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# Ni de Aqui Ni de Alla: The Emergence of the Mexican/Chicano Conflict

Ana Perches

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By  
**Ana Perches, Ph.D.**  
**University of Arizona**



**Southwest  
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Ana Perches  
Rockefeller paper  
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NI DE AQUI NI DE ALLA: THE EMERGENCE OF THE MEXICANO/CHICANO  
CONFLICT

Why are Chicanos so repulsive and despicable for Mexicans? Why, despite a few exceptions, do Mexican writers tend to view us negatively? In brief, because we undermine the protective wall of national separation between Mexico and the United States; we deconstruct the fictions of exclusivity necessary for Mexicans to go on seeing themselves in terms of a solidified absolute. We are a threat because we short-circuit their national self-project, so they must reduce us to less than equals.

Bruce Novoa, "Chicanos in Mexican Literature"

"Por más que la gente  
me juzgue tejano  
Yo les aseguro  
que soy mexicano  
de acá de este lado"

Popular Mexican corrido

(No matter if people take me for a Texan, I assure them that I am Mexican, from this side of the border)

The three Mexican-born writers I have chosen for this paper reflect the general political ideas or attitudes of middle-class Mexican exiles of the 1920's. All three, Julio Arce (Jorge Ulica), Benjamín Padilla (Kaskabel) and Daniel Venegas have an attitude vis-a-vis mexicanamericanization or chicanoization which is expressed in their perception of the chicano as someone who is a renegade, a "vendido" or is "ni de aquí ni de allá" (neither from here nor from there). This does not mean that these writers did

not denounce the injustices and social evils which the general Mexican and Mexican (-American) population suffered, in fact, one of their themes is the exploitation of Mexican laborers by the United States, but my focus is on their perceptions of chicanos, or "Mexicans from this side."

The above corrido expresses what many Mexican nationals living in the United States have felt at one time or another in regard to their Mexican ethnic identity. The anonymous author of the "Corrido del Norte" does not want people to view him as a Mexican-American or Chicano, insisting that he was born on the Mexican side of the border.<sup>1</sup> This ethnic self-consciousness, stemming in part from the Malinche complex, was reflected in several corridos of the 1920's as well as in some of the journalistic writings published in Spanish-language newspapers in the United States. In this context, the Malinche complex refers to the resistance of Mexican nationals to become or be perceived of as anything but "real Mexican."

There are other reasons for this ethnic consciousness such as the fact that Mexicans suffered discrimination by Anglos and thus, by expressing their Mexicanness and criticizing assimilation, they indicated a resentment of American cultural hegemony. In addition, middle or upper class Mexicans exhibited a class bias whenever they chose not identify with the laboring class or peasant-origin **mexicanos** or **chicanos**.

In an article on the Spanish-Language Press, Luis Leal states that "the reconstruction of the history of Chicano journalism is important for the study of Chicano history and culture in general"

(158) Among the scholars who are in the process of reconstructing the history of the Spanish-language journalism in the United States are Juanita Lawhn, Clara Lomas, Francisco Lomelí, Gabriel Meléndez, Guadalupe Castillo and Herminio Ríos (pioneers in the field), to name a few. Many newspapers had the goal to defend "the dispossessed Mexican inhabitants of the Southwest" (Leal 160). However, as Leal points out "not all the Spanish-language press [...] followed the same policy. Many sided with the establishment or the so-called 'educated Mexicans'" (160). A reconstruction of the political diversity within the Spanish-language newspapers is a study that should be done. My particular focus here is on cultural ideology, hence my choice of Kaskabel, Ulica and Venegas. In reference to cultural maintenance, Luis Leal states that:

All Spanish-language newspapers published in the United States [...] have had one important function: to preserve the Mexican cultural heritage of the Chicano, and to stimulate a sense of identity. Most important, they have contributed to keeping the Spanish written language alive. (161)

However, it is not as simple as it may sound. Important questions arise such as: Whom were the writers addressing? the middle class Mexican exiles or the second, third and beyond generation Mexican (-American)? What was the tone in their message? Was it didactic, moralistic, condescending? What regional differences are to be observed that would alter the writer's perception of his/her community? For example, would Ulica's perception of "pocho" language and lifestyle been different had he settled in northern New Mexico instead of in San Francisco? I believe so.

The Mexican-born "Chicano" writers of the 1920's which I will focus on in this chapter, exemplify a sentiment of ethnic self-consciousness which combines such factors as **malinchismo**, ideology and class.<sup>2</sup> By insisting on their Mexicanness, these writers disassociated themselves from the **pochos**, whom they viewed as culturally inferior.<sup>3</sup>

The oral tradition via the corridos testifies to the pervasive attitude of anti-pochismo from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. Whereas corridos as a popular oral form reflected the point of view of the campesino or working classes, some of the writers of the 1920's, the period covered in this chapter, were of upper or middle class origins. These writers did not participate actively in the economic struggles of their Mexican compatriots. In fact, these conservative writers contrast vividly with activists such as the Flores Magón brothers, who were anarchists involved in labor movements in the Southwest.<sup>4</sup> The main writers discussed in this chapter, rightfully categorized within Chicano literature (Rodríguez 20) express views that can be considered antagonistic to Mexican (-Americans) of that period and of today.

A common perception of Chicanos assumes that ethnic confusion stems from the dichotomy of being at the same time Americans as well as persons of Mexican descent. Such a perception puts the crux of the "problem" on bi-culturalism and by extension, bilingualism. As far as language is concerned, it is not uncommon to hear Euro-Americans comment on Chicano Spanish that it is "not



real Spanish" or "not good Spanish" or that it is "street Spanish," "Tex-Mex," "Spanglish" or "slang." The general perception held by many Euro-Americans is that (1) Chicanos speak some sort of Spanish because "they are from Mexico" or (2) Chicanos speak a bastardized form of Spanish which is neither "Castillian" nor real Spanish, nor is it the Spanish they speak in Mexico and (3) Chicanos speak either a limited form of English or they speak English with an accent (Gonzales, 3).<sup>5</sup> Many of these perceptions are wrong and they are triggered from a preconceived stereotype of a particular ethnic group. In some cases, Euro-Americans usually make no analogy between their own immigrant background and that of Chicanos whom they view as "recent immigrants." For the most part, the Euro-American population knows little about Chicano history and confusion abounds on the use of the word "Hispanic" and its implications.

Mexicans also hold certain stereotypes in regard to Chicanos. Although in recent years there has been an interest to include the study of Chicanos in Mexican conferences and literary magazines, most of the dissemination is limited to academic circles.<sup>6</sup> The old saying "no son ni de aquí ni de allá" (they're from neither here nor there) is still commonly heard in Mexico when a description of Chicanos is called for, usually followed by "they speak neither English nor Spanish."<sup>7</sup>

In this chapter, I examine selected writings of various Mexican nationals residing in the United States during the 1920's and their perception of "Mexican Americans."<sup>8</sup> These writers are

classified as Chicanos by most current critics and academics.<sup>9</sup> My focus is on the perception which these Mexican writers have of their special Other, not in reference to their Anglo-American co-resident, but of the "Chicano" or American of Mexican descent. According to a census report (Reisler 268-269) in 1920 the estimated number of Mexican born individuals was 486,418 while that of "Native born of Mexican or mixed parentage" was 252,045. However, it is virtually impossible to state how many Mexicans immigrated to the United States during the 1920's and how many chose to remain permanently (Reisler 56). The fluctuation in numbers reflects the economic conditions of both countries, having a rise in the 20's and a dramatic decline of Mexican immigration in the 30's, due to the Depression. This would place Ulica and the rest of the writers included in this chapter as a numerical majority among Mexican Americans having been born in Mexico. The fact that they belonged to the educated middle class (in both Mexico and the U.S.) also provided them with a socio-economic advantage. In the first few years of the 1920's, the situation of Mexican laborers was destitute and as the demand for Mexican labor declined during the depression, unemployed Mexican workers moved to the cities (Reisler 50). These laborers were called "chicanos" at the time (Villanueva 7). Such immigrants usually were associated with low-paying "unskilled" labor such as agriculture or railroad work.<sup>10</sup>

The period of the Mexican Revolution (1910 - 17) and the decade directly following (1920's) represent a contrast between

middle-class conformist values of some Mexican writers and the anarchist views of the Flores Magón Brothers, (often known as the "revoltosos") and revolutionary women such as Leonor Villegas de Magnón who organized women's groups and defended Mexican language and culture in Texas (Lomas 81).

Manuel Gamio, in a study of Mexican immigration carried out in 1926-27, was among the first scholars to map out the various social classes found in the Mexican immigrant population. Some were people who "[came] to the United States to escape the disorders of the revolutionary periods" (Gamio 1). While many came from the peasant class, a number of these Mexicans came from the middle to upper class and some, such as the writer Daniel Venegas, were not only eyewitnesses of the deplorable conditions suffered by the immigrant but also worked on the railroad tracks or in other manual jobs (Kanellos 15). Writers such as Kaskabel and Ulica belonged to a social category more attuned with the *ricos* or *gente de razón*, distinct from the large numbers of laborers and campesinos who desperately fled Mexico in search of a better economic opportunity in the United States. Ulica and others who had published in Mexico prior to coming to the United States rapidly established themselves in the journalism business, thus escaping much of the physical hardships and discrimination suffered by the workers in low-paying jobs. In other ways, they also fit into Gamio's category of "The Leader and the Intellectual," specifically as urban writers or journalists (183-224).

My primary focus is on the Mexican authors living in the

United States in the 1920's who dealt with issues of assimilation and acculturation faced by **mexicanos** from this side of the border (U.S.). At a moment of history when a Revolution was taking place, some of these Mexican writers of middle or upper class background espoused conventional and reactionary attitudes towards socialist movements, feminism and even toward the increasingly more visible "pochos," Americans of Mexican descent or Mexican immigrants who were more assimilated than the **chicanos**. I maintain that it is, in part, due to a class self-consciousness and to a conservative ideology that writers such as Ulica and Kaskabel profess a negative attitude towards Mexican-Americans of the time. I also maintain that such attitudes and perceptions are still present in many Mexican nationals living in the United States and in Mexicans from Mexico, especially among the elites. Although there are universal parallels in the dynamics of the relationship between Mexicans and Chicanos, there are fundamental reasons why the conflict is stronger among the inhabitants of two nations, one rich, one poor, who share 2,000 miles of a common border.

The writers to be discussed here fit into a category of Mexicans who misunderstand, misrepresent or mistrust the **chicano** and **pocho**, with various degrees of intensity. This period in history, marking the onset of the twentieth century witnessed the large flow of Mexican immigrants arriving in the United States, referred to as the "Migrant Generation" by Alvarez (44-45). However, the middle-class and the **ricos** who fled Mexico were as distinct from the laborers as they had been in Mexico. These

writers perceived themselves as exiles, not immigrants and they "wanted to continue to see themselves as Mexican citizens in exile and not as Mexicans accommodating to their new environment" (García, R. 53). According to Nicolás Kanellos,

In the U.S. Southwest, educated political refugees of the Mexican Revolution played a key role in publishing. From their upper class, expatriate perspectives, these intellectuals and entrepreneurs created and promoted--and here the newspaper was essential-- the idea of a Mexican community in exile, or a "México de afuera" (Mexico on the outside), in which the culture and politics of Mexico could be duplicated until Mexico's internal politics allowed for their return. ("A Socio-Historic Study 110)

Throughout the Southwest during the 1920's, there were at least five major categories of "Mexicans": (1) nuevomexicanos or neomexicanos, the descendants of the Spanish explorers and mestizo settlers from New Mexico and Southern Colorado with its various social classes (2) the descendants of Spanish and Mexican settlers from California, Arizona and Texas, each with its distinctive characteristics (3) the diverse population, which includes but is not limited to the two above, which experienced "1848" and became "Americans" by default (4) American-born Mexicans (Mexican-Americans) who were comprised of an upper middle class (gente decente), a middle class and a lower class (clase humilde). This group would be generically lumped in the category of "pocho" by many Mexicans from Mexico. (5) the population consisting of immigrants and exiles from Mexico comprised of urban and rural people, mainly **chicanos** from campesino or working class roots and educated middle to upper-middle class (with variations for each group). This chapter deals with the attitudes of this last group

of (upper)middle class writers who often lumped the rest of the Mexicans/Mexican Americans in one category.

Mexican nationals such as Ulica, Kaskabel and Venegas did not become aware of their ethnicity until they were confronted with a population of Mexican origin which did not self-identify with Mexico in the way that they expected. On the topic of cultural preservation Kanellos says that the "México de afuera" campaign "was markedly nationalistic and militated to preserve Mexican identity in the United States" (110). In reference to San Antonio's *La Prensa*, Bruce-Novoa states that "it was the voice of the Mexican exile group. And exiles, having to face the trauma of exodus, often react by reproducing the homeland in a representational form of their own choosing and one that serves their needs" (151).

What were the conditions that made the exiles want to separate themselves from those who were not as Mexican? It is when one confronts the Other, in this case a very similar Other, often regarded as the Self, that one can begin to formulate an ethnic consciousness. A question to be asked is not what were the economic conditions of the Mexican immigrants and exiles of the time, because social scientists know that (Reisler 1976) but instead, what were their perceptions of themselves and of the Other during this period as reflected in their writings.

My focus here is not on the Chicano perception but on the Mexican perception. The distinction between Mexicans from Mexico and Mexicans from the United States (Mexican-Americans) was

progressively more marked with each decade that passed. In fact, the forties and fifties, due to the participation of Mexican-Americans in World War II and the Korean War, bring about the onset of a growing "Mexican-American consciousness" leading to the "Mexican-American Generation."

With the exception of a number of nuevomexicanos writing during the twenties and thirties, most writers in the Southwest who were writing in Spanish for the Mexican and Mexican-American community were originally native to Mexico, not the United States. At the time, writing and publishing was limited to the middle or upper educated classes and those with the capacity to publish in Spanish language journals had to come from an educated middle class. A recent study by Gabriel Meléndez points to the Mexican and Mexican-American writers (mostly nuevomexicanos) from the turn of the century to the 1930's, writers who published in Spanish-speaking newspapers in New Mexico and other states (pg.#) However, unless these nuevomexicanos were literate in "standard" Spanish, they would have found difficulty publishing in Spanish-speaking newspapers because these newspapers were directed by people from Mexico or other Spanish-American countries who would harbor disdain toward the Spanish spoken and written by the typical Mexican-American who received no formal instruction in "la lengua de Cervantes," as Ulica would have put it. Especially in the case of New Mexico, however, the Spanish language among native nuevomexicanos was a strong cultural force up to about the 1930's.

Antonio Ríos-Bustamante also argues that during the first

decades of the twentieth century, the distinction between Mexicano and Mexican-American was not as marked as it is today, rather, people identified in terms of their region so that "California-born Mexicans were called **californios**, not just the elite" (246) If the concept of the provincial **patria chica** of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries prevailed before state demarcations (Ríos-Bustamante 4) what differences can be observed upon the beginning of massive immigrations into the Southwest which brought Mexicans from various cultural regions from Mexico, many of which were not aware of the unique characteristics of the inhabitants of the region. If a Mexican exile settled and wrote in a predominantly Anglo area, what differences could be observed in his/her topics and attitudes or would s/he have written at all?

Although there were variations among the different regions or states, there were middle-class Mexican-Americans who identified with Mexico as in the case of residents from the Texas Lower Valley whose ancestors settled in the region in the 1700's and who, even in the twentieth century, sang the Mexican national anthem in their private schools in Texas (Tatum 131). As Raymund Paredes points out:

Thousands of campesinos came north because the fighting had all but destroyed the country's agriculture. Other immigrants were political refugees. Many Mexicans, from every social class, left because they found the prevailing atmosphere of random violence intolerable. But in no sense did the immigration movement represent a widespread rejection of Mexican culture. These people saw themselves as exiles, and many dreamed of returning home. In the meantime, they held as best they could to their traditions and deplored those who did not. (80)

In fact, the onset of the Mexican Revolution brought about an



array of new ethnic consciousness which would forever mark the Mexican idiosyncrasy, both in Mexico as in the United States. By focusing on writers who were raised in Mexico, I wish to expose the Mexican perception of Chicanos within the acculturation/anti-acculturation continuum and within the scope of the trans-ethnic transformation process.

My theory is that a Chicano identity is defined not only in defiance and contrast to Anglo culture but by the perception of the Mexican national on the Chicano himself. It is the Mexican national who defines Chicano, not always accurately, but who makes the Chicano feel "different" (and often inferior). If it were not for the Mexican national monitoring the mexicanness of Chicanos, Chicanos would have kept on feeling very Mexican or Mexican enough. It is through the opposition, through contrast, through sameness, through dichotomy, that Chicanos define themselves vis-a-vis Mexicans.

Two writers with similar backgrounds and views reflect a chronic condition suffered by many contemporary upper and middle-class Mexicans: a misunderstanding of the Mexican (-American) often accompanied by a paternalistic attitude of pity toward him. I will first focus on Benjamín Padilla (Kaskabel) and then Julio Arce (Jorge Ulica) as two prototypical examples of writers expressing anti-Chicano attitudes.

KASKABEL: THE ULTRA-MEXICAN (MEXICANISTA) IN THE FIRST  
STAGE OF CHICANOIZATION

Benjamín Padilla, here referred to by his pen-name, Kaskabel, was a businessman and a part-time journalist. In 1906 in Guadalajara, he founded a magazine by the name of El Kaskabel, published until 1915 (Rodríguez 20). He met Julio Arce in Guadalajara, became a good friend of his and was also exiled in San Francisco in the 20's. While in San Francisco Padilla, now using the name Kaskabel, continued to write satirical vignettes (estampas satíricas) published in various Mexican-American newspapers such as La Patria in El Paso; Eco de México from Los Angeles, El Cronista del Valle from Brownsville and Hispano-America from San Francisco. Kaskabel returned to Mexico after the Mexican Revolution and topics dealing with Mexican-Americans ceased to appear in his writings (Rodríguez 20). Rodríguez maintains that some of Kaskabel's articles remind us of contemporary Chicano literature and therefore become Chicano literature due to the inclusion of topics such as loss of culture and assimilation to Anglo society (20) But it is not these topics themselves that give Kaskabel a Mexican-American perspective. In fact, the attitude professed by Kaskabel attests to his lack of comprehension of Mexican-American people or empathy with them. What Kaskabel confuses as the desire for the Mexican to assimilate to American society is actually the necessity for survival that recently arrived Mexican nationals experienced in the

United States. Kaskabel accuses his compatriots on the other side of being victims of assimilation, what commonly is referred to as "malinchismo," that is, the concept of denying or disdaining one's own culture and admiring and trying to imitate a foreign culture.

In his essay, "Los que llegan hablando trabado" (Those who come back [to Mexico] speaking all jumbled up) Kaskabel lists seven rules which apply to the Mexican immigrant who desires to pass for an American when he returns to Mexico. Kaskabel describes the "vendido" as someone who shaves his moustache, wears a cap instead of a sombrero, smokes cigars and pronounces Spanish with difficulty, including the name of his own country, Mexico. In addition, Kaskabel states that these "agringados" do not even speak English because they live side by side with other Mexicans in a Mexican barrio, and because they "sweat Mexican" ("sudan gotas mexicanas de sudor amarguísimo"). Kaskabel, like his contemporaries, criticizes the exploitation suffered by the Mexican workers at the hands of the American boss or foreman who chews tobacco and makes them work endlessly. The technique of caricature, although humorous, creates a stereotype of the Mexican immigrant, a stereotype held by many Mexicans vis-a-vis the Mexican-American or Chicano. In fact, Kaskabel's rendition of the "pocho" dialect resembles more the speech pattern of an Anglo trying to learn Spanish. The following passage is unrealistic especially given the fact that the speaker, according to Kaskabel, does not even speak English:

"Oh...bueno...tú sabes. Yo mucho tiempo fuera de mi país..sabes. Oh, mucho gusto sienta volver Meksico...!"

Kaskabel believes that these U.S. Mexicans or *pochos* speak no English and a very broken Spanish. By reiterating his disdain for the loss of Spanish in the Mexican-American population, he reaffirms his own Mexicanness. He assumes an anti-Malinchista/anti-Porfirista position but he fails to understand not only the linguistic reality of the "Chicano", but also his vulnerable position in a society which stresses assimilation. In the above example, Kaskabel fits into the category 1b (see Appendix to chapter II)

In an interesting twist to Kaskabel's ethnic ideology, we find the position of the Mexican residing in the U.S. who experiences a detachment from his mother country, and therefore undergoes an initial process of chicanoization. This is seen in his reference to the fact that he feels more Mexican than Mexicans from Mexico:

"Los que por acá luchamos para ganarnos la vida, sentimos amar más hondamente nuestra tierra. Somos más mexicanos que los que viven en el propio Mexico." (364)

(Those of us here who struggle to earn a living feel deeper affection for our country. We are more Mexican than those who actually live in Mexico)

However ironic this may seem, such a comment makes Kaskabel in some ways more "Chicano" or "mexicano de este lado" (Mexican from this side) and less Mexican because he is identifying with a sector of the population (*somos*) which resides in the United States and because he feels different in his ethnic identity, from his Mexican counterparts. The sector of the population with whom he identifies is comprised by individuals like himself who continue to feel a lot more Mexican than Mexican-American. His attitude toward Mexicans

from this side is generally negative and displays a sense of inherent superiority.

#### ULICA: DEVIL'S ADVOCATE OR DEVILISH CHRONICLER?

Coming from a similar background, Julio G. Arce, better known by his pseudonym, Jorge Ulica, has received more attention from critics perhaps because he stayed in the United States until his death in 1926. The son of a medical doctor, Ulica was born in Guadalajara in 1870. From an early age, he took a profound interest in journalism and published his first newspaper at the age of 14 (Rodríguez 9). He studied pharmaceutical science and moved to Mazatlán, Sinaloa, to work at a friend's pharmacy but soon responded to his itch to write. He soon found out about an important newspaper, *El Correo de la Tarde*, which published poetry by two Mexican Modernistas, Amado Nervo and Enrique González Martínez. He began to write what he termed as controversial literary criticism using the pseudonym "Jorge Ulica." Subsequently, he moved to the state capital of Culiacán and joined the only newspaper in the city, *El Occidental*, which was government owned. Ulica was active in various cultural projects in the city, including the inauguration of Teatro Apolo in 1892 (Rodríguez 10-11).

Ulica was encouraged by his colleagues to start a literary magazine and he did, inviting his friend, Manuel Bonilla, to be co-editor of *Bohemia Sinaloense*. The first issue appeared on September 15, 1895 and was a success during its two years of existence.

Ulica was also active in politics and served in various positions which were awarded to him due in part to his support of the Porfirio Díaz government (Rodríguez 12). In 1901, Ulica published a newspaper, **Mefistófeles** which lasted for seven years. Soon afterwards Francisco Madero was gaining ground and Ulica was writing against Madero's political beliefs in **El Diario del Pacífico**. Back in Guadalajara he found it difficult to find a good job and teamed up with some friends who had also fled Sinaloa. He then started an evening newspaper, **El Diario de Occidente** and founded an association of journalists which were targets of the revolutionary forces. In 1915, Ulica fell in hands of the revolutionaries and was jailed for two and a half months (Rodríguez 14).

Ulica felt the pressure to leave Mexico and embarked on the first ship leaving Mexico, regardless of its destination. The ship was headed for San Francisco where he arrived in October of 1915. As many other Mexicans in his situation, he took a job as a laborer in the American Can Company but soon found placement in one of the Spanish language newspapers, **La Crónica**, and became its editor in November of 1915 for two years (Rodríguez 15). He left **La Crónica** when the ownership changed in 1917, started his own weekly, **Mefistófeles**, and then, in 1919, became editor once again of **La Crónica**, which now had a new name, **Hispano-América**.

Credit must be given to Clara Lomas for unearthing the writings of Jorge Ulica. In her goal to trace the development of the Chicano short story she consulted the newspaper collection at

the University of California's Chicano Studies Library and found a series of vignettes or "cuadros de costumbres" under the title of "Crónica Diabólica." Lomas was struck by the social topics found in these crónicas, many of which dealt with the encounter between Anglo American and Mexican societies (Lomas, "Resistencia" 44). Lomas succinctly summarizes the historical and socioeconomic context in which these crónicas take place. Lomas critiques the way in which Ulica conveniently slides between a position which criticizes the acculturation process of the Mexican and a position which accepts and benefits from various Anglo American traits which in turn secure him the middle class status he so often flaunts.

The "genre" named by Ulica as "crónica diabólica" is equated by Lomas to the traditional "cuadro de costumbres" (45-46). The "cuadro de costumbres" is European in origin, then Latin American (49) In Mexico, Fernández de Lizardi and Ignacio Manuel Altamirano are the major costumbristas of the 19th century. Lizardi's picaresque and humorous style surely shed an influence on Ulica and probably Venegas, to be discussed later.

Because Ulica deals with topics within the United States he can be viewed as a pioneer in the Mexican-American/Chicano "cuadro de costumbres." In fact, the unique name prescribed by Ulica "crónica diabólica" is the kind of term that should pass on to be a generic term for this kind of vignette or "cuadro" (portrait).

The collection of "Crónicas Diabólicas" are humorous commentaries on various aspects of American life, with an abundance of essays dealing with the Mexican population residing in the

United States and their desire to assimilate into mainstream American culture. Ulica pokes fun at the increasing use of English words or anglicized Spanish words which then form a hybrid language which he defines as "pocho," a common derogatory term used mostly by Mexican nationals to describe the way Mexican Americans/Chicanos speak Spanish. In his crónica "Do you speak Pocho...?" Ulica sarcastically suggests that a Pocho Academy (like the Real Academia de la Lengua Española) be established with its own dictionary of "español-pocho," so that we can all understand each other. At the end of the crónica he concludes by saying that it will be necessary to compile a list of vocabulary items in the pocho dialect ("vocabulario de pocherías" ) or to establish an academy of the pocho language for "profanos" (ordinary people). Using a play on words, Ulica states that he will be one of its most diligent students (uno de los alumnos más aplicados) and that his application is on its way ("Y en seguida iré mi 'aplicación'").<sup>11</sup>

Ulica is a master of satire. He strikes a certain linguistic chord in bilinguals who have experienced a momentary loss of a word, whether in English or in Spanish. In the above mentioned crónica ("Do you speak pocho?...") Ulica deliberately writes the title in English in order to make the point that the dialect spoken by many "Spanish" people from California is "a scramble, more mixed up by the day, of Spanish words , English words, popular expressions and terrible slang" (un revoltijo, cada día más enredado, de palabras españolas, vocablos ingleses, expresiones populares y terrible 'slang') (Ulica 153). In this crónica, Ulica



reproduces a letter written to him by a Mrs. Skinejon, who once was Señora Pellejón. This letter is basically written in Spanish with an abundance of words which Ulica writes between quotation marks. Such words or phrases are either English words written with Spanish phonics (posofis = post office; lob y quises = love and kisses; jiven = heaven), false cognates (aplicación instead of solicitud for application; papeles instead of periódicos for papers) or idiomatic expressions which do not translate literally from English to Spanish (levantar infierno for to raise hell). By having Mrs. Skinejon misspell English words such as "aromovil" (automobile) "don Taun" (downtown) "especial de liver" (special deliver), Ulica is not necessarily implying that people such as Mrs. Skinejon do not master either language, but rather that these people have such a tremendous urge to assimilate that they purposely choose to speak this way. Such seems to be the case in Mrs. Skinejon who within a few months of having left Mexico, "speaks Pocho perfectly" (habla perfectamente el pocho) (153). Such a phenomenon would be impossible but Ulica exaggerates the intensity of wanting to assimilate because this way he calls attention to the "problem" and he achieves a caricature which is comical. Ulica demonstrates a superiority complex vis-a-vis Mexican (-Americans), many of whom had not had the educational opportunities of the middle-class exiles such as himself. In reference to the educational situation of the 1880's, Antonio Ríos-Bustamante points out that:

Research on literacy appears to indicate that more recent Mexican and Latin American immigrants tended to have a higher literacy level than Native Mexican californios who tended to have a more rural heritage and lifestyle. (262)

Ulica, although a self-proclaimed "defensor de la Raza" (defender of the Mexican race), makes no attempt to extol qualities found in the Mexican population (Lomas, "Resistencia" 48). There is a contrast between his self-portrayal and the portrayal of the Mexican population in the U.S. Lomas states that Ulica takes an elitist stand, flaunting his privileged economic status from which he can behave in an acceptable manner within a respectable distance vis-a-vis the Anglo-American society in general (Lomas "Resistencia" 48). However, I add that the distancing in Ulica's case is also manifested in his relationship with the Mexican population to which he feels superior. Ulica's elitist attitude is based on his own experience as a member of the middle-class of Mexico. If in Mexico the class distinctions were more pronounced than in the U.S., within Ulica's experience as an "exile" surrounded by Mexican immigrants, Ulica like Kaskabel, does not want to be "confused" with the "masses" and therefore makes a point of constantly ridiculing people of Mexican descent who have undergone a certain degree of transculturation, biculturalism or, chicanoization. However, in his attempt to resist becoming "Chicano" or Mexican from this side. Ulica undergoes the first stage of chicanoization, which is recognizing that such a process is a possibility and even a cultural "threat" to someone who prides him/herself of being "más mexicano que el nopal," (more Mexican than the prickly pear) and never a "vendido."

VENEGAS; SLAPSTICK SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Daniel Venegas publishes a novel **Las aventuras de don Chipote o Cuando los pericos maman** (The Adventures of Don Chipote or When Parakeets Suckle Their Young) in a Los Angeles's Spanish-language newspaper called **El Heraldo de México** in 1928.<sup>12</sup> Kanellos, who discovered this novel, once referred to it as "the first Chicano novel" (Intro.8)<sup>13</sup> but I argue that it is not a **Chicano** novel but a novel dealing with the **chicano** experience as related from a Mexican perspective.

Daniel Venegas was a newspaper editor for **El Malcriado** (The Brat), a satirical weekly from Los Angeles during the 1920's. Kanellos describes it as "a chatty periodical which employed worker's dialect and openly identified with Chicanos, the term used both in the newspaper and in his novel." Venegas also wrote plays and directed a vaudeville company in Los Angeles whose audience was working class (Kanellos, A Socio-Historic Study 114).<sup>14</sup>

The message found in Venegas, Ulica and Kaskabel, regarding the assimilated Mexican or "pocho," parallels that found in some corridos of the period. Raymund A. Paredes calls attention to a piece appearing in Los Angeles in the 1920 (The Renegade) whereby a Mexican national living in the United States deplores the Mexican who yearns to appear American in his big car all dressed up like a dandy when in his rancho back home he didn't even own a pair of huaraches. He, on the other hand, will never forget his country and it is due to the unfortunate political situation of his homeland (continuas revoluciones) that he finds himself far from home. A good Mexican never disowns his homeland because there is

nothing worse than a renegade ("no hay nada en el mundo tan asqueroso como la ruin figura del renegado") (Paredes, R. "The Evolution" 80)

In a similar manner, Daniel Venegas is quick to criticize Mexicans who forget their native language and who show off the minimal English they know to their compatriots:

...algunos mexicanos, nomás cruzan la línea divisora y ya no saben hablar su idioma; presumen de gringos, principalmente cuando encuentran paisanos recién desempacados, a quienes les presumen de su sabiduría en el tok inglés. (45)

...some Mexicans, as soon as they cross the dividing line no longer can speak their language; pretending arrogantly to be gringos, especially when they meet recently arrived countrymen, to whom they show off their knowledge of "tok inglés" (English talk).

The novel begins and ends in the same place, in a peaceful 'ranchería' probably in the central state of Michoacán.<sup>15</sup> The protagonist don Chipote de Jesús María Domínguez and his wife, doña Chipota (the "don/doña" title, used for the upper classes or people highly respected by their community creates an ironic tone) work hard to feed their "chipotitos." The scatological tone of the novel begins in the first chapter, where Chipote, (a made-up name which, in Mexico refers to a temporary protruding bump on the head caused by a blow) works on a land as an oxen-driver; "picándole la cola al buey" (poking the ox's ass) and occasionally having to inhale the not so comforting emanations of the animal's rectal area: "tenía que seguir a la retaguardia del cornudo aspirando de vez en cuando las poco confortadoras emanaciones del conducto trasero del animal" (16). Throughout the novel, a combination of linguistic registers, ranging from the most formal Spanish to the

most colloquial, creates a humoristic, sometimes double-entendre slap-stick adventure with picaresque elements. Don Chipote is impressed by Pitacio, who returns from the United States in a fancy outfit (yellow shoes, silk socks and cowboy hat) weaving story after story of riches and economic opportunity up North. Don Chipote begins his journey, accompanied by his faithful dog, Sufrelambre (he who suffers hunger) and arrives in Juárez, referred to by the narrator as one of the most perverse cities in Mexico, a place where people from the United States, unable to consume alcoholic beverages because of prohibition laws, find solace in bars and brothels. The narrator laments the fact that, because of this, Americans, are quick to judge all Mexicans, ignorant of "el interior de nuestro país" (the interior of our country), or what some call the "real Mexico". Don Chipote arrives at the border crossing on the U.S. side but before being considered for a visa, is forced to bathe and have his clothes disinfected, thus suffering the first humiliation of many to come (29). Not being granted permission to cross to the United States, he meets with a coyote (middleman) who exploits him and the others. Finally in El Paso, don Chipote and his new friend, Policarpo, get drunk at the hotel and are robbed by a prostitute. Not having money to pay for the food at the restaurant, they are forced to wash dishes. Afterward, they work for the Union Pacific Railroad who exploits them through their "suplai" (company store) system. After a series of jobs at el traque, laying railroad lines in Arizona and New Mexico, and after recovering from a railroad injury, don Chipote finds a job as

a dishwasher in Los Angeles while Policarpo works as a cement mason. After a few paychecks, they buy the latest style clothes and frequent the vaudeville theaters and moviehouses.<sup>16</sup> Don Chipote begins an affair with a waitress, a flapper referred to as his *pelona* (refers affectionately to someone with short hair). Meanwhile, doña Chipota becomes impatient waiting for her husband to come back and, without telling him, arranges to travel north with all of the "caravana chipoteril" (chipotesque offspring). Pitacio, who supposedly had been in charge of the land, goes with them at doña Chipota's expense. Riding on four burros, they arrive to the United States and encounter similar difficulties to those of most immigrants. Doña Chipote tries her best to haggle with the coyote but to no avail. Finally, they make their way to Los Angeles and one night, doña Chipota who wanted to have some fun, goes to a theater and, to her surprise, finds that her husband is one of the performers. She begins to shout at him and to hit him while the audience believes that it is part of the show. When the chipotitos also climb up on stage and make a racket, the audience complains and the chipotesque family is sent to jail. They are subsequently deported back to their rancho. On the way home, doña Chipota forgives her husband and they return to the peaceful setting of their campesino surroundings. They are met with enthusiasm by neighbors who believe they have returned with plenty of money in their pockets. Don Chipote asks his former boss for work, sells him a few burros and begins to work the land as before. The Epilogue repeats the idyllic setting found in the first

chapter, including the description of driving oxen. But it adds the memories of bitter adventures and amorous moments coupled with the constant disillusionment and "fracasos" (failures) experienced by "chicanos [ ] who leave their country, inspired by the many tales of those who have been to the United States supposedly to sweep the streets of gold" (155). The last paragraph contains Venegas's thesis, which appears several times throughout the novel:

Y pensando en esto, [don Chipote] llegó a la conclusión de que los mexicanos se harán ricos en Estados Unidos: CUANDO LOS PERICOS MAMEN.

And thinking about this, [don Chipote] came to the conclusion that Mexicans in the United States will become rich: WHEN THE STARS FALL FROM THE SKY (literally, when parakeets can suckle their young)

Of the three, Venegas is the most critical of the United States' exploitation of Mexican workers. He does not criticize feminism and, in fact, his only female protagonist, shows initiative and determination in her actions. Venegas sympathizes with the chicanos in part because he worked with them side by side for a while. Whereas Kanellos and Meléndez argue that Venegas uses the "Chicano language," I argue that (1) Chicano language is not monolithic, (2) Venegas's novel contains various linguistic registers, among them a very formal Spanish rarely observed in Chicano literature (3) the examples given by Kanellos and Meléndez as "Chicano" words are Mexican as well, and therefore not exclusively Chicano (4) the linguistic patterns of the chicanos in the novel are very different from those of the narrator. There are few dialogues between the campesinos and the few that appear

demonstrate an uneducated Spanish. The narrator, on the other hand, is educated in formal Spanish as well as in informal (urban) lingo. The narrator's discourse, taken as a whole as an interesting blend of highly formal words, colloquial expressions or "modismos," dichos and caló expressions, does not correspond to that of the chicano, nor to that of the present-day Chicano for that matter. The closest parallel is Miguel Méndez in his use of formal and "flowered" Spanish mixed with expressions of caló. However, because Méndez's (like Venegas's) dominant language is Spanish, he represents a small minority within the current Chicano population. In addition, the "Anglicisms" which both Kanellos and Meléndez point out as elements of Chicano speech, are used very differently by Venegas than by Chicano writers. Venegas places the English words in italics or in quotation marks, to signal a deviation from his own speech. On the other hand, the use of English in contemporary Chicano literature is either the main language or part of a code-switching and therefore natural linguistic process whereby italics or quotation marks are not needed. It is important to analyze the language carefully in order to determine this.

The Malinche Complex is observed in Venegas in his insistence that Mexicans (chicanos, meaning Mexicans who cross over to the United States for work) not venture in the United States, that Mexicans stay in their own country because, not only will they avoid discrimination, but they will avoid becoming that despised monster, the "renegado." The confusion which the modern reader may have is that Venegas continuously uses the term "chicano" in its



original meaning, that is, to refer to a Mexican from Mexico who plans to return as soon as he earns enough money to take home. For that reason, I insist that it is a Mexican novel published in the United States dealing with a chicano theme (not Chicano) but which, nonetheless pertains to contemporary Chicanos and should be considered as part of Chicano literary patrimony. After all, chicanos are the ancestors of many current Chicanos.

#### FEMINISM AS "VENDIDISMO" (MALINCHISMO)

Both Jorge Ulica and Kaskabel express patriarchal attitudes throughout their essays. They are appalled by the changes taken place in the United States regarding women's rights. Ulica regards the Mexican American woman as someone who has been influenced by American feminism. His aversion to "assimilation" is further intensified when he witnesses changes in the gender status quo. Functioning as a "shoulder to weep on," Ulica sympathizes with Mexican men who confide in him complaining of their spouse's reluctance to be the obedient "mosquita muerta" (weak fly) wife she was back in Mexico: "in my country [Mexico] I could have knocked off her teeth with blows but here, if you do that, they'll hang you in San Cuintin [sic], as they call the prison here" ("Arriba las Faldas" 145) Ulica satirically describes how in the U.S. gender roles are completely reversed, making American women the happiest in the world because their husbands do all the housework, change diapers, do the grocery shopping, wash and iron and obey their wives in everything. He describes a married couple (Rufina and

Castro) getting in an argument based on Rufina coming home late at night drunk with her dress burned by a cigar. Rufina scolds her husband and beats him physically and Ulica states that there are many Rufinas in these lands, referring to the United States (146-7). In another crónica "Inacia y Mengildo" (89), he suggests that Mexican men leave their wives in Mexico, as far away from the United States as possible because as soon as Mexican women arrive to the United States they soon find out that "aquí mandan ellas" (women are the ones who rule). Ulica presents Mexican women as the ones who desire assimilation and social mobility much more than their male counterparts. Inicia tries to "civilize" her husband, making him cut his hair in the latest style and criticizing his insistence on eating Mexican food such as chorizo, sopes, tostadas, chicharrones, menudo and pozole. She, on the other hand, prefers to eat clam chowder, bacon, liver and onions, beef-stew and hot dogs (90).

Kaskabel's perspective is very similar to Ulica's but his misogyny is not necessarily tied to the assimilation process, as is the case in Ulica. However, he expresses his contempt for marriages between Mexican women and Anglo men "el peligro yanqui" (an Anglo threat). These "gringos," he states, take advantage of what "should be exclusively ours, something intimate that belongs to us [from Mexico], the virgin hearts of our 'chicks': the ineffable love our Mexican girls" (my trans.) (Kaskabel 97). In "Novias y esposas" (113) ("Girlfriends and Wives"), he criticizes modern girlfriends (las novias de hoy en día) who are too

preoccupied with their looks instead of being more domestic and yet, when they get married, they neglect both their looks and their household duties ("los peinados caprichosos se convierten en huracanados greñeros"). The solution is for the husband to educate his wife in the manner that her 'mustached' mother ("la bigotona mamá") should have done, that is through physical force ("a golpes con su cónyuge ") (115).

Although Kaskabel usually is addressing himself to a male audience, there are cases where he clearly addresses women. Through a fictitious voice of a priest, he advises married women to continue being coquettish and not to become stinky, uncombed and sloppy women ("hediondas, desgreñadas y malfajadas") (235) He further adds that unless the married woman shape up and be coquettish, there will be many 'enemies' who will win the heart of her husband.

Daniel Venegas presents a more balanced portrait of gender roles. He prescribes less judgement on the actions of his characters in regards to sex roles. He neither condemns nor condones don Chipote's extra-marital affair with la "Pelona" and in the second half of the novel, it is his wife which assumes a more active role in their relationship: she acts independently and with assertiveness without being ridiculed by the narrator. When she travels to the United States to look for her husband, she finds him at the night club doing his act. Instead of portraying her as a passive campesina she confronts her husband: "Sinvergüenza! Mal marido! Tú andas por aquí tan elegante y pasiándote mientras

nosotros hemos estado con necesidad. Pero ya te encontré y ahora vas a ver lo que te pasa. ¡Andale! Vámonos para que me ayudes a cargar a Chipotito y déjate de andar con estas cosas" (Shame on you! A husband you are! While you roam around in fancy clothes having a good time we have been left needy. But now I've found you and you'll see what's coming. Hurry! Let's go so you can help me carry Chipotito and forget about this way of life) (Venegas 146) Mrs. Chipota, having stayed in Mexico while her husband worked in the United States, had not been influenced by American feminism so Venegas does not make a connection between the two and shows respect and understanding for doña Chipota, a campesina.

The writers studied in this chapter are examples of cases which should be categorized within Mexican and Chicano literatures. As academics recognize the vast differences among a growing ethnic minority in the United States we will have an increasing need to invent new terminology and create new methods of interpretation. In other words it will be insufficient to say that Ulica, Kaskabel and Venegas understood the "Chicano" experience when in fact they distinguished themselves from the chicanos of the time. As ideas continue to develop and the world continues to experience cross-ethnicity, we will be eager to coin new terms but we will do so by necessity in order to achieve communication. We must stress that studying writers from the past helps us to understand the present. We must make an attempt to write literary criticism in an accessible manner and we must recognize that acknowledging differences in ideology does not preclude political commitment.

APPENDIX (tentative)

Below is a preliminary classification of (U.S.) Mexicans:

CATEGORIES: (1) MEXICANS\* RESIDING IN MEXICO

(a) Cuauhtemoquista: This individual is nationalistic and resents U.S. imperialism, both economic and cultural. Social and educational level may vary but ideologically this individual is left of center. Cuauhtemoquistas sympathize with Chicanos struggle for economic justice.

(b) Patriota : This individual is also nationalistic but criticizes Mexican-American Spanish and lifestyle and maintains various elitist attitudes vis-a-vis the lower classes or indigenous groups.

(c) Malinchista/Porfirista type; although s/he may express ethnic pride, and may criticize those who try to assimilate into American culture, such as number 3 below, s/he admires European and American culture, espouses a bourgeois ideology and has racist attitudes, consciously or unconsciously, vis-a-vis non-whites. Malinchistas can appear nationalistic and patriotic and they criticize Chicanos whether they assimilate or not.

(2) MEXICANS\* RESIDING IN U.S. (can exhibit characteristics parallel to (1) (a, b, or c) above. However, for reasons of simplification, I will group them in three main categories (for now).

(a) these individuals are anti-Porfiristas/anti-Malinchistas; they support Chicanos in their efforts for economic

justice, maintenance of Spanish language and Mexican culture but are not overly critical of Chicanos who have assimilated because they understand the socio-political pressures of the Anglo-conformity ideology in the U.S.

(b) although these individuals reside in the U.S. but continue to identify as Mexicans rather than as Mexican-American or Chicano). This individual criticizes those Mexicans who lose their Mexican identity in exchange of a pseudo-American one. Although they criticize Chicano speech and bicultural way of life, they lack the political consciousness to realize the colonialist implications on an oppressed sector of the population. These individuals espouse a bourgeois ideology and often times would like to distinguish themselves from Mexican-Americans or Chicanos whom they view as "cholos" or lower class people with whom they would rather not associate. (Ulica and Kaskabel fit nicely in this category).

(c) Mexican national residing in U.S. who intends to remain in the U.S. and who wishes to assimilate into mainstream American culture. Not to be confused with the Chicano who, having been born and raised in the United States, has been deprived of an education in the Spanish language and/or in Mexican culture and history.

\*By Mexicans, I refer to the general population of mestizos or non-Indians.

## ENDNOTES

1.1 Raymund Paredes interprets "acá de este lado" as being the United States "While the tejano [in Corrido del Norte] ardently proclaims his allegiance to Mexico despite his American origins, the Mexican-born composer of 'El renegado' recognizes the easy temptations of American life [...]" (Paredes, R. 1978: 80). I argue that "acá de este lado" (this side) refers to Mexico, because otherwise the corrido would have said "even if born on this side (U.S.). The singer's attire (sombrero vaquero, chamarra de cuero, mascada roja) often is often perceived as that of a cowboy, when in fact, he is a vaquero. "Porque uso de lado el sombrero vaquero/porque uso pistola y chamarra de cuero/porque acostumbro mi cigarro de hoja/ y anudo a mi cuello la mascada roja/me creen otra cosa" (Because I wear my cowboy hat sideways/ because I carry a gun and wear a leather jacket/because I roll my own cigarettes/and I wear a red bandanna around my neck/ because of those things people take me for something that I am not).

2. Malinchismo is discussed in Chapters 1 and 5 of this book. In Mexico this term refers to the proclivity of many Mexicans to overly admire foreign culture, specifically American and European, and to denigrate or reject indigenous peoples or their culture.

3. Pocho is a derogatory term used mostly by Mexican nationals or Mexican-identified Mexican-Americans to describe what they view as an assimilated Mexican who has intended to adapt to American lifestyle and who oftentimes makes of fool of himself in the process. Mexicans are repulsed by the pocho's "contaminated" Spanish or his lack of Mexicanness. "Pocho" is used as an adjective, noun or to describe a hybrid Spanish or dialect. Also, as a verb, "apocharse" and adjective "apochado".

4. Ricardo Flores Magón was born in Oaxaca in 1873 and died in Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary. He led the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM) and his newspaper, *Regeneración*, expressed opposition to the Porfirio Díaz regime. His motto "Tierra y Libertad" emphasized distribution of land and abolition of private property. See *Sembradores: Ricardo Flores Magón y el Partido Liberal Mexicano: A Eulogy and Critique* by Juan Gómez Quiñones.

5. In fact, studies show that 91% of all Mexican Americans born in the United States speak English only, very well or well. See Frank Bean and Marta Tienda, **The Hispanic Population of the United States**. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1987.

6. See "Relaciones Chicano-Mexicanas: De la Práctica a la Teoría" by Jorge A. Bustamante; and "Chicanos y Mexicanos Deben Conocerse y Entenderse" by David R. Maciel, in **Al Norte de la Frontera: El Pueblo Chicano**, México: Consejo Nacional de Población, 1988.

7. Margarita Hidalgo's research on language attitudes of residents of Juárez vis-a-vis Chicano Spanish point to a disapproval and rejection of the Chicano dialect often associated with the use of Spanish-English Code-Switching (24-25). Many respondents emphasize the ugliness and incorrectness of the Spanish spoken in El Paso, stating that "no one should speak that way" (Nadie debería de hablar así) (25). A survey of Mexican attitudes toward Chicanos was done by Erlinda Gonzales-Berry, "Unwelcome Home: Chicanos in Mexico," presented at the Simposio Sobre Estudios Internacionales de la American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, Pamplona, 1985 (unpublished paper).

8. Although the terminology will vary with the historical period. The writers from this decade used various terms to describe the more "Americanized" or assimilated Mexicans residing in the U.S. or the Americans of Mexican descent. Common terms were "pocho," "chicano," "renegados."

9. Luis Leal states that Ulica's work "represents an important link in the development of Chicano narrative written in Spanish..[and] until [such writers] are discovered, as has been Ulica, we cannot speak of a definite history of Chicano literature" (my trans) (1982)

10. For this time period, Nicolás Kanellos uses the term "Mexican (-American) to designate the general population of Americans of Mexican descent because the term "Mexican-American" did not appear until later. I have proposed the use of the lower case in **chicano** to designate the first definition of the term (a Mexican who immigrates to the United States) in opposition to **Chicano**, emerging in the 1960's to designate Americans of Mexican descent. The lower case is the correct form in Spanish adjectives of ethnicity or nationality. The use of "chicano" was usually within a Spanish-language context during the course of the first decades of the 20th century.



11. "Aplicación" is an Anglicism for "application"; the Spanish word for application is "solicitud".

12. Translation of title by Nicolás Kanellos ("A Socio-Historic Study.." 114). The title refers to a situation which will never happen, such as "when the stars fall from the sky."

13. Francisco Lomelí credits Eusebio Chacón as a pioneer of the "Hispanic novel of New Mexico" ("Eusebio Chacón" 149). Chacón published two short novels in 1892, *El hijo de la tempestad* (Son of the Storm) and *Tras la tormenta la calma* (Calmness After the Storm). As we continue to recover the Chicano literary heritage, the title of "first" will remain flexible.

14. Kanellos lists the names of Venegas's plays (all have been lost): *Quién es culpable* (Who is to Blame), 1924; *Nuestro egoísmo* (Our Selfishness) (consisting of three acts and dedicated to Mexican women) 1926; and *Esclavos* (Slaves), 1930. Kanellos also points out a number of magazines among Venegas's contributions, such as *El maldito jazz* (That Darned Jazz), *El establo de Arizmendi* (Arizmendi's Stable) (celebrating the boxer Baby Arizmendi) and *El con-su-lado* (The Consulate [play on words referring to an opinionated or biased Consulate]) Referring to the premiere of *Esclavos*, *La Opinión* (Jan. 8, 1930) printed that "el autor cuenta con muchas simpatías entre el elemento obrero mexicano de Los Angeles, por lo que seguramente tendrá casa llena esta noche" (the author has many fans among the Mexican laborers from Los Angeles and will therefore have a full house this evening) (Kanellos, Intro. 15).

15. The narrator refers to a nearby town by the name of Nacatecuaro. Many towns in Michoacán have the ending "cuaro" as in Pátzcuaro. The "naca" in Nacatecuaro is perhaps used to connote a poor environment: "naco/a" are derogatory adjectives to designate lack of sophistication in working class Mexicans or used as nouns to refer to persons with "tacky" taste. Michoacán is one of the states from Mexico from which many Mexicans emigrate.

16. Douglas Monroy indicates that "in the new land, even with low wages, one could buy commodified things of great iconic value. Seductive images encountered in movie houses and in fashion advertising provided compelling new models of behavior for Mexican youth" (79).

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