return for the London report, Scherer was to help the Mexican section of Amnesty International obtain official registry. Deal made. Scherer anonymously published the report in the April 16, 1977 issue of *Proceso*.[238] Scherer felt confident in his ability to help Acosta given that he had a close contact within the López Portillo administration that is with the Secretary of *Gobernación,* Jesús Reyes Heroles. But, when Amnesty International won the Nobel Peace prize in 1977,

[237] Amnesty International, "Informe de Amnistía Internacional sobre la tortura en México," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 16-21.

[238] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City); Amnesty International, "Informe de Amnistía Internacional sobre la tortura en México," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 16-21.

announced on October 10, little was needed to get the Mexican section legal standing. The moment the prize was announced, Scherer phoned Acosta and told her: "We have it made. What we are going to do is publish in the cover of *Proceso* that the organization that wins the Nobel Peace price does not have legal registry in Mexico."[239] A week later the headline of the October 17 issue of *Proceso* read: "NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 1977: Amnesty International, slighted in Mexico." [240] In laughter, remembering the ordeal, Acosta concluded: "That is how it happened, that evening, we were given our registry." It was Amnesty International's relationship with *Proceso* that eventually enabled the local chapter to obtain a legal standing in Mexico, no less than six years after its original founding.

"Démelo, yo lo publico": Why Proceso Pioneered Human Rights News[241]

The term human rights in *Proceso* appeared in relation to repression in Latin America. The magazine became one of the first print publications in Mexico to actively employ and diffuse the concept. The creation of the magazine and other print sources, from *Vuelta* and *Unomásuno* to *Nexos*, signaled a new age of print media in Mexico. It was the context of the late-1970s that these new print sources were created, signaling the rising social tensions and the growing demands for a peaceful path toward democratization. The human rights campaigns carried out by Amnesty International depended on print media in order to shame and pressure repressive governments for the pain they inflicted through their counterrevolutionary measures. In the case of Mexico,

[239] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City).
[240] "Premio Nobel de la Paz 1977: Amnistía Internacional, menospreciada en México," *Proceso* (No. 50, Cover), 17 October 1977, 6-9.
[241] Interview with Mariclaire Acosta, 11 March 2014 (Mexico City).

Proceso offered the space for indicting the military actions in Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, and in the process introducing the terms into the Mexican public. Why the focus on the Southern Cone? When it came to the Americas, the AI facility in London was flooded with demands from the trio countries of Argentina, Uruguay and Chile (hereafter AUC). Such proved the atrocities that Amnesty International was inspired to carry out its first international camping on torture specifically focus on a single country, that country being Uruguay (February 20-March 20, 1976).[242] These global campaigns and its fact-finding mission reports brought greater attention to the happenings in South America, which of course also influenced the U.S. Congress to limit military aid to the AUC countries. While initially most attention went to South American countries, furthering the myth that human rights violations were not happening in Mexico, eventually though even *Proceso* began to associate the term with López Portillo's political prisoners and *desaparecidos.* This turn toward associating human rights to Mexico's own Dirty War crimes coincided with the rise of dissident groups like EUREKA! that demanded the government respond to the demands of family members of the imprisoned, exiled, and disappeared.

Proceso's coverage of dictatorship in Latin America between 1976 and 1979 by far surpassed that of any other new print sources of the time. *Proceso* was the only publication that consistently employed the term human rights in its coverage of Latin American between 1976 and 1979. From its inception, *Proceso* served as a political indictment against the Mexican government and against the military campaigns in South America. With the exception of the newspaper *Unomásuno* in its coverage of the

[242] This according to an interview with Mariclaire Acosta, see "Premio Nobel de la Paz, Amnistía Internacional, defensores de los prisioneros olvidados," *Proceso* (No. 50), 17 October 1977, 8.

Central American wars in the late-1970s and 1980s, no other publication employed human rights as the preferred lexicon for reporting on the happenings in the latter half of the 1970s. This can be attributed to Scherer and his team's knowledge and familiarity with the work of Amnesty International and their focus on Jimmy Carter's rights campaign. Such proved the attention on the region, that the Atlas World Press Review granted Scherer García the "Journalist of the Year" award on November 8, 1977, a few days shy of *Proceso*'s first year anniversary. It director, Alfred Black, described Scherer's role in carrying out changes "unprecedented in Mexican journalism." Moreover, he added: of *Excélsior* in disseminating information on military dictatorships in the region. Black wrote: "Among other things he introduced the so-called investigative reports and from abroad he himself denounced acute repression of the military governments in Latin America and with great audacity submitted Mexican institutions to a critical and ongoing review."[243] While Scherer used the moment to talk about the constraints to freedom of the press in Mexico and the assault on *Excélsior,* Mr. Black only verified that in reality the former editor carried to *Proceso* his devotion for informing the atrocities his fellow Latin Americans suffered.

In the process, the magazine introduced a rights vernacular in the process of globalization. *Proceso* undoubtedly rendered significant space to Latin American dictatorships, and in 1977 Scherer questioned Octavio Paz on *Vuelta'*s own coverage of the region in a manner that indicated he perceived such reportage on violence as an obligation. Scherer's interview with Octavio Paz was widely circulated. Some of the discussion focused on the absence of projects, on what Paz perceived as an absence of

[243] "Prensa: Recibió Scherer el premio al Periodista del Año," *Proceso* (No. 54), 14 November 1977, 24-25.

viable projects from either the left or the right. That is until, Scherer implied Paz had given considerable intellectual space in *Plural* and eventually in *Vuelta* to discussing repression in the Soviet Union, while the "persecuted, tortured or exterminated by the military regimes of the South did not even occupy a minimum space as the one dedicated to" criticizing Gulag and defending Soviet and Central European dissidents. "False!," replied Paz, "In *Plural* and in *Vuelta* we always attempted to denounce the crimes of military regimes of Latin America." In defense, Paz listed a report *Plural* published on fusillades in the Trelew prison in Argentina, and the many texts published on the overthrow of Allende (including one of his that was reproduced by *Le Monde* and the *New York Times*). In his defense he noted that the denunciation of military dictatorships (like the Pinochets and Videlas of the world) and its linkages to Washington were a campaign of "moral and political cleansing," while the examination of the so-called socialist regimes "was a work of historical analysis."[244] In some sense, the editors' magazines like *Vuelta* and *Nexos* believed their publications as intellectual endeavors focused on producing in-depth philosophical, historical and cultural analysis of the left, rather than engaging or mirroring the "West's" (i.e. Carter or AI human rights campaigns) shaming operations of military dictatorships. In that sense, while *Vuelta* did include publications on the conditions in South and Central America, these did not employ the language of human rights commonly found in Carter's foreign policy or in Amnesty International campaign on behalf of prisoners. Rather, *Vuelta* and others seemed to distanced themselves from human rights because they either refused to

[244] Julio Scherer García, "Octavio Paz: Veo una ausencia de proyectos," *Proceso* (No. 58), 12 December 1977, 6-7. Both Scherer and Paz reproduced the interview, Scherer in *Encuentro: Octavio Paz y Julio Scherer* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2014), and Paz in *El ogro filantrópico* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, ©1979 and 1990), 322-338.

engage in what they perceived as 'unintellectual' leftist indictment of dictatorship or to participate in reproducing the Carter's morality campaign.[245] While *Proceso,* particularly through the writings of Enrique Maza and others, may have echoed leftist politicking emblematic of the Cold War polarization—these nevertheless should be recognized for their contribution to the diffusion of internationalist notions of rights through their coverage of dictatorships in Latin America. Moreover, South Americans as a subject matter and as actors played a key role in the global diffusion of human rights in the 1970s, despite not always historically recognized for their efforts as reporters, teachers, as exiles, as pressure groups indicting their governments from abroad and in collaborations with publications like *Proceso.*

[245] *Vuelta* did indeed publish articles on the political conditions in Central and South America. These, however, did not employ the term human rights. When reviewing the 1970s publications in *Vuelta,* I did not find a single article making use of the terminology. However, scholars have evaluated political essays published in *Plural* and *Vuelta.* Paz once remarked of his time as editor of *Plural*, "Scherer's friends thought that we were old fashioned liberals and that it had been a mistake to give us the magazine. The cooperativists in *Excélsior* thought we were Communist intellectuals. Scherer always defended us." John King also includes *Vuelta*'s coverage of repression against Argentine intellectuals. Although, it seems *Vuelta* legacy remains outside of Mexico and more pronounced in the cultural rather than the political realm. See John King, *The Role of Mexico's Plural in Latin American Literary and Political Culture: From Tlatelolco to the "Philanthropic Ogre"* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 60-93; Malva Flores, *Viaje de Vuelta: estampas de una revista* (Mexico DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011), 179.

CHAPTER 6:

A Black Valentine: Human Rights in U.S.-Mexico Relations, and the Burden of Oil in Jimmy Carter's 48-Hours in Mexico, February 14-16, 1979

"The most serious problems
between the two countries is one of attitude.
Again, the Mexican people feel that the United States has often
treated them unfairly and almost always with condescension.
They suspect that you are visiting them now
only because they have become energy-rich."
-- Jerry Rafshoon[1]

Introduction

Of all the many events that helped catalyze discussion of human rights in Mexico, none rivaled the two-day visit of U.S. President Jimmy Carter in February 1979. Two years into his presidency, Carter's foreign policy toward Latin American dictatorships had drawn extensive coverage in the Mexican press, particularly in *Proceso.* However, editorials prefacing his arrival introduced to the nation a leader and his global human rights agenda and by default circulated a limited definition of human rights, one derived from the United States and espousing political and civil rights as a counterpoint of social rights loudly championed by socialist countries. While Carter's foreign policy toward the world, particularly South American countries, was subject to significant criticism, the most outstanding press coverage of his trip extended to matters of border security and drug control, undocumented Mexican immigrants, nuclear arms disarmament, trade, and, most acutely, oil. "Mutual cooperation," and not human

[1] Rafshoon served as President Carter's Assistant on Communications. These remarks derived from a trip to Mexico by two U.S. government representatives whose duty was to gage the receptiveness climate for Carter's visit. Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to the President, "Trip to Mexico," 5 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

rights, stood as the primary theme of the U.S.-Mexico meeting embedded in Carter's trip to Mexico.

The Valentine's Day trip exemplifies a pattern of absent pressure from the United States toward human rights violations in Mexico. President Luis Echeverría raised Mexico's international profile, possibly one of his least credited achievements. By the time his successor José López Portillo took office, Mexico's northern neighbor took notice and saw the country as a regional force to be reckoned with, especially after the discovery of massive oil reserves. For that reason, Carter consistently emphasized the country's growing economic and political influence in the world, most notably in Latin America. By the time of the 1979 visit with López Portillo, Carter utilized a language of partnership whereby Mexico stood as a joint promoter of regional justice, not as a human rights violator. For the purposes of greater cooperation, President Carter did not consider raising the specter of human rights violations in Mexico—because the country had not been flagged as such, nor had it been a large receptor of U.S. foreign aid; rather, by 1975 it had become a large debtor of private foreign loans.[2] Thus Mexico avoided international scrutiny during one of the loudest U.S. presidencies pushing for the limitation of military aid to repressive governments. Mexico's counterpart leaders took notice. A March 1977 *Washington Post* article noted that "officials say privately the only reason Mexico has avoided being targeted in the human rights campaign is that it is controlled by an authoritarian leftist regime rather than an

[2] According to Rosario Green, Mexico began its debt with multilateral institutions like the Inter-American Development Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the late 1950s; however, by 1966 rate of aid significantly decreased (see graph 1, p. 59). Moreover, by 1975 Mexico's public debt to private institutions constituted about 60%, and mainly owed to foreign banks, principally those in the United States. Rosario Green, "Deuda externa y política exterior: la vuelta a la bilateralidad en las relaciones internacionales de México," *Foro Internacional* 18:1 (July-Sept. 1977) 59, 67.

authoritarian rightist regime."[3] Certainly its revolutionary past and civilian rule when the rest of the region fell to military dictatorships shielded Mexico's internal, subtle, and maturing repressive mechanisms from international scrutiny until the mid-1980s, when the massive influx of Guatemalan refugees, the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, the rise of NGOs, and the strengthening of oppositional parties all combined to change the equation. Nonetheless, the Carter presidency initiated a pattern in U.S.-Mexico relations, whereby economic and political interests (bilateralism) have consistently been placed above those of human rights; for that reason, U.S. foreign policy has usually failed to actively pressure the Mexican government on its internal failings in comparison with other Latin American countries.

Return to U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Relations

The Mexican and U.S. presidents involved in this historic visit had begun their terms only a month apart.[4] President José López Portillo was sworn in on December 1, 1978, and in place of President Jimmy Carter his fully bilingual wife Eleanor Rosalynn Carter attended the inaugural ceremonies—a deed to which Carter pointed as evidence of his government's esteem for its southern neighbor during his 1979 visit to Mexico.[5] And when Carter took office on January 20, 1977, Carmen Romano de López Portillo

[3] Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Losing the Latins," *The Washington Post,* 16 March 1977. Embassy Dispatches, Mexico-United States, III-3315-3. Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE).

[4] According to Carter, it had been twenty-fiver years since both countries elected presidents at the same time. See, Jimmy Carter, "Visit of President Jos[é] L[ó]pez Portillo of Mexico Remarks of the President and President L[ó]pez Portillo at the Welcoming Ceremony," 14 February 1977, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7877>.

[5] Interview, "Interview With The President By Joaquin Lopez-Doriga, Channel 13, Government of Mexico Television," 8 February 1979, 2/8/1979—Interview—Joaquin Lopez-Doriga, Channel 13, Government of Mexico TV, [Map Room]; Box 40, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

attended the ceremony.[6] By Rosalynn's invitation Carmen, accompanied by her three children and son's fiancée, was the "only member of a reigning family in world politics invited to the Carter Inauguration." According to the *Washington Post*, Carmen "wasn't hard to spot", given her large eyes, blue eyelids, and extravagant clothing, from her "diamond-and-enamel necklace and matching mobile ring" to her "bright red, tight-fitting suit with fur collar, and matching pumps."[7] Even while the press poked fun, Carmen's visit exemplified a return to bilateral relations, which Echeverría had attempted to downplay in favor of a flirtation with Third World politics.[8] Nevertheless, the rapprochement between both leaders almost seemed inevitable, given the United States' energy crisis, together with Mexico's faltering economic model and a foreign debt, which by 1977 had reached alarming proportions.

As such, both leaders made symbolic efforts to advance relations between their two countries, at one of their lowest points by the end of the Echeverría and Ford presidencies.[9] López Portillo seemed the most eager in his engagement with the United States, possibly due to the massive inflation, capital flight, and rumors of devaluation months before his inauguration. As president-elect, he met with Ford in Washington at

---

[6] Jimmy Carter, "Visit of President Jos[é] L[ó]pez Portillo of Mexico Remarks of the President and President L[ó]pez Portillo at the Welcoming Ceremony," 14 February 1977, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7877>.

[7] Judith Martin, "First Lady's Return Visit," *The Washington Post,* 22 January 1977, E4.

[8] For Rosario Green, the return to bilateral relations with the United States derived from Mexico's increased public debt funded by an increase in private loans from international banks, principally North American. Rosario Green, "Deuda externa y política exterior: la vuelta a la bilateralidad en las relaciones internacionales de México," *Foro Internacional* 18:1 (July-Sept. 1977), 54-80.

[9] U.S. Ambassador Joseph J. Jova documents his visit with Fausto Zapata, Echeverría's Undersecretary of the Presidency, in which the Mexican leader expresses his concern over the state of US-Mexico relations by the summer of 1976: "One of the President's confidants, Fausto Zapata, sought an appointment with me to express concern over a perceived deterioration in our bilateral relations." Joseph J. Jova, "Conversation with Fausto Zapata," American Embassy (Mexico) to Secretary of State (Washington), 31 July 1976, Canonical ID: 1976STATE189157_b, Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006, *Wikileaks* <https://wikileaks.org/About.html>, 1-3.

the end of September 1976, just before the US presidential elections.[10] According novelist José Agustin, López Portillo assumed Ford would win the election, a fact that explained the timing of the early trip.[11] After Carter's win, four Mexican senators traveled to Washington in November 1976 to begin contact with Carter's assessors.[12] The surprise victory meant a return trip for López Portillo. In mid-February 1977 López Portillo arrived as the first foreign chief of state to visit during Carter's administration.[13] While Agustin notes a warm welcome, journalist Armando Ayala Anguiano on the other hand believed that "in reality López Portillo was treated like an insolvent Third World *cacique*."[14] Like Ayala, Robert A. Pastor, National Security Council staff advisor for Latin America and the Caribbean during the Carter years, points to financial reasons behind the Mexican leader's visit. Pastor states that Carter invited López Portillo in order "to help restore the financial community's confidence in Mexico." The "conversation," according to Pastor, "went exceedingly well."[15] For Rosario Green, López Portillo's visit proved the second key act of his administration in relation to the country's public debt, when he interviewed with "world representatives of official finances from the United States, international banking and American private

---

[10] For date of López Portillo's visit with Ford, see Biblioteca Benjamín Franklin, "Reuniones Presidenciales México-Estados Unidos," Biblioteca Benjamín Franklin-Embajada de los Estados Unidos en México-Servicio Cultural e informativo, <http://www.usembassy-mexico.gov/bbf/pdf/bfVisitasPresidenciales.pdf>.

[11] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 122.

[12] The four senators included Roberto de la Madrid, Eliseo Mendoza Berrueto, Adolfo de la Huerta and Rodolfo Landeros, "Estados Unidos: Sigilo y cautela de Carter," *Proceso* (No. 2), 13 November 1976, 52.

[13] Dispatch, Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Announcement by the President of Vice President Mondale's Visit to Mexico," Not Dated; Mexico: 1-12/77 and 1-12/78; Box 48, Zbigniew Brzezinski's Country Files, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[14] *Cacique* is Spanish for political boss. Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 141; Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 34.

[15] Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 29. A shorter version of the article was published in *The United States policy in Latin America: a quarter century of crisis and challenge, 1961-1986,* edited by John D. Martz (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

banking."[16] Those with whom López Portillo met included: W. Michael Blumenthal (Secretary of the Treasury), Antonio Ortiz Mena (president of the Inter-American Development Bank), Robert McNamara (Director of the World Bank), and David Rockefeller (president of Chase Manhattan Bank).[17] Mexico so desperately needed access to key financial institutions that it even signed with the International Monetary Fund in the fall of 1976—an institution the country had avoided since its last loan there in 1961.[18] Meanwhile, López Portillo insisted that the objective of his trip had not been "to borrow"; rather, he explained, "we went to present financial problems, of trade, monetary . . . that if we posed exclusively as credit problems, would be incorrect."[19] Aside from the financial meeting, the trip also offered López Portillo the opportunity to chat with private business about the massive oil reserves and his project for a gas pipeline; the conversations defied the wishes of the Carter administration, which had asked Mexican officials to negotiate with the U.S. government first.[20]

Despite the breach of protocol, Carter remained keenly concerned about mending and expanding U.S.-Mexico economic relations. Unlike his predecessors Nixon and Ford, Carter "devoted substantial time in the White House to guiding the development and the implementation of his administration's policy toward Latin

---

[16] Rosario Green, "Deuda externa y política exterior: la vuelta a la bilateralidad en las relaciones internacionales de México," *Foro Internacional* 18:1 (July-Sept. 1977), 75, 70.

[17] Others included Juanita Kreps (Secretary of Commerce), William B. Dale (Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund), Arthur Burns (U.S. Chairman of the Federal Reserve), Proceso Nacional, "Presidencia: Un viaje con signo económico," *Proceso* (No. 17), 26 February 1977, 19-20.

[18] Rosario Green, "Deuda externa y política exterior: la vuelta a la bilateralidad en las relaciones internacionales de México," *Foro Internacional* 18:1 (July-Sept. 1977), 75, 70.

[19] Others included Juanita Kreps (Secretary of Commerce), William B. Dale (Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund), Arthur Burns (U.S. Chairman of the Federal Reserve), Proceso Nacional, "Presidencia: Un viaje con signo económico," *Proceso* (No. 17), 26 February 1977, 19-20.

[20] Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 30.

America and the Caribbean."[21] According to Pastor, his interest in the region surpassed that of his primary foreign policy advisers, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.[22] This was in part true due to Carter's knowledge of and travels in Latin America, including Mexico, and his limited knowledge of the language—the first president since Thomas Jefferson to attempt to learn Spanish.[23] As such, Carter responded to his southern neighbor's invitations and sought greater cooperation between both countries. After López Portillo's visit in February 1977, Ms. Carter met with Ms. Romano de López Portillo in November of the same year, afterwards Rosalynn toured in the summer through seven Latin American and Caribbean countries, where she reiterated Carter's project for the region and encouraged leaders to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the American Convention on Human Rights.[24] The following year, and by presidential invitation, Vice President Walter Mondale made a one-day trip to Mexico, from January 20 to the 21st. For Carter, Mondale visited as his "personal representative to continue this important process of consultations on both bilateral and multilateral issues with our good friends and neighbors in Mexico."[25] These diplomatic overtures eventually culminated with Carter's two-day visit to Mexico in February 1979.

---

[21] Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 3.

[22] Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 5.

[23] Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 5.

[24] The Tlatelolco Treaty sought to limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 22-23.

[25] Dispatch, Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Announcement by the President of Vice President Mondale's Visit to Mexico," Not Dated; Mexico: 1-12/77 and 1-12/78; Box 48, Zbigniew Brzezinski's Country Files, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

Like their policy approaches, both men could not have been more different. Born in Mexico City in 1920, José López Portillo was the grandson of José López Portillo y Rojas, a politician, man of letters, and author of one of nineteenth-century Mexico's most important novels, *Nieves* (1887).[26] The future president's father, José López Portillo y Weber, had served as a military cadet during the short-lived administration of Francisco I. Madero, then went on to become an engineer. Third-generation José completed both grade school and his bachelor's degree with his good friend Luis Echeverría, both graduating with law degrees from the UNAM. In 1959 he entered the ranks of government at a relatively high level, having previously dedicated his life to private law. During Echeverría's presidency, Portillo held three different posts, ascending from the Secretary of Patrimony and Industrial Development to the state-owned Federal Electricity Commission, and finally taking over the Secretary of Finance.[27] There was nothing particularly outstanding about Portillo's career; rather, it has been speculated that Echeverría picked him in order to continue to serve as de facto ruler of Mexico, or at least to provide for his allies, for whom he negotiated posts in the new administration.[28] However, López Portillo eventually grew so tired of Echeverría's meddling in his presidency that he assigned his two immediate predecessors to embassies in distant parts of the globe. After several post swaps, Echeverría ended up some six thousand miles from home as the Mexican emissary to New Zealand, Australia, and the Fiji islands.[29] In the meantime López Portillo exploited Mexico's large oil reserves, enjoying a life of lavish spending that he shared with his immediate

[26] José López Portillo y Rojas, *Algunos cuentos* (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1996), IX; Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 15-17.
[27] Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 15-17.
[28] Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio*, 24-25; Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 134.
[29] Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio*, 30; Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 150.

and extended family through paternalistic governance—most notably by dispensing public posts.[30] Through his varied public relations maneuvers he became famous for his athleticism—from swimming, tennis, karate, and boxing to equestrianism—while adding to his family's political legacy, given that his grandfather served as governor of the state of Jalisco, and less gloriously, as Secretary of Foreign Affairs under counterrevolutionary Victoriano Huerta (1913-1914).[31] It would be this unusually flamboyant individual who would initiate, however reluctantly, Mexico's transition from a system of state-directed economy backed by revolutionary rhetoric and its adjacent social groups to one placing the country on the path towards economic liberalization, deregulation, bilateralism, oil dependency, and independent social mobilization espousing individual rights through the emergent language of human rights.

Meanwhile, his counterpart Jimmy Carter had risen to the national spotlight in the midst of a post-Vietnam, post-Nixon, and post-Kissinger political crisis. Son of a farmer, most often noted for his cultivation of peanuts, Carter grew up in Plains, Georgia, a town of some six hundred inhabitants.[32] After marrying and establishing a career in the Navy, where he worked under the direction of the legendary Admiral Hyman Rickover, Carter returned to his hometown to run the family farm when his father passed away. Once back, he entered politics, eventually making an unsuccessful run for governor in 1966 that led him into a journey of spiritual re-discovery, this after a conversation with his sister: "I decided along with Ruth, that I would try to reassess my relationship with God, and did." After a series of evangelizing trips as a "born-again"

---

[30] Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 138.

[31] Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 18-19.

[32] Robert A. Pastor, *Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Latin America and the Caribbean* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 42.

Christian through his home state, Philadelphia, and Central America, Carter returned to politics.[33] Carter competed once more for the Georgia governorship in 1970, this time successfully. In 1976 he won the presidential election by stressing his position as an "outsider," reinforcing southern mores, and noting his cultural and political distance from Washington politics—or as Pastor described, "someone untainted by Lyndon Johnson's war, Richard Nixon's cover-up, or Gerald Ford's pardon."[34] Unlike his Mexican counterpart, once in office Carter sought frugality in the White House—from reducing staff to selling the presidential yacht *Sequoia*—in some sense a measure of self-protection. According to a Carter's physiological profile written by Peter G. Bourne, these efforts "were motivated, at least to some extent, by Carter's subconscious reservations about his own stature and fitness for the job as well as his apprehensions about what other people thought of him."[35] Nevertheless, greater problems lay outside himself. By the late 1970s the United States remained scarred by the twin experiences of Vietnam and Watergate, while stridently anti-U.S. revolutions loomed in both the Middle East and Central America. Worse still, a dramatic rise in world oil prices after 1977 brought shortages and rising inflation. These challenges lay beyond the power of any one individual to correct, but it would be Carter who, as president of the United States, paid the price. His at times uncertain performance alienated many, disappointed others, and failed to meet the expectations for morally redeeming the political system. But whatever his shortcomings, Jimmy Carter's human rights policies toward Latin

[33] Peter G. Bourne, "Jimmy Carter: A Profile," *Yale Review* 72 (Oct. 1982), 130, 136.

[34] Robert A. Pastor, *Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Latin America and the Caribbean* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 42.

[35] Peter G. Bourne, "Jimmy Carter: A Profile," *Yale Review* 72 (Oct. 1982), 138.

America in his first two years in office would bear long-lasting consequences that merit incorporation into the larger historical discussions on his presidency.

The root of Carter's human rights ideology and policies has been the subject of much historical debate. Peter G. Bourne and others believe Carter's dedication to matters of human rights were rooted in "his Southern experience," and as such "the extension of his domestic civil rights policy into a global human rights policy."[36] In that sense, human rights in foreign policy derived from his own experience in the South and the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. While Carter's religious, civil and political experience in Georgia certainly predisposed him to take up human rights, he did not actually address the topic until campaigning for the presidency.[37] Interestingly, Henry Kissinger employed the term before even Carter took them up; that is, human rights in U.S. foreign policy began during the Ford administration and in Congress.[38] Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Don Fraser (D-MN) initiated hearings to limit funding to repressive governments; they essentially "provided intellectual leadership to translate America's moral impulse into a coherent policy for reducing aid to countries that abused the right of their citizens."[39] Alongside Congress stood nongovernmental organizations like Amnesty International; together, they inserted human rights into the national political debate, eventually resulting in

---

[36] Peter G. Bourne, "Jimmy Carter: A Profile," *Yale Review* 72 (Oct. 1982), 134-135.

[37] Mary E. Stuckey, *Jimmy Carter, Human Rights, and the National Agenda* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2008), xvii.

[38] For instance, in a speech given during a trip to Lusaka, Zambia in June 1976, "Kissinger spoke of a U.S. commitment toward human rights. Later in the year, his speeches before the UN General Assembly and in Santiago, Chile, reaffirmed a new human rights emphasis." See the Preface to Barry M. Rubin, and Elizabeth P. Spiro. *Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979), xiv.

[39] Robert A. Pastor, *Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Latin America and the Caribbean* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 107.

legislation that established State Department reports on human rights.[40] It was somewhere in his presidential campaign that Carter fused his own justice and religious ideology with a wave of political activism already present in Congress, and it would be these ideas that he was to globalize through his foreign policy.

More than anywhere else, it would be Latin America that served as the testing ground for Carter's rights crusade. Just as Greg Grandin has argued Latin America served as a type of "laboratory" for strategic and military measures that have empowered the United States, in similar form human rights policies were tested in the region beginning in the 1970s.[41] While these policies "dismissed as morally bankrupt the Cold War theories of containment that drew the line between anti-communist friends and Communist foes," they also institutionalized human rights as international, and hence suitable for application abroad. At the same time, those same policies dealt almost exclusively with civil and political rights, while steering clear of social or economic guarantees.[42] Carter thus employed human rights in Latin America as a way to reconfigure a new strategic approach toward the region, one presumably more benevolent than its Cold War predecessor. However, U.S. rights policies toward the region institutionalized a selective process by which some countries avoid scrutiny due to their economic positioning in relation to the United States—as was the case for Mexico.

---

[40] Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States," *Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999), 1233-1234.

[41] Grandin argues Latin American has served as the workshop for empire—for extraterritorial rule, for practicing counterinsurgency measures later employed in other parts of the world, and "where an insurgent New Right first coalesced, as conservative activists used the region to respond to the crisis of the 1970s…" Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 1-7.

[42] Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States," *Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999), 1234; Mary E. Stuckey, *Jimmy Carter, Human Rights, and the National Agenda* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2008), xxiv.

U.S.-Mexico Relations, 1977-1978

Between 1977 and 1978 Carter and López Portillo reached several agreements, none of which garnered significant media coverage. In November 1977, for example, both countries signed a tropical products agreement "representing the first such agreement between an industrialized nation and a developing nation within the context of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations."[43] The following month, an exchange of prisoners treaty was reached whereby inmates could complete their terms in their home countries' detention facilities. A year later, 137 Mexicans imprisoned north of the border returned to Mexico, and 350 to the United States. Carter's presidency praised the diplomatic effort as "a model for similar agreements with Canada, Bolivia and Turkey."[44] Before the agreement, *Proceso* reported on the Senate discussions regarding the "human rights" violations of U.S. citizens imprisoned in Mexico on a previous failed attempt to pass the exchange of prisoners' law. Among the most outspoken about Mexico's police force included Jacob K. Javits (R-NY), while Fortney Stark (D-CA) opposed the initiative, yet noted the prisoners' treatment as an "insult to human rights" and blamed Mexico's highly bureaucratic legal system. According to their estimates, Mexican prisoners held some 579 U.S. citizens, eighty-percent of which had been charged for possession or trafficking of drugs. The use of torture, forced confessions, and extortion were among several of the charges leveled by U.S. representatives, former detainees, and by current prisoners through written statements. For example, Robert

[43] Report, "Mexico—Presidential Visit, Background Report by Office of Media Liaison, The White House Press Office," 12 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[44] Report, "Mexico—Presidential Visit, Background Report by Office of Media Liaison, The White House Press Office," 12 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

Richard, at that moment held in a Guadalajara facility, noted that citizenship did not matter and that Mexican prisoners also suffered physical and human rights abuses. By June 1977, Mexican authorities passed the law of exchange, yet Congress failed to do so until the following December.[45]

The Mexican press and the Carter administration featured the negotiation as evidence of amicable relations between both countries. In the December 21 "Prisoners as a Christmas Gift" article by *Proceso,* the director of Santa Marta Acatitla prison announced twenty-five of the prisoners set for exchange did not want to return to the United States due to family links, while others remained simply because they enjoyed the modus vivendi of Mexican prisons. The director noted the treaty did not stipulate any transfer arrangement for family members of prisoners residing in Mexico. Nevertheless, *Proceso* announced the exchange scheduled for December 20 and 24, 1977.[46] The first exchange of sixty-one prisoners to the United States, and thirty-six Mexicans held in San Diego did indeed take place, amid a small ceremony in the hangar of the General Attorney's Office. The prison directors from both countries underscored the role good conduct played in the selection of prisoners for transfer, the majority indicted on drug charges.[47] The exchange signaled a diplomatic moment whereby U.S. officials publicly discussed rights violations in Mexico, yet did not pressure the country toward reforming its justice system, despite known charges of police corruption and complicity in the illicit drug trade.[48]

---

[45] Raymundo Riva Palacio, "Enjuicia el Senado de EEUU a México," *Proceso* (No. 33), 20 June 1977, 24. Also see Bill Curry, "Americans Held in Mexico Lobby Senate," *Washington Post,* 13 June 1977, A11.

[46] "México-EU: Presos como regalo de Navidad," *Proceso* (No. 55), 21 November 1977, 30.

[47] "México-EU: Intercambio de prisioneros," *Proceso* (No. 58), 12 December 1977, 28-30.

[48] The exchange, however, ended in a tragic accident. In this particular transfer, an official Mexican plane with American prisoners on its way to the Tijuana airport slammed into a telephone pole

Meanwhile, other developments suggested growing political and economic accord between both countries. A January 1978 aviation agreement expanded air services between Mexico and the United States—"the largest expansion of air services with any other nation since World War II," and one that would translate into more travel and "an additional boost to the flow of tourist dollars." In a similar line of economic linkages since 1977, the White House staffers' report celebrated a tourism agreement without a specific date, but one that again would "encourage investment in the tourist sectors and stimulate increased tourism into both countries from third countries." U.S.-Mexico relations also involved the transfer of technology, a key point of contention in Latin America dating to Raúl Prebisch's time as director of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), where he and others noted the lack of access to technology as a contributing factor to the region's underdevelopment and dependency.[49] Although not cited by name, the transfers included agreements reached "on science and technology cooperation," distinguished for having "increased in quality," meaning agreements already in place on matters dealing with solar and nuclear energy, and agricultural research.[50] Finally, the other two agreements were a new extradition treaty "replacing convection terms dating to 1899," signed in May 1978, and a maritime boundaries treaty signed the same month—Treaty of Maritime

---

and burst into flames, resulting in the death of all ten passengers—this after the plane had wandered over the border and then back in the midst of heavy fog. The incident took place just one mile from the border in the Otay Mesa, south of San Diego. The news report noted that the exchange agreement between Mexico and the United States stemmed "from reports that American prisoners were being abused inside Mexican prisons." Meanwhile, Mexican authorities contended that "the U.S. wanted leniency for convicted criminals." "Prisoner Exchange Airplane Crashes," *The Spartanburg Herald,* 29 October 1979, A1.

[49] For more on Prebisch see Chapter two on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

[50] Report, "Mexico—Presidential Visit, Background Report by Office of Media Liaison, The White House Press Office," 12 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

Boundaries between the United Mexican States and the United States of America (1978).[51] The latter simply specified locations for the maritime boundaries already negotiated in the 1970 "Treaty to Resolve Pending Boundary Differences and Maintain the Rio Grande and Colorado River as the International Boundary," which recognized the maritime border "a distance of twelve nautical miles seaward."[52] None of these agreements received significant coverage in the media, yet they factored into the preparatory discussions for Carter's trip to Mexico, a trip on which U.S.-Mexico oil relations hinged.

Matters of narcotics proved a key U.S.-Mexico issue for negotiation and contention. By 1979 the White House Press Office lauded the commitment of Mexican officials to drug eradication, deeming "[c]ooperation on narcotics control" as excellent. According to the same report, U.S. and Mexican justice departments had worked hard to control smuggling, leading to an estimated eighty-percent drop of "detectable surface areas devoted to poppy cultivation," that is according to aerial photography.[53] However, the public discovery of the use of the paraquat herbicide in Mexico's drug eradication initiatives gained significant media attention and momentarily alarmed the Carter administration. As part of an overall national effort to curtail heroin, the U.S. government turned to targeting supply countries, including Mexico.[54] Starting in 1972

---

[51] Report, "Mexico—Presidential Visit, Background Report by Office of Media Liaison, The White House Press Office," 12 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[52] U.S. Maritime Boundaries: Agreements and Treaties, "Treaty on Maritime Boundaries between the United Mexican States and the United States of America (1978) Senate Treaty Document EX. F, 96-1 (PDF)," *U.S. Department of State* (Mexico), <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/125392.pdf>.

[53] Report, "Mexico—Presidential Visit, Background Report by Office of Media Liaison, The White House Press Office," 12 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[54] Frontline-Drug Wars, "Interview Peter Bourne," *PBS,* 2000, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/interviews/bourne.html>.

the State Department provided Mexico funding through the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and as part of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drug (1961). No major technology had been used to eradicate marijuana; rather it had been done manually by uprooting and burning since 1972, efforts that had proved inefficacious.[55] Since enforcement authorities received funding and helicopters for spraying heroin, they negotiated the use of equipment to target marijuana as well. Peter Bourne, Special Assistant to the President for Health Issues during the Carter administration, traveled to Mexico and evaluated the program for spraying opium but also flew over areas cultivating marijuana. Bourne found that the Mexican government was "far more concerned about marijuana cultivation, because they felt that it was being used significantly domestically, and it was creating an economic problem for them." The Mexican government thus asked to employ "US-donated helicopters" to spray the marijuana as well, and U.S. authorities conceded on the condition that officials get their own chemicals, which they did—by purchasing paraquat from Europe.[56] As a result of this agreement, the Mexican government began spraying marijuana fields with paraquat in November 1975, but it was not until early 1977 that the media and other organizations engaged in a national frenzy on paraquat-contaminated marijuana from Mexico.[57]

---

[55] Kathy Smith Boe, "Paraquat Eradication: Legal Means for a Prudent Policy?" *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* 12 (1985), 502-503.

[56] Portion of *Frontline* transcript of Bourne interview: "The Mexicans said, 'When we're not using U.S.-donated helicopters to spray the opium fields, can we spray marijuana? Because that's a problem to us.' And we said, 'Yes, we don't provide you the chemicals for doing it, because it's not that high a priority for us. But if you want to purchase the herbicide paraquat with Mexican funds to spray marijuana, you're welcome to use the helicopters to spray marijuana when they're not being used to spray opium." Frontline-Drug Wars, "Interview Peter Bourne," *PBS,* 2000, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/interviews/bourne.html>. According to

[57] Kathy Smith Boe, "Paraquat Eradication: Legal Means for a Prudent Policy?" *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* 12 (1985), 503. According to Michael Chance, the story broke in the media in early 1977, "Abnormal: The Paraquat Panic of 1978," *The Green Pulpit,* 05 January

Oil for Immigration Reform?: Chicanos, Carter, and López Portillo

The question of undocumented immigrants also factored into the López-Carter agenda. As Mexico's political leverage increased due to oil reserves, several Mexican-Americans spoke to President López Portillo about pressuring Carter on immigration reform. In his February 1977 trip to Washington, the Mexican leader spoke twice in Chicago to Mexicans residing in the United States. According to *Proceso* the meetings felt a lot like his campaign sessions. He asked "Mexican friends" to remain true to themselves and their heritage, while also reiterating his government efforts toward advancing Mexico—and maintained he had not traveled to the United States solely for financial reasons.[58] While López Portillo may have not brought up matters of immigration reform during his visit, Mexican-American leaders from Texas made efforts to negotiate with the Mexican leader. In January 1978, a delegation of eight met with López Portillo in Mexico City, including José Ángel Gutiérrez from La Raza Unida Party (RUP), Eduardo Morga (President of the League of United Latin American Citizens, LULAC), Antonio Morales (National President of the G.I. Forum), and the more radical Reies López Tijerina (formerly in the *Alianza Federal de Mercedes*). One of the meeting's focuses included the rights of undocumented immigrants and Mexico's responsibilities in defending them. "President L[ó]pez Portillo assured the delegation that Mexico would not endorse a bracero program…without the delegates' active participation in the negotiations," and offered fifty scholarships for Mexican-American

---

<http://thegreenpulpit.com/2015/01/05/abnorml-the-paraquat-panic-of-1978/>.

[58] Proceso Nacional, "Presidencia: Un viaje con signo económico," *Proceso* (No. 17), 26 February 1977, 19-20.

students to study in Mexican institutions.[59] According to Jorge Bustamante, Special Council to López Portillo on immigration issues, the scholarships specifically for the medical profession had been initiated during the Echeverría sexennial, and proposed by José Ángel Gutiérrez.[60] Chicano leaders looked for political leverage in Mexico on behalf of a segment of the U.S. population whose legal livelihoods depended on a well-founded immigration reform rather than the renunciation of a labor agreement between Mexico and the United States.

The Carter administration, meanwhile, took on a traditionalist approach to the problem of immigration by adhering to the argument of legality. For one, President Carter proposed an immigration plan to Congress that sought to "increase legal avenues of immigration for Western hemisphere immigrants," whose limits had been affected by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 and some argued resulted in an increase in undocumented immigration—tripling from 1965 to 1970.[61] At least in the case of Mexico, legal entry numbers "plummeted from 450,000 annual guest worker visas and unlimited number of resident visas to just 20,000 visas for permanent residence."[62] In that sense, Carter's plans sought to limit undocumented migration by broadening the legal avenues, in addition to increasing border security and penalties on employers

---

[59] Armando Navarro, *The Cristal Experiment: A Chicano Struggle for Community Control* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 212.

[60] By 1980, the program had been in place for some six years and had benefited approximately one hundred Mexican-American. "Increasing Ties Between Chicanos And Mexicanos [Guest Jorge Bustamante]," narrated by Linda Fregoso, *Onda Latina-Social Issues,* 17 April 1980, (Radio Program #1980-21), University of Texas at Austin, <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/onda_latina/program?sernum=000535506&term=>.

[61] Karen Manges Douglas, Rogelio Sáenz, and Aurelia Lorena Murga, "Immigration in the Era of Color-Blind Racism," *American Behavioral Scientist* 59:11 (2015), 1437-1440.

[62] See Michael Jones-Correa and Els de Graauw, "The Illegality Trap: The Politics of Immigration & the Lens of Illegality," *Dædalus* 142:3 (Summer 2013), 187, cited in Karen Manges Douglas, Rogelio Sáenz, and Aurelia Lorena Murga, "Immigration in the Era of Color-Blind Racism," *American Behavioral Scientist* 59:11 (2015), 1438.

hiring undocumented workers.[63] Part of this reform also included deportations and heightening border security. Under the Ford and the Carter administrations alarming numbers of undocumented immigrants were rounded up and deported, and by 1974 some 800,000 Mexicans involuntarily arrived in their home country.[64] Unlike his successor, who "had much more contact with Mexico and understood it better than many other politicians," Carter did not fully grasp the problem of Mexican immigration, nor did he gage the political value of reform on U.S.-Mexico oil talks.[65]

Chicanos responded vociferously to Carter's proposals.[66] Some believed his immigration reform revived the Bracero program (1942-1964) by importing 800,000 laborers, a proposal "to meet the demands of agribusiness and other employers for cheap labor, easily exploitable labor." Some activists believed this plan was "nothing but a sugar-coated 'Bracero program."[67] In late 1978, RUP members in association with Mexico's Socialist Workers Party (PST), represented by Carlos Olamendi, denounced Carter's immigration policies and plans to build fences along several states, efforts at the time denoted to as "Tortilla Curtain," or what they referred to as the "Karter, Kastillo Kurtain" (KKK).[68] Mexican-American leaders also pointed out the

---

[63] Karen Manges Douglas, Rogelio Sáenz, and Aurelia Lorena Murga, "Immigration in the Era of Color-Blind Racism," *American Behavioral Scientist* 59:11 (2015), 1439-1440.

[64] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Chicanos y braceros: Una sola lucha," *Excélsior,* 25 November 1975 in Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Testimonios* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978), 55-56.

[65] Reagan met four times with López Portillo and six with Miguel de la Madrid (between 1981 and 1988). According to Pastor, "No U.S. President conferred as frequently with a Mexican President as Reagan, who used the get-togethers to maintain a good personal relationship." Moreover, it was also under President Reagan that major immigration reform took place (IRCA). Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda. *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 113.

[66] Joe Nick Patoski, "Little Joe," *Texas Monthly* (May 1978), 212.

[67] Committee on Chicano Rights, Inc., "Stop Carter's Immigration Plan-H2 'Bracero Program'," *El Tiempo Chicano* (No. 6), April 1979, 12.

[68] Armando Navarro, *The Cristal Experiment: A Chicano Struggle for Community Control* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 212. "Kastillo" is referring to Leonel Castillo, former Houston City Controller and called Leonel "Coyote" Castillo by the Committee of Chicano Rights, Inc. See, protest poster in Committee on Chicano Rights, Inc., "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" *El Tiempo Chicano* (No. 6), April 1979, 11.

absence of Hispanics in Carter's cabinet, as well as recent mass deportations; their portrait of the plight of undocumented immigrants contrasted sharply with the president's own language of human rights.[69] While Chicanos had been historically adamant at the presence of undocumented immigrants, given the role cheap labor had played in diminishing unions' bargaining power, by 1975 it had become clear that the anti-Mexican workers posture shifted as Chicanos realized that anti-immigration policies would indirectly target them as well. Chicanos' response and efforts during the Carter-López administrations therefore seem to indicate a new posture toward the needs of minorities and exploited groups of Hispanic descent: no longer separating Mexican-American struggles from those of Mexican immigrants.[70]

Carter's announced trip to Mexico amid oil talks further incited suspicion and opportunity for Mexican-American leaders. A May issue of *Texas Monthly* suggested that some politicians had offered López Portillo more favorable oil prices if he supported Carter's immigration reform initiative. Featuring Tejano singer José María de León Hernández, best known as "Little Joe," the editorial briefly chronicled the singer's trip to Mexico City by invitation of José Ángel Gutiérrez. He joined the group of Chicanos in their meeting with the Mexican president. Joe Nick Patoski, who traveled with Little Joe, recounted "[t]he purpose of the delegation's visit with López-Portillo was to apply a wedge of pressure between the United States and Mexico regarding Jimmy Carter's

---

[69] "In an era when human rights are being carefully scrutinized on a worldwide basis, we must call the attention of President Carter the fact that the undocumented person may be little better off than black slaves 115 years ago." Mexican consulate in Corpus Christi sent a March 23, 1977 article from the *Corpus Christi Caller,* "Mexican-Americans urge emancipation for illegal aliens," in which Mexican-American groups demand immigration reform from the Carter Administration. Memo, Raúl Roel Martínez to C. Director General del Servicio Diplomático-Edificio. Embassy Dispatches, Mexico-United States, III-3315-3. Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE).

[70] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Chicanos y braceros: Una sola lucha," *Excélsior,* 25 November 1975 in Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Testimonios* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978), 55-56.

proposed immigration policy."[71] According to the *Texas Monthly,* American officials had been contacting López Portillo "purportedly to suggest, among other things, that the U.S. government might be more amenable to purchasing some of Mexico's huge surplus of natural gas at their advertised price of $2.60 per thousand cubic feet," if the Mexican government supported Carter's immigration plan. Vice President Mondale and California Governor Jerry Brown were listed among those supposedly chatting with the Mexican president about the plan.[72] For that reason, the envoy the Tejano singer joined formed part of a unified Chicano front to lobby the Mexican government against Carter's plan. The night before meeting with López Portillo, the group met with Mexican hosts in the lobby of the Hotel del Prado, with its famous Diego Rivera mural; there they hashed out the plans for their meeting in Los Pinos. López Portillo assured his guests "that he would not let the sale of gas affect his position on immigration and promised Gutiérrez that Chicanos would be included in any immigration talks involving the border area and the *bracero* program." Like many in Mexico, López Portillo seemed surprised to learn that Latinos constituted "a larger minority than blacks in some areas of the United States."[73] By 1978 an organized Chicano initiative ensued against Carter's immigration plan that led prominent community leaders to López Portillo; the latter apparently consistently held an "open door" policy for Mexican-Americans seeking to speak with him, and according to anthropologist Rodolfo Stavenhagen, it was during the Echeverría sexennial that the Mexican government first sought to strengthen its contacts with Chicanos.[74]

---

[71] Joe Nick Patoski, "Little Joe," *Texas Monthly* (May 1978), 212.
[72] Joe Nick Patoski, "Little Joe," *Texas Monthly* (May 1978), 213.
[73] Joe Nick Patoski, "Little Joe," *Texas Monthly* (May 1978), 213-214.
[74] According to Special Council to López Portillo on immigration issues, Jorge Bustamante, the President understood the political importance of Chicanos in U.S.-Mexico relations, and for that reason

Chicano advocates thus sought to delegitimize Carter's reform by questioning his economic intentions in Mexico and did so by using the language of human rights. To that end, activists juxtapositioned Mexico's oil reserves with matters of immigration reform. In 1979 Chicanos in California believed "the issues of oil and immigration are factors that would ultimately affect the social-economical and human rights of Chicano-Mexicano people." Chicanos employed Carter's language of rights, and regarding his trip to Mexico in 1979, poet, former boxer, and prominent Chicano leader Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzáles noted: "The Carter trip to Mexico City has nothing to do with human rights. Carter[']s meeting with Portillo is not on human rights but profits." Given the legacies of labor and political exploitation of Hispanics north of the Rio Grande, it was only normal that in the context of the 1970s the more radical spokesman to view Carter's trip within the lens of U.S. imperialism at home and abroad. As did Corky when he said, "Mexico is in danger of being raped again." On February 11, 1979, just days before Carter's trip, Chicanos marched in San Ysidro, California, in one of the largest demonstrations against the construction of a combined six-mile fence in San Diego's and El Paso's border crossing. Activists not only protested against the fence, which they deemed served to "dehumanize the undocumented worker," but also gathered in opposition to Carter's immigration plan that they argued militarized the border.[75] Yet, after Carter's proposal failed in Congress, Senator Edward Kennedy

---

welcomed not only activists, but any Mexican-Americans seeking to talk to him. "Increasing Ties Between Chicanos And Mexicanos [Guest Jorge Bustamante]," narrated by Linda Fregoso, *Onda Latina-Social Issues,* 17 April 1980, (Radio Program #1980-21), University of Texas at Austin, <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/onda_latina/program?sernum=000535506&term=>; Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Chicanos y braceros: Una sola lucha," *Excélsior,* 25 November 1975 in Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Testimonios* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978), 55-56.

[75] The newsletter also includes a letter the Committee on Chicano Rights (CCR) sent to Sentaor Edward Kennedy (Chairperson of the Senate Judiciary Committee) and to Representative Elizabeth Holtzman (House Immigration Sub-committee) seeking an investigation on the violent acts committed by

formed a Special Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy whose recommendations for immigration formed the basis for Senator Alan Simpson and Romano Mazzoli's 1982 proposal version for comprehensive reform that eventually solidified into the 1986 Immigration Reform Control Act (IRCA) signed by President Ronald Reagan.[76] While plans for the fence were eventually dropped, they were revived and solidified during the Bill Clinton administration (1993-2001).[77] Nevertheless, on matters of immigration, Chicanos seemed rather aware of Mexico's political leverage after the discovery of oil reserves, and as such they sought to derail North American policies by making alliances with López Portillo, a strategy that initially bore some fruits.

Meanwhile, *Proceso* journalists gave considerable coverage to Mexican laborers' experience abroad and Carter's immigration proposal. In October 1977, *Proceso* published an interview with Patrick J. Lucey, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico (1977-1979), in which he declared his dedication to protecting the rights of migrant workers and affirmed the increase in border patrol, an approach, which he assured, did not mean the closure of the U.S.-Mexico border or anything resembling the Berlin Wall. Lucey also revealed that that Mexican authorities had been consulted on May 6, June 1 and 12, 1977 on Carter's immigration plan and had rendered their support for the initiative. The proposal sent to Congress on August 4 was better received than those previously

---

the Border Patrol. This letter was also sent to President José López Portillo. "Against Carter Curtain," *el Tiempo Chicano* (No. 6), April 1979, 1, 2, 10.

[76] Karen Manges Douglas, Rogelio Sáenz, and Aurelia Lorena Murga, "Immigration in the Era of Color-Blind Racism," *American Behavioral Scientist* 59:11 (2015), 1439-1440.

[77] See Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

presented to the Mexican government.[78] In the same issue of *Proceso,* Jorge A. Bustamante sent an article for reprint he had written for *Los Angeles* times in which he challenged Carter's notion that the issue of undocumented workers stood as "one of the country's most complex domestic issues." As Carter submitted his August 4 reform proposal, Bustamante seemed critical of the manner in which the president approached the problem of migration. He believed Carter's proposal for heightened border security would undoubtedly lead to massive deportation and civil and human rights violations, even while the president sustained he does not seek massive roundups. In addition, Bustamante deemed the reform a political scapegoat that stigmatized immigrants as a cost on the economy and deemed the proposal as narrow, unilateral, non-inclusive, and a short-term solution.[79] Immigration discussions north of the border factored into the Mexican press, where journalists scrutinized policies proposed by the Carter administration for most of 1977 and sympathized with fellow Mexicans, using their writings served as a platform on behalf of a group of people largely forgotten by the general population and left out of Mexico's public agenda.

Nevertheless, the coverage in *Proceso* revealed solidarity for their Mexican counterparts at the center of an unfolding of a politics of repression around the issue of immigration. Renowned anthropologist Rodolfo Stavenhagen, most known for his research on indigenous peoples, wrote extensively for *Excélsior,* and after 1976 for *Proceso,* on Chicano culture and the repatriation of Mexicans. Up to 1976 Stavenhagen reported on general Chicano culture, Chicano and Mexican immigrant relationship,

[78] According to Lucey, the Carter proposal included a category of "non-deportable" immigrants, valid for five years, for those who arrived in the United States between 1970 and 1977. Rodolfo Guzmán, "El embajador Patrick Lucey: EU no fue unilateral, consultó con México el plan sobre los braceros," *Proceso* (No. 51), 24 October 1977, 6-10.

[79] Jorge A. Bustamante, "EU procede como si los braceros solo fueran problema suyo," *Proceso* (No. 51), 24 October 1977, 8-9.

anti-Mexican campaigns in California, and the repatriation of thousands of workers to Mexico.[80] Other news pieces reported violence and repression against Mexican migrants and Chicanos and the rise of a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) initiative against the entry of undocumented workers.[81] An article titled "There They Live Badly, but Better than Here" reproduced the story of the union leader José Rodríguez from San Luis de la Paz, Guanajuato. Rodríguez, along with twenty men and fifteen women, walked some 1,800 miles from Texas to Washington to talk to Carter. The group sought for the U.S. government to recognize their union, *La Unión de Campesinos de Texas* (Texas Farmers Union) and to demand that their employers pay them wages sufficient to survive—"so the government can give us what is just." Rodríguez added he did not want to return to Mexico, "[o]nly if they throw me out I will leave, but I have already given a lot to the United States," but argued what they demanded was not wealth, rather just to be treated humanely.[82] The article implied migrants' acculturation and a desire to remain in the United States, while also reflecting a conscious effort to demand just treatment.

Jesuit columnist Enrique Maza, who also wrote extensively on human rights, grappled with the question of migrants. Maza believed that undocumented immigrants in the United States were the result of one of the "intrinsic failures of the socio-economic-political structures of capitalism," emanating from the growing disparity

---

[80] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Genocidio en Chiapas," *Proceso* (No. 4), 27 November 1976, 50. Also see the following articles by Stavenhagen: "Ante el desempleo rural: El retorno de los braceros," *Excélsior,* 4 December 1973; "Los Chicanos: ¿Tacos o Hamburguesas?" *Excélsior,* 29 January 1974; "Bracerismo: 13 millones de mexicanos indeseables," *Excélsior,* 6 August 1974; "Chicanos y braceros: Una sola lucha," *Excélsior,* 25 November 1975; "Dependencia fronteriza: El éxodo silencioso," *Excélsior,* 26 April 1976 in Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Testimonios* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978), 9-80.

[81] Mexico-EU, "Represión a los ilegales; "Faltan trabajadores aptos en el campo de EU"; Carter impedirá acciones ilegales del KKK, dice Lucey," *Proceso* (No. 52), 31 October 1977, 48-49.

[82] "Mexico-EU: Allá viven mal, pero mejor que aquí," *Proceso* (No. 45), 12 September 1977, 47.

between wealthy and poor countries. Using Carter's own language of rights but with a critical stance toward the president's approach to the problem of migration, Maza believed "the real problem posed by illegal workers is the universality of human rights, beyond national borders." Maza wondered whether human rights could transcend national borders and argued there could be no human rights where structures of inequality existed, nor could human rights exist merely in the realm of individual freedoms at the margin of social realities. For Maza the underpinning problem of undocumented immigrants lay in global questions of inequality and of humanity.[83] In August *Proceso* also reported on the meeting of Andrew Young, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, with López Portillo and other political leaders to discuss undocumented Mexicans abroad and negotiations over the Panama Canal, among other things.[84] By the end of 1977, coverage on undocumented immigrants featured in *Proceso* decreased with a clear shift in U.S.-Mexico relations reporting toward the pipeline project and the United States' refusal to accept its southern neighbor's price for gas.

By the February trip, Mexican writers and Chicanos had appropriated Carter's own language of rights to scold him on injustices in his own country. The southern democrat had made human rights a cornerstone of his foreign policies. While the general population in the United States remained aloof to the emerging terminology of "human rights," Mexican-Americans learned the language from Carter. The Carter administration, however, did not associate or apply human rights terminologies to

---

[83] Enrique Maza, "Ilegales y derechos humanos internacionales," *Proceso* (No. 40), 8 August 1977, 37.

[84] Young also traveled with several State Department and National Security Council leaders, including Sally Shelton (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America), Abelardo López Valdéz (Assistant Administrator of the Agency for International Development, AID), Luigi Roberto Einaudi (Director of Policy Planning for the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs). "Negociaciones con Young sobre bracerismo," *Proceso* (No. 41), 15 August 1977, 19.

matters of immigration, border security, and much less did officials associate these with the rights of minorities in the United States. Rather, human rights in the 1970s were confined strictly to the realm of foreign policy—precisely from where they had been endorsed by members of congress just a few years prior to Carter's election. Because of the way they were promoted by members of Congress, human rights became intimately linked and confined to U.S. foreign policy, and especially marred by Cold War politics of counterrevolution. In that sense, human rights terminologies were tagged to happenings abroad, particularly in developing countries, and they embodied the excesses of a strong and closed state that infringed on individual values prioritized by Western democracies: political and civil rights. In the context of the Cold War, human rights policies emanating from the State Department were used as a measure of anti-communism, as a strategy to counter an ideology that privileged social and economic rights over civil and political. Because Mexico had not been flagged as a hub for revolutionary movements, neither Carter nor his predecessors or successors challenged the government on its human rights records, although enough knowledge of the country's faulting justice system existed. The absence of non-governmental organizations looking into violence in Mexico, and Carter's priorities in Latin America, explains another reason why human rights were never of major importance for the February 1979 U.S.-Mexico meeting.

(Avoiding) International Scrutiny: Documenting Mexico's Human Rights Violations

While the U.S. government certainly knew of its southern neighbor's rights violations, Mexico also worked diligently to dispel such charges. According to Kate Doyle, during the Echeverría sexennial First Secretary of the U.S. embassy T. Frank

Crigler met with officials from Mexico's Secretariat of Foreign Relations to talk about "U.S. interests in the current human rights situation." When Mexican officials wondered if the U.S. government needed an official statement on human rights in Mexico, Doyle documents, Crigler immediately assured authorities stating "that there was no intention on our part whatever to meddle in Mexico's internal affairs, but that we simply wished to cooperate and consult with the Mexican government on means by which other nations might be encouraged to pay attention to human rights values."[85] Moreover, Doyle states, "Declassified U.S. documents from 1968-78 show clearly that the United States knew the Mexican government was committing grave human rights violations - they also show that the U.S. was uninterested in publicizing that fact, either to the Mexican government or to the U.S. Congress."[86] It seems that rather than risk antagonizing the country, the U.S. government sought Mexico's cooperation in pressuring other Latin America nations on their human rights records—as Echeverría diligently did, especially through his policy of welcoming South American exiles.

Even so, Mexico still factored into the State Department's country reports on human rights. The 1976 report, compiled by the Coordinator for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, placed Mexico in the category of "partially free" countries, while Bolivia, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Haiti and Panama were deemed "not free." At the time, however, Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada denied any human rights violations in the country.[87] The 1977 report predictably called attention to Mexico's

---

[85] Kate Doyle, "Human Rights and the Dirty War in Mexico," *National Security Archive*, 11 May 2003, <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB89/index2.htm>.

[86] Kate Doyle, "Human Rights and the Dirty War in Mexico," *National Security Archive*, 11 May 2003, <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB89/index2.htm>.

[87] These reports evaluated the record of human rights for countries receiving U.S. economic assistance. In 1977, the post became the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and in

single-party rule yet deemed the PRI "a channel for considerable political participation and debate." The State Department also recognized that while individual rights were "generally respected in practice," the government did not condone human rights violations as part of its public policy debates.[88] The 1979 report kept faith with earlier perspectives by stating that the Mexican system promoted social justice derivative of its Revolutionary past; but at the same time the report documented complaints of "individual human rights abuses" in relation to "anti-terrorism or restraint of political opposition."[89] The U.S. government also recognized that the López Portillo government addressed some of the accusations through an amnesty law and by accounting for "disappeared person," a category not included in the evaluation on Mexico for 1979; by 1980 the State Department bluntly reported that the country did "not acknowledge the existence of disappeared persons."[90] While Mexico's repressive measures were largely overlooked for lack of "conclusive evidence," the State Department consistently pressured the country on its treatment of U.S. citizens incarcerated in Mexico, but did not publicly condemn its human rights records in the press or diplomatically.

Whatever their limitations, the State Department reports set an important

---

1993 changed to the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. "Juicio a México: libertad parcial," *Proceso* (No. 35), 4 July 1977, 48.

[88] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 184.

[89] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 359.

[90] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 359; U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), 480.

precedent for evaluating human rights in the world. These documents reviewed conditions for each country based on several criteria, particularly those related to civil and political rights, the principal exception being the category on economic and social rights.[91] They drew on the terminology of rights primarily from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ranging from torture, disappearances (category excluded from the 1978 report on Mexico altogether), arbitrary arrest, denial of a fair public trail to freedom of speech and press—all relevant to rights espoused on behalf of political prisoners—with a single category on social and economic rights related to food, shelter, health, education, and employment.[92] In January 1978 an internal State Department's newsletter outlined Carter's foreign policy on human rights in which it defined the latter as "based on our historical documents and experience, the UN Charter, and other international instruments," including the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The GIST newsletter (U. S. Department of State's Global Innovation through Science and Technology) listed three groups of rights the State Department pursued:

> --Freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, torture, unfair trial, cruel and unusual punishment, and invasion of privacy;
>
> --Rights to food, shelter, health care, and education; and

---

[91] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 184.

[92] Categories: 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From: a. Torture, b. Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, c. Disappearances, d. Arbitrary Arrest or Imprisonment, e. Denial of Fair Public Trial, f. Invasion of the Home; 2. Government Policies Relating to the Fulfillment of Such Vital Needs as Food, Shelter, Health Care, Employment and Education; 3. Respect for Civil and Political Liberties, including: a. Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion and Assembly, b. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration and Repatriation, c. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process; 4. Government Attitude and Record Regarding International and Non-Governmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights. U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 479-487.

--Freedom of thought, speech, assembly, religion, press, movement and participation in government.[93]

Despite the somewhat narrow list of rights evaluation, the State Department reports institutionalized a measures contingent with the legal priorities of the United States unique legal trajectory and Western legal systems prioritizing individual over group rights, and focused primarily on civil and political rights. Yet even when sufficient evidence existed on rights violations, the Carter administration (and its many successors) selectively chose the countries to publicly pressure versus those with whom it privately negotiated on matters of repression.

Conspicuously absent in the State Department country reports was data from NGO fact-finding missions to Mexico. The U.S. government relied heavily on documented material published by non-governmental organizations for their own reports. Evidence of the absence of international groups working in Mexico was reflected in the State Departments 1977 report. In the four pages, officials documented numerous claims of "no conclusive evidence," and a single paragraph to material collected and published in the Amnesty International Report for 1977.[94] Incredibly, the 1977 report did not include surveys of Chile or Argentina, two of the most egregious human-rights offenders in the western hemisphere.[95] Two years later, the 1979 and 1980 the report on Mexico more than doubled to nine pages. The State Department

---

[93] Letter, Hugo B. Margáin to Director General de Servicio Diplomático, 3 February 1978, Annex: GIST, "US Human Rights Policy," *EAU of Public Affairs, State Department,* January 1978. Embassy Dispatches, Mexico-United States, III-3345-3. Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE).

[94] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 184-187.

[95] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), viii.

officials included detailed material from local dailies and magazines, including such ideologically opposed publications as the right-wing *Diario de Yucatán* and the more left-leaning *Proceso*, in addition to first and second-hand information "received by American consular officers," as well as U.S. consulate reports as related to North American prisoners in Mexico, and from NGOs—including the Defense Committee for Political Prisoners, Disappeared Persons and Exiles (DCPPDPE, in Spanish Comité ¡Eureka!) and the International League for Human Rights (ILHR).[96] The 1980 report also referenced Mexico's rising political position, given the discovery of oil and material from the President's State of the Union reports (*informe de gobierno*), which staffers often took at face value reproducing propagandistic material on social, political, and economic advancements in the country—such as the arguments that "Men and women are equal before the law, and women participate freely in the political process," along with percentages of women in universities and claims of an absence of hiring or wage discrimination for women in the unskilled, semi-skilled, and professional fields.[97] Despite some misstatements and shaky interpretations, the documentation improved in quality from 1977 up to 1979 and 1980, and the terminology regarding political dissidents diversified from merely utilizing "terrorists" and the government counterrevolutionary efforts as "anti-terrorism" to showcasing specific cases and noting

[96] The NGO was created by Rosario Ibarra, mother of a student involved in guerrilla activities in Mexico and killed by the government. She created Comité ¡Eureka!, also known as Comité Pro-Defensa de Presos Perseguidos, Desaparecidos y Exiliados Políticos de México, an organization that used the media to publicized repression in the country. U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 360-363.

[97] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 366; U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), 484.

the repression against specific groups, like students, workers, and left-wing guerrillas.

However, Mexico's reportage lagged in comparison to material recompiled on Argentina and Chile after 1977. Country reports on human rights relied heavily on evidence collected in fact-finding missions carried out by non-governmental organizations. The information reproduced by the State Department reports reveals a disparity in missions to South American countries versus Mexico. Evaluations of Argentina's human rights record, for example, reflects the U.S. government's use of documentation by several local and international organization, from the Peace and Justice Movement headed by Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IAHRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross, to the New York City Bar Association.[98] Argentina's case shows the existence of a specialized transnational network of activists, political leaders, and exiles working to document and diffuse stories, names by providing a general panorama of repressive conditions on the ground. Because more people advocated on behalf of repressed peoples in Argentina and Chile, the U.S. government pressure exerted on these countries varied significantly from others not flagged as violators. Most importantly, Mexico's groups most vulnerable to human rights violations and political repression found themselves in rural areas with little or no access to the national or international media. Unlike primarily urban societies, Mexico avoided international scrutiny in large part due to the absences of a transnational exile and media networks actively engaged in the 1970s emerging device of fact-finding missions—and the especially non-existent surveys of government repression in extremely poor, isolated,

[98] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), 330-333.

and rural communities.

Moreover, Mexico's double discourse on human rights spared the country from international scrutiny. The State Department exemplifies how the Mexican government distanced itself from countries with public records of rights violations. Both Echeverría and López Portillo actively criticized military governments and adhered internationally to protecting human rights, while also demanding their right to sovereignty on internal matters. The State Department, for instance, noted Mexico's cooperation and argued the country "had a good human rights record in international affairs, with traditional support for the persecuted of other countries and with frequent participation in multilateral approaches to human rights problems."[99] Subsequent reports replicated the statement, almost verbatim, and in 1980 the State Department added "Mexico has traditionally provided asylum for dissidents from throughout Latin America."[100] The open door policy to South American exiles served to solidify Mexico as a protector, rather than a violator, of human rights. Likewise, in López Portillo's February 1977 speech in the U.S. Congress he outlined Carter's priorities in Latin America, noting negotiations over Panama and the "evolution" of relations with Cuba, yet he proved critical in that the U.S. government was less concerned by human rights violation in Chile.[101] In similar manner, López Portillo employed international forums to denounce human rights violations, even in the United States. Moreover, Carter built on this notion of Mexico as a protector by referring to López Portillo as a leader

---

[99] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 184.

[100] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 479.

[101] Proceso Nacional, "Presidencia: Un viaje con signo económico," *Proceso* (No. 17), 26 February 1977, 19-20.

committed to advancing the human rights cause in the region. In that manner the Mexican government appropriated the emerging language of international human rights by openly scrutinizing Latin American dictatorships as part of its foreign policy and deference for state sovereignty, partly a strategy to limit speculation on its own repressive measures.

When charges of human rights violations did surface, Mexican authorities deflected criticisms by opening the door to international organizations. Amnesty International proved one of the few institutions surveying Mexico's human rights records, primarily its treatment of political prisoners. As such, representatives traveled to the country on several occasions, with the first visit taking place in July 1975.[102] When AI delegates presented Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada with their findings on the condition of human rights violations in Mexico, he did not admit any of the charges, but delegates acknowledged his willingness to answer queries. Ojeda also diverted from explaining why Mexico had not ratified the International Bill of Human Rights, which includes the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.[103] Luis Echeverría, now a Nobel Peace Prize candidate, failed to respond to the various recommendations AI presented the country after their visit.[104] Moreover, in November 1976, AI delegates presented President Echeverría and President-elect López Portillo with the report of

[102] "Informe de Amnistía Internacional sobre la tortura en México," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 16-21.

[103] "Entrevista con el Lic. Pedro Ojedo Paullada, Procurador General de la Republica," *Proceso* (No. 24), 16 April 1977, 21.

[104] "México aun no da respuestas a Amnistía Internacional," *Proceso* (No. 50), 17 October 1977, 6.

their findings from the 1975 visit to Mexico.[105] When Amnesty International won the Nobel Peace Prize in October 1977, *Proceso* again pressed the question of Mexico's political prisoners and the government's failure to give the national section of AI official registry.[106] The State Department's 1977 report on human rights described Mexico as being "generally cooperative with international human rights groups," whereby Secretary of Foreign Affairs Santiago Roel García announced to the OAS General Assembly that both the Inter-American Human Rights Commission would be welcomed in Mexico. Other officials said the same to Amnesty International representatives interested in visiting Mexico.[107] According to the State Department, in 1978 the Mexican government "received a high-level delegation from Amnesty International and a study group from the International League for Human Rights." The Amnesty International 1979 annual report welcomed Mexico's Amnesty Law but also questioned the safety of prisoners when released, and noted some were simply transferred from one prison to another.[108] In January 1980 Mexican authorities welcomed another mission group from Amnesty International, which continued to document political repression in judicial procedure, disappearances, and complaints against the paramilitary group known as the White Brigade that had been created to

[105] "México aun no da respuestas a Amnistía Internacional," *Proceso* (No. 50), 17 October 1977, 6.

[106] "México aun no da respuestas a Amnistía Internacional," *Proceso* (No. 50), 17 October 1977, 6.

[107] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 187.

[108] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 367.

counter leftists in the country.[109] Amnesty International became one of the key groups that surveyed the conditions of political prisoners in Mexico throughout the 1970s; however, the group also served to legitimize Mexico's stance as a cooperative and responsive country to international scrutiny on its human rights records, as evidenced in the State Department reports.

While on the one hand Mexico welcomed surveyors, on the other authorities challenged report findings and denied any wrongdoing. When Amnesty International reported in December 1976 on the existence of more than two hundred political prisoners in civil and military clandestine prisons, Mexican authorizes denied the charges and demanded evidence to support AI's claims. In press conferences the Attorney General Oscar Flores Sánchez and Secretary of Defense Felix Galván López demanded the names of those said to be disappeared, imprisoned, and subjected to torture and denied the existence of political prisoners in military camps and, like some South American military leaders, parried AI's demands by proclaiming the right to sovereignty: "we have no reason to show foreigners our military installations." *Proceso* noted the Mexican government asserted on several occasions that human rights were not violated in Mexico and consistently denied the existence of political prisoners.[110] When in 1977 AI claimed the existence of one to two hundred political prisoners in the country, the State Department overlooked the charges on the basis that the "Mexican

---

[109] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), 487.

[110] The Attorney General had previously argued that the doors to Military Camp No. One were open to prove there are no political prisoners in Mexico. Meanwhile, the report's facts dispelled the government claims by noting the existence of 166 political prisoners in Mexican prisons and 240 disappeared and kidnapped by the various military and police forces in the country, information collected by the Mexican NGO *Comité Pro-Defensa de Presos, Perseguidos, Desaparecidos y Exiliados Políticos* (Comité ¡Eureka!). "Amnistía Internacional: 'Creencias' lo de las torturas aquí," *Proceso* (No. 59), 19 December 1977, 27-28.

Government has presented evidence that the prisoners in question are charged with or convicted of common crimes."[111] In December 1977 Flores Sánchez sent AI's Secretary General a letter stating that an invitation had not been made for the organization to inspect detention centers. He added, "I agree with the Mexican government's approach not to accept the intromission of foreign groups in matters that only corresponds to Mexicans and the Mexican government."[112] While Mexican authorities announced in international forums their open doors to international organizations, when authorities disagreed with the findings and recommendations they fervently adhered to state sovereignty and reverted to their motto of non-intervention in national matters.

It was through the invite-and-deny maneuver that the Mexican government disavowed international NGO claims of human rights violations. Mexican officials publicly rejected charges of political repression, even while local organizations like Comité ¡Eureka! disseminated the names and locations of prisoners in the country, the data that both Flores Sánchez and Galván López demanded from Amnesty International. Popular print media reproduced the names and faces of political prisoners and *desaparecidos* (the disappeared). In the December 1978 issue of *Los Agachados,* Rius used satire to reproduce the material collected by Comité ¡Eureka!, namely photos, stories, and photographs of young women and men, urbanites as well as campesinos, missing or harassed in various parts of Mexico.[113] Nevertheless, Mexican authorities proved more responsive to international charges and avidly concerned with

---

[111] U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* [Report Submitted to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, and Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 187.

[112] "Derechos Humanos: Amnistía Internacional no va a fiscalizarnos," *Proceso* (No. 60), 26 December 1977, 25.

[113] Rius, "Los desaparecidos de Echeverría y sucesores…," *Los Agachados* (Year 1, No. 4), 20 December 1978, 6-25.

dismantling such claims, while local groups almost invariably confronted bureaucratic obstacles when seeking official registry, or on some occasions had organizations' offices sacked.[114] Even though political repression existed in the country, organizations like Amnesty International did not believe there to be an emergency in Mexico in matters of human rights when the urgent cases upon the international secretary came largely from Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, described Mariclaire Acosta from the Mexican section of AI.[115] The local networks with international links and access to global media simply did not consolidate efforts as they did in the Southern Cone. For that reason, the government could lavishly deny charges of political repression in international forums. As such, Mexican authorities espoused a language of decency in matters of human rights in international scenes and by inviting international organizations like Amnesty International, yet consistently denied charges from AI and ignored those posed by national organizations on matters of political repression—an approach commonly employed still today.[116] These maneuverings of denial also detracted the Carter administration and other international non-governmental organizations from fully gaging the extent of the repression in Mexico, contributing to the climate of oversight.

---

[114] The offices of CENCOS and the Jesuit church Angels in Mexico City were both sacked by the government. "Lío internacional por el saqueo de CENCOS," *Proceso* (No. 37), 18 July 1977, 10-11; "Represión: Violencia contra los jesuitas," *Proceso* (No. 45), 12 September 1977, 25-26.

[115] "Premio Nobel de la Paz: Amnistía Internacional, defensora de los prisioneros olvidados," *Proceso* (No. 50), 17 October 1977, 7-8.

[116] Mexico is a signatory of the majority of international human rights covenants and has consistently welcomed monitoring institutions to visit Mexico, as has been the case of the missing 43 students from Iguala, Guerrero, yet has worked diligently to publicly discredit international investigations that tarnish the government's judicial and military systems. An expert group from the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights released a report on their findings on September 6, 2015 of the disappearance of the Ayotzinapa students. The government welcomed the report, yet, expressed their concerns and doubts regarding the material posed given that the experts questioned the official story presented by Mexican authorities and revealed the existence of a fifth bus carrying drugs headed for Chicago. Complete report can be found here <http://goo.gl/uQfNsv>.

Carter-López Portillo Oil Talks, 1977-1978

Mexico's recently discovered oil deposits also placed a newfound weight on U.S.-Mexico relations, and on Carter to negotiate a deal. Some estimates placed Mexico's oil reserves at 60 billion barrels, significantly more than the United States' 42 billion, thus converting Mexico, according to George W. Grayson, "from a neglected stepchild of the petroleum world to a dazzling Cinderella."[117] The Mexican government understood the political leverage and the economic possibilities for the country: "[t]he world is now divided into two camps; nations that produce oil, and nations that do not. Mexico is a nation that does!" López Portillo proudly declared.[118] Naturally, the Mexican government looked for a market in the United States. However, as early as April 1977 "Carter administration officials informed Mexico that it needed to negotiate an agreement with the U.S. government before talking to the gas companies . . . ," wrote Pastor.[119] López Portillo, however, began talks with private companies soon after taking office. The president and his key negotiator Jorge Díaz Serrano, director of Mexico's state-owned oil company created in 1938 *Petróleos Mexicanos* (PEMEX), "met at least ten times during the first half of 1977" with Tennessee Gas Transmission Company officials. The intent lay in reaching an agreement for the exportation of natural gas.[120] By August 1977, PEMEX and six U.S. pipeline companies signed the Memorandum of

---

[117] Clint E. Smith, *Inevitable Partnership: Understanding Mexico-U.S. Relations* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 61; George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 573.

[118] Clint E. Smith, *Inevitable Partnership: Understanding Mexico-U.S. Relations* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 61.

[119] George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 587; Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 30. Also see, Robert A. Pastor, *El remolino: la política exterior de Estados Unidos hacia América Latina y el Caribe* (México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1995), 51.

[120] George W. Grayson, *The Politics of Mexican Oil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980), 187.

Intention agreement, which provided for an opening production of some fifty million cfd (cubic feet daily) at an initial price of $2.60 per Mcf (thousand cubic feet) with possible delivery as "early as the 1977-1978 heating season."[121] Negotiations with the private sector also jump-started the *gasoducto* project (gas pipeline) from Cactus, Chiapas to the border region, with a projected cost of one billion dollars. By the summer of 1977, the Mexican government and U.S. private business reached an oil agreement in record time.[122]

However, the Carter administration and some businessmen opposed the price established for the gas deal. Negotiating with Mexico was no doubt a sane option—"only three days steaming time from Mexican oil ports compared to forty-five days from the Persian Gulf"—but the López Portillo administration's asking price posed several problems for the U.S. government.[123] Portillo argued energy sources should be considered world heritage, and in the words of journalist Ayala Anguiano "industrial countries should commit to paying higher prices for all other products they acquire from the developing world."[124] Meanwhile, Carter and James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of

---

[121] The six companies included: Tennessee Gas Transmission Company, Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation, El Paso Natural Gas Company, Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Corporation, Southern Natural Gas Company, and Florida Gas Transmission Company. Percentage varied between 37.5 of the gas to only 3.5 of the total shipment. George W. Grayson, *The Politics of Mexican Oil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980), 187; George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 582.

[122] The Mexican government seemed satisfied and "preferred to work with private firms rather than with the U.S. government," given that the latter "demanded extensive information on reserves, productive fields, and financial matter"—an arrangement that at least had been the case for Canadians on similar negotiations. PEMEX officials, however, preferred to safeguard such information. George W. Grayson, *The Politics of Mexican Oil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980), 188; George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 582.

[123] George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 574.

[124] In a joint communiqué of Carter's meeting with López Portillo in February 1979, the term "patrimony of mankind" resurfaces in reference to how oil resources should be considered and negotiated. Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 35. Also see Agustín, *Tragicomedia mexicana 2,* 191. For the complete joint communique of Carter's trip, see United

the Department of Energy, submitted a plan to Congress calling for a price of $1.75 per Mcf for new natural gas discoveries and the gradual deregulation of natural gas in stages with an end date of December 31, 1984. Paying Mexico its asking price of $2.60 per Mcf weakened the Carter-Schlesinger gas proposal and it would inflate the price paid for Canadian gas, which "supplied gas to the upper Midwest and Pacific Northwest at $2.16 per Mcf."[125] Schlesinger made a final year trip to Mexico and offered no more than $2.16 per Mcf. In the meeting with Díaz Serrano and Roel García, Mexican officials did not budge on the price and again pressed to tie the price to fuel oil, then $2.76 per Mcf. By December 22 the Mexican government announced it would not "renew the Memorandum of Intent, due to expire at the end of 1977." Pipeline companies complained and blamed Schlesinger for the deal going sour, but the Energy Secretary believed the Mexican government would eventually reach out to the United States when left without an alternative.[126] Despite the absence of direct pressure on

---

States, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I - January 1 to June 22, 1979* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 291.

[125] Because the gas price was subject to regulatory provisions, individuals like Senator Adlai E. Stevenson III (D-Ill) worried that Canadians could demand a higher price for their gas, thereby inflating the price for U.S. buyers. Stevenson also believed that Mexicans "could recover the gas, operate the pipeline, finance its debt, and still enjoy an attractive profit" at price of $1.75 per Mcf, while the extra 85 cents could mean an additional $620 million in annual deficit on fuel imports for the United States. Stevenson's position on the matter led to a postponement of a loan from the U.S. Export-Import Bank to Mexico since he served as the chairman of the Banking Committee's Subcommittee on International Finance, the charge being that the institution acted too prematurely—a move that primarily antagonized Mexican officials' plan for the pipeline which still started in October 1977. Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 30; George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 586; "México-EU: Senadores contra el crédito para el gasoducto," *Proceso* (No. 51), 24 October 1977, 49; Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda. *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 101.

[126] Schlesinger worried about the impact of the $2.60 price tag and believed that pairing the gas price to fuel oil, which is "volatile and subject to manipulation by OPEC," subjecting U.S. prices to a global market price set by OPEC, and one liable to unpredictable change. Finally, the possible problems stemming from a change of Mexican presidential to the next also posed a threat for Schlesinger, who believed the length of the gas deal should be set for twenty years to avoid disruption. Despite official opposition to the private sector's gas deal, Mexican authorities preceded. Some speculate that the gas companies convinced López Portillo or his energy minister, "perhaps with some material inducements," that Carter would back down and approve the deal. George W. Grayson, "The U.S.-Mexican Natural

López Portillo, people like Lt. Gen. Gordon Sumner, Jr. believed Carter's policies toward the region alienated Argentina and Brazil, and detracted from advancing strategic relations with Mexico.[127] In that sense, the pressure on the Carter administration to reach an oil deal in the midst of an energy crisis required that the U.S. government negotiate cautiously with the government, further constraining any pressure on human rights violations that could antagonize López Portillo.

Meanwhile, the Mexican press projected nationalist anxieties over the expected U.S.-Mexico oil talks. Between May and December 1977, cartoonist Rogelio Naranjo drew numerous political sketches featuring the perceived threats of a gas deal between a devious "Uncle Sam" and Mexican leaders, along with his signature image of a poorly dressed and malnourished *campesino* as the ultimate casualty of the energy negotiations. The cartoons themselves illustrated particular stages of the negotiations, starting with "*Debajo del agua*" (Under the Water) in which a big bellied Mexican in mariachi attire fished across from a hunched back and big-nosed Uncle Sam (see Illustration 6.1).[128] The next featured a technocrat with vampire fangs whose horns derived from a two graphics, one featuring a downfall in the national economy and one on with a sharp rise in the production of petroleum—and in his desk a fallen woman symbolizing the *patria,* the homeland (see Illustration 6.2).[129] In another López Portillo played a violin and

---

Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It," *Orbis* (Fall 1980), 587-589; Robert A. Pastor, "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle," *The Carter Center,* (July 1992), <http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>, 30.

[127] Letter, Raúl Roel Martínez to Director General de Asuntos Diplomáticos, 8 June 1978, Annex: James Cary, "Danger of 'Losing the Continent': Gen. Sumner Warns U.S. Of Latin America Neglect," *The San Diego Union,* 2 June 1978, A5. Embassy Dispatches, Mexico-United States, III-3345-3. Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE).

[128] The men on the ledge had both caught something; the mariachi pulled an oil derrick while Uncle Sam fished a "*prestamos*" (loans) submarine with a claw grabber that reached for the Mexican's derrick Naranjo, "Debajo del agua," *Proceso* (No. 28), 16 May 1977, 5.

[129] Naranjo, "Gráfica simétrica," *Proceso* (No. 30), 30 May 1977, 4.

asked for a collection in dollars (see Illustration 6.3).[130] Between September and October the cartoonist proceeded with illustrations on U.S. interests in Mexico's growing oil infrastructure, particularly the *gasoducto* (see Illustrations 6.4 to 6.10).[131] Finally, Naranjo concluded 1977 with cartoons on restrictions placed on Mexico by the International Monetary Fund and the practical sell-off of oil at a very cheap price.[132] While other cartoonist like Magú and Ruis also explored the question of gas in their work, Naranjo's often heavy-handed cartoons best exemplified the distrust and uneasiness toward the Mexican government's dealings with the United States and the *gasoducto* project, a reflection of a nationalist ideology protective of its emblematic natural resource whose ownership went to the state in 1938.[133] Most importantly, however, the images revealed Mexican's reservations about its newfound economic relationship with the United States, the implications behind an expanding relationship with the outside world, and the gradual erosion of a key pillar of Revolutionary nationalism: oil.

Interestingly enough, the press coverage on President Carter and the oil

---

[130] In this illustration López Portillo plays a violin in which the string half of the instrument was made-up of an oil derrick, and with a music book titled "*Primer Informe*," a term referring to the President's government report to Congress given every September 1. The title "*Paganini*" implies "pay up" in the first half of the term "nini" alluding stereotypically to a famed composition or composer's name suffix—and there López Portillo awaits contribution in a bucket with the sign "Only Dollars. Thank you." In this cartoon Naranjo is making reference to the President's first *Informe,* which was marred with discussions of the *gasoducto.* Naranjo, "Paganini," *Proceso* (No. 44), *Proceso* (No. 44), 5.

[131] In September Naranjo drew "Cactus" in which he featured the pipeline as essentially North American-owned and safeguarded. By October 1977, the famed cartoonist continued to feature U.S. interests in Mexico's growing oil infrastructure, particularly the *gasoducto*, followed by another titled "*Suicidio*" (Suicide) featuring Díaz Serrano and a skeletal campesino on the edge of a magic rabbit hat—along with an oil barrel tied to the energy baron's neck and the campesinos ankle. Naranjo, "Cactus," *Proceso* (No. 46), 19 September 1977, 5; Naranjo, "Cliente natural," *Proceso* (No. 48), 3 October 1977, 5; Naranjo, "Espontáneo," *Proceso* (No. 51), 24 October 1977, 5.

[132] In these comics López Portillo attempts to navigate the IMF's instructions, while the final year depiction showed a Christmas tree in the shape of an oil derrick titled "*Ganga*" or bargain, with a sign announcing cheap prices on all existing stock and home delivery service. Naranjo, "Guía practica," *Proceso* (No. 57), 5 December 1977, 5; Naranjo, "Ganga," *Proceso* (No. 58), 12 December 1977, 5.

[133] Magú, "Somos independientes," *Proceso* (No. 48), 3 October 1977, 37;

negotiations also disseminated term "human rights" into the country's print media. Díaz Serrano consistently and for the most part successfully countered any charges against PEMEX or its pipeline project and shamed the "bad Mexicans" who opposed gas ventures due to a supposed threat to state sovereignty.[134] Díaz Serrano maintained that Carter's global commitment to the human rights cause safeguarded Mexico from any possible wrongdoing on the part of the United States. On several occasions, Díaz Serrano refuted leftists who argued the gas deal made the country vulnerable to a U.S. invasion if their gas supply was under threat on the basis that he trusted in "the philosophy raised by President Carter and his great concern for human rights." According to Díaz Serrano, such philosophy served as a guarantee that the United States and Mexico could "work in peace," this he expressed in his appearance in the *Cámara de Diputados*.[135] While in Cosoleacaque, Veracruz, he again deemed the possibility of territorial aggression by the United States in defense of the *gasoducto* as senseless because the country "has proven to be the key Human Rights defender." Again he stressed Carter's global human rights crusade as an assurance the country posed no threat of intervention. "In terms of physical aggression, I think in a world that is so concerned with human rights and in which the largest and most powerful country on earth makes a cult of the defense of human rights," claimed Díaz Serrano, "I don't think it would be sensible to think they will territorially attack." Rather than risking

[134] In October, Díaz Serrano answered questions in the *Cámara de Diputados* or the lower house of Congress, on the various charges published by *Proceso* incriminating PEMEX and its dealings with private contractors linked to the Cactus-Reynosa *gasoducto*. Elías Chávez, "Dos días de sesiones: Los diputados, convencidos por Díaz Serrano," *Proceso* (No. 52), 31 October 1977, 10-11; Heberto Castillo, "La CIA informa: México proveerá hasta 4.5 millones de barriles diarios de petróleo en 1985," *Proceso* (No. 52), 31 October 1977, 12; "Energéticos: El gasoducto nos liberará, opina Díaz Serrano," *Proceso* (No. 52), 31 October 1977, 26.

[135] Elías Chávez, "Dos días de sesiones: Los diputados, convencidos por Díaz Serrano," *Proceso* (No. 52), 31 October 1977, 11.

Mexican sovereignty through the growing bilateralism with the United States, the PEMEX leader believed the projected *gasoducto* annual revenue of $2,000 million dollars would mean economic independence for Mexico.[136] Meanwhile, the president's global human rights policies helped forged an image of internationalism and well-founded cooperation as opposed to unilateralism that helped leaders like Díaz Serrano dispel fears of U.S. military aggression; although unexpectedly, this was precisely the outcome Carter hoped for when it came to U.S.-Latin American relations.

A Final Attempt: Preparing Carter's Trip to Mexico

Despite various attempts at an oil agreement, the Carter-López Portillo relationship reached a new low by 1979. Even though Carter had hoped to improve relations with the region, including brushing up on his Spanish with lessons at the White House, a stalemate prevailed in U.S.-Mexico relations in his third year.[137] By 1979, the optimism of early 1977 had faded away; particularly troubling for Carter was the manner in which López Portillo negotiated with private enterprises, along with Energy Secretary Schlesinger's reluctance to settle on a gas deal. Moreover, by 1978 the Mexican government had adopted a nationalist strategy whereby the gas previously destined for the United States would be used locally and particularly to advance industry—all as though nothing had been lost or wasted in the construction of a pipeline configured primarily to supply its northern neighbor. Still, and as early as August 1978, the U.S. government initiated preparations for Carter's February 1979 trip to Mexico—this with a major review of U.S.-Mexico Relations through a Presidential Review

[136] "Energéticos: El gasoducto nos liberará, opina Díaz Serrano," *Proceso* (No. 52), 31 October 1977, 26.

[137] Peter G. Bourne, "Jimmy Carter: A Profile," *Yale Review* 72 (Oct. 1982), 129.

Memorandum (PRM-41) designed "to reverse previous U.S. neglect of policy issues between the two countries and to correct past problems…"[138] According to Pastor, PRM-41 proved the longest high-level review of U.S. government policies toward Mexico ever conducted, and one that involved fourteen federal agencies and "three cabinet-level NSC meetings." The number of participants often complicated reaching a consensus; nevertheless, the recommendations served as the basis for the U.S. approach toward Mexico for the remainder of the Carter years. The review was meant to be kept secret, but portions of it invariably leaked out.[139] By October 1978 it had become evident that two issues dominated U.S.-Mexico relations, at least for the Carter government: immigration and energy. The inter-agency group reviewed U.S. policy toward Mexico for immediate and long-term policies and the State Department as the responsible entity for drafting the findings identified two key policy issues that would "require decision," one of which sought to define if Carter's government would revise immigration legislation for undocumented immigrants and "a strategy for natural gas negotiations." Not surprisingly, perhaps, negotiations for the revival or reinstatement of a worker program disappeared somewhere along the way.[140]

From November until the February 1979 visit, Carter's staff strategized on an oil deal and evaluated Mexican feelings toward the trip. In early November, Zbigniew Brzezinski sent James Schlesinger a memo on the need to develop a coherent strategy for Carter to negotiate not only on natural gas, but also oil. Given the earlier problem

---

[138] "PRM-41 and the great Mexican oil grab," *Executive Intelligence Review* 5:42 (Oct. 31-Nov. 6, 1978), 37.

[139] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 102-105.

[140] Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to The President, "U.S. Policy to Mexico: An Update," 12 October 1978, Mexico: 1-12/77 and 1-12/78; Box 48, Zbigniew Brzezinski's Country Files, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

of negotiations with private companies, Brzezinski suggested "We will not only want to be clear on our objectives, but also on our tactics both with regard to U.S. companies and regulatory agencies and Mexico." The National Security Advisor emphasized that the strategy should be developed within the guidelines and context of the PRM-41, meaning a multilateral approach that did not antagonize the Mexican government, since Schlesinger had already received most the blame for the outcome of the 1977 failed negotiations.[141] Moreover, Deputy Assistant to the President for Communications, Greg Schneiders, together with Carter's chief speechwriter, Rick Hertzberg, made a trip to Mexico for three days to evaluate the official and the public's feelings toward the U.S. president's set for February 14. Jerry Rafshoon, the Assistant to the President for Communications, summarized for Carter the overall impression based on Schneider's and Hertzberg's interviews with "Mexican and American officials (including Ambassador Lucey and his staff), journalists, writers and other cultural figures, Mexican pollsters and some plain folks about your visit." Rafshoon had recommendations for both public and private conversations, and publicly Carter's goal was to "win the hearts of the Mexican people" through his televised address to Congress.[142] Rafshoon wrote to Carter that Mexicans "overwhelmingly believed" the United States does "not treat them fairly," adding that their attitude toward the president was "divided and somewhat negative." The poll results confirmed the former assertion, namely, that "Mexicans respect our competence but doubt our compassion . . . [t]hey suspect that you are visiting them now only because they have become energy-

[141] Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to The Secretary of Energy, "U.S.-Mexican Energy Relations," 8 November 1978, Mexico: 1-12/77 and 1-12/78; Box 48, Zbigniew Brzezinski's Country Files, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[142] Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to The President, "Trip to Mexico," 5 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

rich."[143] The latter feelings about Mexico's oil and the Carter's interests in the energy source consistently appeared in *Siempre* and *Proceso* news reports before, during, and after Carter's trip. Finally, Carter's Communication Assistant concluded with: "They are justifiably proud people and bristle at what they see as North American condescension towards and ignorance of Mexico."[144] Given the observations, Carter's team prepared and made concerted efforts to approach the Mexican president and the country's peoples with respect in an attempt to distance themselves from decades of U.S. imperialistic tendencies.

Rafshoon provided Carter with sound recommendations, at times taking lessons from Pope John Paul II's trip to Mexico. Early on, Carter decided he wanted to speak to Congress in Spanish, and as such he would be the first U.S. president to do so, and much hinged on this single act. "In our judgment this will be the one opportunity to make the trip not just a success but a triumph," a proud moment for Mexicans, U.S. citizens, and Spanish-speaking peoples in the United States, believed Rafshoon. "It will be a dramatic demonstration of your respect for the Mexican people and their heritage and of your determination to treat them as equals," just as the Pope's own discourses had demonstrated. John Paul II had traveled to Mexico just a month prior to Carter, and had delivered several speeches phonetically in Spanish. Carter's communications advisor believed the language had played a bigger role in impressing Mexicans than the

[143] Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to the President, "Trip to Mexico," 5 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[144] Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to the President, "Trip to Mexico," 5 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

content itself.[145] He also suggested Carter keep the speech short, something between twelve and fifteen minutes, and he added: "It should contain explicit discussion of the biggest bilateral issues—especially energy and immigration—but its major thrust should be to put Mexican-Americans relations in a new and brighter historical and emotional context." Rafshoon also warned against going into the specifics of the issues discussed. In order to guarantee the success of the delivery, Carter's advisor sent tapes of previous speeches given in Spanish to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico for employees to evaluate, and they concluded the president's Spanish was "readily understandable" but lagged in "rhythm and intonation." His communications advisor recommended special recording of his speech for Carter to practice through listening and repeating. Finally, he ended with: "By the way, Rosalynn is perceived universally as a tremendous asset. We are going to try to arrange for her to be seen as much as possible conversing in Spanish with some Mexican people."[146] By February 5, 1979, Carter was set for his trip to Mexico; his speech to Congress loomed as one of the greatest challenges, one that his advisors hoped would help bridge negotiations between both countries and show the president's knowledge of and respect for Mexico. Others worried the address could go badly.

Meanwhile, the Mexican journalists, intellectuals, and commentators speculated on the motives of President Carter's trip to Mexico. The U.S. news roundups in early February revealed several concerns by Mexican writers, mostly in reaction to the suspected gas negotiations that would take place with Carter in Mexico, and these expressed a nationalist fear of a threat to sovereignty. The writer of *El Heraldo*'s column

[145] Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to the President, "Trip to Mexico," 5 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[146] Memo, Jerry Rafshoon to the President, "Trip to Mexico," 5 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

"*Entre empresarios*" (between businessmen) wondered about the real reason for Carter's visit. *El Día* reported on scheduled demonstrations by the Mexico's Socialist Party at the Cárdenas Monument with the theme of "Carter, our sovereignty is not for sale." Commentators in *El Universal* and *Excélsior* worried that Carter's oil policies would widen the technological gap between Mexico and the United States, with journalist Oscar González López noting the visit would be used to further the interests of those seeking to make Mexico more economically dependent on its northern neighbor through the promotion of a system of free enterprise—a model seen as the solution to the country's economic woes by some. González López encouraged Mexicans to stick together to "ensure that Mexico will not always be a supplier of cheap raw materials and labor for the United States." *La Prensa, Unomásuno,* and *El Universal* included articles on the Chicano campaign to be indemnified for land lost during the reign of Antonio López de Santa Ana; on protests in San Isidro (California) in response to the treatment of undocumented workers; and on Latino farmworkers seeking to get migrants on the Carter-López Portillo agenda. Heberto Castillo represented the workers, who warned that the Pope's visit ("the maximum spiritual representative of the Western economic system") followed that of Carter's ("the maximum representative of the world economic power")—a leader who "comes for oil and gas and to maintain his hegemony." Castillo warned laborers: "He will fulfill his objective if we workers do not act." Meanwhile, Luis Spota in his column "Picaporte" in *El Heraldo* warned that U.S. "secret agents" in Mexico worked to capture delinquents and drug traffickers and demanded that Attorney General Oscar Flores explain why such "agents are permitted" to operate in such manner. While criticisms varied, the majority of them reflected suspicion and anxiety toward a possible renunciation of oil and gas negotiations, and a dependence on

revenues from raw materials that stumped industrialization projects. The anti-Carter sentiments expressed in the press alerted the president's staff to the emotional depth of the controversy that awaited his arrival.[147]

Even so, Carter and his team boarded *Air Force One* on Valentine's Day at 7:00 a.m. en route to Mexico City. The timing could hardly have been worse. President Carter, his National Security Advisor Brzezinski, and Secretary of State Vance dealt with several problems abroad, including the assassination of the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan and an Iranian attempt on the U.S. Embassy.[148] Even so, the trip continued as planned. The president arrived at the Mexico City airport around 11:50 a.m. and made it to the National Palace around 12:10 p.m.[149] From the first meeting with the Mexican president, Carter viewed the Diego Rivera murals in the corridor walls of the National Palace and from there he made his way to the Foreign Ministry for a formal luncheon with López Portillo and his wife Carmen Romano—a luncheon marred by confrontational remarks from the Mexican leader.[150] According to Pastor, the two presidents met twice for presidential conversation on both days of the visit, in meetings that lasted more than three hours and where Carter found himself "repeatedly frustrated by his inability to elicit a comment specific enough from López Portillo to permit some progress or agreement."[151] Meanwhile, López Portillo used the trip as a

---

[147] "Morning News Roundup-USICA Mexico," 2 February 1979. Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[148] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 108.

[149] Itinerary, "Trip to Mexico: Wednesday February 14 through Friday, February 16, 1979," 31 January 1979, Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[150] Itinerary, "Trip to Mexico: Wednesday February 14 through Friday, February 16, 1979," 31 January 1979, Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[151] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 108.

nationalist platform to shame Carter and expose the abusiveness of the United States, in defense against criticism of his weakness toward the United States. For journalist Ayala Anguiano, "Carter received a treatment of something between discourteous and coarse."[152] Both Anguiano and Pastor noted the criticisms against Carter for allowing López Portillo to scold him, which the press took to further the image of a weak chief executive—despite the agreements reached on the second day, which received little coverage.[153] Anguiano goes even further to say that López Portillo "contributed to weakening Carter and strengthening the electoral triumph of Ronald Reagan, for whom López Portillo ended up being a common Latin American puppet."[154] Nevertheless, conservatives looked to further relations with Mexico on matters of oil and also foster the notion that Carter was a weak leader. Despite the hostile treatment, Carter proceeded courteously in an attempt to reach concrete accords and salvage the U.S.-Mexico relationship in the midst of unfolding events in Afghanistan, Iran, and Central America.

The following day talks went somewhat better. Carter left Ambassador Lucey's residency for Los Pinos around 8:45 a.m. and discussions began around 9:00 a.m. until around 1:00 p.m.[155] According to Pastor, on February 15 "López Portillo accepted direct government-to-government negotiations on natural gas. In addition, the two

---

[152] Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 55.

[153] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 109-110; Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 56.

[154] Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 56.

[155] Itinerary, "Trip to Mexico: Wednesday February 14 through Friday, February 16, 1979," 31 January 1979, Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

presidents agreed on several projects, such as electricity exchanges on the border."[156] Thereafter, key leaders headed by helicopter to the town of Ixtlilco el Grande in the state of Morelos where the presidential couple visited a farming community and saw an irrigation pump that was part of the Program for Integrated Rural Development. Later that day Carter gave a speech in Spanish to those gathered in the town square and expressed his gratitude to those he met, like the Sánchez farming family, and conveyed his admiration for the advancements he saw in the countryside. "You showed me some of the finest tomatoes and onions and corn and cantaloupes and watermelons and rice that I have ever seen," said the president. Drawing connections from his own farming background he added: "And you have showed me your peanuts. As you know, I have been a peanut farmer for much longer than I have been a president—and the peanuts of Ixtlilco el Grande look just as good as the ones on my own farm."[157] In the evening, the Mexican and U.S. Delegations made their way to the City Theater (*Teatro de la Ciudad Esperanza Iris*) in Mexico City's historic center where the Mexican Symphony Orchestra performed, with no less a person than Leonard Bernstein conducting. The evening concluded with the traditional dinner in honor of the Mexican president and his wife. Customary and official socializing marred most the events on February 15 between Mexican and U.S. delegates; nevertheless, all was ready for Carter's final act the

[156] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 109.

[157] Remarks, "Text of Remarks by The President at Town Square, Ixtlilco El Grande Mexico," 15 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library; United States, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I - January 1 to June 22, 1979* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 280; Itinerary, "Trip to Mexico: Wednesday February 14 through Friday, February 16, 1979," 31 January 1979, Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

following morning: his address to the Mexican Congress.[158]

Carter ended his trip with a speech before Congress at 10:25 a.m. Despite some hesitation on the matter, the president spoke in Spanish.[159] After a brief discussion on the language, Carter proceeded with a quote by Octavio Paz, as suggested by Brzezinski who in a memo referred to the poet as "Mexico's greatest living man of letters." The security advisor added: "His statement vividly articulates the feelings of all Mexicans about the U.S. There could be no better way to catch their attention, and to prove that you have heard them, than to lead with that quotation." The president's communications assistant Rafshoon did not like the quote, which he deemed condescending, Brzezinski later wrote.[160] Paz's writing depicts the United States as a giant luring Mexico on, but concludes that if that neighbor happens to listen the "possibility of coexistence" emerges—representative of Carter's goal to forge a new sense of friendship between Mexico and the United States.[161] "My friends, I have come to Mexico to listen." Carter underscored the shared history between both countries and the cooperation deals that had taken place during his and López Portillo's administrations. He hoped for another meeting during the upcoming summer to keep resolving remaining problems. On immigration matters the president underscored his

---

[158] Itinerary, "Trip to Mexico: Wednesday February 14 through Friday, February 16, 1979," 31 January 1979, Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[159] "For more than a century that country has appeared to our eyes as a gigantic but scarcely human reality. Smiling or angry, its hand clenched or open, the United States neighbor sees nor hears us, but keeps striding on, and as it does so, enters our land and crushes us. It is impossible to hold back a giant. It is possible, though far from easy, to make him listen to others. If he listens, this opens the possibility of coexistence." United States, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I - January 1 to June 22, 1979* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 284-287.

[160] Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to The President, "Your speech in Mexico," 7 February 1979, 2/14/79-2/16/79—Mexico [Trip] RH; Box 41, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[161] United States, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I - January 1 to June 22, 1979* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 284-287.

responsibility to uphold the law, yet he promised to do so in a humane manner and protecting the basic human rights of those within national borders, citizens or not. When he discussed energy resources, he noted: "We understand clearly that Mexican oil resources are the national patrimony of the Mexican people, to be developed and used and sold as Mexico sees fit." Carter also stated the U.S. government's intentions to buy: "As a good customer, we are prepared to pay a fair and just price for the gas and oil that you may wish to sell." The president wanted to make it clear that the Mexican government decided how to manage and sell their natural resources, and the United States was merely a customer—an explicit response to the numerous criticisms in the national press implying the sole reason for the trip was gas and the aggressive and domineering nature of Mexico's northern neighbor in pushing energy negotiations. Finally, Carter discussed talks of reducing barriers on trade for "a future in which more trade flows freely between our countries . . ." and a reality that unfolded in subsequent *sexenios*.[162] The seemingly successful 48-hour trip for mending relations and resuming gas negotiations eventually led to a gas deal, but the Iran crisis appeared to detract from greater cooperation between the United States and Mexico.[163]

Not long after, relations between the Carter and the López Portillo administrations reached a new low. According to Pastor, "Carter did not return with a warmer feeling for López Portillo," but at least "his sense of importance of Mexico was

---

[162] United States, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I - January 1 to June 22, 1979* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 284-287.

[163] "Perhaps Mr. Carter would have been faster on his feet and accomplished more if he had not been distracted by the crisis in Iran and Afghanistan," noted a reported for the *San Diego Union,* 17 February 1979. Note and attachment, Greg [Schneiders] to Jerry Rafshoon, Files: State of the Union Address 1/20/79 through P's Trip to Mexico 2/14/79; Box 15, Rafshoon, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

strengthened."[164] That perception probably led to Carter seeking asylum for the deposed Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (Shah of Iran) in Mexico, an act that further damaged U.S.-Mexico relations. In reality it had been Henry Kissinger and David Rockefeller who sought out a place for the Shah after he left the Bahamas, and as such, the leader arrived in Mexico City that June and settled in the outskirts of the city of Cuernavaca, in the state of Morelos. In an interview, the Shah thanked the country he had visited in 1975 and stated he was uncertain how long he would remain in Mexico.[165] But on October 22, 1979 the Shah left Mexico to seek treatment at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center.[166] On November 4, Iranians seized the U.S. embassy, further complicating the Shah's stay in the United States. According to Carter, the Shah had responded well to the radium treatment he received in New York and was ready to return to Mexico. However, on November 29 at 6:30 p.m. Secretary of State Vance telephoned Carter letting him know that the "Mexicans" had changed their minds about letting the Shah back into the country. In his diary, Carter noted, "López Portillo is not a man of his word." And added: "I was outraged." The president could not make sense of the change of mind given that the Mexican government had no personnel in Iran, nor did they have interests in oil from the country, and López Portillo had assured Carter the Shah could return. Without warning, "apparently the President of Mexico had simply changed his mind at the last minute," wrote Carter. "It was a

---

[164] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 110.

[165] "Shah Arrives in Mexico," *The Times-News [Hendersonville, NC],* 11 June 1979, 8. For more on the role of Rockefeller see: Terence Smith, "Why Carter Admitted the Shah," *The New York Times,* 17 May 1981, SM9.

[166] Lawrence K. Altman, M.D., "The Shah's Health: A Political Gamble," *The New York Times,* 17 May 1981, SM12.

serious blow."[167] Instead of making it back to Mexico, the Shah arrived in Panama.168 According to Pastor, no other incident affected Carter's "feelings toward the Mexican president as much or as adversely as López Portillo's decision on the Shah."[169] Mexico's refusal to open its doors to the Shah drove a deep wedge between a preoccupied Carter and the López Portillo administration—an act of defiance on the part of the Mexican president that still raises questions regarding why he shunned his northern neighbor at a critical time of need—perhaps an act of retaliation for failing to agree on a gas deal in 1977.

"New Sense of Partnership"[170]: Oil, *Not* Human Rights

By late 1979 the brief, new-found friendship had officially ended. Even while Carter became even more occupied with the happenings in Iran, he still made a cordial attempt to dissipate negative feelings about his trip. When asked a leading question by a top TV presenter, Joaquín López-Dóriga—"Mr. President, would you tell us, please; what is the main purpose of your visit to Mexico? Oil, gas, only gas or altogether?"—Carter sought to reverse the nationalistic fervor against the United States and one heightened by the refusal to accept the $2.60 gas price.[171] Even when López Portillo

---

[167] Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1995), 477.

[168] Lawrence K. Altman, M.D., "The Shah's Health: A Political Gamble," *The New York Times,* 17 May 1981, SM12.

[169] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 112.

[170] Jimmy Carter described the existence of a new US-Mexico relationship and a "new sense of partnership" under his presidency. Interview, "Interview with the President by Jacobo Zabludovsky, Televisa," 8 February 1979, 2/8/1979—Interview—Jacobo Zabludovsky, Televisa Mexico, Map Room; Box 40, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[171] Interview, "Interview With the President By Joaquin Lopez-Doriga, Channel 13, Government of Mexico Television," 8 February 1979, 2/8/1979—Interview—Joaquin Lopez-Doriga, Channel 13, Government of Mexico TV, [Map Room]; Box 40, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

publicly harangued the U.S. government, Carter consistently reiterated Mexico's autonomy in the matter: "We want to be customers to purchase both oil and natural gas and we want to be good customers." In terms of prices, he added, "We want to pay a fair price and those prices will be negotiated in good faith with very careful attention paid to the sensitivities and the needs of the people of Mexico and to the needs of our own country as well."[172] Despite all the political verbiage and provocative simplifications, however, the situation was deeply complex, and from the start reflected a wide variety of motives. In many ways, Carter's treatment of López Portillo did indeed reflect his attempt to forge more amicable relations with Latin Americans and ease rising sentiments against the United States. His good intentions, however, revealed he lacked real knowledge of the region or the social movements that unfolded. And in this case, well-intended words failed to win the day. Despite the proposed "plan for government-to-government talks" on future energy exchanges, an increased sense of anti-Americanism prevailed in Mexico—including student protests with slogans like "*Cuba si: Yankee no*" that demanded the president leave.[173] The media coverage in the United States proved equally critical. Greg Schneiders, the Deputy Assistant to the President for Communications, sent a note to Jerry Rafshoon in which he expressed his frustrations with U.S. media coverage of Carter's visit. "We have gotten pretty consistently negative press on the Mexico trip which is totally unjustified on the basis of the results," he wrote. Schneiders hoped Rafshoon could contact experienced

---

[172] Interview, "Interview With the President By Jacobo Zabludovsky, Televisa," 8 February 1979, 2/8/1979—Interview—Jacobo Zabludovsky, Televisa Mexico, Map Room; Box 40, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[173] Carl P. Leubsdorf, "Despite veneer of ineptitude, core of success marks Carter Mexico trip," *The Sun,* 18 February 1979, A12; Newspaper clipping, Fred Barnes, "Carter Privately Chides Mexican Leader," *Washington Star.* Files: February 14-17, 199, Space Center, October 1, 1978 [2] through Part I, Mexico Trip, February14-17, 1978; Box 8, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

journalists like Scotty Reston and Joe Kraft, who were both in Mexico, and have them "discuss how badly the trip has been distorted by people who did not follow it closely and who know next to nothing about Mexican-American relations."[174] It was precisely the two nations' friendship that Carter sought to salvage, even at the cost of seeming weak before López Portillo and the North American public; yet privately the president sought diplomatic solutions—perhaps an approach that cost him a significant amount of political clout.

In matters of human rights in Mexico, Carter himself often felt conflicted, and word of those feelings occasionally leaked. Journalist Fred Barnes captured Carter's trip response toward Mexico: "President Carter has privately chided Mexican President Jos[é] L[ó]pez Portillo for criticizing the United States, but publicly he is taking the approach that relations between the two countries are moving along amicably."[175] In the same manner, Carter approached the Mexico's leader about human rights violations, initially with a direct proposal for the implementation of the American Convention on Human Rights, an initiative he and First Lady Rosalynn lobbied for in Latin America.[176] On more serious charges of political violence or corruption, Carter could not shame Mexico publicly nor add its southern neighbor to the list of foes—that would have resulted in yet another and perhaps even greater problems in terms of diplomatic relations, commercial ties, and national security. Harvard Professor Stanley Hoffmann best explained the human rights dilemma of selecting which countries to

---

[174] Note, Greg [Schneiders] to Jerry Rafshoon, Files: State of the Union Address 1/20/79 through P's Trip to Mexico 2/14/79; Box 15, Rafshoon, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[175] Newspaper clipping, Fred Barnes, "Carter Privately Chides Mexican Leader," *Washington Star.* Files: February 14-17, 199, Space Center, October 1, 1978 [2] through Part I, Mexico Trip, February 14-17, 1978; Box 8, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[176] Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to The President, "Letter to Mexican President Jos[é] L[ó]pez Portillo," 13 February 1978, Mexico: 1-12/77 and 1-12/78; Box 48, Zbigniew Brzezinski's Country Files, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

shame and which to ignore in terms of abuses. "If the United States is too selective about which countries to denounce, it risks becoming hypocritical (for instance, if it singles out only its foes and spares its friends)." But, "If it pursues the cause of human rights everywhere, in an almost crusading manner, that is likely to be a highly self-destructive ordeal."[177] The Panama treaty meetings served as one of various forums in which Carter talked human rights with South American leaders. In the September 7, 1977 meeting the president spoke with several leaders, including Argentina's Jorge Videla, Uruguay's Aparicio Méndez, and in Washington he spoke with Chile's Augusto Pinochet and Paraguay's Alfredo Stroessner.[178] López Portillo defied Carter by not attending the ceremony, even when the U.S. president called him and asked that he reconsider attending. The Mexican leader declined on the pretext that the meeting was too close to the day of his *Informe Presidencial,* also in September.[179] According to Peter Bourne, "Carter did discuss human rights with L[ó]pez Portillo but the Panama Canal and corruption were the highest priorities."[180] Like Hoffman, Bourne recognizes the Carter administration's knowledge of Mexico rights context; however, "Carter did not want it to look as though he was attacking all the countries in Latin America," especially when he needed support for the treaties.[181] Given that the State Department did not

---

[177] Letter and attachment included a quotation of Professor Hoffmann, Hugo B. Margáin to Director General de Servicio Diplomático, 3 February 1978, Annex: GIST, "US Human Rights Policy," *EAU of Public Affairs, State Department,* January 1978. Embassy Dispatches, Mexico-United States, III-3345-3. Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE). Also see, Stanley Hoffmann, "A View from at Home: The Perils of Inchoherence," *Foreign Affairs* 57:3 (1978), 463-491.

[178] "Proceso Internacional: América Latina-EU: Carter pasa revista," *Proceso* (No. 46), 19 September 1977, 40-42; United States, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I - January 1 to June 22, 1979* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), 1567.

[179] Robert A. Pastor and Jorge G. Castañeda, *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 101.

[180] Peter Bourne, "Re: Questions on your visits to Mexico," Message from Ariana Quezada, 10 October 2015, E-mail.

[181] Peter Bourne, "Re: Questions on your visits to Mexico," Message from Ariana Quezada, 10

see Mexico as a priority country in matters of human rights, and because Carter's priorities in Latin America lay heavily on the Panama treaties, Mexico avoided international scrutiny on its repressive measures.

The fact that international organizations and the Carter administration spared Mexico a public shunning did not go unnoticed. A Stockholm independent liberal paper, *Dagens Nyheter,* published a February 16 editorial of Carter's treatment toward Mexico, in which the leader thought it "necessary to create good relations on a more equal basis" in order to improve relations. The writer added, "But Mexico has the same dark sides as the rest of Latin America. When Carter praises Mexico's respect for human rights, it easily sounds a bit out of tune considering how miserably insecure the Mexican Revolution has let life remain for millions of people who are without any influence or voice…"[182] Despite countless efforts, including those of Ambassador Lucey, to counter the idea that U.S. interests lay solely on gas and that Carter's human rights approach toward Mexico were tainted by his own priorities, those notions could not be dispelled, in part because while much of the human-rights initiative was doubtless sincere, oil nevertheless did play a key role in U.S.-Mexico relations in the 1970s.[183] Yet, few could deny the ability for both countries to work together on drug eradication. Carter described the cooperation on the matter as "one of the most exciting and gratifying experience" since being president. He believed that "The cooperation there has been superb and there has been a drastic reduction in the trafficking of drugs across

---

October 2015, E-mail.

[182] Media Reaction Watch-list, U.S. Embassy in Stockholm to Washington, "Media Reaction: President Carter's Mexico Trip," 16 February 1979, p. 2 Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[183] "Well, the visit is solely to deal with energetics, or solely to deal with gas, or solely to deal with migration." Address, "Ambassador Lucey's Meeting with Members of Club de Columnistas," Mexico City, 12 December 1978. Files: February 14-17, 199, Part II, Mexico Trip; Box 1, Speech Files, Hendrik Hertzberg, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

the border."[184] Yet, on matters of human rights and unlike Augusto Pinochet, both Echeverría and López Portillo cared deeply about the image projected abroad.[185] López Portillo prided himself on liberating political prisoners through his Amnesty Law. In other instances he claimed to be a defender of human rights by shaming South American dictatorships and welcoming political refugees from the region, and in some cases welcomed Amnesty International even while failing to accept its findings. As Bourne rightfully notes, "The Mexican government was, and always has been, very skilled at handling the public relations of human rights in the international arena."[186] Even while two of his administration's top leaders, Jorge Díaz Serrano and Mexico City's Chief of Police Arturo "El Negro" Durazo, eventually paid the price for a repressive and corrupt administration, the long-term consequences of placing economic and political interests in U.S.-Mexico relations above those of human rights have been long-lasting and have contributed to the institutionalization of a system immune to reform.[187]

Nevertheless, U.S.-Mexico negotiations during the López Portillo and Carter administrations also reveal the cooperation that put Mexico on the path to economic liberalization. In the early phase of the relationship, Carter helped the Mexican government regain the trust of banking institutions both in the United States and abroad. As a result, Mexico pursued a market for its newly found oil reserves and

---

[184] Interview, "Interview With The President By Jacobo Zabludovsky, Televisa," 8 February 1979, 2/8/1979—Interview—Jacobo Zabludovsky, Televisa Mexico, Map Room; Box 40, Records of the Speechwriters Office, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

[185] "Chile, no mendiga el aplauso ni el favor internacional de nadie, por lo cual no modifica ni modificará el rumbo que soberanamente se ha trazado." "Proceso Internacional: América Latina-EU: Carter pasa revista," *Proceso* (No. 46), 19 September 1977, 40-42.

[186] Peter Bourne, "Re: Questions on your visits to Mexico," Message from Ariana Quezada, 10 October 2015, E-mail.

[187] On the corruption scandal of Díaz Serrano and Durazo see: Manuel Buendía, *Los petroleros* (México, D.F.: Océano; Fundación Buendía, 1985) and José González G., *Lo Negro del negro Durazo* (México, D.F.: Posada, 1984).

became subject to the reforming policies of the International Monetary Fund, including economic liberalization, deregulation, limits on public spending and tariff reductions. Meanwhile, the U.S. government and private enterprises sought greater economic engagement with Mexico, but not exclusively in relation to energy resources. Yet, by the end of 1977, the López Portillo jockeyed with nationalist rhetoric in response to the failed negotiations for gas, but by 1979 and 1980 he transformed his cabinet with a group of technocrats far more willing to find solutions to Mexico's economic woes in free market economics.[188] As such, López Portillo routed Mexico's path away from the project of state-driven development and negotiated industrialization toward one espousing private enterprise, foreign investment, and the slimming down of state. In this economic and political context, individual conceptions of rights as espoused by international organizations like Amnesty International and Jimmy Carter's human rights—which placed civil and political rights above economic protections—took root. No other NGO and no other U.S. president disseminated individual rights conceptions through the language of human rights—guided chiefly by principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—like Amnesty International and President Jimmy Carter. For victims of political repression in countries like Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, the human rights crusade cemented a powerful network of people working against the apparatus that kept military governments in power. In the case of Mexico, the government appropriated the language of rights protections as espoused in the 1970s and avoided international scrutiny and legitimized a state as a protector rather

[188] Carlos Tello and Rodolfo Moctezuma resigned, the former a promoter of a state-driven economic model and the latter a technocrat in favor of free market economics. See Rolando Cordera and Carlos Tello, *México: La disputa por la nación—perspectivas y opciones de desarrollo* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1981).

than a violator of rights. However, civil society began to engage with the emerging and individualist conceptions of rights rarely used before the 1970s, initially to reproducing news on the campaign against South American dictatorships and eventually to shun its own government. The leftist press reproduced the term "human rights" as espoused by President James Carter to report on political repression in Latin America, and eventually as a weapon of civil society against repressive elements of Mexico's institutions. Although initially detrimental in advancing institutional change through international pressure, human rights eventually inserted local NGO's to the international network—at the cost of group rights previously pursued by state affiliated institutions. In Mexico's insertion into a neoliberal world system, also came a language consonant with a more individually organized way of demanding rights, one that came to replace previous conceptions of revolutionary social justice—as such those that came into existence with the 1910 Revolution.



ILLUS. 7.1. Rius, "Aniversario," *Proceso* (No. 55), 21 November 1977, 37. Dialogue bubble: "I am little bit confused, pal: Is it the anniversary of the triumph of the Revolution or the triumph over the Revolution?" (Reproduced without permission)

CONCLUSION:

The Revolution in Crisis: Human Rights in a Neoliberal Mexico

"*Latin America, so to speak,*
became a testing ground
for so many universal declarations
and high-flown human rights mechanisms."
--Rodolfo Stavenhagen[1]

In November 1946 the distinguished Mexican intellectual Daniel Cosío Villegas published an essay that hit the nation's elite with all the force of a mortar attack. In "La Crisis de México," or "Mexico's Crisis," Cosío opined that "MÉXICO has been suffering for some years now a crisis that worsens day by day," he wrote, "but like in cases of a fatal illness in a family, no one talks about it, or does so with a tragically unrealistic optimism." So what exactly was this illness plaguing the Revolutionary family? He deemed the goals of the Revolution exhausted—"to the extent that the term revolution itself lacks meaning," as he put it. Social justice dispensed through protections for the workers and peasants, and the redistribution of public lands, for example, had been compromised. When the essay reached a wider audience through its re-reprint in *Excélsior*, the public reacted defensively at what it perceived to be an unjustifiable assault on nationalism.[2] More than anything else, the vociferous response proved that many of the ideals generated by the Revolution and their accompanying political system was alive and well. Mexico in the post-war period still very much

[1] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "América Latina: Desarrollo y derechos humanos," *Nexos*, 1 July 1990 <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=5921>.

[2] The essay first appeared in the journal *Cuadernos Americanos* in April 1947. Daniel Cosío Villegas, "La crisis de México," *Cuadernos americanos,* XXXII: 2 (March-April 1947), 29; Enrique Krauze, "Daniel Cosío Villegas (1898-1976)," *Fondo Aleph—Biblioteca Virtual de Ciencias Sociales,* 22 May 2012, 183-184, <http://aleph.academica.mx/jspui/handle/56789/24709>.

guarded its state sovereignty, and while it briefly looked outward during World War II, it soon returned to its tradition of isolationism. In that sense, when Cosío Villegas questioned Mexico's Revolutionary institutions he stood as a lone voice in a country where its people still held the government in high esteem, and the one-party state, in that self-same year re-christened as the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, or by its more famous initials, the PRI, reigned unopposed.[3]

The words of Cosío Villegas may have seemed dyspeptic in 1946, but they gained force and cogency as time went on. Thirty years later, it become clear that not only had the goals of social justice been abandoned but also its accompanying economic model. By the 1970s several intellectuals, including soon-to-be Nobel Prize winner Octavio Paz, publicly critiqued the failing project of modernization. "Here I will only repeat that we Mexicans have undertaken various projects of modernization since the time of the great Hispanic schism . . . Not only have all these projected proved unworkable but they have disfigured us," he wrote in August 1978.[4] At the time of the publication, President López Portillo's "Cambridge boys," a group of foreign-educated economists—José Andrés de Oteyza, Vladimiro Brailovsky, and Carlos Tello—faced a declining economic model, one that came to suffer from rampant inflation, peso devaluations, trade deficits, and internationally imposed austerity measures.[5] Like the

---

[3] The essay first appeared in the journal *Cuadernos Americanos* in April 1947. Daniel Cosío Villegas, "La crisis de México," *Cuadernos Americanos,* XXXII: 2 (March-April 1947), 29; Enrique Krauze, "Daniel Cosío Villegas (1898-1976)," *Fondo Aleph—Biblioteca Virtual de Ciencias Sociales,* 22 May 2012, 183-184, <http://aleph.academica.mx/jspuind /handle/56789/24709>.

[4] After Paz left *Excélsior* and his post as the editor of the newspaper's magazine *Plural,* he created *Vuelta.* Many of his writings for these two magazines have been reproduced in texts like *El ogro filantrópico.* Octavio Paz, "El ogro filantrópico," in *El ogro filantrópico* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1990), 85-100. The English translation has been taken from Octavio Paz, Lysander Kemp, Yara Milos, and Rachel Phillips*, The Labyrinth of Solitude and Other Writings* (New York: Grove Press, 1985), 397.

[5] The trio studied under neo-Keynesian economists Nicholas Kaldor, Ajit Sing, and Joan Robinson; the latter dubbed a "Marxist economist." In an unprecedented act, Tello resigned from his post as Budget and Planning Minister in November 1977 and criticized the austerity measures imposed

"Cambridge camarilla," nationalists remained faithful to public spending and the state-directed economic project; however, from the context of Paz's disfigured Mexico ensued the competing project of free market economics, that of neoliberalism.[6]

But the story was not entirely declensional. For while the midcentury vision of a brokered, corporate state faltered and the promise of easy petroleum wealth gave way to a hard lesson in market vicissitudes, the controversial neo-populist *sexenios* of Echeverría and López Portillo also formed the birthplace of a distinctly Mexican version of human rights. When John P. Humphrey held the 1961 U.N. seminar in Mexico, human rights politics did not challenge national sovereignty, nor would the government welcome diplomats seeking to monitor its internal workings. Rather, human rights as promoted by an international organ like the United Nations sought to strengthen individual rights through legal and constitutional means. Challenges to state sovereignty over the rights of individuals heightened with the rise of independent print sources, and radio to television coverage which raised the specter on human suffering, or began what Michael Ignatieff referred to as a "revolution of moral concern."[7] NGOs both on the ground and internationally disseminated information on human rights violations and pressured governments for the release of political prisoners and to adhere to international rights covenants. Moreover, by the mid-1970s, and under pressure to limit its links to repressive regimes (particularly in Latin America), the U.S. government appropriated and contributed to the globalization of human rights, in this instance through Jimmy Carter's foreign policy. Amid all the international processes underway promoting

---

by the International Monetary Fund. Armando Ayala Anguiano, *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 114; Alan Riding, "Director of Mexico's Central Bank: Carlos Tello Macias," *New York Times,* 8 September 1982, D1, D4.

[6] Journalist Armando Ayala Anguiano uses the term "Cambridge camarilla," see *JLP: secretos de un sexenio* (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984), 114

[7] See Michael Ignatieff, *The Rights Revolution* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2000).

human rights, the terms remained obscure and confined to a few groups and to foreign policy.

However, by the 1980s, human rights proliferated amid demands for democratization in Mexico. The term appeared far more frequently in the press, among social organizers and in intellectual circles. It happened after a decade of bourgeoning social uprisings in the country. After the 1968 student movement, the PRI dealt with a legitimacy crisis that soon into a far-reaching critique of almost every aspect of Mexican society. Unlike other Latin American countries, Mexico had lived through a social revolution early in the decade whereby it established a system of negotiating conflict and dispensing justice through the ruling party. This unique revolutionary system coupled with rapid economic growth had allowed the PRI to enjoy relative political stability with minimal internal dissidence or international oversight. After 1968 the party struggled to redefine its stronghold amid growing social demands. As Soledad Loaeza rightfully argues "the student movement was the first step towards the implementation of the pluralist model and the displacement of corporatism."[8] It was therefore from the initial schisms of the Revolutionary corporatist system in the 1970s that the term human rights expressions appeared, as evidenced by the publications of CENCOS, the discussions in the 1975 IWY Conference, and publications in *Proceso.* Even then, and as Carter's foreign policy and AI's campaign reveal, the terms "human rights" remained obscure and its meaning limited to civil and political guarantees. In that sense, human rights became the nationalist alternative to armed revolutionary and

[8] Soledad Loaeza, "México, 1968: Los orígenes de la transición," in *La Transición interrumpida: México 1968-1988*, edited by Ilán Semo (México, D.F.: Departamento de Historia, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1993), 17.

traditional party politics when the PRI embraced neoliberalism and abandoned its commitment to Revolutionary social justice.

At the same time, the rise of human rights in Mexico remains uniquely linked to the legacies of its Revolution, not apart from them. Unlike other Latin American countries, Mexico avoided international scrutiny for its counterrevolutionary tactics during its own Dirty War, precisely because of the PRI's ability to maintain social control when leftist revolutionary movements and military dictatorships thrived in Central and South America. The PRI's relative political stability, its proximity to the United States, and the lesser expressions of democratic demands due to its co-optation and carrot-and-stick allowed the authoritarian government to maintain control while other countries turned to states of siege and large-scale torture regimes. Most international organizations and certainly Jimmy Carter's foreign policy looked directly to the atrocities committed under military dictatorships, and few (if any) international NGOs looked to Mexico. This, coupled with the growing bilateralism, particularly after the announcement of oil reserves, and Carter's attempts to reach a gas deal, initiated a tradition in which economic interests in U.S.-Mexico relations have been placed above those human rights matters. A key legacy of international oversight on Mexico's internal repression mechanisms has translated into the absence of both internal and external pressure toward significant institutional reform of its justice system as those seen in Argentina and Chile after the fall of the dictatorships. Nevertheless, when individual conceptions of rights bourgeoned in Mexico in the late-1970s and 1980s, these embodied "the development of a culture of participation led by the values of the middle

classes, who have been identified with democratic values."[9] The rise of modern democratic expressions projected the triumph of neoliberalism, the disillusionment of traditional party politics and armed struggles as an avenue of change, and the crisis of Mexico's Revolution and its corporativism system guiding social, economic, and political change. The history of human rights in Mexico embodies the triumph of individual over group rights in the late-1970s and early 1980s at a time when the country's leaders decided between the continuation of economic nationalism and the implementation of neoliberal policies, a struggle Tello dubbed "Dispute for the Nation."[10] The mere existence of this dispute reveals that within the global history of human rights lies a unique narrative of their development at a national level whose legacies are conspicuously evident in modern day social movements.

In Mexico as elsewhere, concepts of legal rights necessarily existed as part of a larger arrangement that very much included economic models. The country took a turn toward free market economics as early as 1978. Most scholars point to Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) as the first neoliberal president; however, it was López Portillo that in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund pressure to trim down state expenditures that streamlined the country for the turn to neoliberal economic policies. That came despite the fact that López Portillo nationalized the banking system as a response to an overspent economy and placed Tello as the head of the Bank of Mexico, all of this as the last nail in the coffin of economic nationalism. De la Madrid immediately disapproved and so began Mexico's greater engagement with free market economics, further eroding corporativist protection. For example, he stopped

[9] Soledad Loaeza, "México, 1968: Los orígenes de la transición," 46.

[10] Spanish for "Dispute for the Nation." Rolando Cordera and Carlos Tello, *México, la disputa por la nación: perspectivas y opciones del desarrollo* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1981), 10.

"channeling money and state patronage to trade union and farmer leaders due to the shortage of government resources for those areas under neoliberal policies."[11] However, civil society engaged with human rights discourses in the absence of a state responsive to their needs. As early as 1984, the Mexican Academy for Human Rights (AMDH) made up of intellectuals began publishing scholarly material on human rights conditions in the country, including the condition of Guatemalan refugees arriving and settling in Mexico. The newspaper *Unomásuno* made use of the term as it afforded considerable coverage to the Central American crisis. Most importantly, however, were the organizations that arose to fill the role of the state during the destructive 1985 Mexico City earthquake. Perhaps no other 1980s event crystalized the failings of the revolutionary party as much as the earthquake, which served as a catalyst for the mushrooming of civil organizations. Finally, the 1988 election signaled and stalled the expectations for a democratic and peaceful electoral transition away from one-party rule.

Unlike South American countries, the Mexican government did not make human rights part of its public policy until 1990, in part because it did not have to confront a legacy of abuses remotely on the scale of places like Argentina, Brazil, or Chile. After clear electoral fraud, President-elect Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) met with members of the *Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos* (Mexican Academy of Human Rights, AMDH), in order to gauge the condition of human rights in the country. These late 1988 discussions led to the creation of a short-lived government institution (*Dirección General de Derechos Humanos*). Just months after, Human Rights

[11] Ariadna Estévez, *Human Rights and Free Trade in Mexico: A Discursive and Sociopolitical Perspective* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 41.

Watch published a damaging report on Mexico's human rights violations. Salinas, who was set on carrying out a free trade agreement during his administration, responded quickly and dissolved the earlier commission and created today's National Human Rights Commission, the *Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos* (CNDH) in June 1990.[12] Initially, the organization seemed promising. Today the CNDH is one of Latin America's best-funded human rights bureaucracies, yet one with only the ability to render recommendations and still unable to legally investigate matters of labor or electoral fraud.[13] Although the rise of local and state human rights institutions have multiplied in the last decades, these remain poorly funded and have little or no official links to the national commission.[14] Moreover, in recent years Mexico, along with countries like Brazil, has attempted to weaken the growing power of the Inter-American courts by purposely selecting individuals not specialized in matters of human rights. It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that it has done so in order to reverse the trend toward holding the states accountable in the international realm. While the region experienced a rapid expansion of an international system, there now seems to be a reversal and subtle return to non-intervention in matters of human rights. Such efforts further erode at the possibilities of justice for Mexicans in the international rights system.[15]

---

[12] Ellen L. Lutz, *Human Rights in Mexico: A Policy of Impunity* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1990); Ariana Quezada, "*El pueblo refugiado*": Guatemalan Refugees and the Emergence of Mexico's Human Rights Discourse," (M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2009).

[13] "¿Sirve la protección internacional a periodistas? "*Seminario Sobre Violencia y Paz,* 21 April 2014 (COLMEX), <http://violenciaypaz.colmex.mx/index.php/conferencias/2015/sesion-16>.

[14] According to the CNDH's current president, Luis Raúl González Pérez (2014—) the national commission does not have strong links to local and state governmental human rights commissions. It is only when a local complaint reaches the CNDH that often times these local institutions are asked to investigate further. See "¿Cómo están los derechos humanos en México? El Ombudsman Nacional Opina," *Seminario Sobre Violencia y Paz,* 7 July 2015 (COLMEX) <http://violenciaypaz.colmex.mx/index.php/conferencias/2015/sesion-18>.

[15] Catalina Botero (Ex-relatora Especial para la Libertad de Expresión Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression for the Inter-American Commission), "¿Sirve la protección internacional a periodistas?" *Seminario Sobre Violencia y Paz,* 21 April

Nevertheless, great progress has ensued since the 1970s. The work of human rights organizations and their education efforts can be seen in the country; NGOs consistently pressure the government for the rights of victims of drug violence by taking cases to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (where Mexico presented the most cases),[16] by proposing legislation, and demanding freedom of the press. Rights activists have learned to negotiate change and pass legislation by working with politicians. That proved the case with the decriminalization of abortion in Mexico City (2007), a real transformation in the realm of women's rights, and an effort that succeeded in large part when framed as a matter of public health.[17] Meanwhile organizations like Institute for Human Rights and Democracy (*Instituto de Derechos Humanos y Democracia*) have started working with the government in order to better educate public workers on matters of human rights in an effort to raise consciousness and limit abuses.[18] Other public initiatives have made government institutions, like the Human Rights Commission of the Federal District, more accessible to its public. Planning for the relocation of the *Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal* (CDHDF) began under the leadership of Emilio Álvarez Icaza. Today, the CDHDF is located near the metro stop *Viveros,* and the city has subsequently amended the original

---

2014 (COLMEX), <http://violenciaypaz.colmex.mx/index.php/conferencias/2015/sesion-16>.

[16] Noted Emilio Álvarez Icaza, currently the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), in his March 2015 visit to Mexico. Previously, Álvarez Icaza served as President of Mexico's National Human Rights Commission from 2001-2009. He is the son of José Álvarez Icaza, the subject of chapter four of this dissertation.

[17] Marta Lamas details the convergence of negotiations that took place between key political leaders, local NGOs, and other public figures in order to legalize abortion in Mexico City. See, *El largo camino hacia la ILE: Mi versión de los hechos* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2015).

[18] Interview with Rocío Culebro (Executive Director of the *Instituto de Derechos Humanos y Democracia*), 14 July 2014 (Mexico City).

name to included *Derechos Humanos* or Human Rights.[19] The advances in human rights matters and conscious building can indeed be seen, although primarily in urban areas.

Meanwhile, the upsurge of organized crime has further complicated the social rights milieu in urban and narco-dominated regions. The state of Veracruz, an oil region, has seen the rise of drug violence. Under the leadership of Javier Duarte (2010—) Veracruz has been labeled as one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists.[20] Between 2015 and 2016 the State of Mexico and Jalisco have declared a femicide emergency in their territory, after decades of violence against women in the border region of Ciudad Juárez. This sad trend has recently been coupled with the androcides, or the systematic killing of men, that have claimed the lives of thousands of Mexico's youth involved in the drug industry and others victims of cross-fire since the beginning of the War on Drugs. Alongside these atrocities exist organizations like *Desarma México* (Disarm Mexico) that seek to limit the number of weapons entering the country. However, the militarization of Mexico and the increased U.S. funding for the War on Drugs continue to claim lives, with little or no formal international pressure for the government to improve its human rights' record.

The privatization of rights under neoliberal governments seems to have complicated the chances of significant structural changes—that is the legacy of the global proliferation of individual rights. Human rights as promoted in the 1970s initiated new ways for demanding change by circumventing traditional party politics, asserting universalities, creating networks of cooperation outside the nation-state,

---

[19] Interview with Emilio Álvarez Icaza, 14 March 2012 (Mexico City).

[20] Javier Garza Ramos, "Being a journalist in Mexico is getting even more dangerous," *The Washington Post,* 18 February 2015 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2016/02/18/being-a-journalist-in-mexico-is-getting-even-more-dangerous/>.

shamming repressive governments, promoting liberal democracy and favoring free market economics. Since then, no other major structural alternative has arisen for mending democracies' failure to guarantee the safety and wellbeing of citizens. The move away from state-directed economic policies has inevitably left out many of the protections guaranteed under corporate social justice, and the increased attention to human rights may well provide one of the best available mechanisms for protections against the worst abuses that the new order has generated.

None of this is to suggest that Mexico's newest legal orientation will result in some sort of utopia. Human rights movements carry their own limitations, and some of those limitations have already become evident. Samuel Moyn points to precisely such problems in his assessment of the political legacy of the rise of human rights:

> In his recent manifesto for a reclaimed social democracy, *Ill Fares the Land*, Tony Judt stirringly calls for a revival of an unfairly scuttled domestic politics of the common good. Judt argues that if the left, after a long era of market frenzy, has lost the ability to 'think the state' and to focus on the ways that 'government can play an enhanced role in our lives,' that's in part because the ruse of international human rights lured it away. The antipolitics of human rights 'misled a generation of young activists into believing that, conventional avenues of change being hopelessly clogged, they should forsake political organization for single-issue, non-governmental groups unsullied by compromise.' They gave up on political tasks, Judt worries, for the satisfying morality of Amnesty International and other human rights groups.[21]

[21] Samuel Moyn, *Human Rights and the Uses of History* (London; Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2014), 85. Essay originally published as "Human Rights in History," *The Nation,* 30 August/6 September 2010 (No.

Whether or not these concerns about the potential ill consequences of the Mexican human rights movement prove justified, or whether the tens of thousands of individuals moved to action since the early days of the United Nations' first campaigns will ultimately find their efforts vindicated by the emergence of a more respectful, tolerant, and peaceful nation: all are questions that remain for the future. What can say now is that the human rights debate was one of the most dynamic intellectual ferments of the country's past half-century, and that it involved participants from virtually every part of the political and social spectrums. Nations with such ferments are destined to confront many answers, some more serviceable than others; nations without them are condemned to moral and intellectual stagnation. In their quest for a better world, the Mexican people decidedly belong in the former group.

291), 37-38.

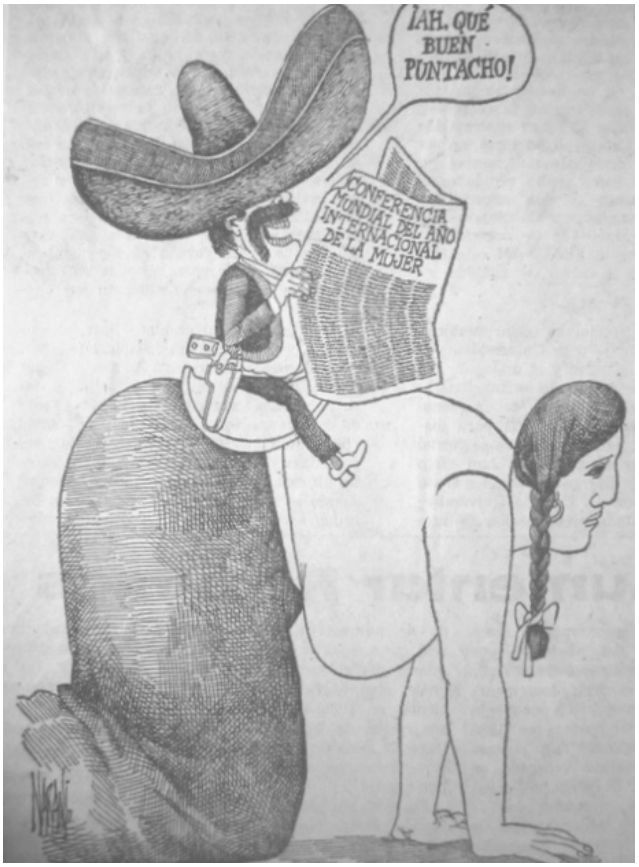
ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS



ILLUS. 3.2. Mexico's official International Women's Year logo. Programa de México, *México 75: año internacional de la mujer,* no. 1. (México, D.F.: Juventud, S.A., 1975). (Reproduced without permission)



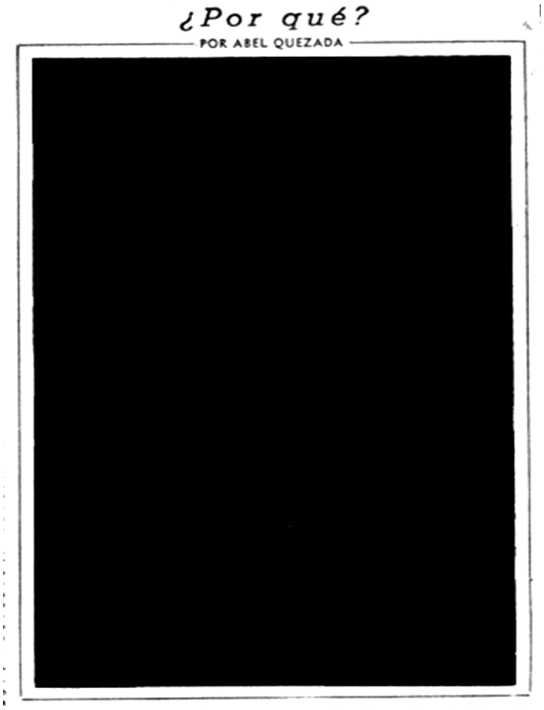
ILLUS. 3.3. Rafael Freyre, "PRI's Poultry Farming," *Siempre!* No. 1335, 24 January 1979, 11. (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 3.4 Rogelio Naranjo, 6 June 1975, *Respuestas de Prensa, Año Inter. de la Mujer*, Vol. Junio I, 1975, CENCOS. Translation: "Ah, What a Good *Puntacho*!" (slang for joke). Newspaper: "International Women's Year Conference." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 5.2. "Golpe de *Excélsior.*" Photo by Juan Miranda. Image obtained from *Proceso,* <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?page_id=7>. (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 5.3. Abel Quezada, "¿Por qué?" *Latina Performance,* 15 May 2013 <https://latinaperformance.wordpress.com/tag/student-massacre/>. (Reproduced without permission)



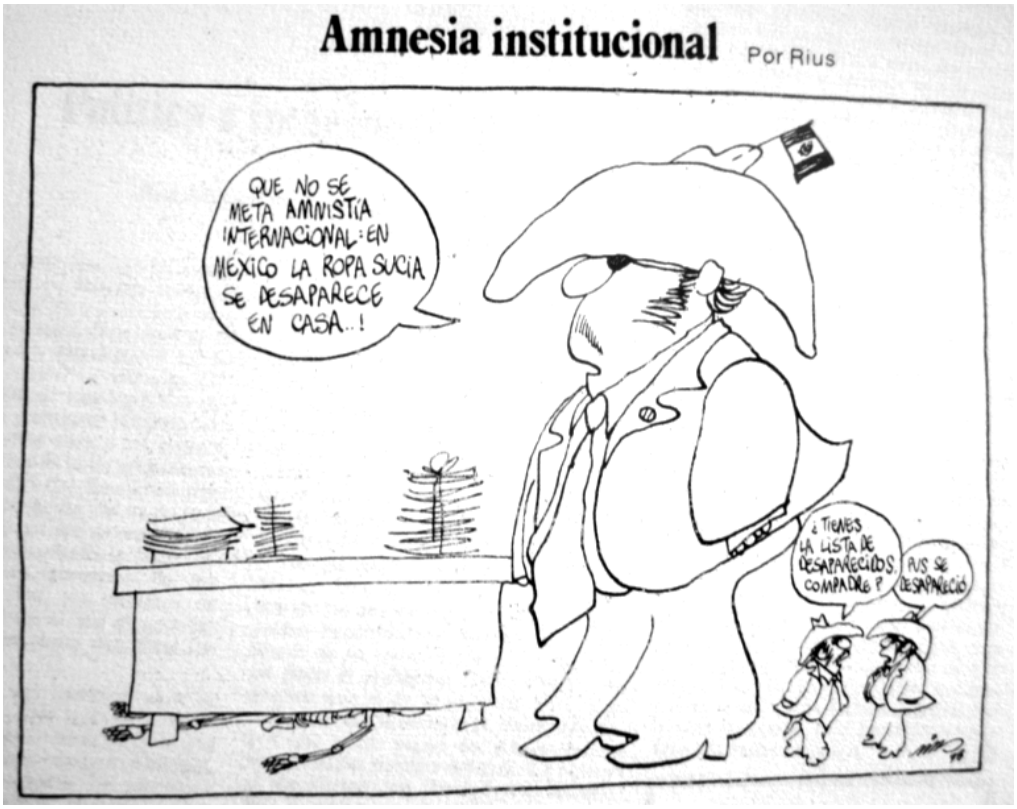
ILLUS. 5.4. Heberto Castillo, Naranjo, and Magú, "Pinochetazo a Exc[é]lsior," *Los Agachados,* Year IX, No. 270, 25 August 1976, front matter, ENAH Archive. (Reproduced without permission)



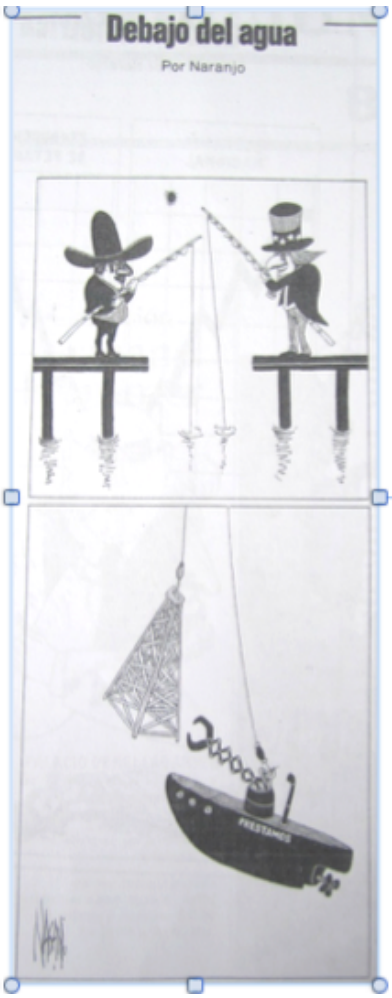
ILLUS. 5.5. "La Solidaridad," Scherer, Pagés Llergo, *Excelsior* and *Siempre!* team. *Siempre!* (No. 1206) 4 August 1976. (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 5.6. Rius, "The Biggest Seller," *Proceso* (No. 21), 26 March 1977, 47. Translation: Board behind Jimmy Carter reads "We Are For Human Rights (In the USSR)." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 5.7. Rius, "Institutional Amnesia," *Proceso* (No. 95), 28 August 1978, 35. Speech bubble 1: "Amnesty International Needs to Stay Out: Mexico's Dirty Laundry is Disappeared at Home…! Speech bubble 2: "*Compadre* do you have the list of the Disappeared?" Speech bubble 3: "Well it Disappeared." (Reproduced without permission)



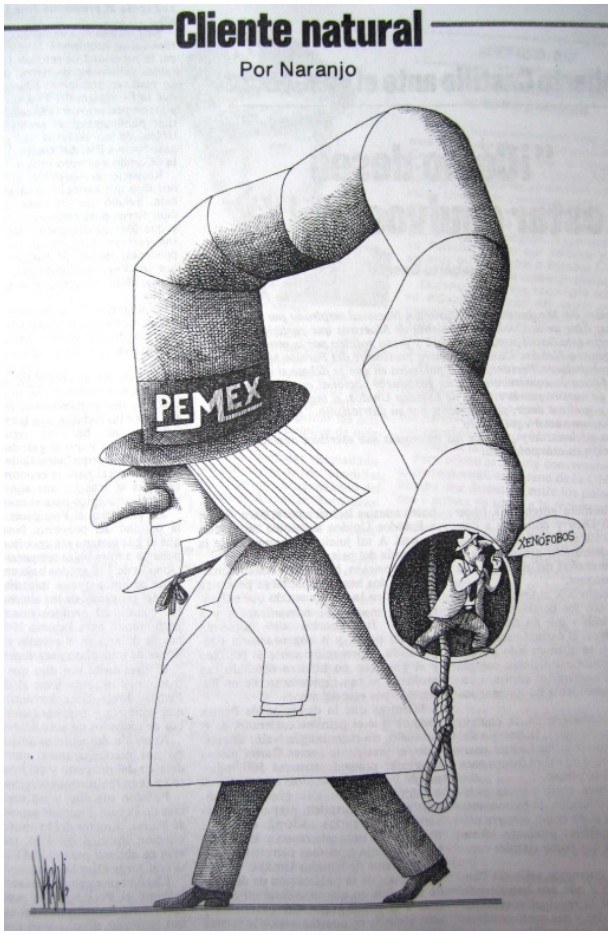
ILLUS. 6.1. Naranjo, "Under the Water," *Proceso* (No. 28) 16 May 1977. Text in the submarine: "Loans." (Reproduced without permission)



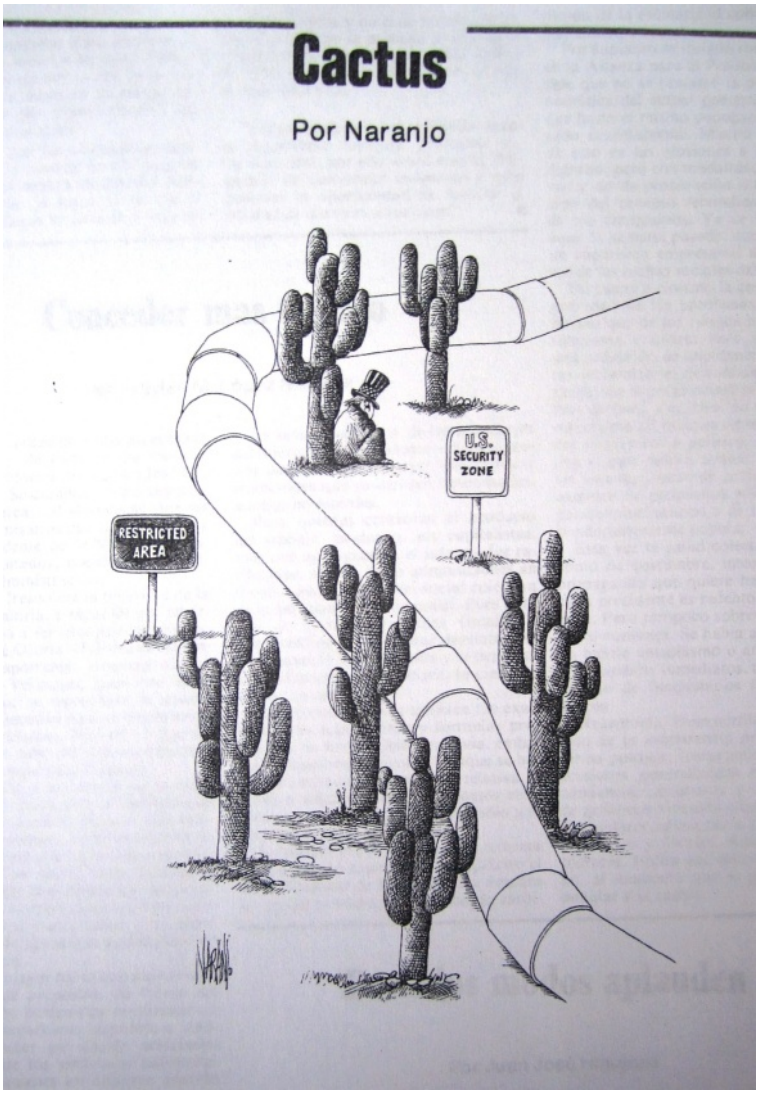
ILLUS. 6.2. Naranjo, "Symmetric Graph," *Proceso* (No. 53), 7 November 1977. Falling graph: "National economy." Rising graph: "Oil production." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.3. Naranjo, "Paganini," *Proceso* (No. 44), 5 September 1977. Music score: "First State of the Union Address Report." Container: "Only Dollars. Thank you." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.4. Naranjo, "A Natural Client," *Proceso* (No. 48), 3 October 1977. Dialog bubble: "Xenophobes." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.5. Naranjo, "Cactus," *Proceso* (No. 46), 19 Septiembre 1977. Signs: "Restricted Area" and "U.S. Security Zone." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.6. Naranjo, "Sale," *Proceso* (No. 58) 12 December 1977, Sign: "Don't Miss Out! Cheap Trees. All Stock for Sale. Home Delivery." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.7. Naranjo, "Suicide," *Proceso* (No. 53), 7 November 1977, Jorge Díaz Serrano holds the PEMEX barrel. (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.8. Naranjo, "Cyrus y van-seis," *Proceso* (No. 79), 8 May 1978. Dialogue bubble: "Just What We Needed: Now it Turns Out That We Interfere in Their Legislative Work." Sign: "Sale 2.60." (Reproduced without permission)



ILLUS. 6.9. Naranjo, "Nightmare," *Proceso* (No. 119), 12 February 1979. (Reproduced without permission).



ILLUS. 6.10. Naranjo, "Wide, Open and Honest," *Proceso* (No. 120), 29 February 1979. Card: "The Oil is Ours." (Reproduced without permission)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archives

Archivo General de la Nación, México (AGN)
-Dirección Federal de Seguridad (DFS)
Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada. Acervo Histórico Diplomático. Secretaría de Relaciones
Exteriores (SRE)
Hemeroteca Nacional
Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social (CENCOS)
Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia (ENAH)
-Biblioteca "Guillermo Bonfil Batalla" (Acervo)
Jimmy Carter Presidential Library
Universidad Iberoamericana
-Hemeroteca

Newspapers and Periodicals

Bloomberg Businessweek Magazine
Chicago Tribune
CNN Expansion (Digital)
Crisol Plural (Digital)
Design Week
Diario Rotativo: Noticias Querétaro.
El Día
El Financiero
El Nacional
El País
El Universal
Emeequis
Excélsior
La Cooperacha (Digital)
La Jornada
La Prensa
Lancaster Farming
Letras Libres
Lodi News Sentinel
Los Agachados
New York Times
New York Times Magazine
News Week Global
Nexos
Nuestro Diario (Edición Dominical)
Prensa Libre
Proceso
Punto Crítico

Sala de Prensa (Digital)
Sarasota Herald-Tribune
Siempre!
Stylepark (Digital)
Texas Monthly
The Evening News
The Nation
The New York Sun
The Observer
The Times-News (Hendersonville, NC)
The Wall Street Journal
The Washington Post
Unomásuno
Vertigo Político (Digital)
Vuelta
Washington Post
Washington Star
Wilmington Morning Star
Xinhua News Agency

Interviews

Acosta, Mariclaire (Director of Freedom House-Mexico). March 11, 2014. Mexico City.

Álvarez Icaza, Emilio (Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights). March 14, 2012. Mexico City.

Bourne, Peter (Special Assistant to the President for Health Issues, Carter administration). "Re: Questions on your visits to Mexico." October 10, 2015. E-mail.

Culebro, Roció (Executive Director of the *Instituto de Derechos Humanos y Democracia*). July 14, 2012. Mexico City.

Pettis, Valerie (Designer of the IWY logo). "Re: My role in International Women's Year Logo." September 9, 2014. E-mail.

Ruíz, Clara (Former CENCOS Secretary). February 16, 2012. Mexico City.

Published Primary Sources

"Ley General de Población." *Diario Oficial de la Federación*. 7 January 1974, Tomo CCCXXII, México, DF: 1-10.

"Texto del discurso pronunciado por el Secretario de Gobernación ante los Diputados

de la XLIX Legislación, con motive de la presentación de la iniciativa de la Ley General de Población de México." *Demografía y economía* 8:1 (1974): 109-114.

Balboa, Marie Whitesell. "Annual Conference for the Non-Governmental Organizations," *Women Layers Journal* 61:2 (Spring 1975): 71-81.

Document 1: "Executive Order Establishing a National Commission on the Observance of International Women;s Year, 1975," Executive Order 11832 signed by President Ford, 9 January 1975, reprinted in National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, "… *To Form a More Perfect Union…": Justice for American Women* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976):117-120. Included in *How Did the National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977 Shape a Feminist Agenda for the Future?,* edited by Thomas Dublin, Stephanie Gilmore, and Kathryn Kish Sklar. Binghamton, NY: State University of New York, 2004.

Echeverría, Luis. *México ante el mundo*. México: Secretaría de la Presidencia, 1974.

Economic Commission for Latin America. "Second Latin American Meeting on Population—Information document no. 1." 17 January 1975, ST/CEPAL/Conf. 54/D.1.

Lutz, Ellen L. *Human Rights in Mexico: A Policy of Impunity*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 1990.

Patterson, David S., and Bruce F. Duncombe. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume IV: Foreign Assistance, International Development, Trade Policies, 1969-1972*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002.

TD/180, Vol. I, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Third Session, Santiago De Chile, 13 April to 21 May 1972, Volume I (Report and Annexes)*. New York: United Nations, 1973.

U.S. Department of State. "U.N. World Conference of the International Women's Year Held at Mexico City," *The Department of State Bulletin.* Vo. LXXIII, No. 1886 (18 August 1975): 233-261.

UN Documents ST/TAO/HR/12. "Seminar on *Amparo, Habeas Corpus* and Other Similar Remedies." New York, N.Y.: United Nations, 1962.

UNCTAD/GDS/2006/1, UNCTAD secretariat. *UNCTAD: A Brief Historical Overview.* Geneva: [UN], 2006.

United Nations. *Meeting in Mexico: The Story of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico City, 19 June-2 July 1975).* New York: United Nations, 1975.

United States. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter: 1979-Book I – January 1 to June 22, 1979*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980.

Secondary Texts

Acevedo-Muñoz, Ernesto R. *Buñuel and Mexico The Crisis of National Cinema*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Aguayo Quezada, Sergio. "The Uses, Misuses, and Challenges of Mexican National Security: 1946-1990." In *Mexico: In Search of Security*, edited by Bruce Michael Bagley, and Sergio Aguayo. Coral Gables, Fla: North-South Center, University of Miami, 1993.

Aguilar Rivera, José Antonio. *El manto liberal: los poderes de emergencia en México, 1821-1876*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 2001.

Andes, Stephen J. C. "A Catholic Alternative to Revolution: The Survival of Social Catholicism in Postrevolutionary Mexico." *The Americas* 68:4 (April 2012): 529-562.

Arriola, Carlos. "El acercamiento mexicano-chileno." *Foro Internacional* 14:4 (April-June 1974): 507-547.

Ayala Anguiano, Armando. *JLP: secretos de un sexenio*. Mexico: Grijalbo, 1984.

Baker, Richard D. *Judicial Review in Mexico; A Study of the Amparo Suit*. Austin: Published for the Institute of Latin American Studies by the University of Texas Press, 1971.

Barranco, Bernardo. "La iberoamericanidad de la Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos (UNEC) en los años treinta." *Cultura e identidad nacional*, edited by Roberto Blancarte, 188-232. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994.

Baum, Gregory. "Human Rights and Liberation Theology." *Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice,* no. 6 (1986): 327-336.

Becker, Davida and Claudia Díaz Olavarrieta. "Decriminalization of Abortion in Mexico City: The Effects on Women's Reproductive Rights." *American Journal of Public Health* (February 14, 2013): e1-e4.

Beezley, William H. "Conclusion: Gabardine Suits and Guayabera Shirts." In *Populism in Twentieth Century Mexico: The Presidencies of Lázaro Cárdenas and Luis Echeverría*, edited by Amelia M. Kiddle and María L. O. Muñoz. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010: 190-205.

Bennett, Douglas and Kenneth Sharpe. "The State as Banker and Entrepreneur: The Last-Resort Character of the Mexican State's Economic Intervention, 1917-76." *Comparative Politics* 12:2 (January 1980): 165-189.

Berryman, Phillip. *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts About the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America—and Beyond*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1987.
Blancarte, Roberto. *Historia de la Iglesia Católica en México*. México: Colegio Mexiquense, 1992.

Blancarte, Roberto. *Historia de la Iglesia Católica en México*. México: Colegio Mexiquense: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992.

Boe, Kathy Smith. "Paraquat Eradication: Legal Means for a Prudent Policy?" *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* 12 (1985): 491-526.

Borrego, Salvador E. *Cómo García Valseca Fundó y Perdió 37 Periódicos y Cómo Eugenio Garza Sada Trató de rescatarlos y Perdió la Vida*. Iztacalco, D.F.: Editorial Tradición, 1985.

Bourne, Peter G. "Jimmy Carter: A Profile." Yale Review 72 (Oct. 1982): 137- 127.

Boylan, Kristina A. "Mexican Social Secretariat [Secretariado Social Mexicano]." *Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Politics, Volume II, L-Z,* edited by Roy P. Domenico and Mark Y. Hanley. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006.

Bradley, Mark, and Patrice Petro. *Truth Claims: Representation and Human Rights*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

Brewster, Claire. "The Student Movement of 1968 and the Mexican Press: The Cases of "Excélsior" and "Siempre!" *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 21:2 (April 2002): 171-190.

Budrys, Valmantas. "Chapter 10 – Frida Kahlo's neurological deficits and her art." *Progress in Brain Research* 203 (2013): 241–254.

Butler, Matthew. "The Church in 'Red Mexico': Michoacán Catholics and the Mexican Revolution, 1920-1929." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 55:3 (July 2004): 520-541.

Calderón Aragón, Georgina, and Blanca Rebeca Ramírez Velázquez. "De campesino yuntero a jornalero: neoliberalismo y desarrollo en el campo." In *Agricultura y espacio rural en Latinoamérica y España: posibilidades y riesgos ante la mundialización de la economía,* edited by José Antonio Segrelles Serrano, 265-322. Madrid: Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, Centro de Publicaciones, 2002.

Camargo, Pedro Pablo. "The Right to Judicial Protection: 'Amparo' and Other Latin American Remedies for the Protection of Human Rights." *Lawyers of the Americas* 3:2 (Jan. 1971): 191-230.

Camp, Roderic A. "Informal and Formal Networking among Elite Mexican Capitalists and Politicians." *Comparative Sociology* 2:1 (2003): 135-154.

---. *Crossing Swords: Politics and Religion in Mexico*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

---. *Intellectuals and the State in Twentieth-Century Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985.

---. *Mexican Political Biographies, 1935-1993*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.

Cardoso, Fernando Henrique, and Enzo Faletto. *Dependency and development in Latin America.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

Carter, Jimmy. *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President*. Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1995.

Castañeda, Jorge G. *Perpetuating Power: How Mexican Presidents Were Chosen*. New York: New Press, 2000.

Castañeda, Jorge. "La carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los estados: desde el punto de vista del derecho internacional." *Justicia Económica Internacional* (1976): 9-41.

Castillo V., Gustavo del. *Crisis y transformación de una sociedad tradicional*. México: Centro de Investigaciones Superiores del INAH, 1979.

Cazés, Daniel. *Crónica 1968*. México, D.F.: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 1993.

CEMEX+FNPI. *Scherer, Salgar, Clóvis Rossi, Sábat: Premio Homenaje CEMEX+FNPI*. México: FCE, Fundación Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007.

Claffey, Patrick, and Joe Egan. *Movement or Moment?: Assessing Liberation Theology Forty Years After Medellín*. Oxford: P. Lang, 2009.

Cmiel, Kenneth. "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States." *Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999): 1231-1250.

Concha Malo, Miguel. *La Participación de los cristianos en el proceso popular de liberación en México, 1968-1983*. México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1986.

Consejo Nacional de Población [CONAPO]. *La situación demográfica de México 2009*. México, D.F.: Secretaría de Gobernación, CONAPO.

Cordera, Rolando, and Carlos Tello. *México, la disputa por la nación: perspectivas y opciones*

del desarrollo. México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1981.

Cosío Villegas, Daniel. "La crisis de México." *Cuadernos Americanos* 32 (March-April 1947), 29-51.

---. *La constitución de 1857 y sus críticos*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998.

---. *Memorias*. México: J. Mortiz, 1976.

Dasgupta, Riddhi. *International Interplay: The Future of Expropriation Across International Dispute Settlement*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.

Dawson, Alexander S. *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004.

Díaz Prieto, Gabriela. "Abrir la casa. México y los asilados politicos chilenos." In *México, país refugio: la experiencia de los exilios en el siglo XX,* edited by Pablo Yankelevich. México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2002, 265-280.

---. "Un exilio venturoso: chilenos en México (1973-1990)." In *Revolución y exilio en la historia de México: del amor de un historiador a su patria adoptiva : homenaje a Friedrich Katz*, edited by Javier Garciadiego Dantan, Emilio Kourí, and Friedrich Katz. México, D. F.: El Colegio de México, 2010.

Díaz Redondo, Regino. *La gran mentira, ocurrió en "Excelsior", el periódico de la vida nacional*. México, D.F.: EDAMEX-Libros para Todos, 2002.

Domenico, Roy Palmer, and Mark Y. Hanley. *Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Politics*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2006.

Dosman, Edgar J. *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch, 1901-1986*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008.

Dumbrell, John. *The Carter Presidency: A Re-Evaluation*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995.

Engler, Mark. "Toward the 'Rights of the Poor': Human Rights in Liberation Theology." *Journal of Religious Ethics,* 28:3 (2000): 339-365.

Estévez López, Ariadna. "Transición a la democracia y derechos humanos en México: la pérdida de integralidad en el discurso." *Andamios* 3:6 (June 2007): 7-32.

---. *Human Rights and Free Trade in Mexico: A Discursive and Sociopolitical Perspective*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Fazio, Carlos. *Algunos aportes del Secretariado Social Mexicano en la transición a la democracia*. México, D.F.: Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos, 1997.

Ferguson, Niall, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent, eds. *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

Fernández Christlieb, Fátima. *Los medios de difusión masiva en México*. México: Juan Pablos Editor, 1984.

Fernández Menéndez, Jorge. *Nadie supo nada: la verdadera historia del asesinato de Eugenio Garza Sada*. México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007.

Fiz Zamudio, Héctor. "The Writ of Amparo in Latin America." *Lawyer of the Americas* 13:3 (Winter 1981): 361-391.

Flores, Malva. *Viaje de Vuelta: estampas de una revista*. México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011.

Fraser, Arvonne S. "Becoming Human: The Origins and Development of Women's Human Rights." *Human Rights Quarterly* 21:4 (1999): 853-906.

---. *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1987.

Friedan, Betty. *It Changed My Life: Writings on the Women's Movement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Fuentes, Carlos. *La región más transparente*. México, D.F.: Alfaguara, 1998.

Galeano, Eduardo, and Cedric Belfrage. *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997.

Galey, Margaret E. "Women Find a Place." In *Women, Politics, and the United Nations,* edited by Anne Winslow, 11-28. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1995.

García Rubio, Claudia I. "Radiografía de la prensa diaria en México en 2010." *Comunicación y Sociedad* [*Departamento de Estudios de la Comunicación Social, Universidad de Guadalajara*]. No. 20 (July-December, 2013): 65-93.

García, Elvira. *Ellas, tecleando su historia*. México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2012.

Garner, Karen. "World YWCA Leaders and the UN Decade for Women." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 9:1 (September 2007): 212-233.

González de Bustamante, Celeste. *"Muy Buenas Noches": Mexico, Television, and the Cold*

War. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012.

González Marín, Silvia. *Prensa y poder político: la elección presidencial de 1940 en la prensa mexicana*. México, D.F.: Siglo XXI Editores, UNAM-Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliográficas, 2006.

Gowan, Peter. "US:UN." *New Left Review* 24 (Nov./Dec. 2003): 5-28.

Granados Chapa, Miguel Ángel. "[A]proximación a la prensa mexicana (notas sobre el periodismo diario)," *Revista Mexicana de Ciencia Política* 69 (July-Sept. 1972): 47-52.

---. "1970-1976: un sexenio de comunicación." *Asociación Mexicana de Investigadores de la Comunicación* (1981).

---. *Excélsior y otros temas de comunicación*. México, D.F.: Ediciones el Caballito, 1980.

Grandin, Greg. *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism.* New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006.

Grayson, George W. "The U.S.-Mexican Natural Gas Deal and What We Can Learn From It." *Orbis* (Fall 1980): 573-607.

---. *The Politics of Mexican Oil*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980.

Green, Rosario. "Deuda externa y política exterior: la vuelta a la bilateralidad en las relaciones internacionales de México." *Foro Internacional* 18:1 (July-Sept. 1977): 54-80.

---. *La deuda externa de México, 1973-1987: de la abundancia a la escasez de créditos*. México, D.F.: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1988.

Gutiérrez Casillas, José. *Jesuitas en México durante el siglo XX.* México: Editorial Porrúa, 1981.

Hale, Charles A. "Political and social ideas in Latin America, 1870-1930." In *The Cambridge History of Latin America, Volume IV c. 1870 to 1930*, edited by Leslie Bethell. London: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

Hale, Charles A., Lucrecia Orensanz and Dra. María del Refugio González. "La tradición del derecho continental europeo y el constitucionalismo en el México del siglo XX: el legado de Emilio Rabasa." *Historia Mexicana* 48:1 (Jul.-Sep. 1998): 97-125.

Harvey, Neil. *The Chiapas Rebellion: The Struggle for Land and Democracy*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

Healy, Teresa. *Gendered Struggles against Globalisation in Mexico*. Aldershot, England:

Ashgate, 2008.

Herrick, John Middlemist, and Paul H. Stuart. *Encyclopedia of Social Welfare History in North America*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005.

Hobbins, A.J. "Humphrey and the High Commissioner: the Genesis of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights," *Journal of the History of International Law* 3 (2001): 38-74.

Hoffmann, Stanley. "A View from at Home: The Perils of Incoherence." *Foreign Affairs* 57:3 (1978): 463-491.

Holman, Frank E. "An 'International Bill of Rights': Proposals Have Dangerous Implications for U.S." *American Bar Association* 34 (November 1948): 984-986.

Hopgood, Stephen. *Keepers of the Flame: Understanding Amnesty International*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006.

Humphrey, John P. *Human Rights & the United Nations: A Great Adventure*. Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Transnational Publishers, 1984.

Humphrey, John P., A. J. Hobbins, and Louisa Piatti. *On the Edge of Greatness: The Diaries of John Humphrey, First Director of the United Nations Division of Human Rights*, *volume I*. Montreal: McGill University Libraries, 1994.

Igelmo Zaldívar, Jon, and Patricia Quiroga Uceda, "Ivan Illich and the Conflict with Vatican (1966-1969)." *The International Journal of Illich Studies* 2:1 (2010): 3-12.

Johnson, Stanley. *World Population and the United Nations: Challenge and Response.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998.

King, John. *The Role of Mexico's Plural in Latin American Literary and Political Culture: From Tlatelolco to the "Philanthropic Ogre".* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Krauze, Enrique. *Mexico: biography of power: a history of modern Mexico, 1810-1996*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997.

Landrigan, Philip J., Kenneth E. Powell, Levy M. James, and Philip R. Taylor. "Paraquat and Marijuana: Epidemiologic Risk Assessment." *American Journal of Public Health* 73:7 (July 1983): 784-788.

Lawson, Chappell H. *Building the Fourth Estate Democratization and the Rise of a Free Press in Mexico*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Leñero, Vicente. *Los periodistas*. México: Joaquín Mortiz, ©1978, 1994.

Lewis, Stephen E. "Una victoria pírrica en el México posrevolucionario: los finqueros alemanes, las escuelas Artículo 123 y la formación del Estado en la costa de Chiapas, 1934-1942." *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 67:2 (July-December 2010): 445-465.

Loaeza, Soledad. "México, 1968: Los orígenes de la transición." In *La Transición interrumpida: México 1968-1988*, edited by Semo, Ilán. México, D.F.: Departamento de Historia, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1993.

López Portillo y Rojas, José. *Algunos cuentos*. México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1996.

López, Pablo J. "Nacional Financiera Durante la Industrialización Vía Sustitución de Importaciones en México." *América Latina en la Historia Económica* 19:3 (September-December 2012): 129-163.

López, Yolanda M. "A Chicana's Look at the International Women's Year Conference." In *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings,* edited by Alma M. García, 181-182. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Lowenthal, Abraham F. "The United States and Latin America: Ending the Hegemonic Presumption." *Foreign Affairs* 55:1 (October 1976): 199-213.

Luis Buñuel, and Abigail Israel. *My Last Sigh: The Autobiography of Luis Buñuel*. New York: Vintage Books, ©1983, 2013.

Lynch, John. *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826.* New York: Norton, 1973.

Malpica de Lamadrid, Luis. *La influencia del derecho internacional en el derecho mexicano: la apertura del modelo de desarrollo de México*. México: Noriega, 2002.

Manges Douglas, Karen, Rogelio Sáenz, and Aurelia Lorena Murga. "Immigration in the Era of Color-Blind Racism." *American Behavioral Scientist* 59:11 (2015): 1429-1451.

Maulen de los Reyes, David F. "Cohesión social como programa arquitectónico: genealogías tentativas del edificio UNCTADIII/CCMGM." *Revista de Humanismo* [Universidad de Chile-Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo] 25 (Fall 2011): 92-95.

Maulen de los Reyes, David F. "Proyecto Edificio UNCTAD III: Santiago de Chile (June 1971- April 1972)." *Revista de arquitectura* 13 [Universidad de Chile-Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo]: 80-91.

Maza, Enrique. *La libertad de expresión en la iglesia*. México: Oceano, 2006.

---. *Rumores de silencio*. México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de Difusión Cultural, Dirección de Literatura, 2008.

McCaa, Robert. "Missing Millions: The Demographic Costs of the Mexican Revolution." *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 19:2 (Summer 2003): 367-400.
McCarthy, Helen. *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat*. London, England: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Middlebrook, Kevin J., and Cirila Quintero Ramírez. "Protecting Workers' Rights in Mexico: Local Conciliation and Arbitration Boards, Union Registration, and Conflict Resolution in the 1990s." *Labor Studies Journal* 23:1 (Spring 1998): 21-51.

Minués Moreno, Héctor. *Los cooperativistas: el caso de Excélsior.* Mexico: Editores Asociados Mexicanos, S.A., EDAMEX, 1987.

Monsiváis, Carlos. *A ustedes les consta: antología de la crónica en México*. México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, © 1980, 2006.

Moon, Danelle. *Daily Life of Women During the Civil Rights Era*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011.

Mooney, Annabelle, and Betsy Evans. *Globalization: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Morales, Juan Jesús. "De los Aspectos Sociales del Desarrollo Económico a la Teoría de la Dependencia: Sobre la gestación de un pensamiento social propio en Latinoamérica." *Cinta de moebio* 45 (2012): 235-252.

Moyn, Samuel. *Human Rights and the Uses of History.* London; Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2014.

---. *The Last Utopia Human Rights in History*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

Mraz, John. *Nacho López, Mexican Photographer*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Muñoz, María L. O. "'*We Speak For Ourselves': The First National Congress of Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Indigenismo in Mexico, 1968-1982."* Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2009.

Murphy, Craig. *The Emergence of the NIEO Ideology*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1984.

Musacchio, Humberto. *Historia gráfica del periodismo mexicano*. México: Gráfica, Creatividad y Diseño, 2003.

Napolitano, Valentina. "Between 'traditional' and 'new' Catholic church religious discourses in urban, Western Mexico." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 17:3 (1998): 323-339.

Navarro, Aaron W. *Political Intelligence and the Creation of Modern Mexico, 1938-1954*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010.

Navarro, Armando. *The Cristal Experiment: A Chicano Struggle for Community Control*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998.

Negretto, Gabriel L., and José Antonio Aguilar-Rivera. "Rethinking the Legacy of the Liberal State in Latin America: The cases of Argentina (1853-1916) and Mexico (1857-1910)." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32: 2 (May 2000): 361-397.

Nichols, Madaline W. "Las Siete Partidas." *California Law Review* 20:3 (March 1932): 260-285.

Nicklen, Challen. *Rhetorics of Connection in the United Nations Conferences on Women, 1975-1995*. Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 2008.

Novo, Salvador. *La vida en México en el periodo presidencial de Luis Echeverría*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2000.

Ochoa, Guillermo. *Reportaje en Chile*. México: [Centro de Información Política], 1972.

Ojeda Gómez, Mario. *México: el surgimiento de una política exterior activa*. México: Cultura Sep, 1986.

Olcott, Jocelyn. "Cold War Conflicts and Cheap Cabaret: Sexual Politics at the 1975 United Nations International Women's Year Conference." *Gender & History* 22:3 (November 2010): 733-754.

---. "Empires of Information: Media Strategies for the 1975 International Women's Year." *Journal of Women's History* 24:4 (Winter 2012): 24-84.

---. "Globalizing Sisterhood: International Women's Year and the Limits of Identity Politics." In *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective,* edited by Niall Ferguson, Charles Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel Sargent, 281-293. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

---. "The Battle within the Home: Development Strategies and the Commodification of Caring Labors at the 1975 International Women's Year Conference." In *Workers Across the Americas: The Transnational Turn in Labor History*, edited by Leon Fink. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Ortiz-Ortega, Adriana and Mercedes Barquet. "Gendering Transition to Democracy in Mexico." *Latin American Research Review* (Special Issue, 2010): 108-137.

Parry, Manon. "Betty Friedan: Feminist Icon and Founder of the National Organization for Women." *American Journal of Public Health* 100:9 (September 2010): 1584-1585.

Pastor Escobar, Raquel. *José Álvarez Icaza y la puesta en práctica del Concilio Ecuménico Vaticano II en el laicado mexicano.* Ph.D. diss, Ciencias Políticas y Sociales con Orientación en Sociología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, 2004.

Pastor, Robert A. "The Carter Administration and Latin America: A Test of Principle." *The Carter Center* (July 1992) <https://www.cartercenter.org/documents/1243.pdf>.

---. *El remolino: la política exterior de Estados Unidos hacia América Latina y el Caribe*. México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1995.

---. *Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Latin America and the Caribbean*. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Pastor, Robert A., and Jorge G. Castañeda. *Limits to Friendship: The United States and Mexico*. New York: Knopf, 1988.

Paz, Octavio, Lysander Kemp, Yara Milos, and Rachel Phillips. *The Labyrinth of Solitude and Other Writings*. New York: Grove Press, 1985.

Peebles Lane, Joy Lee. *Las organizaciones no gubernamentales de derechos humanos en México: su formación y esfuerzos para realizar cambios socio-políticos*. M.A. thesis, Estudios Latinoamericanos, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, UNAM, 1993.

Pérez Espino, Efraín. "El monopolio de la televisión comercial en México." *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 41:4 (Oct.-Dec. 1979): 1435-1468.

Persinger, Mildred Emory. "Unfinished Agenda." *Journal of Women's History* 24:4 (Winter 2012): 186-192.

Piper, Teryn Louisa. "The 1974 Congreso Indigena: The Church, the State, and the Emergence of the Indigenous Movement of Chiapas." M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2011.

Preston, Julia and Sam Dillon. *Opening Mexico: The Making of a Democracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004.

Quezada, Ariana. "*El pueblo refugiado*": Guatemalan Refugees and the Emergence of Mexico's Human Rights Discourse." M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2009.

Rama, Angel, and John Charles Chasteen. *The Lettered City*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996.

Requelme, Julio. "Francisco Carmona Nenclares. Perfil Bibliográfico." In *Los maestros del exilio español en la Facultad de Derecho*, edited by Fernando Serrano Migallón. México: Porrúa, 2003.

Riding, Alan. *Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

Rodríguez Castañeda, Rafael. *Prensa vendida: Los periodistas y los presidentes: 40 años de relaciones.* México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 1993.

Rodríguez O., Jaime E. "The Emancipation of America." *The American Historical Review* 105:1 (Feb. 2000): 131-152.

Rojas Mira, Claudia F. "La Casa de Chile en México." In *Exiliados, emigrados y retornados: chilenos en América y Europa, 1973-2004,* edited by José del Pozo, 107-126. Santiago de Chile: RIL Editores, 2006.

Rosenn, Keith S. "Procedural Protection of Constitutional Rights in Brazil." *American Journal of Comparitive Law* 59 (Fall 2011): 1009-1050.

Rubenstein, Anne. *Bad Language, Naked Ladies, and Other Threats to the Nation: A Political History of Comic Books in Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

Rubin, Barry M., and Elizabeth P. Spiro. *Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1979.

Sabato, Hilda. "On Political Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century Latin America." *The American Historical Review* 106:4 (October 2001): 1290-1315.

Safford, Frank. "Politics, ideology and society in post-Independence Spanish America." In *The Cambridge History of Latin America, Volume III, From Independence to c. 1870,* edited by Leslie Bethell, 367-441. London: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Saltalamacchia Ziccardi, Natalia, and Ana Covarrubias Velasco. "La trayectoria de los derechos humanos en la política exterior de México (1945-2006). In *Derechos humanos en política exterior: seis casos latinoamericanos*, edited by Saltalamacchia Ziccardi and Ana Covarrubias Velasco. México, D.F.: ITAM, 2011.

Saltalamacchia Ziccardi, Natalia. "1968 y los derechos humanos en México." *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica* 9:1 (February 2009): 133-142.

Sánchez Mejorada, Carlos. "The Writ of Amparo. Mexican Procedure to Protect Human Rights." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 243 (Jan. 1946): 107-111.

Sánchez Olvera, Alma Rosa. *El feminismo mexicano ante el movimiento urbano popular: dos expresiones de lucha de género (1970-1985)*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Campus Acatlán, 2002.

Sánchez Prado, Ignacio M. "Claiming Liberalism: Enrique Krauze, *Vuelta, Letras Libres*, and the Reconfigurations of the Mexican Intellectual Class." *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 26:1 (Winter 2010): 47-78.

Sánchez Ruiz, Enrique E. "Los medios de difusión masiva y la centralización en México," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 4:1 (Winter 1988): 25-54.

Scanella, Petra María. *El periodismo político en México*. Barcelona, España: Editorial Mitre, 1983.

Schenkel, Peter and Marco Ordóñez, eds. *Comunicación y cambio social.* Quito, Ecuador: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, ILDIS; Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina, CIESPAL, 1975.

Scherer García, Julio and Carlos Monsiváis, eds. *Parte de guerra, Tlatelolco 1968: documentos del general Marcelino García Barragán: los hechos y la historia*. México, D.F.: Nuevo Siglo/Aguilar, 1999.

---, and Carlos Monsiváis. *Tiempo de saber: prensa y poder en México*. México, D.F.: Aguilar, 2003.

---. *La terca memoria*. México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2007.

---. *Los presidentes*. México: Debolsillo, ©1986, 2007.

---. *Vivir*. México, D.F.: Grijalbo, 2012.

Schryer, Frans J. "Peasants and the Law: A History of Land Tenure and Conflict in the Huasteca." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 18:2 (Nov., 1986): 283-311.

Shapira, Yoram. "The Impact of the 1968 Student Protest on Echeverría's Reformism." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 19:4 (November 1977): 557-580.

Smith, Angel. *Historical Dictionary of Spain*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2009.

Smith, Clint E. *Inevitable Partnership: Understanding Mexico-U.S. Relations*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000.

Sonnenfeld, David A. "Mexico's 'Green Revolution,' 1940-1980: Towards an Environmental History." *Environmental History Review* 16:4 (Winter 1992): 28-52.

Soto Laveaga, Gabriela. "'Let's Become Fewer': Soap Operas, Contraception, and Nationalizing the Mexican Family in an Overpopulated World." *Sexuality*

Research and Social Policy: Journal of NSRC 4:3 (September 2007): 19-33.

Spalding, Rose J. "State Power and its limits: Corporatism in Mexico." *Comparative Political Studies* 14:2 (July 1981): 139-161.

Stavenhagen, Rodolfo. *Testimonios*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978.

Stephenson, Carolyn M. "Women's Organizations and the United Nations." In *Multilateral Diplomacy and the United Nations Today,* edited by James P. Muldoon, Jr., JoAnn Fagot Aviel, Richard Reitano, and Earl Sullivan, 207-227. Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2005.

Stuckey, Mary E. *Jimmy Carter, Human Rights, and the National Agenda*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2008.

Suárez, Luis. *Echeverría en el sexenio de López Portillo: El caso de un expresidente ante el sucesor*. México: Grijalbo, 1983.

Taylor, Ian, and Karen Smith. *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Tenenbaum, Barbara A. "Streetwise history: the Paseo de la Reforma and the Porfirian State, 1876-1910." In *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico*, edited by William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, and William E. French. Wilmington, Del: SR Books, 1994.

Thomson, Guy P. "Popular Aspects of Liberalism in Mexico, 1848-1888." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 10:3 (1991): 265-292.

Thorp Rosemary. "A Reappraisal of Origins of Import-Substituting Industrialisation 1930-1950." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24:S1 (March 1992): 181-195.

Toledo Ocampo, Ezequiel. "El sistema para el desarrollo integral de la familia (DIF): Expresión de una política social del estado mexicano," *Horizonte Sanitario* 2:3 (November 2003), 8:20.

Tombs, David. "Latin American Liberation Theology: Moment, Movement, Legacy." In *Movement or Moment?: Assessing Liberation Theology Forty Years After Medellín*, edited by Patrick Claffey and Joe Egan, 29-53. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009.

Tulis, Jeffrey, and Stephen Macedo, eds. *The Limits of Constitutional Democracy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010.

Urquidi, Víctor L. "La carta de derechos y deberes económicos de los estados: la cuestión de su aplicación." *Foro Internacional* 20 (October-December 1979): 181-190.

Verdoy, SJ, Alfredo. "La confederación nacional española de las Congregaciones Marianas o la movilización de la juventud de la Virgen (1919-1923)." *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 85:334 (June 2010): 547-573.

Villegas, Cosío. "Historia moderna de México." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 46:3 (August 1966): 274-282.

Wheat, Andrew. "Mexico's Privatization Piñata." *Multinational Monitor* 17:19 (October 1996).

Winslow, Anne. *Women, Politics, and the United Nations*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1995.

Wollny, Hans. "Asylum policy in Mexico: A Survey." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4:3 (1991): 219-236.

Womack, John Jr. "The Spoils of the Mexican Revolution." *Foreign Affairs* 48:4 (July 1970): 677-687.

Zolov, Eric. "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics." *The Americas* 61:2 (October 2004): 159-188.