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CULTURE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN THE CURRICULUM

**A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts
in
Education: English as A Second Language Option**

**by
Enrique Fernández Nárez**

September 1994

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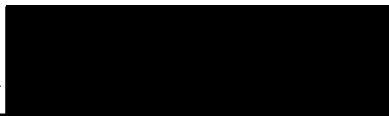
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ABSTRACT

The dominant population of the United States has been misled into believing that monolingual education in English is the best form of education for all students regardless of their race, language, background, or experiences.

This project looks at alternative curricula that allow Mexican students to enhance their experiences rather than to discard them, as used to be the norm.

This project will try to show how minority students can achieve more by keeping their culture, language, and family ties. This project provides an example of a curriculum designed specifically for Chicano students which might enhance their self-esteem by showing their ethnic background in a positive light.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the most important and influential person in my life: my wife, Petra Vega Nárez.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my children, Enrique Vega, Daniel Nelson and Sarah Petti.

Thanks go also to my parents, Gilberto and Lucila Nares, who have supported my decisions, as well as my brothers, Gilberto, Francisco, Alfredo, and finally my sister, Lucila Nares.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my wife primarily since she not only has provided moral support but she helped type this thesis and taught me how to use the computer.

Thanks to Lucila Nares, my sister, for the gift of a computer, which made this project much easier to write.

Thanks to Francisco Nares, my brother, for the crash course in statistical analysis and thesis writing which allowed for this report to be made much easier.

Thanks to Dr. Lynne Díaz-Rico, for the help and support.

Thanks to everyone whose help or encouragement allowed for this project to be written.

Finally I would like to thank my brothers-in-law; Francisco, Sergio, and especially Antonio Vega, who has been inspirational by refusing to let hardship dictate his way of life or break his spirit when things seem to get bleaker and bleaker, and no help was in sight.

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INTRODUCTION

This project is being written in order to demonstrate how it feels to be a non-English speaker attending a public school, and what schooling does to the ethnic identity of the child. The project will try to give a glimpse into the child's identity as it is developed and nourished, or, conversely, attacked, ignored, or coerced by the public school system and its curricula.

Many school districts resist the implementation of bilingual programs, with the argument that they are divisive to the community or due to the fact that the majority of the voters do not see the need for them. If a bilingual program is not feasible to implement, then a few changes in the curricula may make a positive impression in the Chicano student.

Some of the "old-guard" teachers speak about "those good old times" before they had to worry about all those different programs which force them to return to school in order to teach "foreign" students against their will, when they would rather stay with their regular or "normal" kids.

This project relates my experiences as a foreign student in order to communicate what it feels like to start school in a foreign

country where no one wants to admit knowing your language and where the teachers and the texts tell you that everything you knew is now obsolete.

I attended my first five years of school in Mexico, where I was an excellent student. I enjoyed participating in various extra-curricular activities such as band and the soccer team.

While attending school in Mexico we were told to feel proud of our culture and heritage because it was a very rich one.

After moving to the United States, my first experience in the public schools was of awe. It was incredible to see such large schools with so many employees. It was easy to understand why everyone would ignore me when I attended class since I was new in this huge elementary school. Of the nearly one thousand students, the vast majority spoke English while I could only speak to a handful of students who knew Spanish and were not ashamed to admit to it. I can vividly see my first vocabulary test when I was told to spell and pronounce: "coyote, nickel, Doris," etc. My answers, of which I was so proud, were "coyote, nico, and Torres." I was told that I had spelled "coyote" correctly but the teacher thought I had cheated. I was one of the few students who had gotten this one correct and this one was a

difficult word. As for the rest of the test the teacher had no idea what "garbage" I had written. To make matters worse I could not pronounce "coyote" like everyone else, thus, proving that I had cheated.

As an immigrant who had just arrived from Mexico and could not speak English, I still remember my stay in elementary school when I had no one to speak to in class. I would get there every day and stare at everyone. Even a Mexican-looking girl who had a Spanish last name wouldn't speak Spanish to me when I asked her for help. She told me that she did not understand Spanish.

Those were "the good old days when everyone had to speak American," and Spanish was frowned upon because it interfered with learning. It was also the good old times when "all a teacher had to do was teach" and "not worry about all that paperwork that comes with those different students who can not learn anyway." That comment was used recently by a colleague who could not understand why minority students were not excluded from his classes so that "regular" students would not be held back by the new students.

Two years later after my first days at school I saw the same girl who had denied being bilingual at a picnic, speaking Spanish to

her mother, who was my mother's boss. With time, I learned that that same girl who was ashamed to acknowledge the fact that she spoke Spanish is now proud of her heritage and of being bilingual. She is presently the director of a Mexican folklorico dance group.

I remember those days as though it were only yesterday. I wanted to learn English badly so that I could communicate with someone, anyone. I would purchase comic books to look at and see what new words I could learn that day. Cartoons on television really helped, because with all that repetition I could not help but learn phrases spoken in those shows.

In class I knew that I couldn't repeat what I had learned at home because everyone always laughed at my accent. Knowing that I would be laughed at, I decided that I would not participate in any oral activity unless I felt sure enough that my accent was not very different from the rest of the students. I was once told that my grade would be lowered by one unless I did participate orally with the class. I decided to go with the lowered grade.

I only went one year to elementary school. The following year I had to move on to junior high school. The day before the first day of school my parents and I had no idea where the school was located.

We went to ask some acquaintances if I could walk to school with them but the kids were not that interested in walking to school and be seen with a nerd, they said. Their parents forced the kids to take me along on the condition that I would walk behind them that day so no one would suspect we knew each other.

The next day I walked to school by myself. The third day of school I lost my program during lunch and had no idea what class I needed to go to next. I walked all over the school hoping to see someone familiar who could direct me to class, but no such luck. I can still remember vividly that day. The following day I went to my first period class and a Puerto Rican student asked me in Spanish why I had decided to skip the last two periods the day before. I stuck like glue to this new-found friend who was in four of my six classes.

Another episode from those days was the first day of P. E. when, after playing sports, we were told to take a shower. We had to stand stark naked except for a towel, waiting until one of the coaches would allow us all to go get dressed.

Again I learned firsthand how "wonderful" it was to be monolingual with English being the language of choice. One day,

when running to the showers, I was in the last group. A friend informed me that the last person needed to close the doors to the gym. Being last, I quickly did what was asked of me, and as I was stripping, a coach ordered me to his office where he told me how we Mexicans were always up to no good and ordered me to bend over and gave me a swat with a ping pong paddle. Later, I found out that this coach would always treat Hispanics in this manner because we refused to speak "American."

I never forgot this kind of school discipline and knew how it worked even better than some of the teachers.

A couple of years later, in the late 60's, the Chicano community became vocal and demanded a better educational program for their children who were not being taught properly. These members of the community decided their children would walk out of their respective schools if no drastic changes were made. I remember that many of us were gathered together by the administration at the mostly white junior high school. We were warned that if we walked out of school that day we would be expelled. Not having participated in politics before, about 15 of us decided that this was a good cause or at least a good reason to skip school for La Raza. We never were caught but I

was always afraid that my parents would find out that I left school without permission.

I enjoyed school in the United States even though most of my classes were too difficult or just plain boring. There were many smart students who went to school only to socialize with the girls who would stay out of class with them, because school offered nothing else worthy of their time. I learned from them how to get away with this since I was not going to allow other "coaches" to teach me any more of their so-called discipline. Eventually I was able to go to classes or miss them at will. In high school I would later miss class 35 times one semester and still get an "A."

In high school I wanted to go out for sports but came with a bad case of ingrown toenails and my plans could not be carried out. Since I could not play sports and my parents needed the money, I worked a couple of hours after school picking strawberries. I would be picked up at the field and be taken to the podiatrist who would work on my toes.

While I was in high school, my counselor decided that all Mexicans were good with their hands and should graduate and

possibly continue their education at a trade school, where none of us would be at a disadvantage because of the language problem.

Since most of my classes were not challenging enough I learned to get the best grades possible with the least amount of work. Some classes I would not attend for weeks and there was never any concern on my part about my grades. High school was a big party which was only interrupted by an occasional class. To add to the fun, in 1970-1971, my senior year, the teachers went on strike and the school became a huge playground where no one at school knew where any student was at a given time. Classes were herded to the auditorium or the gym and a few substitute teachers would try to take care of us but we would walk out. We would roam the school all day. When questioned we would tell whomever asked us that we were office monitors on an errand. They never asked us for a pass to verify this so we were free to do anything we wanted.

All this was happening while our parents thought we were there to get an education. We would go to other schools whenever we could get someone who had a car, but we would wait until roll was taken and then we would walk out. While at the other schools we would ask the students there for the fun gathering place and if

there was none we would roam the campus for a while and then go get something to eat.

After the strike ended, some students asked me which college I was applying to since I had excellent grades, and students with those kind of grades always went on to college. I never once thought I would continue with school since no one had mentioned this possibility to me. A friend later told me what the steps were but first I needed to get the forms from my counselor. I made an appointment with my counselor and was told that I lacked some of the required courses to be admitted to a university or college. Instead, I should apply to the local trade school where I could learn a trade using my drawing skills. I was also told that language was not that much of a factor there so I would be successful, not having to compete with native speakers, as in college. My counselor told me that I should have been responsible for mentioning my interest in college and if I had I would have been put on a college track.

Knowing that I had goofed by not stating my intentions and would be unable to continue on, I gave up that idea, although I felt angry knowing that things could have been different if I had known about my choices.

A few weeks later, California State University Long Beach (CSULB) sent some recruiters to our high school to see if they could recruit Chicano students. Apparently CSULB president Stephen Horn seemed to think that out there in the high schools were some Chicanos who could succeed if given the chance. These recruiters asked us to take a tour of their campus. I resented having those people here, especially since they knew that probably none of us had the requirements which my counselor had just explained. The recruiters persisted and told us that we would have a full day out of school and a free lunch, if nothing else.

At CSULB, we were given a tour of the campus and then we were given some forms to fill out in order to apply to this college under the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). EOP admitted minority students who lacked financial resources, admission requirements, or the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) required for admission.

Unlike all of my previous schools, here at CSULB I was given an orientation class which taught us all the essentials, from where and how to use the library to what kind of financial aid was available and how to fill out the forms required. This class also took us around to

meet with those departments which had tutoring for us. This class as part of the curriculum forced us to meet with those tutors weekly. I never once felt lost or alone while in college and my GPA rose. I also got to play soccer for the varsity team my freshmen year.

In 1974, when I was getting ready to do my student teaching, I was told that I and some other minority students who spoke with an accent needed to take an oral exam to see whether we would be understood by the students we would be teaching. We submitted a grievance to Dr. Horn and he soon repealed this teaching requirement, although we never got a chance to see him since he was in Washington D. C. chairing a study on Mexican-American students.

Soon after, the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, chaired by Dr. Horn, came out with its findings, recommending that Chicano students be taught using their native language and using culturally affective materials, which have been somewhat ignored up to now.

This project was done to follow up on the recommendation of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The goal is to design curriculum that allows Mexican-American students to find a place for themselves in schools while keeping their cultural identity and self worth.

It is time to start writing curricula for the Hispanic child.

Hispanic educators must make an effort to design a curriculum that incorporates the child's culture as a valuable, worthwhile educational resource. These educators usually understand what it feels like to be thrown into a scary, foreign school where adjustment may be difficult.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chicano/Mexicano Culture Identity in the Existing School Curriculum

This project proposes to introduce of curriculum that will enhance the Chicanos attitude about their culture, thus raising their self-esteem. No one single thing will change their self image, but a combination should prove more valuable than the alternative that is being used today with very little positive results.

Chicano students' identity has been ignored, bruised, and shattered by schools due to the ignorance of teachers regarding the Chicano culture or by their elitist attitude that everyone must blend and join into the "melting pot." Although the "melting pot" theory is seen as obsolete, the perception that every student must adopt and become a mirror image of a "good American" still persists in the United States. When personnel in schools try to bend, blend, mix, and shape "foreign" students to match a perception of what a "good American" student should be, messages are sent that tend to conflict with the teachings of the students' culture. What we teach many times pits their families and values against school and society's expectations.

In 1974 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights did a study to investigate the barriers to equal educational opportunities for Mexican Americans in the public schools in the Southwest (Anderson & Boyer, 1970). The findings depicted an educational system which ignored the language and culture of Mexican-American students. Not only were the language and culture of Chicano students ignored but it seemed it was even suppressed by many schools.

In fact because of prevalent practices, these same students far too often found themselves placed in low ability groups, or even yet, sent to classes for the educable mentally retarded when their teachers couldn't or would not teach them (Kuykendal, 1992).

Curriculum provides the basis for the school's educational program. The basic function of curriculum is to provide students with intellectual and social skills. Equally important, it is a primary means of transmitting to children the culture and values of society (Saville-Troike, 1974).

Curriculum is neither neutral nor impartial. It reflects value judgements that significantly affect the student's perception of himself and of society in general (Cárdenas, 1971).

Many of the texts used then and in subsequent years

portrayed Hispanics with disdain by ignoring their culture purposely or through sheer ignorance: Español Comencemos (Schmitt, 1981), a beginning Spanish text, has a drawing of a Hispanic family seated on the floor while eating dinner. On the opposite side there is a picture of an American family seated around a large table nicely decorated and with lots of food, in vivid contrast to the Hispanic family which does not own any of these amenities. With examples like those Hispanic children could not help but deny their heritage or lose their self-esteem.

A social studies text explains the Spanish conquest as plain luck on Cortes' side since good fortune seemed to follow him everywhere. This does not take into account the Aztecs' beliefs which featured the return of a White god who would return to help them. It purports such non-truths as how Cortes luckily captured an Indian woman, "Doña Marina," who spoke many languages and later became his interpreter instead of explaining that the Indian cultures were expecting the arrival of a god (Abramowitz & Job, 1981).

A student who had been taught history in Mexico would see how American texts distorted the truth, ignored the facts or lied to present their point of view in a positive light. Foreign students knew

that texts contained mistakes and should not be believed as a Bible of information. Students who had only studied in the public schools in the United States did not have the advantage of seeing their culture in a favorable light as did the foreign students. Having had their identity reinforced in their own country, the students had a point of reference where they could believe or disregard the teacher.

Another example of misinformation is found in a social studies text which explains the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs by saying that Cortes was well aware of how ferocious the Aztecs were and so he laid his plans carefully and selected the best army possible of about some 500 men. He selected the best horses as well. He also gathered ample supplies of food and water for the long voyage to the New World which he knew would be long and difficult. Cortes also knew of the Indians' reputation as fierce, unyielding fighters and so he prepared well. Once he arrived at Veracruz, Aztec messengers told him that their ruler wanted to know why he had come. Cortes decided to march to the Aztec capital, which he reached after "several days" (Joyce, Houston, Gross, & Lee, 1977).

A Mexican student who had a thorough education in elementary school would know his country's history well enough to

see the errors presented in the American public schools, because Mexican schools are very proud of Mexican history and teach it thoroughly. A Mexican text explains how it took months for a person on horseback to reach the capital when the Spaniards arrived, and that there was no one but Doña Marina who could speak both Spanish and Nahuatl. Doña Marina, this text explains, was given to Cortes as a gift of good will by the Aztec ruler who never tried to fight Cortes. The Spaniards had no previous knowledge of the Aztecs. The Aztecs never asked the Spaniards why they were here, as we are to believe by Joyce et. al. (Barron De Moran, 1960).

For Mexicanos who had been educated outside of this country it is easy to be able to see the lack of knowledge in their teachers and mistakes in the texts in regards to their culture and thus, it becomes very difficult to believe everything they are taught. The Mexicano will correct the teacher and may even make fun of the teacher's lack of expertise. The Chicano student's identity has not been set so the student must believe the teacher's lecture which demeans the culture he feels comfortable in as inferior.

School shapes the culture and values of its students by presenting favorably certain lifestyles and customs. The language in

which the curriculum is presented also transmits to children a value judgement regarding their culture and community in relation to others (Stent, Hazard, & Rivlin, 1973).

An example of how Mexican and Mexican-American students receive a negative perception of their language and culture was presented by Doctor Leonard Olguín at a presentation at Rialto High School in May, 1993. Dr. Olguín told an audience of high school teachers that a student he once knew refused to be called by his first name because his name was Refugio (Reh foo gee oh) but his Anglo teachers called him Reh fuckyou. This boy was scared and preferred to be called Reggie ever since, losing his identity in the process.

Most Hispanic children are taught at home to respect their teachers no matter what, or else suffer the consequences. Dr. Olguin also mentioned another student who was fed up with his teachers not calling him by his given name so he confronted one by telling him that "Hose A" was next to "Hose B." He was "José." He would have had to confront his parents if the school had called to report how their son had treated a teacher with disrespect. This episode could have been avoided if the teachers had made an effort to understand the student's culture.

A very common example of how Mexican students lose their cultural identity is the way in which I had my last name changed from Nárez to Nares because I always pronounced it with an "S," and not a "Z," not knowing that there is a difference on how they are pronounced in English. In most Latin American countries there is no differences in how they are pronounced. The Anglo teachers I had never knew that in Mexico the "Z," is pronounced as though it were an "S." While in college, 10 years later, I had to go to the trouble of correcting every document which had an "S" on my last name. This was a long and tedious process which my brothers decided to avoid and thus still have their documents spell their last name with an "S." This is the reason why there are so many spellings of the same Spanish names in the United States.

One more example of how a school official mangled a student's name is the example of my brother-in law, Roberto Vega Rodríguez. At school they saw that Rodríguez was at the end of the name and they assumed, incorrectly, that it was the last name when, in fact, it referred to the mother's last name. He has not yet fixed it.

Curriculum has not had the flexibility or been broad based enough to develop the potential of all students. "Educational

programs are designed and developed for the white Anglo-Saxon, English-speaking, middle-class population” (Cárdenas, 1971). This incompatibility between the Chicano student and the curriculum is most evident in the areas of language and culture.

It makes one wonder why effective curriculum has not been developed, since research indicates that schools can be much more successful if they take appropriate steps to improve instruction (Ornstein & Levine, 1993).

Although the educational system in the United States most closely represents the culture of the mainstream middle-class population, the Hispanic subculture has developed some attitudes, values, and expectations in its own right which set it apart. Educators must be seen from this perspective as successfully acculturated (since they adapted themselves to the subculture in order to complete the years of training for certification); they are the transmitters of these attitudes, values and expectations to the next generation so that it, too, may “achieve in school.” A self-perpetuating cycle needs to be put in place with new Hispanic teachers understanding and valuing those differences (Saville-Troike, 1974).

Culture as Expressed in Primary Language Use

The language in which the curriculum is taught and the values reflected by the curriculum affect all students significantly. These aspects of curriculum are of special importance to Mexican-American students because their language and culture differ from those of the majority of the students (Nárez, 1993).

Oral language is the most basic element of any curriculum. Schools use English as the dominant language of instruction. Thus, in the formative years, reading and writing skills are developed on the assumption that the child has oral skills in the English language. For the Chicano students, this assumption is often false (Troike & Saville, 1971).

When Chicano students are ready to begin learning to read and write, instead of being encouraged to develop these skills in Spanish, they are prohibited by school authorities from using their native language. Schools have incorporated the ideology that Spanish is a handicap to successful learning and so they foster unacceptance and the resulting discouragement of the speaking of Spanish in school. Not only does this practice fail to build on one of the most basic skills of Chicano students but it degrades them and impedes

their education by its implicit refusal to provide for teaching and learning in Spanish (Zintz, 1973).

Educators also are wary of curricula that includes cultural content geared toward Chicanos, fearing that this is a watered-down curriculum which is distilled in order to make Chicano students test better, when in reality there is no significant change in their learning.

Chicano students with little or no knowledge of English find it difficult to function satisfactorily in the classroom. Also, because language is rooted in and reflects a set of values of a particular group, exclusion of Spanish engenders in Chicano children the feeling that very important aspects of their lives-*their community and culture* -are undesirable (Levine, 1969).

To help with this problem, English as a Second Language was added to the curricula, but many districts report that their programs could be better if there were enough qualified instructors to staff them.

The major problem with ESL is the fact that ESL is designed strictly as a transitional language program and usually contains no culture content relating to the Chicano community or heritage.

Further, as one source has stressed, "This method subtly, by minimizing the student's vocabulary, places the home language in an inferior, unacceptable position" (Title VII, ESEA 1971).

Using ESL is an excellent idea but not the solution to the problem on hand since English is used almost exclusively with the student, whether the student understands English or not; rarely, if ever, is the student's native language used. Although these programs have the use of a Spanish-speaking person during the day, this person tends to be a paraprofessional at best or a bilingual parent with no teaching experience.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, provides Title VII services specifically for bilingual-bicultural education. This would seem to be the perfect solution to the problem of schooling in an appropriate language, but school administrators are afraid to spend large sums of money on another program that will not provide better results than those which ESL currently provides.

Bilingual-bicultural education has been defined as "Instruction in two languages as mediums of instruction... for any part or all of the school curriculum and includes the study of the history and

culture associated with the student's mother tongue. A complete program develops and maintains the student's self-esteem and a legitimate pride in both cultures" (Modiano, 1974).

Bilingual-bicultural education builds on the student's skills, such as languages skills, rather than ignoring or suppressing them. The student's familiar experiences, community, and cultural heritage are incorporated into the educational program, rather than being excluded (Nárez, 1993).

As noted earlier, curriculum is neither neutral nor impartial but reflects value judgements about customs, values, and life styles. Essential to an effective curriculum is the incorporation of the culture as it manifests itself through the family, community, and background of all the students. These represent the elements students are most familiar with and on which their education can be most effectively based (Saville-Troike, 1974).

Many programs in the Southwest are misnamed bilingual-bicultural programs but are actually focused on teaching English and have no course content or a cultural component. Presently, in Rialto Unified School District, there are so called "bilingual programs" which are taught by teachers who have never taken a bilingual course in

their lives, nor do they want to. As with the ESL programs, some are taught by teachers who mean well and have empathy for the students but, unfortunately are not certified nor qualified to teach these kids. This would be comparable to a community of professional scientists allowing their children to be taught science by paraprofessionals, with the limited assistance of teachers with non-science specialties.

Chicano/Mexican Core Values

The Hispanic child receives its initial nurturing from the family, which tends to be large. Part of the reason why the family is so large is due to the fact that it is an extended family where grandparents, uncles, older cousins, padrinos, and friends of the family partake in the upbringing of the child.

With such a large group being responsible for the Hispanic child there tends to a lot of people involved directly and indirectly for his well being. The family is responsible for the following: (A) basic family and cultural values, (B) socializing, (C) conformity, (D) emotional security, (E) financial security, and (F) education (Carrasquillo, 1991). These are the core values, each of which will be explained in turn.

Family and cultural values

Basic family values are evident in the ways a Hispanic child is complimented for good work. A compliment may not be readily understood by the Hispanic child. For example, in March of 1994 I mailed complimentary postcards to the parents of every student in my class who had a B grade or better. Many Anglo student informed me that their parents were happy to hear of their son's and daughter's accomplishments. Only two Hispanic students informed me about their parent's reaction to receiving these postcards; neither was favorable. Both students had to explain that the postcards were complimenting them for their excellence in my class and not complaining about a lack of production.

Chicano students have a sense of loyalty to the family and their behavior always reflects on the honor of the families. In contrast, mainstream families teach that life is in their hands and have only themselves to thank or blame for their accomplishments. With this in mind we may not get our point across when we say, "good work, Mary. You should be proud of yourself." Instead, we must remind Mary how proud her family will be of her accomplishments (Vasques,1990). Mothers who are more comfortable with their

Mexican culture may be teaching their children about the Mexican culture and thus have children who are more ethnically identified (Knight et al., 1993). Children will come to us when they are of school age identifying with their culture and we at school will ignore that which is pleasant to them.

Socializing

Students form a network of social relationships which functions as an adaptive response to the tensions and conflicts generated in the context of the school. Such tensions resulted primarily from a rigid curriculum that allowed limited expression and from the low expectations of the teacher regarding the achievement of minority students. This network of peer relationships operates as both a support system and an escape valve for the tensions generated during classroom work (Echeverriarza, 1991).

The basic premise of social identity is that we are social creatures who strive for positive self-concepts. We categorize ourselves and those around us into "in" groups and "out" groups. A strong identification with both groups or cultures is indicative of integration or biculturalism. A strong identification only with the

dominant culture reflects assimilation. A strong identification with their ethnic group reflects separation. Identification with neither group reflects marginalization (Ogbu, 1986).

Thus, it is clear that marginalization is the least adaptive mode on the part of Chicano students. This mode is seen among Cholos, Mexican-American students who feel disinterested and live for today only and do not feel part of the mainstream. Lacking a clear identity as Mexican or American, many become the victims of hopelessness, alcoholism, or a fate which allows for a very short life, not for an academic life.

We must also take cultural differences into account. Today we can see this with the younger generation who started the *quebradita* dance fad in order to establish their sense of Latino identity. Steve Lozada, a professor at UCLA, tells us, Chicanos, that we can wear boots and hats so as not to look like Prince or Madonna. When a Mexican puts on a vaquero suit it is just like in the old days when Chicanos put on zoot suits, walked into clubs and were proud to be Mexican (Martínez, 1994).

Conformity

Mexican-Americans, generally, feel colonized or part of a caste-like system since they generally can not believe that education or anything else will make a difference in their lives when nothing else has made a difference in their parent's or their grandparent's either. A student of mine, a Cholo, a Mexican-American student who lives for today and disregards the future, was telling me that he had spent the weekend visiting his dad, uncles, and some friends in jail. He did not think a high school diploma would make a difference in his life if he were to get it since he would not be comfortable working with people vastly different from those he is used to. A few weeks later he was expelled from school.

There appears to be little question that minority group members are aware of the images of their group that pervade the media and are evident in their daily life. However, knowledge of the stereotypes is different from acceptance of them. If a Chicano is treated in a discriminatory or stereotyped way, he or she may assume that it is not a personal insult but rather a racial one (Phinney, 1991). Adaptations that involuntary minority group members make to their minority status vary and include changes in

communication and interaction styles, stronger ethnic ties, and rejection and distrust of the culture and customs of the dominant group. Most important for their schooling is their increasing disbelief that their chances of obtaining a good education equal those of Whites, coupled with their belief that, for them, formal education is not the way to succeed socioeconomically (Bernal, Saenz, & Knight, 1991).

Emotional security

A while back most parents wanted to spare their children from experiencing America's racist attitudes and thus, they avoided all contact with their cultural identity. The idea was to make their children emotionally secure.

Most students growing up in the Southwest during the 60's and 70s never learned to speak Spanish even though both their parents were fluent. Artist/painter Daniel J. Martínez recounts his education in the public schools: "Spanish was strictly forbidden by my teachers." Most Hispanic students never learned anything positive about their ethnic background while in school. "The orientation of my world was toward whiteness. Mexican music was not played in my

household. Spanish was never spoken. For me, white meant better. It meant privilege” (Benavídez, 1994).

We should not denigrate student’s culture by implying that their identity is based on how well they assimilate to their new culture: White-middle America.

Financial security

Although most Chicano students could use bicultural education, there are many who can outperform the majority of the population in the context of the regular curriculum. An example of this group of students is described by Henry Cisneros when he speaks about his high school classmates: “Mexicanos were better than me at grades, went to other universities where they were judged by other criteria: who your father was or how you fit into the hierarchy of the Texas power structure” (Rodriguez, 1994). This group lacks neither the financial resources to achieve high intellectual goals nor pride in its culture or its own identity as to where do they belong in society. This group is accustomed to deal socially with the upper power people and have no qualms about their language or their culture. The attitudes, immigrant bashing, or name calling by the general

population does not affect them as much since they tend to ignore them as the ignorance of a racist few.

Education

There are no culturally-based "smartness" categories.

Intelligence is not a cultural phenomenon, although testing biases may systematically discriminate against certain cultural groups so that this may appear to be the case (Saville-Troike, 1974).

As with the Mexicanos who lacks neither the financial resources to achieve high intellectual goals nor pride in its culture or its own identity as to where they belong in society. Since we can not provide students with the financial resources to produce many more of the above Mexicanos we can, at least, try to provide them with a curriculum that uses their ethnic identity.

Religion

Religion is very intrinsic in the Hispanic mentality and thus, it must be included with Carrasquillo's core values.

The Hispanic culture revolves around religion. It is very difficult to find a Mexican holiday which has not been shaped in any

way by religion. When we at school try to ignore religion we unwillingly ignore the student's culture. Most Hispanic children are Catholic since their families have always been Catholic. Mexican culture always revolves around religion and it is very difficult to separate the two.

For Mexican American youth, religion and ethnic identity are very important. Ethnic identity commitment is significantly related to self-esteem (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990).

Fostering Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is a psychological construct that addresses the important question, "Who am I?" It is a set of self-ideas about one's own ethnic group membership that allows for the child's self concept (Bernal, et. al., 1991).

A strong sense of identification with one's ethnic culture is likely to act as a positive influence on well-being, by providing a sense of belonging and serving as a buffer against the negative impact of prejudice and discrimination.

Subjects with high ethnic identify had significantly higher self-esteem than those with low ethnic identify. Having a clear

opinion on active strategies for dealing with threats, rather than ignoring them, may contribute to the higher self-esteem of high ethnic identify adolescents (Chavira & Phinney, 1991).

The cultural mismatch theories emphasize microlevel sociological variables including disparities between home and school environments as causes of under-achievement. Primary cultural discontinuities cause of conflict between minority students, school and lead to academic failure. These conflicts are a result of differences between minority and Anglo cultures in nonverbal and verbal communication, cognitive styles, cultural values and behavior. Such interactions, attributions, and labeling on the part of both school staff and pupils result in disruptions of the teaching and learning process. These disruptions lead to students' rejection of the cultural values and academic demands of the schools and consequently, to academic failure in ethnic minority children. Low status minority students often experience inferior instruction and discrimination in classrooms because of White teachers' racial and ethnic biases (Chavira & Phinney, 1991).

Ethnic identity is a multidimensional construct, involving ethnic feelings, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors. It has been

pointed out that if one's group has lower status in society or is subjected to prejudice, discrimination, and negative stereotypes, then group members might be expected to have lower self-esteem. With this in mind we must devise some alternative curricula for the Mexican-American child.

Cultural inversion is the tendency of a minority group to see behaviors, events, meanings, and symbols of the dominant group as inappropriate for them, and as a means of repudiating the derogatory images placed on them by Whites. Mexican American youths whose ethnically based behaviors and attitudes are incompatible with the requirements of school tasks may be less likely to respond to the demands of the immediate social environment. Under these conditions, attributes such as their traditional Mexican cooperativeness, respectfulness, and unassertiveness, may result in a process that leads to academic failure. But if the social identity "student" prevails, and its contents include appropriate classroom behaviors, the youth may be more responsive to environmental demands, and consequently more successful (Bernal, et al., 1991).

THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT

Ogbu's theory of cultural secondary discontinuity seeks to identify causes of underachievement but does not offer any interventions or solutions to the problems. All of his relationships may be influenced by contextual variables, such as the prevailing societal attitudes toward particular ethnic groups like the Italians and the Irish, but something needs to be done in the meantime since we can not wait for society to change its mind on this particular minority as it did with some of the others which had been ostracized. This project proposes to introduce curriculum that will enhance the Chicanos' attitude about culture in order to build self-esteem. No one single thing will change their self image but a combination should prove more valuable than the alternative which is being used today.

Having Hispanic teachers who understand and value the Chicano students' culture and identity the next step is to have those same teachers write the curricula for those students.

An example of useful educational materials is, Margarita's Secret, a piece of literature which takes into account the Hispanic student's experiences and the new literature project. Margarita's

Secret is a short story that has been adapted to computer-based instruction, and implemented as software that combines both computers and the use of the student's culture in order to increase the minority student's language acquisition. This program proves that minority students are capable of higher production if given the right curriculum and tools (Nares, 1993).

In planning educational programs for Hispanic students, decisions need to be made in terms of the varied cultural and linguistic characteristics of these populations as well as their ethnic identity. Hispanic students have the need for textbooks to which they can relate their experiences and culture. There is that need in order to strengthen their personal identity and self-esteem. With this in mind the following lesson plans were written using Carrasquillo's framework:

"Cinco De Mayo" is a lesson plan which includes cultural values, emotional security, and religion. Presently it, the holiday, is used as a place to socialize. Education plays a big part in showing the students how rich their culture is and what they can strive for.

"El Día De Los Muertos" includes basic family and cultural values, conforming to one's social level, emotional security, and

religion. For those who work the alfiniqui it serves as a financial security and it serves as a way to socialize for those two days involved.

“The Spanish Conquest” will focus mainly in what a large part religion will change the outcome of history. The lesson will also show how emotionally secure the population was before the arrival of the Spaniards.

The biographical stories try to highlight one or more of these descriptions in order to help the teacher understand the student. This is done with a focus on the child’s identity and the possible cultural conflict found when schools pit the child’s culture against that of mainstream America. If we are to believe Vygotsky’s contextual approach to development we must emphasize both the cultural aspects of development as well as the historical influences upon the student (Garton, 1992). Thus the ensuing lesson plans and cultural material emphasize rather than ignore the Hispanic’s culture and identity.

upon the student (Garton, 1992). Thus the ensuing lesson plans and cultural material emphasize rather than ignore the Hispanic's culture and identity.

LESSON PLANS FOR A CULTURALLY RELEVANT CURRICULUM

El Día De Los Muertos

This is a lesson plan that addresses the following high school strands: Social Studies, Spanish, ESL, and Art. It also takes into account the historical, ethical and cultural literacy of the lesson as well as the necessary use of critical thinking skills. The lesson will be used with grade levels seven through twelve and will take five class periods (5 hours) to complete.

Objectives

Students will be able to do the following:

1. Analyze why the Aztec and the modern Mexican people believed that life is short, and why this belief is sustained by modern Mexican people.
2. Describe in writing why it is possible for the Mexican people to interact with their beloved ones who are deceased.
3. Explain in journals how the religious beliefs and perceptions of events effect the actions of both Mexicans and Mexican-Americans.

4. Learn about Jose Guadalupe Posada and how he introduced to the Mexican people his carvings and drawings of skeletons performing daily chores.

Historical Background for the lesson (Teacher's Use)

The Aztecs believed that life on earth was temporary and thus they were here just passing by. After the Spanish conquest, the Aztecs were given Christianity, which preaches a better life after death.

The Aztecs' religious beliefs were reinforced by Christianity. Both the Aztecs and modern Mexicans believe that life on earth is temporary, and that death should not be feared since it is only a transitional process and not eternal. People expect the dead to return, and do their best to entice them back to enjoy their favorite foods and music.

Lesson Activities

Introductory Activity

Students will read silently the following materials: "Memorias Del Día De Los Muertos" (E. Náñez, see Appendix A) and "La Ofrenda" (R. Berdecio & S. Appelbaum, see Appendix B) These stories will give

background information as to why children believe and will continue to believe in this tradition in spite of opposing viewpoints.

After reading the story, students synthesize what they have read with their own cultural knowledge by writing in their journals on the following topics:

1. How would they feel if their parents believed this to be true?
2. What would happen if a prominent leader purposely made fun of this tradition?

For a second writing activity have students write for ten minutes on their feelings about "El Día De Los Muertos."

Role Play Activity

Have any number of students under 11 role play two leaders with different beliefs and values and how they would react to this tradition.

Beliefs and characteristics of Leader 1. Leader 1 strongly believes that America is being contaminated with so many foreign traditions. He believes his first role is to keep America from having ethnic beliefs imposed on us.

Beliefs and characteristics of Leader 2. Leader 2 believes that any tradition which positively stimulates students to learn is welcomed since ethnic knowledge diffuses prejudice.

A panel of under 11 students can answer questions about this tradition. One student should be the moderator. Every student should have a question about their personal experiences with this holiday.

Critical Thinking Activity

Introduce the question "What is reincarnation?" on the overhead projector. Students brainstorm as teacher writes ideas on the overhead.

Ask how the United States culture would be different if people believed in Spiritualism.

Video Viewing Activity

Show the movie "Macario" which gives one person's perspective on "El Día De Los Muertos." Answer questions about the movie (see Appendix C).

Discussion Activity

Discuss why it is feasible for the dead to return. Arrange students in small groups and have them come to a conclusion in writing about Macario's demise in regards to this tradition.

Students will discuss Macario in regards to the Mexican belief of "Día De Los Muertos."

Art Activity

Students color artwork from Guadalupe Posada after reading a snippet of his life.

Culminating Assessment Activity

Students will discuss or write about effects of beliefs on history.

1. How have all the great muralists been influenced by this tradition?
2. Could this tradition have survived if Spaniards had been Protestant ?
3. Why are Mexican-Americans accepting this tradition?
4. Should we accept or reject this tradition in America?

The Spanish Conquest

This is lesson plan that addresses the following high school strands: Social Studies, Spanish, ESL, and Art. It also takes into account the historical, ethical and cultural literacy of the lesson as well as the necessary use of critical thinking skills. The lesson will be used with grade levels seven through twelve and will take five class periods (or hours) to complete.

Objectives

Students will be able to do the following:

1. Analyze why the Aztecs behaved contrary to their nature.
2. Describe in writing why the Aztecs were initially benevolent with the intruders.
3. Explain in journals how both people's religious beliefs and perceptions of events effect their actions.

Historical Background for the Lesson (Teacher Use)

We learn from history that many times religion was the main catalyst for action that influenced events. If we are to understand why history developed the way it did, we must understand the motives and beliefs of the people involved.

The Spaniards came to the Americas in the name of God to convert the Indians to Christianity. Many textbooks focus on the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter Reformation to give insight into the religious motives of the conquistadores. Seldom have the reasons for the seeming passivity of the Aztecs in response to the Spanish invasion been examined.

The practically bloodless conquest of Mexico was possible because the Aztec leader, Moctezuma, was a very religious man. The enclosed background story, Moctezuma's Dilemma, helps students understand the Aztec perspective after they have been sensitized to the problem of facing a frightening and unexplainable happening in the "War of the Worlds" lesson.

Lesson Activities

Introductory Activity

Play a transcript of the radio show, "War of the Worlds", which scared many people into believing that the Martians had landed in America. Stop the tape before Orson Wells interrupts and explains that the tape is only a drama.

Reading Activity

Hand out copies of the story “Moctezuma’s Dilemma” (V. Riva Palacios, see Appendix D). Students read the story silently individually; they stop at the warning. Limited English Proficient students should read the story in pairs. Finish by reading the ending of the story “Moctezuma’s Dilemma” together as a class.

Writing Activity

Have students reflect by writing in their journals on:
How they would have felt if they believed the radio show was a live news broadcast.

What role they would have expected from the nation’s leader.
Why?

Each student writes in his or her journal whether Quetzalcoatl behaved properly as a religious and political leader. Why do they think so?

As a group, students write their own ending to the story and share it with the class.

Role Play Activity

Have two students role play two leaders with different beliefs and values and how they would have reacted to what they thought was a news broadcast of an invasion by Martians:

Beliefs and characteristics of Leader 1. Leader 1 strongly believes in science and that there are logical explanations for everything. He also believes the leader's first role is to protect his people.

Beliefs and characteristics of Leader 2. Leader 2 strongly believes that God works in mysterious ways and is manifest in the world. He believes the leader is responsible for the salvation of his/her people.

Discussion Activity

Play the end of the tape. Discuss with the class the concept that what the people thought was true during the broadcast, was not really true.

Critical Thinking Activity

Introduce the question “What is religion?” on the overhead projector. Students brainstorm as teacher writes ideas on the overhead and asks students how religion has shaped the culture of America.

Culminating Assessment Activity

Students will discuss, write or make a video explaining the effects of beliefs on the outcome of history.

1. How did his religious beliefs affect Moctezuma’s thinking about the white gods?
2. Could history have been different if Moctezuma hadn’t been so religious?
3. What might have happened if all the Spaniards had been killed on La Noche Triste?
4. Why did the Spaniards reach the city without a battle?
5. Why did the other tribes help the Spaniards?

El Cinco De Mayo

This is a lesson plan that addresses the following high school strands: Social Studies, Spanish, ESL, and Art. It also takes into account the historical, ethical and cultural literacy of the lesson as well as the necessary use of critical thinking skills. The lesson will be used with grade levels seven thru twelve and will take five class periods (or hours) to complete.

Objectives

Students will be able to do the following:

1. Analyze why the Chicano and the modern Mexican people believed that no challenge is too great to be overcome.
2. Describe in writing why it is possible for the Mexican people to feel proud of a rag tag army who defeated a larger and better equipped army.
3. Explain in journals how both Mexican and Mexican-American peoples' beliefs and perceptions of events affected their actions.

4. Learn about the great muralists (Orosco, Rivera, and Siqueiros) and how they introduced their legacy to the Mexican people with their drawings and paintings of the heroes performing against monumental odds.

Historical Background for the lesson (Teacher Use)

Mexico in the nineteenth century.

Lesson Activities

Introductory Activity

Students will read silently “Battle of Puebla” (E. Blanquel) (See Appendix E) & “Intervención Francesa” (B. L. Solis) (See Appendix F). This story gives background as to why children and adults alike believe and will continue to believe in the Mexican bravery.

After reading the story, students synthesize what they have read with their own cultural knowledge reflect by writing in their journals on the following topics:

1. How would they feel if someone tried to take their home by force?
2. What would you do if others tried to pick a fight with you because you're weaker?
3. What if you were forced to fight when you didn't want to?

For a second writing activity students will write for 10 minutes on their feelings about "Cinco De Mayo."

Role Play Activity

Have any number of students under 11 role play two leaders with different beliefs and values and how they would react to this tradition.

Beliefs and characteristics of Leader 1. Leader 1 strongly believes that own country is better off being ruled by a foreigner than by someone from the same country. He believes his first role to keep the country economically solvent no matter what it takes.

Beliefs and characteristics of Leader 2. Leader 2 wants to keep the country free of foreign intervention and he wants to

Writing Activity

Arrange students in small groups and have them come to a conclusion in writing about Maximilian's demise in regards to U. S. history. Answer questions about the invasion.

Art Activity

Students color artwork from The Great Muralists after reading a snippet of their life.

Culminating Assessment Activity

Students will discuss or write about effects of beliefs on history.

1. How have all the great muralists been influenced by this battle?
2. Could this feeling of patriotism have survived if Spaniards had been Protestant?
3. Why is the Mexican-American population accepting this tradition?
4. Should we accept or reject this tradition in America?

improve and strengthen the country by using national resources with as little foreign influence as possible.

A panel of under 11 students can answer questions about this event. One student should be the moderator. Every student should have a personal question or statement about having avoided a fight or one they had to get involved with.

Critical Thinking Activity

Introduce the questions “What is an invasion?” and “Was this an invasion?” on the overhead projector. Students brainstorm as teacher writes ideas on the overhead.

Discussion Activity

Students will discuss among themselves:

“How did France shape the culture of Mexico and the U.S.?”

“What legacy did the French leave behind?”

“Why is it feasible for a country to invade another and why would anyone do it?”

BIOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE

Basic Cultural and Family Values

El Papá Más Listo

Gilberto estaba casado y era zapatero de profesión. Él seguía la tradición de continuar el mismo oficio de su padre y trabajaba a comisión en casa con ayuda de su esposa Lucila y sus hijos Enrique, Gilberto y Francisco. Con el tiempo tendrían también una hija llamada como la mamá.

Durante el día y al estar trabajando toda la familia escuchaba la radiodifusora del pueblo; Purépero. Todos los jueves durante el mediodía había un programa donde regalaban boletos a la función del cine a las primeras personas que llegaran allí con la respuesta correcta a la pregunta del día. Los boletos eran buenos para las funciones dominicales de matiné y se les entregaba a las primeras tres personas que llevaran las respuestas correctas.

Gilberto que nunca terminó su educación primaria por falta de recursos económicos continuó educándose y leyendo por sí mismo para seguir aprendiendo. Como él siempre leía y aprendía por cuenta propia sabía tanto como las personas que habían continuado asistiendo a las escuelas secundarias.

Para conseguirles boletos al cine y como siempre sabía él las respuestas correctas decidió implementar un sistema infalible, el cual les permitiría conseguir boletos semana tras semana.

Para poder ser los primeros en llegar a la radiodifusora y poder conseguirles boletos a los dos hijos mayores que estaban en el cuarto año decidió que deberían llegar inmediatamente y así poder ser siempre de las primeras tres personas con sus respuestas.

La familia vivía a cuatro cuadras de la radiodifusora y para asegurarse de que serían de los primeros, Gilberto, el papá, decidió que Gil el segundo hijo esperaría en la esquina con un patín que le daría a Enrique. Enrique vendría corriendo hasta la esquina que era cuesta arriba y además la calle no estaba pavimentada como el resto de las siguientes calles. La calle donde vivían estaba empedrada y era difícil correr en patin. Gil esperaba a su hermano mayor que venía corriendo con la respuesta que le había dado su papá y le entregaba el patín para que siguiera rápidamente y no se cansara pues las cuatro cuadras eran cuesta arriba.

Quique, como le decían al mayor, llegaba rápidamente con la respuesta correcta que le daba su papá y regresaba donde estaba su

hermanito mostrándole los boletos que ellos dos usarían para el domingo siguiente.

Los locutores siempre se preguntaban ¿cómo era posible que este mismo niño llegaría tan rápido a la estación? si no vivía cerca y no traía un radio de transistores que le permitiera estar afuera de la estación en espera de la pregunta de esa semana no sabiendo que tenían un sistema.

Al regresar con los boletos Quique se los mostraba a su hermanito que lo esperaba donde se había quedado al darle el patín.

Continuaban los dos niños felices a su casa sabiendo que los boletos eran para ellos y que su papá siempre les conseguía los boletos con sus respuestas y con su sistema que les permitía siempre ser los primeros en llegar a la radiodifusora.

Los dos niños tenían boletos para todas las funciones dominicales hasta que un día la radiodifusora cerró sus puertas para siempre y se terminó este juego fascinante que les redituaba varias horas de entretenimiento gratuito.

The Smartest Dad in the World

Gilberto was a married shoemaker. He continued his family's profession as had been the case with his father and grandfather before him. He worked at home and his family helped since he worked and got paid by piecework. He got help from his wife and three sons. Later on they would also have a daughter.

He worked at home and he would listen to the local radio station in Purepero. Every Thursday afternoon there was a contest where they would give a couple of tickets to the first three people who arrived at the station with the correct answer. Those tickets could get you into the movies for the special matinee on Sunday morning.

Gilberto who was never able to finish his elementary school due to economic hardship continued to educate himself by reading anything he could get his hands on. Since he continued to read and learn on his own he knew as much as many students who had gotten their high school diploma.

In order to get some tickets for his older sons who were in the fourth grade, and since he found the questions very easy, Gilberto decided to come up with a plan which would get them free tickets

week after week. In order to get to the radio station quickly and be one of the first three people with the correct answer he decided to come up with a fool proof plan.

His family lived four blocks from the radio station and in order to make sure they could always be one of the first three people, Gilberto decided that Gil, his second son, should wait on the corner up the street where the older son, Enrique would run and take the scooter from Gil. The street where they lived had nothing but pebble stone but, the other streets were paved and it was easy to run, with the scooter, the next three blocks even though they were uphill, with the answer written down in order not to forget.

Quique, as the eldest son was known, would arrive quickly to the radio station with the correct answer, which his dad gave him, and soon returned to his brother who still waited at the same corner spot. He would flash the tickets for his brother to see and returned home together knowing that they would be attending the next matinee. The disk jockey couldn't figure out how this same boy kept arriving so soon, with the correct answer, even though he didn't live close by or carried a transistor radio to wait outside and run in immediately with the answer.

With tickets on hand both children walked home flashing big smiles knowing that their father had helped them acquire those tickets with his fool-proof system which allowed them to be the first ones at the radio station. It was great having the smartest dad in town.

Both boys always had tickets for Sunday's matinee until one day the radio station closed its doors forever and the never ending tickets which gave them hours of free entertainment stopped coming.

Banda de Guerra

A los once años en la escuela primaria estatal de Purépero decidí que quería formar parte de la Banda de Guerra grupo musical que tocaría para la celebración del 16 de septiembre, La Independencia de México.

Todas las escuelas marchaban por el pueblo y cada escuela tenía su banda detrás de la cual marchaban todos los alumnos.

Esta era una de las pocas cosas que se hacían en la escuela de la cual derivaba un gran prestigio al individuo como a la escuela. Algo parecido como tenemos hoy en día en los Estados Unidos con los deportes que compiten de escuela con escuela.

Puesto que estos grupos desfilarían marchando, tocando y representando el honor de la escuela se le permitía a los alumnos que tuvieran instrucciones privadas por parte de Genarito un músico profesional que trabajaba como Mariachi para el mejor Mariachi de la región, el Mariachi Cendejas.

De una a dos horas antes de finalizar las clases se nos permitía que nos reuniéramos para practicar en conjunto pues algunos de los chicos tenían que trabajar ayudando en los negocios de los padres y era casi imposible juntarse todos para practicar por

los diferentes deberes de la mayoría de los alumnos del quinto año.

Genarito, nuestro maestro, a pesar de ser un músico profesional que tocaba la trompeta en el mariachi del pueblo, era un músico lírico y por lo tanto nosotros, los de la banda teníamos que ser músicos líricos pues nadie podía enseñarnos a leer la música que tocaríamos para El Día de la Independencia.

Por los problemas que habían para que el grupo se juntara y pudiera practicar junto decidimos los niños que dormiríamos en la escuela para levantarnos temprano y practicar algunas horas antes de empezar las clases.

El primer día nos quedamos y toda la noche estuvimos alerta para escuchar “La Bota” que se decía habitaba la escuela y asustaba durante las noches. La Bota decía la leyenda que pertenecía a un soldado que murió en la escuela durante la guerra de los Cristeros y que su bota caminaba por sí sola todas las noches. Nadie la vió a pesar de que el crujir de la madera de las vigas, decían los niños, que era producto de que la Bota temía aparecerse a un grupo tan grande de niños. Esa noche nos pasamos la noche platicando de cuentos de miedo y de horror. Cuando amanecía y era la hora que habíamos decidido levantarnos para practicar nos habíamos quedado dormidos

y fuimos despertados por los maestros que llegaban temprano para preparar sus clases.

Yo decidí que tocaría el tambor y como mi tía era maestra en la escuela se me dió el privilegio de escoger el tambor de mi preferencia a lo cual escogí el que mi primo Sergio había tocado el año anterior y mi tío Chucho dos años antes. Después supe que mi primo Gustavo también escogió mi tambor al año siguiente.

Este tambor tenía su historia pues no solo había estado en la familia por cuatro años seguidos. Se decía que los cueros del tambor no resistían los golpes del año y que la escuela no se hacía responsable de adquirir nuevos si se rompían durante el transcurso del año. Genarito nos contó como mi tambor no se había roto en dos años y nos dijo que la razón fue que él y los niños de hacía dos años antes habían ido de cacería y habían matado un perro al cual le quitaron la piel. Esta era la que tenía mi tambor y por eso no se rompía.

Al oír esta historia decidimos que al día siguiente íbamos a matar bastantes perros para tener suficientes cueros para cada uno de los tambores.

A la mañana siguiente nos fuimos directos al mercado donde sabíamos donde encontrar armas para completar nuestro objetivo. “Chuchi el ciego,” un señor con un solo ojo, que vendía plátanos y otras frutas tiraba los garrotes que usaríamos cuando le quitaba los plátanos. Valientes y armados nos lanzamos en busca de nuestra primer víctima. Vimos un pequeño perrito al que asustamos al perseguirlo y al cual nunca ni nos le acercamos. Seguimos buscando a quien cazar y nos encontramos con un gran perro al cual con un poco de miedo nos le acercamos. Cuando levantamos el tronco de platano, el perro ladró y nos persiguió. Cada niño, gritando de miedo, corrió a esconderse del perro y yo alcancé, gracias a Diós, a esconderme en la iglesia. Nunca más tratamos de conseguir cueros para nuestros tambores.

Un día fueron los niños a mi casa por mi a las tres de la mañana y mi mamá los regresó diciéndoles que era muy temprano. A las cuatro y media volvieron tocando sus instrumentos y al oírlos me levanté y nos fuimos tocando por todo el pueblo. Mi mamá no me dejó quedarme más en la escuela pues vió que los niños nada más se la pasaban contando cuentos y no dormían. Yo me tuve que quedarme en casa al fin que vivía a la vuelta de la esquina.

Salíamos a practicar todos los días a las cinco de la mañana y si había alguna persona que nos molestara o que no quisieramos entonces les llevabamos "serenata" y nos quedabamos allí afuera de la casa hasta que los despertábamos y nos corrían con amenazas y maldiciones.

Varias personas con el tiempo se quejaron de que los despertábamos o que no los dejábamos dormir pero el director les explicaba que era necesario que practicáramos antes de clases pues algunos de los niños trabajaban en el día. Otras veces nos íbamos con Chuchi para ver si podíamos robarle alguna fruta que hubiera dejado a la mano sin esconderla.

Si no conseguíamos fruta entonces nos íbamos a la panadería a comprar pan del día anterior que casi nos lo regalaban por unos cuantos pesos.

En este tiempo había un programa existente entre las esposas de los presidentes de México y los Estados Unidos en el cual se les daría desayuno a los niños escolares de primaria de los pueblos mexicanos. Si no habíamos conseguido comer nada entonces nos regresábamos pronto a la escuela donde nos daban un vaso grande de leche que habían preparado con leche polvo. La leche venía de

sabores de chocolate, vainilla y fresa. Con el desayuno que nos cobraban diez centavos pero también nos daban frijoles y un bolillo. Esto era bastante comida.

Al fin llegó el día esperado “El día de la Independencia” en el cual representaríamos a nuestra escuela frente a un grupo bastante grande, todo el pueblo. El grupo o Banda de Guerra nuestro vestía sueter azul con colgijes o golpes. Nadie más podía usar estos más que los miembros de la banda. Elegantemente vestido me fui a la escuela donde todo mundo, en la escuela, nos ponía gran atención para ver si estábamos listos y para dirigir la marcha de los alumnos de la escuela.

Era un honor el poder romper el cuero del tambor durante la marcha pero por más que traté y por más duro que le pegaba al tambor nunca pude trozarlo.

Al final nos felicitaron por tocar tan bien y nos preguntaban si teníamos años tocando juntos pues tocábamos muy parejos y no parecía que tuvieramos unos solos meses que habíamos empezado con el grupo. Nadie se dió cuenta de que solo éramos músicos líricos como nuestro maestro.

The School's Marching Band

When I was eleven years old, attending a public school in Purepero, I decided to form part of the school's marching band which would play for Mexico's independence day, September 16.

Every school in town participated in this holiday, marching behind their band.

This was one of the few things done at school which brought prestige and honor to the individual schools. Today we have something similar here in the United States with competitive sports.

Since the marching bands would play while representing their respective schools their members were permitted to be taught by a private instructor. Our instructor was Genarito, a short man, who played with the best Mariachi, band in town, Mariachi Cendejas.

An hour or two before school was over we would be allowed to leave class in order to be ready for our big day: September 16.

Since many of the children needed to go home to help their family, we had to use school time in order to be able to practice together. Some of us were able to stay after school and continue practice for another two hours.

Genarito, our teacher, who was a professional musician, had learned to play on his own and never learned how to read music. Since he never learned to read music he was unable to teach us how to read music either. We learned to play by ear since our teacher could not teach us any other way.

Since many of the children had to work and they were unable to stay after school and practice, we decided to sleep at school in order to get up early and practice together a few hours before school.

The first night we stayed at school we could not sleep at all since a boy brought up the fact there lived "the Boot," a myth, which was said that belonged to a soldier who had died at school and his boots continued to walk the halls. The soldier had fought the Cristeros when the government tried to outlaw religion. He died at school when it was used as a temporary hospital. We could not get a wink of sleep that night since we kept hearing different sounds and noises through the night. We woke up when we heard the principal open up the school for all the teachers to come in.

I had decided to play the drum. I had pick of the instruments since my aunt was teacher at the school.

I picked the same drum that had belonged to my cousin, Sergio, the year before and my uncle Chuche, the year before that. I learned with time that my cousin Gustavo picked the same drum the year after.

That drum had its own history with our family since we had it for four years in a row. It was said that drum skins were flimsy and would not take the pounding of a full year and thus, the school wasn't responsible for replacing it once it broke. Genarito told us that my drum had not been broken for at least two years and the reason had been the fact that the children using it at the time had gone out to hunt and kill a dog to replace the skin of my drum which had broken. My drum, I was told, was the only one with dog skin and it was the reason why it stood all the pounding.

When we heard this tale we decided to go out and kill enough dogs to replace all the drums as soon as we woke up the next day.

When we woke up, instead of practice, we went directly to the town's mercado where we knew we could arm ourselves for the hunt.

"Chuchi the blind man," who was missing an eye sold fruits at his local stand and discarded the "clubs" which we would use once the bananas had been peeled off them. When our whole group found

enough "weapons" we left in search of our first victim. We found a small dog who got scared when the entire group went after him. He ran away and we never had a chance to get close to him. We continued to look for other victims and we were very brave since the other dog had been afraid of us. Finally, we found a large dog which we happily ran to kill. When we got close and tried to club him, the dog growled and barked at us menacingly which made us run away from him. Seeing us run, he chased after us and, thank God, we finally found a safe place to hide; the local church. We never again considered obtaining any more skins.

One day the boys from the band went to my house at 3 in the morning to get me to practice but my mom sent them home. An hour and a half later they came back playing and I was able to hear them so I dressed and left quickly before my mom could send them back. We played all over the entire town that morning. My mom would not allow me to sleep over with the other boys since they kept telling scary stories and they just would not go sleep. I lived a block away from the school so they could stop by and get me anyway.

We would practice every morning at 5 in the morning. We would stop at anyone's house if we could not stand him. We would

“serenade” that person until he would threaten and curse us for waking him at such early times.

Many people went to school to complain that we would play outside their bedrooms and would not let them sleep but the principal would explain that was the only way we could practice together since many of the children worked after school. The principal could not believe that anyone from his school would be so mean as to purposely wake someone else in town. Sometimes while practicing we would visit Chuchi to see if we could steal some fruit which had not been locked away.

If we couldn't get any fruit then we would go to a nearby bakery where we could purchase day old bread for a few pesos .

At the time there was a bi-national program in which the wives of both presidents, from Mexico and the United States, wanted to feed as many elementary school children in Mexico as possible. If we had not gotten any food then we would hurry back to school to be in line before anyone else got there in order to be fed a large glass of prepared milk. This milk was prepared from flavored powdered milk which was sent from the United States. We got chocolate,

vainilla, and strawberry milk along with a large "bolillo," sour roll, for only ten cents. Sometimes we also got beans to make a torta.

Finally September 16 arrived for which we had practiced hard and often and we were eager to strut our stuff. The entire town tends to come out to see all the elementary schools march behind their bands. Our school's marching band wore blue sweaters along with elegant white pants which made us look very distinctive. Looking very nice, I left for school knowing that everyone knew that I belonged to that elite group; the marching band.

It was an honor to be able to break the skin of the drum while playing but as hard as I tried I was never able to make a dent on it. At the end we were congratulated since we played as though we had been playing together for years and not a few months before as was the case. No one realized that we could not read music and that we played music by ear. The principal told everyone how much we had sacrificed to get to this level and how some people would even complain about our activities in those mornings that we practiced.

Mother's Day

On mother's day of 1994, my brother Freddy, my sister Lucila and I got together to celebrate this day with my mother Lucila . Both my sister and my brother had everything ready when we arrived at their house where we were to spend the day.

My sister prepared a sumptuous lunch which we were unable to finish since it was much more food than we could possibly eat in one day.

As we were talking about nothing in particular we had my brother Gilberto, who is living in Atlanta, call my mother to wish her a happy mother's day and soon after my other brother Francisco, who lives in Texas called to do likewise.

With me were my wife Petty and my children Enrique, Daniel and Sarah. The children played outside constantly running in and out while we watched TV and talked about everyone's plans for the future.

My parents are in the process of moving and are staying with my mother's sister for a week until they get their new house since they sold their old house, on their own without the need of a realtor, and are waiting for their new one to move into.

My sister is teaching at Cal State Dominguez Hills and she has been approved to participate in a doctoral internship at UCLA.

My brother tells us that he has been admitted at USC to an MBA program and is receiving a full scholarship.

Both my brother who are out of state are engineers doing quite well in their careers.

I invited my parents, Gilberto & Lucila, as well as my brother and sister to my forthcoming graduation on June, when I will receive my masters in education.

We're proud of both my parents who have always encouraged to continue with our education as far as we can. We have always been told at home that we are capable of becoming anything we want to be and that nothing is impossible, only difficult and time consuming.

I remember back when I was in high school when I was working part-time where my parents worked and the lead man made a comment about "those poor Mexicans." My mother swore that her children would never be called that and if necessary she would work as much as needed to allow us to go to college since college is always expensive.

Looking back I guess that she accomplished the above without “selling out” as some Mexican Americans have done, such as Richard Rodriguez who may never have had the enjoyment of a get-together like this one.

Finally, before we called it a day we played a card game where the person who first gets a poker, four of a kind, will pick up a spoon and the one who ends without a spoon loses. This game is called cucharas and it was played by my parents my brother and sister as well as my oldest son who is 8 years old and myself as well.

We all had a wonderful time and I kept thinking if Mr. Rodriguez’ sacrifice of losing his identity and family wasn’t a sacrifice which could have been avoided as it was done with my family.

I hope you had as wonderful mother’s day as we had!

Cultural Differences

In Mexico whenever a young man feels like smoking, he takes out his cigarette pack and offers a cigarette to everyone around him before he ever lights up.

Its customary for the Mexican young man to offer his cigarettes before he takes one out for himself. Usually, the young people go out together in large groups and when one of them smokes he has to offer his friends whatever he has. If he had gum, he would need to share with everyone just as well because it is customary to share one's wealth with one's friends and acquaintances.

I have a friend who smokes, and in order to satisfy all his friends as its customary, he carries two packs of cigarettes. One of the packs is a cheap brand which he offers around to everyone and once he has done this he puts whatever cigarettes he has left and without anyone noticing he takes a cigarette from the second pack which he never took out since this is an expensive American brand.

I had a job a few years back where almost everyone got together for lunch. We would spread out our lunches and help ourselves to whatever we had brought without minding if someone else had brought a less expensive lunch than the rest of us.

Since most of my friends and acquaintances are Mexican, I had always followed this custom of sharing my food with the people I sit down to eat with as they do too.

A couple of years back I had brought a lot of food to school since I had night classes and I planned to have some leftovers for dinner. While at lunch I brought out my lunch which looked and smelled very delicious.

The wonderful aroma from my lunch started everyone to compliment my lunch. Some of the teachers asked if my food tasted as wonderful as it smelled which I told them that it did. I offered it to them so that they could taste it and soon it was all gone.

This happened a few more times were we all helped ourselves to my lunch. I worked with teachers who are not Mexican and I soon started to notice that everyone would bring their lunch and comment about their wonderful lunches but they never once offered any to anyone.

Once I overslept and forgot to get my lunch from the refrigerator. When we got together for lunch a couple of teachers asked me if I was dieting. I explained to them how I had to leave quickly and I had no time to get my lunch. Some of the teachers

went on to explained how that day they had lots of food because they had cooked the day before and had brought more food than usual.

Their food, I was told, was very delicious since they had the time to cook but not once did they offer me any, or anyone else.

That day I realized that I was expecting non-Mexicans to abide by a Mexican custom. Ever since I continued to take my lunch to school but now I behave like the American teachers and I eat my lunch by myself as they do too. It feels odd not to be sharing but I'm becoming a "good American."

Presently, I see my fellow students at the University take out their lunch or snack and help themselves to it and think nothing about eating in front of everyone and not share.

At times like this I simply cannot agree with Richard Rodriguez when he says that everything "American" is best and therefore we should renounce our culture and adopt the new one.

A student I know was considered selfish for not wanting to help others unless he got paid for his services. He refused to run errands for family members unless he was told in advance how much he was going to get for his help otherwise he just wouldn't do it.

In the Mexican culture this kind of behavior was considered to be lacking in the social graces and people frowned upon it.

While this is not the best behavior desired in a family member, the young boy was considered one of the best students in school because he was very focused on his goals for the future and was never distracted from them. He would not "waste" his time trying to help others as readily the other Hispanics. He did extremely well at school since he was very goal oriented.

This is clear example of "double jeopardy" where a Chicano student learns to use the American culture better than his own. He is seen in a negative light in his own culture for being a "vendido" and not caring to abide by the cultural mores. The better he learns the dominant culture the more of an outsider he becomes. This tends to happen more and more as he loses his old culture and becomes more at ease with his new found culture which praises his achievements unlike the other one that tends to have nothing but criticism.

Naranjas

Luci era una niña muy inteligente que siempre trataba de ver como podía hacer cosas que los otros niños no se atrevían a hacer o nunca pensaron hacer.

Luci era una niña atrevida sin miedo que jugaba caminando en las bardas que dividían las casas y por suerte nunca tuvo la misfortuna de caer y quebrarse un brazo o una pierna pues la caída hubiera sido muy peligrosa.

Los niños jugaban en la calle y puesto que no había mucho tráfico en esos tiempos los padres de los niños no temían que fueran a ser atropellados como sucedería hoy con tanto tráfico.

Los niños jugaban a las escondidas, al tentado (un juego parecido al béisbol donde el bateador tiraba la pequeña pelota de hule y le pegaba al mismo tiempo), a las cebollitas donde se agarraban de un árbol el primero y el resto cogido en fila y uno de ellos trataba de sacarlos de la fila, las columnas de marfil, etc.

La casa de enfrente del callejón donde jugaban era una grandísima casa que consistía de media cuadra. La parte trasera de la propiedad tenía una huerta de frutas que la familia no comía pues la fruta era demasiada para la familia que solo tenía 3 hijos: 2

niñas y un solo niño. Los niños eran muy vergonzosos y no jugaban con ninguno de todos esos niños que se juntaban a jugar a diario detrás de su casa.

Después de jugar por varias horas Luci recordaba que al lado de la barda donde había estado jugando había visto la huerta llena de varias frutas y se le vino en mente una idea de como podía conseguir fruta para todos, a pesar de que sabía que la familia nunca les daría fruta.

Luci tiró la pelota a la huerta de la casa y los niños se pusieron “enojados” al ver que la pelota se les perdería pues con tanto árbol allí sería muy difícil encontrarla. Eso si encontraban que la familia estaba de buenas y les permitía a uno de los niños ir a buscarla.

Los niños le dijeron a Luci que ella tenía que ir por la pelota pues si la familia no estaba de buenas ellos no querían ser regañados al pedir permiso para buscar la pelotita.

Luci inmediatamente fue en busca de la pelota, iba tan sonriente que causó sorpresa en los demás pues parecía que no temía pedir permiso para entrar ni le daba miedo entrar a la huerta donde se decía había muchas víboras y culebras pues casi nadie entraba allí.

Al poco tiempo los niños detrás de la casa oyeron a Luci que les gritaba de la huerta diciéndoles que se prepararan para una sorpresa.

Casi inmediatamente empezaron a llover manzanas y naranjas y cuando ella vio que ya tenían suficientes para todos les dijo que aventaría otras para que se las guardaran a ella pues ya iba para afuera y también quería comer fruta.

Salió de la casa y se despidió de la familia dándoles las gracias por permitirle buscar y encontrar su pelota la cual les enseñó al salir. La familia viendo esta niña tan educada y tan femenina le dijo que si necesitaba regresar alguna otra vez por la pelota tendría permiso.

Regresó con los amigos con esa misma sonrisa que le vieron cuando aventó la pelota y se preguntaron ¿qué se tramaría ahora?

Oranges

Luci was a very intelligent girl who always tried to do things that other children never dreamed of.

She was a very daring girl who would climb the walls dividing her house from the neighbor's property and then she would walk them back and forth. She was lucky not to have fallen off since she would have broken an arm or a leg.

Children used to play on the street since there was no park to play at and very little traffic on the streets. Parents never feared for their safety as they would nowadays. Children would play hide and seek, stick ball (a game similar to baseball where the batter would throw the ball up in the air and hit it himself), cebollitas, little onions (a child would grab a tree and everyone else would hold on to the person in front of him with a child pulling one out from the line), Ivory towers, etc.

They would play at the narrow street rather than at the wider street since that way they would not be bother by the heavier traffic. The house that fronted where they played was about half a block wide and had a lot of fruit trees which could be seen from the street.

The house was owned by a family which had 2 girls and a little boy but all three children were extremely bashful and wouldn't talk to anyone.

The children playing outside tried to get the other children to join them and maybe then the 3 bashful kids would share some of that fruit which they couldn't eat since that was too much fruit for a family of 5.

After playing for hours on the street Luci remembered that on the other side of the wall could be found many many fruit trees with lots of fruit which they would love to eat but the family refused to sell or give any away.

While playing Luci threw the ball to the orchard in the house and all her friends were upset that their ball would be lost since the family would give them a verbal lashing for having thrown it in their house. Everyone said that she should retrieve it or purchase another since they were afraid to ask the family for it. Everyone had a story about the family being mean and nasty and no one dared to venture into the house.

No one dared go ask the family for the ball and they all had a good reason why they weren't the best suited people to retrieve it.

When everyone refused to retrieve the ball she said she would get it back and, smiling, went to ask permission from the family in order to look for it.

Everyone was surprised that Lucy did not try to back off but rather, she went after the ball as though she enjoyed it. People said that snakes lived in that orchard since they were never bothered by anyone.

All the children were asking themselves if they would dare go after the ball even if given permission to retrieve it since those snakes were deadly. They started to exchange horror stories about people they knew who had been bitten by snakes and had died or had lost their minds from the venom.

Suddenly, they heard Luci on the other side telling them to get ready for a surprise. Almost immediately, all kinds of fruit, oranges and apples, began to rain down on them. When she thought they had enough fruit for themselves she told them she was throwing some more to be saved for herself since she wanted to eat some also.

Before leaving she made it a point to go and thank the family for allowing her to retrieve her ball which she showed them. The

family seeing such a good mannered girl told her that she would be allowed to retrieve it if it ever went to their orchard again.

She returned to her friends and ate the fruit which had been saved for her and as she ate the fruit told them how she had to be careful not to disturb the deadly snakes in the house.

She returned to her play after eating with the same smile as when she threw the ball over the wall in the first place. Her friends then asked themselves: What is she planning now?

Pepa

Pepa era una niña huérfana de madre que vivía con su padre en un rancho lejos del pueblo. El rancho estaba rodeado por una barranca. Bajo la barranca corría un arroyo abundante en agua.

En primavera todo era verde y lleno de flores y en tiempo de lluvias caían unos aguaseros que empapaban la tierra y con el calor del sol el campo se floreaba y así se blanqueaba de hongos. Habían muchas flores que le daban un colorido muy festivo al rancho. De tantas flores que se encontraban ella escogía algunas para satisfacer el hambre de la niña .

Unas de ellas eran las pisecuas, charauescas y carne de vieja. Las charauescas eran unas plantas a las que se les excavaba para sacar la raíz y de esta planta se comía el camote que era más jugoso que la jícama.

La carne de vieja era una planta de tallo rojo y flores rojas que también comía, pero esta era agria y todo lo contrario de las pisecuas que ella prefería.

Las pisecuas eran dulces y no tenían que hacer mucho trabajo para conseguirlas como las otras plantas. Éstas se encontraban entre el maíz y las comía en vez de dulces que no se encontraban en

el rancho pues con tanta golosina natural como eran la miel, cañas de azúcar, tunas, pisecuas y otras flores dulces el papá no pensaba en comprarle dulces fabricados.

Alrededor del arroyo se encontraban las cañas a las que después de bañarse buscaba para comerlas pues después de nadar le daba mucho apetito.

El rancho estaba a dos o tres horas de Purépero, muy lejos del pueblo a pie, y como no tenía con quien jugar; para divertirse, Pepa se deslizaba de la ladera que rodeaba el rancho y que tenía como 24 pies de altura. Se deslizaba para divertirse y a la vez para llegar más rápido al arroyo donde se bañaba y chapoteaba. Ella creía que eso era nadar pues nunca había visto nadar a nadie y no podía comparar su nadado.

Como no había jabón usaba una planta de nombre pachangua que crecía alrededor de la barranca y parecía una cebolla. La planta se machacaba y la usaba ella como jabón para lavarse el pelo y para bañarse. Dice que el pelo le quedaba muy limpio y brillante.

La gente acomodada compraba la pachangua preparada para lavar los trastes de la casa. En aquellos tiempos se encontraba pues eran por los años de 1930. Ahora solo se conoce el jabón .

Al terminar de nadar y bañarse se alisaba el pelo y a falta de espejo usaba el agua del arroyo donde se reflejaba y podía verse al estarse alisando en pelo. Se ponía su ropa y corría lo más recio que podía para que se le secara el pelo pues tenía prohibido por su papá bañarse en el arroyo. Al llegar al rancho llegaba seca y muy ajitada pero disimulaba pues si notaban que se había bañado su papá le pegaba con una reata.

A la niña le encantaba mucho comer y recuerda como para septiembre iban a Tlatzazalca para traer camotes. Tenían una vidriada (olla grande de barro con asas) que llenaban de camotes y lo cocían toda la noche y al amanecer el camote ya estaba tatemado y enmielado. La familia lo comía con leche de chiva recién ordeñada de las chivas que tenían en el rancho. Para comer usaban cucharas que el papá les hacía cortando una rama de Cirimo, el árbol que da la flor de Tilia. Empezaba por cortar un palo al que le sacaba correas hasta quedar un palo blanco. Con un cuchillo le rebajaba para dar la forma de la cuchara. Para platos usaban unos llamados borselana de barro con greta verde.

Casi siempre mataban 3 conejos que colgaban en una viga y los

comían al día siguiente con chile verde. También habían muchos nopales para comer y las tunas las comían como postre.

Como no tenía juguetes para jugar ella hacía sus propios pues en el rancho no había donde comprarlos y en el pueblo los daban muy caros. Para hacerlos ella traía barro del arroyo y formaba platitos, vasos y muchos otros trastes que luego los llevaba a la chimenea de la cocina. Cuando hacían las tortillas ponía los trastes en las brasas de los leños para coserlos y no se le desbarataran. Para hacer lumbre usaban la yesca una planta seca, un eslabón y una piedrita que frotaban hasta sacar chispas y prendiera la yesca.

Ella jugaba sola con sus trastecitos de barro cocido pues no habían niñas a los alrededores para jugar. Era una niña lista y muy curiosa pues sola se inventaba sus juegos. También hacía muñecos de trapo. Compraba una bolsa de trapos por 3 centavos y de ahí se fabricaba una familia de muñecos. Empezaba con la mamá, iba por partes: empezaba por hacer una bolita para la cabeza y luego le pintaba los ojos la nariz y la boca.

Después hacía los piesitos negros pues llevaba zapatos, le seguían las piernas el cuerpo y los brazos. Cuando ya tenía todas las

partes las unía cosiéndolas y así hacía cada muñeco: la mamá, el hijo y la hija pero ¿porqué nunca pensaba en hacer un papá?

Una de las tareas de la niña de escasos 8 años era cuidar una vaca llamada Pastilla. La sacaba a pastear y no tenía que dejarla que se brincara el cerco que dividía el rancho del vecino y por mas que trataba de detenerla a Pastilla ya sabía que en el rancho vecino había mucho que comer y se brincaba. Pepa lo unico que podía hacer era ponerse a llorar. Al rato llegaba el vecino a darle la queja a su padre de que Pastilla estaba en su milpa comiéndose su maiz. Pepa ya sabía que le esperaba una monda al haber dejado brincar a la vaca. Otra de sus tareas era cuidar unos chivos que tenían en el rancho. Seguido se le aparecían unos grandes venados que le daban mucho miedo pues ella creía que se comerían a los chivos y a ella también. Se subía a una piedra y se ponía a llorar, del miedo que les tenía no podía ni gritar. Aparte de juguetona era muy miedosa.

A Pepa le gustaba mucho jugar, andaba por todo el rancho que era muy grande y le gustaba comerse las pencas de miel de los jicotes a los que mataba para robarles su miel. Su papá tenía abejas a las que también le quitaban la miel haciendo lumbre con yesca para auventarlas con el humo y sacarles la miel. Le gustaba correr por

todo el rancho y cuando se cansaba se tiraba en el sacate cerraba los ojos y escuchaba los cuervos gritar. Ella se imaginaba que volaba con ellos y lo creía verdad. Ahora a los sesenta y tantos años escucha los cuervos y recuerda como volaba con ellos.

Un día jugando vio como de unos ollos se veían unos ojitos que le daban miedo. Ella creía que todos los animales que no conocía comían gente y empezó a gritar lo más fuerte que podía, “PAPÀ, PAPÀ” y el papá llegaba corriendo pensando que algo grave le ocurría a la niña y vio ese día que solo eran unas onzas en sus madrigueras.

Otro día vio dos víboras de cascabel una junto a la otra y empezó a gritar despavorida otra vez como tantas otras veces “PAPÀ, PAPÀ” y el papá llegó corriendo y encontró a la dos víboras que se encontraban aun dormidas y las mató allí mismo.

Cuando su papá trabajaba en el campo y al estar arando la tierra se encontraban calaveras y huesos humanos demasiado grandes decía su papá que eran de gente gigante por el gran tamaño de los huesos. También se encontraban molcajetes y figuras antiguas de barro que el papá le daba a la niña para que jugara con ellos sin darse cuenta que eran joyas arqueológicas y muy valiosas.

Ella platica que por las noches se escuchaba un tamborcito que se decía era del tiempo de la revolución que hacía años que había pasado. El tamborcito no dejaba de sonar y cuando lo escuchaban se le paraban los cabellos del miedo. Entonces le decía a su papá "PAPÀ, oiga el tamborcito" y su papá le decía que se callara y ella le veía el miedo que a él también le daba a pesar de ser un hombre recio, aquello sí lo asustaba. Se decía que era de algún espanto que andaba asustando gente y siempre lo escuchaban por la noche.

La niña solo asistía a la escuela los meses de febrero y marzo pues el resto del tiempo tenía que ir al campo a trabajar y los otros meses que podía asistir estaban de vacaciones. Como no asistía mucho a la escuela no recuerda si pasó del segundo año escolar.

Ya más grande de algunos 13 o 14 años los muchachos se fijaban en ella y trataban de darle cartitas "Raya de agua" que eran cartitas pre-escritas de colores pastel. Las cartitas se vendían en paquetes.

Pepa's Memories

Pepa was a little orphan girl who lived alone with her father far away from town. They lived in a big ranch which was surrounded almost completely by a canyon.

Their ranch in spring was completely green and full of flowers. When it rained it would turn white with mushrooms.

Many of the flowers gave the ranch a very festive look with its many colors. Pepa would use other flowers, such as the Pisecuas, charahuescas and carne de vieja, to satisfy her hunger. She preferred Pisecuas which were found at the edge of the river. Charahuescas were plants which could be found by digging for them with a stick and its roots would be eaten since the roots were much more juicy and delicious than jicamas.

Pepa preferred pisecuas since they were much more delicious and sweet than anything else around and they weren't very difficult to acquire. She knew that pisecuas could be found between corn stalks whenever she felt like having a sweet; since they had no candies at home and they were extremely far away from town to go and purchase any candies.

Pepa knew her flowers since she could have candies without going to town. Carne de Vieja was another plant which had a red stalk and its flowers were just as red. This plant she ate although it wasn't sweet but rather sour, unlike the others.

Since she had no toys to play with she would slide down the sides of the canyon surrounding her ranch which were about 24 feet high. She would slide down as play, as well as to save time in order to arrive faster to the river where she would bathe and swim. Since she had no soap to bathe with she would use a plant found nearby, the Pachangua which looked very similar to an onion. She would smash its fruit to make some soap. The juice of the fruit she would use as soap, and as shampoo for her hair, as she was bathing.

Back then, rich people would purchase prepared Pachangua to wash their dinner ware at home. Today it is nowhere to be found and only soap can be purchased.

When Pepa finished taking her bath and was tired of swimming she would use the reflection of the river as a mirror.

There were sugar canes at both sides of the river which she also eat after having swam for a while. Once she finished eating she would run home. She did this in order to dry her clothes which would

get wet and to dry her hair at the same time since she needed to be completely dried when she got home since her dad had forbid her to swim in the river by herself.

Since she didn't have any toys to play with she decided to make her own by bringing clay from the river bed. She would make, small plates, cups and spoons and later would take them to be fired in the kitchen when tortillas were prepared. She was careful to place her toys in the fire so that none would break while the food was being prepared.

Pepa made her own plates and cups which she had fired in order to make sure that they wouldn't break as she played alone. There were no other children around to play with within miles of where she lived, and so, she had to make her own toys and entertainment. She would also make her own dolls. She bought a stack of rags for 3 cents which she used to make enough dolls for a family. She started with the mom and by making parts of the body. She made a small ball which would serve as the head; afterwards she painted on her eyes, nose, and mouth. Afterwards she made black balls for shoes. She continued with legs, and finally the body once the arms had been done. When she had all the parts she joined

them together by sewing them and thus, she was able to have some doll to play with. She made a mom, a son, and a daughter but she never once thought about making a daddy.

At eight years old Pepa was in charge of taking care of a cow and some goats that her dad had at the ranch. Pastilla, her cow, needed to be kept on their property since it always wanted to jump over the fence in order to eat the neighbors corn. Her neighbor would get upset with her dad everytime that Pastilla had eaten his corn.

Pepa would see Pastilla trying to jump over the fence and as much as she tried to hold her she just couldn't stop her cow since she was just eight years at that time. When her dad would arrive and had heard the news he would give her a *monda*, spanking, for not having done what she had been told to do.

Pepa loved to eat and still remembers her trips to Tlazazalca in September to bring sweet potatoes. At home they had a vidriada, a large clay pot, which would be filled with the sweet potatoes and would be left to cook all night long. In the morning it would be crisp and full of honey from its own juices. They would eat it, in the morning, with goat's milk from the goat's they kept at the ranch. Her dad would make spoons to eat. He made them from branches of a

Cirimo tree. This tree is famous for its Tilia flower. Her dad would get branches which he would strip them clean to make spoons. He used his pocket knife to peel off the bark and make the spoons. Plates were purchased and they were green glazed, better known as Borcelanas.

At home there always were at least 3 rabbits which they would hang overnight to eat the next day in green chile sauce. There were many nopales, cactus, at the ranch to eat along with its fruit, cactus pears.

Pepa like all children her age loved to play all day long. She loved to play all her ranch which was quite big even though she was girl who scared very easy.

One day while playing she noticed inside some holes what looked like eyes inside them. She got scared and started to scream as hard as she could saying "papa, papa." When he heard her daughter screams of anguish he ran out as fast as he could to see what mortified her little girl and then he was able to see some weasels looking out of their homes.

Once when she was playing at the river, she saw 2 sleeping rattle snakes next to each other and started to cry out loud "Papa,

Papa.” Her dad arrived shortly and found the two sleeping snakes which he killed immediately before they could do any harm. Another time when she was taking care of the goat she saw two deers very close to where she was and she become so very frightened that she couldn’t call her dad for help. She was frightened by those huge animals which she believed would eat her goats as well as her.

Pepa would scare easily but the only thing that scared everyone was the “thump, thump” sound of a little drum, which the old folk tells said, belonged to the revolutionary army who carried it. Everybody at the ranch heard it and they knew there was no war anymore but they believed that the drum was being played by a soldier who had been killed years before in the war. Pepa would be more afraid when she would call her dad and he would tell her to be quiet. Since she saw his fear also and no one knew what it was they tried to not make any sound. They could hear it so close to the ranch but no one could get that close since the property was very large and it was private property.

She remembers how they would find human bones and ancient earthenware everytime they toiled the land as they prepared to grow their corn; her father said they were from giant people since they

appeared to be very large bones. She also would find different kind of pottery which she used to play with. Now she realizes that it was ancient pottery and she should have saved it since it was very nicely painted and carved.

Pepa attended school only when it was possible like those months of February and March since her father thought that it was a waste of time going to school. He would rather have her at the ranch helping out. When she had any free time she could have attended school but it happened to be during vacation and she couldn't attend either. She's not sure as to how long she attended but it could only have been up to the second grade.

In spite of the fact that this little girl was afraid of almost everything, she loved to eat honey. In order to be able to do so she had to kill the bees and steal their honey. Her dad had hives in order to supply himself with honey. He would light a fire by gathering yesca, dry plants, and would light it by striking two flint stones. When lit he would use the smoke to make the bees leave and he would use the time to take their honey.

When she was 13 or 14 years old, she remembers , boys would start noticing her and would give her, notes called "Raya de Agua,"

pre-written pastel colored love letters. Those small letters were sold by the package and started with the white colored letter. With their first message, the white letter was used and the color tint would increase depending on how much their relationship grew.

Pepa wouldn't accept those letters from the boys but there was a special boy who just wouldn't give up and he decided to introduce those love letters under the front door to make sure she would read them. The following day when her dad got up he found the letter left behind by the boy, and thought that someone was interested in his niece who was older than Pepa. Since he thought that his niece was old enough to marry he gave it to Pepa to give to her cousin. Since Pepa was too young to think about boys, and also, decent girls couldn't just go and have boyfriends her dad never thought she would be interested. Love letters flourished since nice girls couldn't very well talk to boys.

Pepa kept reading the love letters, but she never once answered back, and realized that she had an interested boyfriend. Her boyfriend would leave those love letters, whose tint increased while going from friendship to an eventual love. After a while it

would end in marriage if the last letter from the package was accepted.

Her boyfriend would try to be around in order to be seen by her and when he realized that he had been seen, would leave his letter by a tree or their favorite hideaway which tended to be the hollow of the dividing wall which divided her ranch and the neighbor's property.

As soon as her boyfriend would leave she would run to look for that letter which she was sure had been left behind. She would read that letter over and over again and would wait to see what else he had to say in the next one.

It was wonderful, back then, knowing that that person was the great and only love in your life... knowing that they would share every waking moment together. It was wonderful seen that boy walking about! And what could she tell him if he ever spoke to her? Oh God, don't let Dad see him now!

How could a Quinceañera, sweet fifteen, have such passion?

Fifteen and madly in love ! !

At fifteen she married the boy and her father was so upset

that he refused to attend the wedding or allow any family member from attending.

Pepa could only invite the lady who taught her the catechism to her wedding but her mother-in-law gave her a verbal lashing for having invited someone without asking her permission to do so.

After 18 pregnancies and 16 kids later, she got married again, but this time to celebrate her 50th Anniversary. Her fifteen children, that are still alive, 7 girls and 8 boys, pitched in together to give her the wedding she always imagined but never was able to have. She was able to invite hundreds of guests who flew from all over the country to be together for this happy celebration which she never thought could be carried out since her children live all over the place and its very difficult to get them all together at once.

Those 50 years were difficult for both Pepa and Rafael, her husband. They tried to make sure that all their children were well fed. Pepa made "milagros," by being able to feed all her children with the little money Rafael sent her from "El Norte." All fifteen of their children did appreciate all the sacrifices made by their parents to raise them and thus, the 50 year celebration.

Responsabilidad

Hace algunos años una muchacha, María, que estaba en la "high school" en el año escolar once y le gustaba mucho la escuela. En su clase de gobierno habían unas muchachas que casi nunca hacían trabajo alguno pero al contrario se la pasaban platicando y coqueteando con el maestro. A pesar de que ella tenía poco tiempo aquí en los Estados Unidos ella estaba haciendo bastante progreso en sus estudios y trabajaba para sacar la máxima calificación posible: una "A." Siempre cargaba un diccionario que en cualquier momento sabía lo podía necesitar.

Ella siempre se había esforzado por sacar las mejores calificaciones y en esta clase no iba a ser la excepción puesto que a pesar de que el inglés es un idioma difícil por no tener las reglas que explican como se conjugan como el español ella se aplicaba para aprenderlo bien. Además de que no le importaba mucho esto del idioma porque ella entendía perfectamente las lecciones pues siempre tenía su diccionario con ella que le ayudaba a entender el idioma.

María sabía que tenía que aprovechar su tiempo en la escuela puesto que sus papás estaban muy necesitados. Si iba a la escuela

debía de ir a estudiar y no a perder el tiempo pues de otra manera mejor sería que se pusiera a trabajar y así poder ayudar a sus papás que tenían que mantener a seis hijos.

Estas eran las clases de verano de su último año escolar. Iba a tomar estas clases para así poderse asegurar de que al final del año podría graduarse de la "high school" o escuela preparatoria. Ella era una muchacha muy seria que sabía que sus padres estaban haciendo un gran esfuerzo para poder darle la oportunidad de que se educara al máximo. Ella sabía que para poder sacar esa "A" que quería, debía de aplicarse. Ella no podía andar con juegos como ese grupo de muchachas locas que solo asistían a clase de vez en cuando. Esas raras ocasiones cuando estaban en clase solo se la pasaban platicando entre sí en vez de tratar de reponer todo ese tiempo perdido.

El maestro seguido las regañaba por solo estar platicando en vez de trabajar. Ellas solo platicaban en voz baja o decidían incluir al maestro en sus platicas al ser regañadas pero nunca se les veía que trabajaran. Varias ocasiones cuando veían que el maestro se les enojaba porque molestaban a la clase con sus pláticas que nunca terminaban decidían coquetearle al maestro y así no tenerlo enojado.

Parecía que María sí sacaría esa calificación esperada puesto que solo ella estaba tomando esta clase en serio y había echo todo el trabajo requerido para obtener una "A."

Cual fue su sorpresa, el último día de clases, al escuchar al maestro que les daba las calificaciones a todos los alumnos de esa clase y las muchachas que coqueteaban con el recibían una "A" y a ella le decía que había recibido una calificación más baja que ellas solo una "C."

Cuando la clase se terminó ella se fue a su casa bastante triste y bastante enojada con ese maestro que le robó su calificación para dársela a esas muchachas que no se merecían esas calificaciones que les regaló el maestro. "Como es posible que una persona que debe de ser imparcial cometa esos errores garrafales". Muy triste llegó a su casa donde le dijeron sus hermanas menores que se preparaban para irse a trabajar fuera de la ciudad puesto que habían decidido dejar la escuela que no les llamaba mucho la atención y sus papás necesitaban toda la ayuda económica posible. Al escuchar esto ella y ver que en la escuela había favoritismo y al ver que sus hermanas menores iban a trabajar para ayudar a sus padres decidió ella marcharse y dejar la escuela para siempre pues

ella era la que debía de tomar esa decisión puesto que era la mayor de 6 hijos que quedaban en su casa. Su mamá que creía saber que una "C" no era mala calificación se aseguró con uno de los hijos mayores y le preguntó si una "C" era para reprobado y el hermano le respondió que era buena. Su mamá le preguntó que porqué se quería salir si tenía buenas calificaciones a lo que ella le contestó que "yo quería una A". Su mamá trató de convencerla que siguiera en la escuela pero estaba tan desilucionada que pensó que si así sería siempre nunca iba a poder realizar sus planes, se dio la vuelta y se retiró pocos días después partió con su papá y sus dos hermanas a trabajar en los "files."

Varios años después felizmente casada y con hijos decidió regresar a la escuela nocturna donde últimamente ha sacado solamente el 100% en sus exámenes para así no dejar duda alguna de cual calificación se merece esta vez.

Que lástima que ese maestro que le pareció divertido jugar con esos "grados" jamás se dió cuenta de la diferencia que había hecho en la educación de María.

Responsibility

Maria was a girl who was attending public high school in Los Angeles. She enjoyed attending school and she attended school because she loved learning. She decided to attend summer school at the beginning of her senior year of high school because she wanted to learn as much as she could.

The class she chose to take was American Government, which would insure her graduation by the end of the year. She wasn't that fluent in English so she always carried a dictionary with her in case she needed one. She thought the class was a little difficult for her but she always did her work hoping to get an "A."

She had always taken school seriously and she wanted to get her high school diploma and receive good grades as well. Even though she had not been in the country very long, she had a good command of English. She was proficient enough in the language where she felt that she could compete for the best grades in this Government class.

Maria knew her parents were behind her in her decision to continue even though they could really use the additional income she would bring if she were to drop out of school.

She decided to take summer school before her senior year in order to make sure that she would have all her requirements met.

Maria was very serious about her classwork since she knew her parents were making a sacrifice by working so much in order to allow her to attend school, even though she could help the family financially if she were to start working instead of attending school. Her parents allowed her to choose between attending school or working full time. She decided to attend school and do the best work possible without wasting her time unlike most of the other students in her summer class.

In that government class there was a group of girls, who unlike her, went there to socialize and were not interested in doing any school work. The teacher would get upset with them everytime they got loud and rowdy but they knew how to make him happy. As soon as the teacher got upset with them they would flirt with him and soon he would forget he had reprimanded them and they would continue as though nothing had happened. They never cared to work in class since they were busy socializing. They hardly attended school.

Maria wanted an "A" from that government class and since it was the only class she was taking she decided to put all her effort to get that "A."

The last day of class the teacher announced everyone's grade and she was shocked to find out that all of those girls who rarely worked or went to class got an "A." She was even more shocked when she was told that her grade was lower than theirs; a "C."

She was so upset with the teacher that she decided not to speak with him and confront him about those grade discrepancies.

Maria left school upset that she had been cheated out of her grade and upset that the teacher, she asked herself "what gave him the right to play with those grades?" "How can that teacher not be responsible for his actions?"

She arrived home angry at the teacher who had given out undeserved grades.

Maria was told by two of her younger sisters that they were packing since they had dropped out of school in order to help their parents work out of town. When she heard this from her younger sisters and while upset with the teacher who had no idea how those grades would change her life; she decided to join them. She felt at

that moment that she was the one who should be taking the responsibility for helping out since she was the oldest of the six kids left. She went to talk to her mother who knew she liked school and told her that she was dropping out of school to go to work. Her mother knew there was something else behind it so she ask her why was she doing this? She showed her grade and since her mother didn't know what a "C" was she called her older brother to ask him if she was failing. Her brother said that "a C was a good grade" so she asked her daughter what was the real reason for dropping out. She answered "I wanted an A" and her mother tried to convince her to stay in school, as much as she could, but she just turned around and left in order to pack. She never told her mother the real reason why. That day was too upsetting to explain her reasons. A few days later she left town with her father and two younger sisters to work.

Many years later, now happily married with children, she decided to go back to night school where she's now receiving nothing but 100% on her exams in order to make sure that there will not be a doubt whatsoever as to what grade she deserves.

That teacher will never know the difference he made in this girl's life since she wanted to be a teacher but he killed that dream for many years.

El Balón Nuevo

Quique estaba en el segundo año de primaria en la escuela del estado Melchor Ocampo en Purépero, Michoacán. Era un niño muy obediente y calmado que siempre cuidaba a su “hermanito” Gil que era un año menor pero estaba en la misma aula escolar pues era un niño muy inteligente.

Quique y Gil eran muy conocidos por todos, adultos y niños por igual pues nunca peleaban con nadie y al contrario siempre hacían su trabajo sin envidias. Los dos trataban siempre de ayudar a sus compañeros que tenían problemas con el trabajo escolar.

Para la graduación de fin de año se acostumbraba convidar padrinos para acompañar a los niños y tanto Gil como Quique recibieron un regalo que todos los niños les envidiaron, un balón de fútbol. ellos habían pedido ese regalo y como siempre recibían muy buenas calificaciones les dieron su balón a cada uno. En esos tiempos era la costumbre de convidar padrinos de graduación los cuales les daban un regalo al ahijado por haberse aplicado durante el año. Ellos sabían que habían recibido un buen regalo pero no se imaginaban que tan bueno era hasta que los demás niños les explicaron que no habían más balones en el pueblo como esos. Eran

dos balones de piel que costaban una fortuna en esos tiempos de 1963.

Los regalos eran idénticos y venían envueltos en papel de regalo por lo que no era necesario desenvolverlos para saber cual era el contenido. Recibieron sus regalos y a instancias de sus amiguitos se pusieron a patearlos sin desenvolverlos. Su mamá les dijo que cuando menos los desarrollaran para ver si les gustaba el regalo y les dieran las gracias a su madrina. Lo hicieron y se quedaron boquiabiertos al ver un balón profesional de pura piel tan blanco como la nieve.

Al año siguiente cuando era día de clases de cultura física los niños, compañeros de clase, los convencían para que llevaran su balón al campo de fútbol del pueblo que quedaba en las afueras del pueblo detrás del cementerio. Los niños y adultos iban allí a jugar y nadie temía por lo cercano del cementerio con el campo de fútbol.

Cuando los dueños del balón accedían a ir a jugar "fut" se retaba a otra clase y estas dos clases marchaban a ese lugar destinado a aclarar quien era mejor. Las dos clases marchaban en línea detrás de sus maestros respectivamente como si fueran a la guerra a vengar una ofensa.

A Quique que era un poco mayor que su hermano lo convencían más rápido sus compañeros que generalmente eran mayores pues en esos tiempos los niños no avanzaban de año a menos de que pasaran sus pruebas o de otra manera regresaban a repetir el año escolar.

Como a Quique le gustaba más el "fut" que a su "hermanito" era más fácil convencerlo para que se llevara su balón a jugar. Gil no quería prestarlo porque se lo pateaban.

Cuando iban los niños rumbo al campo se desviaban a casa de Quique para recoger el balón pues sin el no podía haber juego pues nadie más tenía otro.

Un día cuando las clases estaban jugando fútbol Quique estaba tristemente viendo como los niños felizmente jugaban y él no jugaba porque no lo escogían por no ser tan buen jugador como los demás niños que jugaban. Allí llegaba su tío Chuche que venía a practicar con su equipo y había llegado temprano y alcanzó a ver a su sobrino que no jugaba y se le acercó. Le preguntó su tío, ¿por qué no estás en la escuela pues es hora de clase? Él le contestó que estaba con la clase allí pero que estaba esperando que terminaran de jugar para recoger su balón y marcharse a casa. Le contó que no lo habían escogido por no ser tan bueno como los demás por lo que no jugaba.

Chuche se molestó porque no jugaban con su sobrino a pesar de que el balón le pertenecía. Fue y les quitó el balón y se lo entregó a su sobrino para que se lo llevara a su casa. Los niños que jugaban dijeron que no les importaba porque ya era hora de volver a casa y ya estaban por terminar de jugar de cualquier manera.

Camino a casa Chuche le informó a su sobrino que si algún día volvían a jugar que lo hiciera con la condición de que lo nombraran capitán pues el capitán del equipo no sale del juego si no quiere. Él también decide quien juega y cuando.

La siguiente ocasión en que volvió Chuche al campo de fútbol vio que los niños de la escuela jugaban una vez más y se acercó para verlos jugar y notó que su sobrino estaba haciendo cambios y los niños que veían el juego desde afuera le pedían que los dejara entrar a jugar por el niño que salía. Contento por lo que había visto se fue a practicar con su equipo.

The Brand New Soccer Balls

Quique was attending the public school in his hometown, Purepero in Mexico. At the time there was a custom of giving a “graduation” gift to every child who passed his classes that year since those who failed the school year needed to take it over again. There was no automatic advancement and only the graduating students moved on.

Quique was a good student who liked school and always took care of his little brother, Gil, who was in the second grade also. Although he was a year younger he was in the same class, where he was the youngest student. Both boys were very friendly and helpful with both students and teachers alike.

For graduation they invited “padrinos,” godparents, who would give them a present for “graduating” and moving on to the next school year. That day after the ceremonies concluded and the graduating children received their gifts both Gil and Quique knew what their gifts were. Although they had not opened them they could tell by the wrapping. They started to kick their gifts back and forth since they knew a ball was wrapped inside.

Both gifts were round gifts so they figured they could play with them since they couldn't have anything else inside. Their mom told them to open their gifts and see if they like them. They expected to see a plastic ball but instead found a brand new leather ball. Those balls were worth a small fortune and they never expected to see one much less two balls in the same household.

Both soccer balls were identical and they were as white as snow with a few black patches. Those were the kind of balls seen in professional soccer games but never given to 8 year old children. All the children started to play with Quique's ball since Gil wouldn't allow the children to play with his since he wouldn't allow anyone to kick his ball. It seemed as though every boy just wanted to play with their shiny white leather ball rather than with their own gifts.

The following school year whenever their class wanted to play soccer during their recess they would ask Quique to see if he felt like playing soccer. If he wanted to play he would take his ball along and the entire class would go out and play. Since they had a professional soccer ball, when he agreed to play, they would go to

the soccer field which was located behind the town's cemetery, about two miles away, but not one child was afraid of playing there.

Quique's class would challenge some other class to a soccer game and they would march down to the soccer field as though they were two armies marching on to war to defend their country. Each class would march down behind their respective teacher.

Quique who was nine would be convinced more easily to use his ball since he was able to play better than his younger brother who was, in the same grade level, but only 8. Most of their classmates were much older since they had failed to pass their classes before and they had to repeat the school year. Since the kids were much older Gil didn't care to play much. Quique, on the other hand, would jump at the chance of playing with his older classmates even though his ball had to be kicked during those games.

On their way to the soccer field the class would stop by Quique's house to pick up his ball. They had to convince him before they planned anything since they couldn't always count on his loaning him the ball.

Once as the teams were playing Quique was sadly watching those 22 boys in the field since he wasn't picked to be in. At that

instant his uncle who had arrived to get ready for his game noticed that the boy watching looked very much like someone he knew. As he got closer he noticed that the boy was his nephew, the owner of the ball they were playing with.

He asked his nephew why wasn't he in the game since he owned the ball. His nephew told him that since most boys were older they were much better players and thus, were picked ahead of him who wasn't as good as the others. Chuche, his uncle, told him that the owner of the ball always becomes the captain who in turn decides who plays and when. If the team doesn't do as the captain says then he just goes home with the ball and the game ends. Chuche asked for the ball since it was time for Quique to go home. All the little boys told him how they didn't care for the ball since they were going home as well.

On his way home Quique thought about becoming a captain and deciding who could play. He thought how great it would be to pick and choose who got into the game and who had to sit down. That would certainly would make him popular.

A few days later when Chuche went to the soccer field for his game he was able to see some little boys playing a game. When he

got close he noticed how his nephew was playing, unlike the last time he had seen him. Just then he saw him stop the game and tell one of the boys to get out and allow someone else to play for a while. All the boys watching outside begged him to let them in. He picked a chubby boy, who never seemed to get in, and the new boy seemed so pleased with the new captain.

Alfiniqui

María Solano nació en Pénjamo, Guanajuato donde conoció a Juan Zendejas con el que se casó a los 17 años.

María vivía en casa de los suegros como era la tradición. En esa casa el papá de Juan, Teodoro, fabricaba alfiniqui, calaveras, cajas de muerto y animalitos de dulce. Ella ayudaba en la producción en la cual empezaban a producir las calaveras con cuatro meses de anticipación.

En Zacapu, Michoacán había una gran fábrica americana que necesitaba muchos empleados y Juan emigró con su esposa María a Zacapu para trabajar allí.

En Zacapu esperaban la llegada del mes de julio, ese mes tan esperado durante todo el año, cuando al fin podían empezar a producir ese alfiniqui que venderían cuatro meses más tarde en solo dos días. Después de llegar de la fabrica Juan trabajaba con María en casa produciendo tantas calaveras como pudieran acumular pues necesitaban tener un buen inventario para esos dos días tan esperados, pues ese dinero que venderían sería una gran fortuna.

Un año pudieron vender 800 centavos que fue quizá su mejor venta. Al poco tiempo con los ahorros acumulados compraron una

casa de un costo de 1800 centavos. Esta casa era una vecindad de 3 unidades. Corría el año de 1940.

Hoy día se usa la grenetina para trabajar el azúcar glas pero en aquel entonces se usaba solo el camote de lirios que crecía en los árboles. Lo partían en rebanadas y lo ponían a secar. Ya seco lo molían en metate y el polvo lo mezclaban con azúcar. El lirio le daba un olor perfumado al azúcar que quedaba suavemente mientras que ahora el terminado es seco y duro. Este trabajo lo han estado haciendo por 50 años.

Las calaveras de azúcar que producían las vendían en Pénjamo de donde eran originarios y las llevaban en tren. Viajaban desde el día 28 de octubre para evitar contratiempos y tener todo listo los días primero y segundo de noviembre. La venta era solamente de esos dos días a pesar de que llegaban con anticipación a ese lugar.

El alfiniqui está tan bien producido que puede durar muchos años sin descomponerse y son unas obras de arte en azúcar. Este se vendía fuera del camposanto, hoy llamado panteón, donde siempre se les agotaba.

Los productos u obras de arte que hacían consistían de tumbas que eran cajas de muerto decoradas por una corona de flores de varios colores.

Las tumbas eran las mejores obras artísticas pero también se vendían las tan populares y codiciadas calaveras como así las cajas de muerto, figuritas, angelitos, perritos, canastitas, monitas, frutas y muchas otras figuras de animalitos. Todo esto de diferentes tamaños y precios desde tres por un centavo hasta tres centavos por pieza.

Con el tiempo la pareja tuvo varios hijos y empezaron a dejarlos a que vendieran en Zacapu. José uno de los hijos empezó a vender allí en 1972 y empezó la tradición que no se había arraigado como en los otros pueblos de Michoacán.

Hoy en día Luz, otra hija, continua también la tradición y es toda una artista en este arte del alfiniqui.

Además de todos los objetos descritos anteriormente también producen fruteros, ramos de flores y cualquier objeto que al cliente le agrade.

Cuando sea el día primero pida a sus amistades sus "angelitos" y al día siguiente el día dos no se le olvide pedir su "ofrenda" o sus

“muertitos” para que quizá le regalen una calavera, obra de arte, de esta artística familia.

Sugar Art Works

Maria Solano was born in Penjamo, Guanajuato, Mexico where she met Juan Zendejas whom she married at only seventeen.

Maria went to live with her in-laws as it was the local custom. At that house Teodoro, Juan's dad, made Alfiniqui. Alfiniqui consists of sugar skulls, skeletons, and animals. Maria helped with the production which would begin four months earlier and would start with the skulls.

In Zacapu, Michoacan there was a large American textile factory which was hiring workers and so, Juan migrated with his wife in order to work for that company.

In Zacapu they would wait eagerly for July. That month was the month when they would finally begin production in earnest which would be sold four months later in only two days. Juan would get to work after he arrived home from his shift alongside his wife Maria. They would produce as many skulls as they could for the next four months since they would need as much merchandise to be sold in that two day holiday. The money they would sell was a small fortune.

One year, she remembers, they were able to sell 800 cents which was perhaps one of their best years. A short while later they were able to purchase a triplex, three houses in one lot, for 1800 cents with their savings. The year was 1940.

Today grenadine is used to work the sugar but back then they would use the roots of the lilies growing on the trees. They sliced the roots and let them dry in the sun. When dried they would ground them into powder and mix it with sugar which it turn would become nice and soft, unlike today's sugar which is hard and coarse. This kind of work they have been doing for over 50 years.

Those sugar skulls they produced were sold in Penjamo where they were born. They would take their merchandise by train October 28, in order to avoid any problems and thus be able to be ready for November first and second. They would sell their marchandise only those two days in spite of the fact that they would arrive a few days early.

Alfiniqui is so well made that it can last for years without breaking down. These skulls are artworks in sugar. Alfiniqui was always sold outside the cemetery where they always ran out every year.

These pieces or artworks they made consisted mainly of tombs which were decorated with colorful wreaths.

The tombs were the best art works but they also sold the ever popular and asked for "calaveras," skulls, as well as the skeletons, little angels, dogs, baskets, dolls, fruit and many other figures of small animals. All of these came in different sizes and prices from 3 for a cent to three cents each.

Later on the couple had many children who were allowed to remain home to sell in the city of Zacapu. Their son Jose started to sell there in 1972 and he started this tradition which wasn't as popular there as it was elsewhere in Michoacán.

Today a daughter, Luz, continues this tradition and she is considered an artist in the art of Alfiniqui.

Aside from all the various objects named above they also make various fruits, corsages and anything else the client wishes to have custom made.

When the first of November comes around be sure to ask your friends for your "little angels" and for "offerings" the day after, hopefully your friends will give you a "calavera," an art work, from this artistic family.

The Highest I. Q.

I still remember back in 1969 when they used to test students in the public schools by giving them an IQ test. Those tests would eventually be discontinued because they were highly biased against minority students, since they tested how well a person knew the dominant culture rather than testing his intelligence.

My brother Francisco Javier who we affectionately called "Jave" was given the IQ test along with the rest of the students who were at his grade level. He knew that this would test everyone's intelligence in order to see how they would perform in school and thus be tracked in the proper level.

Jave came home and told us he had taken this test. He thought he had done quite well, but he would need to wait a few weeks for the results in order to find out how well he had done. At this time I was attending high school and I had heard how biased this test could be so I decided to warn Jave so that he would not be too disappointed if his test results did not returned as high as he was expecting them.

I explained to Jave and my parents how I once refused to be tested when I had recently arrived from Mexico a few months earlier. I refused the test since they wouldn't give me one in

Spanish where I would be able to score much better since I had been an excellent student in Mexico. I told my family how some minority groups wanted to ban this test since it did not predict how well most minority students would do academically.

A while later my parents were told to attend a conference to go over my brother's IQ test. An appointment was made and my brother who is bilingual was able to translate what the results had been. I asked them what they had been told, while still skeptical, and I was told that the results had not been conclusive since they were not given a specific answer and Jave needed to be retested.

My parents were told that everything was fine and that Jave had done very well but he needed to take the IQ test again. We had no idea why but in the meantime we started kidding Jave that he was the only person we knew who had failed the IQ test. He seriously tried to explain to us that he had done well but the school needed to test again for a specific result but we, my brother Gilberto and I, would not hear none of this.

Jave was retested since the original test was able to test IQs of no more than about 138 and my brother had scored much higher than that. Eventually the results came back from the second test but

my parents did not tell us how high they were since they thought that we would be afraid to try in school knowing that no matter how well we would do we could never do as well as my brother Jave.

I do not know whether Jave was ever told how high he scored since he never once flaunted how much smarter he was than the rest of us. Even years later when he was applying to different schools he wasn't confident enough about his chances of being admitted to some of the best colleges in spite of his high grades. He applied to some lesser schools just in case none of the others would want him even though he graduated with a higher GPA than 4.0.

When the second test scores returned my parents went back to school and they were asked if they were proud of having such a smart son. They replied that they were very proud of all their children and not just their genius son.

The school interviewed Jave and they had his picture and his biography in the main office for everyone to see what an excellent student was attending that school. In the interview he was asked what his plans were and what was he interested in becoming once he graduated from college. His response was, half in jest, that he wanted to drive a trash collecting truck for a living. We asked him

if he was serious about doing that for a living and he said that he was only playing with the counselor's mind but that he couldn't really come up with something else at that time.

There were a few other students who scored high on the test although no one else was asked to retest. All the other students who were not minority students wanted to be doctors and lawyers and the only minority student, who had scored the highest, had no real role models to emulate and thus could not come up with a reasonable profession to look up to.

Jave eventually went on to CalTech in Pasadena and a couple of years later he transferred to Stanford University where he received his Bachelors of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering. Later on he got his masters degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Jave enjoys speaking to students and he loves to entice students to give college a try. He tells students that it is possible to do well in college if they have a plan and they follow it. He tells them to plan for their future since the only people who fail are those who fail to plan.

Pedro

I had no one to help me get around my new school since the acquaintances who had brought me to school the day before were ashamed to be seen with me. I had to make my way around with no help whatsoever on this second day of school in a foreign country.

The boys who took me around the school the day before agreed to do so on the condition that I wouldn't talk to them during school. Since those boys didn't want to acknowledge knowing me during school. I didn't know anyone else in this school and was forced to eat by myself.

I was cleaning my lunch tray getting ready to go to my 5th period class, when I realized that my schedule was missing. I looked for it in my notebook but it wasn't there, I checked my books with no luck and, finally, I checked every pocket in my clothing, knowing that if it wasn't there I would have nowhere to go since I had not memorized what classes I was given.

On this second day of school I was forced to go to all those classes which I was given here in this new country, in this school they called a junior high school, which made students go from class to class every hour, unlike any other school I ever had before. I had

felt so proud of myself for knowing the idiosyncracies of the native population even though I was on my own with no help from anyone.

Today I had lost the help of my dad's friends who wanted nothing to do with me since I dressed differently and spoke no English at all.

I tried to retrace my footsteps of the day before, when my schedule was taught to me on the condition that I wouldn't talk to those boys if I ever saw them during school. Knowing that if I could remember a name, a face, a classroom, a building, a teacher. . . anything, then I could find my way, I could not very well go and ask anyone for help since no one had spoken to me the day before when I registered in all those new classes.

How much I wished to be able to go and ask anyone for information about my classes which were coming up, and I had no idea where they were.

The day before, not a single person had spoken to me. It had seemed as though I was never there in class. As I went from class to class I knew where to sit but the teachers never made any attempt to get me involved in any class whatsoever. Ironically, in my math class I would end up with the greatest point total of the entire class in spite of the language problem; but it seemed that

today I wasn't going to be there physically either. I always have liked school and wanted to go to my classes badly, so that I could learn to speak English and not get into this kind of predicament anymore.

As hard as I tried to remember, all that I could remember was my math teacher who had a hole in his neck and needed a microphone to speak to us. He was in my second class so I could not very well go to that class because it was already fifth period.

Knowing that I did not know what class was coming up and that I couldn't count on anyone to help I quickly went to a building that I was sure would be the correct class. As I got there the tardy bell rang and I sighed with relief knowing that finally I had found my class. As I entered quickly to my seat I noticed that I had been there before in the morning. Embarrassed I quickly left the class and just stood outside thinking how much easier school would be if only I could understand the language which EVERYONE spoke, but me.

I wandered around the campus for two hours, wishing that someone would stop me and ask me why I was not in class, but nobody did. When, after what seemed an eternity, everyone came out of their sixth period class and went home. I also followed and went home.

I felt SO stupid getting lost and not knowing my classes but I had never had so many classes in my life and today was only the second day of junior high and I was in a strange, foreign country where no one would speak to me.

I wanted to tell someone what an embarrassing day I had but I was afraid of all the ribbing I was going to receive at home from everyone so I told no one what had happened at school since it was too embarrassing. I had always done well in school and getting lost was too stupid to admit to.

My parents had always been interested in our school work and the first thing they asked as I entered was to ask me if I was able to get around school now that I had no one to help me at this school. Being too embarrassed to admit to what had happened I excused myself before they could ask me any specific questions.

That night all I could do was pray that somehow I could find that piece of paper that had my classes. I figured that if they wanted to find out where I was then they would find someone who could speak to me. After a long sleepless night I was willing but not ready to go back for another dose of humility.

The next day, as I entered my second period class and I was still wondering what was I going to do about my missing classes, a boy asked me why I had ditched my classes. As I heard the question for the second time I realized that I spoke that language that the boy was speaking to me and I also was able to understand him. At first I couldn't fathom anyone speaking to me without being forced and no one was forcing this boy to speak.

I felt so much relief just knowing that there were others at school who could understand me.

The boy introduced himself as Pedro. "Hola me llamo Pedro." "¿Porque te fuiste de pinta?" "Why did you ditch?"- he asked me one more time, speaking Spanish to me.

"Perdí mi programa y no sabía a que clases ir." "I was lost, I had no idea where my classes were at," I told him.

"¿Si quieres puedo decirte a que clases ir o puedes ir conmigo pues tenemos cuatro clases juntos?" "If you want to I can help you since you're in four of my classes anyway?"

"¿Sabes cuáles son mis últimas clases?" "Do you know which are my last two classes?," I asked him.

“Sí, estamos juntos en las últimas dos.” “Yes, we’re together in the last two.”

“¿Pedro. . . Pedro me dijiste que te llamabas?” “Pedro. . . Pedro is you're name, right?”

“Pedro me llamo.” “Pedro it is.”

“¿Pedro, puedo ir contigo a mis clases?” “Pedro, do you mind if I walk to class with you?”

“No pero creí que tu no querías hablarme.” “No, but I thought you didn’t want to talk to me.”

“Claro que sí pero que te dió esa idea?” “Of course I want to talk to you, what gave you that idea?”

“Ayer cuando te hablé pasaste y me ignoraste.”

“Yesterday when I spoke to you just walked by and ignored me.”

“¿Me hablaste en español porque de otra manera no te entendí?” “Did you speak Spanish 'cause otherwise I wouldn’t know you where talking to me?”

“No sé yo solo uso el idioma que necesito.” “I don’t know I just use whatever language I think I need.”

“¿Cómo te llamas?” “What's you're name any way?”

“Me llamo Enrique.” “I'm Enrique.”

I only knew Pedro for about three months; then he had to go back to Puerto Rico, where he preferred to live. He spoke constantly about returning to his beloved "Green Island."

One day when I got to school I found a note which was written by Pedro. It said that he had to go back home but he needed to thank me for all the help I had provided while he was at this foreign place which I knew so well and had shown him around.

As I read the note I wondered if I had ever thanked Pedro for getting me through those dark, scary times when I had no one at school to help me, and when I wanted to go home as Pedro was doing now.

How ironic to be receiving a note of gratitude from someone, when it should have been I writing it. I never wrote that note because I never had the chance, but I always wanted to. So, after all those years, here it is: Pedro, you have made all this possible. I told you one day I would be able to write to you in English so here it is:
THANK YOU.

Pedro's Legacy

Pedro was a lot different than those people who I was acquainted with. He was the only Puerto Rican I knew since there weren't many people who had that accent.

He would say "Puelto Lico is the most wonderful place in the whole world and soon I will return to stay."

I would ask him if he was just saying that so that I wouldn't get homesick. "Of course not, I'm just telling you what it looks like so that you can visit me once I'm back at Green Island," the name we have given our wonderful home. "Well, then you will have to visit me when I'm back in Michoacan and then we can go eat some fish tacos at Lake Patzcuaro which has been called one of the most beautiful places on earth."

Pedro would not be outdone and would then invite me to El Morro, the Puerto Rican version of Patzcuaro.

"Come and eat, food is served!"

My mother's call to supper would always make us stop our comparisons.

"Mom, what are we having?"

"What does it matter, aren't you eating?"

As I started to eat caldo Mich I started to explain what kinds of fish were found in the soup but again, I was told to be quiet at the table.

Pedro, on the other hand, was allowed to tell us how wonderful it was to be Puerto Rican since the island was a paradise with an extraordinary amount of fish and shell fish as well.

My parents enjoyed listening to Pedro's experiences and they got annoyed whenever I interrupted him even though he was here to visit me.

"Quique can't you see that Pedro is talking?" I would be told.

Pedro was treated as though he were an adult visiting my parents and not a twelve year old kid who was here to visit me.

"Pedro, do you want to get that errand taken care before it gets dark?"

"Yeah, let's go."

"Mom, dad I'm gonna take Pedro to his uncle's by Victoria Elementary."

"Be careful to get back before it gets dark."

"We'll just pick a package and get back to play."

"One day I'm going to get people to realize that "he Island" must be treated like a sovereign country and not like a dumping ground for this country where all the drug addicts are sent" Pedro would tell solemnly.

"In my country nobody likes to deal with them because then you are treated as though you where a marihuano yourself," I would tell him so that he would see how mature I was too.

"I'm not talking about that"

"Then, what are you talking about"

"I'm talking about getting my country recognized."

"In Mexico everyone recognizes Puerto Rico as an independent country."

"But not here."

"What do they think it is then?"

"A colonia."

"People actually think it is a barrio? Are they that stupid?"

"No, not that kind."

"Which kind then?"

"Here it is called a Commonwealth."

"What's the difference?"

"We aren't allowed to have leaders who are separatistas."

"Who won't let you?"

"Washington!"

"Who's he?"

"That's this country's government."

"Why do you have to ask them? We don't."

"Because they give us unemployment insurance?"

"What's unemployment insurance?"

"When your parents are fired they can receive money until they can get another job."

"Why would they want to, when they are receiving money?"

"Because they won't get a lot."

"OK, I understand. There's the school!"

"Behind the school, the green house."

"Will anyone be there?"

"My aunt said she would be there all day."

"Well then, lets, find out what they sent us from Puerto Rico."

"They didn't send us anything, they sent my parents a package which I'm not allowed to open."

"I didn't wanna know what was there anyway"

That was the last day I spent with Pedro before I went to my locker which was used by him also since his was not near any of our classes.

Carnal

Roberto se escondía para que nadie se diera cuenta de que hacía su trabajo, tenía un libro en la clase y otro en casa.

Roberto era el jefe de una pandilla y por lo tanto él no podía darse el lujo de trabajar mucho en la clase y mucho menos de hacer tarea pues eso no era el ejemplo a dar a sus compañeros de pandilla.

Roberto era un chico muy inteligente pero tenía el problema de tener que poner un ejemplo a seguir y él de ser un buen o excelente estudiante era todo lo contrario de lo que sus compañeros de pandilla querían ver en él.

Él era bajito de tamaño, chaparro, pero muy musculoso y le gustaba pelear a la primera insinuación.

Él quería aprender el español mejor de lo que lo hablaba pero tenía el problema de que no debía poner mucha atención en la clase y peor, hacer preguntas sobre algo que no estaba seguro de haber entendido. Otro gran problema era el de poder hacer tarea regularmente y así poder entender mejor lo que el maestro había enseñado ese día.

Con los problemas de no poder participar con libertad porque los alumnos le llamaban "school boy" o "estudiante" pues un

pandillero no debe dar esa clase de ejemplo y mucho menos hacer su mejor trabajo posible.

Un día el maestro le dijo que se quedara después de clase porque quería hablarle de su conducta y todos los alumnos empezaron a decir ¡¡uuuu!! porque se imaginaban que había echo algo malo.

Roberto preguntó que ¿qué había echo? pues él no recordaba haber echo nada malo en esta clase. Esta era la única que le gustaba y a la que nunca dejaba de ir y no entendía ¿porqué tenía que quedarse después de clase?

El maestro le explicó que él había entendido como Roberto trataba de hacer el mejor trabajo posible sin llamar mucho la atención. Él le iba a ayudar a aprender más y a poder hacer más trabajo sin que nadie se diera cuenta del mejoramiento en sus calificaciones y en su trabajo total.

Para poder hacer todo esto casi a escondidas el maestro le prestó un libro adicional para que pudiera dejarlo en casa y hacer su tarea sin que nadie se diera cuenta o lo vieran cargar libros a casa.

Cuando él hacía su tarea, que ahora era una cosa común, él no podía entregarla con los demás alumnos. Cuando no quería que se dieran cuenta de que hacía su trabajo muy seguido lo dejaba en el escritorio del maestro al pasar y sin que nadie se diera cuenta. Algunas veces lo aventaba en el escritorio diciendo "solo hice esto de tarea, si la quieres califícala, y si no títala a la basura pues a mi no me importa." El maestro le contestaba que esta vez le daría un poco de crédito pero que nunca más le aceptaría media tarea como la de ahora. Los dos sabían que la tarea estaba completa y casi siempre correcta.

Al estar por finalizar el semestre, después de clase, el maestro y Roberto platicaron sobre la posibilidad de que él pudiera recibir una "A" pero Roberto prefirió no exponerse a que alguien se diera cuenta de cual calificación él había sacado en esta clase y fueran a burlarse de sus buenas calificaciones y por lo tanto decidió quedarse con una "B" pues era más fácil explicarla.

Why Homeboy Got a "B" in Spanish

Robert used to hide so that nobody would realize he was doing his homework. He was afraid that his friends wouldn't understand and would make fun of him.

He was the leader of a gang in his junior high school and he didn't think they would understand how their leader could behave like a school boy instead of behaving like a homeboy.

Robert was very intelligent but he needed to set an example for his gang and being an excellent student wasn't what they expected from him.

He was a short, stocky, well-built young man who loved to fight anyone regardless of the reason why.

He wanted to learn Spanish well since he knew that his Spanish was not the best but he just could not participate as much as he wanted since his friends would object. Not only was he unable to participate as much as he could but he couldn't very well turn in all the homework assigned.

He wanted to participate and learn but he just couldn't afford to look like a "school boy" or a "nerd" who is always doing

everything the teacher asks for. What would he do if his friends started calling him a “teacher’s pet?”

One day the teacher told him to stay after class because he wanted to speak to him about his behavior in class and immediately, everyone said “uuuuu, Robert!!!” Everyone thought he had finally made this teacher upset.

Robert could not understand why he needed to stay behind since he always tried to behave for this teacher although sometimes he just would not listen. He asked his teacher “What did I do?” the teacher told him to sit down and he would talk to him as soon as he could.

After about 10 minutes of wondering what he had done the teacher put everything away and when he noticed that no one else was around told him that he knew how much he tried to work without making it obvious. The teacher thought he had come up with a plan where Robert could do all the work assigned and no one would notice.

The teacher told Robert to take his book home and keep it there and he would be assigned a second one which he could use it during

school. By having two books he was able to do homework and no one would know it since they never saw him carry it home.

When he did his homework, something common now, he would just throw it at the teacher's desk or leave it there inconspicuously. Whenever he thought someone was watching he would just throw it at the desk and loudly would say "That's all there is. If you want to give me credit for trying, fine; if not, who cares? Dump it" Both the teacher and Robert knew that the homework was complete. With this plan no one was able to find out how much work Robert was doing or how well.

A few weeks before the end of the semester Robert and the teacher went over the grade he had at that point; an A minus. The teacher asked Robert that if he wanted to keep that grade, which had been hard earned, he needed to do well for the final. Robert decided to purposely go for the lower grade since that way he wouldn't need worry about anyone finding out that he had received a "B" in Spanish. He could always claim that a "B" was easy since he spoke Spanish but an "A" needed an explanation and he didn't think he could come up with a good one. His homeboys just wouldn't understand their leader getting As in school.

Fun time

Just about the only thing I can remember from my first year in elementary school here in the U. S., in 1967, was the strange way of teaching. In Mexico we were never taught religion as they would here in the States. Every Wednesday at 2 in the afternoon a volunteer would come to our class to take us to her house so that we could pray. This lady lived two blocks away from our elementary school and we would march to her house. I liked marching so I enjoyed the weekly march to her house. I liked marching because it brought back memories from my old school days in Mexico. This lady who came to pick us up told us she was Mexican-American and if we ever wanted to own a nice two-story home like hers we needed to speak perfect English, just like her. She told us that we could not pray in Spanish because then we would never try to learn English.

Although at first I enjoyed leaving the class for the march, I soon changed my mind since the lady would always admonish me for not praying in English as did the rest of the students. The teacher would tell the students that they would be able to have fun time as soon as all the Mexicans left for their praying.

When we came back the next day the students who stayed behind would ask the teacher if they could continue with their work. The teacher would tell the students that they could only work on that assignment when the entire class was not there. Some of the students who left and missed the fun assignments, asked the teacher if we could ever do those assignments. The teacher would always answer that we would have to choose between fun time and our leaving the class to pray. Eventually the number of students who wanted to leave the class became so small that the lady tried giving us punch to attend the praying session.

Soon even the punch would not get us to go with her.

Appendix A

Memorias del Día De Los Muertos

de E. Nárez

Todo mundo celebra el 2 de noviembre el regreso de sus queridos difuntos pero aun recuerdo aquellos días festivos cuando celebrabamos el regreso de los santos inocentes que venían a convivir con nosotros.

Ese día, primero de noviembre, estaba destinado a nosotros los niños que vivíamos en este mundo y aquellos que se habían marchado pero que estarían aquí esta noche y a los cuales divertiríamos.

El Primer día festivo los niños podíamos hacer cualquier travesura y los adultos nos las tenían que aguantar pues no se podían enojar con nosotros y con los pequeños difuntos a los que divertíamos con nuestros juegos. Comprábamos calaveras que eran estampitas con una calavera pintada y con cera se las pegábamos en la espalda de los adultos que se cruzaban en nuestro camino.

Desde el medio día nos íbamos al panteón o cementerio para celebrar estos 2 días. Recuerdo que llevábamos flores para decorar la lápida de mi papá Tino y antes de todo esto teníamos que lavarla y dejarla nítida pues esta nos serviría de mesa. Sobre la lapida mi

mamá y mis tías dejaban la comida que llevaban que había sido preparada en honor del recuerdo de su papá, mi abuelito Florentino.

Sobre las lápidas o cerca de ellas se levantaban altares dedicándoles los objetos predilectos: a los niños se les colocaban en sus altares los juguetes de su predilección en vida, con los dulces que más les gustaban, así como algunas prendas de vestir.

A las muchachas que murieron jóvenes se les colocaban espejitos, peines y cualquier otro objeto para su decoración personal que podían usar durante su jornada de esta noche hacía el más allá. A los adultos se les ofrecían sus cigarritos para el camino y su comida favorita.

Al segundo día a los niños ya no se les permitía hacer de sus travesuras pues ahora este día, el 2 de noviembre, estaba dedicado a los adultos de aquí y “del más allá.” En este día solo se escuchaba la música ranchera que tocaban los mariachis que habían sido contratados para llevarles su música favorita a esas personas que vendrían para este día.

Se decía que la comida u ofrendas para los adultos con sus deliciosas aromas era una de las razones por lo que los muertitos

regresaban cada año pues extranaban esas comidas que en vida tanto les gustaron y solo podían regresar este día.

Cuando a las ofrendas o altares se les decoraba con estas ricas comidas y uno deseaba darse cuenta de si su “difuntito” había podido venir a compartir con los “vivos” se podían probar las viandas y si a estas les faltaba su sabor esto era prueba absoluta de que si estuvieron los difuntos aquí.

Appendix B

LA OFRENDA - THE ALTAR

By R. Berdecio & S. Appelbaum

“DIA DE LOS MUERTOS” is celebrated at the cleaned and decorated grave sites and in the Mexican home where elaborate “ofrendas” or “altars” are erected in honor of the departed souls. The “ofrenda” ensures good relations between the family on earth and the deceased relatives in the afterworld. The entire family takes part in cleaning the graves and constructing the “ofrenda,” continuing the tradition of familial commitment, remembrance, and devotion.

Decorations and offerings (also called “ofrendas”), vary according to religious traditions, local produce, the family's wealth and the personality and importance of the relative being remembered. Candles, food dishes, clothes - all must be new to best please and honor the visiting soul.

Whatever the deceased enjoyed in life is remembered in preparing the ofrenda. Favorite foods are prepared and placed on the ofrenda, along with drinks, new toys (if for a child), a bandana and cigarettes for a man, or new kitchen utensils and items of personal

adornment for a woman. Personal belongings are incorporated, along with the new offerings. Friends and relatives arrive with offerings to add to the ofrenda, signaling their relationship to the deceased.

The ofrenda becomes a collage of personal mementos and remembered pleasures. It is an artfully and lovingly constructed monument to the departed, which by its very existence also commemorates the closeness and continuity of the Mexican family. Once the honored soul has extracted the essence of the refreshments they are shared with family and friends who have often traveled long distances to take part in the annual reunion or kept a long night's vigil at the grave site. The fiesta begins in earnest, somber reflection giving way to merriment and the pleasures of the living. This, too, is a way of honoring the dead.

APPENDIX C

Macario's Test

1. Who was the first man he met? ¿Con quién se encontró primero?
2. Who was the second man? ¿Quién fue el segundo?
3. Who was the third man? ¿Quién fue el tercero?
4. Why did he share his meal with the man? ¿Porqué compartió su comida con ese hombre?
5. What did Macario get in return? ¿Qué recibió a cambio?
6. What was it used for? ¿Para qué servía?
7. How did he know when to use it? ¿Cómo sabía cuando usarla?
8. Who was his first paying client? ¿Quién fue su primer cliente?
9. How much was he paid? ¿Cuánto le pagaron?
10. What did he buy for everyone? ¿Qué les compró a todos?
11. Was he loved by everyone? ¿Todo el pueblo lo quería?
12. What was the Inquisition? ¿Qué era la inquisición?
13. Why was he put in jail? ¿Porqué lo pusieron en la carcel?
14. What will happen if the child dies? ¿Qué pasará si el niño muere?

15. Whose child dies at the end? ¿De quién era el niño que muere al final?

16. Why did Macario eat only half of his turkey? ¿Porqué comió solo la mitad del guajolote?

17. Why did he run away with his candle? ¿Porqué corrió con su vela?

18. Why are candles important? ¿Porqué son importantes las velas?

19. Why did he die? ¿Porqué murió?

APPENDIX D

Moctezuma's Dilemma

By V. Riva Palacios

Moctezuma had been waiting for the god Quetzalcoatl to return to Mexico. He was waiting because he wanted to be the "chosen one" of this important god. Therefore, he offered the gods all the sacrifices possible, including everything from the best of the harvest to the heart of the most beautiful girl.

Aztec scriptures spoke of Quetzalcoatl returning to live again with the natives as he had once before. Quetzalcoatl had been given this name because he had once arrived among the people in something long which resembled a snake (coatl). The name Quetzal had been given to him because of his colorful dress and the fact that he could fly like the beautiful Quetzal bird.

The god, Quetzalcoatl, was very important to the Aztecs because he had arrived in the land and taught the natives many of the trades needed for survival. He taught them how to cultivate the land and make the tools they needed. He taught them about astronomy and music, and what is today's Mexican cuisine, which relies on corn as a staple. While Quetzalcoatl was living with the Aztecs and teaching

them what he knew, they offered him some of the native riches. One of these was frothy dark liquid drink which was the King's favorite. We now know it as chocolate. Quetzalcoatl was also given another drink known as Pulque (Tequila), which he liked as much as the previous one. He drank so much Pulque that he got drunk and lost control. When he woke up, he was told how the day before he had been singing, dancing and finally disrobing and was inviting everyone to join in.

Quetzalcoatl was so ashamed and furious at the Aztecs for not warning him of what the drink contained, that he left. As he was leaving, he promised to return if he could forgive them for shaming him. From that time forward, the Aztecs waited for his return.

Moctezuma was informed by his news carriers that some people, who looked like Quetzalcoatl (tall, light skinned and bearded), had arrived at what is now Veracruz. Moctezuma, who was very religious and thinking himself the chosen one, allowed the Spaniards a clear path to his palace. The Spaniards, who came to convert the Indians and to take all the gold they had heard about, were showered with gifts of gold. The Spaniards were honorable guests and as such were given anything their hearts desired. The

Spaniards were awed by the beauty of the city and the gold in the castles.

[Stop reading this history here]

While his men were being so lavishly entertained in Moctezuma's castle, Cortes received word that six Spaniards had been killed by subjects of the Aztecs on the coast of Mexico. This gave Cortes an opportunity to threaten Moctezuma. Diaz, who accompanied Cortes and recorded the first history of the conquest, reported the events as follows:

Cortes went to Moctezuma with a body guard of thirty men. He said to the Aztec king, "I do not wish to begin war on this account, nor to destroy this city. I am willing to forgive it all, if silently, and without raising a disturbance, you will come with us to our quarters, where you will be well served and attended. But if you cry out or make a disturbance, you will immediately be killed by these, my captains, whom I brought solely for this purpose."

Cuitlahautzin, Moctezuma's brother, wanted to kill the Spaniards, but the priests and Moctezuma wouldn't allow it. One night, known as "La Noche Triste" (The Sad Night), the Spaniards

raped the women at the castle they were staying at and stole the gold found there. When the Aztecs found out what the Spaniards had done, they went after the Europeans. Moctezuma was killed by a hurled brick. The Spaniards were badly defeated and only a few survivors got away from the Aztecs.

The Aztecs, a warring tribe which survived by taxing the neighboring tribes, found themselves wondering what had happened to the gods who got away. In the meantime, Hernan Cortez was aided back to health by the neighboring tribes, which had united together in order to defeat the hated Aztecs. They, like Moctezuma, had waited for the gods to free them from the Aztecs.

Moctezuma's brother, Cuitlahuac, became the new ruler. He organized his troops to fend off the Spaniards. However, within a few months not only he but thousands of Aztecs died of smallpox, a disease brought by the Spaniards. Other Indians died of venereal diseases. The deaths divided the Aztecs since some thought that death was the revenge of the gods whose authenticity had been questioned by the Aztecs.

With the Aztecs divided and all the neighboring tribes joined as a force with Cortez, the Aztecs were soon defeated. The Spaniards destroyed the city in an attempt to erase the power of the Aztec legacy.

APPENDIX E

White Gods on Horseback

By R. Cabral del Hoyo

The Aztec emperor at this time was a brave, intelligent, rather irresolute ruler who has become known to English-speaking people as Montezuma II, although Moctezuma more closely approximated the Aztec pronunciation of his name. His capital was a rich, busy island city of between two and three hundred thousand inhabitants, laced to the shore of the lake with causeways and containing many wide avenues and canals. Moctezuma knew nothing, of course--except possibly some vague, confused rumors--of the bearded white men who had come from across the ocean in 1492, and were spreading little by little over the islands of the Caribbean and the nearby shores of South America. Quite likely though, he did hear of a skirmish between some Mayas and a group of these bearded men that occurred in 1517, for in that year a Spanish expedition organized by Governor Diego Velasquez of Cuba and commanded by Francisco Hernandez de Cordova, sailed west for twenty-one days and reached the coast until, in a skirmish with the local Indians--probably Mayas--Hernandez received several wounds, which caused

his death some days after he was back in Cuba. This was the first known group of Europeans to reach what is now Mexican territory.

Moctezuma must have heard, too, of another group of Spaniards commanded by Governor Velasquez' nephew, Juan de Grijalva, who arrived the following year and discovered the river which now bears Grijalva's name, and reached the place now called San Juan de Ulua, opposite Veracruz on the edge of Moctezuma's own empire. Grijalva was well received by the local Indians, and obtained a good deal of gold in exchange for green and blue collars of very slight value in European terms. Both sides probably considered it a satisfactory deal.

When Grijalva got back to Cuba, told his story, and showed his gifts, indefatigable Governor Velasquez naturally was spurred on to even greater activity and organized a third expedition under the command of the man who was to become the last conqueror of Mexico, and the hero of one of the two greatest adventure stories of all time: Hernan Cortes.

Cortes was a 34 year old encomendero, a landowner, colonist in Cuba looking for an opportunity to make his fortune, as were hundreds of other Spaniards like him. Intelligent, audacious and

adventurous, he was gifted with tremendous energy. Upon learning of his appointment to lead an expedition to Mexico, he went about making ready for the trip without delay. He recruited men, bought supplies, and acquired ships. Hearing that Velasquez was beginning to be distrustful of his subordinate's ambitious zeal and planning to remove him from command of the expedition, Cortes sailed from Cuba without permission on February 18, 1519, smuggling himself aboard his own ship. The force, which was setting out to conquer the Aztec Empire, was composed of eleven ships carrying 508 Spanish foot soldiers, 32 archers, 13 musketeers, 16 horses for the officers, and 200 Cuban Indian burden-bearers.

Cortes arrived first at Cozumel island and then followed the routes of Cordoba and Grijalva to the nearby coast of Yucatan, in the Gulf of Mexico. On the way, the expedition rescued Jeronimo de Aguilar, who had been captured in Yucatan during a previous expedition, and Aguilar became the Spaniard's first interpreter.

Further on, in what is now the State of Tabasco, the Spaniards beat the local native in a skirmish, and their chief presented the invaders with twenty young women; among these was a handsome and intelligent girl who became Cortes' aide, interpreter and

mistress, and stayed by his side through all the vicissitudes of the Conquest. She was baptized and given the name of Marina, but the Mexicans pronounced it Malintzin, for "rain" was a title of honor with them. The Spaniards in turn wrote it Malinche and it is as Malinche that she has become one of the most romantic and attractive figures in the country's history. But the word "malinchismo" has come to mean, in Mexico, a preference for foreign people and customs.

The fleet finally reached the area where Grijalva had chattered for gold. Here on Holy Thursday, April 21, 1519, they formally founded the first Spanish city in Mexico the Rich City of the True Cross, La Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz. Then, in order to free himself from the command of Governor Velazquez, Cortes set up a council, and had himself named Chief Justice and Captain of the Army, thus becoming directly responsible to the King of Spain (at the time the Emperor Charles V) to whom he sent rich presents to prove that he still remained loyal. Then he dismantled all his ships to prevent dissention by those soldiers who had protested his disavowal of Velasquez's authority, and faced inland with his tiny army to conquer the unknown kingdom to the west.

Cortes had apparently been prepared, as Pizarro was later in Peru, to take on with his little expedition whatever native armies might be hurled against him, counting on the surprise caused by his thirteen musketeers and his sixteen horses to carry him to victory. But, on reaching the town of Zempoala, he learned of the hatred which the conquered people felt toward Moctezuma's rule, and saw that he could enlist the aid of Indian nations in his conquest. Slowly, conquering some tribes in battle, enlisting others on his side by diplomacy, he made his way toward the great city of Tenochtitlan where the Aztec emperor dwelt, and from which Moctezuma, in an agony of indecision, instead of sending armies sent ambassadors with more presents urging Cortes to go away.

The people who offered the greatest resistance to the Spanish advance were the Tlaxcalans. Their army under the gallant Xicotencatl had to be defeated twice before its leaders would yield to the Spaniards; but, after the battle, and through all the long months of war that followed, the Tlaxcalans remained staunch allies of the Spaniards.

At Cholula, further along the road to Tenochtitlan, Cortes learned through Doña Marina that the inhabitants were plotting with

the Aztecs to destroy his army. Without arousing suspicion, he summoned all their principal warriors to a meeting. Where, taking them by surprise, he had them all killed, an act of treachery justifiable, perhaps, by the fact that it was roughly what the Cholulans had planned to do to the Spaniards.

On November 8, 1519, little less than a year after he had sailed from Cuba, Cortes made a triumphal entry into Tenochtitlan as the leader of an army of thousands of Indian troops, without ever having fought a battle with the Emperor's forces. He and the other Spaniards came as guests of Moctezuma, who himself came out to greet them. Both the emperor and his subjects considered the Europeans and their horses also as gods and successors of Quetzalcoatl, and honors and gifts were heaped lavishly on every Spaniard. They were lodged in the ancient palace of Atzayacatl, on the site where the National Pawnshop stands today.

The more intelligent of the Spaniards, and particularly their shrewd leader, realized that the sophisticated inhabitants of Moctezuma's vast capital city would not be long in discovering that the white men were only humans after all, albeit very extraordinary humans. So, taking advantage of the killing of some Spaniards by

Indians down on the coast of Vera Cruz, Cortes demanded that the Emperor remain with the Europeans in their palace as a guarantee of their safety. Moctezuma realized that he was being made prisoner, but his inborn tendency toward appeasement led him to accede to Cortes' request, and even to calm his people's anxiety by telling them that he was going to live with the Spaniards of his own free will.

With Moctezuma held as hostage for the safety of his army in Tenochtitlan, Cortes learned from the Emperor's relay messengers that another force of 1200 Spaniards had landed at Vera Cruz. Far from providing reinforcements, this new group of invaders turned out to be an expedition sent by Cortes' old boss, Governor Velasquez, to punish him for his disloyalty. Cortes left a corporal's guard of Spaniards and several thousand Indian auxiliaries in Tenochtitlan under the command of a big, blonde, red faced, hotheaded officer named Pedro de Alvarado, a veteran of Grijalva's expedition; then he hurried off for the coast to meet this new danger. He came up with the new arrivals one rainy night at Zempoala, defeated them, and persuaded the defeated troops to join his own forces, thus nearly tripling the number of Spaniards under his command. Among the new

expeditionaries was a negro with incipient smallpox, who was to prove Cortes' most deadly soldier.

Just as he was preparing to return triumphantly to the capital, Cortes received news of another setback. It was the month of May. The people of the capital had received permission from Alvarado to stage a big religious celebration. All the principal personages had gathered in their best finery. But Alvarado had prohibited human sacrifice, which was deemed to be an essential part of the rite. In an atmosphere charged with hostility and tension, Alvarado abruptly entered the main temple with his soldiers and killed many of the unarmed participants. At this, the citizens, who up to now had remained submissive out of respect for their Emperor, rose in fury, and thousands of them besieged Alvarado, without food and water, almost at the breaking point.

The day after Cortes got back into the palace, the Aztecs renewed their furious attack. Cortes persuaded Moctezuma to go out on the palace roof and urge his enraged subjects to give up the attack and go home. But this time, egged on by the Emperor's cousin and son-in-law, a 20 year old named Cuauhtemoc, the people accused Moctezuma of cowardice and showered him with stones and arrows;

he died of his wounds a few hours later. His body was turned over to the Aztecs, and there was a lull in the siege while the late Emperor's subjects accorded him a splendid funeral and chose a new emperor.

But now the city knew the Spaniards held no hostage. The attack on the palace was renewed with growing fury, and it was obviously only a matter of time before the Spaniards and their allies would be either starved out or killed.

At last Cortes decided to retreat; and on the night of June 20, 1520 the "Noche Triste" or Sad Night as the Spanish survivors ever afterwards called it the palace defenders sallied forth and began fighting their way hand to hand through the streets and along the causeways which linked the island-city with the shore of the lake. The retreating Spaniards were packed tightly on the narrow causeways, the Aztecs attacking them not only on the roadway itself, but from boats in the lake. Some of the invaders tried on the roadway itself, but from boats in the lake. Some of the invaders tried to carry their booty with them, but all sooner or later lost their treasure in the flight or threw it in the lake to be able to fight and move more easily, Only the superior armor and weapons and the

greater personal initiative and desperation of the Spaniards saved them from annihilation. As it was, more than eight hundred Spaniards, eighty horses, and uncounted thousands of their Indian allies perished during the long night. Of the survivors who reached temporary safety across the causeways, there was not one a single Spaniard who didn't bore wounds and thanked his saint for some miracle that had saved his life. All gone was the gold that the Spaniards had acquired from Moctezuma or taken from Atzayacatl Palace, and much of the meager stock of cannon gunpowder and equipment. Cortes, exhausted and gloomy, flung himself down under a now-famous tree at Popotla and wept to see the pitiful remnants of his army march past; and from here, if they gazed across the lake, they all could see those of their comrades who had been made prisoners being led up the great Aztec temple to have their hearts torn from their chests as sacrifices to Huitzilopochtli.

With the Aztecs in intermittent pursuit, the shattered invaders made their way as far as Otumba, where a pitched battle took place on July 7. Defeat and extermination seemed inevitable for the Spaniards until Cortes remembered the Aztecs' tendency to abandon the field when their chief died. He led a desperate drive

against the Aztec commander, who was killed by a Spaniards soldier. As the Aztecs learned what had happened, they began leaving the field of battle; the tide turned, and Cortes had gained the respite he needed. He took his battered army to Tlaxcala. The Tlaxcalans remained his loyal allies even in defeat, and now they helped him re-equip his troops and prepare for a new attack.

But meanwhile in Tenochtitlan, a terrible plague had befallen the Aztecs. The infection brought in by the smallpox ridden Negro had done little harm to the Spaniards; for like most Europeans in those days, the majority of them had been immunized by surviving smallpox attacks in their childhood. Among the Aztecs, however, the plague took hold like a forest fire, for the disease was new in America, and thousands died within weeks of the strange disfiguring fever, including the new emperor Cuitlahuac who had been chosen to succeed Moctezuma. The pursuit of the Spaniards was paralyzed. Cuitlahuac's successor was Cuauhtemoc, the young man who had lead the attack on Moctezuma before the Spaniards were driven out of the city. He summarily rejected all of Cortes' peace proposals and prepared vigorously to resume the war against the bearded invaders.

The delay had given Cortes all the time he needed to recuperate. He now commanded an army of Indians bigger forces than before the Noche Triste. To overcome the advantage Tenochtitlan's watergirt position gave it, he had built thirteen small ships, and with these he now laid siege to the Aztec stronghold. The Aztecs fought with desperate courage and several times made successful sallies and drove the besiegers back; but Cortes' inexorable pressure never relaxed. On August 13, 1521, after seventy-three days, Tenochtitlan capitulated. The Spaniards moved in on a city completely levelled, scorched by fire, infested by plague and littered with bodies. More than three centuries were to pass before the American continent could again boast a city so vast.

Cuauhtemoc was taken prisoner and brought before Cortes. Said the young Emperor defiantly: "I am done everything I should in defense of my city and people, but since I am here by force and a prisoner before you, take this dagger now and kill me with it!" His life was spared; but Cortes' soldiers, eager to recover the gold lost on the Noche Triste and believing that Cuauhtemoc knew where the royal treasures were hidden, induced their commander to have the prisoner tortured. They burned his feet and hands with boiling oil,

and applied the same torture to Cuauhtemoc's faithful vassal, the Lord of Tacuba. Unable to stand the pain, the Tacuba chieftain looked at his emperor as though asking permission to speak. Cuauhtemoc understood his intention and asked ironically: "Do you think I am lying on a bed of roses?" The Tacuba ruler remained silent without a word of complaint. Cuauhtemoc suffered so stoically that he earned the admiration and respect of the Spaniards; convinced, moreover, that neither he nor any of his captains would ever reveal the secret, they stopped the torture. Cuauhtemoc remained a state prisoner until 1525, when Cortes, claiming he was fomenting rebellion, had him hung.

APPENDIX F

The Battle of Puebla or The Battle of Cinco De Mayo

By E. Blanquel

México finally gets its independence in 1821 after a long, expensive, and bloody war (11 years) which had been inspired the French Revolution. When Iturbide had himself crowned emperor, the social situation did not change, with few changes having been accomplished for the general population.

At the beginning of the 19th century the caudillismo appeared in México. Caudillos were powerful men who tried to obtain personal gains without worrying about the interests of the country or its people. Those egotistical men created serious problems for the entire nation. At that same time another group of powerful men appeared: professional military men, Generales, whose ambition constantly put the country in jeopardy with its constant uprisings and deception. The Generales took the townspeople along into more wars. The military men would steal the power from one another and they would not obey the commands of their superiors.

After 11 years of constant war and continuous upheaval to take over the government, the nation was in ruins economically

speaking since the farmers couldn't very well go back to farming corn, the staple of Mexican economy. In 1845 a group of American citizens who had sworn alliance to México when they were allowed to become citizens decided to turn their backs to their new country and decided to form a free and separate country, Texas, from the country that had befriended them. This was the Mexican-American War where México lost half of its land since it was in no shape to defend itself from anyone much less a power such as the United States. México had to try and keep its territory but it was forced to take on the most powerful country in the world, the United States. The Texans were still considered American citizens even though they had renounced their American citizenship and thus, México had to fight the U.S. to keep the land it rightfully belong to México. México was involved once again in a war it didn't want but it was forced to fight nevertheless, if it wished to keep others from invading it again. Three years later, in 1848, México was forced to hand over half of its land with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which in turn promised Mexicans the right to an education in their native language.

With these precarious economic conditions and lack of political stability in the years of the dictatorship of General Santa Ana which lasted until 1854, some liberal men such as Benito Juárez decided to continue fighting the government since there were very little gains which actually had been accomplished since the Independence. The Liberals attracted to their cause a large portion of the population which followed them with great enthusiasm. After the defeat of Santa Ana, a provisional government was elected and three years later drafted The Constitution of 1857 which declared México a democratic republic which is governed by its representatives, freely elected by its population. México was composed of free and sovereign states but united for the good of the entire nation. At last it seemed that México had accomplished its goal but within the nation there were various groups who were not in agreement with those liberal ideas. The conservatives, the wealthy and the clergy joined together to form a front which would try to get rid of the new constitution. With the liberals convinced that this could be México's last chance for democracy and freedom they went on the offense and a bloody war followed: the Three Year War or the Reform War. When the president left the country in fear

of being apprehended, the presidency fell on the president of the Supreme Court: Benito Juárez who fought the conservatives and fled the capital, to Veracruz, as his army started to lose ground. While in Veracruz, Juárez decreed the separation of the Church from the State where the wealth of the Catholic church went to the Mexican government which in turn infuriated the clergy.

When the liberals finally won and it seemed that México would finally enjoy peace and prosperity, a group of rich, powerful Mexican men were convinced that no Mexican was capable of governing this country. They decided to go out and bring in someone capable from outside the country. They decided to invite a prince to rule México as an emperor. Archduke Maximilian of Austria refused the offer but was outvoted by his wife Carlota and Napoleón III, Emperor of France, one of the richest and industrialized countries in the world, who wanted to make México a commercial colony of France.

The war against the Conservatives left México in virtual poverty and president Benito Juárez was forced in 1861 to stop payments on the Foreign Debt for two years until México could afford to continue paying on its debt. The Triple Alliance was made up with England, Spain, as well as France. México was in debt to England for

70 million pesos, to Spain for 9 million pesos and finally France for only seven hundred Mexican pesos. The Triple alliance took over the port of Veracruz in order to collect on their debt. Negotiations with President Juárez soon followed and soon were fruitful when Juárez promised to start payment on its debt as soon as possible. Spain and England promised to wait for its money but France who needed an excuse to invade México decided to remain until it collected on its debt.

The Conservatives were happy to see the French army in México expecting to see the country being ruled by a Monarch. General Loréncz, with the help of the Clergy, powerful dictators as well as the wealthy Mexicans, decided to move on to Puebla when he refused to negotiate with the Mexican president as the other nations had done so. General Loréncz was very famous in Europe for its many victories with the famous French army which was unbeatable at this time. The arrogant general sent a telegram to Napoleón III informing him that he had seen the country and it was only a matter of days before México would belong to France since this poor country couldn't fight against a power such as France.

May 5th is, of course, a date of great significance in México. In the United States it is considered as important as Mexico's Independence Day and, most of all, it is remembered as a decisive victory over the European imperialist armed forces.

It is an ironic fact that on that same date, but in the year 1821, Napoleón Bonaparte died in exile on the Isle of Saint Helena. Forty-one years later, his nephew, Napoleón III, called "the small," suffered a shameful defeat in his deplorable and ill-fated intervention in México. In spite of the fact that the French armed forces were not stopped in their invasion of the Land of Anahuac, the victory of the Mexican Army dealt a great blow to France's imperialist dream of European hegemony in México. Had it not been for the Battle of May 5th, the French adventure would not have ended in Queretaro, and, more precisely, at the Cerro de las Campanas (Hill of the Bells), where Maximilian finally paid the price for his failed conquest.

What really happened at the Battle of Puebla? How did the French and Mexican armies act? In order to explain this, a study of the situation that prevailed on May 5, 1862 was made.

France's expeditionary army in México was made up of veterans of campaigns in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Its arms and military equipment were among the best in the world. In battles on Italian soil in 1857, the French rifles had fully demonstrated their unsurpassed quality. The same could be said of their artillery, whose guns had been in service less than two years. Napoleon's soldiers had been victorious in Crimea.

Mexico's army had none of these advantages. The armed forces of Benito Juárez, who had defeated the Conservatives in the Civil War, were a powerful army equipped with 70 thousand rifles and 600 guns. Nevertheless, most of those arms were obsolete, and many of the men had been discharged after the War of Reform. The Army of the East (Ejército de Oriente) that took part in the Battle of Puebla had only 6,000 men, instead of the 11,000 it had enjoyed a few years before. And, as if not enough, most of the veterans of the Civil War had died or retired, and the new officers were too young and inexperienced. One fortunate feature, however, was the ability of the principal military leaders, men like Escobedo, Corona, Porfirio Díaz, Riva Palacio, and Ignacio Zaragoza.

General Loréncz arrived with 4,474 men in Veracruz on March 6, 1862 and started his advance toward the Mexican capital. The French forces marched slowly, reinforced by the Mexican Conservatives and their first objective was the City of Orizaba. General Zaragoza, meanwhile, took his men to the mountains.

The French commander had the arrogance of sending a letter to his Emperor in which he assured him that as of that date he was "the master of México." But Lorencez had a rude awakening when he faced the heroic defense of the City of Puebla, where the Mexican forces gave battle in the hills surrounding the Forts of Loreto and Guadalupe.

The guns of both armies started firing at 11a.m., and Mexican and French cannons maintained a bloody duel for an hour. At noon, Loréncz made his first mistake when he decided to move part of his artillery units that were below the Mexican forces in the Fort of Guadalupe. After that, he ordered the advance of his zuavos and the First Battallion of Marine Fusileers.

Time and again the French soldiers charged against the Mexican positions, and each time they had to retreat with enormous losses. The battle did not let up for several hours, until General

Loréncéz ordered General Valaze to send reinforcements to attack the Mexican flanks. But the maneuver met with defeat when a number of Zacapoaxtla Indians entered the combat. Armed only with very old rifles and machetes, they faced, the foreign invaders with incredible courage and skill.

Loréncéz saw that the attack had failed and realized that his men were in danger of being annihilated by the Mexican fighters. So he sent a new attack to help them escape. This gave rise to a frontal fight between the armies, which created a battle similar to those in the Middle Ages.

The French forces retreated, but they were far from being defeated. Once again, the Hunters of Vincennes advanced for the third time against the Guadalupe and Loreto forts and in their irresistible thrust reached the walls and started to climb. The defenders knew that everything was at stake in this fight and made a supreme effort that ended in a retreat of the French forces. Then, to seal the Mexican victory, a sudden and heavy rain forced end of the hostilities between the contending armies.

In a telegram sent that afternoon and received by President Juárez at 5:49, General Zaragoza told of the victory in sober terms:

"This is to inform you that the arms of the Supreme Government are covered with glory."

Loréncez retreated after suffering heavy losses. 576 of his men died and another 435 were wounded, while the Mexicans had only 83 dead and 132 wounded. It was a terrible blow to French pride as well as an omen of the final defeat of the French Army and of its Conservative allies that put an end to the brief dream of Maximilian and Carlota. Once Napoleón III heard about the defeat of his powerful army by an inexperienced Mexican rag tag army it decided to send more troops, up to 30,000 soldiers, and named General Elías Foray commander in chief to replace the ineffective Loréncez.

The war against the French army at Puebla lasted only sixty two days. The Mexican army, made up of mostly poor, ill equipped peasants, fought valiantly until it ran out of ammunition and food. Having won, the French army continued its voyage toward the capital. President Juárez had to flee as the invading army captured México City and placed Archduke Maximilian of Hapsburg along with the legendary Empress Carlota as rulers of México. Napoleón III promised to help defend this newly formed monarchy along with the

wealthy vendido, malinchista Mexicans who had gone to Austria to offer him the throne.

President Juárez fled from the French army from city to city, always moving north until it arrived at the U. S. border, as it tried to capture him without any success. Napoleón III sent an army of 40,000 men to occupy México but it had to pull most of its army when Prussia tried to occupy France. The U. S., after having fought a Civil War, sent a warning to Napoleón III informing him that they weren't happy with the invasion of a free country. The Mexican people finally overthrew the French and captured Maximilian on May 15, 1867, five years after the invasion.

Fernando Maximilian of Hapsburg was shot along with Mexican generals Miramón and Mejía for treason to the Mexican nation on June 19, 1867 putting an end to another expensive war which México, again, was forced to fight.

APPENDIX G

Intervención Francesa

De B. L. Solis

En 1821 México consiguió finalmente su independencia, después de una lucha tan larga como sangrienta y costosa inspirada muy cercanamente en la revolución francesa. Cuando Iturbide se hizo coronar emperador no tomaba en cuenta la realidad concreta de México; además, al confirmar la intolerancia religiosa ya establecida en la Constitución de Apatzingan de 1814, privaba a los mexicanos de una libertad fundamental: la de la creencia de su religión.

En la primera mitad del siglo XIX México pasó por una etapa difícil. Apareció el caudillismo, es decir, la situación política dominada por los caudillos, hombres poderosos que trataban de obtener ventajas personales sin pensar en los intereses, mucho más importantes, de la nación y de todos sus habitantes; el egoísmo de los caudillos creó serios problemas a la nación. A la vez surgió otro grupo poderoso, el de los altos jefes militares, que en su ambición amenazaban constantemente al país con levantamientos a los que, engañándolo, se arrastraba al pueblo; con cuartelazos de militares que asaltaban el poder, y con asonadas en que una parte del gobierno

desconocía a la otra. Por otro lado, el alto clero intentó seguir disfrutando de la misma situación de privilegio de que había gozado en la época colonial.

Resultado de las precarias condiciones del país fueron la falta de estabilidad política y la dictadura del general Antonio López de Santa Anna.

Muchos mexicanos se sentían desencantados, pensaban que había que seguir luchando sin cansancio y organizadamente hasta alcanzar lo deseado para el país.

Los liberales atrajeron a su causa a gran parte de la población, que los siguió con entusiasmo.

La Constitución de 1857 declara, como su antecesora, que México es una república democrática, representativa y federal, es decir, que está gobernada por representantes del pueblo elegidos libremente, y que se compone de estados libres y soberanos, con personalidad propia, pero unidos para el bien de toda la República.

Por fin parecía que México había alcanzado lo que necesitaba. Pero dentro de nuestro propio país había varios grupos que no estaban de acuerdo con las ideas liberales. Las clases privilegiadas

y conservadoras, unidas al alto clero, hicieron un intento más para impedir que Constitución funcionara. Por su parte, los liberales, apoyados por la mayoría del pueblo, se dieron cuenta de que esta era la última ocasión que podía presentarse para convertir a México en un país moderno y democrático. Ambos partidos, el liberal y el conservador, estaban convencidos de que la contienda era definitiva. Por eso la lucha se desencadenó terrible y encarnizada: Fue la sangrienta Guerra de Reforma, llamada también Guerra de Tres Años.

El presidente Comonfort, entregó el gobierno a Zuloaga y abandonó el país. A falta de Presidente de la República, el cargo, según la Constitución, recaía en el presidente de la Suprema Corte de Justicia, puesto que ocupaba entonces el licenciado Benito Juárez.

Refugiado en Veracruz mientras la lucha continuaba, Benito Juárez dictó una serie de leyes, las Leyes de Reforma, que completaban la Constitución. Entre estas estaban: la ley de nacionalización de los bienes eclesiásticos, es decir, el mandato por virtud del cual las propiedades del clero pasaban a ser del dominio de la nación, y en la cual se establecía también la separación de Iglesia respecto del Estado.

La Guerra de Reforma duró tres años. Al final triunfó el partido liberal, y la Constitución pudo, por fin, ponerse en vigor. Pero otros peligros se presentaron. Algunos mexicanos estaban desilucionados y no creían que los liberales. La Constitución y las nuevas leyes pudieran realmente hacer de México un país moderno a la altura de otros países del mundo pero estaban convencidos de que los mexicanos no eran capaces de gobernarse por si mismos y de que era necesario traer gobernantes de fuera. Así, pensaron en un príncipe extranjero para hacerlo emperador de nuestro país: en el archiduque Maximiliano de Austria que no estaba muy de acuerdo pero fue convencido por su esposa Carlota. En esto fueron apoyados por el emperador Napoleón III, que gobernaba a Francia, uno de los países más ricos e industrializados de entonces. Napoleón III se disponía a convertir a México en una especie de colonia comercial y aún política del imperio francés.

Deudas con el Exterior. Cuando Juárez empezó a gobernar al país después del triunfo de los liberales en la Guerra de Reforma, la situación del país era de gran pobreza: no había dinero ni para lo más urgente de la administración pública. En busca de alivio económico, el Presidente Benito Juárez expidió el 17 de julio de 1861 un decreto

en virtud del cual se aplazaban por dos años, esperando que las condiciones de erario (impuestos) mejorasen, los pagos relativos a las deudas que México tenía con Inglaterra y España, y el de aquellos que Francia le exigía.

Al conocerse el decreto, dichos países formaron la Triple Alianza, cual fin era hacer a México reclamaciones conjuntas, apoyadas militarmente. Para esto, las tres potencias enviaron flotas de guerra al puerto de Veracruz, así como de los lugares circundantes, se apoderaron a partir del día 17 de diciembre de 1861.

México debía a Inglaterra setenta millones de pesos y a España nueve millones y medio. A Francia casi no le debía nada. Las dos principales reclamaciones francesas eran: una de dos millones quinientos mil pesos, por daños y perjuicios imaginarios, y otra de unos supuestos doce millones que, según Napoleón III, México debía pagar, a cambio de setecientos mil pesos que un banquero suizo había prestado al antiguo gobierno de Miramón.

Los conservadores veían con buenos ojos la intromisión de Francia en los asuntos mexicanos porque consideraban que ese era el único modo de arrojar del poder a los liberales e implantar en México

la monarquía, forma de gobierno que los más conservadores deseaban. Para tal fin habían conseguido ya, gracias a las gestiones que sus enviados hacían en Europa, la ayuda de Napoleón III.

Contando con el apoyo de los generales, directores políticos y dignatarios eclesiásticos del partido conservador, el famoso general Loréncez ordenó que su ejército avanzara sobre Puebla, y esto se hizo posible desde luego al fracasar las negociaciones con Francia, ocurrió algo inaudito: Loréncez se negó a retroceder hasta Veracruz, y desde Orizaba dispuso la marcha sobre Puebla. Loréncez famoso por sus victorias en Europa era un arrogante general y mandó un telegrama a Napoleón III informándole que había visto el país y era solo cuestión de días en cuanto México pertenecería a Francia, puesto que este pobre país no podía competir con un país tan poderoso como Francia.

El cinco de mayo es un día de gran significado en México. En los Estados Unidos es considerado tan importante como la independencia de México y sobre todo se recuerda como una victoria decisiva sobre las fuerzas imperialistas europeas armadas.

Es irónico que en esa misma fecha pero en el año de 1821, Napoleón Bonaparte murió en el exilio en la isla de Santa Elena.

cuarentaiún año después su sobrino Napoleón III, llamado “el pequeño,” sufrió una derrota vergonzosa en su deplorable y malintencionada intervención en México. a pesar de que las tropas francesas no fueron paradas en la invasión de la Tierra de Anahuac, la victoria que consiguió el ejercito mexicano fue un rudo golpe a los sueños imperialistas de supremacía francesa en México. Si no hubiera sido por la batalla del cinco de mayo, la aventura francesa no hubiese terminado en Querétaro, o para ser mas precisos, en el Cerro de Las Campanas, donde Maximiliano finalmente pagó el precio de su conquista fallida.

¿Qué sucedió realmente en la Batalla de Puebla? Como actuaron los ejercitos franceses y mexicanos? Para poder explicar esto, se hizo un estudio de las condiciones que prevalecian en 1862.

El ejercito francés expedicionario en México estaba compuesto de veteranos de guerras en Europa, Africa y Asia. Sus armas y equipo militar era de lo mejor del mundo. En batallas en terreno italiano, en 1857, los rifles franceses habían demonstado su exelente poderío. Lo mismo podía decirse de la artillería, de la cual sus cañones habían estado en servicio por menos de dos años. Los soldados de Napoleón habían salido victoriosos en Crimea.

El ejercito mexicano no tenía ninguna de esas ventajas. Las fuerzas armadas de Benito Juárez que habían derrotado a los conservativos en la guerra civil, era un poderoso ejercito equipado con 70,000 rifles y 600 cañones. A pesar de esto, la mayoría de los cañones estaban inservibles. Muchos de los soldados se habían dado de baja después de la Guerra de Reforma. El Ejercito del Oriente que tomó parte en la Batalla de Puebla solo tenía 60,000 hombres, en vez de los 11,000 que había tenido unos años antes. Y como si no fuese suficiente, la mayoría de los veteranos de la guerra civil se habían muerto o se habían jubilado y los nuevos oficiales del ejercito eran muy jóvenes y no tenían experiencia. Una de las grandes cualidades era la habilidad militar de los jefes. Hombres como Escobedo, Corona, Porfirio Díaz, Riva Palacio e Ignacio Zaragoza.

El general Lorencez había ganado mucho prestigio en Europa. Confiado en la organización y disciplina de sus tropas, atacó la ciudad de Puebla el 5 de mayo de 1862. Mandaba allí el ejercito mexicano el general Ignacio Zaragoza.

El general Lorencez había ganado mucho prestigio en Europa. Confiado en la organización y disciplina de sus tropas. Por fin atacó la ciudad de Puebla el 5 de Mayo de 1862. Mandaba allí al ejército

mexicano el general Ignacio Zaragoza el cual había llevado a sus tropas a las montañas para esperar el ataque francés.

El comandante Francés tuvo la arrogancia de mandar un telegrama en el cual aseguraba que desde ese día el era "el dueño de México." Pero Loréncz tuvo un rudo despertar cuando se encontró con la heroica resistencia de la ciudad de Puebla donde las fuerzas Mexicanas batallaron en los cerros alrededor de los fuertes de Loreto y Guadalupe.

Los cañones de los dos ejércitos empezaron a disparar a las 11:00 a.m. y los cañones franceses y mexicanos tuvieron una batalla sangrienta por una hora. Al mediodía Loréncz cometió su primer error cuando decidió mover parte de su artillería que estaba abajo del fuerte de Guadalupe. Después de esto, ordenó a sus zuavos a que avanzaran con El Primer Batallón de Fusileros Marinos.

Una y otra vez los soldados franceses atacaron las defensas mexicanas y cada vez los franceses tuvieron que retroceder con fuertes pérdidas. La batalla no paró por varias horas hasta que el General Loréncz ordenó a su comandante, el general Valazé a que mandara refuerzos para atacar al ejército Mexicano por los costados. Esta maniobra encontró la derrota cuando un gran número de indios

Zacapoaxtla entraron a combatir. Los valientes indios, armados solamente con viejos rifles y machetes, se enfrentaron a los invasores franceses con increíble habilidad.

El general Loréncz vio que el ataque había fallado y se dio cuenta de que sus hombres estaban en peligro de ser aniquilados por el ejército mexicano y por eso mandó un nuevo ataque para ayudarlos a escapar. Esto dió lugar a un ataque frontal entre los dos ejércitos lo cual creó una batalla similar a aquellas de la Edad Media.

Las fuerzas armadas retrocedieron pero no estaban derrotados aún. Una vez más los Cazadores de Vincennes avanzaron por tercera vez contra los fuertes de Guadalupe y Loreto y en su irresistible ataque alcanzaron las paredes de los fuertes y empezaron a subirlos. Los defensores sabían que tenían que hacer un gran esfuerzo para detener a los invasores a los cuales hicieron retroceder para terminar con la batalla y poder alcanzar la victoria mexicana. De pronto empezó a llover fuertemente lo que forzó el final de las hostilidades entre los dos ejércitos y el triunfo mexicano.

En un telegrama que recibió el presidente Juárez, a las 5:49 p.m. del mismo día, el general Zaragoza le informaba de la victoria

en términos serios. “Esto es para informarle que las armas del gobierno supremo se han cubierto de gloria.”

Loréncez se retiró después de sufrir grandes pérdidas, 576 de sus hombres fallecieron y otros 435 fueron heridos mientras que solo 83 mexicanos murieron y 132 fueron heridos. Esto fue un terrible golpe al orgullo francés además de un aviso de una futura derrota francesa con sus aliados conservativos que daría final al sueño de Maximiliano y Carlota. En cuanto Napoleón III oyó de la derrota de su fuerte ejército ante un inexperto ejército mexicano decidió mandar 30,000 soldados más que llegaron con el general Elías Foray para reemplazar al derrotado general Loréncez.

La guerra contra el ejército francés en Puebla duró solo 62 días. El ejército mexicano, compuesto mayormente por campesinos pobres y mal entrenados en las armas, peleó valientemente hasta que se le terminó el parque y la comida. Al triunfar, el ejército francés continuó hasta la capital de México. El presidente de México, Benito Juárez, tuvo que salir huyendo puesto que el ejército invasor capturó México y depositó al archiduque Maximiliano de Hapsburg con su esposa Carlota como emperadores de México. Napoleón III prometió

ayudar a esta nueva monarquía con ayuda de los ricos, malinchistas, vendidos de México que habían ido a Austria a ofrecerles el trono.

El presidente Juárez huyó de los franceses, de ciudad en ciudad, siempre viajando hacía el norte hasta que llegó a la frontera de los Estados Unidos donde siempre trataban de capturarlo sin conseguirlo. Napoleón III mandó otro nuevo ejército de 40,000 hombres para ocupar México pero tuvo que regresarlos cuando Prussia trató de ocupar Francia.

El pueblo mexicano finalmente derrocó a los franceses y capturó a Maximiliano el 15 de mayo de 1867, 5 años después de la invasión.

Fernando Maximiliano de Hapsburgo fue fusilado con los generales mexicanos Miramón y Mejía por traición a la patria mexicana, en junio 19 de 1867, dando fin a otra costosa guerra a la que México fue forzado a pelear de nuevo.

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