Rewriting History: The Encounter of Two Worlds

By Miguel León-Portilla

Many of us in Mexico in the 1940s and 1950s used a book by two French authors, Albert Malet and J. Isaac, as a text to study world history. These writers provided us with information about everything regarding historical events, mostly in the Old World and particularly Europe, all from a French perspective. In this manner we explored the theme, "Discoveries of the Spaniards and the Portuguese." The authors indicated that while Spain and Portugal were backward countries, they also were home to daring men ever ready to embark upon adventure. An even more driven individual was the Genoese, Christopher Columbus (Cristóbal Colón), who convinced Isabella I, "the Catholic" (Isabel la Católica), to sponsor his voyage across the Atlantic. To Columbus fell the glory of discovering the New World!

In their History (which, although entitled "World," focused on Europe and its cultural antecedents), Malet and Isaac mentioned nothing about life in America until they reached the chapter on the Discovery. Thus, they discussed the Egyptians and the Mesopotamians but not ancient civilizations in America. The natives of that continent unknown to fifteenth-century Europeans entered history only when they were 'discovered', 'conquered', 'Christianized', and 'colonized'. I remember that the only mention Malet and Isaac made of the natives' existence before 1492 was that the great majority were primitive and that their necessary conversion provided new ground for Christianity.

Some of us had the good luck to have another professor recommend that we read Ancient History of Mexico by the eighteenth-century scholar Francisco Xavier Clavigero. The contrast between what he and the two Frenchmen said about the Nahua peoples left us perplexed and disturbed. The clarity of Clavigero's Ancient History and the way it revealed the cultural creations of the pre-Hispanic peoples interested us greatly, but we could not explain to ourselves the differences between the work of Clavigero and that of Malet and Isaac.

For my part, I discovered in the writings of Clavigero a road map for understanding that radical contrast: Several times he alluded to the Englishman, William Robertson, and the Prussian, Cornelius de Pau.

Translated from the original Spanish by Yvonne Pacheco Tevis.
1 Curso de Historia Universal. La época contemporánea by Albert Malet and J. Isaac (Buenos Aires: Librería Hachette, 1940).
These two painted the natives of Mexico and America in general as primitive beings almost lacking in culture. De Paw said, among other things, that the Indians of Mexico could count only to three without making mistakes. On the other hand, Robertson and de Paw criticized many of the actions of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the New World.

Perhaps I sound pedantic, but philosophy has greatly appealed to me and Immanuel Kant has had a profound effect upon me. Like many others who have studied him, I realize that he has demonstrated the limits of rational human knowledge. Yet I discovered limitations in his works also. Kant, too, discussed the natives of the New World. In his Science of Man or Philosophical Anthropology... he asserted that 'the native American do not have a culture... they lack emotion and passion... they do not feel love and therefore are not fertile, they practically do not speak... they do not worry about anything, they are lazy.' 3 In his Reflections on Anthropology he wrote, "An entire part of the world [that is to say, America] is underpopulated and half animal." 4

Such statements shocked me. They contrasted greatly with the admiration that Alexander von Humboldt expressed not much later for the culture of Mesoamerica and the Andes.

Thus, during the same years in which Clavigero painted Mexico's pre-Hispanic past and his Historia was translated into English, French, and German, Kant, with an a priori judgment typical of his style, denied the natives not only emotion and feeling, but the capability to work, procreate, and even speak. Moreover, he branded them 'half animal.' While in such works as Researches Concerning the Institutions and Monuments of the Ancient Inhabitants of America Humboldt described the art and culture of the natives with admiration, and in Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain suggested a promising future for Mexico, Hegel, with the stroke of a pen, placed the entire American continent outside the realm of history.

Years later, reading the marvelous scholarly work by Antionello Gerbi, The Deprive of the New World, I realized that what had happened with the Germans also had occurred, though a bit differently, with the English, such as Robertson, and with the French, from Buffalo to Joseph de Maistre. The latter wrote that "the original attitude of the Europeans in the first century of Columbus, to refuse to recognize as their fellow men those degraded beings who populated the New World, was only fitting." 5 The ignorance about and disdain for the native cultures of the New World on the part of many European thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century also was coupled with a lack of interest in the colonies established there as well as in the nations which later won their independence. One exception was the United States of America, which intrigued many Europeans because they considered the transplantation of Western culture, particularly in its Anglo-Germanic version, to have been successful there. The history of the United States was in their eyes prototypical of what the relocation of Nordic Europeans could achieve, namely, a great country. And in that great nation there was no place for the Indians. No lesser personage than George Washington noted this in a letter of September 7, 1783 to James Duane: "The gradual extinction of our settlements will cause the savages as the world to retire, both being beasts of prey though they differ in shape."

The opinions of Cornelius de Pauw, Kant, Hegel, de Maistre, and Washington regarding the Americanians were the complete opposite of those expressed not only by Clavigero and Humboldt but also by the friar chroniclers in the 16th century. Those who have read Motolinia will remember how he extolled the ingenuity of the Indians. Sahagun, engaged in finding out about the traditions of the Nahua peoples and their views about themselves, gathered together an impressive collection of documents. It should be sufficient to recall one of his comments to highlight the contrast: The Indians are ahead of many nations that presume to political greatness."

And it is unnecessary to quote Bartolomé de las Casas who, had he been able to hear Cornelis de Pauw, Kant, Hegel, de Maistre, and Washington, would have assailed them as he did Juan Gines de Sepulveda in their celebrated dispute in the early sixteenth century over the rights of the American Indians.

A Continent with a 'Birth-Century' 6

I interrupt these reflections for a moment to ask myself how history is written and rewritten. I believe it will be illustrative to reflect upon the present year—not just any year, but 1992. Everywhere people are talking about how this year someone very important is having a 'birthday' or, in Spanish, a cumpleaños. 'Cumpleaños,' of course, means 'to finish' and also, 'yes.' Even better, they say this someone is not old but New, and is having a 'birth-century.' Cumpleaños centenarios. That someone is our continent, which, as far as I know, is the only one with the happy, or unfortunately, privilege of possessing an official birth date. No one ever has spoken of the fourth, tenth, or twentieth centennials of Europe, Asia, Africa, or even Oceania. But this year, America celebrates its fifth centennial. The occasion is related not only to history but also to the various ways in which history has been written and rewritten. For this reason precisely, some celebrate the event while others curse it. I think it would be interesting to ask why, where, and when people began to speak of a birth century, a cumpleaños centenario, for this continent. Obviously, the Indians did not initiate the custom, but rather it is the Spaniards who must credit. Primacy belongs to the French. In recognition of a very important event called the Discovery of America, the Académie Française, only two years after the start of the French Revolution, created a prize for the work which best answered the question, 'How has America influenced the politics, business, and customs of Europe?' 7

The various works submitted—apart from some tributes to Columbus—may be divided between those that interpreted the presence of Spain in the New World as the Black Legend, 8 and those that painted America's influence in Europe with dark colors. The winning prize, whose author chose to remain anonymous, highlighted America's most significant contribution to Europe and the entire

---

5 The thinking of Joseph de Maistre regarding the American Indians is presented by Ambrozio Gerbi in La disposicion del Nuevo Mundo (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1960), 359-364.
world as nothing other than syphilis. It should be noted, however, that syphilis was known for a long time as morbus gaillardi, or the French disease. It is possible that the anonymous author of the competition that inaugurated the commemoration of American centennials wished to recover his country's prestige. 8

The fourth centennial was one exalted celebration: Spain (at the lead), the great majority of the Hispanic-American countries, Italy, and the United States celebrated with expositions, conventions, monuments, publications, and innumerable lectures on this astonishing event, the Discovery of America. But because on this earth there is never perfect happiness or complete concordance of opinion, some malcontents severely criticized the conquistadors' wrongdoing. Ricardo Palma, the Peruvian representing his country at the festivities in Spain, was so outraged by some of the speakers' exaggerated eulogies that during one ceremony he got up and left. Now it is 1992. And now that both centuries for our continent have become a natural occurrence, we find that the fifth centennial has arrived. In Spanish there is a saying, no hay quinto贱o—there is no bad fifth—but this particular fifth brings with it more than one problem. 9 The questions raised in my initial reflections, as well as many others, have become hot topics, inflaming what Guerin called the "dispute of the New World.

Among the many others, questions such as the following underlie the debate: Why is it said that Columbus discovered America? Was it not discovered much earlier by the very Indians who, throughout the millennia, populated it and developed cultures such as those of the Teotihuacanos, the Maya, the Aztecs, and the Incas? How is it possible to speak of a 'discovery' if Columbus never knew where it was landed?

Others take more radical positions regarding the consequences of the process unleashed in 1492. While some declare that the fifth centennial should be celebrated for the introduction of Western culture into a previously isolated hemisphere, others assert that, at a half-millennium of invasion and genocide perpetrated by Europeans in indigenous lands; while some celebrate five-hundred years of Christianity in America, others condemn the imposition of foreign beliefs and practices to the detriment of native religions that were persecuted and, in many instances, extirpated.

Commemorate with a Different Approach

It was in early 1984 when, as the Nahua would say, I met my tonalli, or destiny, and became involved in the theme of the fifth centennial. Two Mexican ministers—from Education, Jesús Reyes Heroles, and Foreign Relations, Bernardo Sepulveda—asked my opinion of what should be done with respect to the famous centennial. Friends said to me, "Don't get involved, it's a controversial and even risky affair." I invited some colleagues to discuss the subject with me. We deliberated at length and agreed that the historical process initiated by the 1492 landing of Columbus has affected all of humanity, not so much in and of itself but for its innumerable consequences and, therefore, it should be commemorated. We used that word specifically to indicate that what we considered necessary was to bring the occasion to mind (con memoria), not only individually but collectively, in order to reflect upon both it and its consequences. It is essential to make very clear the difference between "commemorate" (to serve as a reminder of) and "celebrate" (to observe with festivity). One may and should commemorate the death of a loved one, but how do we celebrate it.

We considered many of the different consequences of 1492—cens, the beginning of the globalization of humankind. People from two separate hemispheres began to notice that across that huge expanse of water were other peoples and nations. And as a consequence that cannot be avoided is what many Indians today describe as the invasion of their lands, their loss of freedom, immovable deaths, and, in some cases, the disappearance of entire ethnic groups, and, in others, the threatened extinction of cultures.

But the invasions and subjugations which occurred in America after 1492 brought other consequences with them. In Anglo-Saxon America, as Washington Irving expressed so concisely, the Europeans set themselves apart from and rejected the wolves and the Indians, yet in the America invaded by the Spaniards and the Portuguese there occurred a mix of populations as well as exchanges—this infallible on a global scale—of all that existed anywhere, transmuted in one hemisphere or the other. With the merging of populations came always the accompanying struggle, but in the end there was a fusion of cultures as well as peoples. Had it not been for this, the more than 300 million Latin Americans who speak Spanish would not exist, nor the 30 million Hispanics in the United States, nor the approximately 160 million people in Brazil who speak Portuguese.

The unspeakable fact is that from the Californería to Tierra del Fuego—almost one-seventh of Earth's land surface—people today demonstrate fundamental features in common as a result of the process commenced in 1492. In addition to the common languages, Spanish and Portuguese, there exist beliefs composed of elements from indigenous and African religions and Spanish Catholicism. In the arts, there was the explosion of the baroque, often shaped by the hands of Indians who, in many ways, have enriched the culture of the majority groups and, at the same time, have assimilated many features brought by Europeans to the New World. The Euroamerican peoples would not even exist, much less have developed new cultures, if that process had not occurred.

In this history of fusion and exchange, it is true that confrontation, subjugation, and a broad spectrum of other injustices have taken place and persist. This is confirmed not only by historical narrative but also by the presence and testimony of forty million Indians who, in the midst of adversity, keep their languages and ethnic identities alive.

My colleagues and I reflected on these and many other topics and debated whether it was pertinent to commemorate the fifth centennial and, if so, just how to do it. Without a doubt, the facts and processes that we had analyzed required a commemoration that would concern particularly the native inhabitants of the continent and those who settled there later. All of them, in one way or another, are our ancestors. It is inexcusable that we and the Indians and Africans—those most concerned—should ignore the occasion of the fifth centennial. But how to commemorate it? Were we going to continue to assume, as during the fourth, the unilateral perspective of those who speak mestizo, or the Discovery of America? Were we going to invite the forty million natives of the continent to "commemorate their discovery, concept of the continent?" It was necessary to adopt a perspective that would take into account all parts of the Americas and would refer both to the people of the Old World (not only the Europeans but also the Africans and Asians) as well as to the inhabitants of this other hemisphere. One speaks metaphorically of an Old and a New World, meaning Old not only Europe but also Asia and Africa. Ignorance was to consider what happened between the people of both worlds starting in 1492. Such a query was not simply a matter of 'I discovered you', but 'we encountered one another'. An encounter, according to the Merriam-Webster or Oxford dictionaries, or in Spanish, encuentro, according to the dictionary of the Spanish Royal Academy, or in French, rencontre, according to the Litté and Robert, was an encounter of two or more people or things occupying the same place, generally one colliding into the other; opposition or contradiction; a conflict, generally unexpected, between battling troops. But it also signifies approach, reunion, convergence, and even fusion.

In The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico, I used an expression to convey a perspective open to reflection. It was "encounter of two worlds." Those of us who proposed this title to the Commission Mexicana del V Centenario (Mexican Commission for the Fifth Centennial) made a public presentation at a meeting of various Latin American and Spanish commissions on July 9, 1984 in Santo Domingo. Suffice it to say that the participants reacted with evident vexation, interpreting the proposal as an attempt to deify Spain and Columbus the glory of the discovery. Such was their indignation that they requested that a floral offering and a guard be placed the following day at

8 For more regarding this subject see Barceló and Locle Menaouer, 1492, Un mundo nuevo? (Paris: Perrin, 1991), 56-55.

9 No hay quien se salve in an idiommatic expression referring to a con, the quito, and meaning something along the line of "every penny counts."
the monument to "don Cristóbal," the Admiral.

The reaction "encountered," that is, the opposition, came when others asserted that by using the word "encounter" to refer to 1492 and its aftermath one conceals the violence of the invasion and the deaths of millions of Indians who were killed in this manner saw, or wanted to see, only that which I call the "positive connotation" of the word, which is to "approach." They ignored the other meanings; "encounter" is related to reflection and debate. By adopting it, UNESCO has encouraged something which, incredibly, has occurred very few times—dialogue and debate with representatives from contemporary Indian groups. Under the title Amerindia-92 various meetings have been convened in Canada, Mexico, Colombia, and other places where the fifth centennial has become an occasion for listening to the indigenous voices of those who, if they evoke five hundred years of injustice, also make proposals for the present and the future.

Another Form of Writing History?

At this point I must ask myself, "Who does all this about the fifth centennial have to do with the idea, convenience, or necessity—only the possibility—perhaps—of rewriting history and sorting out the meaning of the process begun in 1492?" There is, of course, a relationship. This condescension is a time in reflection in order to dispose of deeply-rooted ethnocentrism and to take into account the "other." Also, it is a propitious moment for imagining the historiography fully accessible to whoever believes his or her life is connected to it. The Maya, creators of an extraordinary art and first inventors of the concept of zero, practiced this kind of historiography in their own way. It implied broadening one's perception as much as possible to comprehend the meanings of time, not only the past but also the present and even what could be glimpsed of the future, because the Maya conceived of past, present, and future as an uninterrupted flow of existence. They required it into their past from the viewpoint of their present, as lived by the entire community. And those who write about it, with the recurrence of influence of this past could be upon their future. Thus, their reflection upon the past led them to express themselves with prophetic tones. Their pronouncements were often addressed toward the past as if to prophylaxis what had already happened, or toward the present in which they were living as so to signal cause and effect relationships in the flow of time. They contemplated whatever had happened, was happening, or could happen from a perspective that encompassed a temporal continuum in terms of which everything was to be understood.

Inspired by the wisdom of the Maya, reflection upon the process begun in 1492 could take on account the testimonies of those who participated in it, both the invaders and the vanquished. The Taíno-Arawak of Haiti left many accounts and references about what the encounter meant to them. Much more abundant are the testimonies of those who confronted, in what is understood as the post-Columbian period and the Andean region, the men of Castile. Some of the friars who wrote the early chronicles, men like Molinela and Tovarquemada, noted aptly that those who ignore the testimonies left by Indians in Nahua, Maya, and other native languages will not understand the invasion and imposition of the Spanish.

But the reflection cannot stop with the testimonies of the invaders and the vanquished. It must encompass the present. The history about which the narratives of the conquerors and the vanquished give testimony acquires life and is illuminated by listening to the voices of those who assert that they experience in their own lives the consequences of that encounter, even though it took place several centuries ago. The present and the past, in a kind of unbroken dialectic, are thus opened up to dialogue and debate.

The Américains, their collective memory reanimated by oral tradition and the daily experiences of their dramatic existence—in large measure a consequence of what the encounter brought their ancestors—enter as participants in the narrative thereby reconstituted and continued. Others, too, have an important place and role in this long and sorrowful history, by whom I mean the frequently discriminated-against descendants of those whose lands from their African homes. In a word, reflection and dialogue concern all who, whether or not they are the living consequences of the encounter and the mixing of peoples, feel they have something to say not only about the past but also about the contemporary phase of the five-centuries-long process. It is absolutely true that history, understood as what has already happened, belongs to the past. But when past events become the subject of someone's attention in order to clarify them and reference history exists only in a present. That present pertains to those who inquire, reflect, write, or simply learn about the past. As the present renders as true and possible for centuries—in the pre-encounter epoch and the colonial and modern periods—until now, I say, recently. Probably the books continue to evolve even now in some communities, if we give credit to the testimony of the well-known Maya who found new destinations and hopes for the future. And, depending upon whether or not the latter were fulfilled, they felt compelled to reinterpret their present as well as their past.

When the old books fell into disrepair from being consulted and rewritten countless times, the old words were transformed and surprise and the investigative activities for centuries—in the pre-encounter epoch and the colonial and modern periods—until now, I say, recently. Probably the books continue to evolve even now in some communities, if we give credit to the testimony of the well-known Maya who found new destinations and hopes for the future. And, depending upon whether or not the latter were fulfilled, they felt compelled to reinterpret their present as well as their past.

kind of historiography as alive as time itself is conveyed, renewed, and rewritten, bringing forth new meanings. The entire community listens to the readings, participates in the elucidations, suggests additions, and rewrite the history that is in life and the summing up of its being and time. Is it folly, perhaps, on an occasion such as this, the Quincentennial, to imagine such a form of historiography, if this term can be applied to this unusual way of acting and thinking about history? But is it indeed unusual? Or can I just posit that the term, which has been done many times, although disguised with the masks of those who claim to approach the past scientifically? The historiography we are talking about, whether new or perhaps too old, would be no longer only an uncharitable task of the elite but a living enterprise, an uninterrupted attempt to grasp the meaning of life itself—a history always in the making, the memory and imagination of a people and a nation, and, if one day the dialogue could encompass all of us, of a humankind engaged in global mutual understanding.

The historian's mission, then, would be made greater as he became

10 Many books have been published with titles such as the following: María del Carmen Rubén, Del encuentro de dos mundos: los indígenas de Venezuela en 1562 (Medellín, 1985); Llanos, el indio, el blanco; Victor Moraga, El indio de México (Mexico: Cía. Editorial Ediciones, 1991), 183-190.

11 While in the town of Toluca, Quiroz Rojo, in the Vasconcelos postcard in 1936, Alfonso Villa Rojas found that the Maya priest and the Apotloteo (but also known as Tien Poo) kept in part to the Chilren Balcony of Chichén, a holy book of the Maya. The Maya, Tien Poo led made additions to this text which he used to read to members of the native community. See Alfredo Ildefonso Vazquez, El libro de los libros de Chilcomting (Mexico, 1986), 34-35.
Miguel León-Portilla, world-renowned historian and anthropologist, adapted this essay from his keynote presentation at the fourth UC MEXUS Critical Issues in U.S.-Mexico Relations conference, Rewriting History: Perceptions of Mexico and the United States, held in Baja California on February 8 and 9, 1999. The conference was sponsored by UC MEXUS, the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores of Mexico, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. León-Portilla is the author of a score of books including Aztec Thought and Culture, The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico, and Pre-Columbian Literatures of Mexico. His books have been translated into numerous languages, some into as many as sixteen, including Hebrew and Hungarian. The preeminent authority on Nahua culture, he is editor of Estudios de Cultura Nahuatl and professor emeritus of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). In addition, he has been director of the Inter-American Indian Institute, director of the Institute of Historical Research at UNAM, and Mexico’s ambassador to UNESCO. He has received honorary doctorates from universities in Europe, the United States, Israel, and Mexico and is a member of the Academia Mexicana de Historia, the Academia Mexicana de la Lengua, the Colegio Nacional, which is the most prestigious scholarly organization in Mexico, and the Council of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Miguel León-Portilla

UC MEXUS Director Resigns; Interim Director Named

Arturo Gómez-Pompa has announced his resignation from the directorship of UC MEXUS, the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States, effective December 31, 1992. Gómez-Pompa, internationally known for his work on tropical forest ecology, management, and conservation, will continue for a second year as an advisor on tropical ecology issues to Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. In addition to his presidential appointment, he has been coordinating the development of a plan to save Mexico’s threatened rain forests, under the auspices of the Mexican Undersecretary of Forestry. The Tropical Forest Action Program he developed, presented to President Salinas in October, already has received worldwide acclaim as a model for management of endangered tropical forest zones.

"UC MEXUS is entering a new stage as a research organization in a time of challenges imposed by the University and State economic crises, opportunities presented by the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement, and increased activity in the U.S-Mexican relationship," said Gómez-Pompa. "I hope that, in this critical time, UC MEXUS will be able to quickly recruit a full-time director who will enjoy strong support from the University of California system and bring new energy to the Institute."

UC President Jack Peltason accepted Gómez-Pompa’s resignation as UC MEXUS’ first director "with mixed feelings." "I regret," he wrote, "the loss to UC MEXUS, which you have led with distinction since 1986. Under your guidance there has been the catalyst in forging significant relationships between the United States and Mexico. I am pleased, however, that you will continue to advice the President of Mexico on protecting that country’s unique tropical ecosystems and that you plan to return to your faculty position at Riverside in the future."

During his six-year tenure, Gómez-Pompa directed UC MEXUS through an intensive five-year review by the University’s Academic Senate which culminated in the former Consortium’s official designation as a Multi-campus Research Unit (MC RU) by The Regents of the University in May of 1992. The Consortium’s new name, the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States, reflects the formal status as well as UC MEXUS’ nine-campus, international, and interdisciplinary mission.

From the UC MEXUS University-wide Headquarters at UCR, Gómez-Pompa also coordinated the University’s two-year effort for research, write and publish The Challenge: Latinos in a Changing California, a study which primarily addressed the University’s possibilities for research about Chicano/Latino issues. The report was commissioned by the California legislature through Senate Bill 87, Agreement 43 and has generated significant amounts of new resources in support of UC research dedicated to issues concerning California’s Chicano/Latino population.

Committed to encouraging collaborative binational research and enabling its application to resolution of problems facing Mexico and the United States, Gómez-Pompa established the UC MEXUS Critical Issues in U.S.- Mexican Relations conference series, supported by a major grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The series examined such diverse topics as binational security issues, management of marine mammals, and reviving the history of U.S.-Mexico relations.

In addition, Gómez-Pompa expanded UC MEXUS grants programs, increasing award amounts and creating, in particular, new competitions for grants to support thesis/dissertation research, Chicano/Chicana studies research, and creative activities. Under his guidance, UC MEXUS has greatly increased its support of projects involving intellectual and artistic exchanges, including such diverse projects as lectures at UC campuses by Mexican novelists and political leaders, the Sinfonía Mexicana in Southern California, a television series, "Los Chicanos," produced by Mexico’s Secretaria de Educación Publica, the European tour of a UC Chicano theater group, photographic exhibitions at UC by Mexican photographers, and UC faculty participation in many scientific and humanistic conferences in Mexico.

Gómez-Pompa is especially pleased about the organizing role played by UC MEXUS in the recent establishment of the nongovernmental United States-Mexico Foundation for Science. The Foundation has received grants from both governments to begin its activities as a major funder of binational collaborative science projects.

During 1993 Gómez-Pompa will continue his leave from UC Riverside, where he has been a professor of botany since 1966. He plans to work closely with UC MEXUS to develop
the University-wide natural resources program designed for the MEXUS University of California Professor Pelton has appointed UCR Professor of Zoology Rodolfo Ruibal as interim director of UC MEXUS. Ruibal, who has served as acting associate director of the MEXUS since January 1992, received his Ph.D. from Columbia University and joined the UCR Department of Biology in 1954. An active researcher, Ruibal has conducted field work in Mexico and many other Latin American countries, concentrating on physiological ecology of frogs and toads. He has an impressive record of University administrative and Academic Senate service, and in fact chaired the search which brought Gómez-Pompa to the University. In close coordination with the UC MEXUS Advisory Committee and the Riverside campus administration, the Office of the President of the University has begun an international search for a new UC MEXUS Director. Nominations and applications are invited in the announcement which appears elsewhere in this issue of the UC MEXUS NEWS.

Announcements

Aguila Azteca
Conferred upon Leal

Luis Leal, professor of Chicano Studies and a literary scholar at the University of California, Santa Barbara, was awarded the Orden Mexicana del Aguila Azteca (The Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle), the highest honor granted by the Mexican government to foreigners, at a ceremony at the president's residence, Los Pinos, in Mexico City on December 1, 1991. The Aguila Azteca was established by the Mexican government to recognize non-citizens who make "outstanding contributions toward the improvement and diffusion of the essential values that are promoted by Mexico." Leal is considered a founding father of the field of Chicano literature.

Grant to UCSC

The Eighteenth Congress of the International Committee of Historical Sciences invites papers for its conference in Montreal, Canada, August 27 - September 3, 1995. Topics for plenary sessions are "People, Nations, and States," "Women and Men in Historical Change: Test Cases in the Impact of Gender History," and "Peoples in Diaspora." Topics for special sessions are "Power and Liberty: The Organization, Control, and Finance of Historical Research and Publications - A Cross-Cultural Approach," "Religion between Liberty, Prophecy, and Intolerance," "Development of Underdevelopment," "War and Culture," "People and Societies of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic Regions of the Great North," "Models of Transport of Preindustrial Societies," "Old Age and Aging," "Childhood in History," "Fictionality, Narrativity, Objectivity," "The Fall of Empires in Comparative Perspective," "Relinking Scientific Revolutions," "Environ- mental History," "Oral History," "Decline as an Historical Concept," "The Bank and Its Role in Commercial and Industrial Capitalism from the 13th to the 20th Centuries," and "Systems of Justice and Forms of Punishment." Prospective participants should include the session they seek to join and include a preliminary title, a two-paragraph synopsis of main themes, and a short CV (2 or 3 pages). Prospective Mexican participants should send materials in duplicate to Dr. Iria de Cortés, President, Comité Mexicano de Ciencias Históricas, Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, Plaza Valdés Gamarra 12, Col. San Juan, Deleg. Benito Juárez, Méxi- cto D.F. For deadline information, contact the Instituto Mora at 598-3777. Prospective U.S. participants should send materials in duplicate by February 22, 1993 to Professor Jean Quaataert, Chair, Committee on International Activities, American Historical Association, Dept. of History, P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY 13902-6000.

Bolton Prize Awarded to Gutiérrez

Ramón A. Gutiérrez, professor of history and ethnic studies at the University of California, San Diego, has been awarded the Herbert Eugene Bolton Prize from the Conference on Latin American History for his book, When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500 - 1945.

In Memoriam

UC MEXUS mourns the passing of Homer H. Achsman, professor emeritus of geography at the University of California, Riverside, and acknowledges here his many contributions to the Institute.

Director

UC MEXUS
University of California Institute
For Mexico and the United States

Nominations and applications are invited for the position of Director of the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UC MEXUS). UC MEXUS is a formally recognized Multidisciplinary Research Unit (MBU) of the University of California. The Director is the chief academic and administrative officer of the program with full executive and financial responsibility for its administration. The Director reports to the President of the University through the Chancellor of the Riverside campus, where the Institute is headquartered. The successful candidate will receive a tenured faculty appointment in an academic department at Riverside appropriate to his or her qualifications.

Established in 1980, UC MEXUS's mission is to develop and sustain a coordinated, University-wide approach to Mexico-related studies. UC MEXUS promotes education, research, public service, and other scholarly activities in four principal areas:

- Mexico Studies (studies of Mexican history, society, politics, culture, arts, and economy);
- United States-Mexico Relations (contemporary and historical studies of the economic, political, and demographic, and cultural interactions between Mexico and the United States);
- Chicano Studies (the history, society, and culture of the Chicanos and their populations and their relations with Mexico and Mexican immigrants in the United States); and
- Collaborative Research between U.S. and Mexican scientists in the social, physical, biological, engineering, health, agricultural, and education sciences, as well as in the arts and humanities (as they relate to Mexico, U.S.-Mexican relations, and Mexican-origin populations in the United States).

Within this broad definition, UC MEXUS seeks to identify, encourage, seek financial support for, and publicize research programs which promise to contribute substantially to scholarship, to enhance University instruction, to promote graduate and professional careers, and to make positive contributions to society in both Mexico and the United States.

Candidates must demonstrate distinguished scholarly achievement in a field of interest to UC MEXUS and must be eligible for a tenured faculty appointment at the University of California, Riverside. In addition, candidates must possess proven administrative ability and experience in obtaining grants, raising funds, and developing programs. The ability to interact effectively with a wide variety of faculty and administrative personnel, fluency in both Spanish and English, and direct knowledge of Mexico and its institutions are also required.

Submit applications and curriculum vitae to:
Chair, UC MEXUS Search Committee
Office of the Associate Vice President, Kaiser Building
University of California
330 Lakeside Drive, Suite 100
Oakland, CA 94612-3500.

To ensure consideration, submit materials by March 1, 1993.

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer.
New Publications

The Rag Doll Plagues
By Alejandro Morales. Arte Publico Press, University of Houston, Houston, TX 77040-2000. Tel: (713) 743-2841. 1991, 200 pp., cloth, $17.95. This novel, three plagues afflicting the people of colonial Mexican City, modern Southern California, and the future 'Lameria.' In each case "modern" scientists combat the mysterious illness, exploring conflicting values and cultures, their ethics clashing with governmental dictates.

The Evolution of the Mexican Political System
Edited by Jaime E. Rodriguez O. SR Books, 104 Greenfield Avenue, Wimington, DE 19805-1897. Tel: (808) 772-8937. (902) 654-7713. 1992, 393 pp., cloth, $45.00. Essays by international scholars which examine the evolution of political and political processes in Mexico from Independence until 1993.

Anarchism and the Mexican Revolution: The Political Trials of Ricardo Flores Magón in the United States
By Colin M. MacLachlan. University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. Tel: (415) 642-2427. 1991, 183 pp., cloth $27.50, paper $11.95. Through an analysis of federal court records, MacLachlan tells the story of Ricardo Flores Magón (1873-1922), a Mexican revolutionary and a forefather of the political and social activism of twentieth-century Mexican Americans, who was prosecuted and convicted under a section of the U.S. penal code that defined certain political statements as obscene, as well as under an Espionage Act indictment.

Mexican Ballads, Chicanos: Poems: History and Influence in Mexican-American Social Poetry
By José E. Limón. University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. Tel: (415) 642-2427. 1992, 219 pp., cloth $38.00, paper $15.00. Examines the politically motivated Chicano poetry of the 60s and 70s by combining literary theory with the personal engagement of a Chicano scholar.

No Longer a Minority: Latinos and Social Policy in California
By David E. Hayes-Bautista, Aidla Hurtado, R. Burguiga Valdes, and Anthony C.R. Hernández. UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, Publications Dept., 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1544. Tel: (213) 825-2363. 1992, 47 pp., paper, $8.50. Utilizing data from 1940 to 1990, this report demonstrates that Latinos in California consistently have shown high labor force participation, low labor force depression, low welfare dependency, strong family formation, and a very good health profile.

Saga de México
By Seymour Menton and Maria Herrera-Sobek. Bilingual Review/Press, Hispanic Research Center, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-2702. Tel: (602) 965-8667. 1992, 348 pp., paper, $18.00. Presents literary and historical reading selections, highlighting significant historical figures and events from pre-Columbian times up to the present. A Spanish text intended for high school and college students; section introductions in English.

Frida Kahlo: The Camera Seduced

Five Centuries of Mexican History/Cinco siglos de la historia de Mexico, vols. I and II

Mexican Political Biographies, 1884-1934
By Roderick A. Camp. University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819. Tel: (512) 471-4032. 1991, 458 pp., cloth, $75.00. A reference work that makes available in English biographies of prominent Mexican national politicians from 1884 to 1934.

Chicano Satire: A Study in Literary Culture
By Guillermo E. Hernández. University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819. Tel: (512) 471-4032. 1991, 152 pp., cloth $25.00. Focuses on the use of satire in the works of Luis Valdez, Rolando Hinojosa, and José Montoya and on the larger content of Chicano culture in which satire operates.

Seeds of Change: A Quincentennial Commemoration
Edited by Herman J. Viela and Carolyn Margolis. Smithsonian Institution Press, Department 900, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17234. Tel: (717) 794-2148. 1991, 278 pp., cloth $39.95, paper $24.95. Fully illustrated. Traces the sometimes deliberative, sometimes unintentional exchanges between Europe and America of plants, animals, cultures, and diseases over the course of 500 years.

Current Crises in U.S.-Mexican Perspectives

Videotape Series

Edited videotapes of 13 presentations and two panel discussions from the July 1992 UC MEXUS conference. Speakers offering viewpoints on the endangered vaquita in the Gulf of California are Saul Alvarez Borrero, CICESE; George Rabb, IUCN; Daniel Anderson, UC Davis; Christopher Croft, Defenders of Wildlife; Alejandro Robles, ITESM, and Omar Vidal, ITESM. Speakers offering viewpoints on the tuna/lobster issue are Bernardo Villa, UNAM; William Ferron, Southwest Fisheries Science Center; Martin Hall, Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission; David C. Phillips, Earth Island Institute; Guillermo Campoño, Programa Nacional para el Aprovechamiento del Atún y la Protección de los Delfines; Augusto Fehndo, American Tunaboat Association; and Felipe Charati, Comisión Nacional de la Industria Pescadora. Each presentation may be purchased separately in English or Spanish for less than $5 (including shipping); for unit pricing and ordering information, contact the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UC MEXUS), 225 Highlander Hall, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521. Tel: (909) 787-3139. Fax: (909) 787-3835.
Land, Labor, and Capital in Modern Yucatán: Essays in Regional History and Political Economy

Edited by Jeffery T. Brummond and Gilbert M. Joseph. The University of Alabama Press, Box 470350, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0350. Tel: (205) 348-5190. 1991, 322 pp., cloth, $34.50. The essays suggest that the process of development in Yucatán has not taken place in isolation but has been linked firmly to national and global forces of change over the past two centuries.

Drug Policy in the Americas

Edited by Peter H. Smith. Westview Press, 5500 Central Avenue, Boulder CO 80301. Tel: (303) 444-3541. 1992, 366 pp., cloth $54.95, paper $16.95. Contributors from Latin America and the United States analyze the magnitude and structure of the illicit drug market, the impact of the 'war on drugs', the utility of therapy and treatment, and the implications of legalization.

No Short Journeys: The Interplay of Cultures in the History and Literature of the Borderlands

By Cecil Robinson. University of Arizona Press, 1230 N. Park Avenue, Suite 102, Tucson, AZ 85710-4140. Tel: (602) 621-1441. 1992, 148 pp., cloth, $32.50. Thirteen essays chart the reciprocal influence of Anglo and Hispanic culture and literature, and demonstrate that the U.S.-Mexico border is not a diminishable margin of either country but rather is central to the construction of an American identity.

En busca de un gobierno alternativo. Los Guadalupeños de México

By Virginia Guevara. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Circuito María de la Cruz, 04510 México, D.F. Tel: 665 0700. 1992, 398 pp., paper. An analysis of the origins of Mexican national politics during the Independence period, focusing on attempts to form an autonomous government.

The Rise of the Professions in Twentieth-Century Mexico

By David E. Lorey. UCLA Latin American Center, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1447. Tel: (310) 825-6614. 1992, 232 pp., 64 tables, paper, $17.95. The data presented allow an analysis of the relationship between trends in university graduates and trends in employment opportunities for professionals in Mexico.

New Videotape

The Pool Party

Produced by Gary Soto. 43 The Occidental, Berkeley, CA 94708. Tel: (510) 845-4728. 1992, 26-30 minutes, color, $198.00. Rudi is invited to a rich girl's house for a swim party. His ingenuity makes him a big splash with the other children. Features Mexican American children from the San Joaquin Valley.

MEXICAN STUDIES

VOLUME 9 NO. 1 / WINTER 1993

Michael J. Gleanon, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives • Pilar Gonzalo Alzpuru, Las fiestas novohispanas: Espectáculo y ejemplo • Carmen Vásquez Mantecón, Espacio social y crisis política: La Sierra Gorda 1850-1855 • Robert Bungfison, Revolutionary Reform: The Mexican Revolution and the Discourse on Prison Reform • Luis Leal, Sin fronteras: (Des)Mifcificando en las letras norte-americanas y mexicanas • Timothy E. Anna, Demystifying Early Nineteenth-Century Mexico • Martin C. Needler, Economic Policy and Political Survival

ESTUDIOS MEXICANOS

Please help us maintain an accurate mailing list. Use this form to add or delete subscribers. If you wish to correct your mailing address, be sure also to include the incorrect address for our reference.

[ ] Add to mailing list [ ] Delete from mailing list [ ] Change of Address

Name__________________________

Street Address or P.O. Box__________________________

City_________ State_________ Zip_________

Zip or Postal Code_________ County_________

Old Address__________________________

Your area of interest__________________________

UT MEXUS NEWS Fall 1992

NEIGHBORS IN CRISIS

Mexico and The United States

EDITED BY DANIEL G. ALDRICH, JR. AND LORENZO MEYER

Proceedings from the 1989 conference in the UC MEXUS Critical Issues series, "Neighbors in Crisis: A Call for Joint Solutions." This multi-viewed compilation of papers and discussants' comments probes crucial issues that affect both nations: agriculture as a solution to bilateral problems, the bilateral system of agricultural production, international competitiveness in the export electronics industry, Mexican migration to the United States, AIDS control at the frontier, human rights and indigenous workers, political transition in Mexico, Mexico's foreign debt and the U.S. national debt, possibilities for better energy cooperation. Each entry includes comments by the conference discussants, all experts in their respective fields. Edited by the late Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr. and Lorenzo Meyer, with a detailed table of contents, a reference index, plus accompanying tables and graphs. Neighbors in Crisis is a valuable and timely addition to both private as well as university collections.


14
Illustrations in this Issue

The illustrations in this issue provide various Old and New World perspectives of the 'encounter' which began with the Columbus voyage in 1492. The editor extends thanks to Jaime E. Rodríguez for his valuable assistance.

Page 1: Imaginary picture of the cacao tree, engraved by Jean Cousin, from André Thevet's Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique, printed by the Heirs of Maurice de la Porte, Paris, 1558.

Page 2, lower left: Cocolochitl, Mexican and Central American dahlia, from Francisco Hernandez' Thesaurus, Spain, 1651.

Page 2, upper right: Czech rendition of Vespucci sailing to the New World (1505).

Page 3: Northern coast of the island, Española, drawn by Columbus in 1492.

Page 4, lower left: The earliest post-Columbian portolan chart showing any part of the New World, as designed by the Spanish geographer, navigator, and pilot, Juan de la Cosa, who sailed with Columbus on his second voyage (1493), and with Vespucci in 1499. The map shows Cuba as an island, and between Cuba and the Mexican Coast, the Mare oceanus (Gulf of Mexico), 1500.

Page 4, upper right: A scene of the Conquest from the The General History of the Things of New Spain, or the Florentine Codex, compiled in the mid-sixteenth century by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, one of the first Franciscan missionaries in Mexico. The Codex records the recollections of Aztec elders regarding the Aztec religion, culture, and social structure, as well as the Conquest.

Page 5: Central American Indian warrior, from Jean de Laet's L'Histoire du Nouveau Monde, printed by Bonaventure et Abraham Elzevier, Amsterdam, 1640.


Page 7, lower left: Painted clay pottery of the Pueblo Indians, from Rodolfo Cronau, América, Historia de su descubrimiento desde los tiempos primitivos hasta los mas modernos. Obra dedicada á solemnizar el cuarto centenario de América por Cristóbal Colón, vol. 2 (Barcelona: Montaner y Simon, 1892), 239.

Page 7, upper right: Fanciful drawing of the passionflower of tropical America, from Parkinson's Paradisi, London, 1629.

Page 8: Diagram from The Books of the Chilam Balam of Chumayel, a holy book of the Maya, representing an eclipse of the sun.

Page 12: Clay figures of the Pueblo Indians, from Rodolfo Cronau, América, Historia de su descubrimiento desde los tiempos primitivos hasta los mas modernos. Obra dedicada á solemnizar el cuarto centenario de América por Cristóbal Colón, vol. 2 (Barcelona: Montaner y Simon, 1892), 239.

Page 16: The oldest printed picture of an ear of maize, from Oviedo's Historia Natural, Seville, 1535.

UC MEXUS NEWS
Editor: Kathryn L. Roberts
Associate Editor: Yvonne Pacheco Tevis
Editorial Board: María Herrera-Sobek (UCI); Jaime E. Rodríguez (UCI); and Irwin P. Ting (UCR)

UC MEXUS NEWS is published by the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UC MEXUS); Arturo Gómez-Pompa, director. All correspondence should be sent to 252 Highlander Hall, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521; telephone (909) 787-3519; fax (909) 787-3856. Copyright 1992 by The Regents of the University of California. No article may be reprinted without permission of the publisher. Second class postage paid at Riverside, CA, USPS 131.

Printed on recycled paper.

University of California
UC MEXUS
252 Highlander Hall
Riverside, CA 92521