

A MEXICAN EXPERIENCE

Sabbatical Report
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INTRODUCTION

The objective of my one-semester sabbatical leave was three fold:

1. To reach a practical level of fluency in the Spanish language.
2. To observe methods of teaching of a foreign language while being a student myself.
3. To learn as much as possible of the culture, history and art of the Mexican people.

Obviously, in such a short time as one semester I could only complete but a short and relatively superficial study of each of these three objectives, but all three logically fitted together.

On one hand, my studies of the Spanish language previous to my departure to Mexico was an invaluable asset which allowed me to profit much more by the excellent classes I attended in Mexico.

On the other hand, the sum of my living experiences in Mexico, whether at the home of my Mexican host or while traveling, not only developed my ability to speak Spanish, but enlarged greatly my experiences and understanding of the Mexican people and their history.

B. THE CENTER FOR BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL STUDIES

This preparation was invaluable for my experience in Mexico, as the second part of my language learning took place in Cuernavaca. There, I studied at the CENTER FOR BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL STUDIES (Centro Bilingue) for five weeks. Universities of the United States recognize one unit of credit for each week at the Center. I received a grade of "A" for the total of my five weeks and my professor of Cal Poly Pomona, Dr. Farrell, granted me the one unit of credit for independent study which I had requested.

By chance, I had received a catalogue of Mexican language schools for foreigners which were spread around the country and in cities big and small. I chose to come to Cuernavaca because of its near perfect weather, of course, but also because it is located near several of the most important archaeological sites of Mexico, and within an hour and a half of Mexico City and its' cultural riches.

I also sensed, on reading the catalog, that the school I chose was more seriously academic than the others. I later found out that I had made the right choice. Of the twelve schools of language of Cuernavaca, the CENTER FOR BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL STUDIES is considered by far the best and the most efficient.

Spring is the so-called "slow period" of the year. However, the reputation of the school is growing at such a rate that there were already several groups of students from varied universities of the United States in addition to a number of individuals like me, such as students, teachers, doctors, engineers, business men, etc. Many of these persons come only for two or three weeks, but the group of forty students from the University of Utah, for instance, was there for nine weeks of full credit courses.

Each student is housed in a Mexican family home where he/she is expected to share, in Spanish, all meals and daily activities of the home. These families are carefully chosen by the school and great care is taken to satisfy the special needs of individuals and to match tastes and interests. The families are also under contract to speak only Spanish to the students.

As for the school, it is located in a quiet district of Cuernavaca, a very charming town of the State of Morelos with streets lined with tabache trees and bougainvillea. It is also a fast growing, buzzing refuge for the professionals and retired people who can escape the turmoil of Mexico City and the concerns over more earthquakes.

The school consist of modern small classrooms surrounding a lovely garden with fountains, lanai, swimming pool and clusters of flowers everywhere.

The Founder-President, Lic. Santiago Olalde is a hard-working, very efficient administrator, an innovator and a very respected leader. His warmth and friendliness are easily communicated through the whole faculty, and the near perfect climate of Cuernavaca, as well as the relaxed and casual atmosphere of sunny Mexico contribute to creating an unusually inviting ambiance which encourages one to shed inhibitions and want to share in the speaking of a foreign language, an important incentive in the learning process.

However, the curriculum is strictly observed, and every one seems to think that the learning experience is well worth the cost of the tuition (\$100 per week for individuals -- \$75 per week for student groups).

Students attend eight hours of classes daily including six compulsory class hours in the morning and two hours of varied activities in the late afternoon such as: excursions to archaeological centers, markets or haciendas, visits of other educational centers, basic grammar classes for beginners, and for the more advanced, weekly class-discussions of literature based on reading of contemporary short novels.

During classes -- and "breaks" as well -- not a word of English is permitted.

I was extremely glad to have had some Spanish preparation as this made my classes much more effective and

to follow these lectures. I enjoyed them tremendously, and learned a great deal about a country I had not known at all before.

As for the classes of Spanish language, they are also extremely enjoyable and profitable. These are taught by native language instructors of different backgrounds who have been trained in the most modern methods of language teaching. Each class is made up of not more than five students who form a friendly, cohesive group with the same teacher for a period of one week. Each week-end, the staff meets in conference to discuss the program of every student and places him/her in the proper group for the following week.

In the case of my group, we worked so well together, and we liked our instructor so much that we requested to stay together week after week.

C. STUDYING SPANISH -- PEDAGOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The grammar points were explained to us in Spanish through conversation according to the inductive method which I have been using in my own teaching, and by which the students are led to discover themselves the grammar rule in the sentences they are using through questions and answers.

The major advantage I see in such small classes as those of Cuernavaca over our classes here is that the students practice the same grammar rule for a much longer

intelligent and eager to learn, a harmonious and very friendly, and very productive, atmosphere developed. In fact we had a tendency to stay together (although often along with others) during the excursions, speaking Spanish constantly.

I did learn a great deal of Spanish during my five weeks of classes at the Center and I can say that I became able to speak relatively fluently on almost any subject even using the subjunctive and conditional.

I also learned many new details of teaching technique such as the importance of speaking only Spanish in class. I found indeed that I learned as much by listening intently as by speaking -- and that, while one's ear becomes adjusted to the sounds of the new language, the mind learns to recognize ethymological similarities and to guess the meaning of the new words heard.

In fact, before I tell you more about my traveling experiences, let me express here my conviction on the best method to learn a foreign language.

I have had opportunities to travel to many parts of the world and to be exposed to different languages.

A. Before coming to the United States, I had had seven years of English study and I could speak rather fluently when I was offered my Fullbright

with a long enough stay in the country of that language -- if possible attending language classes while residing there.

I also would like to add that it is of extreme importance to continue to speak or, at least, to read in that language after one's return home. As one of my teachers of Cernavaca said to me: "One loses the memory of seven words a day when one does not use the language newly learned."

However, anyone wishing to speak a foreign language should be given the opportunity to visit the country of that language. The lasting impression he/she will receive will help him/her remember not only the country itself and its people, but the language and its spirit.

An additional benefit one meets when traveling to a foreign country is that one learns more about one's own compatriots as well as the human race in general. Being far away from family responsibilities and daily obligations, one can open one's mind and emotional capacity to many different and enriching experiences. And, while most fast travelers only touch the surface of things and people, a more thorough study of the language and country offers opportunities for much more rewarding understanding of cultures and humanity.

Finally, a word on the living arrangements I encountered in Cuernavaca.

Because of the limitations of diet imposed by my fragile digestive system (a casualty of the Second World War) the school placed me in a home where the cooking would be suitable for me (no onions, very little salt, no beans, all natural food etc.).

It turned out to be a beautiful, but rather special experience: the owner of the house was a Frenchman and an artist. With such affinities between us (I am an artist and have lived with artists all my life) we found ourselves speaking French whenever we were alone; and, in a certain way, this was beneficial to me as a French instructor, because I need to immerse myself in really fluent French once in a while for fear of losing some of the spontaneity of my own language.

However, his house was constantly filled with people, none of whom spoke French. Another young man, a Mexican, lived there, the house keeper was Mexican, and Mexican friends came in and out at all hours, including a young modern Japanese woman; another room was also rented to other Americans trying to speak Spanish as I did. In fact, during my last two weeks there, an American couple of Chinese origin, also studying at the "Center," was my room neighbor; their charm and manners were typically oriental and I had the feeling that my experience was truly international. Another advantage of this situation was that I was

tourista, or worse, hepatitis; and, because of my digestive problems, I have never been able to eat Mexican food.

However, this time, I decided I had lived long enough to take a chance: I was not ill a single day of my trip!

First of all, I only ate and drank in respectable hotels and restaurants, although I never spent more than five dollars for a meal and ten dollars for a room. Yet, I believe that, in time, with only caution, I would have caught some bad germ, as I traveled by bus all the way to the deep south of Mexico.

On the first day of my school experience in Cuernavaca, during the "Orientation Program," we were told that, to avoid being ill, we only had to eat yogurt three times a day.

I, and most of us, followed this advice dutifully. The Mexican supermarkets have the equivalent of our "Yoplait" yogurt. I had three servings a day during the first two weeks, then two a day and then one a day for the rest of my trip -- and I still now continue the habit. The only person in my larger group who became ill -- and very ill in fact! -- was my friend the young doctor who neglected to eat yogurt. He changed his mind after his illness!

II. CHAPTER TWO

Description of Travel and Related Activities

The third objective of my sabbatical trip to Mexico was to learn all I could of the country and it's people. As I studied in Cuernavaca, I had many varied experiences and visited many sites of the region. But to travel to further places I had a little more than three weeks altogether; yet, I took full advantage of that time and, because I traveled alone, I not only could make full use of my time, but I could mingle freely with the local people, and after my five weeks of study in Cuernavaca, that period of traveling turned out to be the time when my ability to speak Spanish progressed the most.

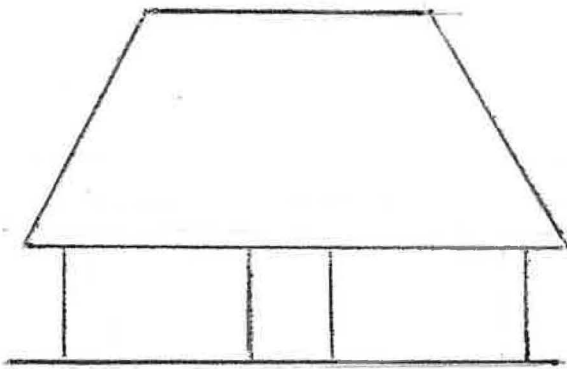
A. Yucatan Peninsula

My first traveling excursion in Mexico took place before my study in Cuernavaca: for four days I visited Yucatan.

Neglecting the beautiful coastline and its temptations such as Cancun, I decided to concentrate on the most important centers of Maya culture. My "pied-a-terre" was Merida, a charming, quite prosperous small city. From there, I signed up for an excursion to the great archaeological sites of Chichen-Itza, Uxmal and Kabah.

It turned out that, instead of a bus load of tourists, my excursion group consisted of only a young, discreet couple and myself. Our guide for three days took us in his comfortable Ford Station Wagon, and we all very much enjoyed the privacy and quietness this gave us.

The three-hour drive to Chichen-Itza took us across flat, hot land, through many small villages. The people looked very poor but happy. They live in the same kind of small rectangular one-room huts as their Maya ancestors did. These are covered with thatch-roofs made of sisal straw (our century plant) and have one opening on each of two opposite sides for light and cross ventilation. Some of them have electricity and a few roofs have a television antenna. The huts and houses along the road are painted with lovely



pastel colors -- much softer colors than in the cities, and the Maya huts are often recessed in a courtyard filled with tropical vegetation: banana trees, indian oaks, and magnificent, gigantic "pitch trees."

Everyone in Yucatan, except the tourists, sleeps in a hamac; they prefer it, it is cooler and it takes less space. The women wear sparkling white dresses with bright, colorful

In the villages, we see many young boys in the streets, some with bicycles, even during school hours -- but we almost never see little girls; they are working in the home. The women do their shopping in the morning, before the heat. The afternoon is for siesta.

1. Chichen-Itza

Upon our arrival at Chichen-Itza, about 130 km from Meridawe settled in the beautiful Spanish style "Hotel Mayaland." Such a hotel is an experience in itself. One accedes through spacious lobbies to the upper story rooms by climbing grand staircases. These are works of art: their wrought iron ramps lead one up steps of intricate and brilliant ceramic tiles with edges of solid, highly polished oak. There are beautiful ceramic tile floors everywhere. Arcades surround a central large garden with ponds, and a large swimming pool in which are reflected walls of bongainvillea. Stone walk ways -- raised because of the heavy rain season -- meander to and between bungalows among a carefully landscaped tropical jungle which is full of exotic, colorful birds that sing day and night and answer each other's echo.

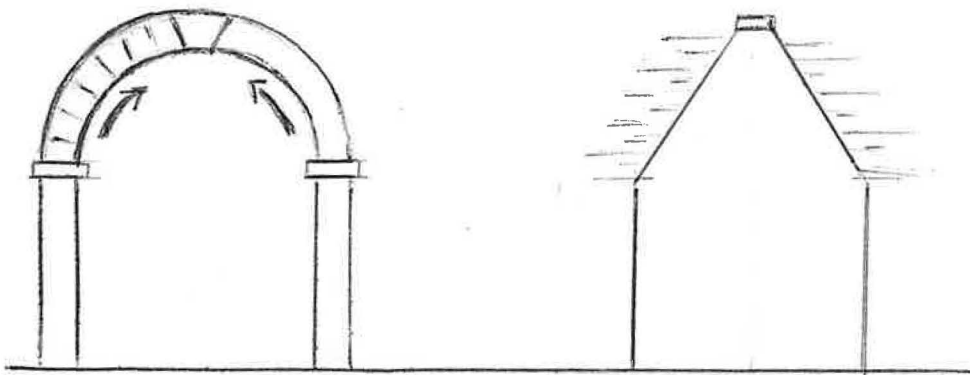
Chichen-Itza is one of the most important and most fascinating sites of Mexico. It is the best preserved site of all the Maya ruins. It's architecture is not purely Maya

and many structures were rebuilt by the Toltecs when they arrived as conquerors.

For this reason, a relatively more detailed account of Chichen-Itza's history might give a better understanding of the great art of the ancient Mexican people.

A. The town of Chichen-Itza dates back to 500 B.C. when it was but an agricultural village built around existing cenotes, or wells.

B. Then during the Formative Period (325 - 625 A.D.) outside influence disappeared and the typical characteristics of Maya culture became evident, such as the famous Maya vault or false arch, also called Corbel Arch.



Contrary to the principal of the roman arch which kept up the key stone by balancing the opposite forces of the other stones on each side of the arch, the Maya "false arch" consisted of two straight sides made of overlapping blocks of masonry which formed

a trunketed cone terminated by a flat stone or beam. With this method, they could build long corridors, but never could build very large rooms. Even the size of the arch was limited and the arch of Kabah is the largest one known. The Maya's already knew the principal of the arch as well as the wheel, but they considered it sacrilege to use any part of the circle which was the symbol of the sun.

- C. The central phase of the Classic period, referred to as Florescence (525 - 800 A.D.) produced a spectacular flourishing in the arts and sciences, notably so in architecture, painting, sculpture, ceramics, lapidary art, astronomy, mathematics and hieroglyphic writing.

Chichen-Itza, then became a religious center of increasing importance.

- D. Then, toward the end of the Classic period (800 - 925 A.D.) aptly called the "Collapse," under foreign influence, the Maya culture was weakened and disappeared; the people emigrated to more fertile land and only came back to Chichen-Itza for primitive religious rites.
- E. However, in the 10th century, the Mayas returned to Chichen-Itza while at the same time arrived

pact of Chichen-Itza, Uxmal and Mayapan gave Itza people, the opportunity to thrive once again, and in so doing, transformed their capital into a magnificent city. It was then that the most spectacular buildings of Chichen-Itza were erected: El Caracol, or observatory; El Castillo or Kukulcan's Pyramid; the Temple of the Warriors, the Ball Court, the Group of the Thousands Columns and many others.

But in 1194 Mayapan broke the triple alliance, subdued Chichen and Uxmal, and Chichen-Itza was gradually abandoned by its people who only came back for ceremonial rites.

Nevertheless, the site, as it is now, is grandiose and immense: temples yet to be uncovered spread for several kilometers on each side of the road. Only thirty of those can be admired today. These magnificent structures were raised during two different periods of time. There are those of the second half of the Classic, from the 7th to the 10 century A.D., erected in the purest Maya style; and those built over the Maya-Toltec period (from the 11th to the 13th century A.D.) already bearing the features of Mexican art.

As soon as I arrived, I went by myself to discover the south side called the Old Chichen. The principal monuments there are the Nunnery and the Observatory.

The Nunnery, is the largest monument of the classic period -- and is the result of the superposition of several structures belonging to different construction stages. As

we shall see later, the Maya did not destroy old structures, they simply built their new temples over them. The Spaniard's called the complex the Nunnery, because of its many rooms and the belief that there were priestesses among the Maya people.

Although the edifice is in ruins, it is still possible to appreciate its architectonic traits and decorations that are typically Maya, with small columns and floral motifs or latice work between two plain moldings.

Next to the nunnery, one can find "the Church" which dates back to the VIIth and VIIIth centuries A.D. and was build in classical Puuc style. The main ornamentation of the frieze and crest is a series of masks of the Rain God, Chac, with his hooked nose protruding from the walls, and with which the God was supposed to hold up the sky. I found this architectural element in many other temples of Mexico where one meets the Maya influence.

The Carocol (snail) or Observatory was used as such by the Maya astronomers. Indeed, the small openings on the walls of the observation chamber face the cardinal points. As we know now, the Mayas were extremely knowledgeable mathematicians. They devised a numeration system based on the numeral 20 which is rather complete and much superior to the system known then in Europe.

The great accomplishment of the Mayas was the invention of the zero. It was represented by a seashell. They used a bar for five and a dot for the units up to four. The hieroglyphic carvings I saw on the walls of many temples carry these numerals. This observatory dates of the period following the "Collapse" when Toltec patterns were beginning to be imposed on Chichen-Itza. It is made of a superposition of terraces surrounding a cylindrical tower which holds a spiral stairway that leads to a higher level chamber used for the observation of the heavens.

Later in the afternoon, our guide took us to the north side of Chichen-Itza and this was an unforgettable and moving experience. As we arrived in the wide open field there stood one of the most beautiful monuments man has ever built, the Great Pyramid of Kukulcan, also called "El Castillo" (the castle). It stands in the middle of a vast esplanade surrounded by other magnificent buildings. The great spaces between these allow the visitor to admire each one from a distance. But I must say that I remained in awe, in front of the great pyramid.

Sustained by a square base measuring 60 yards by side, it is formed by nine terraces with sloping walls whose faces are ornamented with protruding rectangular panels. On the center of each side of the pyramid rises a monumental

stairway which leads to the platform where the temple was raised, the facade of which is adorned by a mask of God Chac as well as carvings referring to Quetzalcoatl as the God of Wind.

El Castillo was devoted to the cult of Kukulcan (Quetzalcoatl), but we now believe it was also connected with the worshiping of the Sun: each stairway has 91 steps. The total of all 4 sides gives 364 steps, plus the upper platform: 365 steps which equals the number of days in a year. And there are other numbers corresponding to the Toltec calendar.

Another structure very similar to this one lies intact underneath. It is an excellent example of the religious custom of superposing one monument above the previous one at the end of a cycle of 52 years.

I climbed the steep staircase inside the pyramid and at the top of this ancient structure I could not help but collect myself as in prayer in front of such a silent and mysterious sight that spoke of eternity: There, in the antechamber of this older inside temple, lies a remarkably well preserved reclining figure of a Chac-Mool (meaning "Red Claw") -- possibly a messenger of the God. It was on such stone Chac-Mools that the prisoner to be sacrificed was laid backwards on its center platform, and his chest was opened alive to offer to the Gods a human heart still beating.

Inside the shrine is the sculpture of a fierce looking jaguar with open fauces -- painted in a brilliant red and with spots of inlaid jade discs on his coat, his eyes made of jade balls and his fanges of flint -- that probably served as a throne for the high priest. This hidden small chamber inhabited by such mystical creatures gives one a different perspective of life and time.

When I came back to the bright sunlight of the outside, I decided to climb the outside of the pyramid. Climbing is easy if one is in good physical condition, but coming down is another matter!! Fortunately the main stairway offers a chain down the middle, to which one can hang on!!

The Ball Court of Chichen-Itza is the largest one in Mexico. The game consisted of two opposite teams who tried to pass a hard rubber ball through a stone ring which one can still see affixed to the parallel walls of the court. These walls form platforms on top of which the people stood to watch the game. They are decorated with stone carving depicting the game. From these we know that often, the captain of the loosing team offered himself to be sacrificed to the Gods.

Other sites of Chichen-Itza would be equally worth a description: some of these are the Temple of the Jaguars, at the entrance to the Ball court, the Tzompantli or Wall of Skulls, the Platform of Venus, and the Cenote, or Sacred

Well of Sacrifices into which the Mayas threw warriors, children and young virgins in offering to Chac, God of Rain, when there was a drought. Masses of jewels and objects of different materials were found in the bottom of its waters.

Then there is the imposing colonnade called the Temple of the Thousands Columns; some of which are beautifully carved, and finally the Temple of the Warriors which is part of the group of the Thousand Columns -- a Chac-Mool and a colonnade are located in front of the plaza.

It would be tempting to elaborate equally on the description of my other excursions but lack of time only permits me to mention the numerous places I visited.

2. Uxmal and Kabal

The next morning we drove down to Uxmal. I must say that, in some ways, I was even more impressed by Uxmal, a center of the same general character, but whose layout is even more noble, with even more grandiose vistas.

In contrast with Chichen-Itza, which reflects a combination of cultures Maya, Toltec and Itza, this pre-columbian city of Uxmal is purely Maya.

The Pyramid of the Magician, also called Pyramid of the Devin differs from that of Chichen-Itza in that its base is an oval instead of a square and its surface is more rugged, more arid and even more foreboding. It is made up of five superposed temples. The huge Palace of the Governor which

stands alone on a plateau, has some of the most beautiful proportions in the world and must have been the inspiration of Lebrun and the architects of Versailles Castle in 17th century France. The so called quadrangle of the Nunnery is equally impressive with its magnificent geometric carvings covering the facade of all four sides, the corners of which are profiled in the sky with powerful masks of the Rain God.

I saw the night program "Sound and Light" in this sacred and immense rectangle: one cannot help but feel inspired to greatness when one re-lives in imagination the family joys, the dances, the speeches, the struggle against drought and famine, the heroism, the human sacrificial offerings that scanded the daily or ceremonial activities of such noble people for whom courage was a way of life and was aided by their complete submission to their Gods.

It is believed that most of Uxmal was built during the Classic period between 600 and 1000 A.D., in pure Maya style, with little or no outside influence. I did see some stone carvings of plumed serpents representing Kukulcan (Quetzalcoatl), the God Leader of Chichen-Itza, but tribes often adopted divinities of their neighbors.

On the other hand, while other sites show vestiges of a decadent period following the Classic, at Uxmal, everything stopped abruptly while civilization was at its summit,

leaving no trace of degeneration. That is probably why I was so impressed by the purity of the architecture.

From Uxmal, our guide took us to Kabah, another site, ten miles further, most of which has not yet been excavated. When one walks around such tree and grass covered hills, one is reminded that, under each one lies one or several superposed sacred temples which, during our European Dark Ages, were the centers of sophisticated activities for generations of Maya people.

The most interesting site in Kabah is a great Mayan Arch. This was a sort of "Arc de Triomphe" serving as entrance or landmark of the main processional avenue which lead, several miles away, to Uxmal or Chichen-Itza, and to the Sacred Sacrificial Wells on ceremonial days. This is probably the largest and best preserved example of the Mayan Arch, or so-called Corbel Arch described earlier (see page 18).

3. Merida

After Kabah, I returned to Merida which I visited for a day, exploring the cathedral and enjoying the well groomed park on the Zocalo where I had my lunch sitting near a charming old Mexican couple typical of the natives of the Yucatan Peninsula (see photo). I also visited the regional museum where I photographed the striking stone head of a Maya, and the Chac-Mool which you see here.

B. Cuernavaca and Surroundings

1. Cuernavaca

Leaving Merida I flew to Mexico City and was driven directly to Cuernavaca to begin my intensive study of Spanish. Classes and homework left me little free time. However, I was able to see most of the important sites in and around the city.

In fact, my first day was already rich in adventures: after a typical full lunch in the small tropical patio of my host, I went out to explore the town.

The most important monument of Cuernavaca is the Palace of Cortez. This was the winter residence of the Spanish conqueror as of 1530. It has the appearance of a formidable medieval fortress with many of the arabic architectural elements one finds in similar places of southern Spain. The battlements and crenels, the turret at the corner, the high, plain walls of the facade are softened by the central loggia which frames the main entrance; and the lovely park of the main square, filled with lacy jacarandas and colorful flowers creates a happy contrast of greenery over the background of the venerable old stone walls of the Palace.

In the interior, high ceilinged rooms surround inside patios and house the Museo Cuauhnahuac which I visited many times again, later on, for it contains informative collections of photographs and mementos of the Revolution,

as well as beautiful pre-columbian stone carvings. But the most interesting part of Cortez's Palace is the large murals by the great Diego Rivera which decorate the east loggia. These were a gift to the city from Dwight Morrow, once U.S. Ambassador to Mexico and a resident of Cuernavaca. It depicts the Spanish Conquest and the enslavement of the Indian people.

As in his other murals, Rivera did not hesitate to represent the evil of the conquest, but his style, although very pictorial and informative, is much more gentle and represents a much milder temperament and spirit of revolt than his successors Siqueiros and Orozco whom we shall meet later.

Kate Simon, in her witty book on "Mexico" has this to say about the murals of Cuernavaca:

Considering that many Mexicans have thought, and some still do, of the U.S. as the land of latter-day "Conquistadores" (certainly Rivera thought so, to judge from his utterances and paintings) the combination of American capitalist and Communist painter collaborating on a set of murals depicting the brutalities of the earlier Imperialists and the triumphs of the Revolution is odd. But, as has often been remarked, diplomacy, money, and art make strange bedfellows. Done in 1930, the wall paintings are full of the round, affectionate rhythms with which Rivera embraced even his most brutal subjects. Zapata is, of course, heroically simple, an appealing innocent,

and his famous white horse as winsome and gentle as a unicorn. But the most living strokes and rhythms flow around the bundles of sugar cane, the piles of graceful fish, and mounds of mangoes like polished gold.

Unfortunately, the dear and beautiful figure of Zapata on his white horse stands at an end of a side mural, near the balcony of the loggia and the strong tropical sunlight is fading its colors rapidly.

From there, my first day visit took me through the charming bustling zocalo, to the cathedral of San Fransisco. Like so many churches of Spain, this was originally a Fransiscan monastery begun in 1529. It is surrounded by a large park which contains three other, smaller churches that seemed to constantly hold elaborate wedding ceromonies.

The whole complex is enclosed in fortress-type battlements above which one joyfully glances, from the outside, at the top of palm trees and other luxurious vegetation. The interior of the cathedral, recently restored presents a disappointingly cold, modern "canopy" over an altar which has nothing of the Mexican spirit and only wants to present a "moderne" and very simplified, reduced, and hungry version of St. Peter of Rome. Fortunately, one is somewhat distracted, during the primary singing of the high school teenagers, by the large murals, sixteen to seventeenth century, recently brought out from

enjoyment. As I carefully walked among the displays of tinsels, children shirts, sandals, tortillas, mangos, and papayas, spread on the ground, over the sidewalk, and almost to the middle of the street, I was amazed at the wonderously neat order in which these very poor people present their ware with complete confidence in the continuous respect on the part of the millions of feet that could crush their livelihood. They seem happy, these simple people, and their children, if they are no longer suckling at their mother's breast, are already selling with a shrewd precocity. In fact, one receives the impression that every one at the market, or almost, enjoys the sunshine which dances over the orgies of colors and shapes, and the great shuffling of humanity with its challenges of choices and bargaining. After a few trips to the Mercado, I had struck a friendship with a lovely young woman whose shrewd business sense was quickly making a success of her little commerce. I concentrated on buying beautiful and colorful embroidered Mexican folk dresses from her at less than half the price I would have paid in the elegant shops around the zocalo. And each time, we conversed together about the way of life in the United States and in Mexico. I also observed more than once, groups of "chilangas ricas" or rich women from Mexico City -- those who come on weekends to their "second home in

the country." Their obnoxious and superior conduct with the merchants made me realize, more than ever, the great differences that still exist between the social classes in Mexico.

Cuernavaca is a case in point: from the downtown area, one climbs toward the upper parts of the city where the hills are covered with quiet streets bordered by walled magnificent villas nested in luxuriant parks, with rose gardens and swimming pools. The people who live there seldom go down to the zocalo: they leave it to the tourists, and to the poor. And poor there are, indeed. The young who sell their painted clay masks and their lovely baskets in front of Cortez's Palace may be counted as "unemployed" by the statistics, and yet they are not the ones to be pitied. The "miserables" are the very old, the blind, the invalid and the abandoned mothers surrounded by their young children, who live entirely from the pesos thrown at them by the passers-by and who can only curl up close together on the sidewalk, against the cold, when night falls. It is difficult to forget such images and not become revolted at the corruption and inefficiency of the governments of our supposedly advanced civilization!

And yet, I truly believe that, in spite of its great physical and economic disasters, Mexico will survive and

eventually grow stronger and stronger because its people have three major qualities that are very much alive: its religious faith, its national pride, and the strength of family ties.

A. The Catholic religion is very much alive in Mexico, even among the young generations: the churches are always full during all masses and even partially full between services, at all hours of the day. Taxi drivers almost always cross themselves when passing in front of churches or religious statues, and bus drivers make an altar of their dashboards or at least hang their rosary on their rearview mirror. Many of them have carved their crude wooden change box into an elaborate church facade complete with towers and sculptures.

B. Pride in the race and the country and its customs is for the Mexican as strong as their pride in their church. In spite of the influence of commercialism and television, most Mexicans with whom I talked, told me that they had no desire to go and live in the United States. Those who cross our borders are those who are destitute of education and livelihood, and who have lost that

while living close to nature and according to its laws and the principles of family, love and children brings joy and the rewards of life.

As a result, children are happy, healthy and well behaved; and I must say that I had been in Mexico five weeks before I heard a child cry: that was a baby trying to drink at the empty breast of his emaciated, destitute mother who was sitting, legs stretched, on the sidewalk of a street of Mexico City, in the Zona Rosa (the Pink Zone) one block away from the Gucci Store.

Cuernavaca has its share of children and one has the impression that every other woman carries an infant in her arms, while walking in high-heel pumps on the uneven narrow sidewalks of the city. A sense of fatalism prevails over a sense of danger among Mexican people and nothing ever seems to be done to prevent potential disasters, or to remedy perenial or permanent nuisances such as the noise and gas pollution of those horrible Mexican buses! I was told that the Governor of Morelos (or is it "of the city"?) owns the bus company and that nobody and nothing, up to this date, has forced him to improve the condition of these ugly, old, rickety, noisy, monsters which hardly deserve the name of buses!

2. Taxco

Much more pleasant for the tourist is the small town of Taxco which I visited twice. A two hour mountainous bus ride takes you to this picturesque cluster of lovely tile-covered houses which climb up to the top of a hill crowned with one of the most graceful and most ornate baroque churches of Mexico. The white stuccoed walls reminded me of the Greek island of Mikonos except for the wrought iron baloconies from which hang vines of bougainvillea. The tourists come to Taxco to drink its charm, and also to shop in the hundreds of silver shops, only two or three of which deserve a serious purchase. But, in addition to an enchanting walk in the narrow meandering streets, two places deserve a special visit in Taxco: one is the so-called "Casa Figueroa" originally built in 1767 by the counts of Cadena, and bought and restored by the industrialist Fidel Figueroa in 1943. It is now opened to the public and offers a complete display of a bourgeois Mexican interior of strong Spanish influence.

The other place not to be missed is the Church of Santa Prisca which some consider one of the finest examples of 18th century ecclesiastic architecture. It was commissioned and entirely paid by the famous Don Jose de la Borda in gratitude for his good fortune in his discoveries of silver mines.

The interior of the Church is pure Churrigueresque with gold-leafed carvings covering every possible surface. The beauty of this church stems from its unity of concept due to the fact that the same architects, Duran and Caballero, directed the entire work from start to finish.

Even the sacristy, in the back of the altar, is a pleasure to visit and holds magnificent paintings by Cabrera and small treasures such as the angel carved in gilded wood represented in this report.

3. Xochicalco

Other excursions were organized by the "Center" with one of our professors as our guide.

Thus we visited impressive archaeological wonders such as Xochicalco. This large fortified site, located 42 km south of Cuernavaca contains pyramids, ball courts, shrines, and especially a pyramide which stands as a sentinel on a hill above the other buildings and is covered at its base by large and magnificent carvings of Toltec character. The stylized plumed serpent one discovers again suggest that the temple may have been dedicated to Quetzalcoatl.

That day we also visited the orphanage of Padre Wasson in the old Hacienda de San Gabriel, a haven for the "abandoned" of this world.

4. Popocatepetl

Another time we went by the town of Cuautla to the high volcanic mountain of Popocatepetl which, with its twin peak Iztaccihuatl, overlook the Valley of Mexico from their snowy caps. On the way back we stopped at the colorful market of Amecameca -- and there, I discovered a lovely cloister which was that of Sister Juana, the famous, controversial writer from Vera Cruz who was a feminist in spite of her humility and obedience to her order, and who is now pictured on the money bill of 1000 pesos.

Then, on we went to the artificial paradise that is fabulous Hacienda Hotel del Cocoyoc where one wanders under ancient arcades, through gardens filled with flowers, birds and fountains, to secluded corners furnished with gigantic trees whose roots climb upon the walls, only to open towards series of ponds, cascades and swimming pools among which walk nonchalantly pink flamingos. There, in a shaded patio, we ordered a drink such as a pinata-colada, sitting next to the stars and famous!

5. Home of Siqueiros

One short trip took us to the home and studio of the great artist David Alfaro Siqueiros, in Cuernavaca and then to the "Tabachines Gold Club" for lunch-in a modern, residential housing community for "nouveaux-riches."

6. Malinalco

Another day, we went deep into the high mountains to the sacred Aztec Temple of Malinalco carved directly into the natural walls of rock. A stone eagle and a jaguar are an integral part of the small, round inner chamber of the main temple. On the way, we pass by the pilgrimage town of Chalma where we saw the faithful walk to the church with the traditional wreaths of fresh flowers on their heads.

7. Teotihuacan

But the greatest archeological experience of the Aztec world of Central Mexico is certainly the visit to Teotihuacan, northeast of Mexico City. This was the earliest urban center of Mesoamerica, and the dominant power in Mexico from 100 A.D. until its destruction by northern tribes in 750 A.D. The Aztec named it the "place where the Gods are made." It is a vast ensemble of many temples and huge pyramids lined along a wide, two-mile long avenue called the "Street of the Dead." In the "Citadel," the Temple of Quetzalcoatl presents some of the most beautiful, powerful, and best preserved stone carvings in all of Mexico. The reason for their preservation is that the temple was covered over by another one which has been cleared out. Fierce looking heads of Quetzalcoatl, the plumed-serpent God, protrude from the wall. Through a

I went to D.F. as the Mexicans' call their city, on two school excursions; and mostly I spent there my long four-day vacation for Labor Day and the "Cinco de Mayo" holiday.

As I always arranged my trips to be there on weekends only, I did not encounter the miserable traffic jams and the air-pollution which seem to be the unhappy lot of those who work in the capital. In fact, the city appeared extremely beautiful to me, with wide avenues such as the "Paseo de la Reforma," streets lit with decorative Victorian light posts, and many excellent modern buildings.

1. The Earthquake

However, in spite of all that I had heard, I was not prepared for the psychological choc that was for me the sight of the destruction caused by the recent earthquake. On the grand boulevards like the Paseo de la Reforma, the crumbled buildings have been hidden behind tall fences, or quickly restored.

But in the side streets of the Zona Rosa I suddenly thought I was thrown back to France, during the Second World War, and seeing the ruins caused by the last bombardment.

My hotel Vienna on calle Marsella was standing alone, intact, next to a huge pile of rubble under which bodies will still be found. But the excavations are slow when one has no jack-hammer and only a pick and shovel!

2. The Palacio de Bellas Artes -- The Great Murals

My first afternoon in the capital was spent in the Palacio de Bella Artes, or Palace of Fine Arts. This imposing structure was built in 1904 by the Italian architect Adamo Boari, in white Carrara marble in the style of "art deco;" but it was only finished in 1934 by the Mexican Federico Mariscal who designed a very beautiful interior lobby in art deco inspired by Aztec motifs. It is now not only a theater and concert hall but also a National Museum of Modern Art. The most important display however is of a permanent nature: an incredible collection of some of the greatest paintings by all the most famous muralists of Mexico. It was raining hard outside when I arrived there. So I spent three hours studying and photographing these great murals by Diego Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, Camarena and Rufino Tamayo.

The large fresco by Rivera replaces the one which the artist had executed for the Rockfeller Center in New York and which had been refused because of its revolutionary implications.

One of the most powerful murals of Orozco is there; it is called "Catharsis" and, like so many of his works, it violently condemns the decadence of our world.

Several murals of David Siqueiros are strong messages of the Revolution; but the most poignant is that of the

torture of Cuauhtemoc by the Spaniards. Then, there are two magnificent murals by Rufino Tamayo which are of a less violent and more poetic quality.

A bright young man working at the information desk was eager to learn english. We talked a while and he helped me greatly with information on these murals (there are no books on the subject) and later sent me beautiful posters which I brought back to my Spanish teaching colleagues along with others I bought in Guadalajara. I did go back to see these magnificent murals with a group of students from the "Center," but this second time, I was forbidden by the guards to take photographs. I do not know why they let me do so the first time. Anyhow I now have a complete collection of slides for our students.

3. The Ballet Folklorics

I also went back on Sunday for the morning performance of the Ballets Folklorico.

Before the program, one has the great pleasure of seeing the extraordinary theater curtain made of tinted glass, in New York, by Tiffany. The ballets are of truly marvelous quality: I particularly enjoyed the first ballet in Aztec costumes with the strong rhythm of the drums and the moving, delicate and swift dance of the wounded deer caught by hunters.

4. The National Museum of Anthropology

I spent the entire following day in the famous, modern, National Museum of Anthropology. The inside courtyard is sheltered from the sun by an immense canopy which rests on a single cylindrical column surrounded by a curtain of falling waters. The exhibition rooms, all around, are filled with the most outstanding collections in the world of the best sculptures of all the Indian tribes that flourished before the Spanish conquest. This museum is justly famous!

I spent a full eight hours there, three of them in the room of Teotihuacan alone! and I wish I could have returned many times!

Two other museums deserve to be seen in the same Chapultepec park: the "Museo de Arte Moderno -- and the Museo Rufino Tamayo. I did not reach the Castillo de Chapultepec (a history museum) in time to visit it before they closed.

5. The University -- It's Library

Another day, our school went to the University of Mexico. There we saw the great mosaic murals of Juan O'Gorman which cover entirely all four sides of the Central Library. They depict the history and the mythology of the Aztec people. Three periods: pre-hispanic, colonial and modern are represented on three sides of the enormous rectangular prism of the building, while the north side

illustrates the artist's vision of the future of Mexico. His style, very different from that of Orozco and Siqueiros, recalls the more naive, popular illustrations of XIXth century Mexican artists. A side of a neighboring building is ornamented with a curious mosaic mural by Siqueiros who successfully created a sensation of movement with large, close-up figures that project from the wall in mosaic covered relief.

6. Coyoacan -- The "Anahuacalli"

On that day we shopped at the Bazaar of Artisans called "El Sabado" -- a feast for the eyes -- had a drink at the elegant "San Angel Inn," another former wealthy hacienda; then had lunch in the barrio de Coyoacan. We sat at a table of a sidewalk cafe on the lovely spacious square. In its center, a circular fountain is ornamented by a large group in bronze of realistic, ferocious looking coyotes. I shared my lunch with one of the thousands of pitiful, homeless dogs that roam the streets of Mexico City -- some so starved that they no longer have the energy to eat.

At the other end of the plaza stands one of the oldest Dominican Monasteries and its church of San Juan Bautista, built in 1583. Close by, at calle Londres 127 we visited the House (now a museum) of Diego Rivera and his wife Frieda Kahlo. The outside of the house, seemingly carved out of lava, has the character of an artist's abode and the garden

is full of interesting Mayan and Aztec sculptures and pottery. The inside presents mostly a collection of paintings by Frieda who was seriously crippled by early polio and an automobile accident. Her terrible suffering is expressed passionately in her somewhat naive, self-taught painting.

Another museum of Diego Rivera, more uniquely his, is called the "Anahuacalli." The artist, who had become rich, had it built to house his immense collection of rare pre-columbian sculptures which he donated to the State. It is a fascinating structure in the form of a somewhat Aztec pyramid, made of dark grey lava. The same rugged character runs through the interior. One passes under Mayan arches into small chambers where niches, carved into the thick wall, set off marvelously the exquisite collections of Gods and figurines in stone, and some of the best ceramic pottery and clay sculpture from Colima and Nayarit I have ever seen.

This museum, although small compared to the great Museo Nacional de Anthropologia is as much a must in the itinerary of an initiated visitor.

7. The Cathedral -- Tenochtitlan -- The National Palace

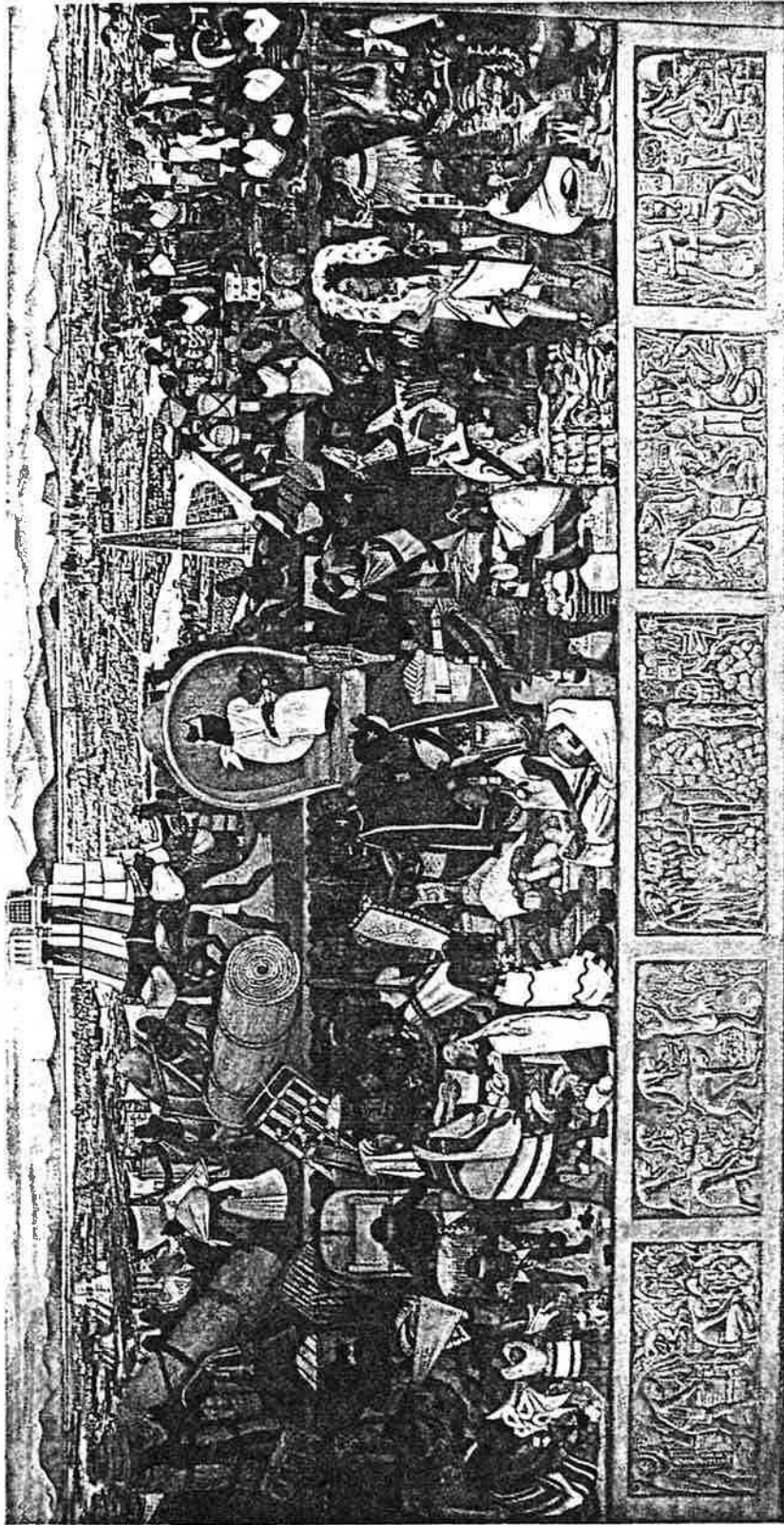
Finally before leaving Mexico City I should mention three other important sites which I visited by myself: the Cathedral of course, the Aztec ruins of Tenochtitlan, and the Palacio Nacional.

A. the most imposing building on the Zocalo is the Cathedral. It stands on the ground once occupied by the Tzompanti, or Aztec ceremonial skull rack. It was built at the end of the sixteenth century. It is very large and full of intricately decorated churrigueresque chapels.

From the zocalo -- a large esplanade which made me think of Moscow's Red Square -- the cathedral has a great deal of noble beauty, and its enormous facade is further augmented by the adjacent church called el Sagrario Metropolitano (Metropolitan Sanctuary), one of the finest examples of churrigueresque architecture in the city.

B. To the east of the Cathedral, a block away, one discovers an elaborate grid of excavations in process. This is where has been uncovered the Great Pyramid (El Templo Mayor) of the ancient Aztec City of Tenochtitlan which stood in the middle of a lake at the emplacement of modern Mexico City.

C. As for the "Palacio Nacional," built over the ruins of that of Moctezuma, it contains principally, 450 meters of frescoes by the famous Diego Rivera.



LA GRAN TENOCHTTLAN

These gigantic paintings cover the walls of the main outside staircase and those of the arcades of the second floor.

The artist has wanted to retrace the whole history of Mexico. The project was probably too ambitious to lead to a masterpiece of great impact. However, it is an important historic document even though somewhat romanticized. It is a very naive, often charming illustration of Mexican life in which the marxist painter did not hesitate to caricature the Spanish oppression. I took many pictures of these murals for the use of our students.

D. PUEBLA

After six weeks in Cuernavaca, armed with my new knowledge of the Spanish language, I departed toward adventure. I passed by Mexico City to unload myself of all excess luggage at the airport and, with only maguey straw bags in lieu of suitcases, I boarded the bus for Puebla.

1. The City

Santiago, the director of the "Center" had advised me not to telephone ahead for hotel reservations if I cared to save money, but to look, instead, on arrival, for one of the many small hotels around the zocalo in any city. A short walk from the bus station brought me to the center of town

where I found instead a very pleasant and quiet room for about ten dollars at the Hotel del Portal just off the zocalo. Immediately afterwards, I went out to explore the surroundings. The elegant main square gives you the feeling that this is an important and orderly city. Arcades surround a shaded park filled with fountains and lucious tropical trees. One side of the square is bordered by the Cathedral built during the end of the sixteen century in a sober, elegant style resembling that of Juan de Herrera, the Spanish architect of the Escorial.

The inside of the Cathedral is vaste and majestic. The dome over the intersection of the transept is especially inspiring because of its great height bathed in sunlight, while, in contrast, the five bays of the nave are dim and full of chapels that invite the faithful to intimate prayer.

I remember particularly, the very beautiful oval paintings by the great painter Cabrera which adorn the main columns along the nave.

As night fell outside, that first evening, the interior took on another life: a new rich mantle of royal blue velvet incrusted with gold embroidery had just been given to the statue of the Virgin. This was cause for a candle-light procession followed by hundreds of Puebla people who filed,

chanting, around the statue, offering fresh flowers at her feet and passing under her cloak which was spread over the faithful like a protective wing.

The next morning was a Sunday. I visited the Cultural Center with a young employee of the Centro de Turismo. Folk dances were performed in lovely costumes in the central patio. Later we went to mass in the Cathedral where a marvelous surprise ended a quiet ceremony: the organist arrived and started to play, and suddenly the high vaults were filled with Bach's great Toccata!

2. Cholula

In the afternoon I decided to take the bus to Cholula. This was a very important religious center in pre-columbian times, but Cortez had the town destroyed, the temples burnt and the people massacred. Later on, maybe by way of expiation, the Spanish covered the town with new churches. The most important of those is that of the convent of San Gabriel with its adjacent "Capilla real" or royal chapel, built on the plan of the Mosque of Cordoue with a forest of little cupolas.

At the summit of what appears to be a hill, another church was built, called "La Iglesia de los Remedios." This hill is in reality the largest pyramid in the world, even larger than the pyramid of Cheops in Egypt. Tunnels recently carved into the hill allow the visitor to see and

touch some of the seven pyramids that had been superposed there by the Olmecs, the Zapotecs, the Miztecs. . . since a millenium before Christ. The hill has not yet been cleared of vegetation but the many ancient constructions around it have been excavated and are visited by the public.

3. Tonantzitla

On my way back I did stop at the village of chipilco as I had been advised to do many times. There, indeed, I found one of the most unforgettable treasures of my Mexican experience: the little church of Santa Maria Tonantzitla.

The naive facade of the church is covered with the famous ceramic tiles of Puebla, some glazed, some unglazed. But it is the interior that present a fantastic relief ornament. In Tonantzitla, we see one of the best examples of syncretism of two cultures: the Spanish -- predominant and solid by the 18th century -- and the Indian, vigorous in the Nahuatl-speaking area.

There the local artists let their joyful imagination and pious enthusiasm dictate the most intricate and delicate carvings over every inch of the interior surface of this exquisite sanctuary. All this is gold leafed, and seems to explode in a sparkling poem of music and love.

By chance, a class of very young children and their teachers were making a novena in the little church, during my visit. Their innocent chanting and their intermittent

The long bus trip was an experience in itself as my traveling companion was a salesman and former teacher full of ideas and opinions. We talked -- in Spanish, of course -- almost without interruption for the nine hours of the trip (after which I was careful to lose him skillfully)!

1. The City

Oaxaca is an enchanting city. There, one feels very much in the deep south: there is an indigenous atmosphere that is less spoiled by modern Americanism. This is a city of art as well as crafts. The mercado is an experience not to be missed, but there are also exquisite churches and museums. Worth mentioning especially are the Church of Santo Domingo which contains another one of the most incredible baroque decorations that can be imagined, and the excellent regional museum which houses many of the treasures excavated from the famous tomb No. 7 at Monte-Alban -- unfortunately the latter was closed to the public because it had been flooded.

2. Monte-Alban

However, my excursion to the mountain top Monte-Alban was, indeed, a memorable experience. Very vast, although smaller than Teotihuacan or even Chichen-Itza the site is still more impressive because of the magnificent setting. The temples are laid in a large rectangle on a high plateau

(at an altitude of about 6000 feet) that stands alone in the middle of a great valley surrounded by high mountains. Moreover, the ancienty of this site is inescapable. This was the cradle of the old Olmec civilization.

Coming back to Oaxaca, I had a lovely dinner of fruit salad under the arcades that surround the zocalo, sharing my food, as usual, with the doves that climb on your table and with the children who try to sell you a rug or a trinket.

3. Mitla

Other excursions took me to Milta a less ancient series of temples of the Mixtec era whose well preserved, geometric decorations were magnificent, that day, illuminated by a low afternoon sun with a background of stormy dark grey clouds over the valley.

4. Coyotepec

I also visited a successful pottery in Coyotepec where the speciality is a very black clay which is burnished to a shine.

The craftsman and owner of the pottery, named Valente, is continuing the tradition made famous by his mother Dona Rosa, very much as Adam, in New Mexico, follows in the footsteps of his famous mother potter Maria Martinez. However most of the present day pottery I have seen is

Oaxaca is crude and does not compare favorably with that of our American Indians in the United States.

F. GUADALAJARA

1. The City

From Oaxaca, I flew to Guadalajara, the largest city of Mexico after the capital and the so-called Paris of the Americas.

It is indeed a very beautiful city. Large avenues, such as the Avenida Vallarta, reminded me of the Avenue Victor Hugo in Paris; and the vast public squares all around the cathedral not only have a strong architectural design, but are lightened in appearance by lovely parks, fountains, and statues. The zocalo is embellished with a very charming kiosque in lacy wrought iron, one of the loveliest in Mexico, while other areas have immense ultra-modern esplanades with very elegant shops.

I spent a week there, living in the home of a surgeon and his family of four children. As they were all busy, my days were free to explore all the wonders I wished to see, and particularly the great fresco murals of the city's native son: Jose Clemente Orozco.

2. The Murals of Orozco

I was already somewhat familiar with his work because, for the last thirty-five years I have seen the extraordinary

mural titled "Prometheus" which adorns one of the dining rooms of Pomona College in Claremont, California, where I live.

However, I was even more subjugated by the great Orozcos I encountered in Guadalajara. Two locations left more lasting impressions than any other: the Palacio del Gobierno and the Hospicio de Cabanas.

- A. The Palace of the Governor is a very imposing building facing the zocalo. It contains an amazing number of inside courtyards, each one surrounded by lovely arcades.

But the great treasure of this palace is the grand staircase decorated on its ceiling and on the sides with a magnificent fresco by Orozco. Which represents the powerful figure of Father Hidalgo exhorting the masses to revolt against injustice. One is moved by the sheer size of the figure of the good padre who seems to fly over one's head as one climbs the stairs.

The murals of the counsel chamber of the same building are also by Orozco. Those were being restored and could only be partly seen.

- B. On the other hand, my greatest experience in Guadalajara was my visit of the Hospicio Cabanas. There, one visits what is, for Orozco, the

III. CHAPTER THREE

Conclusion

This experience in Mexico has been much more marvelous than I had ever expected. I truly enjoyed every day and every moment, and I especially appreciated the friendliness and charm of the Mexican people and the beauty that surrounds them in nature and in the arts. But most of all, I have enjoyed learning a new language and, since my return, I have already begun to evaluate the professional advantages this has given me.

I am more aware of the thinking process involved in learning a language and thus I can understand my students' problems even better than before my sabbatical leave.

I believe this experience has refreshed my pedagogical views and made a better teacher of me. I also can make comparisons between French and Spanish in my classes with more confidence than before. Even more importantly, I think that my new knowledge of the Spanish language and of Mexico is a great asset in my work as chair of the Department of Languages, as I can now share in the specific problems of my colleagues, most whom teach Spanish.

Finally, I have brought back for their use beautiful posters, cassette of songs, a book of popular folk songs, a whole bibliography and seven hundred slides which I shall

have copied for the use of students in the library and for the use of my colleagues as a teaching tool.

I wish to thank again the committee on Sabbatical Leaves and the Board of Trustees for giving me such a wonderful opportunity.

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V. APPENDIX

An Easy Way to Learn the Lingo

By BARBARA KENT

CUERNAVACA, Mexico—The rain stopped as if on cue. I pulled my bags from the taxi onto the cracked concrete sidewalk, side-stepping the small torrent of rain-water that separated the world of hurtling taxis from the morning bustle of the bus depot. Travelers and vendors spilled from the open building.

I pushed my gear against a wall a few feet from the ticket line and took my place behind an elderly man who politely nudged along two bulky packages balanced precariously at his feet. Nostalgically, I turned to survey the scene. It was among my last views of Cuernavaca.

Efficient Approach

A month earlier I had stood in this same spot staring out into a drizzly night. I tried to ignore a mild but growing panic as I braced myself for the next encounter with my fumbling Spanish. Had I been wise to travel alone to this seemingly primitive area to invest my hard-earned dollars and four weeks of my time in a language school whose only recommendation had been a short description in a brochure?

That apprehensive question has since been answered many times over with an emphatic *yes*. Mexico's many language schools provide not only a wonderfully efficient approach to language instruction, but also a superb way to combine the practicality of schooling with vacation travel.

Students are generally housed with middle-class Mexican families who not only provide a pleasant, interesting living environment, but also augment the official instruc-



BARBARA KENT

Students mingle on grounds of Centro Bilingue between classes.

tion with daily conversation. Even as a shy person I found adjustment to my Mexican host family easy,

and our ties grew steadily during my stay.

Please see LINGO, Page 29



The Center for Bilingual Multicultural Studies

Apdo. Postal 1520 Cuernavaca, Mor., 62000 México.

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Nombre MARGUERITE MC INTOSH
Organización MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE
Entrada 19 DE ABRIL DE 1986.
Salida 16 DE MAYO DE 1986.
Descanso _____
Faltas _____
Créditos-Semana 5 EN ESPAÑOL + 3 EN MINICURSOS. TOTAL = 8 horas
Total-Horas 100 EN ESPAÑOL + 40 EN MINICURSOS. TOTAL =140 horas.
Calificación Final A

EVALUACION FINAL MINICURSOS.

TITULO DEL MINICURSO

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Fecha APRIL 14- 18, 86 1 SEMANA
Total - Hrs. 8 **Calific. Final** PASS

2.- HISTORIA DE MEXICO I (DE TIEMPOS PREHISPANICOS A CORTES) ROSS
Fecha 21- MAYO 2, 86 2 SEMANAS
Total - Horas 16 **Calificación Final** PASS

3.- ARTE MURAL MEXICANA (OROZCO, RIVERA, SIQUEIROS) ROLANDO
Fecha MAYO 5- 15, 86 2 SEMANAS
Total - Horas 16 **Calificación Final** PASS.

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Fecha _____
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A - SUPERIOR	4	W - WITHDREW NO PENALTY	0
B - ABOVE AVERAGE	3	AU - AUDIT	0
C - AVERAGE	2	RD - REPORT DELAYED	0
D - BELOW AVERAGE	1	SP - SATISFACTORY PROGRESS	0
F - FAILURE	0	ADD 0.3 GP PER UNIT	0
I - INCOMPLETE	0	DEDUCT 0.3 GP PER UNIT	0
U - UNAUTHORIZED WITHDRAWAL	0		

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DEPARTMENT & COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	GRADE	UNITS	GRADE POINTS	DEPARTMENT AND COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	GRADE	UNITS	GRADE POINTS	DEGREE DATE	DEGREE DATE
FL 251X	233494 EXT FALL 85 INTERMED SPANISH	A-	4.0 4.0	14.8 14.8							
FRL 252X	233494 EXT WINTER 86 INTERMED SPAN READ	B	4.0 4.0	12.0 12.0							
ENC 499X	233494 EXT SPRING 86 INT TRAVEL STUDY	A	1.0 1.0	4.0 4.0							

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Registrar

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History

INDEPENDENCE
1810 - PRESENT

- 1810. Call for revolution by Mexican patriots.
- 1821. Mexico City taken from Spanish by an army of patriots headed by General Iturbide, who had been a royalist general. He made himself Emperor, as Augustin I.
- 1822. A federal republic is proclaimed by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana.
- 1846-48. War with U.S. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo cedes Mexican territories north of the Rio Grande to U.S. Included are vast lands now in Arizona, California and New Mexico.
- 1861. The French army invades Mexico.
- 1864. Napoleon III installs Maximilian, Archduke of Austria, as Emperor of Mexico.
- 1867. Emperor Maximilian executed at Queretaro. Benito Juarez, a Zapotec Indian, becomes President.
- 1910. First uprisings of Mexican Revolution to bring about a more democratic form of government than the dictatorial rule of President Porfirio Diaz.
- 1917. New constitution adopted.
- 1920. Election of General Alvaro Obregon as President begins long period of social reform.



verse Mercator Projection
SCALE 1:500,000
KILOMETERS OR 1 INCH = 7.9 MILES

ETERS 15
TE MILES 15

al Sites
rest
s
s
A.D. 1519 Elevations in Meters

Selected place-name glyphs from an Aztec manuscript.

sa
io Ramirez
n the 15th century, Calixtlahuaca may
: 1700 B.C. The site contains a tiered
ve wind god near a plaza formed by
of which was probably an academy
for priestly and military careers.
ixtlahuaca... Calixtlahuaca

Place of the divine walls... the large fortress
city was occupied as early as the seventh century
and conquered by the Aztecs in 1476. Restoration
of the highland site began in 1974.

side, the military temple
nalco was carved from solid
les and a jaguar grace, the
iber in the main building. The
uth of a serpent with a stone
s a forked serpent tongue.

Once a major pilgrimage site to the Aztec god of the caves,
Chalma now attracts hundreds each Sunday. Wearing flower
wreaths, they dance in homage to the Roman Catholics' Our
Lord of Chalma, represented by a life-size crucifix.

The personal encomienda, or fiefdom, of Cortés. Cuernavaca
still maintains his palace on the main plaza, one of the oldest
colonial buildings in Mexico. The restored structure now
houses the Morelos Regional Museum, with its centerpiece
a Diego Rivera mural, "The Conquest of Mexico."

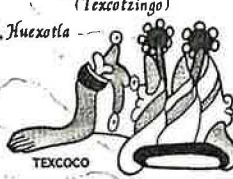
lake system (shaded grey) has all but
disappeared as Mexico City gradually
drained the shallow waters.

Four-tiered circular pyramid at Cuicuilco,
first major ceremonial structure in the
Valley of Mexico, and extensive burial sites
at Copilco date from before the eruption
of Xitle volcano some 2,000 years
ago. Lava buried both sites.

Legendary birthplace of the ruler-priest
Quetzalcoatl, Tepoztlán is also the hillside
setting of the Tepozteco pyramid, a
shrine to Tepoztecatl, one of the most
important of the gods of the sacred liquor,
pulque. In early September a play
dramatizes Tepoztecatl's reasons for
abandoning the Aztec gods
to become a Christian.

Aztec ceremonial center built between
1200 and 1500 at Cuauhnahuac (today's
Cuernavaca) was covered by earth and
vegetation until the Mexican Revolution
in the early 1900s, when cannon fired

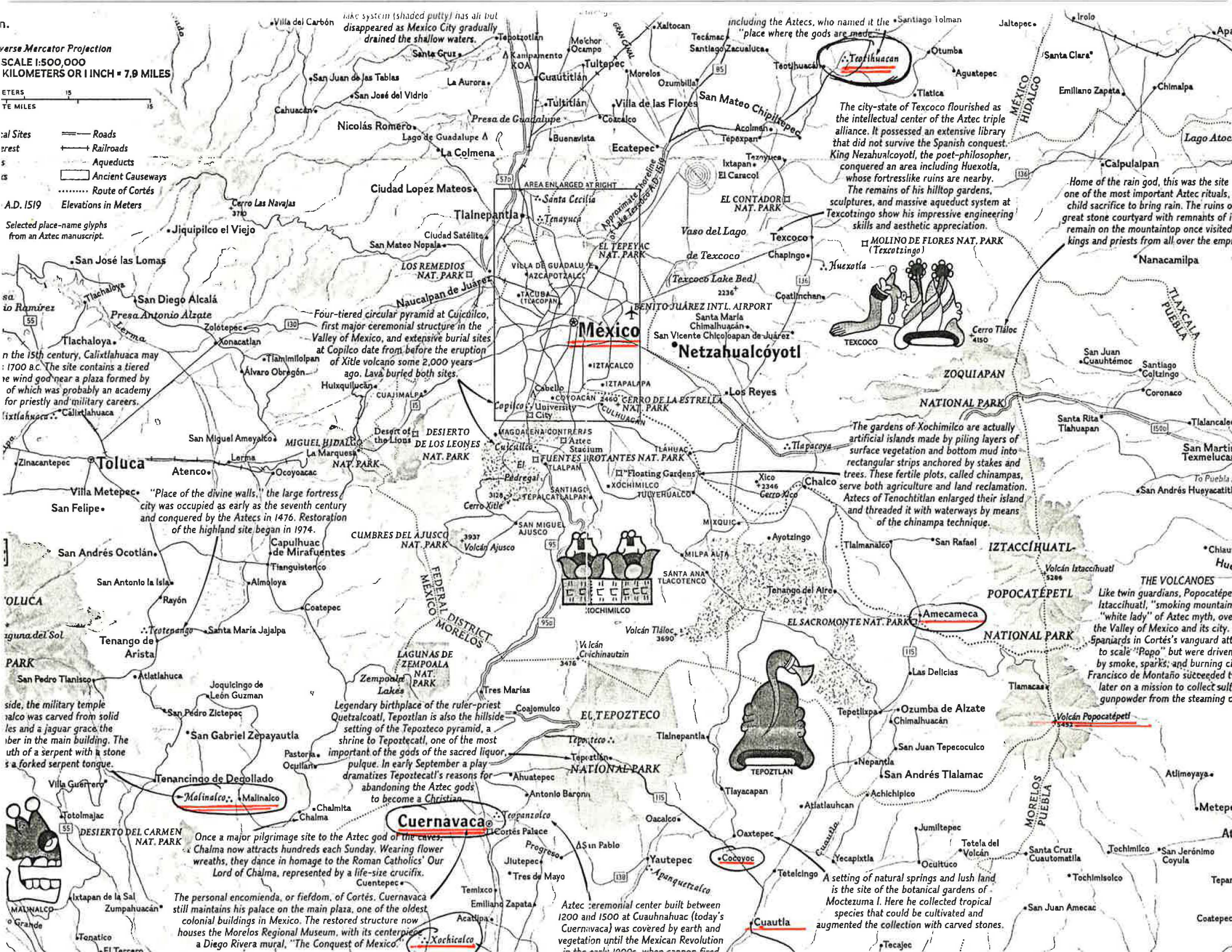
The city-state of Texcoco flourished as
the intellectual center of the Aztec triple
alliance. It possessed an extensive library
that did not survive the Spanish conquest.
King Nezahualcoyotl, the poet-philosopher,
conquered an area including Huexotla,
whose fortresslike ruins are nearby.
The remains of his hilltop gardens,
sculptures, and massive aqueduct system at
Texcotzingo show his impressive engineering
skills and aesthetic appreciation.

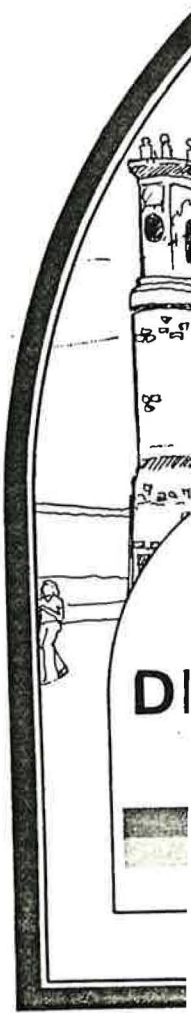
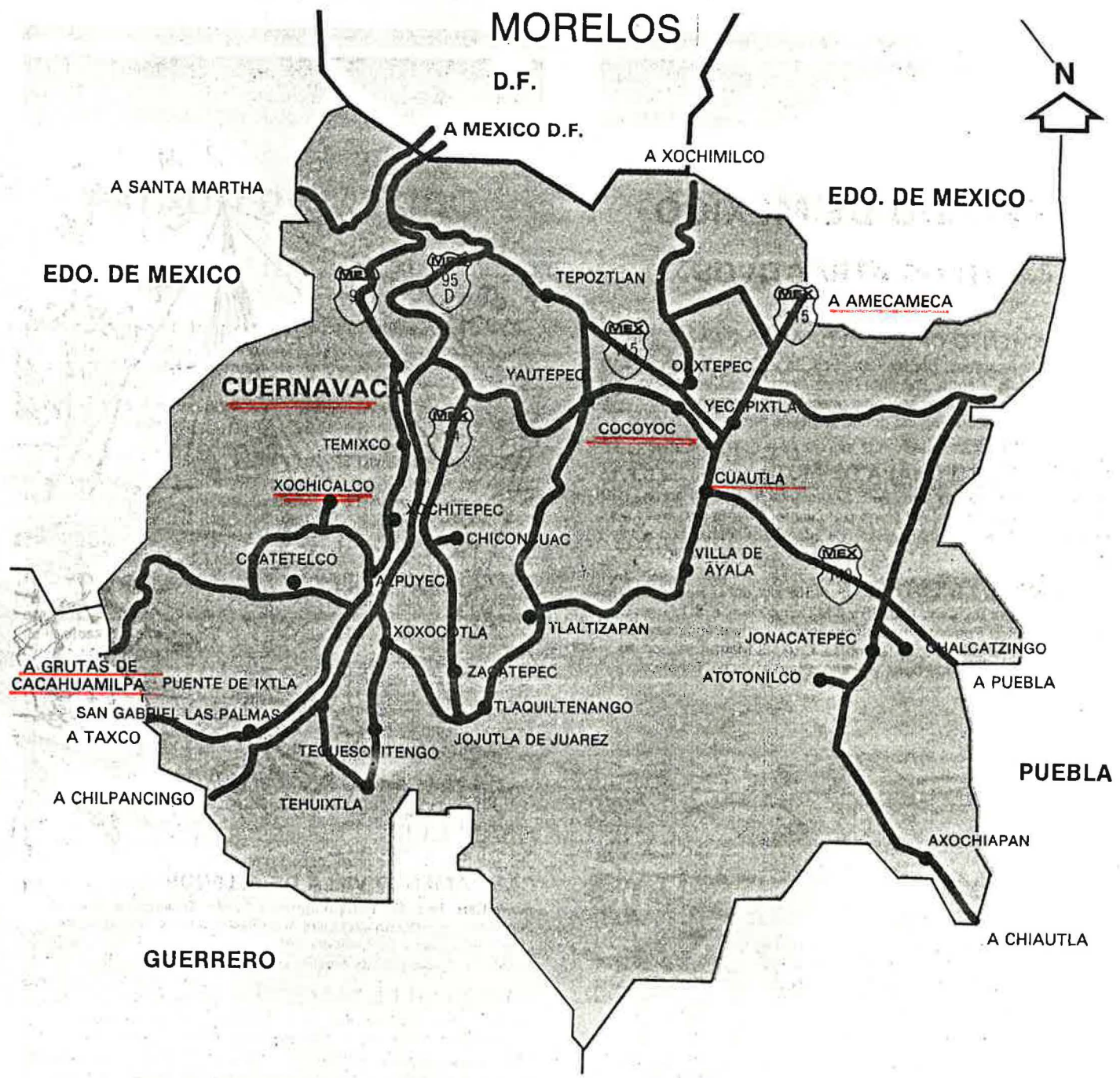


The gardens of Xochimilco are actually
artificial islands made by piling layers of
surface vegetation and bottom mud into
rectangular strips anchored by stakes and
trees. These fertile plots, called chinampas,
serve both agriculture and land reclamation.
Aztecs of Tenochtitlan enlarged their island
and threaded it with waterways by means
of the chinampa technique.

Home of the rain god, this was the site
one of the most important Aztec rituals,
child sacrifice to bring rain. The ruins of
a great stone courtyard with remnants of
remain on the mountaintop once visited
kings and priests from all over the empire.

THE VOLCANOES
Like twin guardians, Popocatepetl
Iztaccihuatl, "smoking mountain"
"white lady" of Aztec myth, over
the Valley of Mexico and its city.
Spaniards in Cortés's vanguard at
to scale "Popo" but were driven
by smoke, sparks, and burning clouds.
Francisco de Montaña succeeded
later on a mission to collect sulfur
gunpowder from the steaming craters.





MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE
Salary and Leaves Committee

APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

Name of Applicant MARGUERITE MC INTOSH

Address 4206 Via Padova, Claremont, Ca. 91711

Employed at Mt. San Antonio College beginning September 1969

Dates of last sabbatical leave:

From never To _____

Department Modern Languages

Division Humanities

Length of sabbatical leave requested:

Purpose of sabbatical leave:

One semester x
Fall _____ Spring x

Study _____ Independent Study
and Research x

Two semesters _____

Travel x Combination Indep. Study
(specify) and travel

Administrative _____

NOTE: Sabbatical periods are limited to contractual dates of the academic year.

Effective dates for proposed sabbatical leave:

From February 1986 To June 1986

and (if taken over a two school year period)

From _____ To _____

Attach a comprehensive, written statement of the proposed sabbatical activity(ies) including a description of the nature of the activity(ies), a timeline of the activity(ies), an itinerary, if applicable, the proposed research design and method(s) of investigation, if applicable.

Attach a statement of the anticipated value and benefit of the proposed sabbatical activity(ies) to the applicant, his/her department or service area, and the College.

Any change or modification of the proposed sabbatical activity(ies) as evaluated and approved by the Salary and Leaves Committee must be submitted to the Committee for reconsideration.

Marguerite McIntosh
Signature of Applicant

November 27, 1984
Date

STATEMENT OF PROPOSED SABBATICAL ACTIVITY

The purpose of my applying for a one-semester Sabbatical Leave would be three-fold:

1. to learn Spanish and become as fluent as possible in that language;
2. to use this experience to renew and improve my teaching techniques; and
3. to produce written materials for MtSAC Modern Language students, to help them decide on language study in foreign countries, and how best to benefit from such study.

I would accomplish this through independent study and travel in Mexico.

There is nothing I could do that would be more profitable to my students, to me professionally, and to the department I chair, than to learn Spanish.

The first reason is that I would return speaking a new language.

The second reason is that the process of learning will give me an opportunity to observe and experience different methodologies of language teaching and language learning.

I. WHY DO I WISH TO LEARN SPANISH SPECIFICALLY?

A large percentage of my students is of Spanish speaking heritage and I find myself teaching French through Spanish because of the great similarities between the two languages. Students coming from Mexico or South America are aware of this and often take French for this reason.

Any instructor of a Romance language, at the college level, should know at least two of those languages (and they almost always do) in order to make comparisons and references. An hour of teaching does not pass that I do not refer to Spanish to compare it with French lexically and grammatically. I could do this much better, more thoroughly and more often if my knowledge of Spanish were not so limited.

I also chair a department made of 80% of Spanish teachers who need to be evaluated and with whom I should be able to discuss choice of textbooks and pedagogical concerns; I should also be able to replace them temporarily, in their classes, in an emergency. All the day instructors of our department teach Spanish and speak it exclusively among themselves.

OUTLINE OF MY PROPOSED SABBATICAL SCHEDULEI. BEFORE MY SABBATICAL LEAVE ,

During our first semester, while I am still teaching, I will have taken a course of Intermediate Grammar Review #201, at Cal Poly. (Unfortunately, this course is not offered during the time of my Sabbatical.). Then, I will take a course of Intermediate Spanish Conversation #203, or Intermediate Reading #202, whichever one is offered next year, during Cal Poly's winter quarter. Dr. Farrell, coordinator of Spanish courses at Cal Poly, Pomona, cannot assure me which one will be offered, but one of them will be offered, and either one would be useful.

II. DURING FEBRUARY AND MARCH,

I wish to spend this first part of my Sabbatical Leave learning as much Spanish as possible here at home. I believe it is necessary that I learn Spanish through the books first, in order to receive full benefit from my stay in Mexico later. I shall continue taking the Spanish course I will have started in January, for the length of the winter quarter, at Cal Poly, not only learning Spanish but observing the teaching techniques of my professor. But I mostly plan to study alone, to review the Spanish Grammar, expand my syntactic knowledge of the language, and practice phonetics in the language laboratory. I would also research the similarities of syntax and ethymology between Spanish and French, and keep notes to be used in my classes. On the other hand, I plan to read all I can on the history and civilization of Mexico, so that, when I am there, I would already have a general knowledge of the country.

III. APRIL - MAY

Then I would leave for Mexico on or about the first of April, to spend April and the first part of May immersing myself completely in its language and culture as my experience convinced me that this is the best possible way to really learn to speak a language,

During this period, I would like to settle in the city of Cuernavaca because of its proximity to Mexico City with its cultural offerings, and because of its excellent language institutes.

I would live with a Mexican family in order to learn to speak the vernacular

ITINERARY

(Dates are approximate to allow for constraints of travel schedule)

FEBRUARY AND MARCH:

1. At home, studying Spanish and the civilization and culture of Mexico, and
2. taking a course of INTERMEDIATE SPANISH READING (#202) or INTERMEDIATE SPANISH CONVERSATION (#203) at CAL POLY with Dr. Farrell.

APRIL 1st to 3d :

Preparing for my departure to Mexico.

APRIL 4:

Arrive in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Getting settled in my new family. This is Easter week-end.

APRIL 8 to MAY 12:

(or to May 19, depending on the state of my finances because of the cost of tuition, and because, after a month in school, I may find that I can continue to study alone , mostly by mingling more with the local life of the people)

Studying Spanish at the "CENTER FOR BILINGUAL MULTI-CULTURAL STUDIES", in Cuernavaca, and living with a local native family.

APRIL 12 to 26:

Living and studying independently in Cuernavaca, and taking day-excursions to Mexico City and the other surrounding places of interest, seeing as many things as possible, such as:
the Pyramides of Teotihuacán
the Basilica of Guadalupe
the Chapultepec Park, etc.

MAY 26 or 27 to 30:

Stay in Mexico City.

Visit of the MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY
the MUSEUM OF BELLAS ARTES
the EXCAVATIONS OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE
the CATHEDRAL
and other important cultural and historical place

OBJECTIVES OF THIS SABBATICAL

- I. To learn Spanish to the point of fluency:
 1. to learn the grammar, syntax and vocabualry of Spanish,
 2. to acquire as correct a pronunciation as possible,
 3. to acquaint myself with Mexico through
 - a/ its people
 - b/ its customs
 - c/ its ancient and modern history
 - d/ its culture and its arts
 - e/ its contemporary political, social and economic activity.

- II. To observe the lexical and cultural similarities and differences between Spanish and French.

- III. To observe my own process of learning a new language as well as the teaching techniques of my instructors, in order to use these observations in improving my own teaching of French.

- IV. To gather information on the process of learning a language in a foreign country for the purpose of publishing a booklet for the use of our students.

- V. To obtain slides and other visual material (posters, postcards, books) which can be used to enhance classroom presentations, and which could be made available to my colleagues in our language department.

* * * * *



MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE

1100 NORTH GRAND AVENUE • WALNUT, CALIFORNIA 91789

Telephone: (714) 598-2811

Walnut November 27th, 1984

To: Members of The Sabbatical Leave Committee

RE: Marguerite McIntosh, Chair

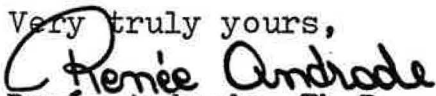
As a full time member of The Department of Modern Languages I feel that our department would benefit immensely if Mrs. McIntosh could pursue her sincere and professional desire of learning how to speak Spanish fluently and get acquainted with the Mexican Culture and Civilization which is representative of Latin America.

Half of the load of our departmental teaching is done in Spanish and therefore 50 % of the Language Instructors, class curriculum, textbooks and arising problems are directly related to Spanish and all aspects of the teaching of that language.

Many of the students that take French come either from a Spanish background or are taking French as a third language, so the interference of Spanish is natural and it would be of great instructional benefit for both Mrs. McIntosh and her students if she could relate to the similarities and differences of both Romance Languages in order to clarify many of the student's problems.

As a linguist, I definitely know and believe that the best possible way to become fluent in any language is by complete immersion and personal contact not only with the spoken language but also the history and culture, and a trip to Mexico would constitute the ideal, fastest and most effective way of her Spanish Language acquisition.

As a colleague, a Language Instructor and a professional in the field, I strongly support Mrs. McIntosh in her desire to become fluent in Spanish for the benefit and enhancement of our Department of Modern Languages at Mt. San Antonio College.

Very truly yours,

Renée Andrade, Ph.D
Spanish Instructor

