

**ART AND POSSIBILITY:  
FROM NATIONALISM TO NEOLIBERALISM.  
THE CULTURAL INTERVENTIONS OF BANAMEX AND TELEVISIA**

by

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## **Abstract**

This thesis will take issue with Citibank's purchase of Banamex and its art collection in 2001 as a point of departure to discuss how legislation on national patrimony is changing as Mexico opens up the cultural sector to foreign and private ownership. I will contextualize this change through a review of Banamex and Televisa involvement in the cultural field since the late 1960s.

I will also examine how the adoption of neoliberal economic measures has encouraged the participation of the private sector and the shift from a state funding system towards a model of transnational corporate philanthropy. In this context, I will argue that the emergence of corporate philanthropy in Mexico is a direct result of the re-distribution of finance capital that accompanied Mexico's neoliberal turn.

For most part of the twentieth century, the Mexican state was the sole sponsor and manager of cultural matters. This funding system began to change in the late 1960s when private citizens and corporations began to invest more openly in the arts as the one-party-rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) began to decline. In the late 1990s as Mexico integrated to the global economy, a need to update this form of management became urgent. Encouraged by the possibility to democratize and decentralize the state's funding system, new state cultural apparatuses that promoted private intervention were established. However, within the framework of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), these newly formed state institutions did not legislate in favor of protectionist measures in the cultural field and rather opted to continue espousing a nationalist rhetoric (without a legal backing) while opening up the sponsoring and ownership of culture and national patrimony to an increasingly transnational private sector. This situation gave rise to debates about the privatization of culture, the inefficient legislation in cultural patrimony, and most importantly, the new role that the state should adopt in handling cultural matters as Mexico's political environment moved towards a democracy aligned to neoliberal economics. I will address how Banamex and Televisa, two of the first corporations to invest in culture and develop cultural foundations, became protagonists in these debates.

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## Glossary

- CC/AC** Cultural Centre of Contemporary Art / Televisa, Mexico City.  
CC/AC opened in 1988 and was Televisa's main exhibition venue until 1998 when it closed its doors after the death of Emilio Azcarraga.
- CONACULTA** National Council for the Arts and Culture.  
CONACULTA is a state institution that manages and administers all matters of culture. It promotes regionalization and the participation of the private sector in the cultural field. It sponsors a national program of art scholarships and funding, cultural exchanges and cultural production. It was established in 1988 as part of the National Plan of Cultural Development lead by president Carlos Salinas de Gortari. This plan was part of the efforts carried out under Salinas presidential term to develop state institutions that will be more amenable to the privatization and de-centralization of Mexico's economy.
- FONCA** National Fund for the Arts and Culture.  
FONCA is a state system of scholarships and funding program for artists. It was established in 1989 to promote artistic production in seventeen different categories that include architecture, dance, literature, visual arts, music and theater. FONCA is also a product of the National Plan of Cultural Development.
- INAH** National Institute of Anthropology and History.  
The INAH was established in 1939 by the president Lazaro Cárdenas with the purpose of regulating and centralizing all cultural matters into one institution. In particular, the INAH oversaw all matters relating to the protection of archeological and historical sites designated as patrimony of the nation.
- INBA** National Institute of Fine Arts.  
Established in 1947 under the presidency of Miguel Alemán with the purpose of promoting and coordinating the production of fine arts in Mexico as well as protecting national patrimony. It represents three national companies (dance , theater and Opera) as well as eight orchestras and several choral groups.
- ISI** Import Substitution Industrialization.  
ISI is the economic policy adopted by most Latin American countries in the 1930s as a direct result of the pressures of the Great Depression. It was based on the premise that developing countries should attempt to substitute imported products and goods with locally produced substitutes.

- MoMA Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
One of the most important exhibition venues of modern art founded in 1929.
- NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement.  
The tri-national economic treaty between Canada, Mexico and the United States signed in 1992 and ratified in 1993.
- PRI Institutional Revolutionary Party.  
Founded in 1929 as the Mexican Revolutionary Party and then re-baptized as the Institutional Revolutionary Party in 1946. It was the ruling party of Mexico from 1929 to 2000.

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## Dedication

To Roberto.

## Introduction

*The best and most effective corporate collections reflect the personality of the respective company, that is to say its Corporate Image as well as its Corporate Culture.<sup>1</sup>*

*Marketing has become the centre or the 'soul' of the corporation. We are taught that corporations have a soul, which is the most terrifying news in the world.<sup>2</sup>*

In 2001, the financial conglomerate Citigroup purchased the largest private bank of Mexico, Banamex, and all of its holdings, including one of the most important collections of Mexican art.<sup>3</sup> The Banamex collection consists of more than four thousand pieces including colonial buildings, textiles, pre-Hispanic ceramics and artifacts, as well as paintings from the colonial to the modern period. Due to its emphasis on national content, its historical scope and Banamex's role as an institution that promoted the protection of cultural patrimony, the Banamex Collection was perceived as an asset of the nation despite that more than three thousand works in the collection were not explicitly declared as such. As I will explain, the possibility of the collection's dissolution and its ambiguous standing in patrimony terms precipitated heated debates amongst several cultural functionaries and sectors of the Mexican population. They engaged in a discussion that touched the core of cultural policies in Mexico: the lack of current

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<sup>1</sup> Gérard A. Goodrow, "Inspiration and Innovation: Contemporary Art as Catalyst and Custodian of Corporate Culture" in Felix Zdenek, Beate Henschel and Dirck Luckow, *Art and Economy* (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany and New York, N.Y.: Hatje Cantz, 2002) 254.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control", *October*, Vol. 59, Winter 1992 (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA) 3-7.

<sup>3</sup> Citigroup purchased Banamex, the National Bank of Mexico, for 12.5 billion US dollars. At the time of purchase Banamex assets were more than 35 billion dollars, 8 millions of bank accounts and RRSPs, a well as a consolidated brand, and an art collection valued at 65 million US dollars. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), Citibank's purchase of Banamex was triggered by the increase presence of Spanish banks in the Latin American financial sector. Citibank is the financial corporation with the largest international presence. Over the course of the twentieth century Citibank had a strong presence in the corporate financial field in Mexico, the purchase of Banamex provides Citibank with access to consumer banking both in Mexico and within the Hispanic market in the US through the Banamex subsidiary California Commerce Bank. Banamex represents 10% of Citibank's global revenue. See Héctor Salas Harms, "La adquisición del grupo financiero Banamex-Accival por Citigroup", *Momento Económico*, vol 127, May-June 2003, 29-52; and María de La Luz González "Bancos: La Ruta del Dinero. Después del Naufragio", *La Jornada*, August 1, 2005.

legislation over cultural patrimony and the role of the state in managing cultural affairs in the context of transnational agreements.

For instance, a couple of months after the Banamex transaction, a Cultural and Education Commission was established to revise and question the condition of cultural legislation within the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In the context of the commission hearings, the following statement by Sari Bermudez, president of the National Arts Council (CONACULTA), reveals the tensions provoked by this incident:

Les repito, en años anteriores, pues estas colecciones se daban, y no habíamos tenido esta situación en que una colección tan importante, quizá la más importante para México, quedara en manos de una empresa extranjera. Y sobre todo que, que tanta obra, 3 mil 303 no estuvieran protegidas. [...]Nos han dicho los propietarios de esta colección, que la colección se piensa quedar en México, que no se la piensan llevar, pero bueno, nuestra función no es tanto creer en la buena voluntad, sino tener sobrepapel, y garantizarle al pueblo de México que le estamos protegiendo estos bienes, que son muy importantes.<sup>4</sup>

This passionate response from a high-ranking functionary regarding a corporate transaction raises several questions: if this was a private corporation, why did this transaction provoke such a fervent response by a prominent government official? Why was this private collection defended as if it was part of the patrimony of the nation, when more than three thousand works in the collection were not legally declared as such? What kind of obligations and responsibilities do private corporations

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<sup>4</sup> "In previous years, we have never encountered this kind of situation whereby a collection of this importance, perhaps the most important for Mexico, will end up in the hands of a foreign corporation. Most importantly, with a situation in which so much of the work (more than three thousand pieces) is not protected under our current legislation. The new owners have repeatedly told us that the collection will remain in national territory and that it will not be dispersed or be taken away from the Mexican population. Our role then, is not to have faith in the goodwill of others, but to have official means to guarantee the Mexican nation that we are protecting these kinds of goods, which are very very important." Sari Bermudez Ochoa, president of the National Council for the Arts and Culture responding to the questions regarding the fate of the Banamex collection at the Education and Culture commission of the Senate of the Mexican Republic. October 31, 2001, Mexico City. See "Versión estenográfica de la comparecencia de la señora Sari Bermudez Ochoa, Presidenta del Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, ante la Comisión de Educación y Cultura de la H. Cámara de Senadores, presidida por el C. Senador José Natividad González Parás, celebrada en Xicoténcatl 9 sede del Senado el día 31 de octubre de 2001, a las 13:00 horas". Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author.

have towards the national patrimony? Who determines and defines what is considered national patrimony, and how is this to be done? And, if this collection was considered “very very important”, how could the state’s cultural policies remain unprepared to defend an example of Mexico’s cultural history considering the importance that national culture has played as a diplomatic and ideological tool? I will argue that the tensions provoked by this transaction are symptomatic of a shift in Mexican affairs that took place during the last three decades of the twentieth century. The Banamex transaction revealed the contradictions of an official discourse that, on the one hand, still zealously defends national identity through the promotion of the nation’s cultural legacy, and, on the other, adheres and opens up to the logic of the market as sole regulator.

The following chapters aim to address these questions. In order to do so, I will use the Banamex incident as a key to enter into the emerging field of corporate art and private cultural intervention in Mexico. I will expand my analysis of Banamex to include a case study of Televisa’s intervention in the cultural field in order to describe the complexity of power relations surrounding corporate investment in culture, and to contextualize the influence of mass media in this field.

Until 1994, Televisa was the sole private broadcasting company in Mexico, holding a monopoly on telecommunications. In contrast to Banamex’s intervention in the arts that “kept with the traditional high-class status quo”<sup>5</sup> the case of Televisa differs radically. On one level, Televisa’s cultural interventions are in the field of cultural industries (television, print media, radio

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<sup>5</sup> Personal interview with Luis Angel Suárez, assistant curator of *Patrimonio Artístico Banamex*, June 6, 2006.

and film).<sup>6</sup> On another level, Televisa's intervention also includes the promotion of international and national contemporary art.

The contrasting approaches of these two corporations offer an expanded view of the Mexican cultural milieu during the last three decades of the twentieth century. Moreover, due to the nature of their business (finance and telecommunications) their cases intersect with current discussions surrounding the new hegemonic relation between finance capital, the media industry and the arts. As I will explain in the following chapters, their influential role within the Mexican financial and media sector made all their activities inseparable from the state, and thus, although private, their interventions in culture were always intertwined with the rhetoric of state-nationalism. Over the course of these decades, the motives behind Banamex and Televisa's interventions in culture were influenced by political and economic changes as Mexico moved from one-party-rule to a democracy aligned to neoliberal economics. Their complex relation with the state and with political and intellectual elites exemplifies how the shift from a state-run to a mixed model of funding the arts that is currently evolving towards transnational corporate philanthropy began to develop. In this context, I will argue that the proliferation of private intervention in culture, which hindered the traditional state monopoly over cultural issues, developed in tandem

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<sup>6</sup> In the 1970s, the term "cultural industries" was officially adopted to describe cultural expressions that were reproduced in series, commercialized in the market and that rely on the media industry for their dissemination. George Yúdice – following a similar argument as Benedict Anderson's in *Imagined Communities* – asserts that cultural industries have played a crucial role in shaping the national identity of several Latin American countries. Yúdice separates them chronologically as follows: newspaper industry in the nineteenth century; book industry during the first decades of the twentieth century; radio and popular music by the 1930s; film industry the between 1940s and 1950s and Television beginning in the 1960s. Televisa, in different capacities, has been an active participant in the Mexican radio, film, editorial and television industries since the 1930s, thus its importance in shaping the consciousness and the identity of the Mexican population parallels the influence of the state nationalistic discourse. However, neither the state nor Televisa's actions were a result of a top to bottom imposition, multiple collective desires collaborated and shaped the official idea of national culture, which the state adopted as a national discourse. For a discussion on cultural industries in Latin America, see George Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture: Uses of Culture in the Global Era*. (Durham, London: Duke University, 2003).

with Mexico's integration into the free-market economy and the decline of the state in the hands of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). The collusion between cultural, political and economic interests is nothing new however; in the context of the last thirty years of the twentieth century, the idea of the nation has become highly contested. It is precisely the tensions about the "national" as they relate to the "cultural" that underlie this discussion.

### 1.3 Panorama

*The artist is not outside the symptoms, but makes a work of art from them, which sometimes serves to precipitate them, and sometimes to transform them.*<sup>7</sup>

Art historians and academics have addressed the symbiotic relation between art and economics since the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> However, the acceleration of the economy during the last three decades of the twentieth century, in tandem with the advent of postmodernism, has prompted a myriad of contrasting views of this relation, including the expanded role "culture" plays in our

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<sup>7</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "On Nietzsche and the image of thought" in *Desert Islands and Other Text 1953-1974*, trans. by Michel Taormina. (Cambridge, Mass: Semiotext(e), 2004) 140.

<sup>8</sup> For example, the French poet Charles Baudelaire acknowledged the speculative characteristic of the art market in the nineteenth century, and promoted an absolute objectification of art amidst the menace of a mercantilists and vulgar society. Contemporary artists have taken this turn toward objectification to the extreme in contrast to Walter Benjamin's or other Frankfurt School Theorists. For example, the work of Maurizio Catellan who superseding the meta-irony of Marcel Duchamp, blatantly mocks the art market and pushes its boundaries. As many other critics have pointed out, any idea or movement of brake or rupture is always pregnant with contradiction and whether or not this meta-objectification functions as a strategy remains to be questioned, An interesting point is drawn by Jean Baudrillard who refers to Baudelaire's critique of modernism to advance his point regarding the not so novel existence of an art market and its premonitory qualities to our current speculative economic model. Baudrillard, while addressing the current commodification of art, argues that our discussions should not focus on the excessive comodification but on the complete aesthtization or culturalization of our lives, which in my opinion is directly linked to the production of a populist discourse that heavily relies on the romantics of emancipation, something that we are constantly being bombarded with either from the right or the left. See "La simulación en el arte" the second of three conferences dictated at El Centro Documental de la Sala Mendoza by Jean Baudrillard in Caracas, Venezuela, 1994. See Jean Baudrillard, *La Ilusion y La Desilución Estéticas* (Caracas, Venezuela: Monte Avila Editores, 1997).

current condition.<sup>9</sup> This has awakened a recurrent debate within the art world about whether art is or is not an independent field –exempt from the vulgarities of economics– or whether an artist could navigate as critic of an economic model by perhaps adopting what Luis Camnitzer labels an “ethical cynicism” towards the art world.<sup>10</sup>

As the pervasiveness and influence of the business sector in the arts increases, this debate has further raised questions regarding the current function of art. In this context, of particular interest to my discussion are the studies of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu’s analysis regarding the consumption of art and cultural production in conjunction with the criteria set forth in his analysis –the terms cultural and symbolic capital– provided the background for my study.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Several intellectuals have criticized postmodernism as either a critique or a more perverse continuation of modernism characterized by the conversion of everything to cultural terms. See for example Fredric Jameson’s *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1991), Terry Eagleton’s *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford, UK : Malden, MA : Blackwell, 2000) or Jean Baudrillard’s *La Ilusión y la Desilusión Estéticas* (Caracas, Venezuela : Monte Avila Editores, 1997). In contrast to these critiques, academics from English ex-colonies working in the United States have developed a new discursive field called post-colonialism. Yet, several Latin Americanists such as the Brazilian Gustavo Lins Riberio have gone further critiquing the post-colonial and postmodernist position and labeling this era Post-Imperialism. See Gustavo Lins Ribeir’o “ Post-Imperialismo: para una Cultura después del Postcolonialismo y el Multiculturalismo” in Daniel Mato (comp) *Estudios Latinoamericanos sobre Cultura y Transformaciones Sociales en Tiempos de Globalización*. (Buenos Aires; CLACSO, 2001) 156-178.

<sup>10</sup> Luis Camnitzer, “La Corrupcion en el Arte o El Arte de la Corrupcion” talk presented at the international symposium *El Síndrome de Marco Polo*. Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin , April 11-12, 1995. Available at <http://www.universes-in-universe.de/magazin/marco-polo/s-camnitzer.htm>

<sup>11</sup> Through his analysis based on surveys carried out in France in the late 1960s, Bourdieu set forth some criteria to analyze the consumption of works of art. He coined two terms cultural capital: which refers to a “form of knowledge which equips the social agent with competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artifacts”; and symbolic capital, which refers to the “degree of accumulated prestige and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge and recognition.” He argued that cultural goods, especially works of art have a capacity for distributing symbolic, social, economic and personal benefits. These benefits are linked to the works of art and their positional value as a strategy of distinction. It is the appropriation of this distinction that makes these cultural objects attractive, which also serves to preserve and reproduce the position of the dominant class.

Bourdieu’s later works on politics as well as his discussions with German artist, Hans Haacke who since early 1970, began to produce artwork addressing the collusion of interests between corporations and institutions within the cultural field, are also considered. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) and Pierre Bourdieu and Hans Haacke, *Free Exchange. Pierre Bourdieu and Hans Haacke*. (Cambridge, Oxford: Polity Press, 1995).

This study also considers the ways in which Carlos Altamirano, Beatriz Sarlo, Nestor García Canclini and Sergio Miceli, have adapted Pierre Bourdieu's analysis to Latin America.<sup>12</sup> They consider that the subordination of popular classes to the dominant culture that Bourdieu observes in his analysis of 1960s French culture is quite different from the experience of Latin American countries where diverse cultural capitals and ethnicities (pre-Hispanic, colonial, African, and a modern capitalist conception of culture) exist simultaneously forming a fragmented symbolic field rather than a unified field as in the French case.<sup>13</sup> According to García Canclini their studies adapted Bourdieu's analysis to include the way cultural products from lower classes and diverse ethnicities redefine and influence the dominant culture and how these products function within their particular symbolic and aesthetic codes outside the dominant culture, making the relation between fields of production dynamic rather than fixed.<sup>14</sup> They also extend Bourdieu's analysis to include the way institutions, and in particular the state, appropriated popular culture in the production of a dominant symbolic capital.<sup>15</sup> This is particularly the case in Mexico, since the nationalistic cultural program developed during the post-revolutionary period (subsequently adopted by the PRI) amalgamated diverse cultural traditions with distinct symbolic structures and from diverse production fields. Hence, I consider Banamex and Televisa as two corporations which influenced and followed the nationalist cultural program and I will address their cultural

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<sup>12</sup> Nestor García Canclini, "Introducción. La Sociología de la Cultura de Pierre Bourdieu", in Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociología y Cultura*. (México: Grijalbo, 1990) 9- 51.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 9-51.

<sup>14</sup> However, Thomas E. Crow has extensively argued how similar conditions where diverse forms of symbolic and economic production came together during the eighteen-century in France resulting in the condition that Pierre Bourdieu analyses in the mid-twentieth century. Thomas E. Crow, *On Painters and Public Life in Eighteen Century*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> Nestor García Canclini, "Introducción. La sociología de la cultura de Pierre Bourdieu", 9- 51.

interventions in relation to their economic interests, their influence on consumers, their relation with the state's cultural policies and institutions, and their overall influence in the cultural field.

The spread of the neoliberal model spearheaded by the neo-conservative turn of the Reagan-Thatcher era prompted a renewed wave of studies concerning relations between contemporary art and the global economy. Of these studies, of particular interest to this discussion is Chin-Tao Wu's, *The Privatization of Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980*.<sup>16</sup> Chin-Tao Wu compares the cases of the United States and Britain through a comprehensive review of the changes in cultural policy that were prompted by the neoliberal turn, including an analysis of corporate interventions. She expands Pierre Bourdieu's terms, cultural and symbolic capital, to include their usage in relation to corporations, which cannot be as transparent as analyzing individuals. Corporations, like individuals, amass cultural capital as a sign of social distinction, and in some cases to obscure illicit aspects such as money laundering or tax evasion. However, one must not dismiss the pivotal role that corporations exert in structuring and shaping consumer minds, and thus it is in keeping this influence that the accumulation of cultural capital makes utmost sense for corporations.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> A similar study is taken up by Mark W. Rectanus in *Culture Incorporated: Museums, Artist and Corporate Sponsorships*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). Rectanus compares the cases of the United States and re-unified Germany.

<sup>17</sup> In contrast to the individual level, where the relationship between economic wealth and cultural capital is in most of the cases freely interchangeable, and where the accumulation of cultural capital usually serves to reproduce and consolidate the position of the dominant class, the purpose of the business's efforts to secure cultural capital is not as transparent. The economic strength of a company in the market place is a form of domination over its competitors, but companies are also dominant in our consumer societies, in the sense that they exert a profound influence over our living space, the political processes and our individual choices. Mass-media corporations, more than any other, play a pivotal role in shaping the consciousness of the population.

The pervasive role that corporations play in the field of contemporary art has also been extensively addressed by a large number of curatorial projects and exhibitions such as *Art and Economy* held at the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg in 2002.<sup>18</sup> These exhibitions attempt to address art and economic collusion from a critical perspective by incorporating a sample of contemporary global artists sponsored by some of the same corporations they seem to critique. A critical overview of the recurrence of these kinds of exhibitions is offered by Julian Stallabrass's *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction* through a discussion on the role that contemporary art plays in our current economic condition. Stallabrass arrives at the conclusion that contemporary art, although it appears to act in a zone of freedom, is not actually free of the constraints of the market but a "supplement" to our neoliberal state of affairs.<sup>19</sup> That is, art has a disavowed affinity with free trade. By drawing parallels between the economy of art and the economy of finance capital, Stallabrass finds striking geopolitical similitude between the distribution of financial power and the distribution of international trade in contemporary art. In this context, the zone of freedom in which art appears to function as an entity separate from the vulgarized production of mass consumption can only be provided by the instrumental system of capitalism. For Stallabrass the "daring novelty of free art [...] is only a pale rendition of the

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It is in maintaining this influence that the accumulation of cultural capital makes economic sense for companies. On the one hand, companies use their symbolic standing in consumer's minds that is they utilize the arts abounding with their social and symbolic implications, as another form of advertisement and a public relations strategy to gain entry into a more sophisticated social group and attract clients. On the other hand, cultural capital accumulation can function both as an investment and an insurance against bankruptcy, a way to secure capital gains free of taxes and one can even go so far as to speculate about its illicit aspects such as money laundering. Chin-Tao Wu. *Privatizing Culture: Corporate Art Intervention since the 1980s*. (London: Verso, 2002.) 6-15.

<sup>18</sup> For example, some of the publications revised of such curatorial initiatives include: Felix Zdenek, Beate Henschel and Dirck Luckow, eds., *Art and Economy*; Aleksandra Mir, *Corporate Mentality. An Archive Representing the Emergence of Recent Practices within the Cultural Sphere Occupied both by Business and Art*. (New York, NY: Lukas & Sternberg, 2003) and Kathy Siegle and Paul Mattick, *Art Works. Money*. (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2006) 1-19.

continual evaporation of certainties produced by the flow of capital itself, which tears up all resistance to the unrestricted flow across the globe of funds, products, and finally the bodies of millions of migrants.”<sup>20</sup>

The neoliberal turn of the mid 1980s was accompanied by the production of democratic discourses that thrived due to their effectiveness in producing positive economic results –of course, analyzed through a macro economic point of view– and in giving the appearance of cleansing the state of recalcitrant corrupt habits. As in the UK and the US, Mexico established a set of privatization policies during the 1980s though for Mexico this was done in return for economic relief received from the World Bank.<sup>21</sup> This push towards liberalization influenced various fields (economical, political and cultural). In the cultural field, liberalization was embraced through a major reorganization of the cultural apparatus that had managed culture since the post-revolutionary period. On one level, this overhaul, aimed at decentralizing and democratizing the access and administration of the cultural field, and on another level, it aimed at diminishing the power of existing institutions, guaranteeing a more plural and tolerant environment. As a result, a new generation of art critics, artists and art historians emerged, producing work more in tune with the global discourse and politics of international contemporary art.

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<sup>20</sup> Julian Stallabrass, *Contemporary Art: A very Short Introduction*.(Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.

<sup>21</sup> Mexico entered into a severe economic crisis in 1982 provoked by the interest hikes of the U.S economy and the worldwide adoption of the economic postulates of Milton Friedman and other economists associated with the University of Chicago. Neoliberal economics were embraced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) after the positive macro-economic results observed in Chile after the US backed-up military coup d' état in 1973. In 1984, the WB granted the first Trade Policy Loan in its history to Mexico, which provided Mexico with a series of loans in return for comprehensive trade liberalization. Further, in 1986, Mexico signed The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) at Uruguay, where GATT was transformed into the World Trade Organization (WTO) that expanded the trade in goods to include the trade in intellectual property rights. For some, the inclusion and regulation of intellectual property marks a point where culture became officially transformed and regulated by the logic of late capitalism or in other words the period of the culturalization of the economy began. It is important to note that for both Canada and more so for Mexico, the lack of protectionist measures in culture has been a point of contention within NAFTA. For information on the economic treaties that Mexico has signed see Sarah Babb's *Managing Mexico. Economists from Nationalism to Neoliberalism*. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001) 181.

The decentralization efforts transferred the axis of development and finance from Mexico City to the northern region of the country.<sup>22</sup> This new distribution of power coincided with a boom in the Mexican art market in the 1980s and with the surge of different kinds of corporate and private initiatives in regions other than Mexico City.<sup>23</sup> Despite this renewed artistic environment, academic research in the area of private intervention in culture is still in a nascent state and hasn't kept up with the pace of the boom in contemporary art.

Since the mid 1960s, coinciding with numerous instances of civil revolts, several academics began to revise and deconstruct the state's idea of a unified culture constructed as part of the nation-building project after the 1910 Revolution.<sup>24</sup> These revisions have led the way to a

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<sup>22</sup> This transference towards the north can be observed in two instances that can reveal the relation between art and the redistribution of finance power in the 1980s: 1) The relocation of the manufacturing industry to the industrial corridors of Tijuana-San Diego and Ciudad Juarez-El Paso, 2) The most recurrent buyer of Mexican art in the 1980s, besides Banamex, was the northern based industrial group from Monterrey Grupo Alfa that later would sponsor along with Televisa the construction of the Rufino Tamayo Museum of Contemporary Art. These geopolitical effects caused by the re-distribution of finance, or what David Harvey has labeled "the territorial logic of capital", have prompted two phenomena that deal with the arts. First the maintenance of the health and well-being of a particular space in the face of the movement of capital which is followed by a need to re-think new ways of bringing new capital in, by constructing convention centres, tourist centres, museums or promoting the re-location of the 'creative class'. The other happens by inertia, the movement of finance capital and power is usually followed by a boom in cultural matters, for example, the transfer of cultural power from Paris to New York at the beginning of the Cold War as Serge Guilbaut has noted in *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*, 1983. In the particular case of Mexico, these tendencies developed further by the 1990s as can be observed in the efforts to transform the Tijuana-San Diego region into a contemporary art hub.

<sup>23</sup> Among these private initiatives that included juried shows, biennials, museums are: in the city of Monterrey, *El Museo de Monterrey* (1979), *El Museo de Arte Contemporáneo* (MARCO, 1991) and *Bienal de Monterrey* (1992); in the city of Guadalajara, *La Feria de Arte Contemporáneo* (1992) and *Salón de Octubre* (1999); in the city of Puebla, *El Museo Amparo* (1991); in the city of Tijuana *inSite* (1992); in the city of Oaxaca, *El Museo de Arte Contemporáneo* (MACO, 1990). Other initiatives also included the establishment of spaces such as *Curare* (1991) that were dedicated to theoretical and critical research as well as curatorial practices of contemporary art in Mexico. For a summary of all these initiatives see José Luis Barrio's essay "Los Decentramientos del Arte Contemporáneo: de los Espacios Alternativos a Las Nuevas Capitales" in *Hacia Otra Historia de México: Disolvidencias (1968-2000)*. (Mexico: CURARE, Consejo Nacional para La Cultura y Las Artes, Rockefeller Foundation, 2002) 141-179.

<sup>24</sup> Among the many incidents that began to precipitate a series of critical works against the stable national image of Mexico that the ruling system so carefully guarded were Luis Buñel's film *Los Olvidados* (1950) and the publication of Oscar Lewis' *Los Hijos de Sánchez* published in 1965 by the state sponsored Fondo de Cultura Económica. This publication prompted the dismissal of Arnaldo Orfila Reyna, Spanish refugee and editor of the state's publishing house. Later on, academic studies followed, such as the work of Guillermo Bonfil Batalla that was crucial in critiquing *indigenismo* (the way of dealing with the indigenous question inspired by Manuel Gamio's ideals). See *México Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 1996, first edition 1988) translated by Phillip A. Denis.

myriad of critical works that discuss how the discipline of art history in Mexico became permeated and identified with the official way of conceiving culture.<sup>25</sup> This line of inquiry is slowly including critical studies regarding the participation of the private sector in cultural matters, as well as in the demystification and critique of the state's cultural policies. Amongst studies that address the legacy of private collections and private galleries in the Mexican cultural field are the works of Ana Garduño, James Oles, Alberto Manrique y Teresa del Conde, and the compilation of essays by Mari Carmen Ramírez that expands to other Latin American countries and collections of Latin American art in the United States.

In addition to art history –which is in itself immersed in an interdisciplinary debate– the privatization of cultural affairs intersects with research from a range of disciplines and international organizations which I have drawn upon for this study. In recent years, the initiatives of UNESCO in the protection of cultural diversity, cultural patrimony and legislation (or lack thereof) in the cultural field have prompted multidisciplinary research conducted by numerous scholars. Amongst the most crucial of these works are: Nestor García Canlini, George Yúdice and Teixeira Coelho. Their research regarding the asymmetric standing of cultural industries within transnational agreements has been crucial in lobbying for a more equitable legislation that argues for an alliance between the private, the third sector and the state to better regulate the unilateral way cultural affairs have been negotiated in international trade agreements.

Indeed, the relation between art and economics has long been a controversial issue that influences all the sectors involved in cultural production. The current surge of transnational

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<sup>25</sup> See for example the compilation of essays in Rita Eder's (ed). *El Arte en México: Autores, Temas y Problemas*. (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para La Cultura y Las Artes, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Lotería Nacional para la Asistencia Pública, 2001) and the collection *Hacia Otra Historia del Arte en México I, II, III, IV*. ( Mexico: CURARE, Consejo Nacional para La Cultura y Las Artes, Rockefeller Foundation, 2002)

corporate power and the growth of private investment in culture has further complicated this relation. In Mexico, the participation of the private sector in the cultural arena has particular connotations due to the role art and culture acquired in the early 1920s and the control the state held over cultural matters for most of the twentieth century. In the following section, I will present an overview of the role art played in the construction of the national imaginary in order to contextualize and further discuss how the interventions of Banamex and Televisa in the cultural field add to debates regarding the relation between art and economics within the Mexican cultural field.

## 1.2 Location

The study of private and corporate collections in Mexico is an emergent area of research.<sup>26</sup> Until recently corporate and private intervention in culture was a controversial issue because it questioned the role of a centralized and protectionist state, and attacked the way culture –broadly defined, but heavily relying on the arts – was used to promote an idea of national identity that was inherently tied to the PRI. This situation hindered the development of a collecting class. However, private citizens and corporations did play a role in supporting the state cultural program.<sup>27</sup>

During the first half of the century, the private sector made economic contributions and formed some private collections to make-up for the state's lack of budget to build collections, promote the creation of audiences or support artists economically. Most of these private

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<sup>26</sup> It was not until the mid 1990s, as Mexico integrated to the global economy, that these two fields of study began to be more frequently addressed by academics. This also coincided with the advent of globalization, which brought media visibility to the condition of Mexican contemporary art at the same time Mexico began its apparent transition towards a more democratic regime.

<sup>27</sup> Ana Garduño, Alvar Carrillo Gil. *Perfil y Contexto de un coleccionista de arte en México*. Ph.D. diss., UNAM, 2004.

collectors held in high regard the “revolutionary legacy” of Mexican art –its didactic and utopian role– and viewed their intervention in the cultural field as a contribution to the maintenance of the ideals of the 1910 Revolution.<sup>28</sup>

Art acquired a didactic role as a result of the nation-building program undertaken by Mexican intellectuals and artists between 1920 and 1940 (the post-revolutionary period). José Vasconcelos, secretary of the Ministry of Public Education (1921-1924),<sup>29</sup> spearheaded a program of cultural missions that consisted of sponsoring artist and intellectuals to tour the country to select folkloric traditions and ethnic types in order to develop a national identity in which the *mestizo* would be at the forefront.<sup>30</sup> Vasconcelo’s cultural missions were a process of “autoethnography”<sup>31</sup> from which a mythologized image of the pre-Hispanic era, folkloric celebrations (fig 1.1), and key ethnic types developed. El Charro (fig. 1.2), la Tehuana (fig. 1.3), el

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<sup>28</sup> Ana Garduño, Alvar Carrillo Gil. *Perfil y Contexto de un coleccionista de arte en México*.

<sup>29</sup> José Vasconcelo’s project was put into practice from 1921-1924, the duration of his term as the Minister of Education during the presidency of Alvaro Obregon. His project also included the massive publication of literature classics, the construction of schools and universities and the creation of interdisciplinary outdoor workshops where artists and scientist could exchange views. It was a massive cultural endeavor to bring Culture to all the culture. His legacy of making the state the architect and manger of Culture was adopted less idealistically and merely became institutionalized by the government of president Plutarco Elias Calles (1924-1928) and later by the ruling party, the PRI in the 1940s. Nevertheless, the ideas of José Vasconcelos, based on the ideas set forth by anthropologist Manuel Gamio, became the basis for the formation of a national idea of culture that acknowledged the history of pre-Hispanic cultures and the colonial period. The muralist movement emerged from Vasconcelos cultural missions as the visual representation that synthesized all these historical moments. This program, as its contemporaries in other parts of Latin America, failed to integrate the living indigenous communities and in particular the Mexican case, promoted integrationist policies through the idea of *mestizaje* (Andres Bello, developed as similar civilizing program in Chile and Domingo F. Sarmiento in Argentina). Sabina Berman and Lucina Jimenez. *Democracia Cultural*. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006).

<sup>30</sup> The *mestizo* was hailed as the new racial make up of Mexico in which the Indigenous and the European heritages mixed to form modern Mexicans. José Vasconcelos, *La Raza Cósmica. Misión de la Raza Iberoamericana* (México: SEP. 1983).

<sup>31</sup> I borrowed the term autoethnography from Mary Louise Pratt who uses it to “refer to instances in which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer’s own terms. If ethnographic texts are a means by which Europeans represent to themselves their (usually subjugated) others, autoethnographic texts are those the others construct in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representation.” In this case I use it to refer to the process by which the Mexican intelligentsia sought out key representations of Mexico to construct a national imaginary, that was embraced and expanded domestically but also met the Exotic requirements of the Other (in this case Europeans and North Americans). Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*. (London and New York; Routledge, 1992) 7.

Campesino (fig 1.4), el Indio (fig. 1.5) and Revolutionary peasants (fig. 1.6) emerged to effectively fuel a sense of national cohesion.<sup>32</sup>

Vasconcelos' efforts paid off with the success of the muralist movement and its most known representatives: José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros. The muralists disseminated Vasconcelos ideas to the Mexican population by painting the result of the cultural missions on the walls of public buildings. They painted allegorical representations of the pre-Hispanic and colonial periods, heroes of the 1810 war of Independence, and scenes from the 1910 Revolution mixed with tableaux of proletarian emancipation guided by Trotsky, Lenin and Marx, in an attempt to erase class differences and reconcile history through paint.

At the same time that murals fulfilled their didactic role of educating the masses in Mexican history, some of them helped legitimized the hegemony of the newly formed state –in the hands of the PRI. For example Diego Rivera's mural *The History of Mexico: From the Conquest to the Future*, 1929-1935 (fig. 1.7) was strategically located in the main stairway of the National Palace in Mexico City that houses the offices of the President and his Cabinet, various government bureaucracies and the Senate chambers. The mural depicts a Manichean fight between the good and the bad throughout Mexico's history. As the viewer ascends the main stairway that leads from the

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<sup>32</sup> The images produced through the cultural missions were embraced all over Mexico as mirror-images of the self. See for example figure 1.3 of this document where different representations of the Zapotec region and the women of Tehuantepec are shown: the cycle of murals that Diego Rivera painted in the Secretary of Public Education commissioned by José Vasconcelos, the portrait of Rosa Rolanda, a series of anonymous cartes de visites of middle class women dressed as Tehuantepec women from 1925-1945, and a 10 peso bill from 1965. The woman and the traditions of Tehuantepec acquired mythic proportions in the Mexican imaginary becoming a recurrent icon to represent Mexican women. It became a representation of the "Exotic Indian Amazon" and of true "Mexicaness" for the State and middle classes, while it erased the conditions of the living indigenous communities. For a critical discussion about the adoption of Tehuantepec as national symbol see Eadena Saynes-Vázquez, Galán Pa dxandi. "That would be great if it were true: Zapotec Women's comment on their role in Society", in *Identities*, Vol 3(1-2), Amsterdam: Overseas Publishers Associations, The Netherlands, 1996, 183-204; and Deborah Poole "An Image of our Indian: Type Photography and Racial Sentiments in Oaxaca, 1920-1940" in *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84:1 (2004)37-82.

courtyard to the second floor, representations of a mythological scene from the pre-Hispanic period are followed by scenes of the Conquest, the Independence from Spain, the Reform period, the Mexican victory over the French intervention, and the war against the US. As the viewer reaches the first landing the chronological progression from the lower part of the mural that culminates with the triumph of the 1910 Revolution at the top of the central is in full view and the meaning of this historical saga becomes clear. The last scene the viewer sees before reaching the second floor of the building where the seat of the president and the Senate chambers are located is the emancipation of peasants and workers painted side by side an image of Karl Marx pointing towards the future with his right hand.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, Marx's future points towards the actual location of the newly formed state –the same that sponsored the painting. At the time of its production this mural send a clear message: the newly formed PRI represented the future for modern Mexico and the embodiment of the ideals of the 1910 Revolution. Such allegorical representations of Mexican history facilitated the integration of the ideals of José Vasconelos and the triumph of the 1910 Revolution as part of the rhetoric of the state. This linear version of Mexican history along with the representations of the newly created ethnic types and national heroes was recycled by the PRI on numerous occasions to affirm the stability of Mexican identity nationally and internationally. Moreover, the PRI encouraged nationalistic sensibilities by incorporating this version of history in a variety of cultural arenas that included public schooling, history books, a ritualized program of celebrations, the promotion of tourism (particularly in archeological areas and beach resorts), folkloric displays, and the promotion of Mexico abroad via a cultural diplomacy program that

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<sup>33</sup> For a description and discussion of this mural see Leonard Folgarait, *Mural Painting and Social Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940: Art of the New Order*. (Cambridge; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 1998) 86-137; and Carlos Fuentes, Raquel Tibol, et al, *Los Murales de Palacio Nacional*. (Mexico, DF; Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1997).

included large-scale touring exhibitions.<sup>34</sup> In these exhibitions, the work of the muralists alongside pre-Hispanic artifacts took center stage. As I will discuss in chapter three, these touring exhibitions played a crucial role in promoting the state's version of Mexican culture abroad. These strategies enabled the party to reap ideological (and material) benefits by making explicit the connection amongst itself, the 1910 Revolution, the colors of the national flag (which are the colors of the party), folklore, and Mexico's modern art movement –Muralism.<sup>35</sup> Thus, national culture became intrinsically tied to the PRI.

From the onset, José Vasconcelos' cultural program influenced the way art would be managed and thought of throughout the twentieth century. In 1923 José Vasconcelos declared:

Deberíamos liquidar el arte de salón para restablecer la pintura mural y el lienzo grande. El cuadro de salón [...] constituye un arte burgués, un arte servil que el Estado no debe patrocinar, porque está destinado al adorno de la casa rica y no al deleite público. Un verdadero artista no debe sacrificar su talento a la vanidad de un necio o a la pedantería de un *connoisseur* [...]. Por eso nosotros no hemos hecho exposiciones para vender cuadritos, sino obras decorativas en escuelas y edificios.<sup>36</sup>

Based on Vasconcelos views a rivalry between easel painting and mural painting emerged.<sup>37</sup> This rivalry was extrapolated to the role the state and the private sector played in cultural matters, which in turn hindered the development of private collections and private sponsorship. On one

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<sup>34</sup> Gilbert M. Joseph, Anne Rubenstein and Eric Zolov, "Assembling the Fragments: Writing Cultural History of Mexico Since 1940" in Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein and Eric Zolov, (eds.). *Fragments of a Golden Age. The Politics of Culture in Mexico since 1940*, 11. For a description and a visual analysis on how the ideals of the Revolution were integrated to the PRI regime, *La Arqueología del Régimen, 1910-1955*. (Mexico, DF: Museo Nacional del Arte, INBA, 2004).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

<sup>36</sup> "We should finish with the art of salons once for all and establish the tradition of mural painting and large-scale easel painting. The tradition of salon painting is a tradition of the bourgeoisie, it is a servile kind of art that the state should not sponsor because it is destined to decorate the walls of the affluent and denies access to the public. A true artist should not sacrifice his/her talents to the vanities of a pedant or succumb to the pedantries of a connoisseur [...]. That is why, we have not promoted exhibitions to sell "little paintings", but rather, have decorated the walls of schools and public buildings." Quoted in Ana Garduño's "Un Palacio para el Movimiento Pictórico Mexicano. Coordenadas Históricas de su Exhibición" taken from Claude Fell's *José Vasconcelos: Los Años del Águila*. (Mexico: UNAM, 1989) p. 418.

<sup>37</sup> Ana Garduño, "Un Palacio Para el Movimiento Pictórico Mexicano. Coordenadas Historicas de su Exhibición" in *70 Años de Artes Plásticas en el Palacio de Bellas Artes*. (Mexico: CONACULTA-INBA, 2004) 49-74.

level, this rivalry existed as nationalist rhetoric that enthroned the muralist aesthetic as the preferred aesthetic of the state, and tied some of José Vasconcelos' views to the state-nationalism espoused by the PRI. Avid promotion of muralism through state commissions, from the 1920s onwards, maintained the status quo of art's emancipatory purpose funded by a state that had concerns for bringing social justice to its people and discursively denied private intervention in culture.<sup>38</sup> By the 1940s, the state institutionalized Vasconcelos' rhetoric and gained the economic benefits of being the sole promoter of national culture while obscuring the participation of private investors. On another level, the rivalry between easel and mural painting was also played out by the artists themselves, who, with no economic support other than government commissions, publicly denounced their disdain for easel painting while avidly continuing to produce them for private markets.<sup>39</sup> Overall, there was recognition that the state should have control over all cultural matters and private investors should support the role of the state.

As world alliances were settled in the course of the Second World War, Mexico began to emerge as an economic miracle and a US ally. The days of civil revolt, expropriation of private property and protectionism (Oil Nationalization, 1938) began to fade as a shift towards the right began to take hold. The PRI began to capitalize on the success of the cultural efforts of the post-

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<sup>38</sup> Various academics have categorized this form of state cultural management in different ways. For instance, Nestor García Canclini and Teixeira Coelho call it "populist statehood". In the essay, "Generosa, Juventud, La del Arte", Medina labels it as "politics of exhibitionism" while giving a critical overview of the network of art salons for emergent-young artists that were organized by public institutions during the 1980s and early 1990. See Cuauhtemoc Medina (Mexico: Federación Mexicana de Amigos de los Museos A.C., 1993) 61-69. ; Teixeira Coelho, *Diccionario Critico de Politica Cultural: Cultura e Imaginario* (México: Conaculta, Iteso, Secretaría de Cultura del Gobierno de Jalisco, 2000) and Nestor García Canclini, *Políticas Culturales en América Latina*, (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1987).

<sup>39</sup> The emergent generation of artist of the mid 1920s –teamed up in the short-lived Union of Technical Workers, Painters and Sculptors– publicly denounced their disdain for easel painting while avidly continuing to produce them for private markets. The production of easel painting contributed to the development of an embryonic art market –a small network of national private galleries and some private collectors began to take hold by the 1940s. See James Oles, "Colecciones Disueltas: Sobre unos extranjeros y muchos cuadros Mexicanos" en *Patrocinio, Colección y Circulación de las Artes, XX Coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte* (Mexico, D.F.: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM, 1997) 623-635.

revolutionary period (1920-1940) by institutionalizing and making use of national culture to heighten a sense of patriotism, at the same time as it promoted private national and international investment. These strategies were most effective between the 1940s to the late 1960s, when Mexico enjoyed the benefits of an economic and cultural boom and the PRI gained US support for being “the preferred solution for the hemispheric problem of change and development”.<sup>40</sup> In other words, the US approved the adoption of an ongoing revolution by the PRI that consisted of fueling nationalist sensibilities by endorsing the ideals of the 1910 Revolution through an extensive cultural program, while, at the same time, the PRI promoted private ownership and foreign investment (which run counter to these ideals) through the same cultural means.<sup>41</sup>

After 1968, a shift in political and economic direction began to take hold. The cultural consensus that held sway since the 1940s –that successfully made Mexico the first Third World economy to host the Olympic Games– was broken in the transformative events of the 1968 student movement. Following massive strikes and protests against the PRI’s repressive measures, two weeks prior the inauguration of the XIX Olympic Games thousands of students were

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<sup>40</sup> Arthur Schmidt, “Making it Real Compared to What? Reconceptualizing Mexican History Since 1940” in Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein and Eric Zolov, (eds.). *Fragments of a Golden Age. The Politics of Culture in Mexico since 1940*, 25.

<sup>41</sup> Culturally the period between 1940-1960s has been labeled as the “Golden Age”, a direct reference to the success of the Mexican movie industry, which paralleled that of Hollywood in the Latin American market. Politically and economically, Gabriel Zaid labeled it as the “Mexican Corporation” a reference to the strong alliances between the state and several corporations that controlled the economy and cultural production according to the PRI’s nationalistic rhetoric and supported its hegemonic rule. See Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein and Eric Zolov, (eds.). *Fragments of a Golden Age. The Politics of Culture in Mexico since 1940*, and Gabriel Zaid, *El Progreso Improductivo* (Mexico, D.F.; Siglo XXI Editores, 1987).

massacred in downtown Mexico City by state order.<sup>42</sup> The repercussions of this event touched all levels of Mexican society and in the wake of the student massacre, any sense of coherence and any willingness to accept the PRI's rhetoric of revolutionary promise was gone.<sup>43</sup>

As the PRI's regime began to lose sway, corporations began consciously to link their once private collections to their businesses, and to make use of them both as an investment and a marketing tool. Banamex began to link its once private collection to its banking activities with the purchase of the Iturbide Palace as a display center in 1968. That same year, Televisa began to lobby for the maintenance of its monopoly by opening its programming to cultural initiatives.

Overall 1968 is an important turning point in Mexican modern historiography, and thus is the main axis of my study. As described, 1968 was the beginning of the decline of the PRI's cultural hegemony as well as a turning point on the way the private sector intervened in cultural matters.

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<sup>42</sup> The Diaz Ordaz regime (1964-70) was known for its economic stability, its good relations with the US and its heavy hand in implementing order. Prior to the student revolt of 1968, he silenced by force the Health Workers Union (1965), he fired the editor of *El Fondo de Cultura Economica* for publishing work that stained the good image of Mexico (Oscar Lewis's *Los Hijos de Sánchez*) in 1965, he sent the army to silence previous student revolts in the states of Michoacan and Sonora (1966), and he fired the president of UNAM (1966) for questioning these actions. For Diaz Ordaz the infiltration of communist ideology in the country was a real matter, he feared the existence of a plot to boycott the Olympic games. Moreover, there was great concern about the student movement reaching the agriculture sector. He already had problems with guerillas in the mountains of Guerrero (Lucio Cabañas) that saw in the call for retreat to the mountains of Che Guevara (killed in 1967) a role model for a revolution. Its predecessor, president Adolfo López Mateos (1958-64) had diplomatically maneuvered to remain an ally of both the US and Cuba, and through an extensive promotion of Mexico's tourism and culture, (through the touring exhibitions organized by Fernando Gamboa) Lopez Mateos had successfully portrayed an image of a stable country that influenced Mexico's designation as the host of the Olympics in 1968 and the 1970 World Cup. Enrique Krauze, *La Presidencia Imperial. Ascenso y Caída del sistema político Mexicano*. (Mexico: Tusquetes Editores, 1997).

It has been argued, that Mexican students, perhaps differently to those in France or Prague, were not after a revolution, but merely a reform of the political system. They did not have the support of the any workers union. They did not see themselves aligned to the left or the right. They did not see in Cuba (that had just supported the Soviet invasion of Prague) a role model. Their demands in the context of the previous acts of repression demanded the liberation of political prisoners, and the removal of the article 145 of the constitution, which dealt with the Law of Social Dissolution by which several students and union leaders were in prison. This law was put in place in 1941, as Mexico entered the Second World War as an ally, and coincided with a concerted effort to end all German propaganda in the country. See Enrique Krauze, *La Presidencia Imperial. Ascenso y Caída del sistema político Mexicano*. (Tusquetes Editores: Mexico, 1997) and Evelyn P. Stevens, "Legality and Extra Legality in Mexico" in *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 1. (Jan., 1970) 62-75.

<sup>43</sup> Gilbert M. Joseph, Anne Rubenstein and Eric Zolov in "Assembling the Fragments: Writing Cultural History of Mexico Since 1940." 12.

Likewise, Mexico's 1968 Olympics were also important in opening up the Mexican art field, which had developed considerably since 1950s.<sup>44</sup> To promote the Olympics, the state's cultural program was expanded to include contemporary art in order to emphasize Mexico City cosmopolitanism.<sup>45</sup> Drawing from the state experience in sponsoring art, "Mexico was in fact the first host country to turn an emphasis on culture into an integral aspect of the games themselves."<sup>46</sup> By means of the Cultural Olympiad, a year long-organization of artistic, musical, theatric and other events that framed the staging of the Games, Mexico showcased its cultural legacy emphasizing Mexico's pre-Hispanic heritage and its folklore. Yet, there was a concerted effort by Pedro Ramírez Vázquez,<sup>47</sup> head of the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, to invite international contemporary artists to participate in the Cultural Olympiad (in tandem with the new generation of Mexican artists who didn't espoused the social realist aesthetic), and even in the design of the logo of the

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<sup>44</sup> The state preference for muralism was contested in multiple ways before the 1950s, and is well known that there were other art movements with strong presence in Mexico, as well as a strong foreign influence before 1968. For example the Surrealist movement led by André Breton, Benjamin Péret and Remedios Varo, which in turn influenced *Los Contemporaneos* (a literary group who advocated apolitical and creative freedom) had presence in Mexico since the early 1930s. At the time of the Olympics the members of the Movimiento de Ruptura (1950s abstract art) and *Los Hartos* Group (Mathias Goertiz), who were against the state preference for the social realist aesthetic of muralism were invited to participate in the Cultural Olympiad. Some of them boycotted the Cultural Olympiad program, but their inclusion shows a change in the state preference for muralism as the modern Mexican expression.

<sup>45</sup> In "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics" Eric Zolov analyzes three aspects of the Cultural Olympiad (the presentation of Mexico's role as world peace-maker, the dissemination of an official logo that conveyed a cosmopolitan and forward-looking sensibility, the high lightened presence of women in central aspects of the Olympic promotion, the elaborate staging of folkloric performances, and the use of bright colors to reinforce Mexico's exotic character) to discuss how the Mexican Organizing Committee, attempted to erase Mexico's underdevelopment and showcase its cultural strengths to reconfigure the image of Mexico and in particular of Mexico City as cosmopolitan center. Eric Zolov, "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics" in *The Americas* 61, no.2 (October, 2004) 159-181.

<sup>46</sup> Eric Zolov, "Showcasing the 'Land of Tomorrow': Mexico and the 1968 Olympics", 169.

<sup>47</sup> Pedro Ramírez Vasquez was also the architect of the Museum of Modern Art (1964) and the Museum of Anthropology(1964) in Mexico City, built on the occasion of the 1968 Olympics to showcase Mexican culture and enhance Mexico City's standing as a cosmopolitan City. Miguel Angel Fernández, *Historia de los Museos en México*. (México D.F.: Promotora de Comercialización Directa, S.A. de C.V., 1988).

Olympic Games.<sup>48</sup> “The fact that non-Mexicans were invited was a clear indication of the urgency of new perspectives that would help break tired stereotypes by which Mexico was traditionally labeled.”<sup>49</sup> The state’s new approach to culture marked a shift from earlier displays of Mexican culture which went from showing national cultural up to the 1950s to include Mexico’s current developments as a modern nation in an attempt to portray a symmetrical relation with first world economies. All the same, the emphasis on culture continued to be a strategic measure to reenergize support domestically and to dissipate international rumors of Mexico’s economic and organization inability to host the event.<sup>50</sup> Hence, the promotion of culture, yet again, emerges as a strategic tool to market economic progress and stability.

At the same time, 1968 is not only a turning point within modern Mexican historiography, –at the height of the Cold War Mexico’s designation as an Olympic host was a product of the political tensions of the era.<sup>51</sup> Mexico had successfully managed to remain an ally of both the U.S. and Cuba and offered the possibility of hosting an un-politicized and neutral ground for the

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<sup>48</sup> Eric Zolov, “Showcasing the ‘Land of Tomorrow’: Mexico and the 1968 Olympics”, 175. As part of a program of public sculpture, Mathias Goeritz organized *La Ruta de la Amistad*. A series of public sculptures (one by each participating country) located on the sides of one of the main roads of Mexico City. The cultural activities, while they widen the perspective to include contemporary art, still continued to frame the traditional as something distinct from the modern, an exotic other to be admired for its authenticity. But the importance of the cultural Olympiad is the recognition and the inclusion of international actors into to a state organized cultural endeavor, a slight shift from previous cultural displays.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 173.

<sup>50</sup> By 1965, the delay in the construction of Olympic infrastructure, the rumors regarding the dangers of Mexican high altitude and the internal lack of support for the Olympics within the Diaz Ordaz regime, summed to a negative press campaign against Mexico, emanating from Detroit (one of the city’s that were also bidding for the Olympic games) and Mexico’s inability to compete with the previous Japanese Olympic expenditure of 2.1 billion dollars, was about to make president Diaz Ordaz bail out as a host. This changed with the designation of Pedro Ramirez Vazquez as the Olympic delegate, whose approach against expenditure and towards, efficiency, utility and display that will build on the countries inherent cultural advantages and extant Mexico’s infrastructure with out forcing Mexico to compete with the previous example set out by Japan. Ibid, 159-188.

<sup>51</sup> NATO policies barred Eastern Bloc athletes, which limited the choice of potential hosts. According to Avery Brundage, president of the International Olympic Committee, both Detroit and Lyon were handicapped by NATO actions barring East Germans. Surprisingly, Mexico won the first run of votes, with the final tally being: Mexico (30); Detroit (14); Lyon (12) and Buenos Aires (2). Press reports suggest that Mexico received eight votes from the Soviet Bloc. Ibid, 163.

sporting event.<sup>52</sup> As we know, this turned out to be the opposite; not only were the 1968 Olympic Games the stage of the Mexican student massacre, the demise of the PRI, and the result of geopolitical interest, they were also the stage of an important transitional moment within the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos publicly defied the failed promises of American justice and equality for all, by performing the “black power salute” as they received their medals.<sup>53</sup>

Moreover, 1968 is a turning point worldwide; a time when the fate of student movements around the world foreclosed the spirit of the 1960s, and in turn gave way to the conservative turn of the 1980s. Economically, 1968, was also the year when the American dollar officially superseded gold as the exchange rate benchmark, leading to current neoliberal economics.<sup>54</sup> This fact is pivotal to my discussion since the adoption of a neoliberal economic model directly influenced the transformation of the Mexican cultural milieu.<sup>55</sup> By the mid 1980s, the PRI’s neoliberal economic model began to restructure the way cultural institutions handled cultural matters allowing a mixed system of art funding, in which corporations could participate more openly.

As described for most of the twentieth century cultural matters were kept in control of the state. This state of affairs not only hindered the development of a collecting class independent

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<sup>52</sup> The emphasis of Mexico as secure and peaceful host was clearly reflected by the adoption of “peace” as the leitmotif of the Olympic Games to promote Mexico’s direct relation to world peace. The official motto of the Olympic Games was “Everything Is Possible in Peace” and a silhouetted contour of a white dove became one of the icons of the Olympics. Ibid, 171.

<sup>53</sup> At the same time the Civil Right Movement left the non-violent struggle heralded by Martin Luther King for the more radical approach of the Black Panthers. Eric Zolov, “Showcasing the ‘Land of Tomorrow’: Mexico and the 1968 Olympics”, 186.

<sup>54</sup> Luz María Silva, “Reflexiones en torno a México” in *México en la Decada de los 90*. (Mexico: Grupo Financiero Banamex-Accival, 1993), 189-201.

<sup>55</sup> Although globalization played a crucial role in the opening up of Mexico’s cultural milieu, throughout this discussion, I will rather focus on the relation between the adoption of a neoliberal economic model and the opening up of the cultural field to the private sector. Yet, the implementation of a neoliberal economic model “a la Mexicain” (since there are diverse and idiosyncratic applications of neoliberal ideology) either adopted by Mexico or imposed upon it has been crucial in shaping the Mexican experience of current globalization.

from the nationalistic state rhetoric, but cultivated the belief that all culture was a right of all Mexicans. And most of all, art was an asset of the nation: it was sponsored by state commissions, and at least rhetorically, kept its social purpose. Private investment in art or the promotion of an art market outside state control run counter to this purpose, thus private collections from the state did not flourish until the late 1960s when the ideals of the Revolution and the one-party-rule of the PRI began to decline. During the 1970s, the PRI attempted to regain authority after the 1968 events by resuscitating the 1920s cultural rhetoric, private corporations obscured their alliances with the PRI to legitimize their activities by fueling nationalist sentiment. Corporations seized the leftover nationalistic rhetoric in order to advance their economic interests. By the mid 1980s, as a new generation of politicians began to adopt a neoliberal model, private cultural initiatives gained more prominence. Private corporations in liaison with the refurbished PRI (a party more aligned with neoliberal economics) began to recycle, yet again, the nationalistic rhetoric to advance an image of Mexico that will suit the needs of free-trade economy, and will allow its entrance to NAFTA's First World bloc. However, as I will discuss in the following chapter, the endorsement of a nationalistic framework to justify investments in culture became the demise of some private cultural endeavors as the effects of neoliberal economics began to take hold.

## 2. Banamex and Televisa: Two Compliant Models of Corporate Collecting

*El Nacionalismo es la transfiguración de las supuestas características de la identidad nacional al terreno de la ideología. El nacionalismo es, pues, una ideología que se disfraza de una cultura para ocultar los resortes íntimos de la dominación.*<sup>56</sup>

The reasons why an individual or a corporation collects a certain type of object or a certain art style can be as diverse as the different types of collectors, collections, museums and corporations. For corporations, collecting art and sponsoring cultural activities are an intrinsic part of their branding and indispensable to their overall marketing strategies. Most commonly, a corporation will choose to collect a particular style of art or to sponsor a certain type of activity to complement their line of business or to gain access to a specific kind of market. Hence, at first glance, the motives behind corporate intervention in culture appear to be straightforward. However, multiple economic and political interests conflict when building or selling a corporate collection. Conflict of interest along with a commitment to corporate secrecy makes access to their records difficult.

Currently, Banamex and Televisa face major restructuring; Banamex was purchased by Citibank in 2001 and Televisa is still adjusting to the death of its CEO, Emilio Azcarraga Milmo in 1997. The only records available to me were some accounts included in essays from catalogues published by the companies, and newspaper articles. This inaccessibility of information is also symptom of the inconsistent way their collecting activities were carried out. Their collecting activities and their intervention in culture fluctuated according to the economic and political climate of the country in order to secure their business.

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<sup>56</sup> "Nationalism is the transfiguration of the assumed characteristics of a national identity into the realm of ideology. Therefore, nationalism is an ideology that disguises itself as culture to obscure its intimate means of domination." Roger Bartra, *Oficio Mexicano* (Mexico: CONACULTA, 2003) 36.

In this context, Krystof Pomian's analysis of collecting behaviour was particularly effective to think through Banamex and Televisa's cultural activities. In *Collector and Curiosities: Paris and Venice 1500-1800*, Pomian provides a framework to explain collecting behaviour, which overrides the obstacles of limited access to collecting records. Pomian disregards frequent explanations that interpret collecting as a testament of taste and social status or a source of aesthetic pleasure or an inherent hoarding tendency in individuals. He argues that collecting is the product of a unique type of behavior consisting of an attempt to create a link between the visible and the invisible. The invisible, according to Pomian, is formed by *semiophores*, that is objects of absolutely no practical use which, by being endowed with meaning, represent the invisible. Pomian considers that "the *semiophore* reveals its meaning only when it is on display"<sup>57</sup> and thus this meaning is what confers on the object its exchange value and its paradoxical inclusion in the economic circuit.

Following Pomian's analysis, I conveniently amalgamated the complex reasons why Banamex and Televisa participate in the cultural field as a desire to make a link with the invisible as a means to obtain symbolic power, where the invisible takes the shape of a very visible nationalistic discourse in its first stage and later on is forced to abandon its nationalistic impetus due to economic and political tensions. This invisible, taken as a discursive field of desire, has the capacity to adapt to changes in political and economical milieu and as such maintains its alliance with the changing needs of the state-corporate nexus. In the following sections, I will explain how Televisa and Banamex shaped their collecting activities and their cultural initiatives to match the needs of state-nationalism.

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<sup>57</sup> Krystof Pomian, "The Collection; between the Visible and the Invisible" in *Collectors and curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500-1800*, translated by Elizabeth Wiles-Portier. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990) 30-33.

## 2.1 Banamex: Nationalism and Finance

The close ties between the financial sector and the state are something common; in fact, there is no other sector as sensitive to political instability as the financial sector. However, the ties between Banamex and the government's nationalistic discourse were augmented by Banamex's cultural activities. This alliance became public as Banamex began to develop a symbolic presence as a protector of the national patrimony.

Banamex was established in 1884 under the petition of president Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910). Díaz wanted to create a bank with a legal monopoly over lending to the federal government in order to establish credibility after fifty years of political chaos following the Independence War (1810). Since then the strong ties between government officials and Banamex have continued, and Banamex remained the nation's largest bank until its sale in the year 2001.<sup>58</sup>

In 1980, prominent Mexican art historian Miguel Angel Fernández described the value of the Banamex Foundation and the Banamex Collection:

...otra virtud del acervo radica en sus calculadas consecuencias: se repatriaron muchas piezas mexicanas que estaban en el exilio involuntario y, como complemento, otras ejecutadas en nuestro suelo por artistas extranjeros podrían permanecer en México para siempre.<sup>59</sup>

Banamex's taste for national art started early on when the Banamex Collection developed from the private collection of the Legorreta family. Its origins can be traced back to the establishment of the bank's first office in a colonial viceroy palace: the Palace of Valparaiso Counts

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<sup>58</sup> Noel Maurer. *The Power and the Money. The Mexican Financial System 1876-1932.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002) 1.

<sup>59</sup> "...one of the most valued virtues ascribed to the foundation and their collection was its role in repatriating several pieces which had left the country through involuntary exile and the purchase of art works produced by foreigners in Mexico. This act will assure their permanence in Mexico forever." Miguel Angel Fernández, *Historia de los Museos en México.* (México D.F.: Promotora de Comercialización Directa, S.A. de C.V., 1988) 226.

and the Marquis of Jaral del Berrrio in Mexico City (1884). This purchase included all the furniture and artifacts of the Palace, which became the bank's decor. This practice of purchasing colonial buildings continued throughout the twentieth century. Nevertheless, records of this type of acquisitions prior to 1968 are not available. The consulted references agree that by 1968, with the purchase of the Iturbide Palace –now the Banamex Cultural Palace<sup>60</sup>– located in the historical district of Mexico City, Banamex consciously began to turn what was until then a semi-private collection with no public or educational mission into a corporate mandate that included a public and an educational purpose.<sup>61</sup> By 1970 Banamex was the owner of an important collection of XIX century paintings in addition to colonial buildings and artifacts that were part of its corporate decor. The focus of the collection towards the XIX century and colonial art linked Banamex to the bourgeoisie and liberal nationalistic tradition –that retained a strong presence despite the efforts of the 1910 Revolution to eradicate it. This in turn represented the core of its target market: the higher classes of large cities.

In 1976, Banamex purchased the collection of Licio Lagos, a patron of the muralists. Amongst the pieces acquired were Diego Rivera's *1<sup>st</sup> May Parade in Moscu*, 1956 (fig.2.1), Rufino Tamayo's *Mujeres* (fig.2.2), Dr. Atl's *Popocateptl desde Tlamacas* (fig.2.3) and José Clemente Orozco's *Mujer con Figura Volando* (fig. 2.4). With these purchases, Banamex began to consciously invest in the growth of its collection and not simply to increase their decor options.

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<sup>60</sup> The *Iturbide Palace* is an example of colonial architecture, but also is a historical marker. In 1822, it was the residence of the General Agustín de Iturbide, First Emperor of Mexico. His reign lasted from 1822-1823. Although he fought for Independence, he was a royalist and fought against the liberals who later on defeated him.

<sup>61</sup> See Juana Gutiérrez Haces, "La Colección de Pintura del Banco" in *La Colección Pictórica del Banco Nacional de México* (Mexico, D.F.: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1992) 21-31 and the Banamex Foundation website at <[http://www.banamex.com/esp/filiales/fomento\\_cultural/trayectoria.htm](http://www.banamex.com/esp/filiales/fomento_cultural/trayectoria.htm)> and Sylvia Navarrete, "La Colección Banamex y sus altibajos" in *El Reforma*, February 22, 2004.

The contrasting themes of these paintings attest to Banamex's intention to absorb everything that was Mexican within its corporate mandate, from the celebratory embrace of communism by Diego Rivera that hangs proudly from one of the walls of one of Banamex corporate offices (fig 2.5) to the most ethnographic works by Rufino Tamayo.<sup>62</sup> In addition to these acquisitions, the Lagos collection also included examples of XIX Century painting; especially landscape paintings by foreign travelers such as Johann Mortiz Rugendas and Daniel Thomas Eagerton.

By the early 1980s, Banamex was a recurrent fixture in international auctions of national art and of artwork with a national subject matter. It was through these auctions that the bank acquired Frida Kahlo's *Los Frutos de la Tierra* (fig. 2.6) and Julio Castellano's *Día de San Juan* (fig. 2.7) which had been part of the Nelson Rockefeller collection.<sup>63</sup> The purchase of paintings with a national subject matter became an important goal for the bank's directors, who became principal buyers. Banamex was following the advice of important academics and critics who pointed to the recovery of paintings that "had left the country involuntarily", as Miguel Fernández declared.<sup>64</sup> Banamex brought back to Mexico works by José Clemente Orozco from an Italian collection, Agustín Arrieta from a German collection as well as work by the Spaniards Pelegrín Clave and Manuel Villar (both professors at the San Carlos Academy in Mexico City).<sup>65</sup> Other examples included, the acquisition of several works by the French painter Edouard Pingret (fig.2.8), which

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<sup>62</sup> At the time, both Diego Rivera and Rufino Tamayo were two of the most sought out Latin American artists internationally. In particular, Rivera's works were declared patrimony of the nation in 1959. The status that Rivera and Tamayo brought to the collection was more important to Banamex than the content of the paintings.

<sup>63</sup> See Juana Gutiérrez Haces, "La Colección de Pintura del Banco", 29, and the catalogue, *The Painting Collection of the Banco Nacional de México* (Fomento Cultural Banamex A.C: Mexico, 2002) 152.

<sup>64</sup> Miguel Ángel Fernández, *Historia de los Museos en México*, 226. Full quote included on page 28 of this document.

<sup>65</sup> Juana Gutiérrez Haces, "La Colección de Pintura del Banco", 29

were found abandoned in a small town in central France.<sup>66</sup> The objective was clear: Banamex was set out to build a large collection with an exclusive Mexican content.

In 1983, Luis Ortiz Macedo, the artistic director of the Banamex collection, described the collection in the introductory essay of the catalogue *La Colección del Banco de México. Un legado a la Cultura Mexicana*:

Desde su origen la colección lentamente reunida se distinguió por su mexicanidad. Desde luego había que renunciar a las obras pre-Hispánicas y las de arte religioso del periodo virreinal que por ley corresponden a la nación [...] Así se buscaron cuadros costumbristas, retratos de temas históricos que constituyen el impresionante panorama Mexicano.<sup>67</sup>

Both Fernandez and Macedo's statements confirm the nationalistic nature of the collection during the 1980s. These nationalistic efforts were backed up by Banamex's public and education mandate that, according to art historian Juana Gutierrez Haces, began in 1977, when the bank began to organize and sponsor public exhibitions displaying the collection all over Mexico.<sup>68</sup> Others argue that Banamex's public mission began in 1971 when the Banamex Cultural Foundation was established; others still, even the same Gutierrez Haces, discuss how these two instances were merely official markers, since the bank always had a public mission in view of the fact that their collection was always displayed at their branches for the enjoyment of their clients.

Si decimos que la vocación de servir al público se inició con la exposición de 1977 es solo porque ésta fue el primer acto oficial organizado, pero debemos reconocer

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<sup>66</sup> Juana Gutierrez Haces, "La Colección de Pintura del Banco", 28.

<sup>67</sup> "From its origins, the collection that slowly grew through the years, distinguished itself by its Mexicanness. Certainly, the Bank had renounce to pre-Hispanic and religious work since by law they belong to the nation, so alternatively we search for landscapes and portraits that depict a historical subject matter or the natural vastness of Mexico." Luis Ortiz Macedo, *La Colección de Arte del Banco Nacional de México: un legado a la cultura Mexicana, Siglo XVII-XX* (Mexico: FCE, 1983) 3.

<sup>68</sup> Juana Gutierrez Haces, "La Colección de Pintura del Banco", 27.

que dicha vocación siempre existió ya que la obra se exponía en los recintos del Banco, donde público y empleados podían admirarla.<sup>69</sup>

In this context, how can one define and bound the public mission of a collection such as the Banamex Collection? As the largest and one of the oldest financial institutions in the country, Banamex had assets acquired via the savings accounts of millions of Mexicans over the span of more than one hundred years. Moreover, in 1982, due to severe economic crisis, all private banks were nationalized and Banamex became part of the state until 1991 when it returned to private hands.<sup>70</sup> The nationalization of all banks assets further fortified the conception that Banamex's assets belonged to the nation. These facts, together with its public adoption as protector of the national patrimony, complicated the condition of Banamex's involvement in the cultural field as an exclusive corporate endeavour, and thus gave rise to the uncertainty regarding the disposition of their cultural assets as patrimony of the nation, even though more than half of its collection was not openly declared as such.

Undeniably, the cultural activities carried out by Banamex and the Banamex Foundation fostered the research and the spread of a version of Mexican history and culture. These activities were significant in the Mexican context (especially if one considers the limited economic resources that the state assigned to the cultural field). Their activities included exhibitions, funding programs for artists and researchers, publishing coffee table books about Mexico's cultural legacy, housing an important archive of Mexican art and history, all of which endowed Banamex with an

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<sup>69</sup> "One could say that the vocation of serving the public began with the exhibition of 1977, however it is only because this was an official and organized act, but we shall take into account that its public vocation has always existed since the bank's collection was always displayed to the public in its offices." Juana Gutierrez Haces, "La Colección de Pintura del Banco", 27.

<sup>70</sup> Héctor Salas Harms, "La adquisición del Grupo Financiero Banamex-Accival por Citigroup", *Momento Económico*, vol 127, May-June 2003, 42.

important symbolic role as guardian of Mexican patrimony. However, one must also consider the ways in which Banamex benefited economically and symbolically from these “patriotic” activities in order to disclose the thick network of interdependencies between cultural producers, mediators (government, private and transnational interests) and audiences. In chapter three, I will discuss how Banamex benefited from the political and economic changes in the country that lead the way to the adoption of privatization measures, and how Banamex sale to Citibank in 2001 was sanctioned due to the lack of legislation in cultural matters that accompanied Mexico’s economic liberalization. In addition, I will describe the career of Fernando Gamboa, the state’s principal cultural promoter, and his relation to Banamex to further elucidate Banamex’s ties with state-nationalism .

## 2.2 Televisa: Transnationalism and the Media

Televisa's alliance with the PRI is legendary and all encompassing. Over the years, Televisa became publicly recognized as an organization in which an influential group of families, executives and politicians converged to control all communications in the country (radio, film, television and more recently digital networks). Indeed, according to Fátima Fernández, "over the course of seventy years, Televisa managed to elude all kinds of obstacles to accomplish its primary objective: the accumulation of wealth and the establishment of a media empire. Moreover, Televisa is no longer a broadcasting company dedicated to producing radio, television, soccer and theatre, it is an association that elusively became a key player in the Mexican political system."<sup>71</sup>

The origins of Televisa can be traced back to the establishment of the radio station, XEW La Voz de America Latina desde Mexico, in 1930 –a striking copy of the US sponsored propaganda radio station La Voz de America desde Washington.<sup>72</sup> This first nation-wide radio station was owned by the Azcarraga-Milmo family; however, a large percentage of funding came from Radio Corporation of America (RCA), a subsidiary of National Broadcasting Company (NBC).<sup>73</sup> At a period of uncertainty regarding Mexico's perceived alliance with Germany, this radio station was pivotal in securing a field for US products through its radio advertisements of Gillete Razors, and the radionovelas (radio soapoperas) sponsored by Colgate and Palmolive. This alliance with the American Way of Life, continued throughout the development of the Televisa media empire and,

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<sup>71</sup> Fátima Fernández Christlieb., "Televisa en la Universidad Autonoma de Mexico" in Raúl Trejo Delarbre, Raúl (coord). *Televisa: el quinto poder*. (Mexico D.F. : Claves Latino Americanas, 1985) 106.

<sup>72</sup> Ramon Gil Olivo, "El Clan Televisa (1950-1980) Antecedentes." in *Revista del Seminario de Historia Mexicana: Colonialismo Cultural y Television*, Vol I, No. 3, Otoño 2003. (Lagos de Moreno: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2003) 89-113.

<sup>73</sup> According to Ramon Gil Olivo 87% of their stocks were owned by RCA part of NBC. At that time foreign ownership in Mexico was becoming contested by nationalization policies of president Lazaro Cárdenas, however XEW was able to stay on the market by adopting a nationalist mandate, but also because it was run by a Mexican family; the Azcarraga-Milmo family. See Ramon Gil Olivo, "El Clan Televisa (1950-1980) Antecedentes." 89-113.

due to the influential nature of the communications field became crucial in selling the American Dream to the rest of the country.

Between 1949 and 1955, through a series of business transactions and buyouts, Telesistema Mexicano SA (Televisa) was constituted as the only private radio-television broadcasting company in Mexico. Its inaugural transmission was the broadcast of Miguel Aleman's fourth presidential address in 1950. Aleman, whose family owned shares in Televisa, was a strong supporter of foreign and private investment as the path to modernization. He modified president Lazaro Cárdenas' agrarian reforms to allow foreign investment in farming infrastructure, and in the industrial sector in general.<sup>74</sup> Aleman's support for private enterprise and his direct alliance with Televisa facilitated the consortium's expansion. Thus, just as Banamex became the private bank of the state, Televisa became the state's private broadcasting company.

Televisa went on to establish one of the largest media empires in Latin America, with an equally strong international influence. At the height of Televisa's success in the mid 1980s, Televisa along with the industrial group Alfa sponsored the construction of the Tamayo Museum of Modern Art. The museum was built on federal land provided by the state with the purpose of housing Rufino Tamayo's legacy to Mexico: his personal art collection, consisting of American abstraction and European art informel. It is well known how Rufino Tamayo fought throughout his career to rid himself of the mural-based nationalism of "the three big ones" (Diego Rivera, José

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<sup>74</sup> See James M. Cypher. *State and Capital in Mexico. Development Policy since 1940*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990) 42-44.

Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros) and legitimize himself as an international artist; his personal international collection served this purpose and made it public through this bequest.<sup>75</sup>

Instead, under the management of Televisa, once Alfa Group had to bale out due to bankruptcy, the Tamayo Museum became the hub for a self-promoting media spectacle of international art sponsored by Televisa. This provoked the outrage of Rufino Tamayo over the lack of exposure of his collection.<sup>76</sup> Certainly, from 1981-1986 the Rufino Tamayo Museum of Modern Art concentrated more in showing blockbuster exhibitions of foreign artists such as Pablo Picasso (1982), David Hockney (1984), Robert Rauschenberg (1985) not to mention the perennial Mexican favorite and Tamayo's worst nightmare, Diego Rivera (1984), rather than Tamayo's collection.<sup>77</sup> In 1986, Tamayo threatened to go on a hunger strike and successfully forced the Tamayo Museum and its collection into the hands of the state.<sup>78</sup> This could be seen as the first of a series of failed attempts to promote a thorough program of private investment in the arts with an international reach. However, this experience introduced Emilio Azcarraga, by then sole-owner of Televisa and an admirer and friend of the Rockefellers, to the benefits that the international spectacle of art could bring to his much-criticized mass media monopoly.<sup>79</sup> His investment in culture expanded as its media-empire sought further international expansion in the US and Spanish markets.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Oliver Debroise, "De lo Moderno a lo Internacional: Los Retos del Arte Mexicano" in *Collecting Latin American Art for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Mari Carmen Ramírez and Theresa Parpanikolas (eds). (Museum of Fine Arts in Houston: International Centre for the Arts of the Americas, 2002) 61-98.

<sup>76</sup> Claudia Fernández and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre. Emilio Azcarraga y su Imperio Televisa*. 242-245.

<sup>77</sup> Claudia Fernández and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre. Emilio Azcarraga y su Imperio Televisa*, 242-245.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 242-245.

<sup>79</sup> Among the influential friends that Azacarraga used to entertain and who perhaps influenced, his interest in cultural philanthropy were David Hockney, David L. Rockefeller, Herbert Von Krajan, the art collectors Jaques and Natasha Gelman, and Mexican intellectuals Octavio Paz and Enrique Krauze who were both strong supporters of the private investment in culture. *Ibid*.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 265-308.

By the late 1980s, Azcarraga's cultural investments multiplied, and like Banamex, he began to consider himself as the "guardian of national culture".<sup>81</sup> By then, Emilio Azcarraga was one of the most important public figures in Mexico and certainly one of the wealthiest entrepreneurs in the American continent.<sup>82</sup> He had backed up most of the presidential campaigns, but his well known fundraiser for Salinas de Gortari presidential campaign, increased his range of influence, acting as an important mediator of Salinas economic policies.<sup>83</sup>

In the late 1980s, as the participation of Mexico in NAFTA was being discussed, Azcarraga started to plan the exhibition *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*.<sup>84</sup> He hired Octavio Paz, and the architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez to oversee the planning of the exhibition.<sup>85</sup> As discussed earlier, Ramírez Vázquez had collaborated with the state in the design of diverse cultural projects for the 1968 Olympics, museums and Mexican pavilions, his participation in the planning of this exhibition brought the state's points of view. On the other hand, Octavio Paz, was the most renowned Mexican intellectual and a strong promoter of privatization. By bringing together these two important public figures, Azcarraga's exhibition became the perfect venue to mediate the transition between two ways of dealing with culture. In addition, Azcarraga organized a meeting between Mexico's president Salinas de Gortari and David L. Rockefeller to secure the approval of

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<sup>81</sup> Claudia Fernández and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre. Emilio Azcarraga y su Imperio Televisa*, 242.

<sup>82</sup> In 1993, Emilio Azcarraga was ranked number 19 in Forbes' 100 greatest fortunes in the world list with 5.1 billion US\$. He was the first Latin American entrepreneur to make it on that list. See Joel Millman, Nina Munk, Michael Schuman, Neil Weinberg, Harold Seneker, "The world's wealthiest people" in *Forbes*, July, 5, 1993, Vol. 152, Issue 1.

<sup>83</sup> In 1993, Emilio Azcarraga donated 70 million dollars to Salinas de Gortari to back up the presidential transition of 1994. That same year, Azcarraga also facilitated the presidential decision to make Ricardo Salinas Pliego (related to Salinas de Gortari) the owner of the new private broadcasting corporation, Television Azteca. The creation of a new TV broadcasting company was aligned to the ideals of de-centralization and democratization that Salinas economic policies promoted. Although, the new private broadcasting hindered Televisa's monopoly, the close ties between them secure that the control over the media industry will continue to be divided between the same political class. See Claudia Fernández and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre. Emilio Azcarraga y su Imperio Televisa*, 400-405.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, 340-345.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 340-345.

the exhibition from the US Council for the Americas.<sup>86</sup> The display of “Mexicanness” spearheaded by Emilio Azcarraga makes evident the expansion of the cultural field into the private sector and the new interests behind these kinds of cultural displays.

After the separation from the Rufino Tamayo Museum of Modern Art, Azcarraga established the Cultural Centre of Contemporary Art / Televisa (CC/AC) in 1986. He hired American Robert Littman as head curator. Littman managed the collection of more than five thousand pieces, which included pre-Hispanic art, examples of Mexican modern painters and an international collection of photography. Littman increased the collection with international contemporary artists from the US, Europe and the Mexican generation of the 1990s. The collection included works by Jenny Holzer (fig. 2.9), Richard Hamilton, Nam June Paik, Donald Judd, Bruce Nauman, Christian Boltanski, Luciano Fabro (fig.2.10), Daniella Russell (fig.2.11) and Paula Santiago (fig.2.12) amongst many others. The Televisa collection filled a void in the emergent field of private collections in Mexico by emphasizing international contemporary art.<sup>87</sup>

From 1986 to its closure in 1998, following Azcarraga’s death, the CC/AC continued to capitalize by bringing international touring shows and organizing more than one hundred exhibitions.<sup>88</sup> The center invested in promoting an emerging generation of Latin American contemporary artists through exhibitions such as: *Asi Esta La Cosa* (That’s The Situation) in 1997 curated by Kurt Hollander (editor of *poliester* magazine), which included the works of Francys

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<sup>86</sup> Claudia Fernández and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre. Emilio Azcarraga y su Imperio Televisa*, 340-345.

<sup>87</sup> However, its curatorial mandate during Littman’s direction has been criticized as unclear and contradictory due to its focus towards work produced by US artists. See Mary MacMasters interview to Mauricio Maillé in “Depuran la colección de arte de Televisa para montar exposiciones propias” in *La Jornada*, September 18, 2002.

<sup>88</sup> Amongst the most successful, according to CC/CA published memoirs *Presencia y Evocación* were: Leo Castelli and his Artists (1987), The Giacometti Family (1987), Joan Miro (1998), Treasures of the Shanghai Museum (1994), American Painting: Abstract Expressionism (1996-97) and The Prado Museum Presence in Mexico (1988 and 1992). See *Presencia y Evocación. Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporaneo Televisa*. (Mexico, D.F.: Fundacion Cultural Televisa, 1998).

Aljys, Teresa Margolles, and Javier Tellez amongst others. In addition, the CC/AC organized exhibitions of established artists and intellectuals such as: Maria Izquierdo (1988-1989), Martin Ramirez (1988-1989), and *Los Privilegios de la Vista* (1990) in honor of Octavio Paz.<sup>89</sup>

Televisa's collaborations with Octavio Paz are also reflective of the rising role of the private sector over cultural matters and the role of the media sector in mediating the experience of high culture to the masses.<sup>90</sup> Paz and Televisa's collaborations were made visible via televised spots hosted by Paz, produced between 1982 and 1983 and by Televisa's sponsorship of *Vuelta*, a literary review magazine edited by Paz, along with a series of intellectual colloquiums such as: *El Siglo XX: La Experiencia de la Libertad*.<sup>91</sup> These collaborations gave rise to heated debates amongst intellectual circles, concerning the role of the private sector over cultural matters. Indeed, by the 1990s, in the wake of Mexico's signing of NAFTA several critics condemned Paz's endorsement of private enterprise and the neoliberal turn of the state.<sup>92</sup> His introductory essay to the catalogue *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries* is revealing of this endorsement. Paz describes Mexico's historical role as bridge between north and south: "one of Mexico's historical functions has been that of bridge between the English -and the Spanish- and Portuguese worlds. I scarcely need add that *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*, sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New

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<sup>89</sup> *Presencia y Evocación. Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporaneo Televisa*, 1-15.

<sup>90</sup> Nestor García Canclini. *Culturas Híbridas. Estratégias para Salir y Entrar a la Modernidad*. (México: Grijalbo, 1989) 101.

<sup>91</sup> Octavio Paz and Enrique Krauze. *La Experiencia de la Libertad*. (Mexico, DF: Vuelta: Espejo de Obsidiana, 1991).

<sup>92</sup> For a comment regarding Paz involvement with Televisa, see Nestor García Canclini. *Culturas híbridas. Estratégias para salir y entrar a la modernidad*. ( México: Grijalbo, 1989) 67 -105. For a critique of his involvement with the exhibition *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*, see Roger Bartra, *Oficio Mexicano*. (CONACULTA: Mexico, D.F.,2003) 31-43, and George Yúdice and Toby Miller *Cultural Policy*, 176.

York and later to be seen in San Antonio and Los Angeles, is a positive example of such mediation”<sup>93</sup>

By the early 1990s, the insidiousness of Televisa’s cultural intervention touched all fields of culture. The ambition and dispersion of its activities were indistinguishable from Azcarraga’s populist rhetoric. In 1993, Azcarraga described the mission of his monopoly:

Estamos en el negocio del entretenimiento, de la información, y podemos educar, pero fundamentalmente entretener... México es un país de una clase modesta muy jodida, que no va a salir de jodida. Para la television es una obligación llevar diversion a esa gente y sacarla de su triste realidad y de su futuro difícil.[...]. Lo que vale la pena es cuando uno se enfrenta a un auditorio de millones de personas y éstas deciden sintonizar algo que, además, es alegría, les ofrece entretenimiento sano y que les brinda una satisfacción interna. Eso es la television, y, entre muchos esfuerzos realizados, el más importante dentro de Televisa, curiosamente, se llama *Los Ricos También Lloran*, para que vean que yo, siendo, habiendo nacido rico, también lloro...<sup>94</sup>

At the time of this statement, Televisa, was already one of the principal cultural promoters in Mexico. Through this statement, Azcarraga confirms his role as a public figure; to entertain the masses, but perhaps most importantly, his bluntness forewarns us of the role that Televisa will continue to play as Mexico moves to an environment that encourages more privatization and gives more power to the media. For instance, according to their memoirs, the Giacometti Family exhibition, introduced the Mexican middle class to a furniture style inspired by the designs of

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<sup>93</sup> Octavio Paz, “Will for Form” in *Mexico. Splendors of Thirty Centuries*. Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, New York (Boston, Toronto and London: A Bulfinch Press Book, 1990) 3.

<sup>94</sup> We are in the business of entertainment, of information, and we can also educate, but mainly our business is entertainment. Mexico is a country with a large percentage of the poor, who have not the means or the will to escape this situation. For the television industry it is an obligation to bring entertainment to these people and distract them from their misery.[...] What really matters is that when one is confronted with an audience of millions of people all over the world and they decide to watch your program, that your program brings them healthy entertainment and internal satisfaction, that is what Television is, that is Televisa.” The quote from Azcarraga is taken from, Carlos Monsiváis. *Aires de Familia. Cultura y Sociedad en America Latina*. (Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama, 2000) 217.

Diego Giacometti, that previously was only afforded by select buyers such as Givenchy.<sup>95</sup> Another example is drawn from the condescending TV advertisements that bombarded Mexican households during the 1990s to promote attendance to their exhibitions. For example, the television commercial for Maria Izquierdo's show animated the painting *El Circo*, 1939 (fig. 2.13), showing the painting elements dancing to a traditional circus song.

Since the CC/AC closed its doors in 1998, the fate of the collection has been the source of frequent debate. A significant portion of CC/AC possessions was placed into the custody of Casa Lam –a private school of Art History– including the art library, the photographic collection, and the pre-Hispanic collection.<sup>96</sup> By funding a school, Televisa ensured that its role as a cultural promoter would remain somewhat intact diminishing the impact of CC/AC's closure.

In 2001, the Televisa collection reemerged under the direction of Mauricio Maillé. Maillé set out to revive Televisa's role as the most important sponsor of contemporary art in Mexico, which by then had already been superseded by the JUMEX Collection.<sup>97</sup> However, Televisa could not recover its prestigious standing; its efforts were a pale comparison to JUMEX's endeavors. JUMEX, a privately owned juice company, did not have the ties to the state that Televisa and Banamex had.

The JUMEX collection was established in 1997, when Eugenio López, JUMEX's CEO, opted for trading his personal collection for an international representation of post-conceptual work and

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<sup>95</sup> This exhibition united the work of Giovanni, Augusto Alberto and Diego Giacometti for the first time in Mexico. See *Presencia y Evocación*, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Mary MacMasters, "Depuran la colección de arte Televisa para montar exposiciones propias" in *La Jornada*, September 18, 2002.

<sup>97</sup> Maillé coordinated several curators to organize different exhibitions to show Televisa's collection. For example: Osvaldo Sanchez curated *Amruga Belleza*, 2003; José Luis Barrio curated *Lugar(es)*, 2002-2003; Alfonso Morales Carrillo curated *Corre Caballo Corre*, 2000 and Karen Cordero Reiman curated *Re(gener)ando. Construcciones y Borramientos* (2004).

art from the 1960s. With this change, it immediately gained a place in the global market. Currently the JUMEX collection is the largest international contemporary art collection based in Latin America.<sup>98</sup> The JUMEX collection, honoured by art critics as the only professional and sustained effort for building a corporate art collection in Mexico, is currently the benchmark for established and emerging institutions that aspire to participate in the cultural field and thus is redefining the field.<sup>99</sup> With its global mandate and its focus on contemporary art, JUMEX's success represents the change of a cultural project from a nationalistic framework to a neoliberal one, and simultaneously the emergence of a strong private collecting sector separated from the constraints of the state, but linked (as Stallabrass reminds us) to the redistribution of financial power.

The participation of JUMEX as an equal player in the international art market backs up the somewhat eschewed perception that neoliberal measures have brought democracy and more opportunity to Third World economies. Indeed, JUMEX investment in art was made possible due to the economic policies and political changes Mexico went through since the 1970s. Its magnitude and success did break with Televisa and Banamex nationalistic framework and undeniably, the success of JUMEX has had an impact on the Mexican cultural milieu, however it remains to be seen what will be the consequences of its growing influence.

Televisa, has attempted to follow suit and the latest exhibition of their photography and new media collection *Eternidad Fugitiva* (2006) which, along with works by Cindy Sherman and Andres Serrano, also shows videos produced by Televisa's news reporters, points to the new

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<sup>98</sup> Mauricio Marcin, "Slim, Eugenio López y Pérez Simón, entre los coleccionistas de arte mas destacados del mundo" in *La Crónica de Hoy*, August, Saturday, 21, 2005.

<sup>99</sup> In 2005 the JUMEX collection was legitimized internationally at Spain's ARCO 05, where Mexico was the guest of honour and JUMEX won the collection award. Besides hosting the collection, JUMEX has also expanded its reach by creating a program of scholarships and funding for artists, curators and critics. See *La Colección JUMEX*, corporate CD, produced by Trianon SA de CV, Mexico City, 2005.

curatorial redirection of the collection (fig 2.14). Televisa Cultural Foundation is now seeking to make the collection an extension of its media industry by narrowing its focus to photography and new media. This new curatorial mandate is more in tune with the changing needs of the economy and Televisa's efforts to legitimize its business. Yet, Televisa's monopolist tendencies and relations to the state keep on expanding; in 2006 a new law, *La Ley Televisa*, was passed by the Mexican Senate granting Televisa exclusive management and control of all the country's digital network communications.<sup>100</sup> This exposes, yet again, the set of complex relations and interests behind Televisa's cultural initiatives and the increasing power of the media industry in all sectors of Mexican society. In the following chapter, I will describe how Televisa benefited from the adoption of privatization measures and how its leading role in the media industry is being sanctioned through the restructuring of state cultural institutions.

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<sup>100</sup> Karen Avilés, "La Nueva Ley de Radio y TV, el más duro golpe a la soberanía del Estado" in *La Jornada*, March 28, 2006.

### 3. Touring the Art of the State: Banamex, Televisa and the politics of state-nationalism

*At stake in every struggle over art there is also the imposition of an art of living, that is, the transmutation of an arbitrary way of living into the legitimate way of life which casts every other living into arbitrariness.*<sup>101</sup>

#### 3.1 Fernando Gamboa and the Politics of Exhibitionism

By the mid 1940s, the PRI institutionalized the post-revolutionary cultural program and abandoned socialist policies which had characterized its beginnings. This shift towards the right favored the implementation of a capitalist program fueled by US foreign investments aimed at alleviating the economic pressures of the First and Second World Wars.

As in other countries in the region –such as Argentina and Brazil– a capitalist program developed in Mexico between the wars by means of a corporatist pact between state-aligned elites, who promoted Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI),<sup>102</sup> and an equally state-aligned popular nationalism that sought state welfare. This paradoxical state developed all the institutions responsible for the institutionalization of the post-revolutionary cultural program (education, radio, film, museums and anthropological institutions). The cultural program that emerged from these endeavors was effectively used as a marketing strategy to disguise the national economic agenda, but it also covered up international and industrial elite agendas throughout the twentieth century.

By the mid 1930s, José Vasconcelos' efforts towards managing all matters of culture under one institution, the Secretary of Public Education, changed with the establishment of the National

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<sup>101</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984) 57.

<sup>102</sup> James M. Cypher. *State and Capital in Mexico. Development Policy since 1940*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990).

Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) in 1939 and the subsequent establishment of the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA) in 1947. Although these institutions seemed to separate high art from popular art, both the curatorial practices and the state's promotion of a national identity continued to be based on the progressive development of Mexican culture from pre-Hispanic to modern times. At the time, the muralist school was an example of Mexico's modernity. As years went by, the modern expressions would acquire prominence compared to pre-Hispanic works resulting in what is known as the Mexican Cultural Renaissance (1937-1947). The PRI and American interests used Mexico's Cultural Renaissance as a diplomatic tool through a series of touring exhibitions, publications and films, to advance political and economic interests.

These endeavors gained prominence with the well-known exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1940 organized by both Mexican and US diplomats.<sup>103</sup> *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* presented Mexican culture to US audiences in a manner that established a model for later touring exhibitions.<sup>104</sup> The model consisted of showing Mexican modern paintings alongside didactic references to their origins, that is the colonial past and pre-Hispanic cultures.<sup>105</sup> These efforts to justify the existence of modern Mexico through a primitive, yet advanced past, matched US interests of validating the cultural legacy of the American

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<sup>103</sup> This exhibition was organized by Nelson D. Rockefeller (MoMA's president and coordinator of the Inter-American Affairs Office for President Franklin D. Roosevelt), along with Mexican government officials, artists and academics (amongst them the archeologist Antonio Caso and the artists Gerardo Murillo (Dr. Atl) and Miguel Covarrubias). For a discussion of the motives behind the exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art*, see, Charity Mewburn's "Oil, Art, and Politics. The Feminization of Mexico", *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*. Núm. 72, 1998. 73-133.

<sup>104</sup> Oliver Debroise, "Mexican Art on Display" in *The Effects of the Nation. Mexican Art in the Age of Globalization*, ed. Carl Good and John V. Waldron (Philadelphia; Temple University Press, 2001), 20-36.

<sup>105</sup> Mexican government officials and US diplomats organized similar cultural programs of diplomacy earlier in order to display to US audiences the recent developments of Mexico and its stability after the 1910 Revolution. For example, in the late 1920s, the exhibition *Outline of Mexican Popular Art*; in 1929, Anita Brenner's book *Idols Behind Altars* was published in New York; and in 1930, an exhibition held at the Metropolitan Art Museum of New York, organized by the US ambassador in Mexico, Dwight S. Morrow and sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation. Oliver Debroise, "Mexican Art on Display" in *The Effects of the Nation. Mexican Art in the Age of Globalization*, 20-36.

Continent to European audiences.<sup>106</sup> Most importantly, as the US and Mexico tried to overcome their earlier differences provoked by the nationalization of oil (1938), and US fears of fascist and communist activities in Mexico,<sup>107</sup> these cultural collaborations were pivotal in buttressing their relations.

From the 1940s onwards, the US government and several industrialists became interested in the arts of Latin American countries; by studying their culture, they could advance their interests in the region. For instance, in 1942, Nelson D. Rockefeller established the Inter-American Purchase Fund to help MoMA develop the first comprehensive collection of Latin American art on a continental scale. This collection was built in one year and its fate –largely kept in the vaults of the museum and rarely exhibited in full– parallels the economic and political interests of the Rockefellers and the US government in the region.<sup>108</sup> Alfred H. Barr Jr., Director of MoMA, traveled to Mexico in 1942 as part of these activities in order to promote the creation of a collecting class and the production of easel painting within Mexico. In an interview with Mexican cultural promoter Fernando Gamboa, he spoke about these issues and expressed to Gamboa what he felt were the dangers facing Mexican art.

Considero el arte y la arquitectura de México, desde los tiempos precortesianos y coloniales, como los más grandes de las Américas, y es incuestionable que su pintura moderna es la mejor del mundo. A pesar de todo, encuentro que en México hay falta de interés por la pintura llamada de caballete, pese que el movimiento en

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<sup>106</sup> Charity Mewburn. "Oil, Art, and Politics. The Feminization of Mexico".

<sup>107</sup> James Oles, " Colecciones Disueltas: Sobre unos extranjeros y muchos cuadros Mexicanos" in *Patrocinio, colección, y circulación de las Artes*, Gustavo Curiel, ed. (Mexico: UNAM, XX Coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte, 1997) 623-636.

<sup>108</sup> This collection, initially formed with an emphasis on Mexico and later included other countries, was the starting point for the US promotion of Latin American Art via the exhibitions of the Pan-American Union that organized almost one every year between 1945 and 1970. See Beverly Adams, "The Challenges of Collecting Latin American Art in the United States: the Diane and Bruce Hall Collection" in *Collecting Latin American Art for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Mari Carmen Ramírez and Theresa Parpanikolas (eds) (Museum of Fine Arts in Houston: International Centre for the Arts of the Americas, 2002) 163.

esta forma plástica ha aumentado mucho en los últimos 10 años. [...] Sin embargo, mientras en los EE. UU. y en Europa había, hasta 1944 un fuerte apoyo de personas y de entidades para la pintura de caballete, en México hay muy poco, en relación con los medios que existen y con la extraordinaria calidad de su pintura.[...] Como visitante norteamericano interesado en el arte, he podido ver obras precortesianas, coloniales, la pintura moderna, pero por ninguna parte he logrado ver una colección pública de José María Velasco o de José Guadalupe Posada, a quienes considero los mejores artistas mexicanos del siglo XX.<sup>109</sup>

Indeed, Barr's statement reveals its preference for easel painting over other artistic movements, in this case muralism. His preference had to do with the ability of easel painting to penetrate the market and develop a collecting class. Both activities were more aligned with the economic project that the US hoped for Mexico, and with the economic interests of the PRI. Barr's emphasis on the work of José María Velasco (fig. 3.1) and José Guadalupe Posada (fig. 3.2) reflect these interests clearly. Posada's work critiqued the government and the 1910 Revolution, but also represented a less threatening kind of visual folklore for the US, while Velasco's paintings represented the European landscape painting tradition. Fueled by Barr's interests and the state's desire to stimulate Mexican economy, Fernando Gamboa, as the main cultural promoter of the state,<sup>110</sup> went

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<sup>109</sup> "I consider Mexican art and architecture from pre-Hispanic to modern times to be amongst the best in the world. However, I find that there is a lack of interest for easel painting, despite that its practice has increased in the last ten years. [...] While in the United States and Europe, at least until 1940, existed a strong private sector supporting this market, I am surprised that in Mexico this is not the case, considering the media and the quality of its painting tradition. [...] As a North American visitor interested in art, I have been able to see multiple examples of pre-Hispanic and colonial art, as well as modern mural painting but nowhere I have been able to see a collection of José María Velasco or José Guadalupe Posada, whom I consider to be the most extraordinary Mexican artists of the twentieth century." Carmen Gaitán ed., *Fernando Gamboa. Embajador del Arte Mexicano*. (Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1991). 23

<sup>110</sup> Fernando Gamboa was the sub-director of INBA from 1949-1952. He was the curator of state sponsored national and international exhibitions from the early 1940s to 1983 (for instance in 1944, he organized an exhibition of José Guadalupe Posada at the Art Institute of Chicago). He oversaw the construction of state museums constructed during that period and in 1965 he was appointed general cultural commissary by presidential order to manage the Mexican Pavilions in the World Fairs of New York (1965), Montreal, Canada (1967), San Antonio, US (1968), and Osaka, Japan (1970), among many others. Ibid.

on to promote the development of a collecting class and an art market that maintained PRI's nationalistic rhetoric and hegemony over cultural matters.<sup>111</sup>

With the presidency of Miguel Aleman (1946-1952), the possibility of progress began to appear plausible through the adoption of ISI. In the cultural field, part of the national budget was destined to the organization of national and international exhibitions causing a boom in the production of easel painting, while murals were still commissioned. Fernando Gamboa, followed Barr's advice by encouraging private collectors to support the insufficiency of state policies while he continued to employ the cultural diplomacy strategies consolidated in the early 1940s.<sup>112</sup>

In order to promote the Mexican art market, Gamboa established La Galeria de Ventas Libres in 1949 and appointed his wife Susana Gamboa as its director. This gallery was instrumental in calming the radical nature of Mexican modernism. At the same time, Gamboa

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<sup>111</sup> It is interesting to compare the career path of Fernando Gamboa to his contemporary Cuban curator, José Gómez-Sicre to further elucidate how the creation of an idea of Latin American Art was intrinsically tied to the US economic and political interests in the region and how, at least from the 1940s to the 1950s, muralism was still threatening for US interests (this will change in the 1980s when muralism via a neo-Mexican aesthetic was revived). In 1944, Gómez-Sicre worked for Barr in the creation of the 1944 *Modern Cuban Painting* exhibition at MoMA. Gómez-Sicre was later appointed curator of the Visual Arts section of the Pan American Union. It is well known how the exhibitions organized by Gómez-Sicre set out to find a new version of Latin American art, one that was comparable to the art produced in the United States and excluded Mexican Mural painting. This rejection towards muralism has been discussed as a reflection of the interests of the US in the region, and as a response to its communist fears at the height of the Cold War. Further, the influence of Gómez-Sicre reached the Mexican cultural milieu. In 1965, Gómez-Sicre organized the Inter-American Salon ESSO, a salon for Latin American artists under 40 years of age, in which the awarded paintings would be part of the ESSO's corporate collection. As part of the project, in Mexico the 1965 Salon ESSO de Artistas Mexicanos, was organized. This exhibition was one of the first shows sponsored by a private corporation, but it was also the cause of a heated polemic because the winners espoused abstract painting rather than the official figurative aesthetic of social realism. This polemic would re-surface three years later as artists boycotted the cultural program of the 1968 Olympics and established the First Independent Salon. Although the importance of the Pan American Exhibitions and the role of Gómez-Sicre is out of the scope of this study, one must consider the influence that his activities and his rejection towards muralism had within the Mexican cultural field. It is also interesting to compare the different curatorial projects espoused by Gómez-Sicre and Gamboa. Although, both promoted the commercialization and private intervention in the arts, Gamboa continued to support a nationalistic model whereas Gómez-Sicre opted for the "freedom" of the US aesthetic. For a short review of Gómez-Sicre career see Alejandro Anreus, "José Gómez-Sicre and the "idea" of Latin American Art" in *Art Journal*, Winter 2005, Vol 64, Issue 4, 83-84.

<sup>112</sup> In several occasions, he would ask companies or private citizens to purchase Mexican artworks to keep them in the country. For example, he asked Banco de Mexico to purchase paintings of José Maria Velasco. Carmen Gaitán ed., *Fernando Gamboa. Embajador del Arte Mexicano*, 86.

established El Salon de la Plastica Mexicana. This half salon, half gallery and juried show, became a stepping-stone for any aspiring artist. Once an artist participated in this salon, he or she could access the benefits of being considered an established Mexican artist. According to Alberto Hajar, Gamboa was able to present the mercantilist side of the nationalist works of art –even those by communist and popular socialist militants– at a time of heightened cold war pressures.<sup>113</sup> At the same time, this government-sponsored salon neutralized artists' belligerence against the state by making them feel that their needs were being attended.<sup>114</sup>

By the early 1950s, Gamboa's influence was pervasive. He became the intermediary between state ideology, artists and an emerging collecting class. Along with the architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, who designed Mexican pavilions for international exhibitions and museums, Gamboa became a pivotal promoter of the state's version of Mexican culture; in the case of Gamboa, this included the promotion of an art market. The exhibitions, pavilions and museums these two men were involved with continued to include the legacy of pre-Hispanic art as a reference for modern Mexican expression.<sup>115</sup> Fernando Gamboa established museums all over the country and organized touring exhibitions in the US, South America, Europe and the Eastern-bloc countries.

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<sup>113</sup> Alberto Hajar, "Posiciones Encontradas" en 44 Años de la Plastica Mexicana. (INBA, Mexico, 1944) 11-19. Shifra Goldman makes a similar argument. Goldman describes how the state and its bureaucrats from 1955-1965 coerced Mexican artists, emotionally and philosophically, to abandon the rebellious nature that had characterized the beginnings of the Mexican mural movement. Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: art and social change in Latin America and the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Among the Mexican pavilions that Pedro Ramírez Vázquez designed included: the Mexican Pavilion for the 1958 Brussels World Fair, and at the 1963/64 New York World Fair. He also designed the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City in 1964. Miguel Angel Fernández, *Historia de los Museos en México*. (México D.F.: Promotora de Comercialización Directa, S.A. de C.V., 1988). For a complete list of the exhibitions curated and organized by Fernando Gamboa see Carmen Gaitán (ed), *Fernando Gamboa. Embajador del Arte Mexicano*. (Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1991).

Between 1947 and 1968, Gamboa's touring exhibition strategy was most successful. Multiple cultural efforts were carried out throughout the world to enhance the image of Mexico and provide the country with international standing. In 1962, taking advantage of the European cultural willingness, Fernando Gamboa strategically introduced Europe to Mexican art with the exhibition *Obras Maestras del Arte Mexicano desde los tiempos precolombinos hasta nuestros días*.<sup>116</sup> This exhibition toured Europe for sixteen consecutive years winning the approval of numerous art critics as well as a loan from the French Government to build the Mexico City subway system.<sup>117</sup> Arguably, these exhibitions influenced the success of Mexico's bid for the 1968 Olympic games and the 1970 World Cup. Gamboa openly recognized the benefits of his endeavors in 1964, when he declared: "we followed the French experience: that is, culture goes first and right after the business delegates."<sup>118</sup>

At the time, Europe was fighting to recover the control of the art scene from the United States, the lure of the exotic was irresistible, and hence, these exhibitions left their mark on European audiences. For instance, André Malraux, French Minister of Culture, applauded and followed Gamboa's audacity in shipping such pre-Hispanic monuments across the Atlantic. Referring to the eight-ton Olmec heads on display at the entrance of the Petit Palais in Paris Malraux said: "Look, Fernando, if you hadn't come and dispelled our fears, I wouldn't have dared to take the *Gioconda* to Washington or the *Venus de Milo* to Tokyo."<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Carmen Gaitán (ed), Fernando Gamboa. *Embajador del Arte Mexicano*, 83.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 88.

<sup>118</sup> "Seguimos la experiencia Francesa: la cultura va por delante y luego llegan los negociadores". Ibid, 88.

<sup>119</sup> "Mire, Fernando Gamboa, sin usted que nos vino a quitar el miedo, yo no hubiera podido llevar *La Gioconda* a Washington ni *La Venus de Milo* a Tokio." Ibid, 83.

From 1983 to 1990, as all banks were nationalized, Fernando Gamboa became the director of Banamex Cultural Foundation. During Gamboa's term, the Banamex Cultural Foundation was the most productive and became known nationally as one of the most important cultural foundations in the country. Indeed, the direction that the bank's collecting took under Gamboa was crucial in consolidating its nationalistic impetus. In addition, Gamboa was also peripherally involved with the establishment of the first private-public museums, the Carrillo Gil Museum in 1972, and the Tamayo Museum of Modern Art in 1982. Gamboa's involvement with the private sector, as well as his activities as one of the architects of the state's curatorial mandate, provide another perspective to understand how the shift from state to semi-private sponsorship of the arts took place, and in particular, evidence the tight connection between Banamex and the rhetoric of state-nationalism.

### **3.2 The expansion of the Cultural Field or Chronicle of a Decline Foretold**

After the 1968 student massacre, president Luis Echeverría (1970-76) began his presidential term with a need to legitimize his rule and regain popularity for the PRI. His involvement as Interior Secretary during the student massacre was never openly discussed until recently but was extensively rumored. Hence, he set out to construct a government that was "open to democracy" by returning, once again, to the recycling of the revolutionary ideals through a populist discourse that relied heavily on an idea of national culture to disguise the economic and political crisis of the time. He did so in various ways: he incorporated intellectuals in his cabinet; promoted the production of popular culture through various initiatives; and, as a strong supporter of centralized government, he formulated a series of laws to protect the national patrimony and legislate the use

of public airwaves.<sup>120</sup> These latter actions directly influenced Televisa's and Banamex cultural interventions.

In 1972, Echeverría's cabinet formulated the Federal Law of Archeological, Historical and Artistic Monuments. The main purpose of the law was to build a national registry of cultural patrimony (in private or public hands), particularly in order to stop trafficking in pre-Hispanic art and the ransacking of archeological sites. It re-established the responsibilities of INAH and INBA in overseeing and controlling the national patrimony and in regulating the responsibilities of private proprietors of monuments or artifacts declared patrimony of the nation.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Echeverría's term was considered a period "democratic aperture" due to the incorporation of many intellectuals such as the writer Carlos Fuentes in his cabinet. For some intellectuals Echeverría's ideals signified a return to Cárdenas. They were a sign of hope after the events of 1968 and the prostitution of the 1910 Revolution ideals since Miguel Alemán's term. However, other leading such as Octavio Paz were less enthusiastic about Echeverría's intentions and will turn towards the private sector to obtain funding for his editorial projects rather than to the state.

As part of his attempt to democratize the state's cultural policies, Echeverría established multiple cultural initiatives and programs for visual artists and artisans. For example, he established the Siqueiros Cultural Centre (Poliforum Siqueiros) to honor the work of David Alfaro Siqueiros, he also negotiated the purchase of the Dr. Alvar Carillo Gil collection, and as a strong supporter of a centralized government he lobbied several times to legislate the use of airwaves which directly affected the monopolist advantage of Televisa, he also developed the Federal Law of Communications and the Federal Law of Cinematography.

Echeverría's cultural policies were ambivalent. He attempted to rescue muralism, ridding it of its incestuous ties to the state and its dogmatism to advance his ideals of freedom of expression and democracy and of course, to regain the artists trust. However, the toll of his repressive hand that in 1971 killed the remaining leaders of the 1968 student movement and the assassination of various intellectuals and journalist that had supported him at the beginning of his campaign changed the image of his democratic intentions, and it was during his term that muralism began to loose its grip.

See Christine Frérot's *El Mercado del Arte en México 1950-1976* and Enrique Krauze, *La Presidencia Imperial. Ascenso y Caída del Sistema Político Mexicano (1940-1996)*. 367-381 for Echeverría's cultural policies, and Ramon Olivo Gil. "El Clán Televisa (1950-1980) Antecedentes". *Revista del Seminario de Historia Mexicana: Colonialismo Cultural y Televisión Mexicana*, (Vol IV, No.3, Otoño del 2003 Lagos De Moreno, Mexico.: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2003 ) for the impact of Echeverría's policies on Televisa.

<sup>121</sup> Prior to this law, cultural properties were identified as properties of the nation in the Constitution of 1917 (article 73) and through the internal laws of INAH and INBA. The Federal Law of Archeological, Historical and Artistic Monuments was initially promulgated in 1970 with a more authoritarian tone to meet with UNESCO's stipulations and stop the ransacking of archeological sites and the traffic of pre-Hispanic arts. The 1972 version was more ambiguous in defining the cultural patrimony, as well as in determining the obligations of private owners of artifacts declared as patrimony of the nation. See Judith Amador Tello "Cronología: Patrimonio Nacional" in *México su Apuesta por La Cultura. El Siglo XX Testimonio desde el Presente*, ed. Armando Ponce (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Grijalbo, 2003.)635-647. And Christine Frérot, *El Mercado del Arte en México 1950-1976*. 82-84.

Overall this law set a precedent, since until then the possession of artifacts considered national patrimony (specially religious or pre-Hispanic objects) by private citizens was deemed illegal.<sup>122</sup> Previously, collectors or proprietors of such artifacts sold their pieces outside the country, in fear that a bequest to a state institution would end up in the private collection of a government official rather than in a public museum.<sup>123</sup> Although protectionist in nature, the 1972 Law “tacitly allowed” the private possession of cultural artifacts as long as they were registered and kept within the regulation of INAH or INBA and public access remain possible.<sup>124</sup> According to this law, private citizens can own examples of national patrimony, and so as long as they are not pre-Hispanic or archaeological, these possessions can be exported temporarily or in definitively with state permission; however there is no mention of the responsibilities of corporations –either national or transnational.

The 1972 law influenced the establishment of private cultural foundations such as: the Banamex Cultural Foundation in 1972 and the Televisa Cultural Foundation in 1975, and was an incentive for the private sector to collect more openly, always under the regulation of INAH and INBA. However, as the economy began to be liberalized private ownership of cultural patrimony became more complex, as the Banamex case attests. To this date, it is still the law that protects national patrimony, and currently is in the midst of being re-written to accommodate a

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<sup>122</sup> As per the Constitution of 1917, archeological, historical and religious artifacts were seen as the responsibility of the state. Prior to the 1972 law, private citizens and corporations did not collect this kind of artifacts openly, see for example the statement by Luis Ortiz Macedo, director of Banamex Collection on page 31 of this document, or if they did so they bequest it to the state, as Diego Rivera’s pre-Hispanic collection in the Anahuacalli Museum (Coyoacan, Mexico).

<sup>123</sup> For an interesting take on this issue see the interview with Mrs. Gelman –one of the owners of the Gelman Collection– in Ana Garduño, “Disyuntivas del coleccionismo: el destino de los acervos” in *Cuarare. Espacio Critico para las Artes*, no 24 (june-december, 2004) 47-53

<sup>124</sup> Judith Amador Tello “Cronología: Patrimonio Nacional” in *Mexico su Apuesta por La Culutra. El Siglo XX Testimonio desde el Presente*, ed. Armando Ponce (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Grijalbo, 2003.) 635-647.

transnational cultural framework –the Banamex incident was pivotal in forcing the revision of the 1972 Law.<sup>125</sup>

Another important part of Luis Echeverría's reinvigoration of national sentiment was his support for the arts. Indeed, Echeverría manifested his deep interest in the role that visual artists and art played in his populist mandate. For instance in 1971, he declared his profound belief in the freedom of artistic creation along with his desire to continue to promote an art that represented the national ideal, as part of his attempts to build a democratic regime:

En México no existe un arte oficial. La recreación intelectual no es objeto de consignas que emanen del Estado ni de presiones económicas. No se persigue a nadie. La libertad de expresión pública está autorizada para aquel que desee hacer conocer sus opiniones filosóficas, científicas, políticas o económicas. El país deberá definir su camino y su perfil histórico con el talento de los creadores mexicanos. La renovación de la sociedad exige un renacimiento de la cultura; reclama un desinterés auténtico, rigor en el pensamiento, conciencia crítica y autocrítica, lealtad en la convicción y, sobre todo, la voluntad de afirmar, en lo más profundo, el vigor del espíritu y la soberanía de la patria. Las artes plásticas no son únicamente manifestaciones elevadas del espíritu humano, sino también un medio privilegiado para expresar la sensibilidad del pueblo y para fortalecer la cultura nacional y la imagen misma de México.<sup>126</sup>

Echeverría's statement denies the existence of an official art in Mexico at the same time as he affirms art's higher spiritual and national purpose bringing to the surface the tensions of the

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<sup>125</sup> In March 2006, after a series of discussions, the 1972 Law was modified as well as articles 27, 73, 115, 116 y 124 from the Constitution; however the outcome of these modifications is still under discussion. At issue is the power that the provinces should have in regulating their local patrimony: a contention between federalism and de-centralization, and the responsibilities and jurisdiction of private corporations. For a current review of the issues regarding the proposal of modifying the law, see Judith Amador Tello "Cautela ante las reformas del patrimonio" in *Proceso*, November, 2006 available at: <<http://www.proceso.com.mx/revistaint.html?arv=139495&sec=10>>.

<sup>126</sup> "An official art does not exist in Mexico. Intellectual creation is not coerced by the state or by economic pressures. Public freedom of expression is authorized to everyone who wishes to express his philosophical, political or economical opinions. [...] The renewal of a society calls for a cultural renaissance; a rigor of thought; a critical conscious; and most of all loyalty, conviction and will in affirming the sovereignty and the spirit of the nation [...] Art is not only a manifestation of the human spirit, but it is also a privileged media through which the sensibility of a nation, the national culture, which is the image of Mexico has been expressed by painters whose aspirations have coincided with those of the Revolution." See Christine Frérot, *El Mercado del Arte en Mexico 1950-1976*, 83.

cultural milieu. During his regime, he paradoxically rehabilitated the work of David Alfaro Siqueiros (the most doctrinaire of the muralists) who had just returned from exile in Chile at the same time that Echeverría reassert freedom of expression after the 1968 students massacre. It is telling that Echeverría, by then an avid collector of Siqueiros' work, defined the objective of Siqueiros' art as "transcendental because it went beyond doctrines."<sup>127</sup> Echeverría's take on Siqueiros' work clearly points to his need to get rid of the perception that the state had a preferred aesthetic, or that the state coerced belligerent artistic activities, at the same time it reinforces the openness of his government which help him regain the trust of some left leaning artists and intellectuals after the 1968 events.<sup>128</sup>

In fact, under Echeverría's term the state preference for social realist aesthetic began to loosen its grip. As I described previously this loosening gained forced during the preparations for the 1968 Olympics, and was reaffirmed in the aftermath of the student massacre when the emergent group of artists boycotted the Olympic Cultural program. Several artists organized the Salon Independiente (Independent Salon), one of the first exhibitions without any state intervention. This action sent a clear message to the state; the production of art could no longer be

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<sup>127</sup> "Su objetivo es trascender... ya que va más allá de las doctrinas, y su significación es profundamente humana y alcanza la plenitud integral de las artes" Ibid, 84.

<sup>128</sup> Carlos Fuentes was a long the intellectuals that supported Echeverría's administration. Fuentes had a foreign diplomatic role during the first years of Echeverría's administration. Jonathan Tittler, "Interview: Carlos Fuentes" *Diacritics*, Vol. 10, No. 3. (Autumn, 1980), 46-56.

tied to state's ideology.<sup>129</sup> Consequently, the 1970s saw the dispersion of the cultural field: a proliferation of art collectives, a significant rise in the number of private galleries, and an increase in exhibitions outside the state circuit.<sup>130</sup> Faced with this cultural expansion, the state had no other alternative but to open up the state-run exhibition program, and to develop multiple juried salons to promote emerging artists.

Despite Echeverría's efforts to legitimize the government via cultural initiatives, the disdain of artists for the hegemonic state control spilled over into all matters of culture rupturing the post-revolutionary ethos that the PRI had successfully exploited as their party's identity. Visual artists were joined by prominent intellectuals, such as Octavio Paz, who in solidarity with the student movement and appalled by state reaction, resigned his diplomatic post abroad.<sup>131</sup> An important group of intellectuals surrounding Paz followed suit and began to lobby for private intervention in the cultural field, as a way to rid it from the dangers of state coercion. These efforts proliferated in the mid 1980s when Televisa and Octavio Paz began to collaborate in the production of publications and cultural TV spots. Furthermore, some of the ideas spearheaded by Octavio Paz and Gabriel Zaid among other intellectuals, would influence the neoliberal cultural reforms of the

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<sup>129</sup> The need of artists to disassociate themselves from the state and from the social realist aesthetic of the Mexican School was present since the early days of the muralist movement. However, it took a stronger force in 1958, with the emergence of El Movimiento de Ruptura that, according to painter Jose Luis Cuevas, one of its most prominent members, invited artists to break with Mexican Muralism in order to achieve the modernization and internationalization of abstract expressionism and neo-figuration. The 1968 Salon Independiente confirmed and made this separation official. It is important to note that Jose Luis Cuevas was the Mexican artist most promoted in the exhibitions of that the Pan American Union organized in the US between the 1950-1960s under the curatorial project of the Cuban Jose Gómez Sicre. See Amado Ponce ed., *Mexico Su Apuesta Por La Cultura. El Siglo XX Testimonio desde el Presente* (Mexico, DF: Editorial Girjalbo, 2003) and Alejandro Anreus, "José Gómez Sicre and the "idea" of Latin American Art" in *Art Journal*, Winter 2005, Vol 64, Issue 4, 83-84.

<sup>130</sup> Among this dispersion, there was a revival of muralism in two distinct ways, one as a revival especially via the *New Presencia* manifesto –headed by the Canadian Arnold Belkin and the other as a critique and parody via the *Mexican-pop* of Felipe Ehrenberg and his group Proceso-Pentágono and the group Tepito Arte-Acá. There was also the emergence of "grupos" art collectives, mail art and a critique of the art object through performance art.

<sup>131</sup> Enrique Krauze. *La Presidencia Imperial. Ascenso y Caída del Sistema Político Mexicano* (1940-1996), 347.

1988 National Plan for Cultural Development from which new cultural apparatuses like CONACULTA developed.<sup>132</sup>

Yet, Echeverría took another measure to legitimize the PRI. In 1976, he attacked all television programming that promoted consumerism and did not promote national culture.<sup>133</sup> This message was directed at Televisa. To this end, Echeverría attempted to regulate the use of airwaves by establishing a Federal Law of Radio and Television and undermine Televisa's influence by developing a state-run channel, and a program of rural television. To avoid restriction and taxation of its preferential usage of airwaves, Televisa turned to various strategies to counter Echeverría's attempts such as the production of educational and cultural programming in alliance with the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and continued to filter nation-wide news broadcasts to buy off the government.<sup>134</sup>

The events of 1968 represent the first nation-wide fracture in the rule of the PRI both politically and aesthetically. By investing in culture, corporations such as Banamex and Televisa expanded their influence by creating alliances with a wide range of institutions and audiences: intellectuals, artists, cultural promoters and the public in general. As the field of cultural production became more dynamic and intertwined with more interests, the network of power

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<sup>132</sup> Armando Ponce ed., *Mexico su Apuesta por La Culutra. El Siglo XX Testimonio desde el Presente*, 645.

<sup>133</sup> Fatima Hernandez Christlieb, "Televisa en la Universidad Autonoma de Mexico" in Raúl Trejo Delarbre, Raúl (coord). *Televisa: el quinto poder*. (Mexico D.F. : Claves Latino Americanas, 1985) 99-111.

<sup>134</sup> Televisa bought off the government by obscuring the video footage that implicated it with the student massacre of 1968 and established the partisan news broadcast 24 horas (until the 1980s it was the main nation-wide source of news). According to Ramón Gil Olivo, the film (and images) proving their connection were never aired on national television, thus making the Tlatelolco massacre the perfect opportunity for Televisa to buy off the government and secure its preferential usage of national airwaves. See Ramon Gil Olivo, "El Clan Televisa (1950-1980) Antecedentes", 89-113; and José Luis Gutierrez Espindola "Informacion y necesidades sociales : Los noticiarios Televisa". 62-99 in Raúl Trejo Delarbre (coord). *Televisa: el quinto poder*. Mexico D.F. : Claves Latino Americanas, 1985.

relations was expanded collaborating with the breakdown of the state hegemony over cultural matters.

The second fracture in PRI's centralized control took place in the mid 1980s. As in other places in the world, the 1980s marked a shift in Mexican politics and economics. Aesthetically, the ideals of the 1910 Revolution were infiltrated by a new ethos of pastiche that drove a *neo-mexican* aesthetic into the international art market.<sup>135</sup> Politically, socially and economically the 1980s were defined by the 1985 earthquake that destroyed Mexico City's downtown core and caused a severe economic crisis. With more than 5 million casualties and a massive migration of individuals and corporations to the provinces, this migration enhanced the fragmentation of the power of the federal state based in Mexico City, thus rupturing the centralized way the country had been managed.<sup>136</sup> This geological rupture forecast the crumbling of the state's centralized power as it transitioned towards a neoliberal model.

By the mid 1980s, the Mexican economy was plunged into severe stagnation. The president, José López Portillo (1976-1982), declared the country bankrupt and asked for a

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<sup>135</sup> The neo-mexican aesthetic developed during the 1970s as critique and parody of nationalism and its links to the state by artists such as Felipe Ehrenberg's and the collective Proceso-Pentágono. By the mid 1980s a group of Mexican commercial galleries began to promote work that recycled symbols and iconography of Mexican nationalism now stripped from the critical impetus of parody of the earlier artists groups. The 1980s version was very successful in the international market, such as the work of Julio Galán. This turn from parody in to pastiche, exemplifies Frederic Jameson's discussion of post-modernism as a cultural moment indicated by the waning of affect and the turn from parody into pastiche. See Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Logic of Late Capitalism*. (Durham : Duke University Press, 1991) and Oliver Debroise, "Desde un México Diferente" in *Encuentros y Desencuentros del Arte. XIV Coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte* (Mexico, D.F.: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM, 1994) 119-126.

<sup>136</sup> According to some sociologists and public intellectuals, like Carlos Monsivais, the aftermath of the earthquake awakened the possibility of the existence of a civil society. That is, a society that could organize itself, one that made demands, was proactive and no longer dependent on a patronizing state. For these scholars, the proof of the existence of this society manifested itself while countering the lack of preparedness of the officials to respond to the aftermath of the earthquake. Regardless of whether the analysis of the condition of Mexican civil society are true or not, this event has been interpreted as a symbol that marks a change in ideology on multiple levels. See Carlos Monsivais, *Crónicas de una ciudad que se organiza*. (Mexico, D.F. : Editorial Era, 1987).

moratorium on its foreign debt.<sup>137</sup> Further, to avoid the flight of capital, López Portillo nationalized the banks, and Banamex, along with all the other private banks became part of the state. This measure was particularly threatening to the private sector, which feared further protectionist measures. Emilio Azcarraga, by then CEO and owner of Televisa, led the creation of an association of industrialist and business owners called La Libre Empresa (Free Enterprise) to promote the purchase of all state-owned enterprise as an attempt to avoid further protectionist measures.<sup>138</sup> In 1984, the president Miguel de La Madrid (1982-1988) acquired a loan from the World Bank: in return for economic relief, Mexico committed to gradual liberalization.<sup>139</sup> With this loan, Mexico began to align its economy and politics to a monetarist model. This publicly promoted the collaboration between the state and the private sector over cultural matters. At the same time, this coincided with a renewed promotion of Mexican art in the international market.<sup>140</sup> As discussed earlier, both Banamex and Televisa were pivotal in these activities.

How was the inclusion of the private sector in the cultural field officially sanctioned? And how did Televisa and Banamex benefit from the state's new cultural policies? As privatization policies were actively put into practice under the Salinas de Gortari administration (1988-1994),

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<sup>137</sup> Enrique Krauze. *La Presidencia Imperial. Ascenso y Caída del Sistema Político Mexicano (1940-1996)*, 383-396.

<sup>138</sup> Raúl Trejo Delarbe "Mas que cuarto poder" in Trejo Delarbe, Raúl (coord). *Televisa: el quinto poder.* (Mexico D.F. : Claves Latino Americanas, 1985) 189.

<sup>139</sup> Economist Gregorio Vidal discusses the unstable period between 1982-1983 as the passage between two different economic logics – from one that advocated a centralized government and public spending to another who sought to reduce public spending and privatize the economy. Vidal, Gregorio. *Grandes empresas, economía y poderes en Mexico.* (Mexico: Plaza y Valdes Editores, 2000).

<sup>140</sup> This is specially seen through the explosion of Frida Kahlo mania, which clearly evoked the requirements of the time: the increase attention to everything that seemed peripheral, and of course in the context of the US it served to justify the lack of recognition for Latino art produced by Latin American migrants by detouring the attention to Mexican art. This issues have been explored by Mari Carmen Ramírez in "Beyond the Fantastic": Framing Identity in US Exhibitions of Latin American Art" in Gerardo Mosquera's, *Beyond the Fantastic. Contemporary Criticism from Latin America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; The MIT Press, 1995) 229-257.

the cultural sector was refurbished via the National Plan for Cultural Development established in 1988. While Britain and the US were immersed in the cultural wars and faced cuts to state funding and the dismantling of state cultural institutions, in Mexico CONACULTA emerged as a new state institution that would manage all matters of culture by promoting regionalization, partnering with the private sector, creating a national program of arts scholarships and funding, and sponsoring cultural productions and exchanges. In essence, CONACULTA is a parallel institution to INAH. INAH also administers and coordinates all matters of culture, and since 1939 has been the state institution that oversees all matters regarding the cultural patrimony of the nation. The duplicate functions of these two institutions have been a source of constant debate. Arguably, the creation of CONACULTA is a strategic measure to encourage private investment in the arts, and even, perhaps, a measure to destabilize the remainder of one of the bastions of the post-revolutionary period, INAH.<sup>141</sup> This is clearly reflected in the way CONACULTA has approached some difficult issues. For instance, CONACULTA has given more power to the provinces in the management of their cultural assets, it has been more lenient with the Secretary of Tourism in promoting cultural tourism to archeological sites and in promoting the collaboration between state and private sector. These three aspects were tightly controlled by INAH in previous years, and were managed in a centralized manner in accordance to the PRI's one-party-rule and nationalistic rhetoric. Further, the activities of CONACULTA have been crucial in promoting international artistic

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<sup>141</sup> Heading towards the July elections of 2006, several attempts have been put forward in congress to give more juridical power to CONACULTA over INAH. Arguably, the public outrage over the purchase of *Banamex* by Citygroup, which included the *Banamex* collection as well as the destruction of the murals at "El casino de la Selva" in Cuernavaca to construct a Walmart store (which now is a Walmart sponsored cultural centre) "El Centro Cultural Muros" prompted the need to modify the cultural apparatus that oversaw the legal protection of culture and national patrimony. The opponents to granting more power to CONACULTA argue that is just a means to privatize culture and give more privileges or at least legalize the tax subsidizes to the already privileged private corporations, at the same time that the cultural reform is a strategy to break the power of INAH and the unions of the cultural sector. See multiple articles under the culture section since 2001 at *La Jornada* <[www. http://www.jornada.unam.mx](http://www.jornada.unam.mx)> or *Proceso* [www.proceso.com.mx](http://www.proceso.com.mx).

exchanges and in establishing a system of scholarships and funding programs for the arts through the National Fund for the Arts (FONCA), while INAH fights to keep federal control over the preservation of national culture in a tangible and intangible sense.<sup>142</sup> The tensions and interests of INAH and CONACULTA, represent contentions between two different models of managing cultural matters (one that still supports a centralized government and the other that advocates decentralization and privatization).

As Mexico began gradually to implement and promote privatization measures through an extensive promotion of the country's resources and developments, the overstatement of the economic and political stability collided with the full-blown effects of neoliberalism. By 1993, president Carlos Salinas de Gortari had opened up the ejido (communally owned-farm land) to foreign ownership; lowered import barriers; reduced the number of state owned firms; attacked organized labour by incarcerating union leaders; re-privatized the banks; and opened up the maquila program in the northern border of the country.<sup>143</sup> These measures drove the lower classes, peasants and indigenous communities to extreme conditions, culminating with an economic and social crisis in 1995. This crisis touched all the corners of the country—from the call to arms from indigenous groups, such as the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) to the emergence of

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<sup>142</sup> Julio César Olivé Negrete, "Retrospectiva y perspectiva en materia de legislación sobre el patrimonio cultral" in *Patrimonio Historico y Cultural de Mexico: IV Semana Cultural de la Direccion de Etnologia y Antropologia Social*. eds. Maria Elena Morales Anduaga and Francisco J. Zamora Quintana. (Mexico: INAH, 2001) 313-326.

<sup>143</sup> David Harvey, *A Brief Story of Neoliberalism*. (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2005) 101.

civil movements such as El Barzon.<sup>144</sup> While these and other groups demonstrated against privatization measures, a new generation of financiers closely linked to the new breed of political elites benefited from the economic breakdown and began to bid for the re-privatization of banks and government-held companies. The privatization measures not only included the banks and state-run infrastructure, but also included the loss of meager agricultural subsidies and a hike in interest rates that left half of the country in debt and without access to the national savings program. Moreover, the 1995 crisis ruptured the core of national politics. Overall, there was an ideological realignment to secure the continuation of the economic model set in motion in the 1980s, which brought with it an increase in poverty and the redistribution of class power under the guise of a democratic change.<sup>145</sup> Both Televisa and Banamex realigned their management to assert their influence in this redistribution.

In contrast to the 1980s crisis, this time around industrialists and businessmen benefited from economic crisis. In 1991, Banamex was sold to a new group of financiers, who established

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<sup>144</sup> El Barzon (La Unión Nacional de Productores Agropecuarios, Comerciantes Industriales y Prestadores de Servicios) emerged as a civil movement in 1994 to defend the patrimony of middle class business, peasants and industrial workers from the financial bankruptcy brought about the 1994 economic crisis. In 1994, it was also known as the “un-armed debtor revolution” in contrast to the armed conflict in Chiapas led by EZLN. Currently it is an NGO that continues to defend debtors against banks. See <<http://www.elbarzon.org>> for more information on *El Barzon* or David Thelen’s “Mexico, the Puzzle: A Conversation about Civil Society and the Nation with Ilan Semo” in *The Journal of American History*, September 1999. Accessed at <<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/86.2/thelen.html>> (27 Mar. 2007).

<sup>145</sup> David Harvey regards this new class composed by an emerging group of CEOs who are closely linked and complacent with the renewed political elites that implemented the neoliberal turn as a “transnational” class since their interests are not exclusively tied to a nation-state, but rather to their investments, which circulate throughout various national borders. This is not at all different from the international ties capitalists classes had since the eighteenth-century. Perhaps the difference is that this class has been de-centred from its traditional imperialist origins (Europe and US) and now we find Indus, Mexicans and Chinese listed in Forbes. For instance, “in 2004, Forbes magazine’s list of richest people in the world revealed that Mexico’s economic restructuring had produced twenty-four billionaires. Seventeen of these participated in the privatization program, buying banks, steel mills, sugar refineries, hotels and restaurants, chemical plants, and a telecommunications firm as well as concessions to operate firms within newly privatized sectors of the economy such as ports, private toll highways, and cellular phones.” From MacLeod’s, “Downsizing the State”, in A. Chua, *World on Fire: How Free Market Economy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability*. (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

Banamex–Accival expanding the bank's capacities to encompass all financial fields. The new owners, Roberto Hernández and Alfredo Harp-Helú were closely linked to the Salinas de Gortari administration and to the generation of technocrats who endorsed the privatization of the economy. Later on, they were associated with numerous illicit activities, but were never prosecuted and instead made it to *Forbes World's Richest People List*.<sup>146</sup>

In 1990, a year prior to the return of Banamex to private hands, its annual reports began to change to accommodate privatization. The 1990 annual report traded the stark look from the 1980s<sup>147</sup> for a corporate annual report look. Instead of a one-color booklet, the reports were printed on glossy paper and their pages were illustrated with full color images of items in the collection, just like an art catalogue, without shying away from the fact that Banamex owned pre-Hispanic art and religious art, previously deemed to be illegal possessions.<sup>148</sup> Further, in the introductory text of the report, Antonio Ortiz Mena, the bank's director, declared that the year's challenge was to prepare Banamex for its transition into the private banking system.<sup>149</sup> Amongst the highlights of the annual report was the organization and sponsorship of 211 exhibitions in the country, its participation in the highly publicized international touring exhibition *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries* for which Banamex lent several pieces, and the organization of a

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<sup>146</sup> The sale of Banamex became part of an economic fraud that involved high ranks of political elites, including charges of drug trafficking. Citibank was also involved in this corruption scandal. For a description of Citigroup and Banamex new directors involvement with ex-president Carlos Salinas de Gortari and his brother Raul Salinas as well as with the leader of the drug cartel of Juarez, Amado Carrillo Fuentes, see Andres Oppenheimer, *Blindfolded: the United States and the Business of Corruption in Latin America*. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2001). For Forbes listings see <<http://www.forbes.com>>.

<sup>147</sup> Banamex Annual Reports revised: 1983, 1984, 1989 and 1990.

<sup>148</sup> According to the Constitution of 1917, Art. 73. Historical, Religious and pre-Hispanic art where the responsibility of state institutions. Up to the promulgation of the Federal Law of Archeological, Historical and Artistic Monuments in 1972, the possession of these kinds of work by private citizens or corporations was not clear, but it was common belief that they were the duty of the state and not of private citizens. See for example the statement by Luis Ortiz Macedo on page 31 of this document.

<sup>149</sup> Luis Ortiz Mena, *Informe Annual Banamex*, 1990. (Banamex Annual Report).

posthumous homage to Fernando Gamboa. As mentioned earlier, Fernando Gamboa, became the artistic director of the Banamex Cultural Foundation from 1983 until his death in 1990. Overall the inclusion of images of the collection in the annual report, as well as an account of their multiple cultural initiatives served to legitimize and advertise Banamex as a corporation with a long tradition in Mexico with the added value of its cultural assets backed up by one of the most important cultural promoters in the country.

This transaction from state to private hands also brought up the possibility of the collection's dissolution prompting a similar debate to the one provoked in 2001 by the Citibank's purchase. However, this time around, the newly formed CONACULTA intervened and forced the bank's new owners to keep the collection intact and adhere to its public mandate.<sup>150</sup>

The 1990s decade also brought some changes to Televisa; in 1994 it was forced to share its monopoly on the airwaves with Television Azteca.<sup>151</sup> The division of the mass media market into two corporations changed Televisa's monopolist status and seemed to change its relation to the state giving the appearance that the privatization measures promoted a more democratic environment. However, as described previously, Televisa continued to play a leading role in the media industry and along Banamex took on an important role in supporting the privatization of the country. They did so by spearheading the recycling of state-nationalism via international exhibitions such as: *Mexico: Splendors of thirty Centuries* as a backdrop to promote NAFTA. The pieces included and the curatorial mandate of this exhibition resembled almost identically the 1940s exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art*. The main difference between these two exhibitions was the disclosed participation of Mexican corporations and their leading role in such

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<sup>150</sup> See Silvia Navarrete "Colección Banamex y sus atibajos" in *Reforma*, September 18, 2006.

<sup>151</sup> Claudia Fernández and Andrew Paxman, *El Tigre. Emilio Azcarraga y su Imperio Televisa*. 400-405.

initiative. The similarity between them confirms the continued reliance on art as the possibility of economic development and diplomatic tool their difference emphasizes the decline of the state and the increasing influence of corporations. Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari inaugural speech opening *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries* confirms this reliance as he reassured to the opponents of the treaty that “thirty centuries of cultural tradition dating back to pre-Aztec times would maintain Mexico’s autonomy as it upgraded to the first-world NAFTA bloc.”<sup>152</sup> In the opinion of Salinas de Gortari and his advisors, Mexican culture was so strong and stable that it did not require establishing any protectionist measures against the northern cultural menace. In contrast to its Canadian counterpart, Mexico did not include sufficient legal provisions to protect its cultural productions (either its cultural industries or its national patrimony other than what was stipulated in the 1972 Federal Law).<sup>153</sup>

By 2001 the privatization program was well underway, and in contrast to the 1991 transaction, Citibank’s purchase of all the assets of the Banamex collection was allowed. With this precedent, Sari Bermudez’s surprise regarding the lack of protection towards the collection appears quite hollow. CONCACULTA and its functionaries became the central players in a debate between public opinion and political and intellectual bureaucracy regarding the fate of Banamex’s cultural assets, at that time valued at \$65 million US.<sup>154</sup> In the midst of the debate and after declaring that CONACULTA’s role “was not to have faith in the goodwill of others but to have

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<sup>152</sup> George Yúdice and Toby Miller, *Cultural Policy*. (London: Sage Publications, 2002) 176.

<sup>153</sup> See Judith Amador Tello “Cronología: Patrimonio Nacional” in *Mexico su Apuesta por La Culutra. El Siglo XX Testimonio desde el Presente*, ed. Armando Ponce (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Grijalbo, 2003.) 635-647. And, George Yúdice and Toby Miller, *Cultural Policy*. (London: Sage Publications, 2002) 176.

<sup>154</sup> The cultural assets of *Banamex* include 4 286 pieces from which 934 are historical monuments, from the XVI – XIX century and are protected under the law of cultural patrimony, as well as 49 pieces from the XX century, the remaining 3,034 pieces are not protected, which included: 1,093 paintings, 350 pieces of furniture, 281 watercolors, 1,086 graphic works, 195 drawings, 40 murals, 198 ceramics and 91 textile works.

official means to guarantee the Mexican nation that we are protecting these kinds of goods which are very very important...<sup>155</sup> Sari Bermudez issued another declaration:

Dependemos de la generosidad de los coleccionistas con respecto a la manera en que vamos a conservar este patrimonio en el país. Ya hemos estado en pláticas con la gente del Citigroup, con las personas que fueron dueñas de Banamex y que ahora ya tienen un puesto importante dentro del Citigroup. Seguimos platicando, están abiertos, están en contacto.<sup>156</sup>

What was clear with this change in Sari Bermudez's opinions was that the current legislation was unable to handle these kinds of transactions that question the tensions between the symbolic value and the economic value of cultural patrimony, or of art in general. It became obvious that the reliance on culture as state ideology, as exemplified by Salinas' statement could no longer function in a transnational framework. Indeed, after seven years of the implementation of NAFTA, things did not seem as unwavering.<sup>157</sup>

The Banamex incident brought to light the inadequacies of the current legislation on cultural patrimony. For instance, according to the Federal Law of 1972, historical buildings were owned by the nation and could be under the custody of private citizens as long as they comply with state regulations under INAH.<sup>158</sup> In 2001, as the fate of the collection was being debated, the

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<sup>155</sup> See full quote of Sari Bermudez declaration on page 2 of this document.

<sup>156</sup> "We depend on the generosity of the owners of the collection to preserve this part of the patrimony of the nation in the country. We are already in talks with the previous owners of Banamex, who now hold important positions within Citigroup to see how are we going to guarantee the permanence of this collection in national territory." See "Preocupa destino de acervo Banamex" in *Reforma*, November 2, 2001.

<sup>157</sup> Banamex was not the only case. During 2001, one year after the "the first democratic elections in Mexico", several civil organizations had established fronts to protest against what was seen as "the hand-over policies of the new government". This sentiment was enhanced by other similar cases that took place that same year. On the other hand, these were not isolated events, they coincided with a world-wide emphasis in the protection of world heritage sites and the encouragement to legislate in favour of the protection of the cultural industries of third-world countries, led by UNESCO and a number of its affiliates. The National Civic Front for the Defense of Casino de la Selva and The National Civic Front for the Defense of the *Banamex Foundation* demanded the cease of what they labeled as the hand-over policies of the new government. See *La Jornada*, Wednesday, July 25, 2001 "Propone Frente civico adquirir el inmueble del ex-hotel Casino de la Selva de Cuernavaca"

<sup>158</sup> Articles 6-12 from the Federal Law of of the Federal Law of Archeological, Historical and Artistic Monuments.

ownership records of the Iturbide Palace and the House of the Valpariso Counts disappeared from the public archives.<sup>159</sup> The way all these legal discrepancies were resolved remains unclear; even so, in 2005 the Banamex Cultural Foundation, re-opened the Iturbide Palace as its office and exhibition space under the name Banamex Cultural Palace.

Further, due to the legal maneuvers performed within Banamex after the Citibank purchase, the Banamex Collection emerged as a separate entity from the Cultural Foundation. The Banamex collection has its own administrative staff and mandate, and according to Candida Fernández, director of the Banamex Foundation, the collection is a liquid asset of Citibank-Banamex, and the bank is still committed to purchasing works, especially Mexican painting from the twentieth century, to fill in the gaps in its collection.<sup>160</sup> In addition, the Banamex Foundation change its designation to a civil organization with its own mandate but funded by Citibank-Banamex. This change entitles the Banamex Foundation to purchase paintings declared patrimony of the nation.<sup>161</sup> At first glance, the separation of the Foundation from the Collection guarantees that work declared as patrimony is kept as a cultural asset under INAHs regulations, however it remains to be seen how this status will change in light of the current attempts to update the 1972 law and to lessen the responsibilities of INAH.<sup>162</sup> Yet, according to Juana Gutierrez Haces, Citibank's purchase of Banamex set important precedents in cultural legislation because it forced the change of the

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<sup>159</sup> See "Extravían inscripción de Registro Público" in *El Reforma* November, 19, 2001.

<sup>160</sup> "Asegurán Permanencia del Acervo en México" in *El Reforma*, July 10, 2003.

<sup>161</sup> Telephone interview with Juana Gutierrez Haces, June, 21, 2006. Important to note is that the work of several XX century painters has been declared patrimony of the nation: Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco (1959), Gerardo Murillo (Dr. Atl) (1964), David Alfaro Siqueiros (1980), Frida Kahlo (1984), María Izquierdo (2002), Remedios Varo (2001), Jose María Velasco and Sarturnino Herrán. See Mari MacMasters, "La Obra de María Izquierdo es declarada patrimonio de la nación" en *La Jornada*, October 29, 2002, and Judith Amador Tello "Cronología: Patrimonio Nacional" in *Mexico su Apuesta por La Culutra. El Siglo XX Testimonio desde el Presente*, 635-647.

<sup>162</sup> Judith Amador Tello "Cautela ante las reformas del patrimonio" in *Proceso*, November, 2006 available at: <<http://www.proceso.com.mx/revistaint.html?arv=139495&sec=10>>.

internal bank legislation to give the state priority over any other potential buyer of the collection.<sup>163</sup> Citibank's acknowledgement of the priority to the state discursively filled in the gap left by the Federal legislation with regards to corporations.

Currently Banamex, under Citibank, continues to espouse a public commitment in multiple arenas, assuring the continuation of its symbolic standing in the country. In addition to the Banamex Cultural Foundation, other foundations were established including: Banamex Social Foundation and the Banamex Ecological Foundation.<sup>164</sup> Banamex's expansion to other fields attests to the transformation of Mexican society: the growth of philanthropic activities, and the growing influence of the private sector. However, given Citibank's role in promoting art as a financial asset,<sup>165</sup> and its overreaching and growing influence in the financial sector, it remains to be seen how the policies of Citigroup will re-direct Banamex's current public commitment.

Before continuing with my conclusion, I would like to further highlight three points that contextualize the tensions that surfaced in the Mexican cultural milieu during the last three decades of the twentieth century.

First, the role that art – both high and low– played in constructing the Mexican national identity. This idea of art, converted into the nationalist rhetoric of the PRI, confirmed and justified the longevity and advances of the Mexican population, erasing at the same time the multicultural

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<sup>163</sup> Telephone interview with Juana Gutierrez Haces, June, 21, 2006.

<sup>164</sup> Banamex has also expanded its cultural role internationally through FUNDACULT (Acciones Culturales de Entidades Financieras y Empresas Iberoamericanas). A network of Hispanic-American financial institutions that promotes cultural and social activities in their respective countries. It was established in 1999 and the Banamex Cultural Foundation was one of its main promoters. To date more than 40 financial institutions from Latin America, Spain and Portugal participate in this network. See <<http://www.banamex.com/eng/grupo/index.html>>

<sup>165</sup> Along with the Chase Manhattan Bank, Citibank was among the first institutions that began to offer the possibility to borrow to finance art purchases and to use art as financial leverage. By the mid 1980s, these two financial institutions help establish a global trend in corporate collections. See Lisa Koenigsberg, "Art as a Commodity? Aspects of A Current Issue" in *Archives of American Art*, Vol 29, 1989, issue 3, p. 23-35.

condition of the country and providing an exotic Other to the US and Europe. This national narrative was successfully used to promote foreign investment and the modernization of the country. Thus, art as a diplomatic tool signified the possibility of progress for the country.

Second, although this nationalist rhetoric was contested in different ways throughout the twentieth century, it still plays a very important role in the Mexican imaginary. Current debates surrounding this construction are reflected in the opposing narratives of the state; on the one hand continues to promote foreign investment and supports the market as the sole regulator of all economic and cultural matters, at the same time, it professes to defend the national patrimony and recognizes the multicultural nature of the country.<sup>166</sup>

Finally, although a thriving bourgeois collecting class did not exist in Mexico during the first half of the twentieth century, few collectors played an important role in making up for the lack of collecting amongst the government and the elite. Persuaded by cultural functionaries like Fernando Gamboa or by their own initiative, private citizens made purchases in the name of the state, and later on, some of these private collections were bestowed to national museums. It is important to clarify that, with few exceptions, most of these private collections consisted exclusively of Mexican art. This aspect changed during the last quarter of the twentieth century as industrialists and corporations began to intervene in cultural matters and build collections with international content, coinciding with recognition of Mexican contemporary art in the international market.

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<sup>166</sup> Nestor García Canclini, *Consumers and Citizens: Globalization and Multicultural Conflicts*. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

The cultural interventions of Televisa and Banamex are framed within these three points. They challenged the traditional relation between state-art-nationalism and advanced the economic progress of the country via cultural brokerage as well as –especially in the case of Televisa– opened up the field of art collections to an international framework. Indeed, throughout these years of political and economic crises, the appropriation of the invisible was, for Banamex, a strategy to gain symbolic standing and attract clients through the accumulation of cultural capital. For Televisa the accumulation of cultural capital was a way to legitimize itself in intellectual circles and to neutralize growing criticism, but most importantly, it was a tool to secure monopoly. As the country opened up to foreign investment and national companies became international players, the need to repeat the national rhetoric diminished. Nationalism became a dead weight for both Banamex and Televisa. As García Canclini puts it “supranational trade agreements and transnational migrations made the national norm an outdated and unworkable framework”.<sup>167</sup> Both companies were forced to reconsider their cultural intervention and revise their mandates in order to accommodate the decline of the national framework. Underlying these changes, the role art has played in Mexican politics and economy as the possibility of development –that is of obtaining recognition as modern nation – is implicit.

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<sup>167</sup> Nestor Garcia Canclini, *Consumers and Citizens: Globalization and Multicultural Conflicts*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

#### 4. Beyond Thirty Centuries of Splendor.

*Neoliberalism becomes internally self-contradictory, and this contradiction is increasingly easy to see. On the one hand, it constitutes one of the principal forces that eliminates traditions on all sides, as consequence of driving market forces and of aggressive individualism. On the other hand, its legitimacy and its links with conservatism base themselves in the persistence of tradition in areas of the nation, religion, the sexes and the family...*

*It is no surprise that the doctrines of the new right mix the liberal freedoms and authoritarianism – even fundamentalism– in an unstable and uncomfortable way.<sup>168</sup>*

This discussion centered on the transformation of the Mexican cultural field from a state-run model to a mixed model of corporate philanthropy and state intervention through a case study of the activities of Banamex and Televisa between 1970 and 2001. Their interventions exemplify how national patrimony is being redefined by the increase participation of the private sector –national and transnational– in the cultural field. While their cases are not exclusive, they are the most influential and they offer an insightful perspective to the complex negotiations and interests that gave rise to this transition due to their strong ties to the state. Indeed, Televisa and Banamex cultural activities influenced the transition to a less centralized way of dealing with culture and sponsoring the arts, yet their activities also corroborate the impossibility of disassociating their cultural interventions from their economic interests. And rather than thirty centuries of splendor, their cultural investments became entangled with the last thirty years of crises that framed the transformation of the Mexican cultural milieu from a nationalistic framework to a neoliberal one.

As discussed, the cultural field was deemed exclusive to the state according to the national purpose of art derived from the ideals of the post-revolutionary period. These ideals, as Leonard Folgarait puts it, had something in common with other nations such as Italy, Germany and the

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<sup>168</sup> Anthony Giddens cited in Nelly Richard, *Cultural Residues. Chile in Transition*. (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 2004) 107.

Soviet Union, which like Mexico, “experienced social change during the first quarter of the century that resulted in a search for the national-self, one that could be articulated in artistic form and put in the service of a government intent upon consolidating its new power.”<sup>169</sup> As we know, the results of this experience in Mexico were quite different than those of the aforementioned nations. By the 1940s Mexico had institutionalized this articulation of nationalism and used it as a diplomatic tool to consolidate its foreign relations –particularly with the US– as well as to maintain its power within its own borders and push forward a capitalist program. Soon after, state-sponsored art became Mexico’s most effective diplomatic tool. The state resorted to the sponsoring of art as a means to prove the stability of the country and its modernization through a series of touring exhibitions organized by Fernando Gamboa.

After 1968, when the credibility of the state and the ideals of the revolution began to lose sway amongst the population corporations began to seize the leftover nationalist rhetoric in order to legitimize their economic activities by investing in the cultural field. Thus, Banamex and Televisa joined the state in the promotion of Mexican official culture. Art converted into the ideology of those in power, signified to the state (and later on to corporations) the possibility of achieving economic progress. They did so by embracing a national aesthetic that provided potential investors with the lure of an appealing image of Mexican culture. However, the effects of economic globalization transformed this diplomatic strategy; transforming the nationalistic framework for one aligned with the neoliberal model.

As described, by 1998 Televisa’s ambitious art sponsoring projects receded from the public and surfaced almost eight years later with a different mandate, no exhibition venue and with

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<sup>169</sup> Leonard Folgarait, *Mural painting and social revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940: art of the new order*. (Cambridge; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 1998)3-7.

only a part of its original collection. Indeed, these changes were a direct result of an important transition within the company, but they also reflected the way in which their investments in culture needed to be transformed from an incestuous relation with the state's nationalistic discourse to one that is more tied to their business. This is exemplified by Televisa's turn towards video and new media art. However, a large part of Televisa cultural activities are still related to sponsoring exhibitions that continue to espouse the post-revolutionary idea of national culture. This fact brings to light the complex ways in which an idea of a unified nation is still useful to pursue transnational or private economic interests, keeping with the pressures of the global economy.

The case of Banamex is also reflective of the changes in the nationalistic framework; however, the purchase of Banamex by Citibank exposed tensions incurred by an excessive endorsement of nationalism to back up populist rhetoric in order to disguise private economic interests. In other words, while the closure of Televisa's Centro Cultural Arte Contemporaneo (CC/AC) was significant it was kept within the field of art. In contrast, the Banamex affair touched the core of nationalism itself: the national patrimony, and perhaps more importantly uncovered the tensions between the national identity endorsed by the state and the adoption of a neoliberal economic program.

These tensions provoked different reactions. For those against free-trade, the purchase of one of the oldest and most well known financial institutions by a U.S corporation was taken as a sign of loss of national sovereignty. For these people, this corporate transaction could not deny its history: its antecedents could be traced back to the multiple efforts to achieve continental unification since the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, which took numerous guises corresponding to the

ideological shifts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, American continental unification –both political and economic– was actively sought through military and economic coercion, as well as through cultural diplomacy by way of the Pan-American Union, the Good Neighbor Policy, the Alliance for Progress, and its subsidiary economic treaties, such as NAFTA.<sup>170</sup> Certainly, seen through the lens of this genealogy, the Banamex affair reveals the contradictions and the accomplices of an economic system in which, to use Bourdieu's terms, the cultural field has been the dominated faction of the dominant.<sup>171</sup> Mexican cultural policies time and again during the twentieth century revealed and disguised the field of the dominant. The cultural maneuvers of the Mexican state, later joined by the private sector, covered up their economic entanglements by promoting a cultural program while simultaneously revealing the sometimes-disavowed relationship between culture and economy.

In contrast to the supporters of free trade, the Banamex transaction was a sign of success and a pivotal part of North American economic integration. It confirmed the need to promote and legislate in favour of private investment in culture as one of the key requirements to facilitate the transition into a democratic and economically developed country, and to get rid off the

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<sup>170</sup> The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) began negotiations in 1994 with the goal of being fully implemented by 2005, achieving economic continental integration to "better compete with the European Union". At the Fourth Union of the Americas in November 2005, and despite the enthusiasm for it by countries like Mexico and Panama, and of course the US, other countries in the Southern Hemisphere spearheaded by Venezuela denounced the unilateralism of the treaty and the impossibility of continuing to apply the same economic conditions throughout the Americas. The debate continues and the push for different arrangements and alliances are being negotiated. The only stage of the FTAA that has been put into practice thus far is NAFTA.

<sup>171</sup> According to García Canclini, Pierre Bourdieu expands two fundamental Marxist ideals (a. that society is structured in social classes, and b. that the relations between classes are of struggle) in his social theory of cultural consumption to include theories that study symbolic systems and power relations. For Bourdieu the economic relations between classes are fundamental to the power relations amongst them, but these relationships take place in accordance to other forms of symbolic power that contribute to the reproduction of power and social distinction. The dominant classes can exert their power in the economic field and disseminate its domination only if at the same time they hold the hegemony in the cultural field. See Nestor García Canclini, "Introducción. La sociología de la cultura de Pierre Bourdieu", in Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociología y Cultura*. (México: Grijalbo, 1990) 9- 51.

“revolutionary legacy” that continues to permeate cultural matters. To supporters of the neoliberal program, the outrage provoked by the fate of the assets of a private corporation revealed the stench of more than seventy-years of a chauvinistic way of dealing with the arts that hindered the development of a private art market and a collecting class.<sup>172</sup>

Regardless of these opposing views, the Banamex affair unleashed the remnants of a nationalistic framework, confronting it with the liberalization of everything, but national borders. This fracture between two ideological standpoints disclosed the contradictions inherent in the constitution of a national patrimony. National patrimony, besides designating the ownership of cultural goods of a collective, constitutes in the words of Pierre Bourdieu, “an act of symbolic violence, in that it gains legitimacy by misrecognizing the underlying power relations which serve in part to guarantee the continued legitimacy of those who produce or defend the canon.”<sup>173</sup> What is expressed in Bourdieu’s terms is how as much as the national patrimony symbolizes the union of a collective it also serves the interests of those in power, where the location of “those in power” can be in multiple positions and serve various factions. In this instance, the fate of an example of the national patrimony, the Banamex Collection, is at stake precisely due to the transformations of the Mexican spheres of power, where competing needs of the cultural field are at issue. On the one hand, the development of an art market is threatened by protectionist policies, and on the other, the national rights of ownership and enjoyment of national patrimony are at stake.

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<sup>172</sup> For instance, the declaration of the work of Remedios Varo and María Izquierdo as patrimony of the nation in 2002, provoked concern amongst curators and art historians because it hinders the commercialization of the work of these painters outside of the country and impedes the development of an art market and the creation of a collecting class. See Ana Garudño, “Sugieren Legislar el coleccionismo” *El Reforma*, July 2, 2004.

<sup>173</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 20.

After the events of September 11, 2001, the interests behind Banamex and Televisa took another turn as the plans for achieving economic integration between the three North American countries became more complicated. The relation between Mexico and the United States deteriorated after Mexico –who held a sit on the United Nations’ 15-Nation Security Council between 2002 and 2004– voted against the US lead war on terror.<sup>174</sup> At stake in this betrayal was the promise of a US reform in the migration law that would guarantee the rights of Mexican migrants in the US, whose remittances accounted, in 2003, to the second source of Mexican revenue after Oil.<sup>175</sup> Following this fallout, the Mexican embassy in Washington announced in October of 2003 a program of touring exhibitions of Mexican art throughout major strategic art venues in the United States, including the National Gallery of Art and the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, and the Legion of Honour in San Francisco. These exhibitions included the US and Mexican old and new favorites: *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*, *The Cubist Paintings of Diego Rivera: Memory, Politics and Place*, the film series *Cinema of Mexico* and Gabriel Orozco’s photography exhibition *Directions*.<sup>176</sup> Televisa Cultural Foundation sponsored some of them and expanded the Mexican embassy initiative with: *Maya Textile Art*, from October to January 2005 at The Presidio in San Francisco (this exhibition was also sponsored in collaboration with the Banamex Cultural Foundation); *The Aztec Empire*, from October to February, 2005 at the Salomon R. Guggenheim Museum; and the cultural festival *Mexico Now*, from October to December, 2005

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<sup>174</sup> See Ginger Thompson and Clifford Krauss, “Antiwar Fever Puts Mexico in Quandry On Iraq Vote” *New York Times*, February 28, 2003, pg A12; Tom Zeller, “How To Win Friends and Influence Small Countries”, *New York Times*, March 16, 2003, pg WK3; Tim Weiner, “US And Mexico Coordinate Military Efforts for Mutual Protection Against Terror”, *New York Times*, March 23, 2003, pg B13.

<sup>175</sup> Ginger Thompson, “A Surge in Money Sent Home by Mexicans”, *New York Times*, October 28, 2003, pg A14.

<sup>176</sup> Lawrence Van Gelder, “Arts Briefing”, *New York Times*, October 2, 2003, pg E2.

in the streets of Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan.<sup>177</sup> The timing and locations of these cultural endeavors, as the US Senate threatens to construct a wall in the border between the two countries, evidences the continued use of an idea of culture as an economical and political brokering tool.<sup>178</sup> Currently, transnational financial corporations are noticing the revenues produced by migrant remittances. For instance, in the past months, Citigroup announced its intentions to expand its financial services towards this field.<sup>179</sup> Taking this into consideration one can observe that even though the players and the interest behind these exhibitions are being expanded to match the current politics, the strategy behind displays of national culture remains the same. As Frederic Jameson puts it “culture has become decidedly economic, and this particular economics clearly sets a political agenda, dictating policy.”<sup>180</sup> It remains to be seen what kind of strategies Citigroup will deploy now that their economic interests touch the core of the migration issue, and whether its presence in the Mexican cultural field will play a part in this new scheme.

Coinciding with the aforementioned exhibitions, Mexico continued lobbying for increasing the range of control of cultural institutions established in 1988 to facilitate the participation of the private sector. In September of 2005 CONACULTA under the leadership of Sari Bermudez, the cultural reform Fomento y Difusión de la Cultura, was proposed. This reform, popularly known as La Ley Bermudez, proposed CONACULTA as the main cultural state apparatus. This attempt to centralize all cultural matters under one institution became a bizarre extrapolation of

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<sup>177</sup> *Annual Report*, Televisa Foundation, 2004

<sup>178</sup> In February 2005 the US Senate F. James Sensenbrenner proposed to build an extension to the existing wall in the border between Mexico and the United States, as part of an anti-immigration movement against the migration law reforms. In 2006, President George W. Bush gave green-light to the construction of the wall. See David Brooks “Congresistas de EU traman nueva ofensiva contra indocumentados” *La Jornada*, February, 11, 2005; and David Brooks, “El Muro en la Frontera, “clave” en la Estrategia Electoral Republicana”, *La Jornada*, October 31, 2006.

<sup>179</sup> See Roberto González Amador, “México, Plataforma de Citigroup para Expandir Operación a Centro y Sudamérica”, *La Jornada*, February 24, 2007.

<sup>180</sup> Fredric Jameson, “Globalization and Political Strategy” in *New Left Review*, No. 4, July – August, 2000, 6.

Vasconcelos' 1920s cultural program; with a crucial shift from nationalization to liberalization. This turn confirms the joint venture between the state and the private sector (national and transnational) in supporting and promoting cultural matters. This reform proposal together with the encounters between Banamex and CONACULTA, first in 1991 and subsequently in 2001 confirm the purpose of the 1988 National Plan for Cultural Development: to gradually achieve cultural liberalization and diminish the power of the revolutionary institutions such as INAH and INBA. Until now, this reform has not succeed, and although multiple modifications and counterproposals have been submitted, the fact that it is still currently debated corroborates the currency of the topic and the way the state and its relation to national culture are deeply entangled with Mexico's economic transformation.<sup>181</sup>

As Terry Eagleton tells us, culture, either in its anthropological, aesthetical or even its commercial sense “constitutes not just an academic quarrel but a geopolitical axis”. For Eagleton, culture is the hyphen between the nation and the state, and the image through which all the contradictions of this union are exposed.<sup>182</sup> From these contradictions, two conceptions emerge: one that sees everything as cultural and the other that sees everything as economical. Hence, cultural wars are fought between the politics of recognition and the politics of distribution – between culture as identity and culture as economy, as both Banamex and Televisa's cases

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<sup>181</sup> Judith Amador Tello “Cautela ante las reformas del patrimonio”, *Proceso*, November, 2006.

<sup>182</sup> The hyphen in the term ‘nation-state’ signifies a link between culture and politics, where politics unifies and culture differentiates. Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*, 58.

attest.<sup>183</sup> In particular, the Banamex transaction also brings to light the dual function of art, which intersects these two conceptions. On the one hand, the condition of art as an object with an assigned, but not fixed, monetary value (as an asset for Banamex), and on the other, its unquantifiable symbolic value; one that confers status and power to influence consumers' minds (or to construct a national identity). Yet, in lieu of Mexico's changing socio-political landscape, it remains to be seen how the sponsorship of the Mexican culture, the conception of national patrimony and the role of art will develop in the coming years, and whether the expansion of the cultural field will serve to lobby for better legislation on cultural matters.

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<sup>183</sup> See Nancy Fraser "Rethinking Recognition" in *New Left Review*. May-June (2000) 107-120; Jeffrey J. Williams, "The Ubiquity of Culture. A review essay considering Francis Mulhern", *Culture/Metaculture* (London: Routledge, 2000) and Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000)." in *Postmodern Culture*, Volume 16, Number 1 September, 2005. Fraser proposes a status model that encompasses an analysis of both redistribution and recognition in which the problem of social justice that for her resides is where the problem of cultural subordination can be more thoroughly analyzed via the recognition of cultural subordination in the form of status and economical subordination in the form of class.

## Figures

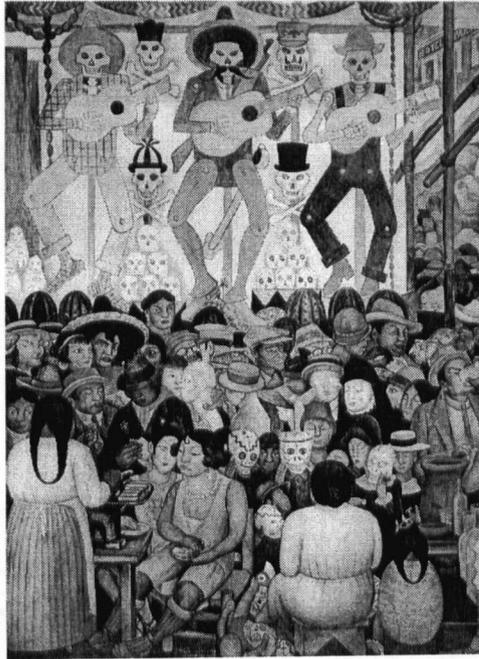


Fig 1.1 Diego Rivera, *The Day of the Dead, Party on the Street*, 1923-24.  
Mural located in the southern wall of the Secretary of Public Education, Mexico City.

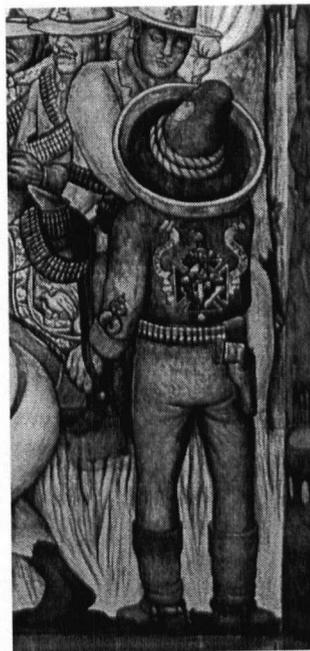


Fig 1.2 Diego Rivera, *The History from the Conquest to the Future. Today and Tomorrow*, 1925-1935. (detail)  
Mural located in the main stairway at the National Palace, Mexico City.



Fig 1.3 (above left) Diego Rivera, *El Baño en Tehuantepec*, 1923-24 (above right) Diego Rivera, *La Zandunga*, 1923-24. Both murals are located at the Secretary of Public Education, Mexico City. (middle) Anonymous, *Cartes de Visite*, 1925-1945. (below left) Roberto Montenegro, *Tehuana (Retrato de Rosa Rolanda)*, 1926. (below right) 10 peso bill (detail), 1965.



Fig 1.4 Diego Rivera, *La Cosecha del Maíz*, 1923-24.  
Mural located in the Southern Wall of the Secretary of Public Education, Mexico City.

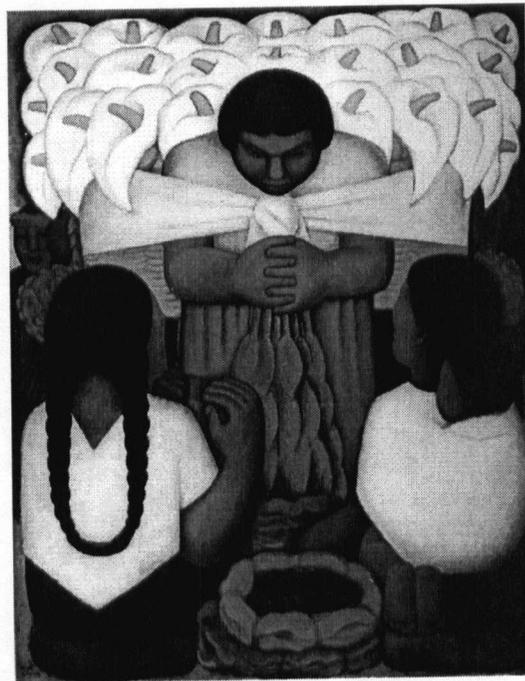


Fig. 1.5 Diego Rivera, *El Día de las Flores*, 1925. (painting). Based on the mural *El Viernes de Dolores*, located on the south wall of the Secretary of Public Education, Mexico City.

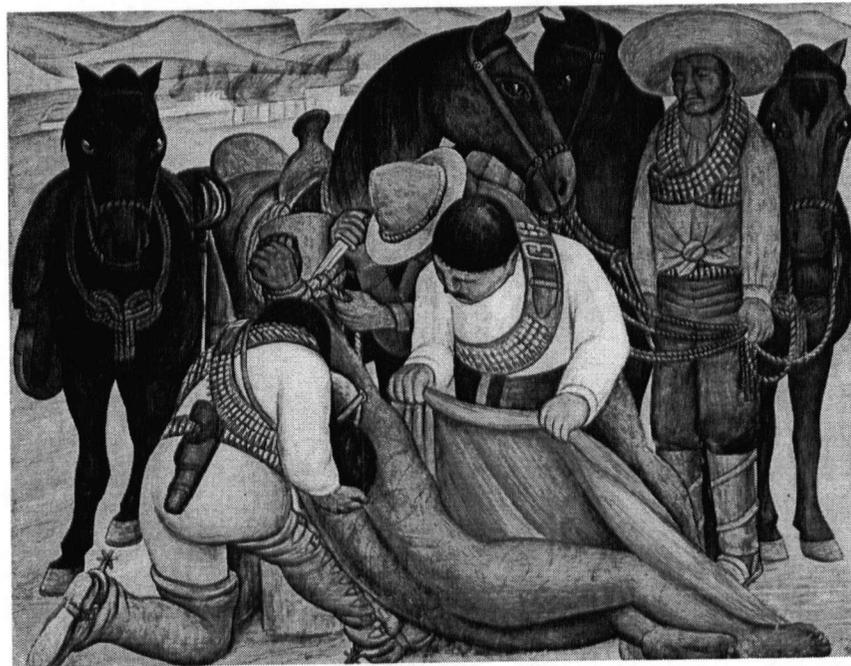


Fig. 1.6 (above) Fernando Leal, *Campamento de un Coronel Zapatista* (*Campamento Zapatista*), 1921-1922.

(below) Diego Rivera, *La Liberación del Peón*, 1931. (movable fresco)

Based on the Mural located in the Southern Wall of the Secretary of Public Education, Mexico City.

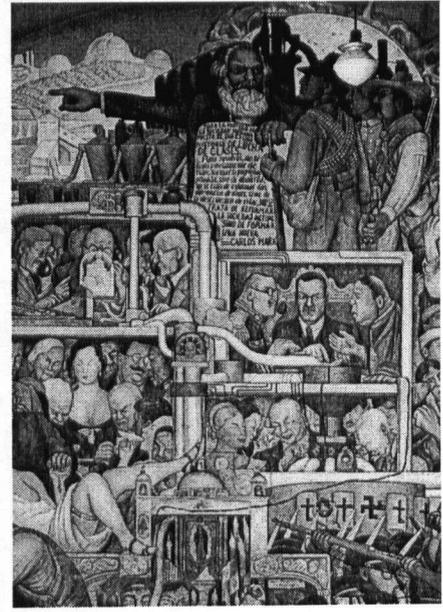


Fig. 1.7 Diego Rivera, *The History from the Conquest to the Future. Today and Tomorrow*, 1925-1935.

Located in the main staircase of the National Palace, Mexico City.

(above left) *Prehispanic Mexico*, mural on the north wall .

(above right) *Mexico of Today and of the Future*, mural on the south wall .

(below left) *From the Conquest to the Present*, mural on the central wall.

(below right) *Mexico of Today and of the Future*, (detail).

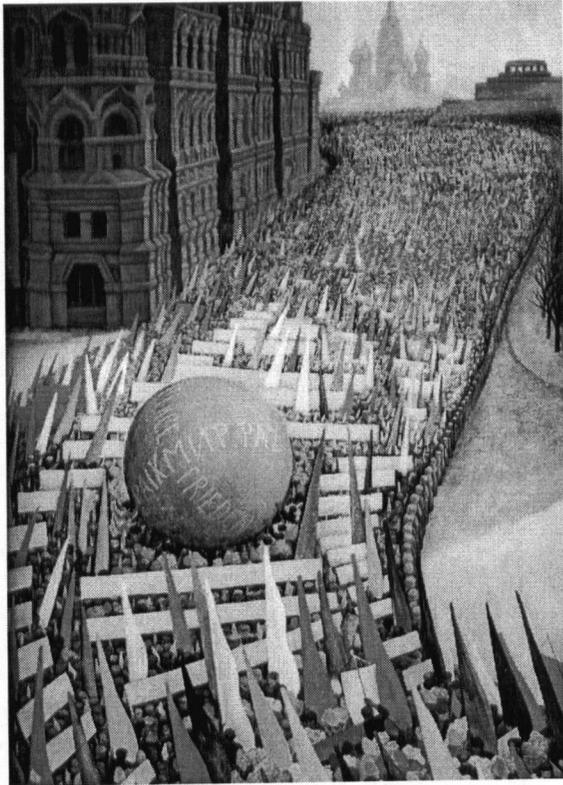


Fig 2.1 Diego Rivera, *1<sup>st</sup> May Parade in Moscow*, 1956. (detail)



Fig 2.2 Rufino Tamayo, *Mujeres*, 1930

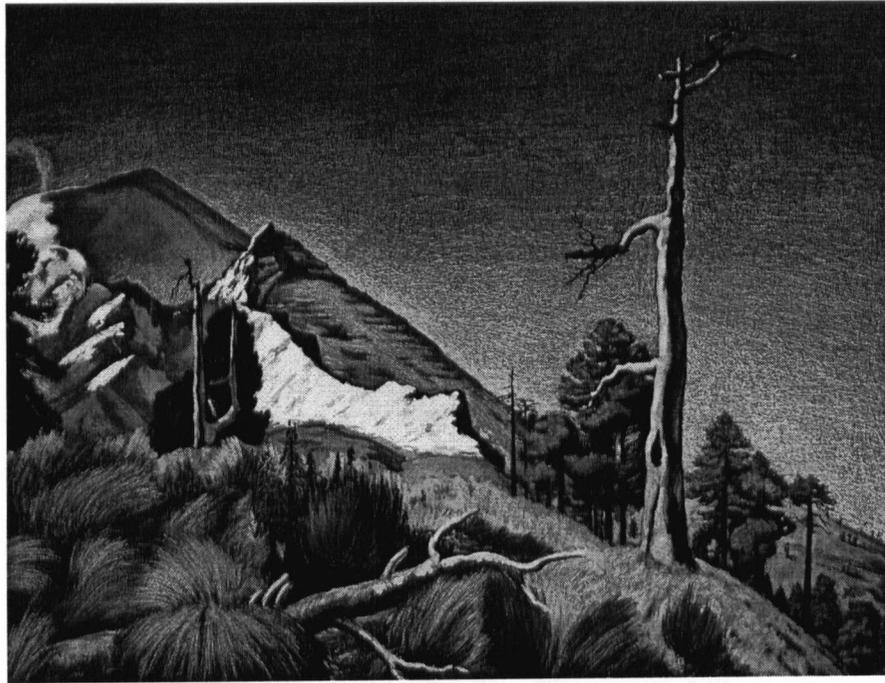


Fig 2.3 Dr. Atl's (Gerardo Murillo), *Popocateptl desde Tlamacas*, 1942



Fig 2.4 José Clemente Orozco, *Mujer con Figura Volando*, 1945

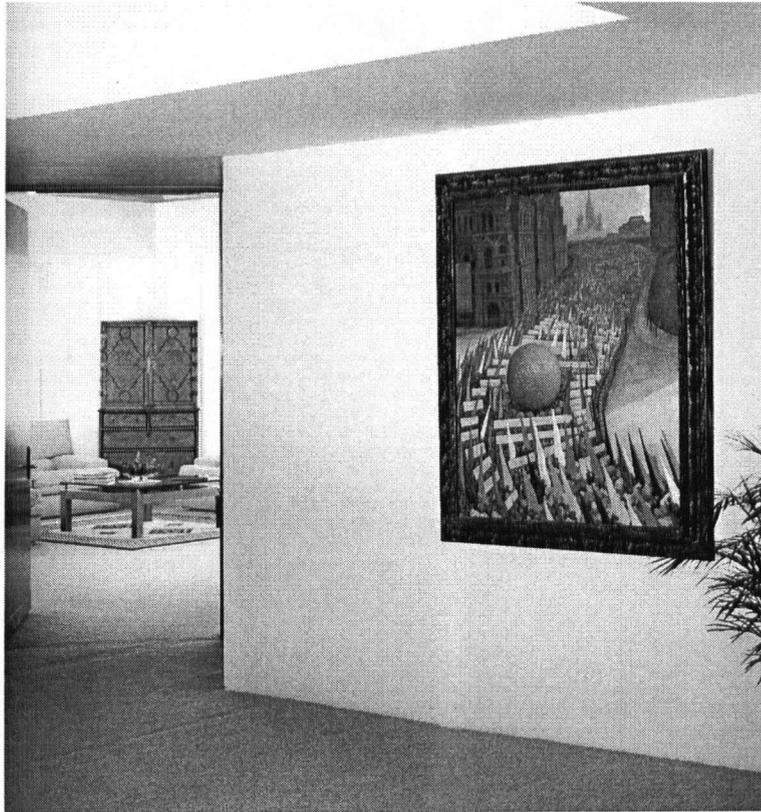


Fig 2.5 Corporate offices of Banamex, Santa Fe, Mexico City.  
Shown in the image: Diego Rivera's *1<sup>st</sup> May Parade in Moscow*, 1956



Fig. 2.6 Frida Kahlo's, *Los Frutos de la Tierra*, 1938

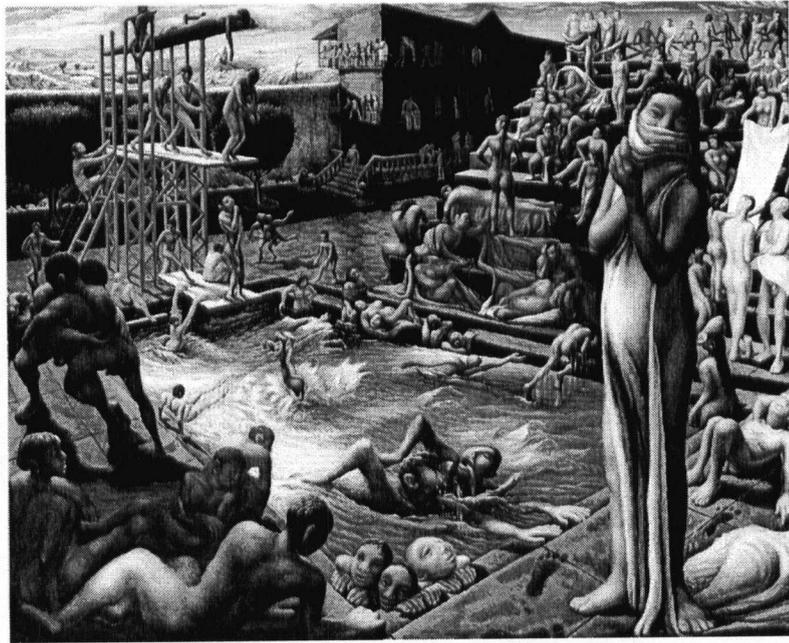


Fig 2.7 Julio Castellano's, *Día de San Juan*, 1939



Fig 2.8 Edouard Pingret, *Tejedora del Ajusco*, XIX Century.



Fig 2.9 Jenny Holzer, *Selections from truisms (La Propiedad Privada Creo El Crimen)*, 1983-84

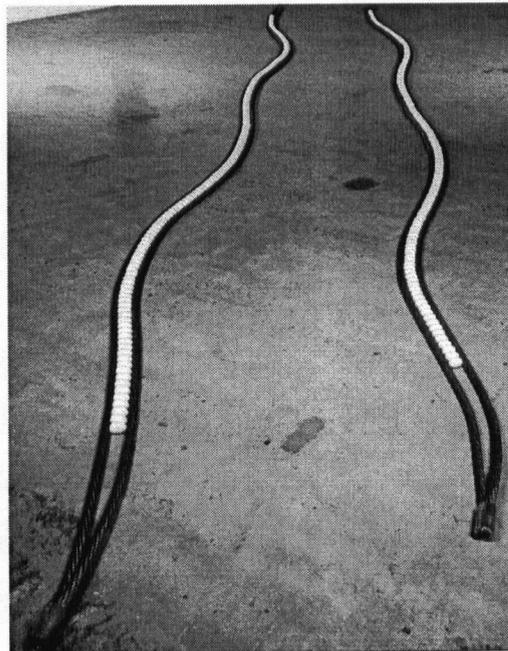


Fig 2.10 Luciano Fabro, *Ovaie*, 1988

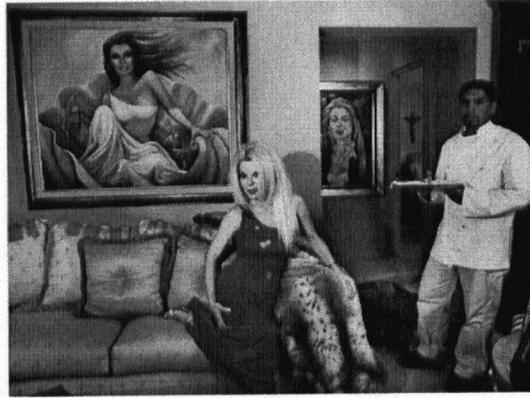


Fig 2.11 Daniella Russell, *Serie Ricas y Famosas*, 2001

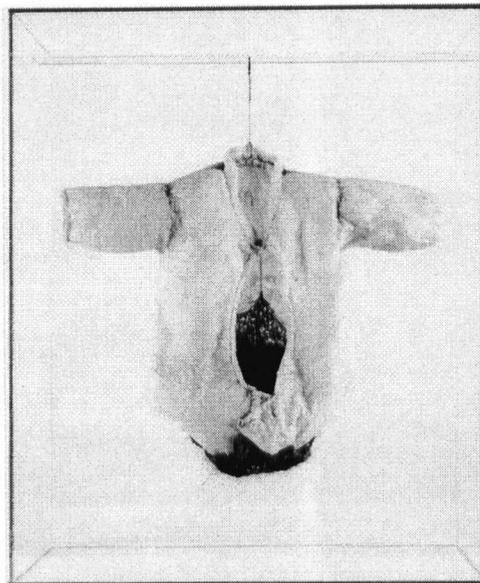


Fig 2.12 Paula Santiago, *Sin Titulo, Sin Fecha*,



Fig 2.13 Maria Izquierdo, *El Circo*, 1939

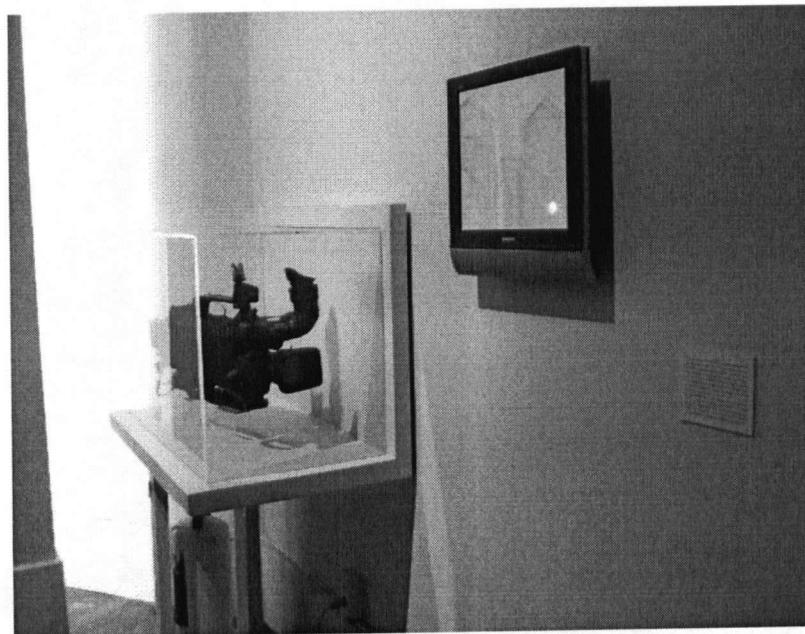


Fig. 2.14 Image of the exhibition *Eternidad Fugitiva* that shows the video camera and video footage of Televisa's embedded reporter on duty in Irak.

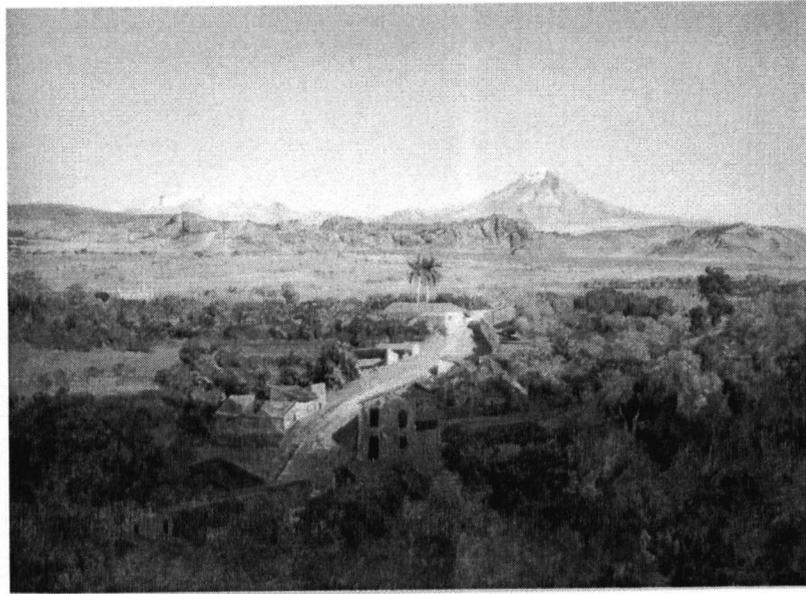


Fig 3.1 José María Velasco, *El Popocateptl e Iztaccíhuatl tomados desde el corredor de la casa de Hernan Cortés en Cuernavaca*, 1881.



Fig 3.2 José Guadalupe Posada, *El Jarabe de Ultratumba*, c1910 (Monography, 1930).

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