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A PROGRAM OF MEXICAN LITERATURE FOR GRADUATE  
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the  
North Texas State University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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The problem of this study is that of developing a program of study of Mexican literature at the graduate level at North Texas State University. The study of literature and culture is approached by probing into the influences on the thinking of the Mexican and by using an in-depth study, rather than an "anthology" approach to teaching.

The data were collected from structured questionnaires sent to graduate and undergraduate majors and minors in Spanish at North Texas State University, as well as to faculty members of the Spanish department at this university. An examination of university catalogues was made to determine which universities offered advanced degrees in Spanish. A structured questionnaire was sent to the Spanish departments of selected universities. Follow-up interviews were conducted in order to establish reliability of the questionnaires received from selected universities. Books and articles were studied in order to present an overview of the development of Mexican literature. A study of documents and interviews with the chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Texas State University were conducted to ascertain the philosophy of the university and the department.

The study is organized into six divisions. Chapter I presents a general introduction to the study, subject of the study, purposes of the study, delimitation of the study, and procedures for collection and treatment of the data. Chapter II presents an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature. Chapter III presents a study of the current status of related courses of Mexican literature in graduate programs of selected universities. Chapter IV presents a discussion of the criteria for designing a proposed course in Mexican literature at North Texas State University. Chapter V presents the proposed course of study in Mexican literature based on the criteria established in Chapter IV. Chapter VI presents a general summary, an evaluation of the course in terms of the established criteria, and recommendations.

The summarization of questionnaires submitted to professors at selected universities indicated a need for more emphasis on certain twentieth century Mexican authors. The works of these writers were selected for emphasis for in-depth study. The summarization of questionnaires submitted to Spanish majors and minors at North Texas State University indicated strong student interest in the creation of a course in Mexican literature which would promote better understanding of the Mexican as an individual.

The findings of the study indicate a need for an upper-level course in Mexican literature at North Texas State University. Therefore, the following recommendations seem appropriate: (1) that North Texas State University initiate a course in Mexican literature which may be utilized by both students in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and students in the Bilingual/Bicultural Education program; (2) that the course be made available to both graduate and upper-level students; (3) that oral communication be emphasized in the course and that student participation in the target language be maximized.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most pressing concerns found in foreign language curricula is that of determining which courses will be offered and the content to be included in the courses. At one time, according to Claudel,

University courses in Spanish emphasized the teaching of the language and literature in English rather than in Spanish. Such large institutions as the University of Chicago and the University of North Carolina stressed the study of Old Spanish, dwelling in great detail on the minute study of philology.

At the University of North Carolina a candidate for the doctorate was usually made to study the gamut of all the Romance languages, including all the various dialects, both ancient and modern. This involved and still involves a long curriculum of courses in philology and related fields (2, pp. 132-133).

In most universities Peninsular literature, and particularly old Peninsular literature, has characteristically been emphasized as an important component of language study. Many graduate Spanish programs continue to stress pre-1700 Spanish literature because of its philological and literary values, and because of its influence on the Hispanic world.

Of the large numbers of students who study undergraduate Spanish, only a few major in the language, and even fewer enter graduate work in the field.

Only a few really able Hispanic scholars are produced in our country, and Hispanic scholarship suffers in comparison with that of our French and German colleagues: our Hispanism is narrower in scope, timider in approach, and less capable of inspiring scholars to commitment and to the production of penetrating, original work, especially in new areas (7, p. 386).

If foreign language programs are to continue, their curricula must reflect student needs and interests, as well as institutional objectives. Course content should include meaningful material which will develop the student's communication skills and increase his understanding and appreciation of the foreign culture through the study of the target language. The study of literature is one method of increasing this understanding. Moreover, literature can be taught in such a way as to develop communication skills. One author states that educators have been spending all their time trying to devise better methods of instruction at the elementary, secondary, and undergraduate levels. He further states

that advanced literature students are legitimate if currently underprivileged members of the academic community; and that they have a legitimate claim to a fair share of our time in devising more efficient means of instruction at their level (5, p. 440).

The study of Spanish has always been important in the United States, especially to the people who live in the Southwest, because of the close link between the United States and Latin America. The United States has long been closely associated with Spanish civilization and culture, and some of the most outstanding American writers, including



Washington Irving, James Russell Lowell, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, studied and taught Spanish language and literature (2, pp. 130-131).

Since World War II and the launching of Sputnik I, there has been in the United States an increase in public awareness of the need for studying languages and cultures other than our own. Early in the 1940's the inadequacy of traditional teaching methods was pointed out, and new methods and ideas were developed. The creation of the concept of "area studies" included the presentation of the political, social, and economic aspects of a region, as well as a study of the literature. In 1953 the Foreign Languages in the Elementary School (F.L.E.S.) program was begun, emphasizing the study of foreign languages in the elementary school. When Sputnik I was launched in 1957, American inadequacy in science and foreign languages was revealed. The National Defense Education Act (N.D.E.A.) was established, resulting from the demand of the people for a change. The N.D.E.A. provided summer institutes for language teachers and funds for the installation of language laboratories (2, pp. 134-135). With the advent of bilingual-bicultural programs in Texas and the proximity of North Texas State University to Mexico, faculty and students have indicated an interest in a specialized graduate course dealing with Mexican literature and culture.

As a starting point for literary study at any level, one professor of Hispanic literature proposes three points:

1. To stress the uniqueness of the literary-aesthetic experience, . . . an act of poetry per se;
2. To give the student such scholarly assistance as may be necessary to illustrate and help him understand and place the literary text in the then and there in which it was conceived . . .
3. To orient the student in the search for ethical implications . . . which all works pose. The moral responsibility (or irresponsibility) of an author is inseparable from his aesthetic vision. In this way the student would examine the value of the literary text in a double perspective--one ethical, the other aesthetic--and new dimensions would be added to the traditional historical-literary analysis (4, pp. 29-30).

Enguídanos suggests a course revolving around the masterpieces of Hispanic literature in which

. . . one would study from six to eight key works representing the various literary genres. These would be complete works, not abridged, simplified, or presented piecemeal, and would be chosen first and foremost for their literary quality (4, p. 32).

Professors complain about the inadequate selection of anthologies which are available to them and their students, and students often complain that reading fragments of poems, dramas, and books is highly unsatisfactory. Perhaps Enguídanos' idea of an in-depth study of a representative selection of literary types would be a more advantageous way of introducing the student to Mexican literature and culture.

#### Subject of the Study

The subject was the development of a program of study of Mexican literature at the graduate level at North Texas State University.

### Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study were as follows:

1. To present an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature;
2. To determine the status of graduate level courses in Mexican literature in selected universities;
3. To establish criteria for designing a related course at North Texas State University;
4. To develop a course of study in Mexican literature at the graduate level;
5. To evaluate the course in terms of the established criteria.

### Guideline Questions

In order to fulfill the purposes of this study, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What insights into the thought and culture of the Mexican people do the different periods of literature reflect?
2. How is Mexican thought viewed by contemporary Mexican philosophers?
3. What are some university programs which include the study of Mexican literature?
4. What need do Mexican-American university students who major or minor in Spanish have for broadening their knowledge of Mexican literature and culture?

5. What need do non-Mexican-American university students who major or minor in Spanish have for broadening their knowledge of Mexican literature and culture?

6. What need do the course offerings at North Texas State University reflect for the inclusion of a course of study in Mexican literature?

7. What literature is to be included in the developed course and which teaching methods will be utilized?

8. What is the content of Mexican literature programs at selected universities, and what teaching methods are employed in these universities?

#### Background and Significance of the Study

Areas of study other than Mexican literature have characteristically been emphasized in graduate Spanish programs. While studies in Peninsular literature abound and most universities provide surveys in Latin American literature, with an occasional course in the Latin American novel, few offer a course in the literature and culture of the United States' closest neighbor to the south, one with whom Anglo-Americans should be building mutual ties of understanding and cooperation.

Characteristically citizens of the United States hold an erroneous concept of the Mexican and his culture. Images, once stereotyped, become part of the national culture and are difficult to change; therefore, colleges and universities are in a unique position to influence students to

develop more realistic images. While correction for the erroneous concepts which are developed with respect to the Mexican and his culture is frequently attempted in undergraduate classes in Spanish, it is also important that this correction be emphasized at the graduate level.

The following paragraph might be representative of how many Anglo-Americans feel about their Mexican neighbors.

Latin Americans all speak Spanish, live in a tropical climate, wear big sombreros and clothing similar to our pajamas, shun work whenever possible, and take siestas whenever they aren't making love or dancing the rumba or cha-cha-chá; they live ordinarily in thatched or adobe huts and their staple foods are hot dishes such as chile con carne, enchiladas, and tamales; they have a revolution every few months, and, in general, supply services and furnish a picturesque background for the resorts and archaeological sites our U.S. tourists enjoy visiting so much (6, p. 322).

This example does not seem like such an exaggeration of the truth when compared to the results of a free association experiment which Mead has conducted over the years in his own Spanish classes. He gives the stimulus word "Mexico" and asks his students to respond to the stimulus by writing down the first five or six words that come to their minds. The five leading responses, which he has tabulated over the years, have been "fiesta," "siesta," "desert," "heat," and "ignorance" (6, p. 322).

The people of the United States can no longer afford the luxuries of provincialism and ethnocentrism. They can no longer exalt their own accomplishments and ignore those of others (3, p. 143). Mexico has a culture of both intrinsic

and extrinsic value. Therefore, a study of its literature seems important.

A course in the literature and culture of Mexico would provide for North Texas State University the following:

1. A greater flexibility of course offering for the North Texas State University Spanish Department at the graduate level.
2. A program of study dealing exclusively with Mexican literature in this university.
3. An elective course for bilingual education, in which a knowledge of Mexican history, literature, and culture is a prerequisite.
4. An opportunity for Mexican-American students to study the Mexican aspect of their cultural heritage.
5. An opportunity for increased cultural exchange and understanding between Texas and Mexico.

The proposed significance of the course is that it approaches the study of literature and culture by probing into the influences on the thinking of the Mexican and by using an in-depth study, rather than an "anthology" approach to teaching.

According to Chatham and Ruiz-Fornells, there is a definite need for more research in the techniques of teaching a foreign literature.

The list of dissertations ("Group I: Dissertations on the Teaching of Foreign Literatures"), which was published in the May 1972 issue of The Modern Language Journal, reveals the production of only twenty-eight

specialists at doctoral level in the teaching of foreign literatures in the United States prior to 1972. Although large numbers are known to be engaged in the teaching of foreign literatures, it is obvious that American doctoral programs have stressed the study of the literatures rather than the techniques of teaching them (1, p. 495).

#### Delimitation of the Study

The material contained in the developed course was delimited to Mexican works considered to be representative.

#### Procedures for Collection and Treatment of Data

The collection and treatment of data were accomplished by the following methods:

1. A structured questionnaire (see Appendix) was designed to ascertain the need for a course in Mexican literature and culture at the graduate level. One hundred of these questionnaires were sent to both graduate and undergraduate majors and minors in Spanish. A tally sheet was designed to mark the number of responses from undergraduate Anglo students, undergraduate Mexican students, undergraduate Mexican American students, graduate Anglo students, and graduate Mexican American students. Tallies were marked for the "Yes," "No," and "Undecided" categories included on the questionnaire.

2. A structured questionnaire (see Appendix) was sent to all faculty members of the Spanish Department at North Texas State University. The questionnaire was designed to determine a faculty member's concept about the students'

need to broaden their knowledge of Mexican culture, the contribution that a course in Mexican literature would make to a greater knowledge of Mexican culture, the need for such a graduate course in Mexican literature to be included in the Bilingual Education curriculum at North Texas State University, the need for such a course to be offered at North Texas State University, interest of the faculty member in teaching such a course, teaching methods that might be emphasized in the course, frequency with which the course should be offered, teaching materials to be utilized, recommendations for the development of the course, existing courses which are taught by the faculty member and which include works of Mexican literature, the specific works of Mexican literature which are studied in the existing courses, and an ordered ranking of selected authors and works to be included in the developed graduate course. Responses were tallied and used as a guide for the development of criteria for the course.

3. An examination of seventy-five university catalogues was made to determine which universities offered advanced degrees in Spanish. From these universities it was found that sixteen included at least one course in Mexican literature. A structured questionnaire (see Appendix) was sent to the Spanish departments of twenty-four selected universities, including the sixteen that offered Mexican literature at the graduate level and eight which did not. The questionnaire was



designed to determine whether or not the study of Mexican literature was included in the university's graduate curriculum and to determine the reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of a program of Mexican literature. The design of the questionnaire also included provisions for responding to questions dealing with course titles, semester hours credit, frequency of course offering, materials used, teaching methods employed, recommendations for developing a similar course at North Texas State University, and an ordered rating of the same selected authors and works rated by the faculty members at North Texas State University. Results from sections E and H of the questionnaires were tallied. Section E dealt with the amount of emphasis placed by each teacher on different methods of teaching literature in his course. The tally of section H produced an ordered ranking of authors and works which served as a guide for selecting writers and literature to be included in the course.

4. In order to establish reliability of the questionnaires received from selected universities, three follow-up interviews were conducted. The information from the interviews was compared with results from the questionnaires.

5. Results of the student and faculty questionnaires were utilized to determine the need for a course of study in Mexican literature at North Texas State University.

6. Information obtained from the questionnaires sent to selected universities offering courses in Mexican literature

was utilized in the formation of the criteria to be used in developing the course.

7. Books and articles were studied in order to present an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as an aid in the construction of the course.

8. A study of documents and interviews with the chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Texas State University were conducted to ascertain the philosophy of the university and the department. These data were used as a guide for the selection of criteria for the formation of the course.

#### Organization of the Study

The organization of the study is as follows.

1. Chapter I presents a general introduction to the study, subject of the study, purposes of the study, delimitation of the study, and procedures for collection and treatment of the data.

2. Chapter II presents an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature.

3. Chapter III presents a study of the current status of related courses of Mexican literature in graduate programs of selected universities.

4. Chapter IV presents a discussion of the criteria for designing a proposed course in Mexican literature at North Texas State University.

5. Chapter V presents the proposed course of study in Mexican literature based on the criteria established in Chapter IV.

6. Chapter VI presents a general summary and an evaluation of the course in terms of the established criteria.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEXICAN LITERATURE

#### Introduction

"There is probably no more eloquent picture of the inner and outer life of any culture than its literary production" (24, p. 3). The study of Mexican literature reveals the story of a people evolving from the influence of two divergent cultures, the Spanish culture of the conquistadors and that of the Indian groups subjugated by the Spaniards. González Peña states that while Mexican literature is generally considered to be a branch of Spanish literature, it is quite different "because of the distinctive character which the Mexican national spirit has given it" (15, p. 3).

#### The Pre-Hispanic Period

The beginnings of Mexican literature are often marked by the works of the first Spaniards--the conquerors and the missionaries. However, the indigenous literature that existed before the arrival of Cortés in 1519 may be said to be the true beginning of literature in Mexico.

There are two main bodies of indigenous Mexican literature, Aztec and Mayan. The Aztec or Náhuatl culture flourished in the center of Mexico and produced a poetry of

anguish and death. There are basically four types of Náhuatl poems, including the following: (1) epic poems concerning the three main cultural centers for the Náhuatl-speaking people; (2) heroic poems, many of which relate the adventures of the god Quetzalcóatl; (3) religious poems; and (4) lyric poetry of great personal and subjective feeling.

The Mayans produced the three most important indigenous works--the Popol Vuh, the Chilam Balam de Chumayel, and the Rabinal Achí. El Popol Vuh o libro del consejo was an oral tradition in the Maya-quiché language, translated by Fray Francisco Jiménez into Spanish under the title of Historias del origen de los indios de esta provincia de Guatemala. The Popol Vuh, also referred to as the "Book of the people," may be divided into an introduction and four sections. The introduction states the intention of the work, that of describing all the historical events that took place in the land of the Mayas and of revealing what was hidden about the origin of life and the beginning of history. The ancient book of the Mayas had been hidden when the Spaniards arrived, and the author of the present version set about writing down this book so that the contents would not be forgotten. The first main section of the book describes the cosmic origins of the world and the humans that the gods created and destroyed. The second part contains Mayan myths. The last two sections tell of the growth of the Mayan nation under the leadership of the first four chiefs (24, pp. 21-22).

León-Portilla believes that the books of Chilam Balam are the most significant works that remain of early Mayan literature. The chilames were the highest of Mayan priests who functioned as teachers and occasionally performed as prophets in pre-Hispanic times. The name "Balam" is a surname, still commonly used by the Mayans in the Yucatán. Eighteen of these books are known to be in existence, containing prophecies of future events, myths, historical events, hymns, songs, tradition, and tribal wisdom which came to be confused with Biblical and Christian ideas (24, p. 19).

Each Book of Chilam Balam consists of a collection of different categories of materials relating to the history, religion, chronology, art, medicine, and so forth of the Maya of Yucatan, reflecting manifestations of their own culture from preconquest times down to and including the period of hybrid elements produced by the introduction of Christianity into the peninsula (2, p. 10).

One of the most important prophecies of the Chilam Balam was that referring to the return of the white, bearded god Kukulcán-Quetzalcóatl. This legend was interpreted as having been fulfilled by the arrival of the Spaniards. Another part of the book contains an epic poem giving an account of the conquest of the Mayas by the Spaniards.

The books had first been set down in hieroglyphics by groups of scholars and priests who sought to preserve the literary legacy of their people. "Since they express the highest ideals of a people, they often provide a key to the

understanding of the art, the traditional institutions, and, indeed, the ancient culture as a whole" (24, p. 174).

Only one indigenous dramatic work has been preserved. The Rabinal Achí, presented customarily by the Indians of San Pedro de Rabinal, tells of the fate of a warrior who stole some honey belonging to the chief. The poetic play contains lengthy dialogues between the warrior, now taken prisoner, and Rabinal Achí, the chief's son who determines that the warrior must die for his crime.

The influence of the Aztecs and Mayas has not been inconsiderable. While what is currently referred to as Mexican literature is a thing apart from the indigenous pre-colonial literature, it may be seen that the Mexican has been strongly influenced in his psychology, speech, and literature by the precortesian civilizations (34, p. 21).

In the native literatures of Mexico, both ancient and contemporary, remains the message of those who knew how to give meaning to life and the enigma of death, the ultimate reality and the universe (24, p. 175).

#### The Chroniclers of the Conquest

"Con Hernán Cortés empieza la Historia de la Literatura en México" (34, p. 42). While the Captain from Castille's worldly fame may be attributed to his conquest of Mexico in 1519, Cortés' literary fame rests on the five letters he addressed to his Spanish monarch, Charles V. These famous dispatches have been compared to Caesar's Commentaries in their terse, vivid style (18, p. 11). Cortés wrote his



Cartas de relación between 1523 and 1526 in order to make sure that the king realized the importance of his conquest. These letters are of multiple interest from a historical, political, literary, and human aspect (26, p. 30).

El gran realismo, exaltado por una gran fantasía, constituye en la contextura de la narración, los elementos del primer espécimen de la historia novelada en tierras americanas (35, p. 47).

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, one of Cortés' captains, wrote a lengthier account of the conquest, twice the size of the Cartas, in order to correct the errors in the accounts of other historians, such as that of Francisco López de Gómara, who did not personally participate in the conquest but wrote about it second-hand. While other chroniclers exalted Cortés, Díaz del Castillo exalted the soldiers who made Cortés' greatness possible. Cortés was limited by the fact that his account would be hastily scanned by a monarch who had little time for reading of his exploits among the Indians of the New World (34, p. 46). Because he was not limited, Bernal Díaz del Castillo was able to include not only historical incidents regarding the conquest, but also interesting anecdotes, vivid portraits of both Spaniards and Indians, and his own remarkably sharp reflections on the situations as they occurred (11, p. 26).

There were other chroniclers of the conquest who were not soldiers but religious historians. The more important include the following: (1) Pedro Mártir de Anglería, who wrote the first history of the New World (De Orbe Novo) in

1530; (2) Francisco López de Gómara, Cortés' chaplain, who wrote the previously mentioned biased and erroneous history of the New World, published in two parts in 1552 and 1553; (3) Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, who wrote another general history in 1601; and (4) Antonio de Solís, whose 1684 history dwelt largely on the conquest.

Of significantly more literary importance were the works of four other ecclesiastical historians--Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, Toribio de Benavente, Bernardino de Sahagún, and Diego de Durán. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, greatly frustrated by the social conditions of his time, is known as the defender of the rights and freedom of the Indians. De las Casas, who entered the Dominican order at the age of thirty-six, labored to right the wrongs done to the Indians by his fellow countrymen. His fight against social injustice led him to write his Brevisísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias (1552), as well as two other histories of the Indies (15, pp. 27-28).

Fray Toribio de Benavente, better known as Motolinía, painted the pacific and long-suffering character of the Indians in his Historia de los indios de Nueva España. In this work he relayed the earliest information about the religion, rites, sacrifices, customs, and conversion of the Aztecs (35, p. 48). Indefatigable in his mission to the Indians, Motolinía founded convents and towns, learned the native languages, and protected the Indians from the cruelties of their Spanish overlords (26, p. 33).

Fray Bernardino de Sahagún came to Mexico in 1529 and immediately dedicated his life to the study of the Mexican languages and to the education of the Indians (11, p. 35). His La historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España is a veritable encyclopedia of the intellectual and social life, customs, beliefs, religion, superstitions, economy, and history of the Indians (11, p. 38).

Fray Diego de Durán completed his Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de Tierra Firme in 1581. This work has been designated by Flores as the best and most complete chronicle which was written about the early history of the Mexicans (11, p. 39).

Early in the Colonial Period the Spaniard began to be transformed by his contact with the Indian. His speech and customs, as well as his attitude towards life began to change; soon the new Mexican, the mestizo, began to emerge from the two distinct cultures.

Como étnicamente se formó un nuevo tipo de la conjunción de las dos razas, la del brioso conquistador y la del trágico y melancólico indio, asimismo espiritualmente en contacto, modificaron entrambas. Hay, pues, diferencias esenciales y aun formales entre los escritores de allende el Atlántico y los del Continente Americano.

Lo que antes era energía y vigor en el castellano, atropellamiento de imágenes, palabra concisa y dura, se convierte en discreción, medida, palabra melíflua, además lento y perezoso. La lengua misma pierde en vigor lo que gana en aterciopelamiento, suavidad, cortesía, anhelo romántico, don propicio de lágrimas. Es que el español ha sufrido el contacto del indio y la influencia del medio . . . (20, p. 44).

### The Poets of the Colonial Period

Francisco de Terrazas, the son of a conquistador who served Cortés as majordomo, composed various sonnets, as well as several longer poems. Tratado de mar y tierra describes Cortés' adventures in Honduras, while his most important work, Nuevo mundo y conquista, is a versified picture of the conquest.

Bernardo de Balbuena, considered to be one of the best descriptive poets of the Colonial Period, gained fame with his long descriptive poem of Mexico City in the waning years of the sixteenth century. La grandeza mexicana is lyrical in its rich, colorful language and in its exuberance. Balbuena's love for and admiration of the capital is seen in the force of his description of every phase of life there-- the topography, the plant and animal life, and the social and political life.

In the seventeenth century the Baroque Period was evidenced as it was in Spain. One of the most characteristic poets of the Baroque Period in Spanish America was Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, the nephew of the most renowned Spanish poet of the time, Luis de Góngora. A great intellectual and humanist, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora early distinguished himself in many fields--philosophy, history, math, and astronomy, as well as poetry. Some of his works include Primavera indiana and El triunfo parténico, which describes a literary contest that took place in 1682 at the University of Mexico.

An intimate friend of the previous poet was Juana Inés de Asbaje y Ramírez de Santillana, better known as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. One of the most fascinating characters of the Colonial Period was this slim, extremely beautiful aristocrat, who was the lady-in-waiting to the wife of the Spanish Viceroy. She was born in 1651 in the village of San Miguel de Nepantla, and at the age of eight she came to Mexico City, where she was already beginning to write verses that astounded the members of the court. Her education began at the early age of three, when, following her older sister to her tutor's house one day, she informed the woman that her mother wanted her to receive instruction, also. This burning desire to learn was to follow her throughout life. At eight she was the composer of a poem in honor of the Corpus Christi festival in her town. She mastered Latin in only twenty lessons. When she was fifteen, she was examined by forty theologians, writers, philosophers, poets, mathematicians, historians, and humanists--a panel of the most scholarly and learned men to be found in all of Mexico. This brilliant young girl acquitted herself admirably on all questions (15, pp. 111-112).

Suddenly, to the complete astonishment of everyone who knew her, Juana decided to enter the convent, where she planned to dedicate herself to God and her studies. The harshness of convent life broke the health of the fifteen-year-old girl, and she was forced to leave the Carmelites

and to enter a less rigid order at the convent of San Jerónimo, where she remained until her death in 1695. In the convent Juana satisfied her thirst for knowledge in the study of the humanities, showing particular interest and enthusiasm for theology, philosophy, astronomy, painting, and music, while she satisfied a thirst for self-expression in her own poetry. Her first volume of poetry, Inundación castálida, brought her instant fame throughout the Spanish-speaking world, but her Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz is the key to her own personality. This prose work was written in response to a critical letter directed at Sor Juana by the Bishop of Puebla, who published under the pseudonym of "Sor (Sister) Filotea." "Sor Filotea" suggested in no uncertain terms that Sor Juana renounce literary criticism and composition (better left to men) and dedicate herself to religious affairs, a subject of endeavor more befitting a woman (15, pp. 112-114). Sor Juana's reply in 1691 is one of the earliest expressions in America of women's rights. It presents a vigorous and sincere picture of the life and psychology of a truly intellectual woman. Another of her feminist writings is a poem entitled "Contra las injusticias de los hombres al hablar de las mujeres."

Sor Juana is best in her poems of mysticism and of both divine and human love. Her gentle softness is seen in the variety of her literary production--sonnets, ballads, lyric poems, plays, and songs. Notable secular poems include the following: "Romance de la ausencia;" "A la rosa," a delicate and lovely sonnet; "Detente, sombra," another outstandingly

beautiful sonnet; and "Hombres necios," a redondilla. In a mystical allegory entitled El divino Narciso is found one of her best expressions of divine love. Primer sueño, her most ambitious poem and a labor of nearly 1,000 lines, is an intellectual exercise in the gongoristic manner.

Today Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is considered to be the greatest female Mexican poet and one of the best mystic poets in the world. She is the most important writer of colonial Spanish America and the first great American poet (32, pp. 39-40).

There were other minor writers who contributed to the literature of the Colonial Period. The Jesuit poets brought about a reformation which was, in effect, a reaction against affectation. One of this group, Fray Manuel de Navarrete, is considered to be the restorer of lyric poetry in Mexico. There were humanists, like Padre Diego José Abad, Padre Francisco Javier Alegre, and Padre Rafael Landívar, who represent the full flowering of Latin poetry in Mexico. There were colonial dramatists who produced a considerable body of literature which has since become lost. Finally, there were historians, linguists, and bibliographers. A periodical which was published in Mexico City between 1805 and 1817 was the Diario de México, the first daily publication of the country.

### The Period of Independence

"El espíritu crítico del siglo XVIII preparó el ambiente para la independencia política de la Nueva España" (26, p. 125). In Mexico the struggle for independence was begun in 1810 by Father Hidalgo, a parish priest whose first army was a group of sixteen peasants armed with machetes.

There are various causes given for the revolution. The creation of the colonial army provided the Mexicans with arms. Economic restrictions were placed on the colonists; royal revenues were increased; protests from the colonists were multiplied. Spain had given the Americans aid in their struggle against England; the Mexicans could now see that independence was not impossible to attain because of the examples set by the United States and France. Finally, the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1807 made Spain divert her attention to matters closer to home (18, p. 31).

As these factors influenced the revolution itself, other important factors influenced and shaped the literature during the revolutionary period. French political and literary ideas, especially those of Rousseau, were introduced in Latin America. Political journals and literary-political societies began to flourish (18, p. 32). Although much patriotic poetry and many popular songs were produced during the revolutionary period, the most important and long-lasting works were prose. Oratory and journalistic essays became the most popular genres to be cultivated.



Shortly after freedom of the press was guaranteed by the Constitution of Cádiz, El pensador mexicano, a revolutionary journal, was founded by a journalist, novelist, poet, and dramatist named José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi. This paper was followed by more than a half dozen others that he edited, all of which were aimed at reforming the political and social conditions of Mexico.

Lizardi also employed the pamphlet, a popular propaganda medium for the revolution, as a means for his crusading, becoming the most talented and prolific of all the pamphleteers of the nineteenth century. Other literary works include a melodrama, a miracle play, a pastoral drama, a four-act tragedy in verse, a monologue in verse about Don Agustín de Iturbide, and various poems.

Lizardi, or "El pensador mexicano," also wrote four works of fiction, on one of which rests his fame as the father of the Mexican novel. El Periquillo Sarniento (The Itching Parakeet), the first Mexican novel, is the picaresque adventure of life in Mexico during the last years of the viceregal period. The protagonist, Pedro (Periquillo) Sarniento, states that he is writing the autobiographical account to his children so that they will profit from his mistakes. Pedro, a child completely spoiled by his mother, fails to succeed at school and is encouraged by his father to enter a monastery. Upon his father's death he leaves the order and begins to spend the money that his father has left

his mother. When his mother dies in poverty, he cannot even afford to bury her. At this point Pedro begins his life of crime--cheating at cards, stealing, killing people with his illegal doctoring, swindling, and seducing women.

El Periquillo Sarniento is obviously a child of the Spanish picaresque novels that preceded it. All of its episodes are didactic, and Periquillo finally displays the traits of goodness, honesty, and generosity that redeem him. The story is interesting because of its humor, its adventure, and its attack on social and political institutions.

#### The Pre-Modernist Nineteenth Century

For the next one hundred years the main political problem of post-revolutionary Mexico was that of providing a stable government. Without peace at home, economic development could not progress. The main cultural problem was that of developing a uniquely Mexican literature, not merely a poor imitation of the French and Spanish.

. . . social habits and attitudes helped to keep Spanish America intellectually a European colony for an unduly long time. In most of the countries there was little or no free public education. The percentage of illiteracy was very great; the reading public was correspondingly small and was made up almost exclusively of the wealthy landholding families, government officials and employees, army officers, priests, and an occasional merchant. These were the people for whom books were written; they were also--with a few notable exceptions like . . . Altamirano--the people by whom books were written. Many of them were educated in Europe; all of them felt themselves more closely related in taste and in breeding to the cultured classes of France and Spain than to the Indians and mestizos who worked on their estates or in their mines . . . (18, p. 45).

The outstanding literary figure of this period in Mexico was Don Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, who, unlike his aristocratic contemporaries, was a pure-blooded Indian who did not even learn Spanish until he entered school as a teenager. He lived through a period of great political upheaval, experiencing first the revolution of 1854, the "War of the Reform" in 1857, and finally the war against the Emperor Maximilian, during which Altamirano fought with Juárez's liberals. After the war he founded a magazine and several cultural societies, wrote literary criticism, taught history and law, and through his lyric poetry, short stories, and costumbrista novels became the greatest Mexican writer of his time. His poetic efforts are best represented by Rimas, a volume of thirty-two poems, and his most outstanding novels include Clemencia, El Zarco, and La navidad en las montañas. For literary inspiration Altamirano drew on local customs, people that he knew in the country towns, and the events of his own time. His striking settings and vivid dialogue make his novels the first important fictional works in Mexico. Clemencia, a romantic novel, is set during the War of French Intervention, while El Zarco is a colorful novel about the bandits of Morelos.

During the years in which Altamirano set the pace for his contemporaries, literature passed through four phases. Neoclassicism, already on the way out, had little influence on the pre-modernist writers. Much more popular in America

was costumbrismo, a manner of writing informal essays on different aspects of contemporary life. These sketches were amusing and picturesque, with a focus on setting. A lengthier reproduction of local color followed in the novels of manners and customs which presented a realistic picture of native life. Later on the realism of the costumbristas became a starker and harsher realism when the influence of the naturalists like Zola came to be felt in Latin America (18, pp. 46-47).

However, the temperaments of Spanish Americans and the conditions under which they lived were so perfectly suited for romanticism that this movement swept the Spanish-speaking countries. Characteristics of the romantic element in literature include individualism, emotional intensity, liberalism, freedom of expression, and the exaltation of nature as a source of poetic inspiration. Romanticism reached Mexico from France and Spain in the 1820's and in the next thirty years spread to South America, where its influence was profound. Favorite subjects of the romantic writers were adventures of native heroes, wars, patriotism, nature, and love (18, pp. 45-46). The names of José Roa Bárcena, Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza, Juan de Dios Peza, Manuel Acuña, and Manuel Flores may be included in a list of Mexican romanticists in Latin America.

### The Modernists

Modernism began in the 1880's as a reaction against romanticism and also against the realism that was in vogue at the end of the nineteenth century. The characteristics of this new movement included language refinements, pessimism, a spirit of rebelliousness, love of beauty, a revival of old verse forms and free use of new ones, formalism, obsession with the subject of death, and the exaltation of the individual, resulting in a subjective approach to literature (18, p. 79).

Modernism covers two periods: the first, the period of the direct, though belated, influence of French romanticism--and also Parnassianism--to which Gutiérrez Nájera and several of the poets of the Azure Review belong; and, second, the culmination of the movement--under the influence of French symbolism--represented by Neruo in his early work and by the poets of the Modern Review (15, pp. 289-290).

The leader of the modernist movement in Mexico was Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, whose work is significant because it best represents the transition that occurred between romanticism and modernism (18, p. 90). Nájera began his career as a journalist, founding the first modernist journal in Mexico, the Revista azul, and writing sometimes under the pseudonym "El Duque Job." Hespelt proposes that this name is suggestive of Nájera's temperament as an aristocratic sufferer (18, p. 90). In his poetry Nájera reveals an elegance of style, a great imagination, a graceful sense of humor, and a spirit of restlessness that characterizes his time (15, p. 292). His

popular poems include "Para entonces," "Pax animae," "Non omnis moriar," and "La Duquesa Job."

Nájera's prose works are the author's impressions of the theater, literary and social criticism, travel notes, bits of humor, chronicles, fantasies, and brief stories assembled under the titles Cuentos frágiles and Cuentos color de humo (15, p. 292). In the field of journalism Nájera created a powerful new genre, the chronicle. To the short story he gave a new twist.

. . . the humorist, now frivolous, now bitter, and the poet, inwardly mournful, roam through the fields of reality and fantasy, sometimes rising to planes of transcendental meditation, as in Rip-Rip and the History of a Counterfeit Peso, the major successes of Gutiérrez Nájera in this genre (15, p. 293).

Flores states that Gutiérrez Nájera is unequivocally the greatest Mexican modernist poet.

. . . ésto lo afirma en tres características de su expresión estética: en el elemento sensitivo que el arte literario moderno trajo con el Romanticismo; en la viveza de sentimientos al expresar las sensaciones en sus cantos, y en la armonía musical de sus poesías, acento que en Nájera llegó a lo más refinado, hasta hacer conmovier al lector en sus más delicadas fibras de su sensibilidad (11, p. 165).

Three other major modernistic poets followed Nájera in the years between 1880 and the Revolution of 1910. Salvador Díaz Mirón, a poet of somewhat less popularity than his predecessor, strove for originality and perfection in his verses. His turbulent life was spent as a journalist, a member of congress, a parliamentary orator, a prisoner, a staunch enemy of the Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz, an

aristocratic recluse, an exile, and a reformer. His most popular poems are "A Gloria," from his early romantic period, and also "El fantasma." Later on, longing for perfection of expression, he determined to develop a new, harmonious technique. This new technique resulted in Lascas, a book of poetry which the author proclaimed his "only book" (15, p. 294).

In what can be considered his definitive manner--a style he used until his death--it is thought that Díaz Mirón lost in spontaneity, in communicative and direct emotion, whatever he gained in marvelous plastic and rhythmic richness through increased knowledge . . . . Thus, while he was ascending toward the dreamed-of goal, more and more he was withdrawing from the multitude who were intoxicated with the music of his early poems. And he who had begun as a popular poet was in danger of converting himself into a poet of the decaying aristocracy (15, p. 294).

Amado Nervo, founder of the Revista moderna and writer of novels, essays, literary criticism, chronicles, articles, short stories, and poems, is best known for his modernistic poems. His poetic work may be divided into three groups. The first, inspired by French symbolism, tender, elegant, and full of internal conflicts, is represented by Perlas negras, Poemas, El éxodo y las flores del camino, Lira heroica, and Los jardines interiores. En voz baja and Serenidad fall into the second group, which is simple but serious and intuitive. The third group, represented by Elevación, Plenitud, El estanque de los lotos, La amada inmóvil, and El arquero divino, reveal the author's feelings of pain and renunciation, resignation and asceticism (11, pp. 178-179).

La musicalidad de la palabra, el color y el timbre de los sentimientos, categorías poéticas del modernismo, se esfumaron de su poesía, a medida que se fue despojando de las excelencias formales, hasta realizar sus emociones íntimas, preocupaciones trascendentales, en un estilo precario de valores sonoros; sencillo hasta confinar con lo trivial de un estado poético.

Una filosofía triste, impregnada de sensaciones piadosas, sentimientos ascéticos, y vaguedades eróticas, que confinan con la naturaleza religiosa, satura su poesía, desnuda en su forma y en su fondo, de las características modernistas, aunque su numen partiera en las búsquedas renovadoras hispanoamericanas (35, pp. 93-94).

Enrique González Martínez practiced medicine, taught, served as minister to Spain and Argentina, and became the last great poet of the modernist movement in Mexico. Perhaps he could be more aptly labeled postmodernist because he advocated the more sincere and meaningful kind of poetry which was written during the contemporary period. He scorned the cold, artificial poetry of the true modernists, who placed too much emphasis on form and beauty. In 1911 he expressed this contempt in his famous sonnet "Tuércele el cuello al cisne," decrying "art for art's sake" (18, p. 119).

González Martínez published two books of memoirs in prose and various volumes of poetry which include "Mañana los poetas . . .," "Como hermana y hermano," "Busca en todas las cosas," "Viento sagrado," and "Casa con dos puertas." "Both his life and works are marked by an innate serenity. His poetry is serious, sensitive, terse, sometimes ironic, always carefully wrought" (18, p. 106).

Because González Martínez was both the last modernist and the first to react against modernism, and also "because



of his attention to the new directions in poetry, he was considered the patriarch of modern Mexican poetry . . ." (15, p. 415).

#### The Novelists of the Mexican Revolution

The year 1910 marks the end of the period of "Porfirian peace," a thirty-year cycle of enforced peace under the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz.

It was against this dictatorship that Francisco I. Madero and other liberals and intellectuals led the Revolution of 1910. Among the many revolutions Mexico underwent, this is known as the Revolution. It began when the rest of the world was at peace; it ended and consolidated its triumphs while other revolutions, in effect or in the making, were changing the face of history. Not even those who set it in motion and carried it out understood it fully.

When the forces of reaction had been defeated, the struggle began between conflicting ideologies, between the ambitions of the various revolutionary leaders. It cost most of them their lives--Madero, Carranza, Obregón, Zapata, Pancho Villa. The entire country, all social classes, participated in it willy-nilly. The intellectuals who did not flee the country were, almost without exception, on the side of the popular leaders, Zapata or Pancho Villa, with the result that they discovered Mexico (1, p. vi).

Most of the writers who were forced from their homes and who discovered their own country for the first time were novelists. These men produced a fine, new body of literature that was truly Mexican in style, in feeling, and in language. Three of the outstanding novelists of this period include Mariano Azuela, Martín Luis Guzmán, and Gregorio López y Fuentes. "Azuela inauguró la etapa de la novela de la revolución; Martín Luis Guzmán, la tendencia política. En El

indio, Gregorio López (y) Fuentes crea la categoría indiana" (35, p. 154).

Mariano Azuela was born in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, on January 1, 1873. The first of nine children, this man was to become the father of the Mexican revolutionary novel. As a young man Azuela was influenced by the adventure stories and regional folk tales told by his grandfather and a family servant and also by the ideas of the scholar of Lagos, Father Agustín Rivera, who later became the subject of a biography written by his student Azuela (27, p. 1).

Azuela left Lagos for Guadalajara, where he first studied religion and later entered medical school. From that point in his life he had two loves, medicine and the novel. When he was in the third year of medical school he published his first stories, Impresiones de un estudiante, which revealed his sympathy for the victims of society (27, pp. 1-2).

After graduation from medical school Azuela returned to Lagos, set up practice, married the niece of Father Rivera, and began to write more stories and novels. In 1903 he was awarded a prize from a local literary group that he had helped to form for a story entitled "De mi tierra." His next novel, five years later, was Los fracasados, in which he criticizes the social institutions of a town typical of the Díaz period (27, p. 2).

In 1908, when Francisco I. Madero published his book La sucesión presidencial en 1910, Azuela recognized a kindred soul who truly wanted social reforms and justice for the oppressed. Azuela then entered politics by forming an anti-Díaz group in Lagos. In 1911, when the Madero Revolution triumphed, Don Mariano was named jefe político of Lagos. However, he renounced his first and only political post in a few weeks because he realized that the Revolution was doomed to failure, foreseeing that the appointment of the new governor of Jalisco was a step toward undermining all the work that Madero had tried to accomplish. This conflict that Azuela felt can be seen in his Andrés Pérez, maderista, which is considered the first novel of the Revolution. Here the author is indignant because of the way the Revolution is being used by opportunists for their own selfish ends.

Madero was assassinated in 1913, and General Victoriano Huerta came into power, advocating a return of the pre-Madero government. When Carranza, Obregón, Zapata, and Villa rose against the Huerta administration, Azuela joined the revolutionaries, serving as a doctor in Villa's army under General Julián Medina. By this time the Huerta government had fallen, and Carranza and Villa were fighting each other. During the period in which the Villa government was in power, Azuela held the position of Director of Public Education of Jalisco (27, pp. 2-3).

When the carrancistas took Guadalajara, Azuela was forced to flee north with Villa's troops. It was on this retreat through Jalisco to Aguascalientes that Azuela conceived the idea for Los de abajo, the finest novel of the Mexican Revolution. The ragged group was forced farther north to Chihuahua and then to Ciudad Juárez. Finally, in October of 1915, Azuela found himself in El Paso, arriving with only the clothes he wore, but with something of much greater value stuffed inside his shirt. He had protected his unfinished manuscript of Los de abajo during the retreat. The editor of the local newspaper, El Paso del Norte, was so impressed with Azuela's preliminary sketch that he ran the story in serial form from October to November (27, pp. 3-4).

The carrancistas finally took Ciudad Juárez, but Azuela slipped back into Mexico during the confusion and took up residence with his family in Mexico City, where he retired from politics and set up his medical practice in a slum area of the city. There he spent the rest of his life serving the poor, treating those who could never pay him, and continuing to write novels about the "underdog" (27, pp. 4-5).

Azuela wrote because he was strongly moved by suffering and injustice; he was not a professional writer. His novels and short stories portray the shifting political and social scene in Mexico over a period of fifty years. His work is emotional, filled with human drama; he cares what happens to mankind (27, p. 5).

Unrealistic novels had been very popular at the beginning of the Revolution. Azuela was impatient with the sentimental writers of the upper class because he had had a harsh experience with reality. He had personally struggled with the revolutionaries and had lived every page that he wrote. He was profoundly moved by suffering and injustice and because of this fact could not be called an objective writer. He shouted in protest against those who were responsible for the weaknesses of his country and analyzed social conflict in the themes of his novels (27, pp. 5-6).

Azuela did not concern himself with character or plot development in his novels. His main interest was in relaying his message to the reader.

Always he makes clear the role of the character within the circumstance. And circumstance is really the basis of his novel. Apparently Azuela saw a set of general conditions first, then placed his characters and moved them to show what he saw (5, p. 168).

The events in Azuela's novels seem to unroll, one after the other, without a plan, and the unrolling becomes the story. His style is new and beautifully suited to describing the Revolution, which also seemed to unroll without a plan (27, p. 6).

Azuela's works may be divided into three main groups, the pre-revolutionary novels, the revolutionary novels, and the novels of the social revolution. The pre-revolutionary novels include Impresiones de un estudiante, María Luisa, Los fracasados, and Mala yerba. The latter two are outstanding

as pre-revolutionary novels. Los fracasados is a satire against the church, the upper classes, unscrupulous politicians, and the hacendado system. The protagonist, who has come to a small town to escape the complications of city life, finds that the town is held tightly in the clutches of the Catholic Church and the corrupt officials who tread on the poor. Mala yerba is a fiery, emotional protest of rural injustice, picturing the oppression of the poor by wealthy landowners and a Mexico that cried aloud for revolution. Mala yerba is the most revolutionary work of this period, presenting the various injustices that gave rise to the Revolution: the total demoralization of the hacendado system, the complete domination of the Church, the oppression of the caciques or bosses, and a corrupt government that did not care what happened to the Mexican people (27, p. 10).

The first novel of the Mexican Revolution, Andrés Pérez, maderista, describes the beginnings of the Revolution and the division of the people into two groups, the idealists and the opportunists. The opportunists triumph. The book becomes the expression of the Revolution's failure; the Revolution has ideals but the revolutionaries do not (27, pp. 16-18).

Other works in this period include Sin amor, Los caciques, Las moscas, Domitilio quiere ser diputado, and Las tribulaciones de una familia decente; however, that which is most truly representative of the Mexican Revolution is Azuela's masterpiece, Los de abajo. It is the epic of the Mexican

revolutionary soldier, a picture of the Revolution itself, of the people who participated in it, of those who were swept into it by the force of the movement, and of the society that obstructed it (27, p. 20).

The protagonist, Demetrio Macías, was inspired by Azuela's friend and revolutionary leader, General Julián Medina. Macías is not a true hero but rather a humble Indian who is not really fighting for any high ideals. He is simply fighting to live. The federales have burned his hut and are searching for him for being a revolutionary. In reality he is no more a revolutionary than Azuela himself, who was also caught up in the fight.

Several of Azuela's characters explain why they are in the thick of the Revolution. Alberto Solís, disgusted with opportunism and inhumanity and disillusioned with the Revolution, states: "You ask me why I am still a rebel? Well, the revolution is like a hurricane: if you're in it, you're not a man. . . you're a leaf, a dead leaf, blown by the wind" (1, p. 73). The men are carried along as if by a whirlwind or by the force of gravity. Demetrio cannot find words to explain his own participation in the fighting. When asked by his wife why he remains in the conflict, he is hard-pressed to find an analogy that will express his feelings to her. Finally, he frowns, picks up a stone, throws it to the bottom of the canyon, and remarks: "Look at that stone; how it keeps on going . . ." (1, p. 147).

The Mexican peons found themselves suddenly set free to fight against oppression, and the Revolution became the outlet for expressing emotions that had been simmering for centuries. These men fought blindly, unhampered by the ideals that the leaders of the Revolution tried to impose on them.

In 1924 a literary feud involving criticism of literary excellence in Mexico sparked the rediscovery of Los de abajo and its author. The novel was translated into the major languages of the world and was republished in Mexico. Finally Azuela was given the acclaim he deserved. Leal, in his biography of Azuela, sums up the importance of the novel. "Leyendo Los de abajo conocemos a México: sus hombres, su paisaje, sus problemas, sus aspiraciones, sus defectos" (23, p. 49).

In his novels of the post-revolutionary period Azuela discusses the corruption of the government, social problems concerning education and public welfare, and the breaking up of the revolutionary forces. He pictures the ideal society and lets his need to moralize dominate his works. The novels of the social revolution include La Malhora, El desquite, La luciérnaga, El camarada Pantoja, San Gabriel de Valdivias, Regina Landa, Avanzada, Nueva burguesía, La marchanta, La mujer domada, Sendas perdidas, La maldición, and Esa sangre, the latter two being published after the author's death.

Azuela began a style of realistic writing that was purely Mexican. Throwing himself into the Revolution with enthusiasm, he soon found himself revolted by the contrast between his



vision of peace and the brutality of the actual war. Azuela became the literary historian of the Revolution, portraying reality with dialogue from human life. Azuela's comments on the Revolution, as seen in his novels, give a sweeping picture of the causes, the progress, and the social and political results of that great upheaval (27, pp. 86-90).

Martín Luis Guzmán, born in Chihuahua in 1887, is considered by González Peña to be the greatest writer produced by the Revolution (15, p. 376). Guzmán was a journalist with the northern revolutionary forces, a student of law, an essayist, and a novelist.

Guzmán became famous for three revolutionary novels: El águila y la serpiente; La sombra del caudillo, a criticism of the Calles regime; and Las memorias de Pancho Villa. The latter is a four-volume historical chronicle which lacks objectivity because the author is very much in sympathy with his hero, Pancho Villa. Villa becomes the ultimate in machismo, and his deeds and speech are recorded in a very animated and colorful manner (34, p. 251).

El águila y la serpiente, which covers the Revolution during the years 1913 to 1915, is a personal narration of two years of bitterness and disillusionment. Villa, with a compelling and almost hypnotic air, becomes the model for the Revolution. Literary critics have generally agreed that El águila y la serpiente is not really a novel but rather "literary reporting" (5, p. 200). Vela describes the book as being

neither novel, nor story, nor biographical novel, nor historical diary, but rather a hybrid form, characteristic of the social change that was taking place (35, p. 151).

Guzmán's style is effective, functional, and forceful.

El estilo de Martín Luis Guzmán representa la realidad sin los módulos fijados por los conceptos clásico o romántico de la novela. Un estilo afín a la forma que científicamente debe denominarse barroca, por la confluencia de principios en pugna, convergentes y polarizados en lo individual y lo social.

El estilo determinado por la Revolución conserva los elementos tradicionales desde Lizardi: la caracterización de los tipos físico y psíquico en unos cuantos rasgos. Procedimiento que se diferencia del modo impresionista: naturalismo en disolución a pequeños toques sentimentales, en su manera de realizar el sujeto, a grandes trazos psicológicos y vastas tintas planas; y en la capacidad de síntesis para conjugar los factores en trance (35, p. 151).

The characters in El águila y la serpiente live because they were so much alive to Guzmán, so much a part of his life.

Pintó Guzmán episodios que había vivido, líderes a quienes había conocido. En su chispeante prosa vemos la complejidad de la Revolución, acaso mejor simbolizada en la contradictoria figura de Pancho Villa, cuya sombra preside algunas de las mejores páginas de Guzmán. Aunque sus obras no sean novelas en el sentido tradicional, la voluntad estilística del autor y su examen de hechos trascendentales para la historia de México han creado libros de lectura apasionada y han influido extensamente en la novela mexicana posterior (22, p. 399).

El águila y la serpiente is considered by many to be the most faithful chronicle of the events of the Revolution (35, p. 151).

José Rubén Romero was a very special and unusual person, being neither a university scholar nor a professional writer. Born in the beautiful state of Michoacán, Romero, a direct contrast to the landscape, was physically ugly, dark, squatty,

and scarred with smallpox. An early lover of verse, he was already writing poems to the sea at the age of twelve. Romero, a mestizo of Tarascan descent, was a man of many facets. He possessed the quality of being able to captivate people by the force of his personality and his great sympathy for everyone.

During the Revolution Romero moved from the village of his birth to Pátzcuaro, where he worked in a notary public's office, became embittered by the hypocrisy of society, published a newspaper at his own expense, and continued writing verse. Later he became secretary to the governor of Michoacán and ambassador to Spain.

While in Madrid Romero wrote a novel of thesis entitled Mi caballo, mi perro, y mi rifle, in which he tries to present the essence of the Revolution. The horse, symbol of the counter-Revolution, represents the enemies of the Revolution. The dog, faithful friend to man, is the symbol of the ignorant masses, the anonymous majority. The rifle is the destructive, evil part of the Revolution--the blood, stealing, and killing. The rifle falls, discharges, and kills the dog; evil triumphs. The story is written in beautiful and simple language, in a natural style that is typical of the other works of Romero.

Romero's other works include El pueblo inocente, Apuntes de un lugareño, Desbandada, Una vez fue rico, Rosenda, Anticipación a la muerte, and the story for which he is best known, La vida inútil de Pito Pérez. In this picaresque novel Romero again pictures scenes of his native Michoacán. Popular

philosophy is put into the mouth of Pito Pérez, a charming rogue who relates his life story in six conversations with the author, who pays for each session with a bottle of aguardiente. Pito himself calls these chats "Diálogo entre un poeta y un loco" (29, p. 15).

Pito is the brother of his predecessors, Guzmán de Alfarache, Lazarillo de Tormes, el Buscón, and later of Lizardi's Periquillo, but Pito is a different kind of pícaro. He is kind; he loves his fellow-man; he is not so cynical; he is funny and human. He is within his soul a representative Mexican spirit. Observing the Revolution at first hand, he has realized that nothing has really changed much. The much longed for changes are yet to come. Pito makes many observations about the degenerate society that is the plague of the nation. He denounces despots and mistrusts people in positions of authority. He ridicules all government officials as being fools and expresses great sympathy for the poor people who suffer injustice at the hands of these corrupt dispensers of the law. In Pito is seen a delightful mixture of wit and grace, arrogance and humor, cynicism and love.

No one is safe from the attack of Pito's sharp tongue. From the government officials to the men of the church, no one is honest or truthful. Hypocrisy seems to be the rule, rather than the exception. Pito has learned that a monk's robe may hide immorality, that a pharmacist dilutes his prescriptions to make a larger profit, that hospitals allow their patients

to die of neglect. He knows that the poor are always punished while the rich commit worse crimes and remain unpunished.

Romero makes the reader feel sympathetic to Pito and his needs, which no one tries to fill. Society rejects him because he is different from everyone else. Romero knows how to make of a character like Pito a study in Mexican psychology, revealing the many facets of the Mexican mind.

Gregorio López y Fuentes, the youngest of the revolutionary novelists, was born on a small ranch in a jungle near the coast of Veracruz. He received his early schooling by riding into town with muleteers on Sunday afternoon, attending classes during the week, and returning home on Friday afternoon. During these biweekly trips the young man became familiar with the language and customs of the mule drivers, information which was later to serve him in his novel Los arrieros.

Influenced strongly by nature, López y Fuentes began his literary career as a poet. His first book of verse, La siringa de cristal, served as a stepping-stone to the poetic novels that followed.

Campamento, his first novel of the Revolution, is the account of eight days in an encampment of revolutionary soldiers. There is no action but rather a dramatization of men waiting. The novel is more like a collection of stories, each one complete in itself, of the diverse protagonists.

Mi general is highly instructive in providing insight into revolutionary types. It is the story of a pig-slaughterer who picks up his knife, joins the Revolution, and becomes a general. Arriving at the city he receives no attention from the local newspapermen. He is finally accorded a notice in the newspaper after he creates a disturbance in a saloon and is carried off to jail.

In 1935 López y Fuentes, journalist, poet, teacher of Indians, and novelist, received the first prize in literature in Mexico for El indio, a short novela de tesis (18, p. 148). This beautiful costumbrista novel presents a truthful picture of the problems which the Mexican Indians faced upon becoming civilized. The theme of the novel is the almost total lack of understanding between two culturally different races.

The Indians live in a remote village and have little contact with the outside world. The white men see the ignorant Indians as merely a possible source of exploitation. The fifth chapter of the novel is an examination of how the whites feel about the Indians. The town secretary says that Indians are unruly people, loafers, drunkards, and thieves. The municipal president says they are a race of inferiors and should be exterminated. The schoolmaster says the Indian problem can be settled by building schools to abolish the language and tradition barrier.

When the Indians finally leave the village the whites are forced to come to terms with them. The citizens of the town

need domestic servants, the hacienda owners need workers for the sugar mills, the traders need customers, and the people of the other rancherías need help with the road repair.

López y Fuentes describes the reforms that the Revolution introduced, reforms that are not made to help the Indians. First, the new deputy for the district arrives and says he plans to bring progress to the ranchería by building a road and a school. Therefore, the Indians will contribute two days work per week on the road and cease giving domestic service in town or working on the haciendas. Then the priest comes to tell the people to build a church because an epidemic has been sent to punish them for their impiety. Now they work two days on the road and two days on the church and have no time left for work on their crops. The road does not lead to their ranchería so they never derive any benefit from it. When a teacher is sent to the new school, he is unable to teach the Indians because he does not know their language. The entire story seems to be saying that the Indian always finds himself defrauded by the white man.

In El indio there is no protagonist, or rather, the whole tribe is the protagonist. Not a single character is named, nor is the reader ever told where the action of the story takes place. Nevertheless, the reality of what López y Fuentes has to say is very convincing.

### The Twentieth Century Poets

Contemporary Mexican poetry begins with Ramón López Velarde, born in 1888. The valuable work that he accomplished during his thirty-three years of life was inspired by his country and revealed the great feeling that he had for Mexico (15, p. 415).

López Velarde identifica a la patria con la tierra, sólo por su sabor salobre: no porque el hombre sea un producto del humus agrícola, en los tiempos feudales. La deslinda del razonamiento, no porque el hombre racionalista se origine de las actividades industriales y comerciales, sino porque la presiente en la idea, hacia adentro, en el fondo de su pensamiento.

De esta transferencia de los fenómenos, surge su poema "Suave Patria," la primera expresión política de categoría en nuestros anales literarios (35, p. 119).

"Suave Patria," López Velarde's best known and most appreciated poem, was written on the anniversary of the consummation of independence (19, p. 294). This nationalistic poem, written within the year of his death,

. . . muestra la transmutación de la experiencia personal del poeta en una experiencia nacional. Su doctrina es el retorno a los orígenes, que nos presenta revestidos con todas las galas con que la imaginación de López Velarde sentía a México (25, p. 22).

This lawyer, judge, journalist, and teacher of literature felt the tragic harshness of reality when beholding the devastation in which the Revolution had left the country. The intensity of his feelings is best expressed in his lyric poems, bringing to them a provincial nostalgia. Because he had written about provincial recollections and a youthful nostalgia, he was misunderstood and unappreciated for many years. He was considered a simple poet (8, pp. 139-140).



No Spanish American poet has surpassed Ramón López Velarde in the intimate fusion of local or everyday themes with the current forms of the spoken language. We discover in his poetry the simplicity and mellowness of Mexican speech, its typical flavor, the inflection of its voice, and the authentic revelation of its environment: its provincial atmosphere, with its naïve customs and its romanticism; the humble devotion of its women, the odor of candle wax and incense, the dress of percale, the flowerpot on the window sill; the virile aspect of the rustic, the childlike fiesta in the village square. López Velarde's Mexicanism, both within and without, is thoroughly convincing; and, therefore, Mexico's young poets have seen in him, and not in Gutiérrez Nájera, Amado Nervo, or González Martínez, the most genuine representative of their poetic nationalism (32, p. 190).

Alfonso Reyes (1889-1959) is known as a humanist, essayist, lyric poet, writer of memoirs, traveler, critic, and translator. He is aptly described by González Peña as a "perfect model of humanism," a "penetrating, shrewd critic," "an original storyteller," and "a poet . . . of sharp sensibility" (15, p. 368).

This cultured intellectual produced Huellas, his first book of poetry; a dramatic poem entitled Ifigenia cruel; and Visión de Anáhuac, an interpretation of Mexico as the conquistadors saw it (34, p. 235). Poetry and prose were almost inseparable in his work. Short stories and essays were as poetic as his poems, all of which were highly creative and extremely personal.

Por la aguda y pródiga belleza de su estilo, por el dominio magistral que tiene sobre todos los matices de las letras y por la profundidad y originalidad de sus estudios--especialmente en el campo de la teoría literaria--, Alfonso Reyes es una de nuestras personalidades intelectuales más distinguidas y uno de los escritores que más honran la cultura mexicana (25, p. 9).

Carlos Pellicer (1899), a member of the group of writers called "Los contemporáneos," represents the lyrical antithesis of López Velarde, writing instinctive, impressionistic poetry filled with music and color (35, p. 124). His poetic works include Recinto, Subordinaciones, Sonetos, Colores en el mar y otros poemas, Piedra de sacrificios, Horas de junio, Hora y veinte, Camino, and Seis, siete poemas.

This native of Tabasco knows as his home the tropics, the sea, and the forest and brings to his poetry a profound love of nature. He is first a poet of landscapes and American themes, later a poet of love and desolation, and finally a poet of sacred themes, revealing his deep piety in his book Práctica de vuelo. His complete works were published by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México under the title of Material poético 1918-1961. His more recent works include Con palabras y fuego and Teotihuacán, y 13 de agosto: ruina de Tenochtitlán.

Octavio Paz (1914) is a surrealist poet whose works include the following: Bajo tu clara sombra, Semillas para un himno, Raíz del hombre, Entre la piedra y la flor, A la orilla del mundo, and Libertad bajo palabra. His themes in these volumes are "la conciencia de la soledad, la existencia desgarrada y desolada, el amor como lo más fundamental" (8, p. 173).

The prose work for which Paz has become most famous is El laberinto de la soledad, a volume which investigates the

Mexican personality. This work is of capital importance to the study of Mexican culture (8, p. 174). The book "is an attempt to explain the character and personality of man in Mexico . . ." (15, p. 423).

Other works by Paz include El arco y la lira (1956), a book on aesthetics and on the poetry of the author; Las peras del olmo (1957), containing essays on Mexican poetry and on other subjects; Cuadrivio (1965), a study of López Velarde and other writers; and Puertas al campo (1966), containing essays on literature and art (15, p. 423).

In 1963 Paz was awarded a grand prize in poetry at an international meeting of poets in Belgium. His works, attaining international renown, have been translated into many languages.

In 1918 Juan José Arreola became the fourth of a family of fourteen children. Unable to attend school because of the family financial situation, he sought employment as a laborer, a journalist, and later a member of a publishing house. Arreola edited the reviews Eros and Pan. In Mexico City and in France he studied theater and became an actor. He attained popularity as a short-story writer with "Hizo el bien mientras vivió," one of the most perfect and skillful Mexican costumbrista pieces (15, p. 447). Other works of this contemporary prosist-poet include two collections of stories, Varia invención and Confabulario; a novel, La feria; and various poems.

In Arreola, who concentrates on the sexual, the ethical, and the aesthetic, one sees in varying degrees the interplay of moralism, universalism, and magic realism. He fancies himself a modern day moralist who is concerned with social justice, and he is not reluctant to expose the evils of Occidental materialism. More importantly, he carries on the tradition of fantasy in Mexican fiction established by Alfonso Reyes (an intimate friend) and others. Arreola stresses throughout the importance of formal beauty and his preoccupation with literary structures. In these he has tried to combine letters, diaries, commercials, biography, and the medieval fable (30, p. 293).

### The Twentieth Century Dramatists

During the twentieth century Mexican playwrights like José F. Elizondo, Julio Jiménez Rueda, Francisco Monterde, and Carlos Solórzano show a unanimous nationalistic tendency in their dramatic production.

El teatro contemporáneo ha venido desenvolviéndose notablemente; en poco más de 20 años se ha acrecentado y superado la actividad de los dramaturgos, y el valor de sus obras adquiere perfiles universales. Además de la evolución de las técnicas escénicas, la temática se ha vuelto más sincera y profunda ocupando el primer plano de atención la presentación de los problemas humanos con un realismo impresionante y algunos autores presentan escenas audaces y utilizan un lenguaje hiriente; aun así, el teatro mexicano adquiere su propia fisonomía y abundan en él autores de gran calidad artística. Entre los más recientes cultivadores de la dramática se advierte un gran espíritu creativo y el abandono de los efectos dramáticos en diálogo y escena para ofrecer al público páginas de vida expuestas con sinceridad y valentía (19, p. 302).

The most important contemporary dramatist is Rodolfo Usigli, born in Mexico City in 1905 of an Italian father and a Polish mother. Usigli has been considered to be a historian, critic, and dramatist whose works are characterized by "strength and delicacy, refinement and originality, a penetrating spirit of close observation," and "a peculiarly

ardent manner which is purposely concealed by cold objectivity and biting irony" (15, p. 404).

His ingenious and highly original plays include El apóstol, Estado es secreto, Medio tono, La mujer no hace milagros, La familia cena en casa, and El niño y la niebla. He also wrote a psychological novel called Ensayo de un crimen and expressed his concepts of the theater in México en el teatro.

Two of Usigli's dramas, El Gesticulador and Corona de sombra, have achieved great popularity in Mexico. In the former play the protagonist, César Rubio, becomes a symbol of the complex Mexican who wears a mask of greatness which is not really his and who comes to believe in the role he plays. The drama is a political satire which illustrates the thesis of Mexicanism (34, pp. 265-267).

Corona de sombra (1943) is the sadly beautiful and tragic story of Carlota and Maximiliano. Usigli's is an exceptionally fine rendering of a much-worked theme.

. . . Concebida en un escenario doble, atendido alternativamente, y articulada por el hilo de la rememoración, la obra de Usigli recrea los hechos conocidos y adivina sus entretelas psicológicas con maestría dramática. La sobriedad de sus materiales históricos, el intachable tratamiento escénico, la densidad y viveza de su lenguaje, enriquecido con penetrantes atisbos sobre lo mexicano, el ventajoso aprovechamiento de una alegoría persistente, que cruza y enlaza toda la pieza, y el empleo de la original técnica dramática, todo se suma para hacer de Corona de sombra una de las contadas obras de primera categoría que posee nuestro teatro (25, p. 39).

Howland Bustamante affirms the opinion of other literary critics in the following statement of Usigli's importance as a dramatist. "La más importante figura del teatro mexicano contemporáneo es, sin discusión, Rodolfo Usigli, autor dramático y escritor" (19, p. 302). Bernard Shaw, upon reading his copy of Corona de sombra, wrote to Usigli saying: "If you ever need an Irish certificate of vocation as a dramatic poet I will sign it . . . . Mexico can starve you; but it cannot deny your genius" (33, p. 245).

#### The New Mexican Novelists

The historical, documental novel of the Mexican Revolution served as the antecedent and point of departure for the contemporary novel as it now exists. This new cycle was begun by Agustín Yáñez in 1947, with the publication of Al filo del agua (15, p. 431).

The new Mexican novelists have preoccupied themselves, perhaps more than did those of other countries, with a search for their identity and their place in the world. They have kept seeking the universal aspects in Mexican life to determine what is lo mexicano, and who may call himself Mexican . . . . Mexicans, suffering from a series of repressive regimes, believed they were not the masters of their own destiny. The younger generations wanted to be independent agents for historical change, but as Carlos Fuentes, an outstanding representative of the contemporary novelists, explains, Mexico will have to find itself in the three temporal perspectives of past, present, and future, for to live as part of the future it will be necessary to understand both the past and the present. The new novelists, then, seek new techniques for communication with their fellow Mexicans and new ways for themselves and their compatriots to manage their individual freedom and destiny (30, pp. 279-280).

A native of Guadalajara, Agustín Yáñez was the precursor and founding father of the new novelists in Mexico. Humanist, lawyer, university professor, politician, researcher, poet, essayist, journalist, and novelist, Yáñez has served also as the director of public education in Nayarit, governor of the state of Jalisco, delegate to the United Nations, and minister of education of the country.

In his many novels and essays Yáñez attempts to explain "what it means to be a Mexican and to analyze lo mexicano . . ." (30, p. 280). Al filo del agua, Yáñez's most outstanding novel, is the psychological study of a whole town (27, p. 277). In this typical village of Jalisco, love and religion become the two forces that determine the future of the town's inhabitants.

. . . Yáñez uses counterpoint, interior monologues of various types, stream of consciousness, temporal jumps and juxtapositions, and combinations of the local and the universal, of allegory and a religious symbolism interwoven into the very fabric of the novel's structure. An outstanding example of his use of symbolism involves light and darkness. The gas lantern which the town acquires sheds light and progress on the night-shrouded world, and the approaching light of the Mexican Revolution, Mexico's own Halley's comet, may yet outshine the altar candles.

Al filo del agua is not a traditional social novel, although it contains many social and political elements, especially in the later chapters. More important is the psychological and physical setting, . . . as Yáñez explores the significance of the revolution on a psychological level . . . . The characters fear, hope, desire, and fail, and Yáñez explores their madness, frustrations, and death in a beautifully poetic way . . . . The title, which means "on the edge of the storm," or the beginning of some event about to start, shows us the frustration and despair on the eve of the revolution. The implication is that the revolution brings a new justice

and hope for the pueblo, even though Yáñez was aware of its failures. Lucas Macías, a kind of prophet in the novel, sees the new light in the form of Halley's comet and the rise of Madero as events which will sweep away the centuries-old oppressive atmosphere, for a good part of which the Church was responsible. He warns the priest, and through him the Church, that Mexico is in the path of a storm and that the first hailstones will hit the Church . . . (30, p. 281).

This is a town of sexually frustrated people; of mujeres enlutadas; of ignorant and superstitious, fear and guilt-ridden citizens, oppressed by four centuries of Catholic domination (14, p. 328).

. . . Yáñez descubre en estas prácticas y ritos religiosos, en esta espesa atmósfera de incienso y beatería, en estos personajes tétricos, ascéticos, torturados por las tentaciones y el terror del infierno, y en estas vidas humildes, trucas, solicitadas por los apetitos de la carne y por el temor al castigo, un tema de arte y materia de novela. El autor saca el asunto del plano de las pasiones y de la lucha de católicos y anticatólicos en que lo han colocado los escritores mexicanos desde los días de José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, para contemplarlo con pura visión artística. Probablemente es ésta la primera vez que tal cosa ocurre en México con tan controvertido problema, y no es éste uno de los méritos menos sobresalientes de su libro (14, p. 329).

Uncommonly perceptive, Yáñez is the first Mexican novelist to analyze both his characters and their actions. His style is impeccable, noble, and brilliant; his themes are original and treated with mastery (19, p. 304).

Other novels include Genio y figuras de Guadalajara, a study of people representative of Guadalajara; Archipiélago de mujeres, Yáñez's first novel; Las tierras flacas, a study of peasant life and psychology in the poor highlands near Guadalajara; La tierra pródiga, the story of "tradition versus



progress in the fecund, hot lands of coastal Mexico" (30, p. 283); La creación, a work in which the author promotes his own "ideas on music, literature, artistic integrity, and the creative process . . ." (30, p. 283); and Ojerosa y pintada, a picture of Mexico City seen through the eyes of a taxi driver whose monologues give "a realistically sad portrait of the city, so pretty from one point of view and yet filled with sewage and excrement and with real circles under its eyes" (30, p. 283).

Essays of Yáñez, written between 1939 and 1944, include the following: Crónicas de la conquista; El Pensador Mexicano; Doctrina de Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, el conquistador conquistado; Mitos indígenas; and El contenido social de la literatura hispanoamericana.

Carlos Fuentes, lawyer, diplomat, political writer, essayist, short-story writer, and novelist, was born in 1928 in Mexico City. His first important novel, La región más transparente, was intended to be a complete picture of life in the capital. It actually includes a vivid description of Mexican history from 1910 to 1951, presenting

. . . a decadent society rotten to the core. The author shows us a variety of family relationships, the rise of the new middle class, and the destruction of older social entities along with many of the old myths and values. Fuentes finds that Mexicans have always wanted to copy customs which do not belong to them, disguise themselves from themselves, and lead an unauthentic life (30, p. 304).

Fuentes is sincerely concerned for his country and for its people who can neither live in the past nor make plans for the

future. Fuentes, like Azuela, bitterly opposes the exploitation of the masses, the betrayal of Mexico to the interests of foreign powers, and the loss of the ideals that the leaders of the Revolution professed.

Mexico is a spiritual wasteland in which people lead stagnant existences concerned only with material things, unimportant in the face of what should be the overriding concern of every Mexican, to find his own identity and salvation. Fuentes, then, hopes for a region where the air is clear, where men may love one another and be free (30, p. 305).

In 1962 Fuentes published La muerte de Artemio Cruz. The novel describes a middle-class man who, having come successfully through the Revolution, acquires a great fortune and power through unsavory means. The protagonist, Artemio Cruz, lies dying in a hospital and spends his final hours recalling the main events of his life. His marriage has been a complete failure; his son has died in the Spanish Civil War; his own life has been built on deception and violence.

Artemio Cruz represents the corrupt power bloc in charge of Mexico's present and future, the newly wealthy class formed in the chaos of revolution. Artemio, a typical caudillo and vestige of the past, frustrates the ideals of the present. In the revolution he had learned that personal survival is the supreme goal, but in his dialogues with his subconscious he shows himself to have been a man capable of love but driven by his obsession of material gain and survival. He is Mexico itself, a victim of his own decisions to follow false gods who lead him to solitude and isolation and a moral disintegration which destroys him . . . (30, p. 308).

Fuentes' other novels include Las buenas conciencias, Aura, Zona sagrada, and Cambio de piel. Two books of short stories are Cantar de ciegos and Los días enmascarados. The

latter is a collection of six stories through which the author reveals his great literary talent. In these stories Fuentes shows his concern over what Langford calls the "social reality" of the country (21, p. 130). Fuentes is preoccupied with trying to interpret the past and with seeking the Mexican identity. He believes in the mythological complex of the Mexicans, "in which they blend and confuse and transform legend and history," and he incorporates elements of it in many of his short stories and some of his novels (21, p. 130). In one of the best stories of Los días enmascarados, "Chac Mool," the Aztec god of rain, or chac, "comes to life and takes over the house and possessions of the person who bought the statue" (21, p. 130). Fuentes presents his version of the "magic realism" utilized so much by his contemporary, Juan Rulfo.

In 1969 Fuentes returned to Mexico from a self-imposed exile in Europe and almost immediately published six new works. The three essays include París: la revolución de mayo, La nueva novela hispanoamericana, and Casa con dos puertas. His new short novel which appeared in 1969 was called Cumpleaños; two plays, El tuerto es rey and Todos los gatos son pardos, complete the series.

Langford states that Fuentes apparently is the only Mexican writer who has attained the much sought goal of being able to make a living solely by his literary production. This achievement is made possible through his diversification, for Fuentes, in addition to his novels and short stories, has

written many essays, movie scripts, and articles. He also lectures and makes appearances on television and radio. Because of his fluency in other languages he is able to publish articles in American, British, French, and German magazines (21, p. 146).

Many of the characteristics of the works of other twentieth century writers are present in those of Fuentes. Like Azuela and others, Fuentes attacks the Mexican Revolution

. . . for its failure to pursue with fidelity and vigor the aims it professed to have, for its incapacity to oust the opportunists who grew rich and fat off the Revolution and drained it of much of its spirit of change (21, p. 147).

Fuentes, like Rulfo, does unusual things with time sequences and "probes the inner consciousness of characters" (21, p. 147). Rulfo perceives life as a mere prelude to death; Fuentes "gives meaning only to life and perceives death as its negation" (21, p. 147). Fuentes is as controversial as his works. He is free in his use of sex and vulgarity. The city is his favorite setting. Carlos Fuentes is a satirist, a crusader, a reformer, and a novelist capable of becoming the finest writer of Mexican fiction of this century (21, p. 147).

Juan Rulfo was born in 1918 in Sayula, Jalisco, a lowland town which is a depressed area of dying land and people. After having lost the family possessions during the Revolution, his father died when the boy was seven. His mother died a few years later, leaving Rulfo to enter the orphanage in Guadalajara. In 1933 he went to Mexico City, where he studied accounting and

law, held a job in the Mexican immigration service, worked for the Goodrich Rubber Company, tried his hand as a movie and television script writer, and began writing short stories. Rulfo has always been concerned with the Indian problem in Mexico and in 1962 began to work with the Instituto Nacional Indigenista to help the Indians become integrated into national life (30, pp. 289-90).

Rulfo wrote his first collection of short stories, El llano en llamas, when he was twenty-four. In these stories he describes the problems of the rural poor. However, " . . . Rulfo's stories are in no way costumbrista, because the author's reason for writing is not to show quaint customs, but to examine the actions of men" (5, p. 30).

The fate of his native land and its inhabitants has influenced Rulfo profoundly. He feels alone, shy, reticent, and humble.

His inwardness and reticence seem to be characteristics of the poor country people of southern Jalisco. . . . The desolation and abandonment and sadness of this region left a vivid and haunting impression on his mind. It is this . . . that provides the setting, the motivation, and the tone throughout Juan Rulfo's two published works (21, p. 91).

Rulfo achieved fame as a novelist with Pedro Páramo, a confusing story in which the characters are dead but continue to talk as if they were still alive. The novel begins with the quest of Juan Preciado for his father, Pedro Páramo. Páramo is a ruthless cacique who has ruled his village of Comala with a powerful and unmerciful hand. He owns land and

people but cannot possess the one thing that will give him peace and happiness. The love of Susana San Juan is the prize he covets above all else, but this is continually denied him as Susana slips into illness and insanity in order to escape.

The characters in this novel are all ánimas en pena, unable to rest, even in death. Langford states his belief that none of these characters is the true protagonist, but that the author intended death itself to be the protagonist (21, p. 99).

Pedro Páramo has been translated into seventeen languages and in 1966 was made into a movie, with screen adaptation by Carlos Fuentes. This novel is the last published work of Rulfo (21, p. 100).

In conclusion it may be stated that the new generation of novelists, dating from 1918 with the birth of both Rulfo and Arreola, are seeking in their works to explain the national character of the Mexican people.

. . . They build on the essays of Samuel Ramos and Octavio Paz, who analyze the feelings of inferiority and solitude which plague the nation. They attempted to psychoanalyze the Mexican, probe his feelings, examine his sexual adequacy, his ambivalence, and his almost manic-depressive states. The findings of the novelists are almost intuitive as they explore the "lie" of contemporary Mexican life, symptomatic of the hypocrisy one can find in all humanity (30, p. 289).

#### The Philosophers

Romanell states that ". . . the dominant preconception on which Hispano-American culture rests is the 'tragic' sense of life and, in contrast, that on which Anglo-American culture

rests is the 'epic' sense of life" (28, p. 21). He points out that ". . . while the epic soul struggles endlessly to conquer obstacles external to himself, the tragic soul has the more difficult job of conquering himself" (28, p. 22).

. . . As the hero in a tragic drama is torn between conflicting goods, so the typical Latin American is torn between the values and ideals of his pre-Conquest Indian heritage on the one side, and those of his European heritage on the other. It is precisely at the crossroads of these two inheritances that the roots of Latin-American culture converge and diverge. The tragic sense of life is what pervades the resulting dilemma, the dual character manifest in the mestizo temper of all its institutions (28, pp. 22-23).

North American thought has been geared toward problems of fact and knowledge while Latin American thought has been motivated by problems of conduct, reflecting a tragic sense of life.

The typical pensador below the Rio Grande . . . writes popular essays on morals and politics rather than technical treatises on logic and metaphysics, and speaks in the public square or café more than he writes (28, p. 27).

Romanell concurs with the Mexican philosopher Samuel Ramos in his belief that the basis of Mexico's problems has been the love of imitation which the Mexican has always had for European culture. The result of this desire for imitation has been that the Mexicans have inherited an inferiority complex, "their natural reaction being one of looking down with suspicion on the copies they had and, conversely, looking up with envy at the originals they did not have" (28, p. 165). Examples of this imitative process at work can be seen in early works of literature, in dress and furniture styles during the years preceding

the Revolution of 1910, and in the Mexican government's borrowing of the United States Constitution and of nineteenth century French legal documents, "paying no attention to the peculiarity of Mexico's circumstances and her mestizo pattern of culture" (28, p. 165). Therefore, according to Romanell and Ramos, Mexicans need to concentrate on being Mexicans and not imitations of Aztecs and Europeans (28, p. 165).

In 1882 José Vasconcelos was born in Oaxaca, Mexico. Because his father worked for the Mexican government, José spent much of his youth in seaports and border towns, where his family lived (17, p. 3). Part of his early schooling was received in Eagle Pass, Texas; later on he attended the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria in Mexico City and the Escuela de Jurisprudencia, where he received his law degree in 1905.

In 1909 Antonio Caso, Alfonso Reyes, José Vasconcelos, and others formed a group of fifty young intellectuals. The Ateneo de la Juventud had the following goals:

. . . the destruction of the Díaz regime, the removal of foreign economic controls in Mexico, and the lessening of the influences of Positivism on the cultural life and educational system of Mexico (17, p. 5).

A year later, when the Revolution broke out, these philosophers tried to devise "both an ideology of revolution and a plan for the cultural rehabilitation of the nation after the revolt" (17, p. 5).

During the years after the Revolution Vasconcelos served as acting rector at the National University and as Minister of Public Education.



Because of his tireless efforts to reorganize and extend the educational system of Mexico and raise the general level of Mexican education, Vasconcelos has been credited with being the father of public education in Mexico (17, p. 6).

Vasconcelos established more than one thousand schools in rural areas, promoted the use of these schools as community centers, published and distributed thousands of the world's literary classics in inexpensive editions, conducted anti-illiteracy drives, encouraged cultural movements, and revived the popular arts, giving many commissions to the Mexican muralists Rivera and Orozco (17, p. 6). As an educator he recognized the defense of Mexico's culture as the main problem of the country. He fought continually for a kind of education that would advance Spanish America's own distinctive culture, lamenting the encroachment of foreign ideals which might corrupt this culture (7, p. 261).

He was a complex, passionate, sensitive, searching, even tormented figure. At times bitter and acrimonious, he despised the petty tyranny and not so petty corruption in Mexican political life and with vehemence gave written vent to his spleen, as in his scathing denunciations of such figures as former Presidents of Mexico--Venustiano Carranza . . . and Plutarco Elías Calles . . .--and of military leaders--Francisco (Pancho) Villa . . . and Emiliano Zapata . . . .

Yet he loved with an even greater passion. He loved his children . . . ; he loved Mexico; he loved beauty; he loved artistic and poetic creation; he loved personal integrity and honor; he loved God (17, p. 10).

Vasconcelos believed that any philosopher must be "a non-conformist, a social combatant, a politician" (17, p. 41). He was always very much a part of the world in which he lived and very much concerned with its problems. To Vasconcelos and to

the other members of the Ateneo de la Juventud, the Revolution has meant "a 'discovery' of Mexico 'by' Mexicans as well as a 'recovery' of Mexico 'for' Mexicans" (28, p. 63).

In La raza cósmica Vasconcelos proposes that the white, yellow, red, and black man mix to form a new synthetic race, combining the best features of each race. The result of this mestizaje will be a "whole man" who will lead Latin America toward a new unity (28, p. 135).

The autobiographical works of Vasconcelos form a series: Ulises criollo, La tormenta, El desastre, and El proconsulado. Among his essays and philosophical works are the following: ¿Qué es el comunismo?, Bolivarismo y monroísmo, El monismo estético, Ética, and Indología.

González Peña describes Vasconcelos as a "philosopher, a thinker and a man of action who was as original in his ideas as he was impetuous and impassioned in the expression of them . . ." (15, p. 367). Haddox refers to Vasconcelos as "too much of a visionary, too confident of the power of love as a force to unify the races and nations of the world . . ." but "one of the main creators of modern Mexican culture" (17, p. 67). Octavio Paz, himself a philosopher as well as a poet, admits the influence and importance of Vasconcelos in Mexico.

If the Revolution was a search for and an immersion of ourselves in our origins and being, no one embodied this fertile desperate desire better than José Vasconcelos, the founder of modern education in Mexico. His work was brief but fecund, and the essence of it is still alive (17, p. 67).

Antonio Caso y Andrade was born in 1883 in Mexico City. After graduating from the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria and the Escuela de Jurisprudencia, he joined José Vasconcelos and others in the formation of the Ateneo de la Juventud. Caso and Vasconcelos became the initiators of the "attempt to discover the proper character of Mexico and to develop a Mexican philosophy" (16, pp. 5-6).

The National University of Mexico was reopened after the Revolution, and Caso served as a professor of philosophy and law, as rector of the university, and as director of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. He also served as a diplomat in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay, but his main interest lay in teaching Mexico's youth.

Caso's message for Mexico and for mankind was that of love.

. . . Caso pleads for Mexicans not to be content with seeking pleasure and possession but to have the courage and enthusiasm to seek unselfishly the good of their compatriots . . . Two of Mexico's more urgent requirements are to forgive and forget former offenses of other Mexicans of whatever political persuasion, economic position, or social caste, and to unite the Mexican criollo, the Mexican mestizo, and the Mexican Indian through an ethic of sacrificing love and unselfish service. Only in this way can a great nation be forged (16, p. 75).

In an article entitled "Mexico: Hazte valer" Caso urged Mexicans "to have confidence in themselves" and "to expect much of themselves" (16, p. 76). In El problema de México y la ideología nacional Caso, like other contemporary philosophers, condemned imitation and lack of inventiveness in his country.

. . . it is urgent now, for the happiness of our people, that we cease to imitate the sociopolitical regimes of Europe and that we apply ourselves in order to discover the geographic, political, artistic, and other conditions of our nation, the very molds of our laws, the forms of our conviviality, the ideals of our activity. We cannot continue assimilating the attributes of other lives that are foreign to us. Our contemporary misery, our chronic revolutions, our tragic bitterness are the cruel fruits of our unintelligent imitation. Let us be, at the proper time, democrats, socialists, or fascists; but let us remember that our democracy cannot be that of the Greeks or that of Lincoln; our socialism could not be copied from the Asiatic and mystic rhythm of Lenin; neither could our conservative spirit dress with the picturesque attire typical of the dictator Mussolini. To imitate without intelligence is the worst of sophisms . . . . Imitate if nothing else can be done, but even when imitating, invent, adapt . . . . It would have been better for us to know what is at home than to import from foreigners theses that are not in accord with the Mexican soul!

. . . Idealists, you who commit yourselves to the salvation of the republic, turn your eyes to the soil of Mexico, the resources of Mexico, to the men of Mexico, to our customs and our traditions, to our hopes and our dreams, to what we are in reality. Only in that manner shall you guide us to a better condition of life and shall you redeem us from our misfortune! . . . . Whoever wants to fly must have "wings and lead" . . . . (16, pp. 81-82).

Caso's literary output represents a considerable achievement. His studies in the history of philosophy and philosophical criticism include nine books and numerous articles. There are more articles and eight books that may be classified as works on social and political philosophy. A third group which may be classified strictly as works on philosophy include the following: Problemas filosóficos, Principios de estética, El concepto de la historia universal, and La existencia como economía, como desinterés y como caridad (9, pp. 272-273).

In the 1940's another philosopher, Leopoldo Zea, generalized that the problem with the Latin American is that he is willing to

sacrifice his own ideal of life for the material comfort which represents the North American ideal. "In trying to acquire capacities alien to her, Latin America has naturally failed, with the inevitable result that she has lost confidence in herself" (28, p. 166). Because of Latin America's early dependency on European culture, particularly on that of Spain, as well as her later fear of "Yankee imperialism," the biggest problem facing Latin America is the achievement of cultural independence (28, p. 167).

In 1949 Zea restated the problem as follows:

We Hispanic Americans have been, during our past, conquerors and conquered, colonials, enlightened, liberals, conservatives, and revolutionaries.

. . . We Hispanic Americans still have, on the surface, the conqueror and the conquered, the colonist, the romantic liberal, and all of the things which were our past. What is more, in spite of the fact that we claim to have been all of them, we are still not fully any of them.

Instead of trying to solve our problems by the dialectical method, we Hispanic Americans have only accumulated them. The contradiction between conqueror and the conquered was still not resolved when we decided to become republicans, liberals, and democrats according to the model which great modern countries, especially Anglo-Saxon ones, gave us. Following that, and without resolving the new contradictions which faced us, we aspired to establish a bourgeoisie similar to the great European bourgeoisie without succeeding in being anything but insignificant servants of the latter. While in our time we have not yet attained the economic power which makes possible the disintegration of that bourgeoisie sui generis, we are faced with the problems of a class struggle . . . . Formerly, it was a struggle against Spain; now it is a struggle against our new mother country, the United States, for we are still a colony. It is always the same, a struggle for our independence. At one time it was a political struggle against Spain; then it was a spiritual struggle against Spain's habits and customs, and later on an economic struggle against the bourgeoisies of which we are only the tools.

It was also a struggle against our cultural dependence, for we are faced with a past which we have not come to regard as ours through a dialectical assimilation (36, pp. 4-6).

Zea concurs with Antonio Caso in the latter's view of Mexican history.

. . . Our national problems have never been solved as they arose . . . Mexico, instead of following a uniform and graduated dialectical process, has proceeded accumulatively . . . Deeply rooted causes, which had developed before the Conquest, as well as others arising later, and all of them working together, have created the formidable national problem, so abstruse and difficult, so dramatic and hopeless . . . We still have not solved the problem which Spain bequeathed us with the Conquest; neither have we yet solved the problem of democracy, and now we have on the agenda of historical discussion socialism in its most acute and urgent form (36, pp. 6-7).

The Mexican is still searching for his own identity, for his place in his country, and his country's place in the world. The twentieth century literature of Mexico is especially representative of this movement toward national discovery.

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## CHAPTER III

### STATUS OF RELATED PROGRAMS AT SELECTED UNIVERSITIES

#### Introduction

In this chapter the status of related courses of Mexican literature in graduate programs of selected universities is presented. The following topics are included:

1. selection of universities;
2. descriptions of courses in Mexican literature at the selected universities;
3. discussion of follow-up interviews.

#### Selection of Universities

University graduate catalogues available at the libraries of North Texas State University and Southern Methodist University were examined in order to identify those schools which offer graduate courses in Mexican literature. From the seventy-five catalogues studied from a seven-state area, including New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, and Texas, it was determined that sixteen universities do provide at least one such course.

#### Course Descriptions

The University of Arizona offers the degrees of both Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish. The graduate catalog lists three courses in graduate level Mexican literature.

"Literature through the Period of Independence" and "Literature from Independence to Present Day" each provide three semester hours credit. "The Novel of the Mexican Revolution" is a two semester hour course and is usually offered in the summer session at the six weeks summer school in Guadalajara, Mexico. Another course in Mexican literature which was formerly offered at the summer school was "Panorama of Mexican Literature." This course is no longer listed in the regular catalog. In addition to these courses in Mexican literature, the Spanish department provides thirty-four hours of Spanish American literature, all of which include some works by Mexican authors.

Northern Arizona University offers a Master of Arts degree in Spanish. The general catalog lists two three-hour courses in Mexican literature. "Contemporary Mexican Literature" includes lyric poetry, essays, and the novel after 1910. There is a special seminar in the Mexican novel which includes works not studied in the previous course. In addition the department provides nine hours in Spanish American literature. These three courses include important Mexican works.

The University of Colorado offers the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Spanish. One general course in Mexican literature is provided at the graduate level, but the department offers twenty-seven hours of Spanish American literature.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. The Spanish department of

this school does not have any specific course in Mexican literature in the graduate curriculum because the department has preferred not to teach any isolated national literatures of Spanish America but rather sees them as part of Spanish American literature in general. However, Mexican literature is taught in all of the eleven general courses at the graduate level. There is also a graduate topics course which may occasionally be dedicated to a Mexican topic such as "The Mexican Contemporary Novel," but this topic is not offered on a regular basis.

The University of Kansas offers the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Spanish. Three graduate courses in Mexican literature include a survey in Mexican literature, a seminar in the Mexican novel, and a seminar in Mexican poetry. In the survey course emphasis is placed on the works of nineteenth and twentieth century authors. Thirty-six hours of Spanish American literature are also offered.

Wichita State University offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. Mexican literature is not offered in a specific course but is included in the nine courses that are provided in Spanish American literature.

The University of Missouri at Columbia offers both the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Spanish. The graduate program provides one three-hour course in Mexican literature, various seminars which may include a topic on Mexican works, and twenty-four hours of Spanish American literature.

Eastern New Mexico offers a Master of Education degree with Spanish as the student's field of concentration. A course in Mexican literature is offered at the graduate level; in this course a study of the field of Mexican literature is made through the works of outstanding Mexican authors from 1519 to the present. The Mexican novel is studied in another three-hour course entitled "The Spanish American Novel."

New Mexico Highlands University offers a Master of Arts degree in Spanish. The Spanish department of this university provides nine hours in Mexican literature plus twelve hours in Spanish American literature. The courses which deal specifically with Mexican works include "Civilization of Mexico," which provides an introduction to the Aztec and Mayan cultures and is a survey of the periods of the conquest, colonization, the Revolution, and the present period; "The Mexican Theater," which presents the Mexican theater from pre-Columbian times to the modern dramatists; and "The Literature of Mexico," which presents the literature from Alarcón and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to the modern novelists of the Mexican Revolution.

The University of New Mexico offers a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degree in Spanish. No specific course in Mexican literature is provided at the graduate level, but the Spanish department offers twenty-four hours in Spanish American literature.

The graduate catalog of East Texas State University states that a Master of Arts degree in Spanish is offered. Two

courses in Mexican literature, the "Popol Vuh" and the "Novel of the Mexican Revolution," are listed at the graduate level. In addition, the Spanish department provides twelve hours of Latin American literature.

Pan American University offers a Master of Arts degree in Spanish. Six hours of Mexican literature are listed in the graduate catalog. The two courses with varying topics cover special studies in the field of Mexican literature. Currently, "El ensayo mexicano moderno" and "La novela de la revolución mexicana" are the two topics being studied. An additional eighteen hours of Spanish American literature is also offered at the graduate level.

Texas Christian University offers a Master of Arts degree in Spanish. One three-hour course in Mexican literature called "Readings in Mexican Literature" presents representative Mexican writers, placing emphasis on the nineteenth century. Eighteen hours of Latin American literature are also offered at the graduate level.

Texas Tech University offers both the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Spanish. Two graduate level courses are provided in the field of Mexican literature, "The Novel of the Mexican Revolution" and "Mexico Field Course," a study of Mexican civilization offered in the summer in Mexico. Eighteen hours of Spanish American literature are also offered.

The University of Texas at Arlington offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. Varying topics such as Fernández de

Lizardi, Modernism, the contemporary short story, and the contemporary novel are offered in a course called "Studies in Spanish American Literature." The graduate catalog also lists a seminar which varies in topic.

The University of Texas at Austin offers both the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Spanish. Four three-hour courses in Mexican literature are provided at the graduate level: "Literatura mexicana," "Contemporary Mexican Prose Fiction," "Mexican Literature of the 1950's," and "Mexican Literature of the 1950's and Beyond." Six hours of Spanish American literature are also provided.

The University of Texas at El Paso offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. "The Literary History of Mexico" is a three-hour course which presents main literary trends and principal writers in Mexican literature. "The Novel of the Mexican Revolution" includes the principal novelists of that period. Thirty hours of Latin American literature are also offered.

The University of Dallas offers the Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies. The program includes "History of Mexico" and "Mexican Art History," both of which are taught in Spanish; "The Mexican Novel of the Revolution;" and "The Search for Mexican Identity in Literature," a study of the elements which give a specifically Mexican flavor to the literature. The latter course covers works from the Popol Vuh to the present, with emphasis on the contemporary novel and the theater. The works of Usigli, Fuentes, and Rulfo receive special attention.

The program also includes eighteen hours of Spanish American literature.

The University of Houston offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. At the graduate level a course called "Mexican Literature in the Twentieth Century" is offered. This course includes readings of twentieth-century Mexican writers, emphasizing the literary expression of the formation of a Mexican national consciousness. Twenty-four additional hours of Spanish American literature are also offered.

Southern Methodist University offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. There is no specific course offered in Mexican literature at the graduate level because the course offerings are not constructed along national lines. All of the eight courses on Spanish American literature incorporate representative authors from Mexican literature.

Stephen F. Austin State University offers a Master of Arts degree in Spanish. No specific course in Mexican literature is offered; however, Mexican topics may be chosen for study in two advanced graduate studies courses. In addition the Spanish department offers twenty-one hours of Spanish American literature which include works by Mexican authors.

Texas Woman's University offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. The graduate catalog lists a general course in Mexican literature which is not currently being taught. Twenty-four hours of seminars, readings, and problems in Hispanic literatures include works of Mexican authors.



The University of Texas at San Antonio offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish. While no specific course in Mexican literature is offered at the graduate level, thirty semester-hours of Hispanic literatures do include the works of Mexican authors.

North Texas State University offers the Master of Arts degree in Spanish and a teaching field for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in College Teaching. The graduate catalog lists no specific course in Mexican literature; however, nine hours in Spanish American literature are provided at the graduate level with the possibility for six more when seminars are offered on Latin American topics.

#### Follow-Up Interviews

In order to substantiate and clarify questions submitted to faculty members at selected universities, as well as to ascertain other pertinent information, interviews were conducted with representatives of the following universities: East Texas State University, Texas Woman's University, and Southern Methodist University.

On February 20, 1976, an interview was conducted with Juan Gámez, professor of Mexican literature at East Texas State University. Because of lack of demand, Gámez's course on the Popol Vuh has not been offered recently, although this course is still listed in the graduate catalog. Gámez stated that in his course entitled "Novela de la Revolución Mexicana" he stresses the novels of Mariano Azuela, whom he

considers the one really creative writer of the period. Included in the novel course are three novels by Azuela, Los de abajo, El cacique, and Las tribulaciones de una familia decente; El indio, a novel by López y Fuentes; and Martín Luis Guzmán's El águila y la serpiente.

On April 30, 1976, an interview was conducted with Maurine Faulkner, Chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages at Texas Woman's University. It was stated in the questionnaire received from this university that the course in Mexican civilization and literature listed in the graduate catalog was no longer being offered. The reason was that after the retirement of the previous departmental chairman, who regularly taught the course, the university no longer had an instructor for the course who possessed both the necessary qualifications and the interest to teach the course. The interview revealed that a qualified instructor had been recently employed and that she could teach the course if there were sufficient demand. Since Texas Woman's University has a bilingual/bicultural education program, it is possible that the course in Mexican civilization may be taught at a later date. One reason given for the current lack of demand for this course was the establishment of a similar undergraduate course dealing with Mexican culture. Since the latter course is a regular offering in the bilingual/bicultural education sequence at the undergraduate level, it may be possible that students who were enrolled in the program may feel that further courses in Mexican literature would not

be as valuable at the graduate level as courses in other areas which had not been studied.

On May 6, 1976, an interview was conducted with Conchita Winn, professor of Spanish American literature at Southern Methodist University. On alternate years she teaches a six-hour survey course in which Mexican works are strongly emphasized. The first semester course begins with a study of Indian poetry and continues through the various literary periods to Modernism, while the second semester course begins with Modernism and continues through the twentieth century. During the semesters in which the survey course is not taught, the following courses in Spanish American literature are taught in rotation by genres: the short story, the essay, and the novel. The novel course is an in-depth study including such Mexican works as El Periquillo Sarniento, Pedro Páramo, and Aura by Carlos Fuentes. Also taught are Caribbean literature, including nineteenth and twentieth century Mexican works, the Romantic Movement, and the recent Spanish American novel. The Chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages at Southern Methodist University stated in his questionnaire that there was no specific course in Mexican literature because the course offerings in his department are not structured along national lines. In spite of the fact that no specific Mexican literature courses are being offered, it appears that Mexican literature is being heavily emphasized as a major component of all the Spanish American literature courses at this university.

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## CHAPTER IV

### CRITERIA FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present criteria for the organization of a graduate university course in Mexican literature. The chapter also presents the North Texas State University statement of purpose, a statement of purpose for the liberal arts at North Texas State University, goals of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, a discussion of the value of literature, a discussion of the need for a course in Mexican literature as expressed by faculty and students at North Texas State University, and a discussion of the findings of the university questionnaire tallies of Mexican works and authors to be included in the developed course.

#### Criteria

The course in Mexican literature should be developed on the basis of the following criteria.

1. The literary selections chosen for inclusion in the course should contribute to the intellectual development of the student. For the purposes of this document intellectual development will be taken to mean the development of the power or faculty of knowing, judging, and comprehending information

relative to the content of the course, measurable through observation, discussion, and other evaluative techniques. The authors and works to be studied are representative of the best thought originating from Mexico during the various literary periods described in Chapter II; therefore, intellectual stimulation should result from a study of literature and authors selected for the course. Since intellectual development is a progressive process, initial instruction should proceed from a level of general understanding to more abstract interpretation of course materials and presentations.

2. The organization of the course should make provision for learning experiences around broad topics from which opportunities should be provided for the student to pursue individual interests and to explore collateral resources for enrichment. The teacher should augment these topics with specific literary selections and learning activities to guide the student in his intellectual growth.

3. The course should foster independence and individuality of thought. The teacher should encourage the student to express his own interpretations of the literary selections in the course. Since students have varied experiential backgrounds, individual interpretations should be varied and should provide information to the class which might be at variance with the teacher's interpretation. The teacher would then act as a catalyst for synthesizing these interpretations.

4. The course should provide for the development of understanding of the motivating forces of each period or genre and/or the personal feelings that the author is attempting to express in each work rather than the acquisition of isolated facts and information. Provisions can be made for the development of a better understanding of Mexican literature by selecting poetry, essays, drama, short stories, and novels which emphasize these forces and feelings.

5. The course should provide opportunities for the sharing of information with other members of the classroom group. In-depth information may be provided to the class on an individual basis. Investigation of special topics to be summarized in oral presentations should be assigned to each student from the list of outstanding authors recommended for inclusion in this course.

6. The course should include provisions for identifying and inculcating a growing awareness and understanding on the part of the student of the cultural elements reflected in the Mexican experience. These elements are typically expressed in idiomatic expressions, philosophical themes, politics, and history of the people. Cultural elements, although aptly described in textbooks, are unique within the context of the life styles of a people at different periods in their history. Since the course includes a survey of selections from Mexican genres representative of the various historical epochs, the cultural criterion should be an integral part of each of these selections.



7. The course should provide for the development of a broader interest and a stronger appreciation of the quality of literature. Aesthetics, generally ascribed to the arts, includes literature and deals with beauty and creativity. In a curricular sense, it deals with the development of positive attitudes and appreciations as well as the expression of individual thought. The course, through works specifically chosen for their beauty and literary quality, should provide for aesthetic development.

8. The course should provide the student with a growing interest in the constructive use of his leisure time. Intrinsic motivation should be fostered to the extent that the student will continue to read selections from Mexican literature for pleasure after the course has been completed. Positive reinforcement of the student's demonstrated competencies in the class and a selection of suggested reading materials based on the student's interests should enable the student to develop a greater desire to continue his studies in Mexican literature throughout life.

9. The course should make provision for the development of powers of choice and discrimination in selecting literary works. Through the study of the different genres and periods represented in the works selected for this course, the student should be able to discriminate between literary compositions of greater or lesser quality and to base his reading choices on this discrimination.

10. The course should provide means for developing self-direction and self-reliance through its activities. Comparisons of similarities and differences between standards of conduct reflected in Mexican literature should enable the student to evaluate and perhaps modify his own standards of behavior.

11. The course should make provision for the expansion of the student's self-concept. Concepts are developed as a result of experience; as a result of a wide range of literary experiences, the student should be able, through identification with protagonists and with the environmental settings, to develop a better understanding of himself and the world in which he lives.

12. The course should have continuity. The organization of course content should provide for a flow of experience from one earlier stage to another later stage without delimiting the potential for later enriching experiences. The utilization of a sequential outline for the fulfillment of this criterion should give coherence and unity to the course.

13. The course should have flexibility. It should provide for modification as class situations and needs arise and should be susceptible to continuous evaluation and revision. The course should make provision for both long-range and day-to-day planning.

### Purposes of North Texas State University

North Texas State University sees its purpose as that of developing intellectual, cultural, and professional competencies for the student body (2, p. I-4). If students, the chief consumers of the educational enterprise, are to receive intellectual, cultural, and professional benefits commensurate with the intent of the university, it is the responsibility of the university to provide for these educational needs. It is also important that educators determine the course offerings needed to fulfill the purposes of the university.

In addition to the original statement of purpose, the university "proposes to contribute directly to the intellectual, cultural, aesthetic, and moral development of its students and more broadly to the global society of man" (2, p. I-4). It is also important to note that the university will "initiate new programs as requirements for educational opportunities demand" (2, p. I-4).

### Purposes of the Liberal Arts

In addition to listing the general purposes, the university also describes the purposes of the liberal arts. "Instruction in these areas will embrace a breadth that produces a liberated mind and a depth that challenges the student with the great intellects of mankind" (2, p. I-5). In this context it is significant to note that the university emphasizes the development of cultural awareness, providing

. . . each student the opportunity to develop to his fullest capacity a cultural awareness and an appreciation for learning that will enrich his own life and enhance his potential for making a significant personal contribution to his society (2, p. I-5).

#### Goals of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures

The goals of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures are in agreement with the stated purposes of the Liberal Arts, as described in the Institutional Self-Study 1971-72. Since these goals are a reiteration of the general purposes of the Liberal Arts plus specific aims, only those departing from the previously stated goals are included in this section. Goals receiving emphasis are ". . . a knowledge of the literature and civilization of the country where that language is spoken, and as a result of this knowledge, to gain an understanding of the people themselves;" promoting ". . . a climate of understanding between peoples separated by linguistic and cultural barriers;" stimulating ". . . interest in graduate study in the foreign languages; . . . preparing teachers;" and ". . . offering language courses which fulfill requirements and complement other programs of study" (3).

#### The Value of Literature

Literature may be defined as

. . . the record of the attempt of writers to express and communicate their ideas about man's hopes, dreams, ideals, feelings, thoughts, and experiences, and his relationship to society (1, p. 217).

It deals with all the experiences of man and with his deepest emotions.

The importance of literature lies in the expansion of man's concept of himself as a person (4, p. 245). By identifying with others through works of literature, man may enlarge his knowledge of himself as a human being (4, p. 247).

The essence of the literary experience involves a personal encounter between a reader and a text. What matters is what happens in the reader as he reflects upon his values, his understanding of his world, and his style of life under the goading and in the light of the work before him (4, pp. 245-246).

There are various routes by means of which man may gain experience of the world. The study of literature is an old and tested route for transcending the individual's limited scope and becoming part of the greater vision of humanity.

. . . Here we find the most direct and individualized expression of men's thoughts and affects as they have grappled, in circumstances similar to or quite different from our own, with the problems of personal existence--the problems, for example, of religion, the ordering of social life, our relationship to our material environment, the familiar gap between the life we live in our finest dreams and the one we live in actuality. The poem, the play, and the tale are devices for the enlargement of experience and the encouragement of personal reflectiveness. If literature is educative--and it has always been thought so--it is because its primary function is to remind men of their selfhood by expanding it (4, p. 245).

It has been said that literature cannot really be taught; an individual must participate within it. If that statement is true, then the task of the teacher

. . . becomes that of introducing the student to a variety of works and nurturing his relationship to them and his habit of turning to literature for that vicarious

experience of the world and of human vice and virtue which he finds increasingly relevant to himself as a person (4, p. 251).

Literature provides insight.

By showing us the interior of one human heart, the artist illuminates for us the experience of every man. Through fiction, poetry, and the drama, we come to know the loneliness, the beauty, the courage and pain of the human condition (1, p. 219).

Literature also provides social insight by offering a knowledge of man as a social being involved in complex social problems. Literature is a study of the reactions of man as he is seen

. . . against the backdrop of the society he has evolved . . . Literature can interpret imaginatively the basic human situations: man's suffering of injustice, his struggle for power, his conflict with his fellows, his rebellion against the laws of God and man (1, p. 219).

Literature provides international understanding.

. . . Understanding comes to students through the widening of experience with books reflecting different cultural patterns, through discussion and understanding of such differences, and the guidance of a teacher who can help them see the common human needs, joys, and sorrows which unite the human family (1, pp. 220-221).

The study of literature should be an aesthetic experience. Students should first feel pleasure in the literary experience; afterwards a sense of form should begin to grow slowly. Some insight into the creative process should then develop (1, p. 221).

The study of literature necessarily involves an encounter with the values by which men live. A student's

. . . reading about men and women who have made moral and ethical choices and his evaluation of these and their results provide him with a measure for thinking about his own choices and their consequences (1, p. 222).

#### Findings of Faculty and Student Questionnaires at North Texas State University

The questionnaire tallies described in the section of Chapter I dealing with procedures for collection and treatment of data indicate an agreement of faculty and students that there is a need for a course on Mexican literature at North Texas State University. Of the eight questionnaires submitted to faculty members of the North Texas State University Spanish Department, three indicated a need for the course, and one believed the existing Spanish American literature courses were sufficient. Four failed to respond to the questionnaire. One hundred questionnaires were given to graduate and undergraduate Spanish majors and minors at North Texas State University. Of the seventy respondents to the questionnaire, fifty-six believed that such a course was needed, four did not, and nine were undecided.

#### Questionnaire Tallies of Mexican Works and Authors

From a survey of anthologies of Spanish American literature a list of twenty-four Mexican works and authors was formulated. This list of most frequently included literary selections represents the outstanding production of Mexican authors. This tabulation was included in the final section of a questionnaire which was sent to professors of courses in

Mexican literature at sixteen selected universities. Thirteen of these professors who returned the questionnaires and who represent eleven universities rated the authors and works on the list on a scale of one to twenty-four, with one being the highest rating. Organization of the tallies produced an ordered list depicting the relative importance of the authors and works. The list provided a sequential preference for the authors and works to be included in an in-depth study of Mexican literature.

Space was provided in the questionnaire for additional listing of authors and/or works. Octavio Paz received five write-in recommendations. Three professors suggested Juan José Arreola as a possible choice for further study.



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## CHAPTER V

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE COURSE

#### Introduction

This chapter includes recommendations for a graduate course in Mexican literature for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Texas State University. The course is developed in terms of the criteria listed in Chapter IV. Course objectives, literary selections, collateral materials, instructional methods, and procedures for evaluating student achievement are discussed.

#### Course Objectives

The course is developed to include all of the criteria which were listed in Chapter IV. Specific behavioral objectives in terms of behavioral outcomes should be formulated by the teacher to reflect each of the criteria. Since teacher personalities, competencies, and experiential backgrounds vary, these behavioral objectives should be left to the discretion of the teacher. However, as a guide for the teacher, the following specific objectives are recommended.

In the area of knowledge of content, the student should be able to discuss major literary trends and periods. He should be able to identify the major works and authors in each

period. He should achieve a historical perspective of a Mexico struggling for her own separate identity.

In the area of attitudes and appreciations, the student should develop an understanding and an aesthetic appreciation of different literary styles and genres. At the end of the course the student should be able to demonstrate insights into the culture of the Mexican people, gained from the study of different literary periods, and into Mexican thought, as viewed by contemporary Mexican philosophers. He should be able to identify the cultural elements relating to the following areas: home and family life, religion, customs and traditions, politics, and man's view of himself.

Although the teacher will be following the general outline provided in Chapter II and the student will be reading the works selected as being of major literary importance, the class should be flexible enough to allow the student to go into more depth of study than the teacher might anticipate at the outset.

#### Course Content

The major content of this course consists of the authors and works most frequently cited in anthologies of Spanish American literature and from the results of the questionnaires submitted to professors who are currently teaching courses in Mexican and Spanish American literature. These authors and works, in order of importance to a study of Mexican literature, are as follows:

1. Juan Rulfo
2. Carlos Fuentes
3. Mariano Azuela
4. Agustín Yáñez
5. Alfonso Reyes
6. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera
7. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz
8. José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi
9. José Vasconcelos
10. Rodolfo Usigli
11. Ramón López Velarde
12. Ignacio Manuel Altamirano
13. Enrique González Martínez
14. Gregorio López y Fuentes
15. Carlos Pellicer
16. Amado Nervo
17. Salvador Díaz Mirón
18. Bernal Díaz del Castillo
19. Hernán Cortés
20. Náhuatl literature
21. Popol Vuh
22. Bernardo de Balbuena
23. Fray Manuel de Navarrete
24. Francisco de Terrazas

Since these authors and works were listed by professors in the order of their significance, it is suggested that the teacher select representative works in order, as time permits, for an in-depth study. The objectives of the course should be carefully reviewed prior to instruction, and students should be made aware of these objectives. It is further suggested that the teacher research the literature in order to find supplementary materials, such as films, filmstrips, slides, tapes, and journal articles.

The suggested readings for the course are given in the following paragraphs. Readings are listed in chronological order, according to the general outline in Chapter II.

To illustrate Náhuatl literature the teacher may elect to read several shorter poems or parts of longer ones. Suggested choices include "Canto de Tlaloc," "Canto de Atamalqualoyan," "Canto en loor de los príncipes, cantado por un príncipe," "Canto de Caballeros Águilas," "Netzahualcoyotl," and "Misión del poeta."

The Popol Vuh, being the most popular work of Mayan literature, is worthy of class study. Most frequently included is the first chapter relating the story of the creation of the world. The second chapter may also be read if time permits.

As examples of the chronicles of the conquest, it is suggested that the following be read: some part of the second letter of Hernán Cortés' Cartas de relación and a chapter from Bernal Díaz del Castillo's Historia verdadera de la

conquista de la Nueva España, such as Chapter XCII, LXXXI, or CXXVIII. If ample time exists, a chapter of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España may be included. The stories about Quetzalcóatl in the third book are especially appealing.

Good examples of lyric poetry during the colonial period are "Dejad las hebras de oro . . ." and "Soñé que de una peña me arrojaba . . .," sonnets by Francisco de Terrazas. Also worthy of study is his Nuevo mundo y conquista, an epic picture of the conquest.

Some part of La grandeza mexicana, Bernardo de Balbuena's descriptive epic poem praising the beauty of the Mexican capital, may be included as illustrative of the colonial period. Chapters I and VI are recommended.

Since Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is one of the authors selected for in-depth study, a longer list of works is provided here. Sonnets, in order of popularity, include the following: "Detente, sombra de mi bien esquivo . . .," "Rosa divina . . .," "Esta tarde, mi bien, cuando te hablaba . . .," "Que no me quiera Fabio . . .," "Éste que ves, engaño . . .," and "Al que ingrato me deja . . ." Of special interest to the class should be the redondilla which begins "Hombres necios . . .," sometimes entitled "Contra las injusticias de los hombres al hablar de las mujeres." In the same vein Sor Juana's Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre Sor Filotea de la Cruz should be read as one

of the earliest American expressions of women's rights. Also of importance to a study of Sor Juana's works are her "Primer sueño" and "Auto sacramental del Divino Narciso." If the teacher has ample time to include other popular poems, the following may be selected: "Feliciano me adora . . .," "Que espresan sentimiento de ausente . . .," "Amado dueño mío . . .," "Fabio, en el ser de . . .," "A Porcia," "Este amoroso tormento . . .," "Al monte . . .," "Miró Celia una rosa . . .," "Efectos muy penosos de amor," and "Aquella zagala del mirar sereno . . . ."

Fray Manuel Martínez de Navarrete may be included as the most outstanding representative of the eighteenth century poets. Selections from his poems should include "La inmortalidad," a work of primary importance to a study of this author, and "La mañana." "Las flores de Clorila" and "La triste ausencia" may be considered as secondary choices.

José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, who may be selected for in-depth study, is the outstanding representative of the period of independence. El Periquillo Sarniento, the first Mexican novel, should be read in its entirety for its satirical picture of the times. The student who undertakes the in-depth study of this writer may be encouraged to sample the other genres which Lizardi cultivated. Representative selections include the following: La ciega y su muchachita; "Los paseos de la verdad;" Don Catrín de la Fachenda; El cucharero y su

compadre Chepe, "Cosas ciertas," and Testamento y despedida al pensador mexicano.

Ignacio Manuel Altamirano may also be selected for in-depth study. The teacher may then require the class to read La navidad en las montañas, a rustic novelette which portrays folk customs in a rural mountain area. If the teacher includes Altamirano only as a part of the general outline, he may wish to read excerpts from this novel; a short selection such as "El día de muertos;" and representative poems such as "Al Atoyac," "Las amapolas," and "Los naranjos." A student who undertakes an in-depth study of this author may also wish to examine Altamirano's other two novels, Clemencia and El Zarco.

A study of the Mexican modernists should begin with Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera. This poet, who will be selected for in-depth study, is noted for his short stories, as well as for his restrained, elegant poetry. "Rip-Rip" and "Historia de un peso falso" should be read as the best of this author's stories. Outstanding poems include the following: "Para entonces," "Non omnis moriar," "La Duquesa Job," "Pax animae," "De blanco," "Mis enlutadas," "La serenata de Schubert," "A la corregidora," and "A un triste." A further selection of poems may include "Mariposas," "Ondas muertas," "To be," "Deseo," and "Para un menú."

A study of the poetry of Salvador Díaz Mirón should include "El fantasma" and "A Gloria," his two most popular poems.



The following poems may also be selected for study: "Nox," "A ella," "Sursum," "Toque," "A un profeta," "El ingenioso hidalgo," "A piedad," "In Hoc Signo," "Música fúnebre," "Ejemplo," "El desertor," and "Dentro de una esmeralda."

The poetic selections that best represent the work of Amado Nervo include the following: "Expectación," "Viejo estribillo," "Vieja llave," "A Kempis," "En paz," "El día que me quieras," "Me marcharé," "¡Está bien!," "Cobardía," "Evo- cación," "En Bohemia," and "El hermano agua." A further study of Nervo's poems may include "Autobiografía," "Extasis," "Gratia plena," "La sed," "Limpidez," "Si tú me dices ¡ven!," "Si eres bueno," and "Tan rubia es la niña."

Enrique González Martínez is best known for his famous "Tuércele al cuello del cisne." Other well-known poems are "Mañana los poetas," "Como hermana y hermano," "Busca en todas las cosas," "Casa con dos puertas," and "Viento sagrado." One who desires further study of this poet may also read "Irás sobre la vida de las cosas," "Dolor," "Psalle et sile," "Cuando sepas hallar . . .," and "Los días inútiles."

Mariano Azuela will be one of the novelists chosen for in- depth study. The class should use Los de abajo as an intro- duction to the novel of the Revolution. A careful reading of this work will introduce the student to a type of fiction new to twentieth century Mexico. The student who undertakes a more complete study of Azuela may elect to begin his reading with Mala yerba, a short novel which admirably serves as an intro- duction to the political and sociological ferment which

culminated in the Revolution of 1910. He should then progress to Los de abajo, which discusses the Revolution itself, and end with one or more of the novels describing post-revolutionary conditions, such as Las tribulaciones de una familia decente.

Although Martín Luis Guzmán is not one of those revolutionary novelists chosen for in-depth study, the teacher may desire to read selections from El águila y la serpiente. The class may find the sections describing Guzmán's personal impressions of Pancho Villa to be particularly interesting.

José Rubén Romero is another author who will not be selected for in-depth study, but who will provide interesting reading for the class. Especially delightful are scenes from La vida inútil de Pito Pérez which describe life and customs in the beautiful state of Michoacán. The class may be encouraged to compare and contrast this work to El Periquillo Sarniento.

Also excellent for fragmentary reading is El indio by Gregorio López y Fuentes. Chapters which lend themselves to class reading are "La tabla de la ley," which relates a group fishing experience, and "Revolución," which describes the isolated village's brief encounter with the Revolution.

A study of contemporary Mexican poetry will begin with an in-depth study of the works of Ramón López Velarde. The class should read "La suave patria," López Velarde's most popular poem, as well as "Hormigas," "El retorno maléfico," "Mi corazón se amerita . . .," and "Mi prima Agueda." The student

desiring further recommendations may choose to examine "Cuaresmal," "Humildemente," "Y pensar que pudimos," "La última odalisca," "La lágrima," "A la gracia primitiva de las aldeanas," "A la patrona de mi pueblo," and "Nuestras vidas son péndulos."

A study of Alfonso Reyes, one of the authors chosen for in-depth study, will include selections of both poetry and prose. Visión de Anáhuac, a description of Cortés' Mexico, should be read, as well as the poems "Glosa de mi tierra" and "La amenaza de la flor." Other recommended poems include "Golfo de México," "Vaivén de Santa Teresa," "Yerbas del Tarahumara," "Río de enero," and "Apenas."

Outstanding poems of Carlos Pellicer include the following: "Estudio," "Deseos," "Segador," and "Nocturno X." Two other poems the teacher may wish to consider are "Horas de junio" and "Tema para un nocturno."

An examination of the poetry of Octavio Paz in anthologies revealed that this author is not noted for any single poem, but rather for his volumes of verse. Poems which are recommended for class reading include "Visitas," "Bajo tu clara sombra," "Elegía," "Himno entre ruinas," "Piedra de sol," and "Viento entero." Sections of Paz's prose masterpiece, El laberinto de soledad, are also recommended for class study since the work is important to the study of Mexican culture and provides insight into the Mexican character.

A study of Juan José Arreola may include a selection of poems. However, more strongly recommended is his short costumbrista story entitled "Hizo el bien mientras vivió."

The outstanding representative of the twentieth century dramatists is Rodolfo Usigli. The teacher may choose between Corona de sombra and El gesticulador as plays for class reading. The student who undertakes an in-depth study of this author should read both works.

As Agustín Yáñez will be one of the authors chosen for in-depth study, the class should plan to read Al filo del agua. The student who elects further reading may want to contrast the two novels Las tierras flacas and La tierra pródiga.

Carlos Fuentes will also be chosen for in-depth study. La muerte de Artemio Cruz may be selected for class reading, or perhaps La región más transparente. The student who chooses Fuentes for independent study should read both novels and also examine the play Todos los gatos son pardos.

Juan Rulfo is considered by the professors polled on the university questionnaire to be the most important Mexican writer. The class should read his masterpiece, Pedro Páramo. A student wanting to concentrate on Rulfo's works should also read the short stories contained in the volume entitled El llano en llamas.

If José Vasconcelos is selected for in-depth study, then the teacher will probably choose La raza cósmica for class

reading. Ulises criollo, the first book of Vasconcelos' autobiographical series, may be an alternate choice. The student attempting to gain deeper insight into Vasconcelos' philosophy should, in addition, read some of the essays on politics, ethics, and society.

If time permits, the teacher may wish to include excerpts from Antonio Caso's essays and articles. Recommended is the article "México: Hazte valer." Also helpful in providing insight into Mexican character and thought is El problema de México y la ideología nacional.

Finally, if it is desired to include the philosophy of Leopoldo Zea, there are several works from which representative selections may be chosen. These works include the following: Dos etapas del pensamiento en Hispanoamérica, América en la historia, and The Latin-American Mind.

#### Instructional Methods

A preponderance of respondents to the university questionnaire indicated a preference for the discussion method of teaching literature. While it was felt that a moderate amount of lecturing should be utilized, little or no translation was employed. Interpretation and oral reports were other recommended instructional methods.

While the discussion method is recommended as a vehicle for the development of reflective thinking, other appropriate methods may be utilized as circumstances occur. For example, the lecture technique may be a more effective method of

disseminating large bodies of information, such as the general material included in Chapter II.

Each student should be provided with the opportunity for conducting independent in-depth study of one of the major authors and his works. It is suggested that this research be presented in the form of an oral report to the class which would include biographical information pertaining to and the philosophy and thought of the author, as well as a discussion of the author's major works, taking into discussion all of the cultural components listed in the course objectives. The report should also include a discussion of the author's style, the significance of his work to Mexican literature as a whole, and a final evaluation by the student.

#### Procedures for Evaluating Student Achievement

Although both subjective and objective techniques may be utilized to assess student achievement in the course, it is suggested, since graduate students in a literature course should be able to verbalize, synthesize, generalize, and draw conclusions with a greater degree of sophistication than undergraduate students, that emphasis be placed upon subjective techniques for evaluating the student's progress. However, in order to assure that the objectives of the course have been fulfilled, structured questions reflecting historical, philosophical, and literary thought should be included. While there are a wide variety of thought questions which may be included in an examination, the following are presented as

examples of possible ways of determining the level to which the students have achieved the course objectives:

1. How has your attitude toward the Mexican changed since undertaking the course? What works have influenced you most in your thinking?

2. Using at least three literary selections to illustrate, discuss the cultural development of the Mexican in the following areas: home and family life, religion, politics, customs and traditions, and man's view of himself.

3. What was the importance of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, both to the country and to its literary accomplishment? Why do some people say that the Revolution is still going on?

4. What insights have you gained from your reading with respect to Mexican culture which might be compared or contrasted with that culture which you consider to be typically American? With that culture which you consider to be universal?

5. What cultural changes do you see appearing in Mexico today? You may choose to discuss the areas provided in the second question or select others of your own.

6. Choose a major literary period, such as the romantic period, the modernistic period, the colonial period, or another of your choice, and discuss authors, works, style, and significance.

7. How is the process of Mexican thought viewed by contemporary Mexican philosophers?

8. The Mexican is a product of two cultures. What elements from his cultural background can be seen reflected in the Mexican-American community in the United States?

Because individual differences exist with respect to student preparation and academic competencies, it is suggested that the frequency with which the students are tested be determined by the teacher. Final grade averages should be determined in terms of achievement on written examinations, contribution to class discussions, and the oral presentation made to the class. Moreover, students should be made aware of the weight given to each of these areas of achievement.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, COURSE EVALUATION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

Chapter VI presents a summarization of the development of the course in Mexican literature for graduate students at North Texas State University. An evaluation of the course in terms of the established criteria and recommendations is also included in the chapter.

#### Summary

Chapter I presents a general introduction to the study in which purposes, guideline questions, background and significance, and procedures for collection and treatment of data are described. The general purposes for this study, described in detail in separate chapters, are as follows.

1. To present an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature.
2. To determine the status of graduate level courses in Mexican literature at selected universities.
3. To establish criteria for designing a related course at North Texas State University.
4. To develop a course of study in Mexican literature at the graduate level.

5. To evaluate the course in terms of the established criteria.

In order to fulfill these purposes, certain questions were formulated, answers to which are described in the text of this study.

The background and significance of the study were developed through personal conferences, research from the literature, and questionnaires (see Appendix). Also, a description of the procedures for the collection and treatment of the data is outlined.

An overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature for North Texas State University is presented in Chapter II. The organization and presentation of the literary material is developed in a chronological order, beginning with and including representative examples of important works from the following periods, genres, and literary groups: the pre-Hispanic period, the chroniclers of the conquest, poetry of the colonial period, the period of independence, the pre-modernist nineteenth century, Modernism, the novels of the Mexican Revolution, twentieth century poetry, twentieth century drama, the new Mexican novels, and twentieth century philosophy.

Since a tally of literary preferences was made from the questionnaire responses, greater emphasis was placed on the authors and works receiving the most tallies. The selections

and authors described in this chapter, therefore, are representative of the professional judgments of professors in the area of Spanish American and/or Mexican literature and of editors who have compiled college-level anthologies.

Included in Chapter III is a description of the current status of related Mexican literature courses in selected universities. Seventy-five university catalogues available in the libraries of North Texas State University and Southern Methodist University were studied as a means of identifying those universities which purport to offer graduate courses in Mexican literature. These seventy-five catalogues were selected from a seven-state area. It was determined that sixteen of these universities offer at least one course in Mexican literature. A selected number of the remaining universities were polled in order to determine why such courses were not offered. The majority of respondents in the latter group indicated a belief that sufficient exposure to Mexican literature could be accomplished by using anthologies which not only include selected works by Mexican authors, but also representative works from other Spanish American countries.

In Chapter IV criteria were developed and presented for the design of a course in Mexican literature for North Texas State University. The criteria selected are consistent with the purposes of North Texas State University and the purposes of the Liberal Arts, as expressed in the Institutional

Self-Study 1971-72, the goals of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, the purposes of literature stated in Chapter IV, and with expressed needs of faculty and students at North Texas State University.

The proposed course in Mexican literature is described in Chapter V. The course is based on the criteria which were listed in Chapter IV. The description contains provisions for developing the course in terms of behavioral objectives reflecting these criteria. Provisions are also made for flexibility which may be needed as a result of differing teacher personalities, competencies, and experiential backgrounds. The course also includes provisions for developing cognitive skills, attitudes, and appreciations. Course content is recommended in terms of responses from professors of the literature and selections from representative anthologies. Chapter V also includes suggestions for presenting materials which include both specific readings and supplementary materials. As an aid to the teacher, a suggested means of evaluating student achievement is presented. Also, a list of possible questions which include course objectives is offered.

#### Evaluation of the Course

The purposes of this course are provided for in the specific criteria listed in Chapter IV. Provisions for intellectual growth are made through a selection of literary works purporting to represent the best literary expression of

the Mexican intellect. It is further believed that the cultural components of the course can be achieved through these means. Changes in aesthetic and moral concepts may be assumed to occur as a result of a student's being exposed to literary selections treating such themes.

The development of positive self-concepts is an important consideration for any course. A study of Mexican literature should fulfill this purpose by expanding the student's awareness of his role as a human being. The range of literary experiences should enable the student to identify with various figures and with various environmental settings, and this identification should better prepare him for living in his world.

Since North Texas State University has an approved program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education, a course in Mexican literature would be an asset to the students in the program who have expressed a need for such a course. A course in Mexican literature should help promote a greater understanding of the Mexican-American, who is a product of two cultures.

A tally of Mexican works and authors that was summarized from questionnaires submitted to professors at selected universities indicates a need for more emphasis on twentieth century writers. This tally was utilized as a referent for the selection of authors and works to be emphasized in an in-depth study of Mexican literature which should promote better international understanding of contemporary problems.

### Recommendations

The findings of this study indicate a need for an upper-level course in Mexican literature. Therefore, it is recommended that North Texas State University initiate a course in Mexican literature which may be utilized by both students in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and students in the Bilingual/Bicultural Education program. Although the course was originally designed for graduate students, it is recommended that this course be made available to both upper-level and graduate students.

In order to complement the Bilingual/Bicultural Education program at this university, it is also recommended that oral communication be emphasized in the course and that student participation in the target language be maximized.

APPENDIX

Dear Faculty Member,

Your assistance is requested in a study of the teaching of Mexican literature. This study will provide valuable information to be included in a doctoral dissertation entitled A Program of Mexican Literature for Graduate University Students.

The purposes of this study are as follows:

1. To present an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature.
2. To determine the status of graduate level courses in Mexican literature in selected universities.
3. To establish criteria for designing a related course at North Texas State University.
4. To develop a course of study in Mexican literature at the graduate level.
5. To evaluate the course in terms of the established criteria.

Please answer the questions on the accompanying questionnaire, and be assured that your responses will be treated in a professional and confidential manner.

Your assistance in providing data for this study will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Linda M. Morgan*

Linda M. Morgan  
Teaching Fellow  
North Texas State University



FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you believe that students need to broaden their knowledge of Mexican culture?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you believe that a course in Mexican literature would contribute to a greater knowledge of Mexican culture?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you believe that a graduate course in Mexican literature should be included in the Bilingual Education curriculum at North Texas State University?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you believe that a course in Mexican literature at the graduate level is needed at North Texas State University?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. If such a course were offered at North Texas State University, would you be interested in teaching it?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. To what extent would you emphasize the following approaches in your teaching of this course?

	Extensively	Moderately	Little
(1) Lecture	_____	_____	_____
(2) Discussion	_____	_____	_____
(3) Translation	_____	_____	_____
(4) Other (explain)	_____	_____	_____

7. Do you believe that such a course would best be taught by the anthology approach?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you believe that such a course would best be taught by an in-depth study of a few selected works, chosen for their literary quality?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you believe that such a course should be offered on a regular basis? If so, when? If not, why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. If you were to develop such a course, what text and/or supplementary materials would you use?

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11. What recommendations would you make for developing this course of study?

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12. Do you teach courses which include works of Mexican literature? If so, please give course titles.

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13. If the answer to the above is affirmative, please indicate which authors and works are included.

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14. In a survey of anthologies of Spanish American literature, it was found that the following authors and works were most frequently included as being representative of the best in Mexican literature. Please rank them from 1 (highest) to 24 (lowest) in terms of their importance to an in-depth study of Mexican literature at the graduate level.

_____ Náhuatl literature	_____ Salvador Díaz Mirón
_____ <u>Popol Vuh</u>	_____ Mariano Azuela
_____ Bernal Díaz del Castillo	_____ Gregorio López y Fuentes
_____ Hernán Cortéz	_____ Alfonso Reyes
_____ Francisco de Terrazas	_____ Carlos Pellicer
_____ Bernardo de Balbuena	_____ Ramón López Velarde
_____ Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz	_____ Rodolfo Usigli
_____ Manuel de Navarrete	_____ Agustín Yáñez
_____ Fernández de Lizardi	_____ Carlos Fuentes
_____ Ignacio M. Altamirano	_____ Juan Rulfo
_____ Amado Nervo	_____ José Vasconcelos
_____ Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera	_____
_____ Enrique González Martínez	_____

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Number \_\_\_\_\_ Minor \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Mexican American? \_\_\_\_\_

Your assistance is required in providing information that will be used in a dissertation entitled A Program of Mexican Literature for Graduate University Students. In answering the following questions you will find that space is provided below the questions for explanation of the answer given. You may also use the back of the page. Please be assured that all responses to this questionnaire will be treated in a professional and confidential manner.

1. Do you believe that there is a need for broadening your knowledge of Mexican culture?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you believe that a course in Mexican literature would contribute to a greater knowledge of Mexican culture?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you believe that such a course is needed at North Texas State University?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. If such a course were offered at North Texas State University, would you be interested in taking it?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you believe that such a course would best be taught by the anthology approach?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you believe that such a course would best be taught by an in-depth study of a few selected works, chosen for their literary quality?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Department Chairman,

Your assistance is requested in a study of the teaching of Mexican literature. This study will provide valuable information to be included in a doctoral dissertation entitled A Program of Mexican Literature for Graduate University Students.

The purposes of the study are as follows:

1. To present an overview of the historical development of Mexican literature as a referent for the construction of a graduate program in the literature.
2. To determine the status of graduate level courses in Mexican literature in selected universities.
3. To establish criteria for designing a related course at North Texas State University.
4. To develop a course of study in Mexican literature at the graduate level.
5. To evaluate the course in terms of the established criteria.

If Mexican literature is not included in your curriculum, please respond to Statement I on the questionnaire, omitting the information under Statement II. If the study of Mexican literature is included in your curriculum, the candidate's doctoral committee has asked that the cover letter and questionnaire be forwarded to the person teaching the subject, so that he may complete the information in Statement II.

Please be assured that your responses will be treated in a professional and confidential manner. Your prompt assistance in providing data for this study will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Linda M. Morgan*

Linda M. Morgan  
Teaching Fellow,  
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures  
North Texas State University

UNIVERSITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of University \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

- I. Please state the reason or reasons why the study of Mexican literature is not included in your graduate curriculum.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- II. Please answer the following questions regarding the course or courses you teach in Mexican literature. (You may use the back of the page for further explanations.)

A. What is the title of each course? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. How many semester hours credit does each course carry?

\_\_\_\_\_

C. Is each course offered on a regular basis? If so, when? If not, why?

\_\_\_\_\_

D. What materials are used for each course?

1. Text, if any (title and author) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Supplementary materials (including outside readings)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



E. To what degree do you emphasize the following approaches in your teaching?

	Extensively	Moderately	Little
1. Lecture			
2. Discussion			
3. Translation			
4. Other (explain)			

F. Describe any features of your course which you may believe to be unique.

---

G. What recommendations would you make for developing a similar course of study at another university?

---

H. In a survey of anthologies of Spanish American literature, it was found that the following authors and works were most frequently included as being representative of the best in Mexican literature. Please rank them from 1 (highest) to 24 (lowest) in terms of their importance to an in-depth study of Mexican literature at the graduate level.

- \_\_\_ Náhuatl literature
- \_\_\_ Popol Vuh
- \_\_\_ Bernal Díaz del Castillo
- \_\_\_ Hernán Cortés
- \_\_\_ Francisco de Terrazas
- \_\_\_ Bernardo de Balbuena
- \_\_\_ Sor Juana I. de la Cruz
- \_\_\_ Manuel de Navarrete
- \_\_\_ Fernández de Lizardi
- \_\_\_ Ignacio M. Altamirano
- \_\_\_ Amado Nervo

\_\_\_ Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera  
\_\_\_ Enrique González Martínez  
\_\_\_ Salvador Díaz Mirón  
\_\_\_ Mariano Azuela  
\_\_\_ Gregorio López y Fuentes  
\_\_\_ Alfonso Reyes  
\_\_\_ Carlos Pellicer  
\_\_\_ Ramón López Velarde  
\_\_\_ Rodolfo Usigli  
\_\_\_ Agustín Yáñez  
\_\_\_ Carlos Fuentes  
\_\_\_ Juan Rulfo  
\_\_\_ José Vasconcelos  
\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

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