The Mexican Woman: A Study of Her Participation in the Revolution, 1910-1940

Shirlene Ann Soto
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87106

POLICY ON USE OF THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS

Unpublished theses and dissertations accepted for master’s and doctor’s degrees and deposited in the University of New Mexico Library are open to the public for inspection and reference work. They are to be used only with due regard to the rights of the authors. The work of other authors should always be given full credit. Avoid quoting in amounts, over and beyond scholarly needs, such as might impair or destroy the property rights and financial benefits of another author.

To afford reasonable safeguards to authors, and consistent with the above principles, anyone quoting from theses and dissertations must observe the following conditions:

1. Direct quotations during the first two years after completion may be made only with the written permission of the author.

2. After a lapse of two years, theses and dissertations may be quoted without specific prior permission in works of original scholarship provided appropriate credit is given in the case of each quotation.

3. Quotations that are complete units in themselves (e.g., complete chapters or sections) in whatever form they may be reproduced and quotations of whatever length presented as primary material for their own sake (as in anthologies or books of readings) ALWAYS require consent of the authors.

4. The quoting author is responsible for determining "fair use" of material he uses.

This thesis/dissertation by Shirlene Ann Soto has been used by the following persons whose signatures attest their acceptance of the above conditions. (A library which borrows this thesis/dissertation for use by its patrons is expected to secure the signature of each user.)

NAME AND ADDRESS

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

DATE

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

10/73–1M
L-133
Shirlene Ann Soto

History

Department

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:

[Signatures]

Chairperson

[Signatures]

[Signatures]

Accepted: [Signature]

Dean, Graduate School

September 12, 1977

Date
COPYRIGHT
by
Shirlene Ann Soto
1977
THE MEXICAN WOMAN: A STUDY OF HER PARTICIPATION IN THE REVOLUTION, 1910-1940

BY

SHIRLENE ANN SOTO
B.A., San Francisco State University, 1969
M.A., University of New Mexico, 1971

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History in the Graduate School of The University of New Mexico Albuquerque, New Mexico December, 1977
To my grandparents Ernest and
Elsie B. Soto and to the memory
of my great-grandparents Cipriano
and Carmel A. Soto, in gratitude
and affection.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my committee, Edwin Lieuwen, Peter Bakewell and Jane Slaughter for their perceptive comments and cooperation in helping me complete this task. To Edwin Lieuwen I owe a special debt of gratitude. He gave his time generously and his suggestions always proved helpful.

The staffs of the Latin American Collection at the University of Texas in Austin, the Hemeroteca Pino Suárez, and the Biblioteca Carrillo Ancona in Mérida, the Hemeroteca Nacional and the Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico City and the Zimmerman Library at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque proved to be of immeasurable assistance in supplying the prime sources used in this study.

My indebtedness to individuals and families should be acknowledged—Rudolfo Ruz Menéndez, Beatrice Peniche de Ponce and the Carrillo Puerto family in Mérida; Gloria Grajales, Adelina Zendejas, Rosa Lie Johansen, Adela Palacios, Virginia Chapa, Álicia Reyes, Emilio Portes Gil, Eugenia Meyer, Rosalia D'Chumacero, María de los Angeles Mendieta Alatorre, María Antonieta Rascón, Leticia Barragán and Amanda Rosales, Pedro Siller, the Martínez Montero family and the Rocha Corral family in Mexico City. I am
especially grateful to writer Carlota O'Neill and her husband Manuel Amaral for making many afternoons and evenings extremely pleasant for me. Susana Mendoza in Cuernavaca was always warm and willing to share information about her great-aunt Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza. Many friends took time from their own work to offer suggestions. Keitha Shoupe, Mike Miller and Alicia Tjarks helped me to obtain materials. Special thanks to Karen Miller for her valuable editorial comments. Thanks also to Penelope Katson for typing the manuscript. Financial aid was received from the Ford Foundation and the Graduate Student Association at the University of New Mexico.

I am especially fortunate to have parents and grandparents who constantly expressed interest and provided much-needed encouragement. Above all, it was the patience and assistance of my husband Jesús Rodríguez which allowed me to complete this study. When I reflect on the past two years, words hardly seem adequate to convey my heart-felt warmth for those who have believed in me. Hopefully, I have not let them down.
THE MEXICAN WOMAN: A STUDY OF HER PARTICIPATION IN THE REVOLUTION, 1910-1940

BY
Shirlene Ann Soto

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History in the Graduate School of The University of New Mexico Albuquerque, New Mexico December, 1977
THE MEXICAN WOMAN: A STUDY OF HER PARTICIPATION IN THE REVOLUTION, 1910-1940

Shirlene Ann Soto, Ph.D.
Department of History
The University of New Mexico, 1977

The Mexican Revolution produced far-reaching changes in the lives of women. Spurred by advances in industrialization which provided a host of new jobs and by the activities of feminists in the United States and Europe, Mexican women demanded full participation in national affairs. During the Revolution, they assumed new responsibilities, traveled to other parts of the Republic and acquired a sense of nationalism. Unfortunately, women revolutionaries did not receive proper recognition for their sacrifices. After participating in the fighting, plans and attempts to implement the goals of the Revolution, women were not rewarded for their efforts nor were they granted political equality as promised by revolutionary ideology. A few received pensions and commissions with rank, but most lived in poverty and died in obscurity.

The Revolution positively affected the women's rights movement because it provided women an opportunity to prove their capabilities. However, after the violent phase, they were denied suffrage in the 1917 Constitution
and several times after. Constitutional rights for working women were rarely implemented. Moreover, little effort was expended to alter traditional attitudes towards women's place in society. Women's inability to become full-fledged citizens stemmed from other crises preempting attention, from their support for the Catholic Church in its struggle for autonomy from the Mexican government, from their position as pawns in the internecine war between conservatives and radicals over the Revolution's direction and from the unwillingness of Mexican males to consider them as political equals. Between 1915 and 1924 Yucatán had the distinction of being the most progressive state in Mexico, especially with regard to women's issues. It was the site of the first two national Feminist Congresses and the scene of very active feminine participation. However, after the assassination of the socialist governor in 1924, social progress was halted and the focus of attention shifted back to Mexico City.

In spite of their failure to achieve political equality, women did gain experience in working together and knowledge of the value of self-organization. A few educated women assumed prominent positions in government and in the universities and by the end of the revolutionary period, leaders in the Partido Revolucionario Mexicano (PRM), sensing women's political potential, acted to
incorporate them into Mexican politics and society. The seminal role women played in the Mexican Revolution and in shaping the direction of Mexico's future is illuminated by focusing on the lives of women who achieved prominence at different periods of the Revolution.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. ANTECEDENTS: WOMEN IN THE PORFIRIATO.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Legal Status of Women</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Education.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women Workers Organize</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teresa Urrea: La Santa de Cabora.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women and the Mexican Liberal Party.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women and the PLM-Supported Strikes.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women Writers and Journalists.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. WOMEN IN THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION:</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE VIOLENT PHASE, 1910-1920</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women in the Initial Stages of the Revolution.</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Madero Faction Succeeds</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women in Revolution.</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Soldaderas</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Revolution Divides:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villistas and Zapatistas</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Carrancistas</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women's Suffrage at the Constitutional Congress.</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Legal Status of Women, 1910-1920</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Labor.</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Journalists.</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Catholic Church and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Revolution.</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Chapter

## II. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN YUCATAN, 1915-1924

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I</th>
<th>Women and Governor Salvador Alvarado, 1915-1918</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education and Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part II</th>
<th>Women and Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto, 1922-1924</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ligas Feministas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Divorce Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birth Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elvia Carrillo Puerto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborators of Elvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrillo Puerto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The End of Reforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## IV. 1920-1934: UNDERCURRENTS IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

| Education and Health Programs | 205 |
| Women Organize                | 210 |
| Journalists                   | 226 |
| The Catholic Church           | 230 |

## V. 1934-1940: AN ERA OF HOPE

| The All-out Drive for the Vote | 253 |
| Journalists                    | 270 |
| Leadership                     | 274 |

## VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

| BIBLIOGRAPHY                    | 292 |

xii
INTRODUCTION

The Mexican Revolution has been analyzed from several different perspectives; however, the paucity of studies dealing with Mexican women is astonishing. The obsession of most scholars with political and diplomatic events--areas in which women have generally played limited roles--has resulted in their neglecting women. This, therefore, is the story of women's participation in the Mexican Revolution (1910-1940) and also an account of the women's rights movement that solidified during the last decade of this thirty-year period. Elsa Chaney noted in "Supermadre: Women in Politics in Latin America" that during times of social and political crises women emerge as a viable force, visible and active. Outstanding examples in Mexico's history were Malínche in the Conquest, María Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez (La Corregidora) and Leona Vicario in the Wars of Independence and Margarita Maza de Juárez in the Reforma. During the Porfiriato (1876-1911) many middle-class women became educated and entered the professions. The Revolution prompted further changes by geographically displacing women and affording them new job opportunities. Agustín Casasola's Historia Gráfica de la Revolución 1910-1940
pictorially reveals the extensive participation of Mexican women in the Revolution. Besides filling traditional roles as nurses, cooks and prostitutes, they assumed new capacities as military commanders, union organizers, writers and propagandizers. Unfortunately, even after contributing to the revolutionary struggle, women remained unidentified and unrecognized.

Organization of feminist groups—those working for women's rights, regardless of political persuasion—also was manifest. Catholics demanded women's rights to encourage women to be better wives and mothers, whereas Communists sought to integrate women politically into a new social order. Women's organizations differed over theory and objectives. Some groups strove for general social change (the Liga Femenina Anti-reeleccionista Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez and the Consejo Nacional de Mujeres Mexicanas); some demanded general change and women's rights (the Hijas de Anáhuac, the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, Regeneración y Concordia, Amigas del Pueblo, the Ligas Feministas in Yucatán and the Frente Unico Pro Derecho de la Mujer); and some were committed exclusively to women's rights (Admiradoras de Juárez, Consejo Feminista Mexicano and La Siempreviva). In the 1920s several women's groups focused on family welfare and health problems; in the 1930s they tended to be oriented internationally.
Despite their powerful organizations, some women's refusal to defend the State against the Church may have cost them the vote because leftist revolutionaries feared that these women, allying themselves with the conservatives, would compromise the Revolution and conspire to displace them from power. Women attained suffrage only after the revolutionary party was firmly in power and the Church and State reconciled their differences. This study terminates in 1940, the date generally accepted as the end of the active Mexican Revolution. After that, Mexico turned its attention from social reform to development of the economy.

Female leadership varied as much as the organizations and included women from all political orientations, classes and parts of Mexico. Feminist Hermila Galindo worked with the government in the early revolutionary period. Cuca García and Drs. Esther Chapa and Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, Communists, also occasionally cooperated with the government. Unaffiliated with any political party, leftist Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza ardently supported women's rights. Socialist Elvia Carrillo Puerto worked for the betterment of women first with her brother's administration in Yucatán and later in Mexico City. Evident were women from all social classes. From wealth came Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Margarita Robles de Mendoza; from the middle-class Cuca, Esther and Mathilde and from poorer stations Maria Arias
Bernal and Juana. Many were highly-educated, others scarcely literate. Some, like Juana, were self-taught. All sections of the Republic as well as all varieties of personal circumstances were represented. Women who were single, married, separated, divorced and widowed participated. This amorphous group cohered because of its belief in the tenets of the Revolution. Disillusionment set in as women realized they would not share in its benefits. They had sacrificed much during the struggle and since revolutionary ideology promised equality, they felt justified in vocalizing their demands. Legislators explained their reluctance to accept women as full political partners by citing their lack of political unity and their traditional ties with the Catholic Church. The failure of women to unite in the 1920s, their support of the Church and conservative candidates and their resistance to governmental social programs tended to confirm those suspicions.

* * *

To investigate women it is necessary to look beyond standard sources because confining research to traditional documentation narrows the social focus and reveals little about groups such as the poor, minorities or women. Even now, few feminist historians exist and traditional scholars still relegate women to subordinate positions. Further,
because many women were illiterate or unable to record their experiences, first-hand and contemporary accounts are rare. Excluding women results in an incomplete understanding of the nature of the Revolution. Through an analysis of their far-reaching roles additional insights into the Mexican Revolution, still imperfectly understood, may be gained.

Since information on women is unavailable from a single collection, it is necessary to tap a variety of sources. The bulk of information for this work was drawn from a wide assortment of newspapers, magazines, pamphlets and books, mainly located in the Hemeroteca Nacional de México and the Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico City. The section of Yucatán was constructed largely from materials in the Hemeroteca Pino Suárez and the Biblioteca Carrillo Ancona in Mérida. Information was also taken from the few contemporary accounts written by female participants. However, these were often uneven and flawed by factual error or superficiality. The most recent historical study, La Mujer en la Revolución Mexicana (1961) by María de los Angeles Mendieta Alatorre, mainly focuses on women in the violent phase of the Revolution and does not cover adequately the participation of leftist women. Mendieta Alatorre deplores merely being able to catalog names without assessing the historical contribution, significance or anything else about the women listed, other than that they
existed. The only book in English which addresses itself to any phase of the struggle is the fine study by Ward M. Morton, *Woman Suffrage in Mexico* (1962) which begins its concentration on the battle for suffrage in the 1930s.

The failure of earlier writers to incorporate women revolutionaries into their work affords researchers enormous possibilities to develop this topic further. The documentation of women's activities in the Revolution can lead to a fuller understanding of the past and of Mexico as a whole. Hopefully this study will increase our awareness of both the dynamic forces that created the Mexican Revolution, as well as introduce American readers to the heroic women who participated in that struggle.
CHAPTER I

ANTECEDENTS: WOMEN IN THE PORFIRIATO

The period of the Mexican Porfiriato (1876-1911) was one of modernization, progress and order. Porfirio Díaz, who lent his name to the thirty-five year span, dominated the era. His three-and-one-half decade rule was accompanied by phenomenal material growth and prosperity. Under Díaz, Mexico surged into the twentieth century. The nation's railroads, mines and ports were rapidly expanded. Development of postal, telegraph and telephone service quickly followed. The benefits of modernization, however, were reserved for the elite. Beneath the splendor, urban laborers and campesinos sank deeper and deeper into poverty, ignorance and misery. Disease flourished, making Mexico's death rate one of the highest in the world.

The philosophy sanctioning this system of plenty for the few was positivism. Positivists, called científicos by their critics, viewed themselves as elites in a long evolutionary process and under Díaz they took advantage of the opportunity to enrich themselves. Foreign investors allied with this oligarchy to gain concessions. The results were calamitous for the masses. The científicos ignored
the Indians, considering them inferior, and openly imitated European and American customs. Individual rights were sacrificed for the betterment of privileged society. There was no political freedom. By 1910, vast differences in wealth, a closed political system and favoritism shown foreigners alienated intellectuals, workers and even some businessmen and hacendados. These conditions prompted the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910.

For women this was a time of liberation. A tidal wave of change rose against the prevailing influence of the Catholic Church, social mores that kept women tied to home and family and a legal code meant to stifle. Mexican women were stimulated to action by outside influences--liberalism, ideas of sexual equality espoused by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and open discussions about women's roles at European Socialist meetings at the turn of the century. In the early years of the Porfiriato the socialist journal *La Internacional* recommended as point 7 of its international program the "emancipation, rehabilitation, and integral education of the woman."¹ In addition, Mexican women drew on the work of important feminists--Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1790), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869) and August Bebel's *Women under Socialism* (1883)--to argue that women should have complete equality. International women's organizations also solicited members. The International
Council of Women (ICW), formed in 1888 and dedicated to furthering peace and improving women's lives, had a growing number of Latin Americans on its roster. The ICW held its first Latin American meeting in Buenos Aires in 1910-1911. By 1913, it had expanded to six million members in twenty-three countries.\(^2\)

Like their struggling sisters in the United States, New Zealand (in 1893, the first country to give women suffrage), Finland, Austria and England, Mexican women joined the growing world-wide movement for female equality. Their own history, dating from the Aztecs to the French intervention in the 1860s, was replete with heroic women. Despite the long struggle for women's rights and the obvious interest it aroused, feminism was still the aspiration of a small group during the early Porfiriato. Education was one of the first issues attacked. With industrialization the need for skilled workers spread the demand for primary and secondary education, initially for boys, and more gradually, for girls. Middle-class women responded to the need for white-collar workers by entering the labor market as teachers, nurses and office workers. Some forced open the gates of higher education by entering universities and teaching hospitals, and by actually practicing the professions. With a wider reading audience, women published more extensively than ever before. They no longer confined their subject matter to music and religion but expanded
their writings to encompass revolutionary poetry, criticisms of the Díaz regime and questions about women's role in society. These hard-won advances, however, were still restricted to literate upper- and middle-class women.

Lacking access to education, women in lower economic classes had few choices in Porfirian Mexico; they could work for a pittance or turn to prostitution. Social mobility for them was practically nonexistent, and many slaved in factories or worked as domestics. In 1895 in a population of 12.7 million there were over 275,000 domestic servants in Mexico, most of them barely eking out a living. The American writer, John Kenneth Turner, reported on the working and living conditions of women in Yucatán and Oaxaca in his famous exposé *Barbarous Mexico*. Yaqui Indian women constantly complained of being molested by the soldiers who forcibly transported them to henequen plantations in Yucatán. Upon arrival, women were assigned sexual partners and were usually forced into marriages, often with Oriental workers the *hacendados* were trying to placate. On the notorious tobacco plantations in the Valle Nacional, workers were forced to share attractive wives with planters or bosses. Other women were requisitely placed in mixed dormitories at the end of the work day and had to fend for themselves.

Prostitution was one of the few options for poor women. Prostitutes were registered and inspected by public
health officials, according to a law promulgated in 1865. These laws, however, went unenforced, and it was estimated that there were 3,508 prostitutes in Mexico City in 1899, of whom only 5 per cent could read. Luis Lara y Prado, a physician and student of Mexico's social problems, pointed out that in Mexico City, as in Paris, the majority of female prostitutes had previously worked as domestics or laborers. In 1908 he noted that 12 per cent of all the women in Mexico City between the ages of fifteen and thirty were listed as prostitutes.

The Legal Status of Women

The lives of women in all social classes were restricted by nineteenth century laws that were clearly discriminatory. Articles 40 and 41 of the Constitution of 1857 defined Mexican citizenship without reference to women. The Civil Codes of 1870 and 1884 severely limited the rights of women. Noted Mexican feminist Hermila Galindo summed up the legal discriminations against married women in the 1884 code:

The wife has no rights whatsoever in the home. [She is] excluded from participating in any public matter [and] she lacks personality to draw up any contract. She cannot dispose of her personal property, or even administer it, and she is legally disqualified to defend herself against her husband's mismanagement of her estate . . . [A wife] lacks all authority over her children, and she has no right to intervene in their education. . . . She must, as a widow,
consult persons designated by her husband before his death, otherwise she can lose her rights to her children.7

Once married, a woman committed herself for life. Divorce was unknown in the 1880s—and unthinkable. The Civil Code adopted in 1884 adhered to canon law which proclaimed the indissolubility of marriage. What was known as "divorce" amounted to merely a legalized separation under which remarriage was forbidden. Separation was granted unequivocally to a husband whose wife committed adultery. On the other hand, a wife could claim a husband's adultery for grounds of legal separation only if he committed adultery in the home, kept a mistress or created a public scandal by mistreating, or permitting his mistress to mistreat his wife. In 1904 a bill legalizing divorce was approved by the Chamber of Deputies. Díaz's wife, Carmen Romero Rubio de Díaz, disapproved of it, as did many others, and it was consequently not even discussed when it came to the Senate.8

In 1891 the most articulate defender of women in Mexico, Género García, in Apuntes sobre la Condición de la Mujer, emphasized the vast legal discrepancies existing between men and women. Stating that "equality is the first condition of liberty," García continued that, while the Civil Code of 1884 defined a Mexican citizen as anyone twenty-one years or over, no woman under thirty could legally leave her parental home. Mexican laws also prevented women
from entering various professions. Section I of Article 462 prohibited women from tutoring anyone but husband and children and Article 581 forbade them from acting as legal guardians. The Commercial Code denied women work in the brokerage field and the Civil Code proscribed them from serving as trial attorneys or solicitors in trial except on behalf of husband or relatives.9

Articles 343 and 345 of the Civil Code prohibited the investigation of paternity but allowed children to trace their matriarchal line. García complained that this constituted "a flagrant violation of all morality and justice, a further impunity for the licentiousness of corrupt men, and a new blow for the already sad condition of women." He concluded by stating that Mexican law "sustains an almost incredible inequality between the conditions of the husband and the wife; restricts in an exaggerated and arbitrary manner those rights due the woman, and ... erases and nullifies her personality."10

Education

The influence of liberalism, especially in education, served as a catalyst to the women's movement in Mexico. In 1867 under Benito Juárez primary education was declared obligatory. Extensive plans were laid to expand educational facilities. The program of the Ministry of Justice included schools for women and girls and town councils and hacendados
were ordered to establish schools. The town council in Mexico City, for example, was instructed to maintain at least twelve tuition-free institutions for boys and an equal number for girls.\textsuperscript{11}

Two secondary schools, one male and one female, opened in 1869. Professional schools of law, medicine, mining, agriculture, fine arts, commerce and one for deaf mutes admitted students soon after. The resulting increase in the number of schools was substantial. In 1843 there had been only 1,310 officially registered schools in the nation; in 1870 the number had increased to 4,500 and in 1874 to 8,103. Of these about 2,000 were private, but only 117 were supported by the Catholic Church. Less than 550 were co-educational, and of the remainder the ratio was about four to one in favor of boys' schools.\textsuperscript{12}

The growth of education during the Porfiriato was even more dramatic. Rising literacy figures illustrate the effect of the new schools. While the population of Mexico rose from six to fifteen million, the rate of illiteracy fell from 99.5 per cent at the time of independence to 78.4 per cent in 1910.\textsuperscript{13} During the Porfiriato women began to enter the field of education in large numbers. This was especially true of middle-class women, who were training to be teachers and joining the labor market to fulfill the need created by government support of the principle of mass education. Upper-class women took some schooling but
mainly gained their training through music, theatre and discussion groups. Lower-class women remained illiterate.

During the Porfiriato educational institutions for women grew rapidly. When Díaz entered the presidency in 1876, his Union Liberal Party adopted a program of popular education as part of its overall goals. In 1878, to satisfy the new demand for teachers, the Escuela Secondaria was converted into the Escuela Normal de Profesoras. Art schools became popular for young women of the middle-class and at the turn of the century could claim more than 1,000 students. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Escuela Comercial "Miguel Lerdo de Tejada" began to instruct young women in the business fields. Rapid growth occurred in the provinces as well. In San Luis Potosí the Escuela de Artes y Oficios para Mujeres opened in 1881. Two years later in Puebla, the Escuela Mixta de Profesores was expanded to include a women's section. The Escuela Normal de Jalapa admitted women for the first time in 1891 and the Escuela Normal de Jalisco enrolled them three years later. By 1895, with the opening of these schools and as a result of the law of 1891 which made primary education mandatory, over half the teachers were women.

While the most popular professions for women continued to be teaching, nursing and government work, women
graduated and practiced in all fields. One of the first women to receive a professional degree in Mexico was Margarita Chorné, who graduated in dentistry in 1886. Mexico's first woman physician was the popular Matilde P. Montoya. Her career choice was so unique that in 1882 several newspapers carried announcements that she would be taking her medical examinations. In 1887 she received the title, "Doctor, the first of her sex in Mexico" in a ceremony presided over by Díaz himself. Writer and activist María Sandoval de Zarco became Mexico's first woman lawyer in 1889. María Guerrero, the first public accountant, completed her studies in 1908. By 1910, the National University in Mexico City had graduated five women medical doctors, two dentists, a lawyer and a chemist.

Towards the last part of the nineteenth century a few special schools were established for women. In 1897 a school for reformed prostitutes opened in the capital. Limited educational facilities were available for orphaned, indigent and handicapped women. In 1888 the asylum for beggars was expanded to include women. Even a day care center for working mothers was begun in 1887. A night school for working women was in operation from 1898. Except for prisons, most of the facilities for women were located only in Mexico City but inadequately served the city's needs.
The growing numbers of educated, working women touched off a controversy that reached to the core of the issue—the role women would play in Mexican society. The ideas of liberalism, positivism and Social Darwinism were bandied about by both supporters and detractors of women's education. Anti-feminists, buoyed by Social Darwinism, argued that women were physically, socially, psychologically and even morally inferior to men. They attacked feminists as being unchristian and domestic failures.\(^{23}\) Ignacio Gamboa penned one of the most famous anti-feminist tracts in 1906. In *La Mujer Moderna* Gamboa warned that a successful women's movement would be a disaster resulting in idolized children and lowered morals. He judged men to be morally and biologically superior to women, not because of Darwin's theory, but because of religious documentation.\(^{24}\)

Attacks such as Gamboa's were countered by the pro-feminist writings of Génaro García, magazine and newspaper articles and many theses authored by women at the Instituto Normal del Estado de Puebla which spoke out strongly in favor of women's education and work. These theses, written shortly after the turn of the century, reflected the increasingly popular idea that a better-educated women would be a more efficient homemaker and help produce a better-educated society. Sometimes education was aligned with democracy or with the notion that countries offering higher education to women were more progressive.\(^{25}\)
These ideas were widely circulated, not only through publication of theses, but by the authors' own classroom proselytizing.

Women Workers Organize

Between 1895 and 1910 women represented one-third of all employed in manufacturing. They worked in dress-making, shoe, food and drink, pottery and glass factories. The greatest number of women were employed in the textile and tobacco industries, although those numbers were declining.26 Facing deplorable working and living conditions, female factory workers were the first women to organize in the nineteenth century. Adelina Zendéjas, writer and journalist, called textile workers the precursors of the women's rights movement.27 Women textile workers, employed since the mills opened in the early nineteenth century, filled the lowest paying jobs and worked for lower salaries than men performing the same tasks. By mid-nineteenth century, factories hired predominantly women workers in areas of traditional labor shortages, as in the state of Veracruz and the North. "Cocolapán" in Orizaba, Veracruz employed 73 per cent, "El Coloso" in Sinaloa had 75 per cent and "Dolores" in Chihuahua, 65 per cent. After the industry became more capital-intensive in the late nineteenth century, it employed fewer women. By the end of the century, with the introduction of technological
improvements and the resultant expansion of the industry, only 13 per cent of the total textile work force was women. It was reported in Puebla's textile center that in 1900 almost no women were employed while "Hércules," an important early factory located in Querétaro, counted only fifteen women and eight children among its 1,000 employees. "Río Blanco" in Orizaba, by then the nation's largest plant and the setting for the 1907 strike, employed 18 per cent. In the North, where labor continued to be scarce and costly, more women were employed, undoubtedly because of their willingness to accept lower wages than their male counterparts. "Estrella" (the Madero family factory in the state of Coahuila) employed 33 1/3 per cent women out of its total of 600 workers. Many of these women were the wives of men who worked in agriculture. Other factories in Coahuila tended to reflect the relatively high proportion of women employed.

In the early stages of Mexican textile production, salaries for women were exceedingly low. Although no figures are available for the first half of the nineteenth century, by the Porfiriato it was estimated that women received half to two-thirds of the salaries given to men for approximately the same jobs. "Hércules" in 1885 paid women an average of 20 to 25 centavos, according to figures submitted to the national government. At the lowest end of the pay scale were the carding and spinning operators.
They were predominantly women and children. In "Río Blanco," female workers received 50 to 80 centavos, children 30 to 50 and men 56 centavos to 2.40 pesos daily. No job differentiation was noted. Julio Sesto, a Spanish poet and tourist, reported that women in the Federal District were paid as little as 25 centavos a day. Many of the "women" were no more than children. "To believe it," he remarked, "one has to see the forsaken girls of Mexico spending an embittered adolescence in the shops and factories." In 1906 the workers' movement headed by Ricardo Flores Magón and organized into the anarcho-syndicalist union, the Gran Círculo de Obreros, urged minimum salaries for male textile workers of 75 centavos, 40 for women and 30 for children. These demands were low in comparison to wages currently being paid at "Río Blanco." It is ironic that the concept of equal pay for equal work was apparently not considered at this stage by the man who would demand economic equality for men and women.

An even larger percentage of women was employed in the tobacco industry. Wages varied from 12 to 50 centavos daily, with only seamstresses earning less. In the textile industry, women were rapidly being replaced by more efficient methods and machinery. Since three-fourths of the employees were women, who lacked employment alternatives, they had very little bargaining power to reverse this trend.
Underpaid, overworked, mistreated and often taken advantage of sexually by male foremen, women organized to protect themselves. The concept of female equality was encouraged by socialists and anarchists who helped organize labor. As early as 1857 textile workers in Guadalajara, 90 per cent women, demanded salaries equal to those in the Federal District. Although unsuccessful in obtaining the raises requested, they did receive some salary increase. In 1862 in Veracruz a circular demanding higher wages, shorter hours and care during pregnancy received wide support among laborers. In 1867 strikers at "La Fama Montaneasa," located in a suburb of Mexico City, demanded a twelve-hour day so they might attend to their domestic responsibilities. When textile workers held their First Permanent Congress in March, 1876, improving the working conditions of women was included in the platform. Obrera Carmen Huerta was elected to preside at the Second Congress in 1879, again in 1880 and several times after.

Women in the tobacco industry were equally active. One of their first strikes was in the "Moro Muzo" factory in September, 1881. The owners wanted to raise the daily quota while continuing to pay the same wages. The cigar rollers struck but hunger eventually forced them back to work without any gains. In protest against unfair wages and treatment, female cigar rollers at "El César" factory in 1881, "El Faro" in 1884 and "La Niña" in 1885 deliberately
slowed production. With like motivation, two hundred female cigar rollers from "El Borrego" attacked the "Moro Muzo" factory in 1884. Production slow-downs, attacks and strikes, mainly over low wages and excessive daily quotas, continued throughout the Porfiriato.

As a further defense against unfair labor practices and inadequate government protection, workers formed cooperatives and mutual benefit societies called mutualistas. Although the life-span of mutualistas was generally short, they did bring some relief to the destitute masses by providing members with unemployment benefits, free medical care, medicines and funeral expenses. The Workers' Congress in 1894 recognized fifty-four mutualistas, eight of which were female. Of the eight, seven were located in or near Mexico City. In the 1890s one of the most prominent was the Fraternal de Costureras headed by Carmen Romero Rubio de Díaz and composed of middle-class widows and orphans. The society Esperanza y Caridad Señores founded in 1874 was more representative of nineteenth century mutualistas. It had 120 members and provided medicine and doctors for sick members and 40 pesos to the family of any member who died.

Increasingly women began to form societies to call attention to their plight. In 1904 journalist Laura N. Torres founded a feminist society, Admiradoras de Juárez. However, it was subjected to ridicule by prominent persons
such as historian Justo Sierra, who accused feminists of trying to imitate men.\textsuperscript{38} The same year the Sociedad Protectora de la Mujer was formed and presided over by lawyer María Sandoval de Zarco and later by poet Laura Méndez de Cuenca. Almost simultaneously the Sociedad Internacional Femenina Cosmos under Aurora Bórquez was founded. In 1906 the Sociedad de Empleadas de Comercio was established and headed by Concepción Gómez Pezuela de Arrecillas, Manuela M. de Obiedo and Emmy Ibáñez Navarro. Its principal activities included the formation of two academies (one for commerce and one for music), a savings and loan bank, an employment bureau, a library and a magazine, \textit{La Abeja}.

Textile workers created the first women's revolutionary organization, Las Hijas de Anáhuac in 1907 in Tizapán in the Federal District. The Hijas supported the goals of the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM), calling for revolution and the overthrow of Díaz, as well as the general betterment of women. Charter members were María del Carmen and Catalina Frías, Justa Vega, Eligia Pérez, Leonila Aguilar, María Gomez, Carlota Lira, Concepción Espinosa and Josefa Ortega. Membership and support came from textile workers in the federal district. The group, meeting weekly at the home of the Frías sisters, grew from a handful to 300 women before its suppression by the police. The directors were the subjects of constant persecution; despite this, meetings continued in smaller groups in the fields
near the factories. The members of Hijas threw their support behind Madero after the Revolution began.40

In addition to the Frías sisters and the women at the Río Blanco mills, the most prominent woman textile worker of the period was María Díaz, who popularized the plight of textile workers through her activities. She began her career in a textile mill in the state of Jalisco at the age of eight in 1904. Since working up to sixteen hours a day left no time for school, she learned the first letters of the alphabet from fellow employees. As a teenager, she lost her job because of her union activities. In 1917 she organized the first Red syndicate in Guadalajara and in 1923 was named Secretary General for the textile union. The same year, the governor of Jalisco appointed her health inspector. By 1935 she had received national recognition for her union organizing and was designated workers' representative on the Central Committee of Conciliation and Arbitration for Guadalajara.41

Teresa Urrea: La Santa de Cabora

During the Porfiriato, while women's groups were in the process of organizing and the Liberal Party was still an idea, a lone Mexican woman was exerting a tremendous influence in northern Mexico. The power of Teresa Urrea was a mystical, spiritual one that became political when so many of her followers grew discontented with the Díaz government.
Had she been more politically attuned, she might have promoted a rebellion twenty years in advance of the Mexican Revolution. She was born on October 15, 1872 in Sinaloa, the illegitimate daughter of a fourteen-year-old Yaqui Indian woman and an hacendado. While still a child she moved to Sonora and at the age of sixteen, at her father's home at Cabora, Teresa began her transformation as a healer. She remained in a trance for three months and then began practicing healing. As the news of her success spread, people arrived in large numbers—an estimated 5,000 in one day.42

Teresa's father doubted her special powers until he saw her perform a miracle. Afterwards he allowed her to receive patients—mainly Sonoran Yaquís and Mayos, Sinaloan Gusaves and Chihuahuan Tarahumares—at his house. For these Indians of the northwest Teresa became "Santa Teresa" or "La Santa de Cabora."

A turning point in her work occurred on December 26, 1891 when twenty-eight armed men from Tomochic, Chihuahua, arrived at Cabora. Tomochic was in rebellion against the government of Porfirio Díaz and had already routed two federal armies. The men were so impressed by Teresa that they elected her their village saint and adopted "Viva la Santa de Cabora," as their battle cry. They were convinced Teresa would resuscitate any who died in battle.44
When the tiny village of three hundred finally met destruction by federal troops, it became a symbol of resistance against the Díaz regime. Although Teresa had not encouraged rebellion, the villagers had been inspired by her. A dozen other villages, invoking her aid, took up arms against the government, but the army squelched the movements.

While there was no evidence of Teresa's complicity in these rebellions, the Mexican government, as a precaution (and to the great displeasure of the Yaquis), exiled her and her father to Nogales in 1892. Their home remained a mecca for pilgrims seeking cures. But more than the sick came. The site soon developed into a rendezvous for revolutionaries plotting the overthrow of the Díaz government who drew recruits from the throngs of people streaming out of Mexico to see Teresa.⁴⁵

After three years in Nogales, Teresa and her father moved to eastern Arizona and then to El Paso. After only a month in Texas, news arrived that the Mexican Revolution was underway. In August, 1896 seventy Yaquis shouting "Viva la Santa Teresa" charged across the American side at Nogales and seized the Mexican customhouse. The same day the Teresitas, as the revolutionaries called themselves, captured and held several Mexican customhouses. These moves, however, failed to signal a general uprising in Mexico. Probably only Teresa, had she been politically
minded, could have initiated and sustained an uprising with her thousands of devoted followers.

Despite the power she wielded, Teresa adamantly refused to participate in politics. On September 11, 1896, in a rare note to the El Paso Herald, she disclaimed any responsibility for the uprisings. She stated, "I am not the one who encourages such uprisings, nor one who in any way mixes with them. . . ." She called herself a "victim" because of the manner in which she had been expelled from her own country by the Mexican government.46

The Díaz regime was uncomfortable with Teresa so near the border and repeatedly urged the American authorities (who did not consider Teresa a political threat) to remove her to the interior. Several attempts were made on her life, although it was never ascertained whether they were carried out by paid Mexican agents. Her father, refusing to risk her life, moved his family to Clifton, Arizona, a remote mining town.

At this point, she left her father's home and toured the United States with a medical company. She married and had two children but never returned to Mexico. As she prophesied, she died at the age of thirty-three on February 12, 1906. Slowly her fame subsided. Her Yaqui and Mayo followers were rounded up and forcibly shipped to Yucatán and Oaxaca to serve as slave laborers on henequen and tobacco plantations. When Teresa's movement died, the anti-Porfirian spirit passed to the Flores Magóns.47
Women and the Mexican Liberal Party

Since 1900 the Flores Magón brothers had led the Mexican Liberal Party against the regime of President Porfirio Díaz. From 1900 to 1906, this determined group of Liberals attempted to re-establish the Juárez principles of political democracy, first within Mexico, then from exile in the United States. Shortly after founding the Liberal Club "Ponciano Arriaga" in 1900, its leaders widened their scope by including demands of workers and peasants. By 1903 they were plotting the violent overthrow of Díaz and calling for deep social changes. Ricardo Flores Magón, disillusioned with political democracy, became convinced that only the adoption of anarchism could free the Mexican people. After 1908, some of the leaders who rejected this new philosophy joined Francisco Modero. Between 1907 and 1918, Ricardo led the Organizing Junta of the Mexican Liberal Party in its attempt to overthrow all government in Mexico and establish a society in which the people would own the land and industry. 48

Women from every social class participated in this phase of Liberal resistance to the Díaz regime. The Liberals themselves espoused the position that women should have equal rights with men. Equal rights, however, meant full economic equality rather than suffrage or political rights. In 1901 at their first convention in San Luis Potosí, members
of the Club "Ponciano Arriaga" issued a proclamation on equality of salary and work. Distinguished female members of the Club included Aurora and Elvira Colín in Zitácuaro, Josefa Arjona de Pinelo and Donaciana Salas from Veracruz, Silvina Rembao de Trejo in Chihuahua and La Laguna, Josefa Tolentino and Rafaela Alor in Coatzacoalcos, Concepción Valdés, Modesta Abascal, and Otilia and Eulalia Martínez Núñez from Mexico City. When the Club officially organized in Mexico City in February, 1903, two women, Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza and Elisa Acuña y Rossetti, served as officers. Both were important in the Liberal movement and would continue to play seminal roles in the Revolution. When the PLM issued its comprehensive reform program in July, 1906, it included provisions for the protection of women and children and the granting of rights and privileges to illegitimate children. It was, however, more facile to make pronouncements about equality than to live up to them. Even socialists and anarchists, pre-conditioned to sexual discrimination, struggled to see women as equals.

Many of the women who gave their support to the Liberal Party movement were wives and relatives of male members. Like the men, they were persecuted and imprisoned—in Belén, the notorious prison located in the Federal District, or in San Juan Ulúa, in the bay off Veracruz—for their beliefs. Margarita Magón de Flores, the ambitious mestiza mother of the Flores Magón brothers, never hesitated
to defend her sons. During their youth, she fought to provide them educational opportunities in Mexico City, rather than have them educated in their native Oaxaca. At her suggestion, the subheading of Regeneración was changed to "Periódico Independiente de Combate." When she was dying, President Díaz offered to release her sons from prison if she would insist that they stop their political activities. She replied that she preferred to die without seeing her boys than have them retract what they had said and done.52 Teresa Arteaga de Flores Magón was one of the first women to respond to the Liberal Party. She joined in 1905 and married Ricardo some time after. Because of her convictions and her relationship to Ricardo, she suffered persecution and exile. During her husband's frequent prison terms, Teresa continued her activities with the Liberals. María Talavera Brouse, life-long companion of Enrique Flores Magón, spent five months in prison for her Liberal party work. After his death she too died, poor and forgotten in Baja California in 1947. Camilo Arriaga's wife, Avelina Villarreal de Arriaga, wrote for Regeneración, and with his sister Dolores, worked for the Liberal cause.53 When women circulated Liberal Party material, they were arrested. With several other Mexican and American women, Hattie de Lara was accused of violating United States neutrality laws. Boston heiress Elizabeth Darling Trowbridge married Manuel Sarabia and contributed her entire inheritance to the Liberal
movement. Her generosity caused her wealthy family to disown and disinherit her. Ethel Duffy Turner and her husband, John Kenneth, who caused a scandal with the publication of *Barbarous Mexico*, worked closely with the PLM. With Elizabeth Trowbridge she founded *The Border* in Tucson, *Appeal to Reason* and other periodicals in defense of the Liberal cause. Ethel managed the English page in *Regeneración* and attempted to keep a file of all issues. After retiring to Cuernavaca in 1950 she wrote *Ricardo Flores Magón y El Partido Liberal Mexicano*, which provided firsthand descriptions of the experiences of the Mexican Liberals in the United States and Mexico. She died in Cuernavaca in 1968. Crescencia Garza de Martínez, wife of Liberal journalist Paulino Martínez, and their daughter Aurora, were both imprisoned. Crescencia, abducted from her home in September, 1909 was forced to abandon her seventy-eight-day-old baby, who consequently died three months later.

Women from all parts of Mexico rallied to the Liberal cause. Sara Estela Ramírez from Coahuila, a writer and revolutionary poet, began her activities early. After joining the Liberals, she founded the newspaper *La Corregidora* which focused on publishing articles against the Díaz regime. Sara also assisted fleeing journalists escaping to safety in the United States. Another writer, Emilia Min of Veracruz, began sending anti-Díaz articles
for publication in independent newspapers in 1901. Edilberto and Josefa Arjona de Pinelo, a husband and wife team also from Veracruz, served the revolutionary cause starting in 1900. In that year Josefa issued an anti-Porfirian document and together they founded two Liberal Clubs in Veracruz. With the help of other interested women, Josefa organized the Club "Benito Juárez." In 1907 the couple fled from Veracruz to Mexico City because of persecution at nearby Río Blanco. In the capital they joined a Liberal society called Socialista Mexicanos whose members also included Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Elisa Acuña y Rossetti. Another Veracruzana, Donaciana Salas, a member of the Liberal Club "Vicente Guerrero" since 1906, served the Liberal cause by relaying information between Mexico City and Veracruz. Silvina Rembalo de Trejo of Chihuahua participated since 1906. She began by writing articles against the administrations of Terrazas and Creel in her home state and, with her husband, founded the Centro Revolucionario de Chihuahua, which remained active from 1907 to 1913. She was imprisoned several times, and became known as "La Matrona de la Revolución en Chihuahua." Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza, Elisa Acuña y Rossetti and Dolores Jiménez y Muro must be counted among the most important precursors of the Mexican Revolution. In addition, each of these women carried her work into other phases of the Revolution. All were writers and Liberal
Party members and all gravitated to the Zapatista camp after leaving the Liberals.

Juana Gutiérrez's long career extends through the precursor period and all stages of the Revolution. A prolific journalist and writer, a socialist, teacher and fearless ideologue, Juana was imprisoned at least four times during the course of the Revolution. Born in Durango into the working-class family of Santiago Mendoza and Porfiria Chávez on January 27, 1875, she was the daughter and granddaughter of Liberals—her grandfather was executed by conservative troops during the War of Reform. While she maintained a close relationship with her only sister, Juana's warmest attachment was to her father. She felt distant from her strongly Catholic and conservative mother whom she found too intolerant. In 1890, at the age of fifteen and with scant formal education, she left her family (now living near Parral, Chihuahua) to marry Cirilo Mendoza, a miner. Together they moved to Palomas Negras, Coahuila. Juana's career as a revolutionary began when she issued an article to the Liberal newspaper El Diario del Hogar concerning the deplorable mining conditions in Coahuila. Upon discovering its authorship, authorities jailed her in Saltillo. She was eighteen at the time and although she served only three months, she never forgot the experience. From that point on, Juana no longer
confined her criticisms to mining but expanded them to encompass the entire Mexican social system. Her first contact with the Liberals came soon after they organized in San Luis Potosí. Apparently impressed, she returned north and founded the Liberal Club "Benito Juárez" in Minas Nuevas, Chihuahua. When the director of a liberal publication in Guanajuato offered her a position, she accepted. After making the long trip south, Juana discovered much to her disappointment that the paper was no longer being printed. Undeterred, she decided to begin her own newspaper and wrote her husband—currently working in Chihuahua—for money. He quickly sold their only assets—their goats. The bitingly sarcastic anti-Díaz newspaper, Vésper, was born on April 5, 1901. Juana continued publishing Vésper, a liberal publication to defend miners and combat the dictatorship, in different locations for the next fifteen years. In addition to criticizing the government, Vésper's publisher printed hundreds of copies of Kropotkin's La Conquista de Pan.60 Along with other opposition newspapers, Vésper was confiscated in 1903 and its editor and writers jailed. Juana was threatened with death if she or any of the other editors ever tried to publish again. Undaunted, she responded in a manner representative of her actions for the next thirty years—she continued publishing.61

Up to this point, Juana's relationship with the Liberals had been cooperative and supportive but this
tranquility was upset by two events at the Liberal meeting in Laredo in February, 1904. The first incident concerned the ever-widening split between Camilo Arriaga and Ricardo Flores Magón; the other involved the drowning death of Santiago de la Hoz. Those attending the Laredo meeting were Camilo Arriaga, Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magón, Juan and Manuel Sarabia, Santiago de la Hoz, Paulino Martínez, Santiago de la Vega, Sara Estela Ramírez, Elisa Acuña y Rossetti, and Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza.\textsuperscript{62} Assembled under the auspices of the Directorate of the Liberal Club "Ponciano Arriaga," the Liberals laid plans to launch a revolution, to re-establish \textit{Regeneración}, and to found a political party. During discussion of these proposals, the group's differences swiftly emerged. In what was both a personal and an ideological struggle, leadership coalesced around Camilo Arriaga and Ricardo Flores Magón. Camilo was milder mannered as well as more politically moderate than Ricardo. De la Vega, Elisa, Juana and Sara sided with Camilo. With hopes that tempers would cool, Elisa and Juana left for San Antonio to re-establish \textit{Vésper}. Sara Estela Ramírez, who since 1901 had maintained a long, warm correspondence with Ricardo, wrote him a letter explaining her reluctant decision to side with Camilo. Her letter emphasized the personal dimensions of the struggle. She wrote:

I've become sad and weary, Ricardo, of so many personal antagonisms. I tell you frankly, I am disillusioned with everything, absolutely
everything. . . . I don't want to analyze the cause of your quarrels with Camilito. I believe you both are right and both to blame.

For Sara the main tragedy was that "we don't know how to forgive one another's shortcomings, to help each other out like true brothers. We criticize each other, and tear ourselves apart instead of inspiring one another and mending our fences." She hoped that "by working in groups apart, separately and in different places, we will get along better and gain a new harmony." Sara's aspirations would not be realized. As the Revolution progressed, the PLM's unity further disintegrated.

The other incident leading to Juana's disenchantment with the Flores Magón leadership was far more serious. The tragic drowning death of Santiago de la Hoz on March 20, 1904 which Juana blamed on Enrique Flores Magón, caused her to sever completely her relationship with the Flores Magón brothers. Throughout the Laredo meeting, Santiago and Enrique had been quarreling. Their disagreements almost erupted in violence one evening when Enrique pulled a gun and Santiago picked up something to defend himself. Later when Santiago was swimming in the nearby Río Bravo, Juana alleged, Enrique hit him with a branch. Although an excellent swimmer, he was knocked unconscious and drowned. The only witnesses were children who reportedly were heard screaming, "Don't do it!"
Because of these two incidents, Juana never again worked with the Flores Magóns or the Liberal Party. Her accusations, including the charge that they wanted to sell Baja to the United States, were handled by their followers. On June 15, 1906 in the pages of Regeneración, Juan Sarabia refuted Juana's criticisms of the Liberal Party Constitution point by point. Ethel Duffy Turner claimed that the split between Camilo and Ricardo was not solely Ricardo's fault. Aligning with the Flores Magóns, whom she greatly admired, Turner called Juana's accusations lies and said she was either a Díaz agent or suffering from hysteria.

The warm friendship between Elisa Acuña y Rossetti and Juana developed while they worked together with the Liberals. Later they collaborated on Vesper and went to jail together. Enrique Flores Magón described his first meeting with Elisa in February, 1903. She presented herself at the office of the Liberal newspaper El Hijo del Ahuizote in Mexico City to offer her services. Because of her experience as a teacher and writer, she immediately was put to work organizing the Club "Ponciano Arriaga" in the capital. She also served on the board of directors for Liberal Clubs. Elisa signed the Liberal Manifesto from Mexico City on February 27, 1903, along with Juana, María del Refugio Vélez and other leading Liberals of the day. The manifesto stressed the movement's emphasis on social and economic injustices and the need for radical reform.
It spoke out against clericalism, militarism and capitalism, and for the need to restore justice to the country. It concluded by advocating revolution. Elisa continued her work with the Liberals until she joined Madero and then the Zapatistas. 67

Dolores Jiménez y Muro was another important precursor. A northerner like Juana, she was born into a prominent family in Aguascalientes on July 7, 1848. She first began writing at an early age during the French intervention but spent the formative years of her life in the rich liberal atmosphere of San Luis Potosí. In 1904 she moved to Mexico City where she began her career as a writer for anti-Díaz periodicals. Often imprisoned for her ideas, she was once released only after staging a hunger strike. She served prison terms with both male and female revolutionaries, including Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza, Elisa Acuña, and Inés Malváez. After leaving the Liberals, she joined Madero for a brief time and then, like Juana and Elisa, worked with the Zapatistas. 68

Women and the PLM Supported Strikes

Immediately after the turn of the century, there was a proliferation of strikes in all Mexican industries. Nineteen hundred six, "the year of the strikes," was a turning point both because of the large amount of work stoppages and the number of workers involved. Most of the
strikes took place in the textile, tobacco, mining and railroad industries. The two major ones—in the mines at Cananea, Sonora in June, 1906 and in the textile mills in Orizaba, Veracruz in December, 1907—were PLM-supported and shook the Díaz regime to its foundations. Both took place in foreign-owned companies that paid top wages. Even the highest wages, however, could not keep pace with rising costs. Besides complaining about economic issues, workers expressed growing bitterness towards foreign owners and bosses, mistreatment, lack of educational opportunities for themselves and their children and little or no compensation for injuries. Strikes set the background for the PLM revolts of 1906 and 1908 and signaled the expanding consciousness of the workers. At the American-owned Cananea mine, the 1906 strike ushered in the first important large-scale labor movement in the twentieth century. It was accompanied by bloodshed and violence, with more than twenty deaths. Dozens of anonymous women joined their husbands and sons in support. Women also participated in the 1907 strike at the French-owned Río Blanco textile mills, where they comprised 18 per cent of the work force. The strike was one in a series at Río Blanco. It was spurred by events in Puebla and Tlaxcala where, because of reduced wages, the union had given orders to halt work. The Puebla workers managed to sustain their strike because of the assistance they received from the Orizaba Union, the Círculo de Obreros
Liberas. When Puebla mill owners complained, the proprietors at Orizaba closed their mills. A nationwide lock-out took place, closing ninety-three of the nation's one hundred fifty mills, and throwing thirty thousand laborers out of work in twenty states. On January 4, 1907 President Díaz ordered that no more strikes be allowed in Mexico, and that all workers in Puebla, Veracruz, Tlaxcala, Querétaro, Jalisco and the Federal District return to their jobs by January 7.\textsuperscript{72}

Most laborers, suffering from weeks without work, accepted the order. At daybreak on January 7, 1907 textile workers gathered outside the Río Blanco, Santa Rosa and Nogales factories, the largest in Mexico. At the Río Blanco factory a group of women workers blocked the doorway, prepared to stop anyone from entering. The factory whistle blew at 5:00 A.M. and no one attempted entry. When the women trekked to the company store run by Frenchman Victor García to ask for credit, they were refused and insulted. Owner of a hated company store and a foreigner, García symbolized oppression to the workers.\textsuperscript{73} The women returned with an angry mob and, led by Margarita Martínez, attacked his shop, killed a clerk and sacked and burned the building. Later that day other stores were looted and set afire.

Several workers were arrested while groups of women tried to detain anyone from entering the plant. The situation exploded when federal troops began a fusillade, mowing down
every man, woman and child in sight. Sharpshooters were brought in and rurales given orders to hunt down fleeing workers. When the rurales refused, they were shot. Even in the thick of battle, women organized and fought. Isabel Díaz Pensamiento, Carmen Cruz, Dolores Larios, Margarita Martínez, Filomena Pliego, Anselma Sierra and Lucrecia Toriz were some of the women who risked their lives attempting to save others. In this single bloody massacre, two hundred workers were shot and four hundred, many of them women, taken prisoner. At least seven workers were executed by firing squads for their part in the strike. Later, the corpses were shipped to Veracruz and dumped in the bay for the sharks.

The massacre at Río Blanco inspired, rather than intimidated, labor. In 1908 the railroad workers called a strike in San Luis Potosí. It was soon cancelled by the leaders who feared another Río Blanco. In spite of these setbacks, workers in mining, textiles and railroads had demonstrated that they were part of a growing dissatisfaction and receptive to revolutionary ideas. The PLM, with its leaders harassed and jailed in both Mexico and the United States, began to lose strength. While their uprisings of 1906 and 1908 did not materialize, the total effect of the strikes and revolts worked to undermine the credibility of the Díaz regime.
Women Writers and Journalists

Mexican women have always been active as journalists and creative writers. The first women journalists and publishers in the western hemisphere were Mexican. High literary achievement among women in Colonial New Spain was accomplished by nuns and Mexico's famous seventeenth century muse Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1651-1695) epitomized this trend. One of the first journalists was Leona Vicario who wrote about the insurgents' progress in the Independence movement. In the 1860s a woman's name appeared for the first time as part of a newspaper staff listing in El Búcaro, published from the capital. The first periodical exclusively devoted to women's interests was El Semanario de las Señoritas Mexicanas, founded in 1841. El Semanario claimed to be the first publication of its kind and contained articles on literary themes, the education of women and historical subjects. In an attempt to maintain a high intellectual level, its editor excluded recipes, fashions and jokes and sought to fill women's educational void, even though their proper place was considered to be the home.77

La Semana de las Señoritas Mexicanas (1851-52) had a less intellectual approach but was equally important in nineteenth century women's publications. Although the format changed from issue to issue, it always contained music, poetry and short stories. Early issues carried historical
sketches; stories and occasional religious pieces comprised later ones. There were regular notes on etiquette and medical advice, as well as complete instructions for playing games. A regular department in *La Semana* was "Economía Doméstica," which included recipes and household management suggestions.78

During the Porfiriato more women wrote for more periodicals than ever before and although many magazines were short-lived, their numbers alone indicate that they served a receptive audience. Appearing in 1880, *La Ilustración Femenil*, a weekly dealing with literature, the arts and science, was edited by various women. *El Album de la Mujer* (1883-90) contained poetry by contemporary writers. *El Correo de las Señoras* (1883-93) also printed poetry and translations of well-known authors. Edited by Laureana de Kleinhans, *Las Hijas del Anáhuac* (1887-1888) contained verse by women socially and literarily important. Its title was changed to *Violetas del Anáhuac* at the beginning of its second year. Among its contributors were Dolores Correa Zapata, a writer and educator from Tabasco, Rita Cetina Gutiérrez, a writer and educator from Mérida, and Laureana, who deserves special attention for her efforts on behalf of women.79 Born in Taxco in 1846 to a North American father and a Mexican mother, she was raised and educated in Mexico. Laureana first proposed the idea of emancipation of women through education in her book, *La Emancipación de la Mujer*
por Medio del Estudio. In Las Hijas del Anáhuac, she made one of the first demands for women's suffrage and equal opportunities for both sexes. Before her death in 1886, she wrote Mujeres Notables Mexicanas which was subsequently published in 1910. In it she called attention to famous nineteenth century women by briefly sketching their histories. One of the last periodicals of the century, El Periódico de las Señoras (1896), was both written and edited by women in the capital. 80

Women were also writing and publishing in other parts of Mexico. From San Luis Potosí, El Album de las Señoritas Potosinas made a short-lived attempt in 1865. La Siempreviva, published since the late 1870s from Mérida was authored and published by women. To a greater degree than other magazines of the time, it had a boldly feminist slant. La Mujer Mexicana, a monthly begun in 1901 in Morelia contained recipes, sayings and a section on famous women of the past.

In the early twentieth century women's magazines began to address themselves in earnest to political and social questions. Their audience, however, still was limited to upper- and middle-class women. Tiempo, later called El Tiempo Ilustrado, and Arte y Letras were general interest magazines that carried news on women. Tiempo presented pieces on famous women; Arte y Letras included a section on fashion and the arts. La Mujer Mexicana (1904-1908) and Diario del
Hogar were more politically oriented. The staff for La Mujer Mexicana originally consisted of women writers who banded together to form the Sociedad Protectora de la Mujer.\textsuperscript{81} It was edited by Dolores Correa Zapata with María Sandoval de Zarco serving on the board of directors. The contributors were among the most talented female writers of the day. They included Rita Cetina Gutiérrez, Dolores Jiménez y Muro, María Enriqueta, Laureana Wright de Kleinhaus, María Arias Bernal and Matilde P. Montoya. Unfortunately, much of Dolores Jiménez y Muro's work is still unaccounted for because she wrote under many pseudonyms. She usually chose "Esparataco" for political articles and "Anima" for literary pieces. Like Dolores Jiménez, María Enriqueta (María Enriqueta Camarillo y Roa de Pereyra) often used pseudonyms. During her prolific career, she contributed to several newspapers and magazines, many of them women's publications.\textsuperscript{82} The subjects of articles published in La Mujer Mexicana ranged from feminism to child care. Diario del Hogar, edited by Filomeno Mata, who had been imprisoned more than twenty times by the Díaz regime, was one of several stars in the Liberal galaxy.\textsuperscript{83} It often carried articles by and about women. Dolores Jiménez y Muro, María Enriqueta, Aurora Colín and Guadalupe Gutiérrez de Joseph, among others, wrote for Diario. Dolores and María often contributed poetry. Aurora, who served as a delegate of the Liberal Junta to the
First Liberal Congress in 1901, wrote political pieces, as did Guadalupe, who had been contributing since she was fifteen.⁸⁴

In addition to magazines, women wrote for and published newspapers. Several radical papers during the Porfiriato were printed by women. In 1876 La Comuna, dedicated to the defense of civil liberty and the strike, published 4,500 copies. It contained political and economic sections as well as articles on working mothers and equality of the sexes. The founders and editors are still unknown.⁸⁵ The boldly anti-Díaz Juan Panadero was published by María Guadalupe Rojo Vda. de Alvarado, after her husband Casimiro died in 1899. They originally published propaganda against the government in Jalisco but were forced to relocate the paper in Mexico City due to constant harassment. After Casimiro's death, María was jailed ten times and accused of several printing offenses. When she entered Belén prison in 1904, she was ordered poisoned. The order, however, was never carried out for fear of demonstrations among her supporters. After the fall of Díaz, María continued her revolutionary activities. President Carranza gave her a small pension but she was already an old woman. She died in Mexico City in 1922.⁸⁶ Sara Estela Ramírez, a Liberal and staunch defender of women, founded La Corregidora to combat the dictatorship. Carlota Antuna de Borrego founded and directed El Campo Libre, a weekly dedicated to the
defense of campesinos, common control of land and the fall of the Díaz government. 87

After founding Vésper in 1901, Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza collaborated with Elisa Acuña y Rossetti on its publication. It usually spanned four pages and had a weekly circulation of 8,000. Its female contributors included Elisa and Juana, Sara Estela Ramírez, Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Aurora Colín. The outspoken approach of its main editor made it an easy target for censorship. In an article written in July, 1903 Juana and Elisa scorned Díaz's fear of them and taunted him as being the first man afraid of women. In the same issue, Juana published a copy of a note she sent to the President with the message, "General, retire!" Fearlessly, she signed her name. 88 Vésper's press was confiscated often and its writers hounded. In 1903, it was suppressed in a raid along with Excélsior, El Padre de Ahuizote and La Voz de Juárez. 89 Juana and Elisa also worked with Dolores Jiménez, María de los Angeles Jiménez Méndez and the Agrupación de Gremios Trabajadores "Socialismo Mexicano" to publish the anti-Díaz newspaper Anáhuac in 1907. Both Dolores and María suffered prison sentences for their part in publishing Anáhuac.

As the Porfiriato drew to a close, women had made moderate gains, most importantly in education. More women attended schools and universities than ever before. Many
entered the labor market as teachers, nurses and government employees. Politically they had begun to organize labor and anti-Díaz groups. Several women were publishing books and magazines. But legally they still felt heavy discrimination and lacked equal rights. As a consequence, during the Revolution they would rise up to accept new challenges.
NOTES

CHAPTER I


9 Génaro García, Apuntes sobre la Condición de la Mujer (México: Compañía Limit. de Tipógrafos, 1891), pp. 7, 42-46.

10 Ibid., pp. 71, 78-79.


12 Ibid., p. 81.


14 María del Carmen Ochoa Flores, "Desarrollo Social de la Mujer Mexicana" (tesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1968), p. 35; Callcott, Liberalism in Mexico, p. 120; "Acceso a la Educación en Todos los Niveles," in Derechos de la Mujer Mexicana (Mexico: XLVII Legislatura del Congreso de la Unión, 1969), p. 69.

15 "Acceso a la Educación" p. 70 gives the opening date for the Escuela Comercial as 1901; Ana María Flores, "La Mujer en la Sociedad," in México: Cincuenta Años de Revolución, 4 vols., Vol. II: La Vida Social, ed. by José Iturriaga, Humberto Romero and Génaro Vázquez Colmenares (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961), 331, states that it was 1903.


17 Callcott, Liberalism in Mexico, p. 146.

18 Iturriaga, La Estructura Social, p. 14. By the 1890s a number of women became government employees. By 1910 there were 1,785 women working for the government.
19. "Acceso a la Educación," p. 70. For a more detailed account of the life of Margarita Chorné see "Acceso," p. 115 and on Matilde P. Montoya see p. 116; María Elvira Bermúdez, "La Familia," México: Cincuenta Años de Revolución, 4 vols., Vol. II: La Vida Social, eds., José Iturriaga, Humberto Romero and Género Vázquez Colmenares (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961), p. 87; New York Times, September 26, 1920, p. 14, incorrectly identifies Matilde P. Montoya as Teresa Montoya. María Sandoval had a long struggle to obtain her education. At one point she received a letter from President McKinley inviting her to come to the United States, become a citizen and practice law, but she preferred a career in her own country. She began a feminist group in 1904 but people were not prepared for it and only intellectuals rallied to the call.


22. "La Instrucción Nocturna para Obreras," La Convención Radical Obrera, a. 12, No. 531 (January 16, 1898), l.


24. For examples of other anti-feminist writings see: P. S. Moebius, La Inferioridad Mental de la Mujer (México: Maucci Hermanos, n.d.) and Roberto Nova, La Indigencia Espiritual del Sexo Femenino (Valencia: F. Sempere y Compañía, 1908), who maintained that women's inferiority stemmed from their smaller skulls.

25. As an example of some of the pro-feminist theses from the Instituto Normal del Estado de Pueblo see the collection at the University of Texas in Austin: Magdalena Alcazán, "Algunas Sugestiones para Formar el Carácter Independiente en las Niñas Mexicanas" (tesis, Instituto Normalista del Estado de Pueblo; María A. Aldana, Dos
Palabras Acerca de la Educación Femenina (tesis, Instituto Normalista del Estado de Puebla, Puebla: Imprenta Artística, 1902); Trinidad Bonilla, Algunas Consideraciones Acerca de la Educación de la Mujer (tesis, Instituto Normalista del Estado de Puebla, Puebla: Imprenta de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios del Estado, 1903); Velino Jiménez, "Ligeras Consideraciones a Acerca de la Educación de Nuestro Pueblo, en el Hogar, en la Escuela, y en la Sociedad" (tesis, Instituto Normalista del Estado de Puebla, 1901).


27 Adelina Zendejas, "El Movimiento Femenil Mexicano," El Día (June 16, 1975), p. 16. Zendejas has written La Mujer en la Intervención Francesa plus articles on women for newspapers and magazines. She is currently writing a book on women workers during the Revolution.


29 Ibid., p. 209. Keremitsis notes that in the twentieth century no more than 18 per cent of the workers have been women at any time, and since the 1950s it is estimated that no more than 5 per cent of the textile labor force is female. She expects this trend to continue and explains it by pointing to the availability of male workers at wages low enough so that there has been no need to draw upon the reserve of women. See ibid., pp. 200-201.

30 Ibid., p. 200, quoting Veracruz (estado), Gobernador, Memoria del Estado, 1900-1902.


32 Ana María Hernández, La Mujer Mexicana en la Industria Textil (México: Tipografía Mod., 1940), p. 25.
33 González Navarro, El Porfiriato: La Vida Social, pp. 294-97, 310-312.

34 Anderson, Outcasts, p. 77.


36 González Navarro, El Porfiriato: La Vida Social, p. 310.

37 Ibid., p. 348; Marfa Antonieta Rascón, "La Mujer y la Lucha Social," Imagen y Realidad de la Mujer, ed. by Elena Urrutia (México: SepSetentas, 1975), states that the Admiradoras de Juárez was founded in 1906 and that Luz Vera, Eulalia Guzmán and Hermila Galindo were members.


40 Alvarado Morales Jurado, "La Mujer Campesina Mexicana" (tesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1954), p. 69; Hernández, La Mujer Mexicana, pp. 35-38. Hernández herself was a federal work inspector. María del Carmen Frías and her sister Catalina, after founding the Hijas, continued with the Casa del Obrero Mundial in Mexico City in 1912. María del Carmen died forgotten in 1935. For more biographical information on the sisters see Hernández, pp. 40-41.

41 María Díaz worked closely with María Juárez of Guadalajara in the textile mills. Unfortunately, tracing her collaboration with other obreras is difficult. Hernández La Mujer Mexicana, pp. 41-43, lists a few other female collaborators.


49 Ricardo Flores Magón, Semilla Libertaria 3 vols., Vol. II (México: Ediciones del Grupo Cultural "Ricardo Flores Magón," 1923), 136-137, quoting Regeneración, February 12, 1916. In the same article Ricardo praised Salvador Alvarado for sponsoring the First Feminist Congress. The importance of women in the Liberal movement is further illustrated by the vast correspondence Ricardo maintained with both American and Mexican female radicals when he was imprisioned in Leavenworth, Kansas from 1918 to 1922. For details see ibid., p. 154.

51 Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors, pp. 239-245, has a copy of the program.


54 Turner, Barbarous Mexico, p. 279; Turner, Ricardo Flores Magón, pp. 174, 310, 359; Heldt, La Mujer, pp. 80-81.


56 Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, La Mujer y la Revolución (México: n.p., 1937), pp. 20-22.


58 Heldt, La Mujer, p. 64.

59 Martínez, ed., Antorchas, p. 6.

60 Susana Mendoza, Juana's great-niece, interview, Cuernavaca, August 12, 1976. It is difficult to determine the exact date of Vésper's birth. Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza, "Memoirs" (unpublished), lists April 5, 1901. This information was provided by Susana Mendoza, interview, Cuernavaca, August 13, 1976; Juan Gerónimo Beltrán, "Una Precursora," El Popular, July 15, 1942, p. 5, states that it was 1900; Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors, p. 102, says it was on June 15, 1901. Cockcroft incorrectly states that Elisa Acuña y Rossetti helped found Vésper. Elisa joined Juana in publishing Vésper after 1903.

Gutiérrez de Mendoza, "Memoirs."


Susana Mendoza, interview, Cuernavaca, August 12, 1976.


Rodríguez Cabo, *La Mujer*, pp. 16–18; Biographical Collection at the Biblioteca Nacional under Jiménez. Some reports state that she was born in San Luis Potosí but most say Aguascalientes.


Anderson, *Outcasts*, p. 156, disputes the depth of the PLM's involvement in the Río Blanco strike which he contends was not politically motivated.

Ruiz, *Labor*, p. 7. Cananea mines paid between 3 and 8 pesos per day and Río Blanco textile mills paid males 1.25 pesos and women 50–80 centavos.

74 Fornaro, Díaz Czar, pp. 54-55.


76 González Navarro, "La Huelga," p. 523. Margarita Martínez was among those women who were arrested and sent to prison. Anderson, Outcasts, pp. 167-169, affirms that the figures of dead were exaggerated. He thinks between fifty and seventy workers were killed. It was, however, widely believed at the time that hundreds of workers had been massacred.


79 For more information on Dolores Correa Zapata see Leonor Llach, "Tres Escritoras Mexicanas," El Libro y El Pueblo, XII, No. 4 (April, 1934), 166-168.


83 *Mexican Herald*, July 3, 1911, p. 3.


85 Zendejas, "La Mujer Mexicana," p. 3.


87 Rodríguez Cabo, *La Mujer*, pp. 20-22; Zendejas, "La Mujer Mexicana," p. 3.

88 *Vésper*, July, 1903, pp. 2-3. Like Dolores Jiménez, María Enriqueta and many other women revolutionaries, Juana Gutiérrez used pseudonyms in her work. "Juan Bernal" was her favorite. Susana Mendoza, interview, Cuernavaca, August 12, 1976.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN IN THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION:

THE VIOLENT PHASE, 1910-1920

Part I

A news item in the New York Times in the spring of 1911 did not exaggerate when it proclaimed that Mexican women were playing "a spectacular part" in the Revolution.¹ Women from all class backgrounds formed resistance groups, founded newspapers and magazines, served as nurses, started hospitals and health organizations, bought, smuggled and sold arms, fought and collaborated on plans and documents.² They entered new occupations as train dispatchers, telegraphers and drivers. Although for some women the Revolution was a continuation of their activities during the Porfiriato, for most it signaled an enormous change.

The restrictive social mores of the past were altered radically by the Revolution. Until then, Mexican women had lived in virtual seclusion. Only 8.82 per cent were economically active in 1910; marriage, family life and the Catholic Church dominated their existence.³ Mrs. E. Alex Tweedie, a British visitor, noted that ". . . the life of a Mexican woman is not a jovial one, she marries straight from the convent or school, and her home is her horizon. Very ideal no doubt, but rather dull."⁴
The Mexican Revolution changed that assessment as it deeply affected the lives of women in all social classes. Upper-class women lent their time to health organizations such as the Red or White Cross, while middle-class women served the cause in all capacities and thousands of lower-class women followed their men into battle as soldaderas. Their previous isolation diminished as women were driven from their native regions and homes in large numbers. Many, forced to survive without their husbands' salaries, sought employment for the first time. Pressured by money and food shortages, some resorted to prostitution. In the constant milieu of uncertainty and death, family life was completely disrupted. Government migration programs and the violence of revolutionary armies increased the number of sexual encounters and illegitimate births. Higher rates of separation, death and new liaisons uprooted families. Army press-gangs conscripted women to cook and to work in powder mills. In the lawlessness of the era, many women were kidnapped, transported to other areas and there sold into peonage or prostitution. Edith O'Shaughnessy, author and wife of the American Chargé d'Affairs, described a tragic incident that occurred during the Huerta administration. The government seized three hundred Morelos women and sent them to Quintana Roo, intending to establish a colony with deported men. On their arrival, fighting erupted and officials shipped them back to Veracruz, dumping
them on the beach. Almost every woman bore a child. Of course, no one claimed responsibility for them and they were left stranded hundreds of miles from their families. O'Shaughnessy also reported on a family of five she observed abandoned on the streets of Mexico City after the father had been taken by a press-gang in the morning. They were sitting on the curb, with nowhere to go. After O'Shaughnessy gave her money, the young mother asked for her blessing. O'Shaughnessy remarked:

> When I put my hand on her head I felt the tears come to my eyes. I suddenly saw in one woman all the misfortunes of the women of this land, separation, destitution, ravishments—and the horrors flesh is heir to.

Confronted with these conditions women organized, both to protect their rights and express their political views. The Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, Amigas del Pueblo and Regeneración y Concordancia were feminist organizations that demanded an end to sexual discrimination and repressive government.

Women in the Initial Stages of the Revolution

Insiders sensed that the splendor of Mexico's centennial celebration in September, 1910 was deceptive. Although President Porfirio Díaz did everything possible to crush opposition movements and then to compromise, his efforts were futile. The country was engulfed in too much turmoil. In an interview with American reporter James
Creelman, Díaz promised to retire and to allow democratic elections. A relatively unknown man from Coahuila intended to hold Díaz to his word. In his book _La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910_, Francisco Madero called for free elections and declared himself a candidate for the presidency. As Madero's criticisms touched an increasingly sensitive nerve in the Mexican people, the situation grew grim for Díaz. The Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM) had been waging war against the Díaz regime since 1900. By 1910 Mexico was dotted throughout with anti-reelectionist clubs.

Women organized their own resistance movements against Díaz. The Liga Femenina Anti-reeleccionista Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, named after the Independence heroine, was especially active. Fearlessly, its members protested the election fraud of President Díaz in the most conspicuous place possible—the Columbus statue on the Reforma. In early May, 1910 they called for the formation of a national anti-reelection club. Fiery Dolores Jiménez y Muro, a former PLM member and a Liga leader, summed up the reasons for their protest, "... equality before the law does not exist in general, since we have ... those who are privileged by fortune, position, or influence, to whom everything is permitted." Dolores also served as President of the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, a feminist club that demanded Díaz's resignation. They staged marches, circulated petitions and did everything possible to focus attention on...
the Mexican scene. On September 11, 1910 the Hijas spon-
sored a large march in Mexico City in protest of the Díaz
regime. In addition, they declared that it was time for
Mexican women to recognize that their "rights and obliga-
tions go much farther than just the home." A manifesto
of the Cuauhtémoc League called for political enfranchise-
ment of Mexican women in their "economic, physical,
intellectual and moral struggles." Cuauhtémoc members
included Arce de Arciniega, Mercedes A. de Arvide and Julia
Nava de Ruisánchez, a teacher.¹¹ Dolores Jiménez was jailed
for her part in the September 11 demonstration.

While unrest built in the capital, revolutionaries
plotted in the North. In San Antonio, Texas, Francisco
Madero and his collaborators worked out their plan for
Mexico's future. The Plan de San Luis Potosí, dated
October 5, 1910 proclaimed the recent Díaz election victory
fraudulent and named Madero as provisional president until
free elections could be held. The Plan also contained
instructions for a nationwide uprising to begin on Novem-
ber 20. Since Madero was under surveillance and his mail
closely watched, he had difficulty distributing copies of
the Plan in Mexico. Mary Petre de Fernández, a United
States citizen married to Madero agent and lawyer Ernesto
Fernández Arteaga, volunteered to carry the documents across
the border. At first both Madero and her husband objected
because of the potential danger. Mary reminded them that
as a citizen of the United States she would not be suspect. She planned to take her nine-year-old daughter and hide the documents in the girl's big doll. They reluctantly agreed. Mary and her daughter crossed at Nuevo Laredo and stated that they were tourists. The doll was carefully examined and admired by one customs official who was so fond of it that he offered to buy it. When Mary objected and her daughter began to cry, they were permitted to pass.\(^{12}\)

From the border the Plan de San Luis Potosí, which spurred the Mexican Revolution, was distributed throughout the Republic. Aquiles Serdán, anti-reelectionist leader in Puebla, received a copy. Aquiles, with the help of his brother Máximo and his sister Carmen, had already built up a sizable organization. It consisted of an anti-reelectionist and workers' club with its own publication, *Luz y Progreso*. The network of women's activities was overseen by Carmen and the three Narváez sisters, Guadalupe, Rosa and María. They coordinated the Puebla operation, printing pamphlets and making and distributing arms. Due to the dangerous nature of their work, they often used pseudonyms: Carmen was known as "Marcos Serratos," Guadalupe as "María Gomez" and Rosa as "Rosa Nervo."\(^{13}\)

Plans for the Puebla uprising were carefully arranged to occur simultaneously with uprisings in other Mexican cities. The plotters hoped that the rebellion would trigger the beginning of the Revolution. The distribution of arms
was to take place on November 18, 1910 and the insurrection two days later. At 7:30 on the morning of the eighteenth, Colonel Miguel Cabrera appeared unexpectedly to investigate a suspected cache of arms at the Serdán home on Calle Santa Clara. A struggle ensued. After shooting erupted, Carmen stepped onto the porch and, clutching a rifle in her right hand, urged the townspeople to join in the battle.\textsuperscript{14} When no one responded, the small group continued to resist but was overwhelmed. Carmen was hit and Aquiles killed. Everyone, including the women—Carmen, her mother Carmen Alatriste and Filomena del Valle, Aquiles' pregnant wife—was taken prisoner. Later the revolutionaries learned that their efforts had not initiated a massive insurrection.

Carmen Serdán was condemned to death but was offered liberty if she would divulge the names of other conspirators. She refused and spent seven months in prison until she was freed with Madero's victory. After her release, she continued to work for Madero. Both Francisco and his wife Sara expressed gratitude to Carmen. A Carmen Serdán Club was formed. An old photograph taken on the day of her release from prison shows Carmen, Sara Madero, Filomena del Valle, Carmen Alatriste, the three Narváez sisters and six other women, gathered to commemorate the occasion.\textsuperscript{15} As part of the ceremonies, attended by more than 50,000, the women placed a wreath on the tomb of Aquiles Serdán.\textsuperscript{16}

Carmen Serdán continued in anti-Huerta activities after the assassination of Francisco Madero in February, 1913.
With the help of the Narváez sisters, she organized a Junta Revolucionaria in Puebla, Tlaxcala and parts of Veracruz and Mexico. The group's main functions were to provide arms for the revolutionaries, recruit troops and distribute information. Carmen, under her alias "Marcos Serratos," served as president.\textsuperscript{17} She later joined the Carrancistas. As a trusted collaborator, she was commissioned by Carranza to carry messages to Zapata.\textsuperscript{18} When Carranza visited Puebla in November, 1914 Carmen and the Narváez sisters were among the few women invited to attend a banquet in his honor. Old photographs show the group assembled with members of the Junta Revolucionaria in the Hotel del Pasaje.

One of Carmen's last revolutionary acts was to organize a group of volunteer nurses to help with war casualties, epidemics and serve in hospitals.\textsuperscript{20} For all her sacrifice, she received very little recognition and no money until 1920 when Congress voted her a pension of 10 pesos daily. This was augmented in 1945 to 20 pesos per day until her death. The pension was hardly adequate and she was forced to work in the Biblioteca de la Escuela Nacional de Maestros.\textsuperscript{21} After a lifetime devoted to the Revolution, Carmen Serdán died in Mexico City on August 21, 1948. Her body was returned to her home town of Puebla for burial.\textsuperscript{22}

The Madero Faction Succeeds

Members of the Díaz government reached an accord with Francisco Madero when it became apparent that the only
way full-scale war could be averted was to force the President to resign. Key figures in the government agreed that the dictator would step down and be succeeded by the Minister of Foreign Relations, Francisco de la Barra. New elections were then scheduled for late 1911. The man elected was Francisco Madero, a member of a powerful and wealthy hacienda family.

The women behind this rather unimposing figure were no less amazing. The Madero women--Francisco's wife Sara, his mother Mercedes González de Madero, his sisters Mercedes and Angela and his brothers' wives--were strong supporters of the Revolution. They traveled to revolutionary camps, nursed the wounded, pawned their jewelry and sacrificed their own pleasures for the cause.

Sara Pérez de Madero was remarkable. Born in Querétaro in 1872 to a distinguished family, she followed tradition and studied abroad at St. Mary's in California. She met Francisco while he was taking courses at the University of California at Berkeley. Theirs was a close relationship. They were rarely apart after their marriage in 1903.²³

As soon as revolutionary fighting erupted, Sara took personal charge of the wounded, organized nurse brigades and supervised sanitation crews. Because of her sincere dedication, she was held in great fondness by Madero supporters. When Ciudad Juárez fell to the Maderistas on May 10,
1911, the New York Times reported that Sara and a cavalry escort were riding behind the Mexican national colors:

Her face was beaming with joy, her black dress covered with dust. She spurred her horse to her husband's side. The shouting increased as the two embraced and entered the municipal building, now the Madero Headquarters.24

Edith O'Shaughnessy described her as "a dark type of New England woman," who gave the impression of being serious and responsible. O'Shaughnessy commented on one of Sara's proposed projects as First Lady--organizing the lace and embroidery industry. Sara told her that 100,000 women in Puerto Rico had been organized and she wanted to do the same in Mexico. She was unable to complete the project, however, because her husband was removed from power in early 1913.25

After General Huerta arrested Francisco Madero and his Vice-President José María Pino Suárez on February 19, 1913 many moved to intercede for their lives. The President's parents wrote the dean of the diplomatic corps, United States Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson, asking for his intervention. Sara, accompanied by her sister-in-law Mercedes, courageously went to the United States Embassy to speak personally with Wilson on February 21, 1913. Later, on August 15, 1916 she recounted her visit to American journalist Robert Hammond Murray. She had pleaded at length with Wilson to exert his influence to protect the President and Vice-President. His response was "That is a responsibility
that I do not care to undertake, either for myself, or my
government." "You know, Madam," Wilson continued, "your
husband had peculiar ideas." Sara retorted, "Mr. Ambassador,
my husband had not peculiar ideas, but high ideals." Wilson
did admit that when General Huerta asked his opinion on what
to do with the prisoners, he advised him to do "what was
best for the interests of the country." At that point,
Mercedes protested that he would be killed. Sara left Wilson
after futilely begging that her husband be allowed to leave
Mexico peacefully.26

Madero and Pino Suárez were assassinated two days
later on February 23, 1913. Ambassador Wilson revealed his
partiality by immediately attempting to have the Huerta
government recognized by the United States. Newly-
inaugurated President Woodrow Wilson refused, however, and
Ambassador Wilson was removed in mid-July. Huerta's govern-
ment fell a year later in July, 1914. Sara Madero left
Mexico after her husband's assassination and lived in New
York until 1916, when she returned to Mexico and died there
on July 31, 1951.27

In addition to the Madero women, several others
joined the Maderistas. Inés Malváez, one of the most dis-
tinguished women in the movement, began her revolutionary
career in 1909. She worked as a propagandist and eventually
achieved the rank of colonel. Mainly conducting her work
in Puebla, she was persecuted and imprisoned many times.
When Carranza triumphed, she joined his forces in Veracruz. Lidia Calderón, a member of the Club Femenil Revolucionario Lealtad, printed copies of the Plan de San Luis Potosí in the basement of her home. She also was jailed and persecuted for her activities. Paulina Maraver Cortés, a professor and Maderista who worked in Puebla with the Serdáns, was another woman who was imprisoned for her anti-Díaz activities. Like many former Maderistas Paulina Maraver joined the Zapatistas in Morelos to work for agrarian reform. Carmen Parra Vda. de Alaniz organized an uprising in Casas Grandes, Chihuahua and later led three hundred men in the capture of Ciudad Juárez. After fighting in the north, she traveled south to join Emiliano Zapata and was imprisoned there. Soledad González, personal secretary to President Madero, Alvaro Obregón and Plutarco Calles urged each of her employers to improve conditions for women. Originally adopted by Madero as a child, she traveled with him to Mexico City and continued there after his assassination.

One of the most famous Maderistas spies was Josefina Ranzeta. Daughter of a wealthy planter in the Laguna district and educated in a Washington, D.C. boarding school, she was a friend of Madero and devoted to the cause. When General Huerta moved north at the head of the Federal Army to squelch the Pascual Orozco revolt, Josefina met him and volunteered her services. Her mission was to learn Orozco's plans and
troop strength. Disguised as a peasant and accompanied by a ragged, aged servant, she set out on the one-hundred-fifty-mile trip to Orozco's camp. Since the railroad lines had been destroyed, the two traveled on donkeys.

After reaching Orozco's headquarters Josefina slowly and cautiously made friends with the women. She began going into Orozco's tent as a servant in the hope of gaining access to documents. One day she succeeded in stealing a packet of valuable letters and documents. She barely avoided being caught on her return trip to Huerta's camp.  

Women in Revolution

As political turmoil enveloped the Republic, Mexican women, like women all over the world, pushed for equal rights. In the exigencies of the Revolution, however, their demands were constantly relegated to a secondary position. The seriousness of their situation was attested to by Edith O'Shaughnessy:

How can a nation advance when the greater part of the women pass their lives grinding corn, making tortillas, and bearing children? There is no time or strength left to sketch in the merest outline of home-making, let alone a personal life or any of the rudiments of citizenship.  

Mexican women organized on a broader, more visible scale than ever before to combat these conditions. On May 29, 1911 O'Shaughnessy wrote, "I saw some Mexican suf-fragettes the other day whom I wish their American sisters
could have gazed upon. They were armed with bandoliers full of ammunition crossed over their breasts, and it did look like bullets rather than ballots among the sisterhood here."35 Shortly after the Revolution began, Dolores Jiménez y Muro, President of the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, founded from her prison cell a women's rights organization called Regeneración y Concordia. Like the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc, it combined feminist demands for equality with comprehensive political reform issues. Its goals were to better the lot of the indigenous races, the peasantry and urban proletariat and to elevate women economically, morally and intellectually, while struggling for the unification of all revolutionaries. The leaders were Julia Nava de Ruisánchez, Mercedes Arvide, María Arias Bernal, Dolores Sotomayor, María Gómez Vda. de Bacmaister and Inés Marváez.36 In May, 1911 more than 1,000 women signed a petition asking Díaz to resign. Even his wife advised his withdrawal.37 In June the Mexican Herald reported that suffragists had demanded their rights in the coming election via a petition to Lic. Emilio Vásquez Gómez, Minister of the Interior. Members of the Amigas del Pueblo were also pressing for suffrage. In June, they sent a letter signed by several hundred women to interim President de la Barra, requesting the vote for women. They pointed out that according to the Constitution of 1857, women had an equal right to suffrage with men. Members based their petitions on the fact that they too
fulfilled in every way the demands made upon citizens in order to exercise the right to vote. They hoped that they would not be forced to the extremes of their sisters in other countries and that the Mexican government would take advantage of this opportunity to demonstrate the extent of its awareness. The same month, nine persons were reported killed and many wounded at a suffrage demonstration in Santa Julia, one of the poorest districts of Mexico City, when rurales were summoned to preserve order. In October, women in the capital demonstrated in favor of Madero's election, even though they could not vote. In addition to sending messages and demonstrating, women picketed the Cámara de Diputados attempting to call attention to their plight. Dubbed "mujeres sandwiches," they were ridiculed by deputies and male reporters because of the large signs they carried.

Not only feminists but women of all political persuasions were banding together. In 1912, partly as a response to feminists, the Unión Femenina Católica Mexicana was founded in Mexico City to encourage development of the home and the community. About the same time the Liga Femenil Latino Americana was born. Its goals were modest: to work for the moral, social and intellectual perfection of Latin American women, to secure members for the teaching staffs of primary and secondary schools, to abstain from "direct or indirect connection with politics" in any country and to avoid questions "which refer to religious beliefs."
Mexican women could not send many representatives to international women's meetings, however, because of the constant turmoil during the violent phase of the Revolution. Yet they were sufficiently well-organized and politically conscious to send a representative to the Feminist Congress Against the War that met in Paris from August 4 to 7, 1914. Consuela Uranga, a student who continued her activities in women's groups in the 1920s and 1930s, was one of only three Latin American delegates present. Women contributed whatever they could—including postage stamps—to send her.41

Two women—María Hernández Zarco and María Arias Bernal—were outstanding for their revolutionary activity during the Huerta regime (1913-1914). María Hernández Zarco established her reputation by printing almost 1,000 copies of the highly critical anti-Huerta speech of Senator Belisario Domínguez in 1913. The Senator was assassinated as a result of the speech. After his death, María further defied the administration by publishing Palabras de un Muerto. She was a feminist and active in the Casa del Obrero Mundial. Unlike most female revolutionaries, she finally was recognized in 1975 at the age of eighty-six by the Mexican Senate, which presented her with the highest civilian honor, the Medalla de Oro "Dr. Belisario Domínguez."42 María Arias Bernal and her group achieved national attention following the commendation of General Álvaro Obregón. During Huerta's administration María organized the feminist Club
Lealtad with Dolores Sotomayor, Inés Malváez and Eulalia Guzmán. They protested against Huerta by organizing demonstrations in front of Madero's tomb. When Obregón spoke by the martyr's grave he praised her action and presented her with a pistol because of the considerable risks she had run. General Obregón chided the men for their shameful apathy as he proclaimed, "Since I admire valor, I cede my pistol to Señorita Arias, who is the only one worthy of bearing it." 43

The personal history of María Arias was one of life-long struggle. She was born in the capital in 1884 to a poor family. A classmate remembered her as the poorest but brightest girl in the Escuela Normal. When María's father died, her mother made great sacrifices to educate her children. After receiving her teaching certificate in 1904, María joined Madero and then Carranza. When Carranza triumphed, she was designated Director of the Escuela Normal para Maestros. Her revolutionary fame as well as her nickname "María Pistolas," was fleeting. Ill with tuberculosis the last three years of her life, she died in obscurity on November 6, 1923. 44

While Mexico City and the surrounding area suffered through the Décima Trágica and the assassinations of Madero and Pino Suárez in February, 1913, the North was engulfed in fighting. The PLM, controlling vast areas in northern Mexico, was one of the most important factions. The party's
recent victories in Baja were largely the work of a woman Ricardo called "a great anarchist"—Margarita Ortega. Since 1911 she served the PLM in several capacities—contact, nurse, comforter and smuggler. A weapons expert, she traveled across enemy lines with arms, ammunition and dynamite. She was often accompanied by her daughter, Rosaura Gortari. When the Maderistas triumphed, Margarita and Rosaura were expelled from Mexicali by Rudolfo Gallegos. Expecting them to perish, he forced them to march under the hot sun on foot without water or food. They managed to reach Yuma where Margarita was arrested by immigration officials. She escaped, and with her daughter, fled to Phoenix, where they took the aliases "María Valdés" and "Josefina." Rosaura, seriously weakened by the long desert trip, died shortly after they arrived.

Margarita continued with the PLM, eventually joining with Natividad Cortés. Together, they reorganized the Sonora movement, working out of the small town of Sonoyta. They were caught off-guard on October 13, 1913 by Rudolfo Gallegos, who had now become a Carrancista. He ordered Natividad Cortés shot at once; Margarita was taken to Baja, where she was left for the Huertistas. She was discovered near Mexicali on November 20, 1913. Jailed and tortured, she was forced to stand day and night in the center of a room, without leaning against the walls. After four days, she collapsed. She was shot on November 24, 1913.45
Even with devoted, capable partisans like Margarita Ortega, the PLM suffered severe defeats. The party's problems were both external and internal—most of its leaders were imprisoned and members split over revolutionary goals. The PLM's failures in Baja and Chihuahua were a direct result of the struggle among anarchists, socialists and filibusterers.46 Almost as soon as the Revolution began, PLM members broke away from the party, joining Madero in the hope that he could effect rapid socio-economic reform. Several former members joined Camilo Arriaga in the Complot de Tacubaya. Its "Political and Social Plan" was a continuation of the principles set down in the PLM Program of 1906, with only slight modifications. It proposed to modify the printing laws, protect Indian races, augment wages for both sexes and reduce the work day to nine hours, insure that a certain percentage of workers be Mexican and halt the excessive charge of rents for the poor. The rebels (probably more than 10,000 in six states) followed Arriaga, as well as left-wing elements who joined Zapata and Carranza. The Plan was composed under the direction of Arriaga's San Luis Potosí colleague, poet Dolores Jiménez y Muro. Two women, Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza, along with over twenty men and a militant group of medical students, signed the Plan. The plot never reached culmination because it was betrayed and its adherents arrested on March 27, 1911. With the failure of the
Complot, Arriaga was jailed but was released when Madero triumphed in May, 1911.47

In the years before and immediately after the Revolution the Liberals had ignored the feminists' call for suffrage because they considered it unrealistic. As Ricardo Flores Magón explained, women could secure true emancipation only through anarchist principles of economic freedom, rather than through exercise of political rights. According to him, capitalism, not male chauvinism, was the root of the problem. Equal participation in a corrupt system was retrogressive because it detracted from the paramount economic struggle. Ricardo's response to the landmark First Feminist Congress, held in Mérida in January, 1916 was one of futility:

What good the lovely and talented Yucatecans would have done to humanity, if in a moment of sane aspiration, they would have set democracy aside, and in its place adopted the Anarchist principles founded in the Manifesto of September 23, 1911.48

Even though the Liberals held these views about the women's movement, they admired women revolutionaries and lauded their efforts. Enrique Flores Magón reserved his highest praise for "nuestras revolucionarias." Speaking of their invaluable services, he expressed pride in their ability to smuggle arms, munitions, pamphlets and subversive materials. He remarked that he had seen women with skills that "exceed many men's." Like Enrique's praise for PLM women and Ricardo's for Margarita Ortega, Camilo Arriaga
wrote of the work of Aurora Martínez and her mother. Aurora had collaborated on her parents' projects from childhood. Arriaga especially admired the women's ability to continue fighting after Paulino was exiled to Havana by Huerta.\footnote{49}

**Soldaderas**

Soldaderas or galletas (cookies), as they were often called, traveled with all the armies.\footnote{50} They fought, cooked, nurses and performed a multitude of other services. Most of the soldaderas were Indians or poor mestizas. When their men were conscripted, they took the children and joined them. They endured miserable living conditions, malnutrition and excessive childbearing. Traveling constantly, they bore their babies in the fields and returned to work.\footnote{51} Edith O'Shaughnessy lamented that "a thick and heartbreaking book could be written upon the soldaderas."

Tito F. Foppa, a reporter for an Argentine review, considered the soldaderas to be the real martyrs of the Revolution. He predicted that while their heroism was well-known at the time, it quickly would be forgotten when their services were not longer needed.\footnote{52}

A description by Francisco Ramírez Plancarte of the Federal Army's withdrawal from Mexico City on August 15, 1914 reveals the soldadera's everyday living conditions:

At the rear, singly or in groups, walked the soldaderas, burdened with a profusion of shoddy
cooking implements and large bundles of clothes, and most of them with two or three children. They were following their husbands, whom they had not left since they had been carried off from home. Suffering had erased all graceful softness of line from their faces and all expressions of sweetness from their eyes, leaving in their place the august marks of grief and the sublimity of resignation. They were just starting the march and they already showed a marked feeling of fatigue and tiredness. It was a sad caravan of suffering. The women were miserably dressed; some went barefoot, most wore sandals and very few had rough, worn-out shoes. The children were half-naked, barefoot, filthy, dressed in rags, many of them with nothing to cover their heads, their little faces numb with cold and emaciated by repeated fasts. Their look was inexpressive, like that of an idiot. Many of them wept in a heartrending manner.53

While most soldaderas remained anonymous, several achieved notoriety. Corridos, which seemed to focus more on love than on women's ability in the battlefield, helped maintain their fame. "La Chinita Maderista" illustrates female participation in the Revolution. Some of the words are: "If you love me as I love you, let us both go to fight for Madero."54 Two other heroines of the Revolution, Adelita and Valentina, were considered "the essence of Mexican femininity." "Adelita" drew its inspiration from a Durangan woman who had involved herself at an early age in the Maderista movement.55 Among Pancho Villa's soldiers, this ballad served as a battle hymn:

If Carranza would only marry Villa,  
And Zapata marry Obregón,  
If Adelita would only marry me,  
Revolution would be dead as a stone. 56

In southern Mexico, Emiliano Zapata's guerrillas were singing "La Valentina," based upon the life of Valentina Ramírez. At
the age of sixteen she decided to fight in the Revolution and, aware that she would never be accepted because of her sex, she disguised herself as a man. Discovered after several months of military duty, she was rejected on the basis of her sex, not her ability. She was portrayed in the following Zapatista song:

Valentina, Valentina
Valentina, I must say,
I am driven by a passion,
That's why I come here today

Because of this love, they all tell me
I'll suffer, and pay, and pay,
Who cares, if it was the devil
I'll be killed in my own way.57

Several soldaderas established reputations for their fighting prowess. One of the most famous was Marga-rita Neri from southern Mexico. Many stories surround her life, making it difficult to separate myth from reality. She rapidly became a high-ranking officer, assuming command over large numbers of Indians.58 Neri, supposedly a Dutch-Maya from Quintana Roo, was noted for her fighting as well as her dancing. She was also alleged to be mistress to a member of the Díaz cabinet.59 In 1910 she led 1,000 men north through Tabasco and Chiapas, vowing to decapitate Díaz with her own hands. It is said that when the governor of Guerrero heard that she was approaching the city, he had himself shipped from the state in a packing crate. Upon being informed that Neri had reached the Río Balsas, Don Porfirio growled, "Guerrero, that's the state in which
a woman like her started the pinto by cohabiting with a crocodile!" Contradictory reports state that she both commanded Zapatistas in Morelos and cut off the ears of Zapatistas sent to recruit her.\textsuperscript{60} Despite the mass of contradictory accounts regarding Margarita Neri, it seems that she was a superb guerrilla commander.

Margarita Mata, María Aguirre, Juana Luicio and María Luisa Escobar were other prominent soldaderas. Margarita Mata was a rebel leader and commander in the state of San Luis Potosí. María Aguirre fought on the Costa Chica in Oaxaca around 1913. Juana Luicio began the revolutionary movement in Guanajuato and later received a regular military pension for her patriotism. María Luisa Escobar never attained military rank but achieved notoriety for her propaganda and dynamiting skills. She died fighting.\textsuperscript{61}

The Revolution Divides: Villistas and Zapatistas

Even before President Huerta's removal from power, the revolutionaries, torn by disagreements among themselves, divided. Zapata continued his struggle in the south while Villa and Carranza fought each other in northern and central Mexico. Women accompanied all forces, although Villa's troops, because of their swift cavalry movements, had fewer soldaderas than other armies.\textsuperscript{62} One of Villa's most faithful supporters was his wife, María de la Luz Corral, from
Chihuahua. After marrying Villa on May 28, 1911, she stood by him until his assassination in 1923. Today she maintains a museum in his honor in her home on the Calle Décima in Chihuahua. Receiving hundreds of visitors yearly, Doña María often personally escorts tours.63

The Zapatista guerrilla bands also had several women with them. Zapata's curandera Apolinaria Flores was especially valuable to him. With enormous faith in her healing ability, Zapata had the wounded brought to her by night from the mountains and returned to their camps by light of day to fight.64 John Womack's Zapata and the Mexican Revolution describes the activities of "La China" in a small village in southwestern Guerrero:

In Puente de Ixtla the widows, wives, daughters, and sisters of rebels formed their own battalion and revolted "to avenge the dead." Under the command of a husky ex-tortilla maker called La China, they raided wildly through Tetecala district. Some in rags, some in plundered finery, wearing silk stockings and dresses, sandals, straw hats, and gun belts, these women became the terrors of the region. Even de la O [a seasoned Zapatista commander] treated La China with respect.65

Women also participated in other offensive forays. In early summer of 1913 four hundred Zapatistas attacked railroad workers in Michoacán. At least twenty women were among the attacking forces.66

Besides attracting soldaderas from the southwest, Zapata's movement drew women from all social classes throughout Mexico. Paulina Maraver Cortés joined the
Zapatistas in Morelos. With her partner, Nachita Vázquez, she initiated the agrarian movement in the state of Puebla. Like most female revolutionary leaders she died poor and forgotten. 67 Aurelia Rodríguez, after working for various women’s revolutionary groups, joined Zapata. Although pregnant at the time, she worked on dangerous, delicate assignments. She was jailed in Puebla where she gave birth. The infant died in prison, however, because she was not allowed to nurse him. Aurelia lived in poverty, sacrificed everything for the Revolution, but died forgotten. 68 Rebecca Bobadilla, a colonel from Morelos, also regularly performed hazardous tasks, often surrounded by spies. Captured and tortured, she was dramatically rescued by Zapatistas. Carlota Bravo Vda. del Gral. Cándido Navarro accompanied Zapata on his campaigns. She was persecuted and confined to the Granaditas in Guanajuato. 69 Coronela Carmen Amelia Robles dressed as a man and fought in the Federal District, Morelos and Guerrero. Antonio Uroz, in his book Hombres y Mujeres de México, complains because her work in the Revolution has been completely overlooked and remains unknown. He concludes that "it is inexcusable that women in our country have not been recognized for . . . , what they've done for the Revolution, as much in war as in peace." 70

Besides spying, smuggling and fighting, women also contributed to building a revolutionary ideology. Elisa Acuña y Rossetti, Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Juana Gutiérrez
de Mendoza, all former Liberals, collaborated with the Zapatistas. Elisa had previously published an anti-Huerta paper, La Guillotina and financed it with her own money. She was forced from Mexico but returned to join the Zapatistas. Her activities centered in the Puebla area where she was also active in feminist organizations. A member of the Liga Pan-Americana de Mujeres, she helped initiate the Primer Congreso Pan-Americana de Mujeres. Throughout this period, she earned her living working in the Biblioteca Nacional. After Zapata's assassination in 1919 she retired. Elisa Acuña died in Mexico City on November 12, 1946 and was buried in the Panteón Civil.  

Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza both held the rank of colonel in Zapata's army. Dolores, in her sixties when the Revolution began, had a long revolutionary career that preceded her appearance in the Zapata camp. She had served with the PLM and most recently with Madero. She had been President of the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc and the founder of Regeneración y Concordia. In the Zapatista camp she worked closely with Emiliano Zapata and Gildardo Magaña, an old collaborator. However, she is best remembered for her introduction to the Plan de Ayala, issued on November 28, 1911, which proclaimed the Zapatistas' basic agrarian reform formula. Besides working on the Plan de Ayala, Dolores undertook dangerous and sensitive missions for Zapata, even carrying messages for him to Obregón. She
suffered imprisonment for thirteen months under Huerta when she was sixty-five years old. After Zapata's assassination in April, 1919, she retired. She was then nearly seventy. Like so many other female revolutionaries, she received no awards or recognition for her long years of service. A few months before she died on October 15, 1925, at the age of seventy-seven, Dolores received a small pension from Secretary of Education José Vasconcelos.\textsuperscript{73}

Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza was one of the most extraordinary women of the Revolution. From 1910 to 1920 she participated in several revolutionary groups, published newspapers, founded the feminist club Amigas del Pueblo and fought with the Zapatistas in southwestern Mexico. After briefly flirting with Maderismo and participating in the Complot de Tacubaya in 1911, Juana joined Zapata. In 1914 she served as colonel in the regiment "Victoria" which she organized and commanded. She also continued editing Vésper in the Sierra del Sur at the house of the ex-governor of Morelos.\textsuperscript{74} In 1914 in Chilpancingo, she founded La Reforma to revindicate the raza indígena. It was subtitled "por la tierra y por la raza." The following year publication of La Reforma was discontinued because its editor Santiago Orozco died in a battle over Indian lands. Juana was apprehended by the Constitutionalist Army and imprisoned in the Federal District.\textsuperscript{75} The same year she founded the study group "Labradores Mexicanos Instituto Popular" in the
capital. Its representatives were Juana and Plácido Ríos. Julio F. Macial, Laura Mendoza (Juana's eldest daughter), and Salvador M. Covarrubias served as officials. In 1919 Juana resumed her activities in Mexico City with the publication of the newspaper El Desmonte, based on the same theme as La Reforma—"por la tierra y por la raza." The first issue appeared on June 15, 1919 and the staff of El Desmonte announced that it would continue to present the ideas espoused in Véspers. This initial issue contained an article by a representative from the Partido Socialista Yucateco, Elena Torres—an indication that female revolutionaries maintained some contact with each other in different parts of Mexico. El Desmonte published only a few issues.

In 1919 Juana also served as President of the Consejo Nacional de Mujeres Mexicanas, founded on May 20, 1919. Its purpose was to raise the level of consciousness and form character, to aid miners and youth and eventually emancipate everyone. Members included Secretary General Julia Mendoza (Juana's daughter), Elena Torres, Laura Mendoza, Justino Bermudes, Miguel Quintero, Hermelinda Gutiérrez and Juan Feiffo.

Juana was amazing because she involved herself so extensively for so many years. She participated in the Revolution, raised her own family—her husband died when the three children were babies—adopted children and wrote
articles, books and poetry. Busy as she was, she managed to maintain a good relationship with her children. Her son Santiago died quite young but Julia and Laura participated fully in their mother's projects. For her many sacrifices, Juana received negligible rewards: the only money awarded her was a scant pension from Carranza. She could not support her family on it and struggled constantly to survive. Her revolutionary activities caused her to exist on the edge of poverty until her death in 1942.

Part II

Carrancistas

The Constitutionalists, after defeating Villa's Division of the North in April and securing recognition from the United States in October, were successfully consolidating their gains by late 1915. Although Zapata continued fighting in the South and Villa took every opportunity to cause disruption in the North, Venustiano Carranza offered the first semblance of stability to Mexico in five years. Under Carranza's administration the Constitutional Convention met in December, 1916 and January, 1917 to draw up Mexico's Constitution. Carranza retained power until his attempted imposition of a presidential candidate brought his downfall and assassination in May, 1920.
The first leader who specifically appealed and gave credit to women, Carranza attracted thousands from all classes.\textsuperscript{82} Working-class Artemisa Sáenz Royo, wealthy Margarita Robles de Mendoza, middle-class Hermila Galindo, as well as soldaderas from the poorest economic levels, joined the Constitutionalists. Feminist Artemisa Sáenz Royo, or "Xóchitl," as she preferred to be known, was an avid Carranza supporter. Born in the state of Veracruz in the 1890s, Artemisa was a prolific writer with sixteen books and twelve pamphlets to her credit. A member of the Red Battalions of the Casa del Obrero Mundial, she was twice wounded and, by the end of this period, a colonel. In 1916 she visited Havana on a special mission for Carranza and the same year attended the Second Feminist Congress in Mérida.\textsuperscript{83} In 1919 she served as chairperson to the Consejo de Trabajadores de la Región Veracruzana and led it in its demands for political and social equality for women. She was involved with the Confederación Obrera Mexicana (CROM) in the early 1920s, working almost exclusively in her native state of Veracruz.\textsuperscript{84}

Margarita Robles de Mendoza, cultured, well-educated and born into wealth, was always concerned with those less fortunate. She became interested in education and women's liberation early in her life but she was not politically motivated until 1914 when she accompanied Carranza to Veracruz as an official of the Secretaría de Agricultura.
She campaigned against prostitution and constantly agitated for women's suffrage. In 1917 she taught English and French at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Like Sáenz Royo, she was most active during the 1920s.\textsuperscript{85}

Hermila Galindo de Topete was Carranza's most visible female collaborator. She was born in Lerdo, Durango on May 29, 1896 to Rosario Galindo and Hermila Acosta de Galindo but was raised by her father and aunt, Angela Galindo, after the death of her mother.\textsuperscript{86} She attended school in Durango, Chihuahua and Torreón. Her father planned to send her to the United States to study chemistry but due to his death she was forced to work to support herself and her aunt.\textsuperscript{87}

She received her first exposure to politics in Torreón in 1909 in an incident that marked the beginning of her close association with the Constitutionalist movement of Carranza. In the course of her training in typing, English and shorthand, she had the opportunity to transcribe an anti-Díaz speech delivered by Francisco Martínez Ortiz, a lawyer from Coahuila. When municipal president Miguel Garza Aldape learned of the incident, he immediately had all copies of the speech collected to prevent its publication. Unknown to him, Galindo retained her copy.

Later in the same year, at a commemoration honoring Benito Juárez, a group of anti-porfiristas arrived in the
city, among them Benito Juárez Maza, son of the former president. When he discovered that Galindo had a copy of the speech, Juárez requested and obtained a copy, distributing it as ideological ammunition to combat the Díaz dictatorship. In 1909 Hermila returned to Durango but in 1911 relocated in Mexico City. The move signaled her subsequent involvement in the Constitutionalist movement.88

In 1914 as a representative of the Abraham González Club, Hermila made a welcoming speech to the primer jefe upon his arrival in the capital. In the address she compared Carranza with Juárez and evidently impressed him with her speaking ability. He requested that she accompany him as his private secretary. Throughout 1914 and 1915 she not only served as secretary, but also traveled through Veracruz, San Luis Potosí, Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tabasco, Yucatán and Campeche, organizing revolutionary clubs and propagandizing for the Constitutionalist cause. As a result of her successful public oratory, especially her speech entitled "Doctrina Carranza" delivered on November 29, 1915 at Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Galindo was persuaded by Carranza to carry the Constitutionalist message abroad.89

Galindo had developed a strong position on women's rights. She was an ardent feminist, although the movement had not yet acquired widespread support. With Artemisa Sáenz Royo and several others, she established the feminist magazine, Mujer Moderna in Mexico City in September, 1915.
Galindo was serving as editor when the magazine ceased publication in 1919. Her controversial message to the First Feminist Congress in Mérida in January, 1916 caused a furor. Nevertheless, she refused to retract her statement which demanded the complete—including sexual—equality of women. Her message to the Second Congress, which met in Mérida ten months later, was a reiteration of her earlier position.

In September, 1916 Galindo traveled to Havana to deliver a series of speeches defending the Constitutionalist revolution. She argued that the only hope for future progress in Latin America lay in collective resistance to any attempted political or economic domination by the United States. She cited American intervention in the Mexican Revolution as an indicator of the future unless the Latin American countries presented a united front against the Colossus of the North. In addition to her plea for Pan-Americanism, Hermila stressed the necessity of developing a strong sense of nationalism to combat the aggressive maneuvers of capitalist countries. Although she rejected the more radical solutions of socialism, anarchism and syndicalism, she did believe that they presented a rationale for objections to the exploitation of capitalists.

After returning from Cuba, Hermila turned her attention to the struggle for women's rights. In December, 1916 she attempted to promote women's suffrage at the
Querétaro Constitutional Convention. She was especially concerned over the fate of Articles 34 and 35, which conferred citizenship upon all Mexicans and established the qualifications for suffrage and office-holding. In January, 1917 the Articles were passed by the delegates exactly as Carranza had submitted them. They affirmed that political rights for women would remain as established in the Constitution of 1857.  

Despite this setback, Hermila continued her activities. In 1917 she ran for diputado from the 5th Electoral District in Mexico City. Believing herself victorious, she defended her election before the Electoral College of the Cámara de Diputados. Had she been seated she would have been the first women to serve in the Chamber of Deputies. However, she was not permitted to serve.

Galindo's journalistic career was a fruitful one. Besides writing articles, she published at least five books on the Revolution and Carranza. In 1919 La Doctrina Carranza, a collection of her speeches given in Havana, was published. Her second book was a laudatory biography of General Pablo González, Un Presidenciable. El General Pablo González. It was written in support of his presidential campaign for the election in 1920 and published under the auspices of the Gran Partido Progresista.  

After Carranza's assassination in May, 1920 Galindo retired from politics but continued writing. In 1923 she
married Miguel D. Topete from Jalisco and moved to the United States where she was living in the late 1930s. She wrote, painted and cared for her two daughters. She returned to Mexico and died in Mexico City on August 19, 1954.  

In addition to intellectuals, thousands of other women were attracted to Carranza’s movement. They undertook a myriad of jobs. Ana María Ruiz Reyes, a nurse and diplomat for Carranza, was moved by Madero’s death to collaborate with the clandestine press, El Renovador. A former member of the Hijas de Juárez, she aided the Constitutionalists by working with the Cruz Blanca Neutral. Leonor Villegas de Magón, born in Nuevo Laredo, founded the Cruz Blanca Constitutionalista on May 18, 1913. She spent her family inheritance on the Constitutionalist cause. La Capitana or "La Chata," from Sonora, was a poor illiterate peasant who rose to fame in Oaxaca for her military prowess. María Gómez Vda. de Bacmaister from Durango tutored Carranza’s children. She belonged to several feminist groups as well as to the exclusive Brigada "Supremo Poderío" created by Carranza. In 1918 she was decorated for her services and retired. Ramona Flores, "Güera Carrasco" led forces in the north. She was born in Piedras Negras, Coahuila to a wealthy family. Information on her is so contradictory that it is difficult to draw a clear picture of either her or her activities. She did, however, attain the rank of
chief-of-staff in the Constitutionalist Army. Her husband was rumored to have been killed while serving as an officer for Madero and to have bequeathed her a gold mine, which she used to finance a regiment. Even after retirement, she retained her title "coronela" until her death.\textsuperscript{100}

The moral support provided by soldaderas is illustrated in the following incident, which enabled the Constitutionalist Army to capture Tampico in 1913 from Federal forces. Four of the ablest generals launched an attack on part of the city but the Federals were well-armed and had superior numbers. Shelling and machine-gun fire diminished the rebels' ranks for seven days and nights. At week's end, the rebels were still in the outlying swamps, exhausted from the prolonged fighting. Suddenly one of the soldaderas grabbed a banner from a soldier, raised it above her head and cried, "We've got to enter Tampico, no matter how. All of you who've got the nerve, follow me!" When she rushed towards the city everyone followed. The losses sustained were great but no more so than they had been during the week and Tampico was finally taken. No one knows the name of that woman.\textsuperscript{101}

While Carranza's movement attracted women of all classes, tastes and talents, there were several who questioned his political views, as well as his attitude towards women's issues. His response to the disenfranchised--labor, campesinos and women--was at least consistent: he acceded
to their demands only when he needed their support. Hermila Galindo was allowed so much latitude because she proved to be a valuable propagandizer. María del Refugio García was an important revolutionary woman who remained uncaptivated by Carranza. Known by her nickname "Cuca," she was born sometime between 1898 and 1900 in Uruapán, Michoacán. Little is available about her background, but it appears that she was from the middle class because her father was the town doctor. As a child she risked her life to defy Díaz. She was such a well-known revolutionary speaker that her friends felt it necessary to transport her from state to state for fear her life was endangered.

In 1913 she became a representative of the Michoacán Revolutionary Movement in Mexico City and dedicated her life to the rights of campesinos. At this point in her career she expressed her disappointment in Carranza, whom she considered too mildly reformist and unwilling to undertake fundamental change. Like many other women reaching maturity during the Revolution, she was most active during the 1920s and 1930s.

Women's Suffrage at the Constitutional Congress

When President Carranza called the Constitutional Congress in Querétaro for December, 1916, he hoped the meeting would be harmonious. In addition to the political
disturbances caused by Zapata in Morelos and Villa in Chihuahua, the country was plagued with economic chaos and widespread famine. Mexicans looked to the Congress's delegates for leadership. Regarding selection of delegates, Carranza did not specifically exclude women from voting in the elections for deputy or from membership in the Congress. In the Decree of September 14, 1916, however, he restricted candidacy to those eligible to run for deputy under the Constitution of 1857, which limited the qualifications of an elector to voting males. The September decree set the election date for Sunday, October 22, and authorized all those qualified to vote. Under such prohibitive provisions women did not vote or offer themselves as candidates for deputies.

Mexican feminists watched the proceedings with exceeding interest. They were especially concerned over those Articles which established the requirement for citizenship, suffrage and office-holding. Generally they were optimistic since extending suffrage to females offered the delegates the opportunity to fulfill the Revolution's basic promise of equality. The women were also aware of the attention feminists were receiving elsewhere in the world and assumed it would work to their advantage. By 1912 eight American states had granted full suffrage, leading to congressional acceptance of a constitutional amendment. European women slowly but dramatically were breaking down the barriers
The question of how much of any kind of instruction should be done in class must be decided in consideration of the specific objectives of the course. If these are primarily for practice or information transfer, the class period should be used for these activities. If the object is to promote independent thought and learning, the class period should be used to enhance this process. The instructor should be aware of the specific objectives of the course and plan the class period accordingly.
that had kept them from exercising their rights. Even women in the Far East had organized and were fighting for suffrage. A few weeks before the sessions at the Constitutional Congress began, Mexican women met at the Second Feminist Congress in Mérida. (The First had been held in the same location in January.)

The delegates assembled in Querétaro received three messages concerning suffrage. Hermila Galindo and General Salvador González Torres sent proposals favoring suffrage. Galindo's message, read on December 12 amid sporadic applause, called for the right of women to vote for representatives to the lower house of Congress. Attempting to appeal to the delegates' "sense of justice as popular representatives," she reminded them that women had participated fully in the Revolution. She hoped that woman, who had "not been excluded from the active part of the Revolution will not be excluded from the political part and, consequently, will achieve from the new situation, rights, which, even though incipient, will put her on the path toward her own advancement." Three days later a proposal from delegate General González Torres, a native of Michoacán representing Oaxaca, was read. He recommended that women be granted more rights, including suffrage. The third proposal, presented on December 16, came from Inés Malváez and was anti-suffrage.

The First Committee on Constitutional Reforms that considered Articles 34 and 35 was chaired by General Francisco
Múgica of Michoacán. He was thirty-two, an excellent speaker and well-prepared to assume his duties. Noted for his radical views, he soon emerged as spokesperson for the radicals. Luis G. Monzón, Deputy from Sonora, presented the Articles. Monzón, thirty-four and a primary school teacher, held leftist ideas. Originally from San Luis Potosí, he had collaborated with the Flores Magón brothers and the PLM. He reported on the Articles in the form originally proposed by Carranza. The Committee's statement explained that Mexican women traditionally had been restricted to home and family, that they had developed no separate political consciousness, and that they "do not understand the necessity of participating in public affairs, which is demonstrated by a lack of any collective movement for this purpose." 107

The discussion probably would have ended with the negative report had it not been for objections from conservatives. In the afternoon of January 26, a lively exchange ensued between Luis G. Monzón and Félix F. Palavicini. Palavicini, founder of the Mexico City daily, El Universal, represented Tabasco and was known for his conservative views. Monzón, speaking for the Committee in the absence of its chairperson, opposed suffrage while Palavicini championed the feminine vote. Palavicini demanded to know why the Committee had not considered the iniciativas from Hermila Galindo and General González Torres in support of suffrage.
Monzón responded that various delegates had approached the Committee asking that the question not be considered. For this reason and because the Committee assumed the traditional position that women should not participate in politics, they had not considered it. Palavicini countered that "the article provides that all citizens have the right to vote," without sex distinctions. He insisted on a clarification of the Committee's position. But Monzón simply replied, "We did not take this into consideration." Ironically Monzón, who had the reputation of being a firm believer in unrestricted suffrage for the masses, appealed to the delegates' "truly democratic impulses" and their "revolutionary soul" to support the Articles. The Articles were adopted as recommended by the Committee.  

While women in other parts of the world were winning basic political rights, Mexican women were denied exercise of theirs. Even after the promises of adherence to democratic principles made during the convention, the delegates imposed sexual limitations on suffrage. The benefits of the Revolution would not be shared. The lack of concern over women's rights, however, was not exceptional. The delegates were merely reflecting a long history of traditional values and the attitudes of most Mexican males at the time. Francisco Bulnes, an old científico, expressed his suspicion of suffrage when he wrote in 1916 that:

It is well known that in Latin countries it is only the unattractive women, despairing widows,
and indigent spinsters, when they are susceptible to hysterical emotion, who consecrate themselves to the social cause. A woman . . . is a great social peril if her energies are not diverted into religious and charitable channels. 109

The problem, however, reached deeper than male chauvinism and indifference. Political power was at stake. Many of the delegates, fearing Church-influenced conservatism on the part of women, refused them access to the vote. The conservatives, on the other hand, felt that women offered a potential power base to build upon. Neither faction seemed concerned about allowing women to vote as an exercise in democracy, or as a way of fulfilling the prime goals of the Revolution. It is no wonder that Ernest Gruening, reflecting on the period, commented that the Revolution had purposefully done little toward the emancipation of women. 110

Years later, male políticos openly admitted that women and issues concerning them were of scant importance. In the 1920s, Elvia Carrillo Puerto asked Luis G. Monzón, then Senator from San Luis Potosí, why the question of suffrage for women had been left so vaguely worded in the Constitution of 1917, especially since considerable support had existed at the time. Monzón, who had presented the Articles and considered himself one of the radical deputies at the Convention, replied: "I tell you compañerita, when that question of women's suffrage came up, we had been on such a tremendous parranda and I was so drunk that we really did not know what we were doing." 111
Another issue affecting women at the Constitutional Congress was whether the death penalty should be applied in rape cases. Like suffrage, this question exposed the lack of interest in women's welfare of even the most radical delegates. Heriberto Jara, thirty-six and a leftist from Veracruz, questioned the use of the death penalty. His strong nationalism and his willingness to sacrifice women's well-being for the sake of appearance surfaced when he remarked that it would seem that the death penalty was necessary because of "the temperament of the Mexican males."

Jara thought rape should be covered by statutory law with only treason and serious military crimes punishable by death. Fernando Lizardi, a lawyer and conservative but respected intellectual, spoke in favor of the death penalty. He maintained that even though rape was rare and not to be confused with winning "the love of a woman," which he admired, using force should be severely punished. Basing his argument on nationalism, but in a different vein than Jara, he affirmed that the death penalty was necessary if Mexicans were to be considered civilized by the rest of the world. Both Jara and Lizardi seemed more concerned with appearances than with the welfare of women. In the final vote, seduction, rape and violación were considered separately. The death penalty was retained for rape but rejected for violación and seduction. ¹¹² Designating three separate categories for sexual assault was unfortunate because it made
convictions almost impossible. If charges were pressed, authorities would have to decide first if seduction, violación or rape was involved and then determine the punishment. If a man were charged with rape, it was, of course, doubtful that he would have been executed.

Even though the delegates to the Constitutional Congress did not seriously consider political rights for women, they did grant important rights to working women. Article 123 entitled working women to childbirth benefits, to protection against night work and certain types of heavy and dangerous labor, a minimum wage and maximum working hours. The maternity legislation was exceptionally progressive, even though it was not strictly enforced. The period of compulsory absence was eight days before childbirth and one month after. An additional permissive absence was allowed in case of illness. Women were to receive full pay during absences, both compulsory and permissive, as well as to retain the right to employment with their post held open for them. When a woman returned to work she was allowed a half-hour rest twice daily during the period of nursing. Every establishment employing more than fifty women was to provide a nursery.113

There were, however, sexual inequalities in the law. While Article 123 established a minimum wage for workers without regard to sex, it made no provision for equal employment opportunities for men and women. It also forbade
unhealthy and dangerous occupations and overtime work to all women and children under sixteen years of age. The Article was poorly enforced and many women continued to work odd hours in dangerous and unhealthy situations. When it was executed, it served only to keep women from earning a living.\textsuperscript{114}

**Legal Status of Women, 1910-1920**

In the "Additions" to the Plan de Guadalupe, published in Veracruz on December 12, 1914 Carranza included a "revision of the laws relating to matrimony and the civil status of persons" among his list of reforms. In fulfillment of this pledge, he issued the Decree of December 29, 1914, legalizing divorce (prior to this there had been only legal separation), the right to alimony, management and ownership of property. In January, 1915 he ordered the Civil Code of the Federal District and the Territories amended to correspond to this decree.\textsuperscript{115}

Carranza justified the divorce law by maintaining that it offered the best remedy for reducing the number of illegitimate unions. He was concerned chiefly with alleviating the condition of women—especially those of the middle and lower classes. He argued that free union was universal among the poor in Mexico, not so much because weddings were expensive, but because legal marriage was indissoluble. Divorce would mean fewer free unions and
illegitimate births. The law would also benefit upper- and middle-class women for whom legal separation was seldom a satisfactory solution for an unhappy marriage. He noted that because of custom and the kind of education they received, most women could not support themselves. If a marriage failed, the wife, unable to support herself or remarry, became her husband's victim and was, by Carranza's definition, a slave. He continued, "... in the middle classes the woman, due to special conditions of education and custom is incapacitated for successful participation in the economic struggle." In addition, this law would give the woman of the lower class, "the opportunity for her own uplift and for her emancipation from the slavery in which she finds herself."\textsuperscript{116}

Generally feminists were enthusiastic over the divorce law. Mexico's first woman lawyer, Marí)́a Sandoval de Zarco, affirmed, "Divorce is not only an advancement but an absolute necessity" to replace "the farce that existed."\textsuperscript{117} Some feminists, however, opposed the law because they felt that it would benefit only men. Indeed, Carranza was not pressured to issue the law by women but by his own colleagues.\textsuperscript{118} Moreover, several provisions in the new law blatantly discriminated against women. For example, the law considered abandonment by the wife to be a mere night's absence while it was thirty days for the husband. To insure that a divorced woman was not carrying her husband's child,
a woman had a three-hundred-day waiting period after the final divorce decree before she could remarry. The man had no waiting period.¹¹⁹

Additional problems arose over nonenforcement of the alimony or child support payments and lack of follow-up legislation. No concerted efforts were made to hire more women in government posts, to improve their educational opportunities or to initiate other measures encouraging their self-sufficiency. Often the main problem was not the law but social custom. Mexican conservatism and Catholic tradition conspired against women. Divorced women frequently were treated with scorn and contempt. Usually a woman's family preferred that she avoid scandal by remaining married regardless of circumstances. Consequently women rarely took advantage of divorce because they were economically dependent upon their husbands and divorce was considered a social disgrace.¹²⁰

On April 9, 1917 Carranza issued the Law of Domestic Relations to complement the divorce law. The 1917 law guaranteed married women guardianship and child custody rights, participation in legal suits and also the right to draw up contracts. Not only were women afforded a legal voice in their children's education and in expenditure of family funds, but the law also permitted paternity suits and gave fathers the right to acknowledge illegitimate children.¹²¹ While the law removed some legal discriminations against
women, many remained. A woman still could not engage in any profession or business without the consent of her husband. Equally restrictive for single women was the provision that prohibited an unmarried woman from leaving her parents' home until the age of thirty—except to marry—without parental consent. In this manner the sexual double standard was institutionalized within the legal system.

Labor

Workers continued to organize throughout the course of the Revolution and the various administrations responded differently towards their efforts. Madero was mildly favorable but in power only briefly; Huerta was negative and closed the Casa del Obrero Mundial. Carranza was ambivalent. His hesitancy was not due, however, to the unbending stance of the Porfiristas, because he occasionally courted labor. In theory his government championed the rights of workers to build independent labor unions. But in reality it chose to manipulate them.

When the Mexican Revolution broke into a civil war among Villa, Zapata, and Carranza, the balance was tipped in Carranza's favor by labor. The largest single recruitment to the Carrancistas occurred when industrial workers from the Casa del Obrero Mundial, after successful negotiations with Obregón, swung their support to Carranza. In
the first days of March, 1915 members of the Casa formed "Red Battalions" and moved from the capital to join Carranza's forces in Orizaba, Veracruz. Between 7,000 and 10,000 persons, including the wives and children of workers, left Mexico City in the March exodus. Part of the agreement was that even the "female workers who perform service in aiding or attending the wounded, or other similar service will be known ... as 'red'". Many women prominent in the Casa were also active in the battalions—among them—María del Carmen Frías and her sister Catalina, Soledad Orozco Avila, and María Hernández Zarco. Besides the six battalions, the Grupo Sanitario Acrata was formed on February 14, 1915 in Mexico City to provide a nursing corps serving with men in combat zones. The Grupo was composed of female members from various industries; some of its members were Paula Osorio, Jovita Estrada, Carmen Velázquez, Margarita Velázquez, Maclovía Pacheco, Esther Torres, Angela Inclán and at least thirty other women.

No sooner had the Carrancistas triumphed militarily over the Zapatistas and Villistas in battles that the Casa's "Red Battalions" and the Grupo Acrata had helped to win, than Carranza's provisional government began to suppress labor unions. Obviously Carranza's patience had worn thin. Workers, suffering from the wage-price crush, depreciation of pesos and constant food shortages, called an increasing number of strikes. When a general strike was planned
for the Federal District for July, 1916 Carranza demanded that the strike committee, composed of Angelita Inclán, Esther Torres and seven men, rescind the orders. Upon their refusal, he ordered General Pablo González to close the Casa del Obrero Mundial in Mexico City, to eject the unions from the Jockey Club and to arrest members of the strike committee and other labor leaders. In August he invoked an old law originally adopted by Juárez on January 25, 1862 to apply against revolutionists. Since it provided the death penalty for anyone "disturbing the public order," Carranza extended it to apply to strikers. In retrospect, many workers felt the Casa had betrayed them by joining Carranza. The Casa, by accepting a supportive role alongside the ultimate rulers of Mexico, invited the manipulation of labor by politicians. Obregón's disagreement with the jefe supremo over the harassment of strikers would later bring him support from the union movement.127

Esther Torres, a member of the 1916 strike committee, had long been active in the labor movement. The daughter of a miner, born in Guanajuato on September 27, 1896, she moved with her family to Mexico City in 1910. In her youth she worked in a cigar factory but left to look for a better paying job and eventually became a seamstress. She joined the Casa in 1915 and organized the Primer Sindicato de Costureras. In February, 1916 during the formation of the Primer Consejo Federal de la Federación de Sindicatos Obreros
del Distrito Federal, she represented the Sindicato de Costureras. Later she served on the general strike com-
mittee. When Carranza exempted women on the committee from being arrested, Esther objected, explaining that "women have the same . . . responsibility in the strike as our comrades." Carranza quickly changed his orders and charges were brought against the women. They were arrested but later released. 128

Toward the end of the period women shared in the formation of two new labor unions—the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (CROM) in 1918 and the Confederación General de Trabajadoras (CGT) in 1921—and participated actively in the Mexican Communist Party. These three organizations all demanded equality of laws and rights for women as part of their platforms. 129 By the next decade, however, women in CROM and CGT were displaced: the government co-opted labor and established its own male-dominated unions and no one lobbied successfully for women's rights or their rep-
resentation on committees. CROM and CGT continued to include women's planks in their platforms for appearance only.

Journalists

Women journalists wrote prolifically during the Revolution. Several women's magazines were founded whose audience may have included middle- and upper-class Mexican
women. In September, 1913 Emilia Enríquez de Rivera began the monthly *El Hogar*. An orphan whose writing skills were completely self-taught, Emilia pioneered in journalism, initially working alone with an old hand press. The magazine grew from a small sheet to fifty pages. Not only did she print *El Hogar* but, under the pen name "Obdulia," contributed regularly.  

*La Mujer Moderna*, founded by feminists Artemisa Sáenz Royo and Hermila Galindo in September, 1915 printed progressive articles by Mexican women hoping to elevate "the feminine spirit to the level . . . it deserved." During its four-year existence, *La Mujer Moderna* dealt with subjects ranging from politics to face cream formulas. The few issues that remain reveal the editors' interest in the worldwide women's movement. The late October, 1915 issue informed its readers of a women's conference in Toluca addressed by Hermila Galindo, carried a news brief that Candelaria Ruz Patrón had ordered the magazine for the Rita Cetina Gutiérrez League in Progreso, Yucatán, and ran an article in support of women's suffrage.  

In 1919 the Consejo Feminista Mexicana was founded under the directorship of Elena Torres, María del Refugio García, Estela Carrasco, Evelina Ray and María and Teresa Sánchez. Their ambitious goal—the economic, social and political emancipation of women—was elaborated in the journal *La Mujer*, edited by Julia Nava de Ruisánchez.
La Semana Ilustrada is an especially valuable source on women due to its extensive coverage of women's organizations and the exceptional quality of its photographs. The January 6, 1911 issue carried a photograph of María G. de Bacmaister performing her duties as President of the Sociedad de la Niñez. In the May 18 issue Cruz Blanca members are pictured departing north to treat the wounded; the June 2 issue shows women working for the Cruz Roja in Chihuahua with guns and bandoliers strapped to their chests. As indicated by photographs, the Anti-Alcoholic League headquartered in Mexico City was active and had many women members. La Semana Ilustrada also published a photograph of the legendary Valentina Ramírez who appears wearing long pants and toting a rifle, pistol and bandoliers just prior to the attack on Culiacán. Zapata brothers Emiliano and Eufemio and their compañeras were pictured in the June 10, 1913 issue; a month later women Zapatistas with their children were shown photographed just after their capture in Morelos. Women active in politics and education also received excellent coverage. The members of a women's political club in Culiacán supporting a particular gubernatorial candidate were pictured in September, 1911. The large women's attendance at the Congreso Nacional de Educación Primaria was discussed. A photograph of Spanish freethinker Belem de Sárraga appeared in La Semana Ilustrada on September 11, 1912, concurrent with her dramatic visit
to Mexico. Like many feminists, she equated progress in women's rights with a lessening of Church influence and Catholics objecting to her strong anti-religious views almost prevented her from speaking. She advised her Mexican audience that women must develop their own minds. El Tiempo Ilustrado, El Universal Ilustrado and Arte y Letras occasionally carried women's news. The May 28, 1911 issue of El Tiempo Ilustrado pictured the eighteen arrested members of the anti-reelectionist club Hijas de Cuauhtemoc. A photograph of Elena Arizmendi de Mejia with a short report about her work in organizing the Cruz Blanca also appeared in the May, 1911 issue. El Universal Ilustrado and Arte y Letras covered women's suffrage though not as thoroughly as El Tiempo Ilustrado or Revista de Revistas. El Universal Ilustrado published a photograph of the Mesa Directiva del Comité Mexicano de la Asociación Pan Americana de la Mesa Redonda, in which Esperanza Velázquez Bringas served as secretary.

Another source of information on women's activities which probably reached middle- and upper-class Mexican women was newspapers. El Voto, El Diario del Hogar and the Mexican Herald, an English language newspaper, carried news items on women. On May 1, 1913 El Voto printed an article by the women's group Amigas del Pueblo. In it they made a public plea for all women to unite to create a better world, to abandon their indifference and work for human
betterment, "separating themselves from old traditions" and "stripping away prejudices," setting an example for the world. This proclamation was signed by Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza, Delfina Peláez, María de Jesús Jaso, María Gutiérrez, Herlinda Bravo, Rosa G. de Maciel (Juana's sister), Marina Trejo, Dolores Medina and Laura Mendoza.142

Women with strong ideological commitments used the media to promote their viewpoints. Inés Malváez, Dolores Jiménez y Muro and Aurora M. Martínez conducted an anti-Huerta campaign in the pages of La Voz de Juárez from Cuernavaca. Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza struck out against injustice with Vésper. Toward the end of the period, socialist Esperanza Velásquez Bringas, a lawyer and director of libraries in Mexico City, published widely in the capital's newspapers and magazines. Sara Estela Ramírez, the revolutionary poet and writer from Coahuila and founder of La Corregidora, continued her journalistic career until her early death.143

The Catholic Church and The Revolution

The importance of the Catholic Church lies in the influence it exercised over women and, perhaps most importantly, the power revolutionaries assumed it had. The response of the Church to the Revolution was to establish its own social systems; its response to the women's struggle was to organize its own movement. When the Constitutionalists
moved against the Church, many women rushed to its defense. Delegates meeting at the Constitutional Convention in Querétaro used this traditional alliance with the Church to prevent women from participating in politics. This ironically resulted in the conservatives favoring women's suffrage and the radicals objecting because they believed it would mean the end of the Revolution.

The long-simmering Church-State conflict erupted openly in the nineteenth century under the reforms instituted by Benito Juárez. During the Porfiriato the Catholic Church regained its prestige and political influence. Díaz, under his wife's sway, permitted the anti-clerical statutes to go unenforced. In this atmosphere, it was reported that women could openly practice their faith, sometimes "to the point of fanaticism." 144

Even before the fall of Díaz, the Catholic Church introduced programs to rival revolutionary plans. A series of conferences were held on social issues, beginning in Puebla in February, 1903 and continuing throughout the Porfiriato. Catholic Social Action, a complete reform program to organize the lower classes and workers into unions, was activated as the Revolution began. The Church, much to the annoyance of leftists, supported presidential candidates. Initially it backed Madero because it believed he was the only candidate who could win. Finding his vice-presidential choice unacceptable, the Church then opted
for de la Barra. After Huerta's fall in 1914, the Church rejected all revolutionaries and consequently suffered politically.\textsuperscript{145}

The violence of the Revolution increasingly affected the Catholic Church, which grew enraged over the indecencies perpetrated upon it by the revolutionaries. An exiled nun described a situation she had witnessed. Of Villistas and Obregonistas she stated in disgust, "I have seen the chasubles, scarfs, maniples, cordons, pluvial capes, and altar cloths used for protecting the horses, while women wore the copes and albs and used the corporals as handkerchiefs."\textsuperscript{146}

Revolutionaries, jealous of the power the Church had traditionally wielded, violated nuns, desecrated churches and turned convents into brothels. Edith O'Shaughnessy wrote of nuns being outraged in the sacking of Tamaulipas and worried about future generations and how the children would adjust after seeing so much bloodshed.\textsuperscript{147} Rebels tried to discredit priests by dressing soldiers in Mass vestments and photographing them standing with nude women. A favorite tactic was to have a prostitute dress in nun's attire and go into the streets to preach against Catholicism.

The Church, however, managed to absorb these attacks until the Constitutionalists launched an all out campaign against it. The sharpest attack came from General Obregón. When he captured Mexico City in January, 1915 he
summoned priests to the National Palace where Vicar-general Antonio de Jesús Paredes and one hundred sixty-seven other priests were taken prisoner. Obregón demanded money in exchange for their release. In protest of the ransom, Catholic women in Mexico City organized a demonstration for Sunday, February 21. Radical workers countered by sponsoring their own demonstration. The two rival meetings ended in a clash in which many were injured and two were killed. Carranza finally ordered the priests released in March, after they had been taken to Veracruz.

The Church's opposition to the 1917 Constitution, which completely stripped it of its power, was predictable. Articles 3, 27 and 130 marked an enormous reduction in the Church's control over education, property and ceremonies. It directly prohibited clerics from political participation and criticism of government laws, forbade clerical periodicals to comment on political matters, and denied clerics the right to bequeath property. Many women rallied to the Church. During the Constitutional Convention, delegates debating the end of Church-controlled education received a message from women in Monterrey protesting the measure as "oppressive of God and our holy religion." The delegates hooted and roared with laughter when the message was read. On December 25, 1917 Catholics in the states of Mexico, Puebla and Michoacán published a pamphlet deprecating the attacks against freedom of education. More than 80 per cent of the signers were women—who could not vote.¹⁴⁹
The willingness of women to defend the Church only helped convince Mexican men that they were a reactionary force that must be curbed. By the end of the violent phase of the Revolution, neither the Church nor women had resolved their relationship with the State. During the next decade the differences between Church and State erupted into violence. The women's issue continued to simmer, with women in the 1920s and 1930s determined to bring the conflict to a favorable resolution.

As the most violent phase of the Revolution came to a close, Mexican women were scarcely better off, except legally, than during the Porfiriato. They had gained valuable experience by assuming new positions and responsibilities but they had not acquired concomitant political rights. The effects of the Revolution had been devastating—rape and pillage, death and the break-up of the family. Under these circumstances, women organized to correct injustices and to demand their rights. The spotlight for the women's rights movement in the period from 1915 to 1924 was focused on the state of Yucatán where Socialist administrations offered women a crucial role in society.
NOTES

CHAPTER II


2 Frederick C. Turner, The Dynamic of Mexican Nationalism (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), p. 188. Women were especially useful in smuggling operations along the United States-Mexican border. At the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez crossing, for example, all men were searched on the streetcars running between cities but women were searched at random.

3 Ibid., p. 185.

4 Mrs. E. Alex Tweedie, Mexico as I Saw It (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1911), p. 211.


6 Turner, The Dynamic, p. 120. Population growth leveled off for the first time in years with diseases, epidemics, food shortages and deaths. Mexican Herald, February 2, 1914, p. 1, reported that women complained because they had little communication with their men and were left without funds. The War Department was supposed to take care of the wives of officers on active duty.

7 The many offenses against women can be reconstructed from newspaper and journal accounts. See for example, Mexican Herald, September 5, 1912, p. 1, which reported that rebels in Cananea carried away a number of women; ibid., January 20, 1913, p. 1, stated that five men and five women were kidnapped by Zapatistas. Turner, The Dynamic, p. 123, discusses the large consignments of women and young girls transported through Veracruz to Quintana Roo and Campeche. O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife, pp. 58, 67.

9. Ibid., pp. 84, taken from a letter dated December 11, 1913.


15. Mendieta Alatorre, Carmen Serdán, pp. 115-116, has a photograph of Carmen on the day she was released from prison. There is a complete deposition by Carmen Serdán of the events of November 18, 1910, pp. 128-145; *La Semana Ilustrada*, Año II, No. 86, June 23, 1911, also has a photograph taken with the Madero women in Puebla; Mendieta Alatorre, *La Mujer*, p. 50; Aurora Fernández y Fernández, *Mujeres que Honran a la Patria* (México: n.p., 1958), p. 216.
16 Diario del Hogar, June 19, 1911, p. 1. Filomena had her baby daughter in prison.

17 Fernández y Fernández, Mujeres, p. 216.

18 Crónica Ilustrada Revolución Mexicana, XLI (1967-68), related by María Narváez, 13. Rosa and Guadalupe helped with Carmen's mission to Zapata. To pay for the trip Rosa had to pawn the few pet birds the family owned.

19 Mendieta Alatorre, Carmen Serdán, p. 154, has a photograph of Carmen Serdán and the others with Carranza.

20 Ibid., pp. 165-166, has a photograph of the group.


22 Mendieta Alatorre, Carmen Serdán, p. 155. Carmen Serdán was honored years later by a biography in 1971 written by Angeles Mendieta Alatorre, a play by the same author, and monuments in Puebla. She was honored nationally on November 18, 1967 by ceremonies in Puebla. See ibid., p. 206.

23 Derechos de la Mujer, p. 114; New York Times, May 10, 1911, p. 2, reported that Sara shared Francisco's prison cell in Monterrey and San Luis Potosí, cooking his food because she feared he would be poisoned.


26 Ernest Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage (New York: The Century Co., 1928), pp. 570-573. Sara's only accomplishment was that Ambassador Wilson agreed to send a telegram to President Taft from Madero's mother.
27 Derechos de la Mujer, p. 114; Julio Scherer García, "María de Pino Suárez, Compañera Olvidada," Excélsior, November 18, 1960, pp. 1, 9. This was the first interview María de Pino Suárez gave since 1913. María, always poor, asked every President's wife for aid in raising pensions. She was never successful.


29 Rodríguez Cabo, La Mujer, p. 20.

30 Villarreal G., Heroínas, p. 13; Mendieta Alatorre, La Mujer, pp. 76-77.

31 María Antonieta Rascón, "La Mujer y la Lucha Social," in Imagen y Realidad de la Mujer, ed. by Elena Urrutia (México: SepSetentas, 1975), pp. 155-156; María Efraína Rocha, Semblanzas Biográficas de Algunas Luchadoras Mexicanas (México: Comité Coordinador Femenino, 1947), pp. 6-7. Alaniz is also spelled with an "s."


33 Mexican Herald, August 5, 1912, p. 6.

34 O'Shaughnessy, Diplomatic Days, p. 60. This information was taken from a letter written on April 25, 1912. Mexican women were affected by the worldwide struggle for equality. The activities of women in Great Britain and the United States received extensive coverage in magazines and newspapers. Socialist and Communist governments also focused attention on women in their conventions on human rights.

35 Ibid., p. 27.

36 Rodríguez Cabo, La Mujer, p. 17. Bacmaister is often spelled Bakmaister and Baicmaster.

38 Ibid., June 1, 1911, p. 2; Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza, "Memoirs" (unpublished), stated that the founders of the Amigas del Pueblo were Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza, Manuela Peláez, Rosa G. Vda. de Maciel and Laura Mendoza. Mexican Herald, June 25, 1911, p. 1; Yolando Tanabe Velasco, "La Mujer y la Profesión de Contador Público en México" (tesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1962), p. 12, has a long list of women who were instrumental in the fight for women's rights.

39 Revista de Revistas, Año II, No. 89 (October 8, 1911), 3.

40 Rocha, Semblanzas Biográficas, p. 16.

41 Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, Liberalism in Mexico, 1857-1929 (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1931), p. 219; Todo, November 20, 1934, p. 12. The other two Latin American countries represented were Argentina and Uruguay.


43 Francisco Ramírez Plancarte, La Ciudad de México durante la Revolución Constitucionalista (México: Ediciones Botas, 1941), pp. 65-66; Rosa Seldi, "María Arias," Biographical Collection of the Biblioteca Nacional, stated that María Arias was actually horrified by her title "María Pistolas" because she could not kill an ant. Mendieta Alatorre, La Mujer, p. 41, incorrectly states that María Elvira Bermúdez belonged to the Club Lealtad. Bermúdez was born in 1916. María Elvira Bermúdez, interview, Mexico City, July 25, 1976.

44 Seldi, "María Arias"; Derechos de la Mujer, p. 15; Rodríguez Cabo, La Mujer, pp. 22-23; Biographical Sketch written by Eulalía Guzmán in the Biographical Collection of the Biblioteca Nacional.


48 Flores Magón, Semilla, p. 38. This was originally written on February 12, 1916.


50 General Juan F. Azcarate claimed that only Federal soldiers had families with them and that soldaderas were inventions of the film industry. See John Rutherford, Mexican Society during the Revolution: A Literary Approach (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 296.


52 O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife, p. 144; Tito L. Foppa, La Trajedia Mexicana (Barcelona: Buigas Pons y Craj., n.d.), p. 110; "Los Que Lucharon en la Revolución: Heroínas Revolucionarias," El Heraldo Domenical, November 18, 1934, p. 4, also stated that the soldaderas were the real heroines of the Revolution.


Ibid., pp. 199-200; Sáenz Royo, Historia Político- pp. 33-34.


57 Ibid., p. 236.

58 New York Times, May 10, 1911, p. 2, reported that Neri had been a wealthy landowner who joined the Revolution because of excessive taxes. She was also said to command 1,000 guerrillas in the state of Guerrero.

59 This is highly doubtful and can be viewed as an attempt to lessen her stature as a revolutionary.

60 Downing, The Mexican Earth, pp. 230-231, related the story of her cutting off ears; Mexican Herald, September 2, 1912, p. 1, reported that she had Zapatistas under her command.


62 Reed, Insurgent Mexico, p. 131.


64 Lewis Hanke, Latin America: A Historical Reader (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., Inc., 1967), p. 582, has a photograph of Apolinaria Flores.


66 Mexican Herald, June 20, 1913, p. 1.

Rodríguez Cabo, *La Mujer*, p. 20; Rascón, "La Mujer y la Lucha Social," p. 156.


Rodríguez Cabo, *La Mujer*, p. 18; Mujeres Mexicanas Notables, pp. 147-149, states that Dolores was a brigadier general. Her pension was awarded through the recommendation of Gildardo Magaña.


Gutiérrez de Mendoza, "Memoirs." I could not find the purpose or goals of the Instituto Popular. Laura Mendoza, Juana's eldest daughter and collaborator, died in August, 1976 in Cuernavaca.
See El Desmonte, June 15, 1919, p. 2, for Juana's article on schools. On p. 4, Elena Torres is mentioned as a collaborator.

Gutiérrez de Mendoza, "Memoirs."

Juana adopted two boys—Hesón and Feliciano Pérez Negrete—in Acatlán, Morelos and raised them to manhood. Siller, "Testimonios," p. 4, has a photograph. Several years after her husband died, Juana was the compañera of a Zapatista who was killed in combat. Susana Mendoza (Juana's great-niece), interview, Cuernavaca, August 12, 1976.

Sáenz Royo, Semblanzas, p. 10.

Susana Mendoza, interview, Cuernavaca, August 12, 1976, stated that many of Juana's papers had been burned. When Juana needed money to keep the press going, she sold beans on the street and had to use her papers to start the fire.

El Pueblo, January 25, 1916, p. 3. Two years earlier (November 17, 1914) Obregón had made a plea to the women of Mexico on behalf of the Constitutionalists: "Mothers, wives and daughters!: kneel before the Altar of the Motherland and bring to the ear of your sons, husbands and fathers the sacred call of Duty." This was taken from Turner, The Dynamic, p. 190, quoting Alvaro Obregón, Ocho mil Kilómetros en Campaña: Relación de las Acciones de Armas Electuadas en Más de Veinte Estados de la República durante un Período de Cuatro Años (México: Librería de la Vda. de Ch. Bouret, 1917), p. 227.

Sáenz Royo, Semblanzas, p. 49. The author herself is mistaken when she states that she attended the First Feminist Congress in 1917. Minutes of the meeting show that she attended the Second Feminist Congress in November, 1916. Villarreal G., Heroínas, pp. 11-12, correctly states that Artemisa Sáenz Royo attended the Second Feminist Congress in Mérida. Sáenz Royo states that Hermila Galindo organized the Congress under General Alvarado with Carranza's support. Morton, Woman Suffrage, p. 3, also notes that Galindo persuaded Alvarado to hold the First Feminist Congress. It does not appear that Galindo was responsible for the Congress being held and the extent of Carranza's support is debatable. For a discussion see Chapter Three.
84 Villarreal G., Heroinas, pp. 11-12; Sáenz Royo, Semblanzas, p. 49.

85 Sáenz Royo, Semblanzas, pp. 42-46. Margarita Robles was also an admirer of Zapata. Her father owned an hacienda in southwestern Mexico that had been burned and destroyed during the Revolution. Robles wrote a favorable pamphlet, El Verdadero Zapata.

86 Mendieta Alatorre, La Mujer, p. 79.


88 Ibid.

89 Mendieta Alatorre, La Mujer, p. 80; Sáenz Royo, Historia Político-, p. 48; Morton, Woman Suffrage, p. 5; Galindo, La Doctrina, pp. 160-161.

90 Morton, Woman Suffrage, p. 3; Galindo, La Doctrina, p. 160.

91 Galindo, La Doctrina, pp. 27-35, 161. Galindo also made a strong point that Mexican women worked and fought alongside men in the Revolution.


96 Revista de Revistas, July 23, 1911, p. 2; Elena Arizmendi y Mejía founded the Cruz Blanca. See Villarreal G., Heroínas, p. 11.


99 María Antonieta Rascón, "La Mujer Mexicana," says Flores was in charge of the state of Tepic; Sáenz Royo, Historia Político-, p. 32; states that she had blue eyes and blond hair; Plenn, "Forgotten Heroines," p. 60, says Flores was stout with red hair, in her early thirties and liked to dress in black satin (always with a sword by her side).

100 Plenn, "Forgotten Heroines," p. 60; Sáenz Royo, Historia Político-, p. 32; Villarreal G., Heroínas, pp. 10-11.

101 Plenn, "Forgotten Heroines," p. 27.

102 Sáenz Royo, Semblanzas, p. 36, implies that if Carranza had not been killed, he would have supported Galindo's suffrage efforts and women would have received the vote.

103 Millan, Mexico Reborn, p. 166; Mendieta Alatorre, La Mujer, p. 137.

104 Millan, Mexico Reborn, p. 166.

105 Sáenz Royo, Historia Político-, pp. 51-52.

106 E. V. Niemeyer, Jr., Revolution at Querétaro: The Mexican Constitutional Convention of 1916-1917 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974), pp. 207-208, does not state why Inés Malváez, who had been an active feminist, opposed suffrage nor for whom she was speaking.

Diario de los Debates del Congreso Constituyente de 1916-1917, II, 711-712, 997; Palavicini, Historia, pp. 95, 98. For the full text of the debate see Diario, pp. 711-719 and Palavicini, Historia, pp. 95-104. Niemeyer, Revolution at Querétaro, pp. 65, 207-209, suggests that Palavicini thought that Múgica would have offered a better explanation than Mónzon. Múgica was known to be a feminist of sorts. He offered scholarships to women while serving as military governor of Tabasco and favored granting women the vote.

Francisco Bulnes, The Whole Truth about Mexico; President Wilson's Responsibility, trans. Dora Scott (New York: M. Bulnes Book Co., 1916), pp. 142-148. Bulnes also stated that feminists helped to undermine Limantour because of vengeance, since he had closed the Treasury Department to them.

Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage, p. 627.

Ibid., p. 630.

Niemeyer, Revolution at Querétaro, pp. 82-83, 199, 203-206. Violación is defined as having carnal knowledge of a woman by force or when a woman is unconscious, mentally deranged, intimidated or a minor.


Morton, Woman Suffrage, p. 2.

117 La Prensa, February 15, 1915, pp. 1, 6.

118 Eugenia Meyer, historian at the Programa de Historia Oral, interview, Mexico City, March 11, 1976, stated that Félix Palavicini, Luis Cabrera, and other men influenced Carranza to issue the divorce law because they had left their wives, had children by other women and wanted to marry them. It has also been assumed that Hermila Galindo may have influenced Carranza.


121 G. Sofía Villa de Buentello, La Mujer y la Ley (México: Imprenta Franco-Americana, 1921), pp. 137-147; Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage, mistakenly states that the law was adopted in 1923.


125 "Acrata," Historia Obrera 5, II, No. 5 (June, 1975), p. 21, quoting Luis Araiza, Historia de la Casa del Obrera Mundial (México: Talleres Gráficos del Sindicato
de Obreros y Artesanos de la Industria Cervecería y Conexas de la Ciudad de Orizaba, Veracruz, 1963), p. 98, states that there were four Red Battalions, rather than six.

126 See Mexican Herald, November 24, 1911, p. 1; December 9, 1913, p. 3; December 31, 1913, p. 10; and November 1, 1914, p. 1 for descriptions of women's involvement in strikes in the Torreón mines and the garment industry in the Federal District.

127 Clark, Organized Labor, pp. 41-44; Cockcroft, Intellectual Precursors, p. 229.


129 "Derechos de la Mujer Campesina," Derechos de la Mujer Mexicana, p. 62. Elena Torres and Refugio García were leaders in the Communist Party.

130 Adelina Zendejas, "La Mujer Mexicana en el Periodismo," El Gallo Ilustrado, June 22, 1975, p. 3, reported that La Mujer was founded in 1915 by Guadalupe Gutiérrez de Joseph who had worked fifteen years on Diario del Hogar. It was, however, shortlived; Fisher, "The Influence," p. 23; Pan American Union Bulletin, LXVIII, No. 5 (May, 1934), 316.

131 María del Carmen Ruiz Castañeda, "La Mujer Mexicana en el Periódico," Filosofía y Letras, XXX, No. 60-61-62 (January-December, 1956), 215; La Mujer Moderna, Año I, No. 7 (October 31, 1915), 3, 9, 14.


133 The best collection of photographs from the period of the Revolution is Agustín Víctor Casasola, Historia Gráfica de la Revolución 1900-1940 (México: Archivo Casasola, 1940). Unfortunately, although many women appear in the photographs, they are rarely identified.
134 La Semana Ilustrada, Año II, No. 62 (January 6, 1911); Año II, No. 81 (May 18, 1911); Año II, No. 83 (June 2, 1911).

135 Ibid., Año II, No. 102 (October 13, 1911). For a photograph of Madero with the Anti-alcoholic League in Chapultepec see, ibid., Año III, No. 117 (January 24, 1912). Madero was made honorary President of the League, see ibid., Año III, No. 138 (June 19, 1912).

136 Ibid., Año II, No. 88 (July 7, 1911).

137 Ibid., Año IV, No. 189 (June 10, 1913); Año IV, No. 194 (July 15, 1913).

138 Ibid., Año II, No. 97 (September 8, 1911); Año II, No. 100 (September 29, 1911); Año III, No. 150 (September 11, 1912).

139 Mexican Herald, September 6, 1912, pp. 2, 3.


142 El Voto, May 1, 1913, p. 4.

143 Ruiz Castañeda, "La Mujer Mexicana," p. 216; Rodríguez Cabo, La Mujer, pp. 18, 20-22; Fisher, "The Influence," p. 223.


O'Shaughnessy, *A Diplomat's Wife*, p. 254. This letter was dated April 9, 1914.

Quirk, *The Mexican Revolution*, pp. 75-76.

Ibid., p. 99.
CHAPTER III

THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT IN YUCATÁN,
1915-1924

Part I

Women and Governor Salvador Alvarado,
1915-1918

The state of Yucatán, located in the far south-eastern corner of Mexico, was the lodestar of the women's rights movement from 1915-1924. It was the site of the first two Feminist Congresses as well as the scene of the most active participation of women in Mexico. The reasons for Yucatán's leadership lay in the support of socialist governors Salvador Alvarado (1915-1918) and Felipe Carrillo Puerto (1933-1924), the progressive ideas of its women and wealth from henequen production. In addition, Yucatán was one of the first Mexican states to open education to women. The Instituto Literario de Niñas was established in Mérida on September 16, 1877. The school's first director was an American, Enriqueta Dorchester. She was succeeded by Yucatán's well-known teacher and poet Rita Cetina Gutiérrez, who devoted her life to improving women's education. In 1878 the Liceos de Niñas opened in the suburbs of Mérida.
A few years later, La Siempreviva, one of the earliest feminist societies, was founded in the state capital by Cristina Farfán de García Montero. Aided by Rita Cetina Gutiérrez and other women, she published a periodical, also named La Siempreviva, encouraging women's education. Moreover, early interest in women was reflected by the many students choosing women's topics for their theses between 1900 and 1915.

It is ironic that the state of Yucatán should be famous both for holding the first two Feminist Congresses and for its enslavement of Maya Indians. John Kenneth Turner visited the peninsula just before the fall of President Díaz in 1911 and publicized the sordid conditions of Mayas and henequen workers in his widely-read Barbarous Mexico. Two British visitors touring Yucatán during the same period confirmed Turner's findings. Their remarks on women are especially illuminating. The horrendous working conditions of campesinas and the "sexual excesses" on the part of hacendados and their sons appalled them. They described wealthy Yucatecas as being extremely lazy and leading "empty and vapid" existences. After completing their brief tour of the peninsula, the visitors concluded that the suffrage question, burning at the time in Britain, had not yet invaded Yucatán.

In contrast to the pre-revolutionary period when progressive programs benefited the few, social reform in
Yucatán reached its apex between 1915 and 1918 under the governorship of Salvador Alvarado. Women were included and played an important part in his reform proposals. The General summed up his reasons for giving so much attention to women and their role in society:

The woman of our country, no matter her social level, is more of a slave than a laborer; she cannot do or resolve anything on her own. The society itself is criminal in the subtlety of justice for women, and ought to be more liberal, more consistent, more tolerant. She has the duty to make herself free, to enter in the tournament of progress... the strong woman is the aspiration of the moment. Elevate woman! 5

Unlike many Mexican revolutionaries, the General considered women's emancipation an integral part of Mexico's overall revolutionary goals of elevating oppressed peoples.

A norteño born in Sinaloa in 1880, the General spent the formative years of his life in the border state of Sonora. He spoke English well, authored several books and was an avid reader of social and economic history. His political career dates from his involvement in the Cananea mining strike of 1906. After Cananea he joined Francisco Madero's Partido Anti-reeleccionista and the uprising in 1910. During the course of the Mexican Revolution, Alvarado rose from captain to the rank of General in 1915. 6 As newly-appointed Governor and Military Commander, Alvarado arrived in Yucatán in early 1915 with orders from President Carranza to bring the state under Constitutionalist control.
After a decisive military victory in March, the General set out to establish order, impose his authority, organize a government and begin the work of reconstruction. While his appointed term as governor lasted only three years, Alvarado in that short time introduced radical socio-economic changes. He implemented his plan to create an ideal society by redistributing income, broadening educational reforms and widening the political base to include unorganized labor, the rural proletariat, peasants and women.

The main vehicles the General employed to effect change were the press, a new political party and whenever possible, local leadership. The newspaper La Voz de la Revolución became the semi-official organ for the Constitutionalists and all of Alvarado's proclamations and speeches were given full coverage within its pages. The Partido Socialista de Yucatán was founded to implement the new reforms. In addition, to create a receptiveness to his programs, the General made efforts to incorporate local leaders into his administration. Felipe Carrillo Puerto, who eventually headed the Partido and later served as governor, exemplifies the talent the General sought.

An idealistic socialist reformer, Alvarado had an advantage few visionaries do—money. Henequen revenues had made Yucatán Mexico's richest state by the early revolutionary period. The General had the good fortune
of being in power during the years of the state's biggest henequen boom and he financed his programs from those profits. This economic windfall was created by World War I which produced an insatiable demand from American farmers for binder twine and, at the same time, cut off other markets. Besides funding Alvarado's reforms, henequen revenues provided money for Carranza's armies battling Pancho Villa in the north and Emiliano Zapata in the south.

Education and Labor

General Alvarado's educational programs were constructed to alter radically the economic, political and social structure by improving the educational opportunities of the disenfranchised—campesinos, Mayas and women. The Rural Education Law of May, 1915 provided for free, secular and compulsory education, and shifted responsibility from hacendados to the state. Henequeneros, who had controlled rural education in the past, were required to furnish school buildings and equipment. They were also ordered to advance money for teachers' salaries and an additional 20 per cent to the treasury by the tenth of each month. Those not complying received fines and some were imprisoned. In addition, Alvarado attempted to involve parents in their children's education. He ordered educational councils composed of students' mothers established in all rural areas.
Since Alvarado believed that it was "a social error to educate women for a society that did not exist," he actively promoted women's education. One of his first official acts as governor was to increase the types and numbers of schools to open education to females regardless of economic backgrounds. The Escuela Vocacional de Artes Domésticas, one of the most important new institutions for young women, enrolled two hundred thirty females in subjects ranging from home economics to telegraphy. The staff was also predominantly female. In general, Alvarado encouraged women to enter professional schools and urged those with intellectual interests to join cultural centers. Further, he used education to implant new ideas and attack old weaknesses. Releasing the hold of the Catholic Church on the population was a primary goal. The archbishop's house in Mérida was expropriated and converted into a school. Women professors were commissioned to hold public meetings to warn against religious fanaticism. Social problems such as gambling, drinking and bullfighting were discussed in classrooms by teachers and propaganda agents.

To win support for his educational programs, the Governor called Mexico's First Pedagogical Congress in September, 1915. More than six hundred teachers, mostly women with their expenses paid by the state, attended. Several of these women provided leadership in the First and Second Feminist Congresses held in January and November, 1916.
The delegates at the First Pedagogical Congress reached the consensus that co-educational and rationalist (socialist), as opposed to religious, programs should be instituted in all schools. Support for these programs was reaffirmed at the Second Congress held in August of the following year.\footnote{13}

Rational education, which Alvarado vigorously promoted, was defined by Colonel J. D. Ramírez Garrido, Chief of the Department of Public Education, as "NOTHING MORE THAN SELECTIVE TEACHING, INTEGRATED WITH THE POLITICAL PROGRAM OF THE SOCIALIST STATE GOVERNMENT GENERATED BY THE REVOLUTION."\footnote{14} Educators espousing this approach were brought from central Mexico to Yucatán to help establish this system in the state's public schools. Porfiria Avila de Rosado, a strong proponent of the new education, arrived in Mérida in late 1916 to begin the first rationalist school in Yucatán. Elena Torres was brought in to work with local leaders to establish primary schools. In September, 1917 she opened the state's first Montessori school "Casa dei bambini" in Mérida. Torres favored the rationalist approach so strongly that she spoke of older methods as being part of a "prison system" and called for suppression of the "disgraceful practices that have been considered good up to now, and which consist of examinations, rewards, and punishments, diplomas, and titles obtained by these means."

"Aptitudes," she informed, "will be measured only by the
competence which students demonstrate in practice" and knowledge will be acquired "in the fields, in the shops, and in the experimental rooms of the school itself."\textsuperscript{15}

Improving the working conditions of women was central to the General's goals of remodeling the social structure of Yucatán. One of his first acts was to send a circular to all military commanders and heads of public offices. In this memo the General noted:

The best way to emancipate woman is to enable her to support herself so that she will not be compelled by isolation or misery into forced marriages or illicit unions; and this is so much more urgent to accomplish . . . since until today she was considered an object of luxury and an article of social dissipation.\textsuperscript{16}

In December, 1915 the General signed an extremely progressive labor law that benefited working women. It defined the rights and obligations of employers and employees, maximum hours, minimum wages, working conditions for women and children, health standards, authorized the right to strike and to bargain collectively and established a Department of Labor. Further regulations guaranteed days off for pregnancy, rest periods to nurse children and a safe place for them while mothers worked. The General also called the first labor congress for November, 1916 to discuss labor's needs and future goals. Alvarado encouraged women's participation by forming special cooperatives. Ligas Femeniles Socialistas were started throughout the state in 1915 and women employed in specific industries
encouraged to form unions. The Sindicato de Señoritas de las Fábricas de Cigarros, for example, was organized only four months after the General first arrived in Yucatán in March, 1915.17

Several of Alvarado's labor reforms were directed specifically at women at the lower end of the economic scale. The Governor issued a decree aimed at improving the conditions of domestic servants, mainly Maya women and children. Well aware of the deplorable situation of servants, he stated:

I believe that if we do not improve the condition of women it will not be possible to build [our] nation. Our efforts ought to be directed to emancipate and dignify her. I found in Yucatán, with sorrow, that there were thousands in the fields as well as thousands of poor women in the cities, degraded in domestic servitude in such a way that, with the risk of being paternalistic [it] was in fact real slavery.

The General attempted to correct the obvious inequities of the system by decreeing minimum wages and maximum hours for servants. Since henequeneros often obtained their servants by "adopting orphans," and then retaining them as domestics, Alvarado prohibited all adoptions of this type.18

Another series of reforms directly affecting poor women were new laws on prostitution. Alvarado attempted to halt the widespread exploitation by brothel owners and police by issuing a decree eliminating bordellos (but not prostitution), requiring prostitutes to undergo periodic
physical inspection and making it an offense for men with venereal disease to patronize them. The physical examinations were to be administered by the Sanitary Department which was unconnected with the police or any other branch of government. 19

It was through reforms in labor laws, special programs and constant encouragement that Alvarado succeeded in opening employment opportunities for women. Many were hired in government offices as cashier, secretaries and clerks. Reform of working conditions, coupled with educational opportunities, altered the traditional role women had played in Yucatán society.

The First Feminist Congress

Alvarado's boldest move during his three-year administration was to convene the First Feminist Congress in Mexico's history. In late October, 1915 the General announced in _La Voz de la Revolución_ that a women's congress would convene for three days in Mérida, beginning on January 13, 1916. Four basic themes were to be considered: freeing women from their traditional yokes, the role of primary education in their lives, participation in public life and public functions to help women achieve their rightful place in society. 20

Extensive preparations and publicity preceded the inauguration of the Congress. Throughout November and
December, Alvarado issued orders concerning the Congress. On Christmas Day Order #410, for instance, encouraged the women's organizing committee, operating in Mérida, to intensify its efforts. This order went into great detail about the obligations of Congress officials and carried several arrangement details. It was personally signed by General Alvarado. In the months before the Congress La Voz de la Revolución ran articles and advertisements about the upcoming meeting, encouraging women to attend. Organizing committees and propaganda agents also notified women in isolated, rural areas.\textsuperscript{21}

The chairperson of the central organizing committee for the First Feminist Congress was schoolteacher Consuelo Zavala Castillo. Dominga Canto P. was Vice-President. Secretaries, a treasurer, vocales and propaganda agents comprised the remainder of the committee. Two weeks before the Congress Consuelo Zavala in an interview in La Voz de Revolución revealed her optimism about the upcoming Congress. Asked about her position on women, she replied, "Oh, yes! I am a grand feminist!" She concluded by stating, "I believe that modern woman has the right to struggle."\textsuperscript{22}

After extensive preparations by the women's organizing committee, the Congress convened at 9:00 A.M. on January 13, 1916 in the Peñón Contreras Theatre in downtown Mérida. Over seven hundred delegates, mostly middle-class teachers, relieved from their classes and with their expenses paid by
the state, packed the building. While most representa-
tives were from the middle-class, they held vastly different
viewpoints on women. After the selection of officers,
differences quickly surfaced in the afternoon session over
a speech written by Hermila Galindo.23 One of Mexico's
most prominent feminists and Constitutionalists, Galindo
had been invited to participate in the Congress by the
Department of Public Education. Unable to attend, she
sent a paper to be read. In "La Mujer en el Porvenir"
(Women in the Future) Galindo adamantly defended the view
that women were the intellectual equals of men and there-
fore should be included in revolutionary ranks. The most
shocking part of her message, however, was her demand that
women have the same sexual freedom as men. Although she
attempted to soften the impact by calling for an end to the
double standard, pleading for sex education and rehabilita-
tive programs for "wayward" women, she was later forced to
defend her position in the columns of the magazine Mujer
Moderna and in a statement sent to the Second Feminist
Congress.24

Hermila Galindo's message acutely divided the
delegates. While it was agreed that her work should not
be published by the Congress, the conservative faction, led
by Isolina Pérez and Evelia Marrufo did not even want her
ideas discussed. The Pérez partisans dismissed Galindo's
message as "immoral." On the other side, Encarnación
Rosado Avila and Candelaria Ruz Patrón affirmed that Galindo had touched on key issues which they thought should be debated. From the dialogue generated by both factions, Galindo's viewpoints received a thorough airing.  

Three basic positions emerged from the First Feminist Congress. The Catholic conservatives, repulsed by Galindo's ideas, condemned her speech. This group, primarily concerned with maintaining women in their traditional roles of wife and mother, fought any proposals that would threaten the status quo. They also feared that too much education and experience would make women unattractive to the opposite sex. Francisca García Ortiz articulated this apprehension commenting that "women don't need as much education" as men. She climactically concluded her speech by declaring that "Women teachers don't marry!" and even sadder, "encyclopedic knowledge seems to be an obstacle for happiness!"  

Such arguments were totally unacceptable to women at the other end of the spectrum. The radicals shared the belief of the socialist government that females should take an aggressive role in society by voting and running for office. They considered women the equal of men in every sense. In their opinion, it was the government's duty to stop injustices and open the door to deserving and competent women.  

Several women held viewpoints midway between those maintained by the conservatives and radicals. The moderates
supported education for women, especially laical and rationalist programs. They saw education as the way of loosening the shackles that had traditionally bound women. They also argued that women should receive a practical education that would help them be better wives and mothers. While they supported women's participation in civic affairs, they moved more cautiously than the radicals on the issue of the vote. The moderate element, represented by Amparo Machín and Francisca Ascanio, argued that political rights for the present should be exercised only by men and then, after women were adequately prepared, they could exercise the same rights.  

Moderates and radicals did concur on the need to reform the old 1884 Civil Code which blatantly discriminated against women. Some of the areas needing revision were sections on guardianship, matrimony, inheritance and freedom for single women after the age of twenty-one. In addition, both factions agreed to support laical education, primary school reforms as decided by the First Pedagogical Congress, new curricula, art academies and public conferences.

The most important proposal passed by the Congress concerned suffrage. During the last session on the afternoon of January 16, a petition on suffrage, initiated and signed by over thirty of the most radical women, was submitted for consideration. It called for the state government to assume leadership in altering the national constitution.
to allow women to vote in all municipal elections. Additionally it proposed revision of the state constitution to allow women twenty-one and over to vote and run for office in state municipal elections. The petition was unanimously passed by a group of exhausted women at the close of the session.  

While Mexico's First Feminist Congress was a landmark in the women's struggle, its immediate effects were of limited success. It did not produce a women's organization nor were its two major proposals—revision of the Civil Code of 1884 and municipal suffrage—acted upon immediately. President Carranza's Law of Domestic Relations in April, 1917 corrected many of the faults of the outdated Civil Code. The municipal and state vote was granted to women in Yucatán in the early 1920s under the governorship of Felipe Carrillo Puerto but Mexican women in most other states had to wait until 1946.

Perhaps the most outstanding accomplishment of the First Congress was that it gathered women together and brought vital issues forward for the first time. It also captured the enthusiastic spirit of the times and encouraged women to continue demanding reform. General Alvarado was both pleased and troubled by the Feminist Congress. Extensive coverage of the meetings in the official newspaper, La Voz de al Revolución and a telegram he sent to President Carranza in Mexico City on January 15, after the Congress
had met for two days, indicated the deep satisfaction he felt. With obvious pride Alvarado reported to the President:

The audience discussed in a vehement manner the most adequate ways for making women less religiously fanatic and improving their social conditions. Vibrant speeches were given with grand enthusiasm. Permit me to express to you that this is a new triumph for the revolution. A year ago, when I arrived, there were few women seen alone in public.30

General Alvarado, however, had hoped for a clear mandate from the delegates. Attempting to win support for his programs and to clarify issues further, he announced that a Second Congress would convene in Mérida in November.31

The Second Feminist Congress

Held eleven months after the First, the Second Feminist Congress was less than half the size but involved many of the same faces. These were mostly middle-class schoolteachers from the state of Yucatán.32 The tone of the second meeting was more pragmatic and circumscribed than the first. This may have been due to the extended length of the November Congress (November 12 to December 2) and the large support the moderate faction received. The discussion topics paralleled those for the First Congress. They included primary school education, marriage, rights of divorced parents and their offspring and women's suffrage and office-holding. As in the first meeting, several heated
debates and protests occurred, especially over the roles women should assume in society.

The Congress opened appropriately in the Escuela Vocacional de Artes Domésticas in Mérida at 4:00 P.M. on November 23, 1916. As in the previous meeting, the first session was devoted to electing nine members to the Mesa Directiva. President of the organizing committee for the Second Congress and presiding official was Porfiria Avila de Rosado, an active participant in the First Congress. Matilde Acevedo de Paullada, who had served as Vice-President for the First Congress, was elected President. The rest of the session was taken up with electing the other members of the Mesa Directiva. 33

Two strongly feminist speeches were delivered at the meeting on the first day by Mercedes Betancourt de Albertos and Candelaria Ruz Patrón. Both speakers emphasized that women must have equality under the law. Mercedes Betancourt pointed to the contradiction between the ideals of equality, stressed by the leaders of the Mexican Revolution and the exclusion of women from the benefits of that Revolution, noting that "nothing would be served by so much sacrifice [on the part of women]" if men do not comply with the promises of the Revolution. As a reminder to Mexican revolutionaries she quoted writer and feminist Emilia Pardo Bazán, "For women to advance, it would be necessary, in the first place that she want to and second, that she
find some ground prepared, [and] some help from man too."
For the women of Yucatán, this statement was optimistically
close to their reality. It was obvious that many women
wanted changes and that Salvador Alvarado was willing to
cooperate. Both speakers ended by proclaiming that, under
the circumstances, emancipation was accessible if the
women present would put all their souls into it. Mercedes
Betancourt concluded dramatically by exclaiming, "Let us
unite into an heroic phalanx and struggle until we win the
inalienable rights of our sex!" 34

After this auspicious beginning, the Congress
bogged down in disagreements and bickering. The delegates
did agree to support apprenticeship programs and practical
training at the elementary level for women. However, dis-
cussions over laws applying to marriage, suffrage and
office-holding brought a sharp divergence of opinions. As
in the First Congress, the issue of the vote divided dele-
gates. The suffrage committee reported that "what is
important in suffrage is not that women have the obligation
to vote but the right to do it because that signifies the
fruition of liberty." The committee further stated that
women were sufficiently intelligent and interested in
participating in community activities, especially at the
municipal level which they considered closer to administra-
tion than politics. While the committee acknowledged that
women should proceed cautiously, it emphasized that "what
is important, is to have the right [to vote]." The committee's concluding recommendation was that literate women over twenty-one be allowed to vote in municipal elections but not run for office.

Several objections to the committee's recommendations were voiced. Lucrecia Vadillo, who served on the committee argued that women's mission should be one of "sweetness and peace." Women in the future should vote, she conceded, but not at present because they are unprepared. Besides, suffrage "is the element that will destroy conjugal peace, wives' happiness, and family life." Vadilla concluded by advising that women neither vote nor run for municipal office.35

After committee members completed their presentations, the suffrage question was opened to the floor for debate. Encarnación Rosado de Montalvo, Mercedes Betancourt and Josefa Osorno spoke in favor of the committee's recommendations. María Aguilar, Consuelo Andrade and Evelía Marrufo, who had led the conservative faction in the First Congress, were opposed. To outspoken Evelía Marrufo women's participation in civic affairs presented a direct threat to home life. Betancourt countered sharply that voting hardly meant abandoning the home.36 The debate was so lengthy and bitter that it carried over into Monday's business with Betancourt and Marrufo continuing their sparring. Betancourt, in exasperation, finally reminded her audience that
this was a Feminist Congress and that women were only asking for the right to vote. No one, she continued, would be obligated to vote if she preferred not to exercise that right. At the end of the discussion, the delegates approved woman suffrage (147-87) on the municipal level, but rejected the right of women to seek office in municipal elections (60-30). 37

Another intense debate occurred during the Wednesday afternoon session, which La Voz de la Revolución called the most exciting of the Congress. The topic was how women could best be freed from the yoke of traditions and converted into agents to diffuse scientific knowledge and principles of liberty. The committee in charge stressed freedom of choice, the merits of secular education and the benefits to be derived from science. Since most delegates were dissatisfied with the committee's work, which they considered too lofty and abstract, a completely new committee was selected to deal with women's freedom. Their more practical focus on elementary education and participation in civic affairs was approved just before the session closed. 38

Like the First Congress, the Fall meeting was filled with protests and petitions which were reported in La Voz de la Revolución. There were objections to the way the President ran sessions but an attempt by radical elements to censure her failed. Protests over the selection of discussion topics and their place on the agenda also occurred.
One of Mexico's leading feminists, Artemisa N. Sáenz Royo, representing Oaxaca and Chiapas, lodged a strong protest. She accused some delegates of purposefully delaying discussions and refused to attend any more meetings. This complaint brought Artemisa and chairperson Porfiria Avila to loggerheads.39

The gaiety of the late afternoon closing session, however, was a sharp contrast to the acrimonious debate of previous days. Salvador Alvarado was present at the ceremonies, along with many other dignitaries. There was a poetry reading, speeches and much praise for the delegates and their accomplishments.40

The accomplishments of the First Congress were more substantial than those of the Second. Delegates passed both the vote and the right to run for municipal office. While these two issues were hotly debated at the Second Congress, the moderate and conservative factions allowed only suffrage to pass. Moreover, the Second Congress did not have to contend with Galindo's radical feminist ideas because her speech went undelivered. It was, however, printed and distributed in Mérida. This pamphlet was a defense and reaffirmation of the ideas she presented in January. She began by clarifying that her work was a serious study undertaken sincerely. Ironically, she explained, the most scandalous paragraphs had been copied literally from the works of famous sociologists. To condemn their
words was to understand or analyze them inadequately. Galindo then proceeded to the heart of her message. She emphatically stated that a major responsibility of women's meetings should be to correct society's injustices and the treatment given "fallen women." To the question of how women could be freed from traditional bondage, she provided two suggestions. First, women must be given the necessary weapons to struggle with life and second, a way must be found to redeem the fallen. The other area she focused on was suffrage. Galindo explained that "Women need the vote for the same reasons that men do . . . to defend their interests, especially the interests of their children, the interests of the home and of humanity." The interests of women "cannot be separated" from those of men. Most importantly, women must vote for "moral reasons." Only in this way can they struggle against alcoholism, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, pornography and the demoralization of children.  

While neither the First nor Second Feminist Congress reached the accord that Alvarado had hoped, they provided a forum in which Mexican women could discuss their goals and aspirations. The meetings revealed the deep divisions between the radical feminists who sought equality on all levels but moved cautiously because they were only proposing municipal suffrage, and the conservative faction which strove to improve women's roles only as they related
to wife and mother. Such divisions and political intrigue would plague the women's movement until 1953 when suffrage was finally granted on the national level. The Congresses, however, must be viewed in the context of the times. They held the women's issue before the public and represented an enormous step forward for the women's movement in Mexico.

The controversy over the place of women in society did not end with the publication of Hermila Galindo's pamphlet or with the close of the Second Feminist Congress. La Voz de la Revolución continued to carry articles, editorials and news items on women and their activities. An editorial on March 29, 1917 signed "Demófilo" reaffirmed that "... the rights of women, in our days, constitute one of the most important problems of nations" and "they [these rights] are going to be resolved everywhere" in a positive way. A month later another editorial signed by the same author clearly connected the issue of women's emancipation with the goals of the Revolution, concluding on the favorable note, "The future belongs to women!" Many theses and pamphlets printed in the state capital also dealt with women.

Socialist J. D. Ramírez Garrido kept the question alive with the publication of his staunchly feminist tract Al Margen del Feminismo in 1918. Tracing the historical roots of the women's movement, he praised the efforts of Governor Alvarado and encouraged women to remain active on all levels of society.
Future reforms were threatened by the passage of a bill at the Constitutional Convention meeting in Querétaro in December, 1916. The bill disqualified Salvador Alvarado from running for governor in Yucatán because he was neither born nor had resided there for five years. 46 Without his leadership, plus a renewed outbreak of violence over the presidential succession in 1920 and an economic squeeze caused by falling henequen prices, social reforms slowed in the Yucatán. Under these circumstances, few gains were possible. The women's movement smoldered until it received the support of socialist Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto and his sister Elvia in the early 1920s. General Salvador Alvarado and the women of the First and Second Congresses had prepared the groundwork.

Part II

Women and Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto, 1922-1924

The reform programs initiated by General Salvador Alvarado were continued under Socialist Felipe Carrillo Puerto while he was President of the Socialist Party in Yucatán and during his governorship from February, 1922 to January, 1924. The General's plans for incorporating women into the social structure were deepened and extended. Under Carrillo women were granted suffrage and the chance to run for office, access to birth control information and the
opportunity to enroll in educational institutions. Women of all classes were organized into Ligas Socialistas.

Felipe Carrillo Puerto is an elusive figure to assess because of the varied reactions he evoked from contemporary observers. He engendered as much criticism as praise. And yet many of his followers considered him a god. Ernest Gruening likened Carrillo to Moses and described him as "a god among his countrymen," "a cosmic figure" whose "leadership was almost unknown in this day and belonging to a rather legendary age."47 At the same time, A. G. B. Hart, an American reporter, compared Carrillo to Moses and related that he was a god for his Indian followers.48

Born in Motul, a hamlet north of the state capital, on November 8, 1874, Carrillo was of the middle class. His father had been a civic leader with a distinguished military career. His mother was a housewife who raised fourteen children.49 Felipe had worked as a butcher, railroad conductor, founder of El Heraldo de Motul (1906), a teamster and a reporter for La Revista de Mérida. When he had his own business hauling machinery and supplies from the railroad to the haciendas, he was exposed firsthand to the horrible conditions of the Mayas. Hacendados owned their Indian slaves body and soul and their women as well. Felipe, who claimed to be of Maya descent, began to inform the Indians of their rights.50 He explained:

I stand first, last and always for Socialism. My ideas are above all Socialistic. My ideals
are centered in the welfare of the Indian who is my blood brother ... I shall continue to put into that side of the balance the weight of my influence till I die.51

He translated the federal Constitution into Maya and became known for his defense of Mayas. For these activities he was imprisoned in Yucatán five different times. At one point there had even been a price on his head.52

During the violent phase of the Revolution, Carrillo, due to his association with Huerta supporters, was forced to flee Yucatán when the Constitutionalisats gained power there. In November, 1914 he traveled to Mexico City. He joined the Zapatistas and was commissioned a colonel of cavalry in November, 1914.53 He returned to Yucatán in 1915 after a short stay in New Orleans.

The relationship between Carrillo and General Alvarado began in Motul soon after the General arrived in Yucatán. Impressed by Carrillo after only a brief meeting, Alvarado appointed him head of the local agrarian committee.54 After that Carrillo worked with the Ligas de Resistencia which, during Alvarado's governorship, he built into a personal power base. In 1917 he was Alvarado's frequent companion on trips throughout the state. In 1918 Carrillo assumed the presidency of the Partido Socialista de Yucatán. The Ligas de Resistencia formed the backbone of this powerful organization. Through reorganization and a massive membership drive Carrillo provided them with broader jurisdictional authority.55
In 1918 Carrillo convened a workers' conference in Motul and established Tierra, the official League publication. The Congress which met in March discussed the organization of the Leagues, social welfare and economic problems. League membership was open to women, who were to pay half-dues and to be allowed to vote in League elections and to run for office after holding membership for one year.  

When the hacendados launched an all-out attack against the Leagues in 1918, Carrillo barely escaped with his life. Continual fighting, plus declining henequen prices resulted in a period of stagnation for social programs. The victory of General Obregón stemmed the violence. With support from Obregón and Manuel Berzunza, who was appointed governor in February, 1921, Carrillo and the Partido Socialista del Sureste (PSS) emerged stronger than ever.  

When Carrillo campaigned for governor in 1921, he called a series of meetings to marshall support. A most important one was the Workers' Congress that met at Izamal in mid-August, 1921. Here it was decided that Carrillo would serve as both President of the Liga Central, which coordinated all League activity, and the PSS. The delegates pledged their support for rational education, the organization of feminist leagues and the expansion of the Partido to include the entire southeastern part of Mexico.
For reasons that remain vague the relationship between Alvarado and Carrillo cooled. Alvarado, under heavy criticism from the PSS, left Yucatán, refusing to support Carrillo in his bid for governor. In early September the former governor returned to Yucatán to try to prevent Carrillo's election. The PSS moved to counteract Alvarado by constant harassment. Realizing that the PSS was completely entrenched, the General left Yucatán for good at the end of September. 59

With minimal interference from hacendados and opposition parties, Carrillo was elected governor of Yucatán on November 6, 1921 by a wide margin. The entire Socialist ticket of fifteen representatives triumphed with him. 60 He immediately set about to eliminate all other political parties and clear the way for his numerous and extensive reform programs. Major changes occurred in all levels of education, labor and women's roles. In addition, Carrillo extended state control over the henequen industry, increased progressive taxes, redistributed land and constructed new roads.

The Leagues were the heart of the Governor's reform program. They were grouped administratively under the direction of the Liga Central in Mérida and held meetings weekly. The Liga Central met regularly on Monday evenings (known as Red Mondays). Purposely constructed to usurp functions formerly performed by the Catholic Church, they
operated night schools, led discussion groups on economic and social problems and sponsored athletic contests. In short, they quickly became the social, economic and political center of the community. In accordance with Carrillo's desire to instill good citizenship and encourage participation, each League maintained its own baseball team and band.⁶¹

In addition to the Leagues, Carrillo relied on another important source of support--the media. Tierra and El Popular, a daily directed by Socialist Miguel Cantón, kept issues before the public. Consistently wide coverage was given to women's activities both on a local and an international scale. Issues such as birth control, education and the new divorce law were thoroughly explained and discussed.⁶² Further, Tierra and El Popular carried articles by local leaders Susana Betancourt, the Governor's younger sister Elvia Carrillo Puerto and Nelly Aznar, as well as pieces by Socialist Esperanza Velázquez Bringas and Communist María del Refugio García. Alma Reed, a North American writer and the Governor's fiancée, graced the September 30, 1923 cover of Tierra.⁶³

Education

Education, the great equalizer, was the cornerstone of Carrillo's reform program. While there were no special provisions for women, they were included in all his
plans. The Governor considered education so important that the first decree he issued on February 6, 1922 was "The Instruction Law of Rational Education." Under this law, Carrillo hoped to make all Yucatecans literate. Each League appointed a three-person commission to take a literacy census. Those who could read and write were then to instruct the illiterates. Students passing the reading and writing examination were exempted from paying Club dues for one year. Anyone not participating was deemed a "bad Socialist." After a League acquired one hundred literate members it was entitled to be designated "Liga de Previsión y Resistencia."^{64}

Carrillo was determined to keep his pledge of not resting until he had "eradicated ignorance, superstition and priestcraft" and "driven them disgraced from my country."^{65} He began immediately to increase the numbers and types of schools or as he put it to "take the schools to the children and not drag the child to the schools." The state and federal government jointly supported two hundred nine elementary schools, two secondary institutions, twenty-eight night schools and one hundred eighty rural schools. An agrarian school, La Casa del Niño for abandoned and orphaned children and the University of the Southwest, the present-day University of Yucatán, were established.^{66}

Besides increasing the number of schools and extending literacy, the Leagues functioned as learning centers.
Teachers, mostly women, were organized into the Liga de Maestros Racionalistas which sponsored conferences to promote the co-educational, rationalist system of education. Teachers themselves received indoctrination in the rational approach by a special month-long training program in the history of labor, Marxism, the socialization process and the study of the land and labor reforms of the 1917 Constitution. Carrillo's long-range goal was to shift emphasis from individualism to a collective consciousness.

Labor

To improve the lot of the working man and woman, Carrillo held several congresses and added new labor provisions, building his major program, however, on the advanced laws passed in 1918 by the 25th Congress of Yucatán. These laws specifically defined the obligations of employers and workers, organizations, debt, hours, salary (fixed by local Ligas under the Liga Central), required a certain percentage of Mexican workers, health and hygiene, accidents and arbitration. Section Nine of the Labor Code dealt with employment of women and children. When a woman became a mother she was allotted two months prior to confinement and two months immediately following for rest at home on full pay. After returning to work she was allowed two periods of one hour each free from work, in which to nurse her child.
Like General Alvarado, Carrillo felt compelled to deal in some way with the large number of prostitutes in Yucatán. Lamenting the situation the Governor stated that, "We cannot abolish it [prostitution] by decree. I believe it wholly unnecessary and that in time with the economic emancipation of women it can be wiped out." More immediately he tried to open other work opportunities to women and to enforce compulsory medical inspection and prophylaxis of men as well as of women who remained in the profession.⁷⁰

In the many labor congresses sponsored by the PSS, Carrillo made efforts to include women. At the Motul meeting in 1918, however, it appears that fiery Elena Torres, representing Mérida and the Liga Central de Resistencia, was the only woman who participated. Nevertheless she was vocal and spoke strongly in favor of the rationalist system of education and against the Catholic Church and the strength it continued to wield.⁷¹

At the Second Workers' Congress held at Izamal in 1921 Elvia Carrillo Puerto, Rosa Torre C. González and a few other women attended. Elvia and Rosa demanded that women be allowed to attend congresses to speak and vote "to defend their rights." Although they conceded that the majority of school teachers in the state were still under the influence of religion, they felt confident that the situation would improve by the time of the next congress.
They suggested that those Feminist Leagues free from religion and social prejudice should be admitted to the meetings. Miguel Cantón, serving on the director's board for the Congress, agreed. He urged that the Leagues work closely with the Feminist Leagues if both were to accomplish their goals. In the end, the board agreed to admit the Feminist Leagues as soon as they shed their religious and social prejudices.72

Ligas Feministas

Building on the programs begun by General Alvarado, Governor Carrillo attempted to include women in all spheres of his government. The Ligas Feministas, under the direction of Elvia, were central to these activities. The basic purpose of the Leagues was to raise women's consciousnesses to enable them to participate fully in community life. The Ligas Feministas launched campaigns against illiteracy and superstition, alcoholism and improper hygiene and child care practices. The Governor, reflecting the revolutionary's traditional distrust of women, explained:

I shall foment all Feminist Leagues with the object at no distant date of granting identically the same rights to women as to men, but only to organized women with ideals parallel to those of the Southeast Socialist Party.73

Under the governorship of Carrillo Puerto women were granted suffrage and allowed to run for municipal and state offices. In the 1923 election, in which only PSS
members ran, Elvia Carrillo, Raquel Dzib, a local school-teacher, and Beatrice Peniche de Ponce, a teacher and librarian, won seats in the state assembly. These women were the state's first female legislators. Socialist Rosa Torre was the first woman to occupy a position by popular election and to win a seat on Mérida's municipal council.

An important function of the Ligas Feministas was to explain past inequalities and encourage women to participate on a broader scale. Governor Carrillo, aware of the pitiful condition under which women and children existed, sought to alleviate those situations. His program for illegitimate children, for example, gave the "natural born" child its father's name and the right to "share equally in all rights and privileges with the so-called legitimate children." It was the League's responsibility to explain these provisions to women making certain that they understood their rights.

Another prime activity of the Feminist Leagues was to sponsor women's conferences and meetings. Topics discussed included birth control, the Catholic Church, organizational matters, conferences, women's emancipation and the vote. At the large October conference held in 1922, three Feminist League members were elected to represent the Leagues at the Liga Central. They were Elvia Carrillo, Rosa Torre and Eusebia Pérez Vda. de MacKiney.
The center of feminist activity in Yucatán was the Liga Rita Cetina Gutiérrez in Mérida of which Elvia Carrillo was president. Begun on January 19, 1919, and named after the state's leading poet and teacher, it was a widely supported club with numerous activities. It endorsed candidates on both local and national levels, even though women could not vote in national elections.77 Besides making frequent trips to the countryside to attend meetings and to generate interest in new feminist leagues, the club actively supported education.78 In early February, 1922, for instance, it inaugurated a school. The Rita Cetina Gutiérrez League also participated in the Governor's reading program. As President, Elvia offered a prize of fifty pesos for any woman who would teach a group of twenty or more to read and write in three months.79

In addition to endorsing candidates, sponsoring conferences and supporting educational endeavors, the Liga Rita Cetina Gutiérrez published a monthly magazine, Feminismo: Organo de la Liga Feminista "Rita Cetina Gutiérrez." Elvia Carrillo served as the magazine's director. Feminismo, which had a strong feminist-socialist tone, carried a variety of poetry, notices of future meetings and articles by both Mexican and foreign women. In addition, there were photographs of some of the League's most prominent women, including Elvia Carrillo and Rosa Torre. Alma Reed's picture also appeared in Feminismo.80
The Divorce Law

The new divorce law, making divorce quick, inexpensive and permissible by mutual consent, was part of the restructuring of roles the Socialist government hoped to make acceptable to Yucatecos. The law found its basis in Carrillo's belief that "marriage is a voluntary union based on love entered into for the purpose of founding a home" and therefore is "to be dissolved when either contracting party desires it." Instead of enslaving women, Carrillo felt marriage should be "a union of equals based on mutual love and respect, not on possession."81

Whatever Carrillo's stated reasons for instituting the divorce law, he was accused of promoting divorce to free himself in order to marry Alma Reed. The rumors seem to be unfounded since the blueprints for the divorce law were drawn before he made any plans to remarry.82 Felipe Carrillo Puerto had married María Isabel Palma Puerto, of Motul, in February, 1898. It is interesting to note that this was the second marriage between the Palma Puerto and the Carrillo Puerto families. Enriqueta, the oldest Carrillo child, had married Pedro Palma, Isabel's brother.83 While the marriage between Felipe and Isabel was not perfect, it was satisfactory and four children resulted from the union. Due to a vast difference of interests, through the years Felipe and his wife grew apart.84 As was common in Yucatán at the time, Felipe acquired a mistress.85
However, he was separated from his wife, who had been living in Cuba for the past three years, when he met Alma Reed in February, 1923. Reed was a twenty-seven-year-old New York Times reporter from San Francisco, traveling with a group of American archeologists and writing on Maya ruins. Even though Felipe did not divorce his wife until November, the plans for Yucatán's divorce law were made prior to this. While she may have approved, Alma Reed was not responsible for the passage of the law. 86

The new divorce law, which permitted foreigners to obtain a divorce after thirty days' residence, caused a scandal. 87 O. Gaylord Marsh, American Consul, considered the law immoral and recommended that the United States denounce it. He believed it was an effort by Mexican Socialists with connections in Russia to demoralize American civilization. Yucatán, in his opinion, was merely serving as a base for Bolshevik operations in the western hemisphere. 88 Although few Yucatecans took advantage of the law, as late as December, 1924 there were complaints about the number of United States citizens using it. After the law was amended so that foreigners had to reside at least six months within the state before getting a divorce, complaints subsided. 89

Birth Control

Yucatán's state-supported birth control program was unique for its time. While women in the United States
and other "industrialized" countries were being jailed for publicly discussing the subject, in Yucatán they received the government's blessing. Carrillo explained his reasons for supporting the program when he stated, "Parents are the ones to determine when and how many children they shall have, not ignorant blind chance." Yucatán's birth control program was run by the Liga Central with the aid of the Ligas Feministas. The program also received assistance from the American Birth Control League. Mrs. Anne Kennedy and Mrs. George H. Rublee visited Yucatán to help set up the first government-supported birth control clinics in the western hemisphere in August, 1923. Another phase of the project was the distribution of birth control pamphlets which were dispensed by the registro civil to those being married.

The pamphlet most commonly distributed was a short translation of Margaret Sanger's Family Limitation entitled La Regulación de la Natalidad. The introduction cited Margaret Sanger as "one of the most important women of the epoch." The text provided the reader with a very detailed and specific accounting of how to prevent conception. The last section contained one hundred nine signatures of those Yucatecans supporting the birth control program. In addition, the pamphlet confronted several stereotypes. The idea that large families were happy, for example, was questioned by pointing out that children were often forced into
domestic service. The overall idea emerging from the leaflet was very modern-sounding--women must be the owners of their bodies.

Another widely disseminated pamphlet was written by Esperanza Velázquez Bringas in 1922. In it, she defended Margaret Sanger's work and discussed birth control clinics in Holland and New Zealand. Supporting the concept of limiting family size, she stated that birth control would "liberate women and benefit all humanity." In an article in El Popular, Esperanza asked her readers if it were not "more immoral to allow children in a working family to grow up, with inadequate nourishment, sick, and [as] poor citizens," than to limit family size.

The birth control program caused an even greater scandal than the divorce law in Yucatán. Yucatecans were horrified over Sanger's graphic descriptions and worried that children might be exposed to the ideas. The controversy was carried daily in the local newspapers. In March, 1922 the staff of El Popular launched a counter-attack on critics of the birth control program. On March 20, the signatures of more than two hundred teachers appeared in an expression of their support for the program.

The controversy over the distribution of birth control information reached a climax when the Knights of Columbus and their wives demonstrated against the dissemination of the pamphlets. The demonstration ended in a scuffle between Catholics and Socialists and left some
Catholics injured. Nevertheless, with the Governor's support, the Feminist Leagues continued to distribute information. The controversy flared again when Rosa Torre passed out pamphlets to representatives of the press during the Mexican Press Association Convention in Mérida at the end of 1923.97

Elvia Carrillo Puerto

Elvia, the sixth daughter born to the Carrillo Puerto family, collaborated with her brother Felipe during his governorship by heading all women's activities in the state. Strikingly good-looking, with a vivacious personality, she worked with the Feminist Leagues, was elected to the state legislature and represented Yucatán and Mexico in feminist congresses. After the Governor's death in 1924, Elvia continued her activities in San Luis Potosí and Mexico City.

Elvia's adolescence, which may shock us today, was unremarkable for rural Mexico in the early twentieth century. She married Vicente Pérez Mendiburo in 1909 at the age of thirteen, had two children (one died shortly after birth), and was widowed by the time she was twenty-one. Her second marriage to Francisco Barroso, whom both her brother and sister called a "brute" and "ignorant," was short-lived. She supported herself by working as a rural schoolteacher in Santa Cruz and Dzununcán.98
While Elvia exhibited an interest in women as early as 1912, founding the first feminist organization for campesinas and in 1919 initiating the Liga Rita Cetina Gutiérrez, her most active period occurred during her brother's governorship. She recalled that Felipe once comforted her with the words, "Don't be afraid, sister. You help me. You work with the women, and I with the men." In 1922 she was Mexican representative to the Pan American Congress for Women in Baltimore and the following year she represented Yucatán at the Feminist Congress in Mexico City. She was elected, with two other women, as a state representative for the 5th District in Yucatán the same year.

In an interview with El Popular in the summer of 1922, Elvia explained her objective: "I want all my sisters to enjoy the same freedoms as men but in a dignified and honorable way." Calling her the "soul and life" of the feminist movement, the article praised her success in aligning the Yucatán feminist movement with that in the nation's capital. She made frequent trips to the capital to strengthen these connections, as well as bring feminists to Yucatán for visits.

Carrillo's closest contacts in Mexico City were with Socialists Esperanza Velázquez Bringas and Elena Torres. Velázquez was a writer for El Heraldo de México and the magazine Zig Zag; Torres, who had moved from
Yucatán to Mexico City, was a writer and expert in rural education. Both women visited the Yucatán in 1922. Velázquez arrived in late January for a three-month stay and worked with Elvia, the Leagues and educators. During her visit she wrote for Tierra and El Popular. After attending the large Liga de Maestros Racionalistas conference in Campeche, she returned to Mexico City in April. Elena Torres visited Yucatán in early July. With Elvia, she observed state projects and attended numerous League functions. In an interview with El Popular she noted that of all the states in Mexico, Yucatán was the most advanced. "The women," she affirmed, "are not only better prepared to interpret the idea of suffrage in its true sense, but they are already organized in leagues and parties."

Elvia Carrillo Puerto and her collaborators, however, did not have the support of all Yucatán's women. La Lucha, an anti-Socialist newspaper, kept up a constant barrage of criticism. At one point, it called Elvia's efforts on behalf of women "ridiculous." To combat the Feminist Leagues, Catholic women formed the Asociación Yucateca Protectora de la Mujer. They attempted to disassociate themselves completely from the League's work and ideology. Like the League, they planned a women's school stressing domestic arts and an orphanage.

The Asociación used La Lucha to express its viewpoint. In an argument frequently heard at the time,
members of the Asociación called feminism "the hysterical product of spinsters" who have not succeeded "in captivating some man's heart." The denounced both feminism and socialism as a "disgrace"; free love and birth control were condemned outright. Pilar de Fontanar articulated the Asociación's views in a column in La Lucha called "The Lies of Feminism." She called feminism and its supporters "crude" and anti-male.

These criticisms did not deter Elvia Carrillo Puerto. Even after her brother's assassination in January, 1924 she continued to expand her field of activity. She established legal residence in the state of San Luis Potosí and prepared to contest the election for diputada in 1925. Carrillo could run for office in San Luis Potosí because Governor Rafael Nieto had allowed literate women to vote in the municipal elections in 1924 and in the state elections in 1925.105

In his reports from San Luis Potosí at this time, the United States Consul compared the state of feminism to that in the United States immediately after the Civil War. He described the area as having only a faint feminist movement because of the dominating influence of the Church. However, he did note that the traditional role of women was in transition. More women were working and the Instituto Científico y Literario, part of the University of San Luis Potosí, had begun to admit women, although they formed less than 5 per cent of the total.106
In her bid, Carrillo sought support at both the state and the national level. From the Minister of the Interior, Adalberto Tejada, she received assurances that since the Constitution of 1917 did not specifically bar women from voting or running for office, her action was legal. She also received backing from Governor Aurelio Manrique, who had succeeded Rafael Nieto, and from General Saturnino Cedillo, jefe de operaciones of San Luis Potosí. \(^{107}\)

Elvia felt it essential to have a woman as her suplente (substitute), even though local politicians urged her to have a man, because they thought it would be impossible to find another woman who was not "reactionary and Catholic." Elvia reminded them, "What about your mothers, your wives, your sisters, and your daughters? Fine Liberals you must be, if in not a single one of your families you have been able to convert your women folk to your point of view." \(^{108}\) Finally, after searching house to house for a woman willing to run with her, Elvia chose Hermila Zamarrón, a stenographer employed in a local internal revenue office.

Her ticket established, Elvia faced yet another challenge. Prior to the period before the July, 1925 elections, her candidacy had been unopposed. During this time, however, the governorship of the state changed hands and Abel Cano assumed power. Unlike his predecessor, Cano did not support women's rights. In the last days of the
campaign he endorsed an opposition candidate, Florencio Galván. Apparently the thought of a woman, especially a Socialist, running for office was too much for the Governor to accept. Attempting to end the controversy, Cesareo Vásquez (Galván's suplente) fired eight shots at Elvia. Fortunately, all missed their intended target.

In spite of the opposition's attempts to assassinate her, Carrillo won heavily in San Luis Potosí. After having her credentials approved by local authorities, she traveled to Mexico City for her election certification by the Preparatory Junta of the new Cámara de Diputados. Under this system and in accordance with Article 60 of the 1917 Constitution, the Preparatory Junta, selected by the permanent committee of each chamber, met in August to verify election returns from the previous July. Diputados whose credentials were in order were then recommended for seating when the regular session began in September. Despite her overwhelming victory, and the approval of her election by state authorities in San Luis Potosí, Carrillo was unable to secure verification of her credentials. She was denied her seat for the 1925 session. Without legal recourse, Elvia had to drop the matter formally. She did send a long letter to the Cámara de Diputados the following Year. It bore the signatures of thousands of women demanding that the Constitution be altered to include women's suffrage.

Elvía continued her activities in Mexico City. In 1927 she founded the Liga Orientadora Socialista Femenina,
composed of employees from the Department of Agriculture. In 1932 she helped create the Liga Orientadora de Acción Femenina. The same year she traveled to Europe on business for President Abelardo Rodríguez. One of her last positions was President of the Liga Orientada de Mujer. After 1938 she retired from public life.\textsuperscript{112}

During her last years, Elvia suffered poor health and poverty. Due to these circumstances, she granted few interviews.\textsuperscript{113} In 1952 Elvia agreed to a rare interview with the jefe de información of Atisbos. Reflecting on her life, she commented, "My life is wrapped in mist and adorned with ironies." After briefly outlining her activities, she proudly acknowledged that she had been recognized by the Mexican government on two occasions. One was to receive an award presented by President Cárdenas in 1939 and the other was to accept the prestigious Legion of Honor presented by President Ruiz Cortines in 1952.\textsuperscript{114} These were the only acknowledgments given her by the Mexican government. Elvia Carrillo Puerto died destitute and largely forgotten on April 18, 1965 in Mexico City.

Collaborators of Elvia Carrillo Puerto

In Yucatán, feminist programs sponsored by the Ligas Feministas were endorsed by many members of the PSS and the Carrillo government. Most significantly, these programs were supported by women who joined Elvia Carrillo Puerto to make equal rights more than a high-sounding phrase.
From different classes, all were Socialists to some degree. Among Elvia's many Yucatán collaborators were Eusabia Pérez Vda. de M., Aurora Abán Puga, Nelly Aznar Gutiérrez, Susana Betancourt, Raquel Dzib Cicero, Rosa Torre and Beatrice Peniche. Besides accompanying Elvia on field trips and speaking engagements, each held posts in feminist organizations. Eusabia Pérez served as chairperson *pro tempore* for the Liga Rita Cetina Gutiérrez in Elvia's absence and was one of three representatives to the Liga Central; Aurora Abán held the important post of President of the Liga Feminista; Nelly Aznar directed the magazine *Rebeldía*, which defended women for the Liga Central; and Susana Betancourt, active since Alvarado's governorship, was treasurer for the Liga Rita Cetina Gutiérrez.115

Elvia's closest collaborators were Raquel Dzib, Rosa Torre and Beatrice Peniche. Dzib, a schoolteacher, served with Elvia and Beatrice in the 28th Legislature where she staunchly supported women and poor people. Born in 1882 into a working-class family, she had been a student of Rita Cetina Gutiérrez at the Instituto Literario de Niñas. Dzib later taught at the Instituto and other schools in Mérida. She participated in both the Pedagogical and Feminist Congresses held when General Alvarado was governor. Dzib died in March, 1949 after fifty years of championing popular education.116
The relationship between Elvia and Rosa Torre was especially close. Constant companions, they participated together in Worker and Feminist Congresses. Torre, a graduate of the Escuela Normal de Mérida, schoolteacher and outspoken Socialist, related her experiences in her short autobiography, *Mi Actuación*. In a 1954 interview with *Excélsior*, when asked why she participated in the Revolution, she replied that "the campesino's slavery in Yucatán always made an impression upon me." After Madero's assassination she joined the Constitutionalists. Very simply she summed up, "My object has been to always be useful." She was the first woman on Mérida's city council and served on socialist and feminist committees.117

Beatrice Peniche is the only woman from this group still living. In an interview in her home in Mérida, she reaffirmed her commitment to socialism and feminism. Her participation in feminism began early in her youth when Raquel Dzib was her teacher. Peniche, now retired, was a schoolteacher and librarian and is still a poet. Like Betancourt and Dzib she was active in both Pedagogical and Feminist Congresses when Salvador Alvarado was governor. She continued her activities under Governor Carrillo as a state representative and by serving on many feminist committees. A spry eighty-one, she still displays a great interest and enthusiasm for everything.118
The End of Reforms

Politics shifted Yucatán's destiny to shoulders other than Felipe Carrillo Puerto's. On December 3, 1923 when General Guadalupe Sánchez in Veracruz sided with Adolfo de la Huerta against President Obregón's "imposition" of Plutarco Calles, Carrillo pledged to fight the rebels. The Leagues were armed and trained but federal troops in Mérida revolted and Carrillo was forced to flee. His path led from his home town of Motul to the east coast. Once on the coast, Carrillo and twelve companions boarded a small vessel which was forced back. While waiting to locate another boat, Carrillo was captured by the rebels and jailed in Mérida on December 23, 1923. Tried for thirty-six continuous hours on January 2, 1924 for alleged crimes committed by his PSS supporters, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, three of his brothers and nine others were found guilty and condemned to death. In the early morning hours of January 3, 1924 they were driven to a Mérida cemetery and executed by a firing squad.¹¹⁹

Carrillo's death saddened many and marked an end to Yucatán's leadership in the women's rights movement. Ernest Gruening wrote, "Thus perished the most enlightened, the most courageous, the most lovable man in Mexico. Her tragic history of blood and tears has offered no nobler, no sweeter figure as a sacrifice to human freedom."¹²⁰
The next period in Yucatán's history was one of confusion. The rebellious forces of de la Huerta attempted to destroy Carrillo's government, the PSS and the Leagues, which were declared illegal. When Obregón's supporters gained control of the government, the Socialists tried to continue with fewer leaders. Great turmoil reigned when Obregón sent his own representatives into Yucatán where the local legislature had already chosen Miguel Cantón as governor. The new legislature selected a replacement for Cantón. In a move to maintain his power, Cantón, who had been a supporter of feminist programs, declared the legislature illegal because it contained women, who were denied the right to vote and hold office by the Constitution.  

Steps were taken immediately to reduce the power of the Leagues. Members of women's leagues were dismissed from public posts and Elvia, now with a price of 10,000 pesos on her head, complained that all that remained of the Liga Central was its name. In a letter to President Obregón, Elvia reported that women in municipal and state government had been removed or forced out of their positions, and members of the Carrillo family hounded out of their government posts. Socialism in Yucatán was buried with her brothers, she maintained, for socialism today "is little more than a deceitful and coarse farce."  

Assessing the depth of Felipe Carrillo Puerto's influence is difficult because his projects were abruptly
halted by his assassination and the transfer of power to more conservative hands. Most of his programs were instituted from the administrative, rather than grass roots, level. He faced constant opposition from the Catholic Church, the hacendados and often from the very people he hoped to convert to socialism. His birth control program, divorce law and rationalist system of education often met uncompromising resistance.

There was some residual influence from the feminist programs. The Ligas Feministas continued to function long after the Governor's death in 1924 but in a hostile atmosphere. The many contacts Elvia had established in other parts of Mexico served to encourage women in Yucatán. The Liga Revolucionaria Feminista "Aurora Abán," named after the Yucatán feminist, continued its work. In 1930 it issued a pamphlet affirming its complete accord with the ideas of Felipe Carrillo Puerto. 123

Many of the feminists active in the days of Salvador Alvarado and through the Carrillo Puerto era continued their efforts without government backing. The anti-feminist administration, plus the cancellation of laws such as suffrage, served to diffuse the momentum of the feminist movement. Elvia Carrillo Puerto never lost her enthusiasm to improve women's conditions but she no longer worked in Yucatán. After running for office in San Luis Potosí, she moved to more fertile ground in
Mexico City, where feminists in the 1920s and 1930s were organizing on a mass scale. Yucatán would never again be the lodestar in the women's movement in Mexico.
1 La Voz de la Revolución, March 28, 1917, p. 3; Congreso Feminista de Yucatán, Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea (Mérida: Talleres Tipográficos del "Ateneo Peninsular," 1916), p. 29.

2 La Voz de la Revolución, March 28, 1917, p. 3; Laureana Wright de Kleinheins, Mujeres Notables Mexicanas (Publicaciones hechas bajo los auspicios de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes; México: Tipografía Económica, 1910), p. 403. Wright stated that La Siempreviva was the first periodical in Mexico published completely by women.

3 These theses are located in the Biblioteca Carrillo Ancona in Mérida. For example see: ña Candelaria Novelo de Jiménez, La Mujer: Estudios y Consideraciones (tesis, Instituto Literario de Niñas del Estado para obtener el Diploma de Profesora de Enseñanza Primaria Inferior y Superior; Mérida: "La Prensa," 1910); Eduardo Cámara Milán, Derechos de la Mujer en Yucatán (tesis, Escuela de Jurisprudencia del Estado de Yucatán; Mérida: "Imprenta Universal," 1912); Arturo Escalante Galera, La Mujer en Nuestra Legislación (tesis, escuela de Jurisprudencia del Estado de Yucatán; Mérida: "La Moderna," 1912); Roberto Castillo Rivas, Jr., Derechos de la Mujer (tesis, Escuela de Jurisprudencia del Estado de Yucatán; Mérida: Imprenta Oficial del Gobierno del Estado, 1912); Ricardo Alpuche, Causas de Divorcio (tesis, Escuela de Jurisprudencia del Estado de Yucatán; Mérida: La Empresa Editora Yucateca, S.A., 1915).


5 Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, p. vii.

Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, p. xi.

Alvarado even married a local girl, Laura Manzano, El Universal, December 27, 1916, p. 8.


For a discussion of the Congress see Bustillos Carrillo, Yucatán al Servicio, p. 169; La Voz de la Revolución, September 12, 1915, pp. 1, 2; Santiago Pacheco Cruz, Recuerdos de la Propaganda Constitucionalista en Yucatán. Con una Semblanza de la Vida, Actuación i Asesinato del Gobernador Felipe Carrillo Puerto (Mérida: Talleres Gráficos y Editorial ZAMNA, 1953), p. 287.

La Voz de la Revolución, March 22, 1916, p. 3, quoting statement by Ramírez Garrido in the Boletín del Departamento de Educación Pública, capitalization in the original.


20. J. D. Ramírez Garrido, Al Margen del Feminismo (Mérida: Talleres "Pluma y Lápiz," 1918), p. 44. Ramírez reported that in late October Professor Agustín Franco suggested to him that a Feminist Congress be held in Yucatán. When Ramírez took that suggestion to General Alvarado it was immediately adopted. On October 28, 1915 the General announced that the First Congress would be held in Mérida; Order of General Salvador Alvarado quoted in La Voz de la Revolución, October 29, 1915, pp. 1, 2.

21. Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, pp. 36-38; Notices about the Congress were carried in La Voz de la Revolución. See, for example, November 20, 1915, p. 3; November 21, 1915, p. 3; November 22, 1915, p. 3; November 26, 1915, pp. 1, 5; November 29, 1915, p. 3; December 5, 1915, p. 1; December 13, p. 3; December 15, 1915, p. 5.


23. Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, pp. 65-68. In a closely contested race Adolfina Valencia de Avila was elected President by six votes over Porfiria Avila de Rosado.

25 Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, pp. 70, 71, 77, 118. Reactions to Galindo's speech can also be found in La Voz de la Revolución, January 14, 1916, pp. 1-3.

26 Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, p. 72.

27 Ibid., pp. 100-109; La Voz de la Revolución, January 14, 1916, pp. 1-3.


29 Anales de Esa Memorable Asamblea, pp. 126-127.

30 Ibid., p. xii.

31 La Voz de la Revolución, November 16, 1916, p. 1.

32 Ibid., stated that over two hundred women attended. As in the First Congress, Alvarado signed a school release allowing teachers to attend.


34 La Voz de la Revolución, November 24, 1916, p. 3.


37 Ibid., November 30, 1916, pp. 1, 5. Delegates were extremely cautious. Only ninety out of over two hundred voted on women holding public office and only thirty voted in the affirmative.
Ibid., December 3, 1916, pp. 1, 2.

Ibid., November 29, 1916, pp. 1, 3; December 1, 1916, p. 1; December 7, 1916, p. 5. Artemisa Sáenz Royo may have been displeased with the Congress but before leaving Mérida she wrote "Adiós a Mérida" in which she praised Hermila Galindo and Salvador Alvarado for their support of women's issues.

Ibid., December 3, 1916, p. 2.

Hermila Galindo, Estudio de la Srita. Galindo con Motivo de los Temas que han de Absolverse en el Segundo Congreso Feminista de Yucatán (Mérida: Imprenta del Gobierno Constitucionalista, 1916), p. 4. Elena Torres, representing Guanajuato, held ideas similar to those of Hermila and agreed to deliver her speech to the Congress. It is not clear why Torres did not attend the meeting; Galindo could not attend because she was ill.


La Voz de la Revolución, March 29, 1917, p. 3 (italics in original), and April 2, 1917, p. 3.

See, for instance, Julio Rodríguez P., La Mujer Delicuente (tesis, Escuela de Jurisprudencia del Estado de Yucatán; Mérida: 1917; Antonio Gual García, La Mujer Ante el Derecho (tesis, Escuela de Jurisprudencia del Estado de Yucatán; Mérida: Talleres "Pluma y Lápiz," 1919).

Ramírez Garrido, El Margen del Feminismo, pp. 41-42.


50 Ernest Gruening, "Felipe Carrillo," The Nation, CXVIII (January 16, 1924), 61; Cámara Patrón and Ayora Sarlat, La Obra Revolucionaria, pp. 26-27; Hart, The Pulse, p. 42; Gruening, "A Maya Idyl," p. 832, stated that Carrillo believed he was descended from Natchi-Cocóm, the Mayapan King. Hart, The Pulse, p. 35, reported that the Governor told him that "Within my breast there beats an Indian heart."

51 Hart, The Pulse, p. 44.


The name of the partido was changed from the Partido Socialista de Yucatán (PSY) to the Partido Socialista del Sureste (PSS) to recognize the new areas it encompassed. Hereafter it will be referred to as the PSS.


Local Feminist League meetings and trips were given daily coverage. Details on the Pan American Conference for Women held in Baltimore, Maryland were carried in *El Popular*, March 30, 1922, p. 1; April 22, 1922, p. 1; and June 16, 1922, pp. 1, 4. Articles on birth control were printed in *El Popular*, June 6, 1922, p. 1 and *Tierra*, No. 17 (August 19, 1923), p. 13. *Tierra*, No. 15 (August 5, 1923), p. 14, has a translation of Margaret Sanger, *Birth Control Review*. Information on the history of education was printed in *Tierra*, No. 24 (October 7, 1923), p. 9 and No. 21 (September 16, 1923), pp. 20-21. The divorce law was discussed in *Tierra*, No. 1 (May 1, 1923), pp. 18, 25 and No. 31 (November 25, 1923), p. 28.

*Tierra*, No. 23 (September 30, 1923), pp. 3, 15; *Tierra*, No. 2 (May 13, 1923), p. 7, had an article by Velázquez Bringas on socialism. For articles by Refugio García see *Tierra*, No. 8 (June 17, 1923), pp. 6-7; No. 11 (July 8, 1923), p. 10; and No. 13 (July 22, 1923), p. 14. *Tierra*, No. 18 (August 26, 1923), pp. 24-25 and No. 21 (September 16, 1923), pp. 1-2, 13, printed articles by Susana Betancourt. The activities of Elvia Carrillo Puerto were printed daily. In addition, her photograph often appeared. See *Tierra*, No. 18 (August 26, 1923), p. 26 and No. 27 (October 28, 1923), p. 15. Aznar discussed the proper attitude women should have in the social movement in *El Popular*, June 15, 1922, p. 3.

Ibid., p. 44.


68. Felipe Carrillo Puerto, "Programa de Preparación Social para los Maestros," March 7, 1922, in Diario Oficial de Gobierno del Estado de Yucatán ( Mérida), March 9, 1922, pp. 1-2. In spite of the efforts to promote rational education, it met with considerable resistance. The chief voice of opposition was Carlos R. Menéndez's editorials in La Revista de Yucatán. Menéndez maintained that few understood the system and that teachers were being forced into accepting it, La Revista de Yucatán, March 9, 1922, p. 3. The Socialist El Popular devoted several pages to combating Menéndez's arguments. See, for example, El Popular, March 10, 1922, p. 1.


71. Congreso Obrero de Motul, Tierra y Libertad; Bases Que se Discutieron y Aprobaron en el Congreso Obrero Celebrado en la Ciudad de Motul Para Todas las Ligas de Resistencia del Partido Socialista Yucatán (México: Talleres Tipográficos del Gobierno del Estado, 1921), pp. 54-56, 86.

Both Elvia Carrillo Puerto and Raquel Dzib lost the nomination in the primary but switched districts and were elected. Interview with Pedro Castro Aguilar, a researcher for the Hemeroteca Pino Suárez, Mérida, Yucatán, April 19, 1976; interview, Antonia Jiménez Trava, a lawyer and the first woman magistrate for the Yucatán Supreme Court, April 20, 1976, Mérida, Yucatán; Ernest Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage (New York: The Century Co., 1928), p. 630.


See El Popular, December 5, 1921, pp. 1, 4; December 17, 1921, p. 4; February 2, 1922, p. 1; February 3, 1922, pp. 1, 4; May 20, 1922, pp. 1, 4; August 8, 1922, p. 2.

Tierra, No. 26 (October 21, 1923), p. 13, printed an article written by Susana Betancourt supporting Elvia Carrillo for Congress. The same issue had an advertisement for Beatrice Peniche de Ponce who was running for representative to the 28th Legislature; Tierra, No. 30 (November 5, 1923), p. 15. The Liga Rita Cetina Gutiérrez endorsed Calles.


Feminismo: Organo de la Liga Feminista "Rita Cetina Gutiérrez," No. 2 (May 1, 1923), pp. 28-29, had a poem by local Socialist Beatrice Peniche. Unfortunately I was only able to locate one copy of Feminismo.


Roque Armando Sosa Ferreyro, El Crimen del Miedo (México: Costa-Amic, Ed., 1969), p. 22; Rosa Lie Johansen,
interview, Mexico City, August 8, 1976. Rosa Lie was Alma Reed’s roommate in Mexico City during the last years of her life. She has many of Alma’s papers, including Felipe’s divorce papers.

83 Cámara Patrón and Ayora Sarlat, La Obra Revolucionaria, pp. 24-25; Carrillo Puerto, La Familia, p. 15; Alma Reed, “Peregrina” (unpublished autobiography), Chapter IX, p. 8. Alma Reed stated that no member of the Carrillo family would attend Felipe’s wedding because of the cruelties of the bride’s brother, Pedro Palma, to which they attributed the death of his wife Enriqueta. Felipe forced Elvia to attend so that he would have at least one member of his family present.

84 Acrello Carrillo Puerto, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 2, 1976. Acrello is Felipe’s only living brother. Angelina Carrillo Puerto de Triay, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 5, 1976. Angelina is Felipe’s only living sister.

85 Pedro Castro Aguilar, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 19, 1976; Margarita P. de Hernández, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 16, 1976. Hernández is a writer from Yucatán; Betrice Peniche de Ponce, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 11, 1976. Peniche is the last living feminist from the Salvador Alvarado and Felipe Carrillo Puerto eras.

86 Harry Bercovich, Jr., “Yucatan’s Slain Governor Was Savior of His People,” San Francisco Examiner, March 16, 1924, p. 3. The romance between Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Alma Reed ended with his assassination in January, 1924. The famous Mexican song “Peregrina” was written for Alma Reed upon the request of Governor Carrillo. It expresses both their differences in background (her “pines” and “snow” and his “palms” and “tropical land”) and their love. For the story behind the song “Peregrina” see Sosa Ferreyro, El Crimen, pp. 117-120. After Carrillo’s death Reed traveled to Europe and then lived in New York where she promoted the career of José Clemente Orozco. Eventually she returned to Mexico. Today her remains are next to Felipe Carrillo Puerto in a Mérida cemetery.

87 For a copy of the divorce law see Sosa Ferreyro, El Crimen, pp. 25 and opposite p. 33; Walter Berry to Consular Bureau, March 14, 1923, U.S. Department of State,
Microcopy 274, National Archives, 812.4054/10. Berry noted that the Yucatán law was similar to federal legislation in that men were eligible for immediate remarriage but women were required to wait for three hundred days. Hereafter all correspondence of the Department of State will be referred to by number.

88 Marsh to Secretary of State, March 26, 1923, 812.4054/1331; Marsh to Secretary of State, March 29, 1923, 812.4054/1332.

89 Hernan C. Vogenitz, American Vice-Consul to Secretary of State, December 6, 1924, 812.4054/1570; Hernan C. Vogenitz to Secretary of State, April 21, 1926, 812.4054/1703.

90 Reed, "Peregrina," Chapter V, p. 22. Reed stated that the Governor first became interested in birth control clinics through his acquaintance with Sweden's program. Carrillo stayed in touch with Swedish scientists and they supervised the program.


92 Anastasio Manzanilla Domínguez, El Comunismo en México y el Archivo de Carrillo Puerto (México: n.p., 1955), opposite p. 187, there is a letter from Mrs. Anne Kennedy to Carrillo about setting up the birth control clinics in Yucatán.


95 El Popular, March 10, 1922, pp. 3-4.

96 José Díaz Bolio, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 20, 1976. His sister married Felipe's brother Benjamín who was killed with Felipe in January, 1924. Díaz Bolio is a writer. See El Popular, March 11, 1922, p. 3; March 14, 1922, p. 3; March 20, 1922, p. 4; March 24, 1922, p. 3; and March 25, 1922, p. 6.
Gamboa Ricalde, Yucatán, III, 301-302.

Florencio Zamarripa M., "Elvia Carrillo Puerto, Precursora del Voto Femenino," Atisbos (December 18, 1952), p. 12. Acrelio Carrillo Puerto, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 5, 1976. In the Atisbos (ibid.) interview Elvia stated that she did not remarry after the death of her husband but both her brother and sister and many others mentioned a second marriage.


El Popular, August 1, 1922, pp. 1, 4 and July 27, 1922, p. 1.

Tierra, No. 2 (May 13, 1923), p. 7; El Popular, February 24, 1922, p. 3; April 22, 1922, pp. 3-4; April 25, 1922, p. 3; April 26, 1922, p. 3.


La Lucha, May 19, 1923, pp. 1, 4 and May 9, 1922, p. 3.

Ibid., May 22, 1922, pp. 1, 4; July 23, 1923, p. 4; July 7, 1923, p. 4; February 2, 1924, p. 2; May 12, 1923, p. 3.

Pan American Union Bulletin, 61, No. 3 (1923), 309. Although literate women could vote in San Luis Potosí, the law prohibited women who were members of religious associations and women who were under their care from either voting or running for office; Walter Boyle to Secretary of State, January 20, 1923, 812.405/121, reported that women were granted suffrage and a woman was appointed as a substitute Magistrate of the Supreme Court of the State because of pressure from Governor Nieto who was trying to appear progressive. There was not a feminist demand involved.

Boyle to Secretary of State, November 22, 1924, 812.405 No. 9. The Consul's comparison of the state of feminism in San Luis Potosí to that in the United States after the Civil War is unclear because North American women were quite active up to 1880.
107 Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage, pp. 629-630.

108 Ibid., p. 629.

109 Ibid.; Zamarripa M., "Elvía Carrillo Puerto," p. 12. Apparently Elvia's opponents were doing more than trying to frighten her. She said that she had been ordered killed.


111 Carrillo Puerto, La Familia, p. 85.


113 Sáenz Royo, "Mujeres Revolucionarias," p. 15, wrote laudatorily about Elvía and her long career as a feminist.


115 El Popular, October 10, 1922, p. 4; February 3, 1922, pp. 1, 4; and May 20, 1922, pp. 1, 4.


118 Beatrice Peniche de Ponce, interview, Mérida, Yucatán, April 11, 1976.


122 Elvia Carrillo, in Zamarripa M., "Elvia Carrillo Puerto," p. 12, stated that several Yucatán newspapers announced the reward for her head. Rose Torre G. in Mi Actuación, p. 8, noted that during and after Governor Carrillo's assassination, Elvia Carrillo's home was sacked several times. Elvia Carrillo Puerto to Obregón, September 2, 1924, Archivo General de la Nación, Papeles Presidenciales, Ramo de Obregón-Calles, 428-Y-5.

CHAPTER IV

1920-1934: UNDERCURRENTS IN THE
WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The period from 1920 to 1934 brought many changes to the Mexican political scene. While the violence of the preceding ten years decreased, revolts and assassinations continued. The revolutionary hagiology changed. Emiliano Zapata's movement was destroyed by his assassination in April, 1919. Pancho Villa was retired to private life by the gift of a ranch in Durango in 1920 and was later assassinated in Parral in July, 1923. The leadership of the era was dominated by a group from Sonora known as "El Triángulo Sonorense"—Adolfo de la Huerta, Alvaro Obregón, and Plutarco Calles. De la Huerta served as interim President for six months in 1920, led the serious 1923 revolt against Obregón's imposition of Calles, and then went into exile. Alvaro Obregón was a farmer elected to the presidency in 1920, after the Plan of Agua Prieta had succeeded and Carranza was assassinated. Calles, a former schoolteacher, was president during the stormy 1924-1928 period which was characterized by intense Church-State conflict. After President-elect Obregón was assassinated in 1928, a cabal of generals led by Calles ruled Mexico. Three
presidents finished Obregón's six-year term—Emilio Portes Gil, Pascual Ortiz Rubio and Abelardo Rodríguez. When Lázaro Cárdenas was elected president in 1934 a much different era began.

This was not a propitious time for women. Despite the fact that women helped win the Revolution, the federal government showed a marked indifference to their plight. One of the reasons was that the presidents themselves were uninterested. The "Sonora dynasty" failed to include women's needs as part of the goals of the Revolution. Obregón had an old-fashioned, gentleman's view of women, and Calles, arrogant and aggressive, had survived in a male world where women's opinions counted for little. During the interim period the three presidents paid little attention to women. Portes Gil was aware of their needs but not motivated enough to rectify the situation. Suffrage was never treated as a serious issue by any of the presidents because they considered women to be under the Church's influence. Preoccupied by national and international crises, they placed women's demands low on the list of priorities.

Even worse, women lost ground in areas that were strengthened by the government. Obregón and Calles increased labor's power but women lost strength in the unions. Union officers, traditionally male, preferred to recruit men for factory positions when there was an adequate labor supply. Claiming that women were indifferent to union aims because of their
marginal position in the labor force (making them less likely to risk antagonizing management), union organizers avoided recruiting women. Access to skilled jobs through apprenticeship and technical education, both largely controlled by union officials, was rarely available to women. Thus, the unions, reinforced by the government, limited the numbers of women employed. Moreover, women fared poorly during this period because of their show of sympathy for the de la Huerta rebellion, their roles in the Catholic Church, the Cristero Revolt and Obregón's assassination and their refusal to support socialist education. Their own meetings, especially the Congreso de Mujeres de la Raza in 1925, were often disorganized and revealed a lack of unity. As María del Refugio García predicted, the major source of change for women came through their own organizational efforts, both national and international. The few women who did assume important government and university positions were exceptions.

The main changes the federal and state governments offered women derived from the Homestead Decree, suffrage in four states, the Civil Code of 1928 and the Federal Labor Law of 1931. The Homestead Decree of August 4, 1923 granted widows (provided they were Mexican citizens and heads of families) the same rights as men to take up a certain amount of national or uncultivated land not reserved by the government. The amount varied from twenty-five to five hundred
hectares, depending upon location and capacity for irrigation. Title was to be granted after two years of cultivation or stock-raising by the claimant. The four states that granted women's suffrage were Yucatán, San Luis Potosí, Chiapas and Tabasco. This occurred only because the governors of those states were either Socialists (Yucatán, Chiapas and Tabasco) or progressive as in San Luis Potosí. Unfortunately, during the Revolution, suffrage rarely extended beyond the changeover from one administration to another. The Civil Code of 1928 was farsighted in that it recognized natural children. President Calles frankly asked for the measure, explaining that concubinage was so general among certain classes that it was necessary to take note of the conditions for the sake of the children. Adoption of the Federal Labor Law in 1931 resulted partly from demands by various women's organizations. The law prohibited overtime, night work and work in unsafe places for women and minors. Pregnant women were to be given time off before and after birth and rest periods at work. They were to work only eight hours and have one day off a week. Since Article 123 of the Constitution had not been enforced, provision was made for minimum and equal wages between the sexes.

By the end of the decade members of the newly formed Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR), Mexico's official political party, realized the potential in women's political participation and moved to incorporate them. In 1929 the
statutes adopted by the party clearly implied the disqualification of women for party membership. In spite of this, the party platform included two points in favor of women: the full right of participation of woman in political life and the incorporation of the farm woman into the economic life of the country "liberating her from hard labor." To these ends the PNR sought to produce propaganda "to influence public opinion so that woman will begin to be a partner and cease to be a slave." The PNR also tried to spread access to women in politics by ordering the state governments of Chiapas, Sinaloa, Hidalgo and Tamaulipas to give women a greater part.\textsuperscript{5}

Education and Health Programs

During the first real peace Mexico enjoyed, the "Sonora dynasty" attempted to implement the goals of the Revolution. The obstacles--foreign commercial domination, the Catholic Church and the poor educational and health level of the masses--were attacked. Treaties were negotiated with governments having major holdings in Mexico. The Mexican government began to enforce the anti-religious provisions of the Constitution, thereby triggering the Cristero Rebellion, the assassination of Obregón and the controversy over jurisdiction in education. New programs in mass education and health care involved women in large numbers. A few even occupied leadership positions.
The enormous growth in educational programs began during the presidency of Alvaro Obregón when he created the Ministry of Education under José Vasconcelos in 1921. Vasconcelos had been rector of the National University and hoped to use education to elevate the Mexican people. The Constitution of 1917, which made education an instrument of social reform, made this possible. Introducing education into rural areas was a prime target of this reform. Women, who made up over half the number of rural teachers, were key participants. Most were so devoted to their work that their low pay of one or two pesos daily did not matter. The basic program used to bring education to the countryside involved establishment of missions. A Congress of Missioners met for the first time in September, 1922 in Mexico City to discuss the problem of bringing education to remote rural areas where it was practically nonexistent. Elena Torres, after working with the rationalist educational program in Yucatán and heading the free breakfast program for 12,000 children in the capital, became Chief of the Bureau of Cultural Missions. The first mission left Mexico City in 1923 to begin work in the state of Hidalgo. Its main purpose was to improve culturally and professionally the primary school teacher. Rural teachers were also instructed in socialism under this method. Under Torres six missions served more than 2,000 rural teachers in 1926. In the next decade the number grew to eighteen missions serving more than 4,000 teachers.
Special classes for women, kindergartens, rural schools and education centers rapidly multiplied. Large numbers of schools offered training in clerical skills, home economics and domestic-related industries for women. By 1924 Mexico City had five trade schools for young women but just three for young men, who were more likely to learn trades outside. One of the four commercial schools was exclusively for women and it conducted both day and night classes. Many women attended evening schools where they were taught elementary subjects and instructed in crafts. More women attended the university. By 1925 most of them were taking courses besides music, and preparing for professions and public life. The development of a pre-school program was spearheaded by Rosaura Zapata from La Paz, Baja California. After obtaining a degree in primary education and studying extensively abroad, she returned to Mexico to establish kindergartens. She created the pre-school division in the Department of Education. Her work was so highly regarded that she was the first woman to be awarded the Medalla Altamirano by the Senate in 1954. The campaign against illiteracy was conducted by Eulalia Guzmán. Eulalia was an educator whose field experience ranged from educating Yaquis in Sonora to beginning a school for poor children, "Cuauhtémoc," in Mexico City. After directing the campaign against illiteracy and studying three years in Berlin, she returned to Mexico in 1930 to become Inspector of Primary
Schools. In the literacy drive each literate was to teach someone to read and write. The government issued certificates to those teaching one hundred people. Eulalia successfully recruited six thousand middle-class men and women and two thousand student volunteers to teach reading.

Under Calles the number of schools continued to increase. Special emphasis was placed on sanitation and eradicating the evils of alcohol. Narcisco Bassols, Minister of Education from 1931 to 1934, caused an avalanche of criticism when he placed schools under federal control and told instructors to teach socialism. Establishment of "sex education" in the schools caused the greatest storm. Press, clergy and parents, refusing to allow their children to attend classes, attacked the government program. The agitation was so great that Bassols had to retire in May, 1934.

A determined effort was made to institute health programs, neglected during the violent phase of the Revolution. Historian Francisco Bulnes painted a grim picture when he reported in 1920:

According to the Civil register of Mexico City, seventy percent of the births were of natural [illegitimate] children. Violation of the women of the humble classes was an established and respectable custom. . . . sixty percent of the population suffered with chronic alcoholism. In 1919 the medical service of the Department of Education declared that the majority of the children attending school were afflicted with hereditary syphilis.

Health programs begun under Obregón greatly expanded under President Calles. The budget was increased in his
third year to fourteen times what it had been annually under Díaz. Sanitary brigades were formed and traveled to remote parts of the Republic. Vaccinations, health inspections, stricter sanitary and housing codes were instituted. Prenatal clinics, clinics for children, research in tropical diseases and propaganda by lecture, radio, motion picture and pamphlet were begun. There were even limited efforts to distribute birth control information. One of the earliest was in 1925 when a clinic opened in the capital and thousands of copies of Margaret Sanger's pamphlet on family limitation were distributed.

Dr. Bernardo J. Gastélum, head of the Department of Health in the Calles administration, discussed the critical problem of prostitution and social diseases at the first Pan American Conference of Public Health officers in 1926:

In Mexico . . . 60 per cent of the inhabitants suffer from syphilis; in the capital more than 50 per cent. Of the prostitutes, who number around twenty thousand, eighteen thousand have it; in the population between fifteen and twenty-five years of age, 35 per cent are afflicted with it. 11

With prostitution so widespread, the Department of Health abandoned the practice of licensing prostitutes. Instead, efforts were concentrated on health aspects. Clinics were established in various parts of the city where prostitutes were obligated to report every six days for examination and free treatment. Medical staffs were instructed to treat these women with the same respect accorded any other patient. When ill, they were sent to a hospital
and during convalescence were taught a trade, and if illiterate, to read and write. 12

Women Organize

The most spectacular change in the women's movement in Mexico from 1920 to 1934 was in the increased number of women's organizations and conferences. Masses of women, recognizing the value in national and international unity, joined together. In addition, they led campaign drives for improved welfare and health programs and for prohibition. One of the most effective organizations was the Consejo Feminista Mexicano, formed in the spring of 1920. It consisted of women devoted to the social, economic and political emancipation of women. By holding mass meetings, it was able to attract large numbers of working women. On November 6, 1920 a Women's Society similar to the Pan American Round Table was founded in the capital. Its purpose was to promote closer ties between women in American nations. Officers included writer María Luisa Ross and Socialist Esperanza Velázquez Bringas. 13 In 1920 Mexicans joined other Latin American women in affiliating with the International Congress of Women (ICW). In conjunction with the League of Nations, this group worked for peace and bettering women's lives. In the mid-1920s the ICW attempted to strengthen its ties with Latin America and in 1930 adopted Spanish as a semi-official language. 14
In 1922 three important organizations were founded—the Sociedad Protectora de la Niñez Escolar begun by María Gómez Vda. de Bacmaister, the Gran Liga Femenina Obrera de Orizaba which published Caridad y Moral and the Mexican Branch of the Pan American Association for the Advancement of Women, with Elena Torres in charge. In 1923 the Asociación Cristiana Femenina (YWCA) was founded by María Elena Ramírez. Under the auspices of the International Division, it focused its attention on women's issues. In 1924 the Asociación opened a baby clinic in Mexico City. A child welfare organization called the Pestalozzi-Froebel Society was begun by educator Rosaura Zapata, who served as its first president. Its goals were to establish a kindergarten, parent-teacher association, legal protection and provide for the sociological study of children. The aims of the Pestalozzi-Froebel Society coincided with many of those of the Children's Aid Society. Headed by Mexico's First Lady, María Tapia de Obregón, the Children's Aid Society was active in helping needy children with everything from building them homes to teaching them skills. The Liga Feminista Mexicana was formed in 1923 as a woman's suffrage organization. Its officers included a distinguished group of educators—Eulalia Guzmán, Julia Nava de Ruisánchez, and Luz Vera Córdova. Eulalia was a well-known educator. Julia Nava, a charter member of the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc and Regeneración y Concordia, had a long career as a feminist.
Luz Vera was an educator, writer and organizer. In 1922 she worked in educational missions in Puebla and in her home state of Veracruz and in 1934, became the first woman to receive a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the National University. A devoted feminist, she attended the Feminist Congresses in 1923 and 1925 in Mexico City. In 1925 university women banded together in the Asociación de Universitarias Mexicanas whose object was to unite women in Mexico with those abroad.\textsuperscript{16}

Women on the left were also active. Elvia Carrillo Puerto worked closely with María del Refugio García (Cuca), who was attempting to organize female government employees into unions. Cuca quickly realized, as first Obregón, and later Calles, reneged on their support for women issues, that if women were ever to be an effective force, they would have to organize themselves. At the time, however, these groups lacked a precise political program.\textsuperscript{17} Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza's interest in indigenous races and rural education was reflected in the numerous clubs and groups she founded in the 1920s. After working in rural schools in 1922, Juana collaborated with campesinos in the state of Morelos to establish an experimental agrarian colony called "Santiago Orozco."\textsuperscript{18} The colony, located in Acaítipa, failed shortly after its founding because of conflict with the Church. The campesinos abandoned the community when Juana tried to curb the Church's power. After
they left, the Spanish hacendados, whom she hated, were able to reclaim the land.

After the failure of the agrarian colony, Juana continued to study anthropology in Zacatecas where she also worked as an inspector of Rural Federal Schools. In 1923 she founded the Consejo de los Caxcanes in Juchipila, Zacatecas. This group was formed to promote and preserve indigenous culture. Later Juana worked in a cooperative in Morelia, Michoacán.\textsuperscript{19}

Members of the Unión de Mujeres Americas (UMA), which included Ana María Zapata, daughter of Emiliano, launched a vigorous campaign for the vote. UMA, with a membership of 200,000, was founded by Margarita Robles de Mendoza, a distinguished writer and language professor. An ardent feminist, she authored articles and books on the topic and served in several organizations. In 1929 she represented Mexico on the Interamerican Commission of Women in Washington.\textsuperscript{20}

In 1928 the Rosalia Slaughter Medical Society was organized by students who wanted to improve the education of women. They planned to affiliate with the Pan American Round Table because it provided scholarships for Mexican women physicians and female medical students.\textsuperscript{21} The same year the Mesa Redonda Panamericana de la Ciudad de México was founded to build an interest in social life and customs of the American nations, and to promote good will among them.
In 1929 interest in women's health was stimulated by the founding of the Asociación de Médicas Mexicanas which encouraged women to participate in medicine, and the Asociación Nacional de Protección a la Infancia, organized by Carmen García de Portes Gil, wife of President Portes Gil. Amalia González Caballero de Castillo Ledón, feminist, writer and professor, was especially interested in child welfare. She served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Child Welfare and was active in the Pan American Women’s League. Health care received a big boost from the three top women doctors—Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, Esther Chapa and Antonia Ursúa. All worked to improve health programs for women and children.

In January, 1931 a Women's Protective Union was organized to defend women's rights in industry, agriculture and commerce. Alcohol and the damage it did to families was a subject upon which women of all political persuasions agreed. They opposed it and vigorously campaigned for prohibition. Since this was an objective that the federal and state governments, especially Socialist administrations supported, prohibition was passed in several Mexican states.

As the period ended, Mexican women's interests in international organizations had been strengthened. The international peace movement attracted large numbers of Mexican women. With the growing interest in international organizations came contact with women from other countries.
Awareness of their struggle only increased the determination of Mexican women to push for their own rights.

Another area of phenomenal growth during the 1920s was women's conferences. The first meeting held in the second decade of the twentieth century was a workers' conference called by Elvía Carrillo Puerto, Florinda Lazos León and María Efraínna Rocha. Delegates demanded political rights, land and tools for campesinas and obreras. A Feminist Congress held in 1921 achieved only limited success and was ridiculed by the press and male reporters who attended. A delegation of Mexican women under Elena Torres traveled to the Pan American Women's meeting in Baltimore in April, 1922. Eulália Guzmán, Julia Nava de Ruisánchez and Luz Vera were among those attending. The Rita Cetina Gutiérrez League from Yucatán also sent a delegation under Elvía Carrillo Puerto.²⁵

In late May, 1923 the Mexican Branch of the Pan American Association for the Advancement of Women held its first national convention in Mexico City with more than one hundred women attending. A wide range of topics, from birth control, economics, labor and social problems, to civil rights, were discussed. The delegates recommended that the Law of Family Relations be modified to aid women and children, that pre- and post-natal clinics with women in charge be established and that there be more co-educational and industrial schools. They also requested political and civil equality and protection for domestic workers and
cooperatives. In addition, they asked for kindergartens, eating facilities in factories and access to female officials in borderlands and ports. The key spokespersons of the meeting, Margarita Robles de Mendoza and Luz Vera, demanded that women be granted full citizenship. 26

The most controversial meeting of the period took place in early July, 1925 in Mexico City. The Congreso de Mujeres de la Raza was sponsored by the Liga de Mujeres Ibéricas e Hispanoamericanas and the Unión Cooperativa. Secretary General Sofía Villa Buentello presided over the meeting of more than two hundred women from Mexico, Latin America and Spain. The high aspirations she expressed about the Congress in an interview with Excélsior in December were shattered. 27 The Congress opened on July 5 in disputes over registration and voting procedure and ended on the same bitter note. Differences between the right and the left (led by Elvia Carrillo Puerto and Cuca García), were mainly responsible for the disruptions. In the session on moral problems the wedge dividing the right and left further widened. When Sofía Villa suggested that public billboards carry inscriptions, "Swearing and begging prohibited," Cuca immediately objected, "How can one prevent mendicity when there is no work, when salaries are so meager, and you have the poor in complete helplessness?" "Work is the social salvation," she concluded. On the following day Cuca stressed the importance of education for indigenous groups and launched
a vigorous protest against the domination of the cuartelazo of the right. 28

By July 10 the controversy had polarized into two distinct factions. The right viewed women's problems as being rooted in social and moral conditions while the left applied an economic interpretation. As the arguing increased, delegates began to leave the meeting in disgust. In frustration, Villa, visibly shaken, reminded the audience: "This is an international Congress, not a socialist or worker Congress; the foreign delegates have abandoned us and now there is no Congress." Elvia, rising, responded, "If it is to be said that this Congress, to be international, is for people of class, why have you invited us, the workers?" She continued her protest, "The heart, the very fiber of the country, protests against the parasites that suck [the lifeblood] from it." In the confusion, Villa finally obtained a promise for order. Cuca proposed that they refrain from passing any measures in the heat of the moment, without ample time for consideration. With order restored, delegates began to filter back into the meeting. 29

Delegates at the Congreso de Mujeres de la Raza did not confine themselves to areas of traditional concern for women but discussed the political, economic and social problems of Mexico, Venezuela, Cuba, China, Spain and France. Elvia Carrillo Puerto gave a presentation, which the right protested, on the success of the Feminist Leagues in Yucatán.
On July 12 the radicals succeeded in passing a proposal that reactionaries be purged from the Mexican government, especially from the Department of Education. This controversial measure was vigorously protested by several women, including Palma Guillén, a professor and educator who served as director of Secondary Education.30

Believing the delegates had strayed from purposeful action, Villa tried to close the meeting. She met with a wall of protest, mostly from leftists who accused the planners of selecting themes that confined discussions to women in their role as wife and mother. When Villa insisted that the conference close, the delegates elected a rump Board of Directors, with women from the right joining the left. The newly-elected president sent a message to President Calles stating that the meetings would continue with revolutionary women and that this would signal a triumph for the Revolution. Villa's scheduling of a concert so that delegates could not hold their meeting also grated on uneven tempers. After considerable confusion, the conference continued until the 15th. The sessions met even though several delegates had departed. On July 15, the last day, only ninety-eight delegates were present to discuss the need for more indigenous education and equality for women and children.31

A scathing editorial entitled "A Defeat of Feminism" appeared in El Universal on July 15. Referring to the
disintegration and disorientation of the Congress, the unsigned editorial reminded women that if this were an example of their participation in public life, it was a fraud. The conference was nothing more than a caricature of the national Congress, superficial and scandalous, conducted by women trying to behave like men. The article concluded by calling the Congreso de Mujeres de la Raza a defeat for the feminist cause. 32

For the first time in Mexican history, lower-class women organized at three important Congresos Nacionales de Mujeres Obreras y Campesinas. The first meeting took place in October, 1931, the second in November, 1933, and the third in September of the following year. These meetings marked a point of progress for working women as well as revealed the splits within their ranks on issues such as determining the priority of suffrage.

The Primer Congreso Nacional de Mujeres Obreras y Campesinas opened at the Centro Cívico Alvaro Obregón in Mexico City at 7:00 P.M., on October 1, 1931. It was organized by René Rodríguez, Ana María Hernández, Florinda Lazas León and Luz Ramírez, and attracted organizations and delegates from all over Mexico. Themes for the meeting were cooperation between obreras and campesinas, organization of women and the development of a national campaign, foundation of a women's bank, definition of the civil and political situation of women and establishment of an organization to protect children. 33
On the afternoon of October 2 there were two presentations—one on obreras by Cuca García and the other on social security for obreras by René Rodríguez. Cuca's long interest in the struggle of the campesina was well-known. In spite of the Homestead Decree of 1923 and the agrarian reform laws she stated:

Thousands of women work the land like peones for a small salary, or work the miserable parcel of their husband, father, or brother, because they are almost completely limited in their right to the land. The Agrarian Law states that they can only obtain land [ejidos], as the female head of the family, [or] as adult campesinas who have suitable needs. The young campesinas don't have a right to the land, that is, the agrarian legislation condemns them to always live at the poor economic level of their father, their husband, [or] their brother, and, as we have already said, economic independence is the base of political independence for women.34

The following day María Ríos Cárdenas presented a plan for a women's organization that divided the delegates into factions—one, led by Florinda Lazos León of Chiapas, wanting a purely feminist organization, and the other, preferring to work in mixed groups, led by Cuca. Florinda's group maintained that whenever they worked with men, their needs were subordinated. Cuca, joined by Communists Consuelo Uranga and Concha Michel, felt that the Congress should have broader aims than feminism. The majority of delegates, however, agreed with Florinda and María and her proposal passed.35

On October 4 the delegates accepted proposals for agrarian schools for women, granaries and cooperatives. The
most controversial measure passed was a recommendation that the government limit the number of priests and not employ members of the Caballeros de Colón. This aroused considerable comment and local newspapers, like Omega, soundly criticized the delegates. In the afternoon session of the following day, Edelmira R. Vda. de Escudero presented a proposal recommending electoral reforms, the vote and office-holding for women and after some debate, this was accepted. Generally the meetings ran smoothly with a few exceptions. There was a protest, lodged by the organizing committee, that Communist members were obstructing discussions, and there were also arrests of Communist women at the closing session. Eleven were arrested, including Concha Michel, but they were released shortly after.

The Second Congress was held in the same building as the First and lasted from November 25 to 30, 1933. There were more delegates present and more tension between Communists and moderates. Discussion topics included minimum wages for women, the creation of special departments in government agencies, establishment of a bank for women's cooperatives and worker education. Conflict erupted when Consuelo Uranga spoke out against the government, thereby offending delegates, the majority of whom were old government employees. They refused to return to the Congress. The worst episode occurred on the 27th when police entered the meeting and ordered all Communists to leave. Several
delegates objected to having their meeting disrupted. However, order was quickly restored and business proceeded. On the following day Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza, a veteran of the Revolution, spoke on agrarian laws and Article 27 of the Constitution, and Ana María Hernández reported on organizing women. The debate was interrupted when police apprehended two Communists. By this time, the Board of Directors for the Congress had had enough. They protested, demanding the women’s immediate release and guarantees for all delegates. After the confusion abated Consuelo Uranga and Florinda Lazos León continued their unresolved argument from the First Congress over whether women should work together or with men. Despite the disruptions, delegates passed proposals for minimum salary, unification of women, repeal of taxes, free schools, commissions to investigate and denounce persons who monopolize public posts and committees to organize agrarian communities. Before closure the delegates passed measures for solidarity with China and against payment of foreign debt, obligatory military service, the Seventh Pan American Conference, American intervention in Cuba, Japanese aggression in China and war.

The Third National Congress for Women was held in Guadalajara from December 13 to 18, 1934 with six hundred delegates. It was less tense and more united and socialistic in nature. The delegates approved proposals for legal
protection for women, co-education, uniting organizations, defanaticizing Catholics, sustaining socialist education and supporting women's suffrage. They also discussed freedom for women in marriage and divorce. The only tense moment occurred when women from the Círculo Feminista de Occidente accused delegates from the Sección Femenil of PNR of being integrated with Catholic, bourgeois elements. Police were called but presiding official María Ríos Cárdenas was able to close the conference without any major incidents. ⁴²

In spite of the flourish of activity on the part of women, the Mexican government remained cool to granting suffrage. Obregón and Calles did not seriously consider it. Calles was firmly opposed, especially since groups like the League of Catholic Women, formed in 1924, vehemently resisted his anti-clerical policies. Only a few states amended their laws to include women's suffrage. Yucatán allowed suffrage under Felipe Carrillo Puerto's governorship. Governor Rafael Nieto granted women electoral rights in San Luis Potosí in March, 1923. State officials in Chiapas, influenced by socialist doctrine, established complete equality of political rights for women in state and local elections in May, 1925. ⁴³ Socialist Tomás Garrido Canabal, Governor of Tabasco from 1931 to 1934, offered suffrage to women. In an atmosphere reminiscent of that in Yucatán in the early 1920s, women were organized into leagues and
cooperatives and actively participated in civic affairs. Divorce was made quick and easy and education was rationalist, compulsory, co-educational and free. 44

Other Mexican states did not follow these examples. Indeed, before the end of the decade, Yucatán and San Luis Potosí reversed their women's suffrage laws. The women's movement received additional setbacks: the Cristero Rebellion begun in 1926 and the assassination of Obregón two years later by a religious fanatic. The demands by members of the League of Catholic Women for female suffrage in 1925 only increased the government's suspicion that women served as a political tool for the Catholic Church. 45

While Mexican men suspected women's loyalty and witnessed their display of disunity in the 1925 Congress, there was yet another, more subtle factor that made them reluctant to give women the vote. With regard to this a Mexican colonel commented:

... we Latins consider that if our women are brought into the rough political melee of public life they would lose their womanly charm and femininity, besides we are endowed with a radical sentimental temperament which tends to forbid them [women] from mixing in our public affairs.

The Colonel indicated that although he did not believe this and that those who did were either blind or stupid, he implied that these opinions were quite common. He admitted that sooner or later "we shall have to share with them [women] equal rights willingly, as they are bound to win
that equality by the people's vote." The Colonel was not aware of it in 1926 but he could have assured his readers that women's suffrage would not come about for twenty-seven more years.

Of the three interim presidents, Portes Gil was the only one demonstrating any interest in women's issues. During his presidency from December 1, 1928 to February 5, 1930 he represented a half-way point between the negative reactions of Obregón and especially Calles to women's suffrage, and the positive response of Cárdenas a decade later. Portes Gil's wife Carmen, at twenty-four, was Mexico's youngest, as well as most active, First Lady. Besides founding the Asociación Nacional de Protección a la Infancia, she worked to educate poor children and collaborated with her husband in his campaign against alcoholism. Portes Gil was acquainted with all the most important feminists of the time and engaged in long discussions with them on the suffrage question. However, he did expel Tina Modotti, an Italian Communist, because of her attacks on the government and in the end he refused to support women's suffrage. The reasons he gave were the traditional ones—the Church controlled women, making them enemies of the Revolution.

In an interview with feminist Margarita Robles de Mendoza during his presidency Portes Gil stated that, although the Constitution proposed to confine the vote to
men, women could and should participate in politics. They must, however, first be prepared to hold public positions, which had always been monopolized by men and they must be educated. When the President was shown a long list of professional women, he responded that he was pleased to know so many women were ready to work with men for the social advancement of the country. These remarks, which received considerable publicity, left the door open for further agitation.

Journalists

As in the past, women continued in leadership positions in journalism. In 1920 María Sandoval and Professor Julia Nava de Ruisánchez edited a new magazine called *Mujeres*. It was not successful and only a few issues were published until 1923 when it was revived as an organ of the Consejo Nacional Femenino de Obreras y Campesinas. Elvia Carrillo Puerto and Rose Torre G. edited a short-lived radical publication between 1922 and 1923 called *Rebeldía*. One of the most staunchly feminist magazines published in the 1920s was *La Mujer*, begun by María Ríos Cárdenas, a professor in the Normal School in Mexico City in 1926. Its subtitle—"For the moral and intellectual elevation of women"—characterized its contents. Published by and for women, it specialized in articles on the women's movement in Mexico and the international scene, as well as divorce and free union and any other area of interest to
liberal women. Owing to its forthright approach *La Mujer* did not attract a wide enough reading audience and was discontinued. Guadalupe Ramírez, daughter of noted statesman and journalist Ignacio Ramírez, began *Luz* in 1929, with five other women. Although she had been a home economics teacher, the magazine was known for its progressive approach.

Leftist women were as active as they had been in the past. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Artemisa Sáenz Royo ["Xochitl"] and Cuca García wrote for the Communist newspaper *El Machete*. In addition to her other projects, Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza continued to write. In May, 1920 she published a twelve-page pamphlet, *Comentarios de Actualidad* under her pen name "Juan Bernal." It was not a feminist tract but a diatribe against both Carranza and Obregón. After criticizing "legalists," Juana concluded that the Mexican Revolution had degenerated into either "a legalistic fossil or a Russian Bolshevik." Her despair over the direction of the Revolution was also evident in her private papers. In January, 1922 she noted that the struggle between 1910 and 1920 was hardly revolutionary: "effective suffrage and no re-election is not revolutionary, but conservative." In the late 1920s Juana collaborated on the newspaper *América India: Por la Unión Indoamericana*. It was the product of a group attempting to create an Indoamerican Union to promote the welfare of the indigenous community. Its goals
were to create a Union, to "purify" the Spaniards and to protect against Yankee imperialism. In an article in América Indígena, Juana explained the group's purpose as being "to conserve and improve the indigenous race, freeing it from all foreign influence." In 1933 Juana directed Radiográficas Revolucionarias, a monthly that dealt with a variety of subjects, including women. El Cauce appeared for the first time on May 31, 1934 from the capital. Its format was similar to Vésper, which was reissued in 1932.

Two trends that stood out in the 1920s in women's journalism were the growing interest publications displayed in women's news and the increasing number of women who branched out into other publications. Two magazines—La Revista de Revistas and El Universal Ilustrado—continued to provide excellent coverage of women's activities. Besides covering female personalities of the day, they included articles on women's conferences and campaign drives. Increasingly, women ventured out of the bailiwick of women's magazines. Juana Gutiérrez collaborated with the staff of the capital daily El Heraldo de México, directed by her old friend, engineer Camilo Arriaga, to write a series of articles. Her subject matter varied from protection for feminine schools to the reconstruction of the country. In addition, she wrote a book in 1924, Por la Tierra y Por la Raza, in which she discussed the most pressing problems of indigenous peoples in Mexico. Esperanza Velázquez Bringas
published widely throughout this period from a socialistic perspective. Catalina D. Eznell, a playwright and drama critic, served as an editor for Excélsior.55

Emilia Enríquez de Rivera, founder and director of El Hogar, in an interview in January, 1928 revealed some of the difficulties women journalists encountered. Of El Hogar she confided that she had to write every line, solicit announcements and distribute copies for the first issues. She continued, "My magazine has been my children and my total life." Emilia explained her success by her willingness to steer clear of controversial political questions. By focusing on the home, she apparently struck a keynote because her magazine was one of the few not suspended during the Revolution.56

Women's journalism flourished in the early 1930s. Many of the new newspapers and magazines were published by women's organizations. La Voz de la Mujer, published by the Bloque Nacional de Mujeres under the direction of Florinda Lazos León, gave extensive coverage to women. The June 22, 1932 issue contained an open letter to former President Calles and to President Pascual Ortiz Rubio demanding that women be incorporated into the political structure. Ana María Hernández and René Rodríguez served on the staff. Later the Bloque published a small periodical on women called Flama, directed by Esther Chapa and Adelina Zendejas.57
The Catholic Church

The already poor relationship between the Catholic Church and the Mexican government turned increasingly sour in the 1920s. A large segment of the Army and the Church supported the de la Huerta Revolt in 1923 and the revolt of Generals Serrano and Gómez in 1927 against the federal government. The Church openly defied the State in 1926 in the Cristero Rebellion and the assassination of President-elect Obregón in 1928 kept the conflict at fever pitch. After a brief respite trouble flared again over the government's attempts to socialize education. These events negatively affected the political future of Mexican women because the government assumed that their support of the Church meant a rejection of the Revolution.

Obregón, in attempting to build a revolutionary nationalism to replace Catholicism, merely forced the Church into defensive efforts to organize its own youth, worker, journalist and women's groups. During the Church-sponsored Social Week, held in Puebla in 1919, priests addressing delegates stressed the necessity of scheduling meetings throughout Mexico to stem the rising tide of socialism. Several speakers equated socialism with free love and feminism, both of which the Church had condemned.

In 1920 Social Action leaders organized an umbrella organization, the Confederation of Catholic Associations of Mexico, to coordinate all Church activity. At the same time
a Mexican Social Secretariat was formed. It conducted conferences, formed labor unions and women's organizations and published La Paz Social, a monthly devoted to social questions. The same year the Secretariat founded the Union of Catholic Ladies of Mexico. The Union hoped to bring large numbers of women into the movement for Catholic Action, through publication of La Dama Católica. The editors, asserting that women's place was still in the home, assured their readers that they were not "feminists in the exaggerated sense of the word." Feminine influences--except in politics--could, however, greatly aid in solving social problems.59

The backbone of Social Action was the National Catholic Labor Confederation formed in 1922. Its members called for the preservation of the family and keeping women out of the factories and in the home. In 1925 the Archbishop of Mexico, José Mora del Río, issued a pastoral censuring adoption of the "North American custom" of women working. Father Medina, S.J., in his monthly review La Paz Social echoed del Río's sentiments when he stated that women working outside would ruin the home. In the April issue he was even more explicit: "The woman from the moment that she becomes a worker, ceases to be a woman."60 This hardline position against women working changed very slowly. The Church's stance on women's political participation altered rapidly when they were forced to tap all potential allies for support in their struggle against the Mexican government.
By the mid-1920s the simmering conflict between the Church and government had heated to the boiling point. For eight years the anti-clerical provisions of the Constitution had not been vigorously enforced. Then in mid-June, 1926 President Calles began strict enforcement by prohibiting alien priests from working in Mexico, closing religious schools and ordering priests to register with civil authorities. By the 31st the Church had reacted by suspending all religious services and calling a boycott on all goods and services. During the summer and fall there were scattered incidents of violence. Women were visible on both sides of the conflict. In Mexico City police fired into a crowd of women in the Church of San Rafael when they refused to leave the building. Riots in Guadalajara and Torreón involved large numbers of women. The government also attracted women who demonstrated in favor of its anti-Church policies. On August 1, 1926 masses of women marched in the government parade sponsored by the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (C.R.O.M.).

By the winter of 1926 thousands of lay Cristeros resorted to armed rebellion against the government. The centers of resistance were overwhelmingly rural, focused in the West and South. Rebels were mainly poor farmers who did not understand the complexities of the Church-State conflict. They were only reacting to what they considered to be wickedness. They blew up trains, burned government
schools, and attacked "socialist" teachers. The fact that
a large percentage of rural school teachers were women
did not deter the Cristeros. In a tragic incident, often
repeated elsewhere, a young woman of the tiny village of
Villa de Refugio in Zacatecas had run out of her school
when she heard mounted men approaching. After being lassoed,
she was dragged feet first over miles of rocky ground until
there was almost nothing left for her friends to bury.
Federal troops retaliated by taking hostages, raiding vil-
lages suspected of sheltering rebels and mercilessly looting
the countryside.\textsuperscript{64}

In many places women made up the heart of the
Cristero movement. They served as spies, organizers, and
suppliers and carriers of arms, ammunition, food and medicine.
The famous Brigadas Femeninas were founded in Zopapán in
June, 1917 by Luis Flores González. Their importance to the
overall Cristero operation is indicated in a statement by
General Jesús Degollado Guizar: "They [the Brigadas] had
become the principal means by which the Guardia Nacional
was supplied with arms and ammunition." In January, 1928
the Brigadas obtained permission to establish headquarters
in Mexico City and to take jurisdiction over the entire
Republic. By the end of 1928 they had increased in number
from six in Jalisco and Colima to more than twenty through-
out the Republic. They had six branches of activity—finances,
war, provisions, welfare, information and health—with over
10,000 members.\textsuperscript{65}
By the end of the year the Liga Nacional Defensora de la Libertad Religiosa, which organized many Catholic lay groups, and the Brigadas Femeninas clashed over jurisdictional matters. The Brigadas demanded autonomy and the League refused to grant it. The main center of Brigada resistance to League authority was focused in the Federal District. Catholic women in other states agreed to bow to the wishes of the League. Repeated efforts to prevent a schism were unsuccessful and the League branded the Brigadas as illegitimate. The conflict, which was never really resolved, hurt the Cristero effort and ended many of the Brigada's activities and all of its effectiveness.

In the tense atmosphere created by the Cristero Rebellion the loyalty of all women was suspected. The Mexican government, plagued with domestic and international crises, displayed very little patience. Women were often accused of being implicated in plots to kill government officials but charges were unsubstantiated and the matter usually dropped. Women in religious orders suffered the most. Every convent in the Republic was dispersed by Calles' ruling of 1926. Nuns were seized, deported, shot and often raped. Thousands were expelled from their positions in schools and hospitals but since they constituted a large part of the teaching and nursing staffs, it was often necessary to hire them back as ordinary teachers and nurses.
The factors that contributed the most far-reaching consequences were women's involvement in anti-government activities and their part in the attempted assassination of General Obregón. Nuns and women sympathetic to the Church turned their homes into meeting places, harbored fugitives and served as messengers. After an assassination attempt against Obregón in Chapultepec Park in November, 1927 women hid the would-be assassins until the government finally captured and executed four of them. Madre María Concepción Acevedo y de la Llata, known simply as Madre Conchita, Superior in a Capuchin convent, used her home on Chopo Street in Mexico City for political purposes. One room served as a chapel where the devoted could attend mass but the house was also a center of anti-government conspiracy. One of the plans discussed at the Chopo Street residence was to assassinate Calles or Obregón with a hypodermic needle containing poison. A girl with a needle hidden in her bouquet was to dance with one of them and then inject the poison. However, the plan failed and the plotting continued. The most sensational incident took place when twenty-seven-year-old José de León Toral killed President-elect Obregón in La Bombilla restaurant in Mexico City. Toral greatly admired Madre Conchita and through her inspiration decided to give his life for the cause. Although Madre Conchita was unaware that Toral had actually planned to kill Obregón, she and twenty nuns were arrested. The Church denounced the assassination and disclaimed any responsibility.
Bishop de la Mora of San Lusi Potosí called Madre Conchita and her family mentally abnormal. The Union of Catholic Ladies also refused to support her. At their much publicized trial in November, 1928 Toral was condemned to death and Madre Conchita, because she was a woman, received a twenty-year sentence. She was sent to prison at Islas Marías where she served as governess to the Director's children and later married a prisoner.

During the presidency of Portes Gil fanatical Catholics were determined to prevent Toral's execution. A telegram from Toral's lawyers asking for clemency was followed by a letter from the representatives of the League of Defense of Religious Liberty which threatened the lives of Portes Gil's family in case Toral was not pardoned. When Portes Gil denied the pardon, the presidential train was dynamited in the state of Guanajuato on the morning of February 10, 1929. The presidential party was uninjured but one person was killed and two pullman cars and a locomotive destroyed. Most of the men and women responsible were sent to Islas Marías. The government execution of Toral was carried out on schedule by a firing squad. Catholics made their point. Attendance at Toral's funeral was so heavy that police and firemen could hardly preserve order.

The Church-State controversy was temporarily resolved by an agreement concluded on June 27, 1929. Yet the residue of bitterness remained on both sides. State legislators
continued to hound the Church by limiting the number of priests and severely restricting the few that remained. Churches were closed in almost half the states in the early 1930s. The most extreme case of anti-Church legislation took place in Tabasco under Governor Tomás Garrido Canabal. Priests were forced to marry, churches were destroyed, Catholics were forbidden to celebrate holy days of obligation and were ordered to eat meat on Fridays.

The focus of contention, however, was education. The government left the Church without any choice—either teach socialism or close down. The government implemented its program with thousands of teachers, mostly women, in all parts of the Republic. It is ironic that the Mexican government used women to disseminate socialist education against the Church and then refused to give women political rights because of their ties to the Church.

Catholics anticipated strict enforcement of the educational provisions of the 1917 Constitution long before the crackdown under Calles and during the presidential interim period. The Church had continually protested its treatment to various administrations. In 1922 the Union of Catholic Ladies at their national convention joined other Catholics in an attempt to fight federal control of education by calling for a repeal of the constitutional ban on religious primary education and for the right of parents to determine the kind of schooling their children
would receive. The ultimate affront was the introduction of "sex education" into the curricula in the early 1930s. Teachers were attacked and harassed. While there was not as much widespread violence as in the 1920s teachers occasionally lost their lives. Riots and protests continued until President Cárdenas was able to alleviate tension in the late 1930s.

The period from 1920 to 1934 drew to a close with few solid gains for women. They had helped to win the Revolution and to carry out the educational and health programs of various administrations but were not included in the benefits. Unfortunately, when the Church was under attack, women won no rights because most revolutionary leaders could not separate one from the other. Women's own lack of organization and political divisiveness also hurt their image. Positively speaking, women in this period organized on a wider scale than ever before and most realized that this was the only way they could gain their rights. A few educated women assumed prominent positions in government and in the universities. The key ingredients necessary to win political rights--a supportive president and large numbers of women favoring suffrage--were present after 1934.
NOTES

CHAPTER IV

1Dawn Keremitsis, La Industria Textil Mexicana en el Siglo XIX (México: SepSetentas, 1973), pp. 200-201. Keremitsis also noted a trend toward a decline in numbers of women textile workers which has continued into the present. Women are finding fewer opportunities to secure factory work. The continuing high level of national unemployment, partly induced by the trend toward capital-intensive industry, provides a dismal outlook for the future of women textile workers. Increasingly, service industries offer the only openings for the large numbers of women entering the labor force, because here alone do their minimum wage demands have a competitive advantage.

2Pan American Union Bulletin, LVII, No. 6 (December, 1923), 624.


13 *New York Times*, Section 7, September 26, 1920, p. 6; *Pan American Union Bulletin*, L, No. 1 (January, 1920), 114; File on Esperanza Velázquez Bringas in the Biographical Collection of the Biblioteca Nacional. Bringas, a linguist, writer, and lawyer, was born in Veracruz and educated at the University of the Southeast in Yucatán. After collaborating with Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto and his sister Elvia, she became the first woman to head the Department of Libraries in Mexico City.


15 "Feminismo," *Enciclopedia de México*, IV, 1970, 90; *Pan American Union Bulletin*, LVII, No. 3 (March, 1924), 321; LVII, No. 2 (August, 1923), 211; LVIII, No. 5 (May, 1924), 533; LVIII, No. 1 (July, 1923), 95. These three women attended the Baltimore meeting the year before.


18 Juana Gutiérrez de Mendoza, "El General Calles No ha Variado Su Criterio Respecto a los Desheredados," Vésper, March 15, 1932, p. 2; María Antonieta Rascón, "La Mujer y la Lucha Social," Imagen y Realidad de la Mujer, ed. by Elena Urrutia (México: SepSetentas, 1975), p. 173, gives the date for the founding of the Santiago Orozco Colony as 1919. It appears that the colony was named after Juana's son-in-law Santiago Orozco, an intellectual, who collaborated with her in publishing the indigenous newspaper La Reforma in 1914. Orozco was a Zapatista General who worked to bring revolutionary factions together in the Plan de Ayala. He was killed in a battle over Indian lands in 1915.

19 Susana Mendoza, interview, August 12, 1976, Cuernavaca; Rascón, "La Mujer y la Lucha Social," p. 173.


21 Pan American Union Bulletin, XXII, No. 11 (October, 1928), 1191.


26. Pan American Union Bulletin, LVI, No. 6 (June, 1923), 630-531; Derechos de la Mujer Mexicana, p. 19; "Feminismo," p. 91, has a list of delegate demands.

27. Excélsior, December 18, 1924, p. 1 and January 17, 1925, pp. 1, 6. The President's wife, Natalia Chacón de Calles, was designated honorary President of the Congress. El Universal, July 6, 1925, p. 1.

28. El Universal, July 7, 1925, pp. 1, 8 and July 8, 1925, pp. 1, 3.


30. Ibid., July 12, 1925, pp. 1, 11; Mujeres Mexicanas Notables, p. 127.


32. Ibid., July 15, 1925, p. 3.

34 El Universal, October 3, 1931, pp. 2, 7; Cuca's speech was printed in Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, La Mujer y la Revolución (México: n.p., 1937), p. 30, and Esperanza Balmaceda de Josefé, "La Mujer Ante la Revolución," December 16, 1936, Collection at the office of the Año Internacional de la Mujer in Mexico City.

35 El Universal, October 4, 1931, pp. 1, 8; El Nacional, October 4, 1931, p. 2.

36 María Ríos Cárdenas, "Pide al Gobierno la Reducción de Sacerdotes, el Congreso Nacional de Obreras y Campesinas," El Nacional, October 5, 1931, pp. 1, 2; Omega, October 7, 1931, pp. 1, 3.

37 María Ríos Cárdenas, "Voto por la Mujer," El Nacional, October 6, 1931, pp. 1, 2; El Universal, October 6, 1931, pp. 1, 8.

38 El Nacional, Part II, October 8, 1931, pp. 1, 4. Among officers signing the protest were President René Rodríguez, Secretary-General Edelmira R. Vda. de Escudero, Secretary of the Interior Ana María Hernández, Head of the Advisory Body Florinda Lazos León, and some delegates; El Universal, October 7, 1931, p. 1.

39 Excélsior, November 1, 1933, pp. 3, 10; Barragán and Rosales, "Congresos Nacionales," pp. 30-39, has information on the second meeting; Excélsior, Part II, November 27, 1933, p. 1; El Mundo, November 28, 1933, p. 1; El Nacional, November 28, 1933, p. 5; Excélsior, November 28, 1933, p. 5, published a highly critical editorial entitled "Communismo Feminista" which ridiculed the efforts of delegates, especially those of Uranga, whose comments were termed "absurd." The editorial concluded that women did not have the faculty or aptitude to dedicate themselves to this type of work and that they were merely imitating men.


41 Excélsior, Part II, November 29, 1933, pp. 1, 6; El Nacional, November 24, 1933, pp. 1, 7; El Mundo, December 1, 1933, p. 1.
42 Ríos Cárdenas, La Mujer es Ciudadana, pp. 107-118, said over 400 women attended the Third Congress; El Universal, September 18, 1934, p. 1; Barragán and Rosales, "Congresos Nacionales," pp. 39-44, covers the Third Congress. Most of the information was taken from El Informador de Guadalajara.

43 Morton, Woman Suffrage, pp. 9-12.

44 Dulles, Yesterday in Mexico, p. 619.


47 Emilio Portes Gil, interview, August 16, 1976, Mexico City. Portes Gil and Calles dealt with Alexandra Kollontai, Russian Ambassador to Mexico. She served in Mexico only a short while because the high altitude caused her discomfort. She left Mexico in 1928.

48 Robles de Mendoza, La Evolución, pp. 26, 58-59, 61.

49 Adelina Zendejas, "La Mujer Mexicana en el Periodismo," El Gallo Ilustrado (June 22, 1975), p. 3; La Mujer, Año I, No. 1 (December 12, 1926), 1; Año 1, No. 6 (June 1, 1927), 1; Año II, No. 13 (January 1, 1928), 8; Año II, No. 15 (March 1, 1928), 8; Año II, No. 14 (February 1, 1928), 8. Parts of Esperanza Velázquez Bringas's thesis were published, as well as poetry by Alfonso Storni; Lola Anderson, "Mexican Women Journalists," Pan American Union Bulletin, LXVIII, No. 5 (May, 1934), 315-320.


52 El Machete, February 25, 1928, p. 1; March 24, 1937, pp. 1, 2; April 24, 1937, p. 3; and May 29, 1937, pp. 1, 4.


56 Ibarra de Anda, Las Mexicanas, pp. 50-54.

57 La Voz de la Mujer (June 22, 1932), p. 1; Adelina Zendejas, "La Mujer Mexicana en el Periodismo," El Gallo Ilustrado (June 22, 1975) p. 4.


59 Ibid., p. 127.

60 Gruening, Mexico, pp. 37, 103, 628.

61 Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, p. 139; James A. Magner, Men of Mexico (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1942), pp. 533-534, maintains that Calles' attitude toward the Church can only be understood in terms of his stubborn desire to make himself absolute master of Mexico. Magner points out the contradiction between Calles' words and his personal actions. There is evidence to show that at
least his second marriage, following the death of his first wife, was contracted in the presence of a Catholic priest. Some of his daughters were enrolled in Catholic school in California, and during a serious illness he entered a hospital run by a Catholic sisterhood in Los Angeles.

62 Gruening, Mexico, pp. 149, 176, 179.


65 Bailey, ¡Viva Cristo Rey!, p. 162, states that the Brigadas were founded by a group of young Jalisco women with headquarters in Guadalajara. He also notes that they obtained ammunition in various ways, including manufacturing it themselves; Jesús Degollado Guízar, Memorias de Jesús Degollado Guízar (México: Editorial Jus, 1957), p. 163; Jean Meyer, Los Cristeros, Vol. III: La Cristada, 2nd ed. (México: Siglo Veintiuno Ed., S.A., 1974), 24-26, states that there were 25,000 Brigada members; Kelly, "The Cristero Rebellion," p. 256, quoting J. J. González, Los Cristeros (México: Impresión privada, 1930), pp. 55-57; Ida Clyde Clarke, Women of Today (Chicago: The John Winston Co., 1928), p. 37, noted that on April 12, 1928 El Universal reported on Agripina, a rebel leader who conferred the title of Colonel upon herself and led one hundred fifty men into the field against the government in the district of Colón in Querétaro. After attacking a ranch and seizing thirty horses, she was last seen marching toward Guanajuato. Government troops had to be rushed in to stop her.

66 Excélsior, August 9, 1926, p. 7; Gruening, Mexico, p. 386; Wilfred Parsons, Mexican Martyrdom (New York: Macmillan Co., 1936), pp. 77-78, 80-89.

68 Ibid., pp. 398-403.


70 Dulles, *Yesterday in Mexico*, p. 425.

71 Lesley Byrd Simpson, *Many Mexicos* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 312, stated that the Cristeros felt that they had been sold out. The provisions of the agreement included (1) a general amnesty for all Cristeros who would lay down their arms; (2) the restoration of priests' and bishops' houses; (3) civil registration of only those priests who had been appointed by the superior hierarchy; (4) religious teaching to be permitted in public schools; (5) appropriate guarantees of all this.

72 Bailey, *¡Viva Cristo Rey!*, pp. 39-40.

CHAPTER V

1934-1940: AN ERA OF HOPE

The period from 1934 to 1940 was dominated by the policies and personality of Lázaro Cárdenas. His administration marked the last phase of the active Mexican Revolution. After exiling key members of the Calles clique who had controlled politics since the 1920s, Cárdenas concentrated on building a socialist state. He sought to fulfill the goals of the Revolution by incorporating previously excluded groups—peasants, Indians, urban workers and women—and attacking revolutionary obstacles—ineffective education programs, the Catholic Church and foreign commercial influence. In an attempt to counter the poor habits which he believed corrupted segments of the population, he banned gambling, conducted an anti-alcoholic campaign, prohibited the manufacture and sale of dice and cards, closed red-light districts in Mexico City and fought graft. The Six-Year Plan, the backbone of his administration, focused on agrarian reform, labor reorganization and the expansion of secular, socialist education. He distributed more land, especially communal ejidos than any other president, oversaw labor's reorganization into the powerful Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM) in 1936 under
Vicente Lombardo Toledano, and supervised educational growth and the construction of thousands of schools. Under Cárdenas, the number of rural schools, teachers (mostly women) and pupils doubled in less than a decade.\(^1\) After bitterly fighting with the Church over control of education, he achieved a *modus vivendi* during his last years in office. In foreign relations, he successfully confronted two crises: the Spanish Civil War in 1936, in which Mexico sided with the Republic, and the foreign oil expropriations on March 18, 1939.

When Cárdenas was first nominated as the PNR presidential candidate on June 1, 1933 he aroused only minimal interest because he was considered a Calles man. Once in office he made clear that his only masters were the Six-Year Plan and the Constitution of 1917. This extraordinary figure was born in the village of Jiquilpán de Juárez, Michoacán into a poor family on May 21, 1895. He worked in a tax collector's office and then became the town jailer. When the Revolution broke out, he joined and fought with Calles. He was promoted steadily, ultimately assuming the rank of brigadier general. Prior to his presidency, he served as Governor of Michoacán, head of the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR) and Minister of War in the Rodríguez administration.\(^2\)

For Mexican women this was an era of enormous hope—President Cárdenas was receptive and supportive and women
in all social classes were well-organized. Unlike many revolutionary leaders, Cárdenas viewed the incorporation of women into the political structure as an essential goal of the Revolution. He stated, "A sound basis for social revolution will not be achieved until the constitution is reformed to grant equal rights." As Governor of Michoacán in 1928, he organized women to combat alcoholism and religion. In undertaking his agrarian reform program, he encouraged women to guard the fields with guns while the husbands worked. During his presidency he affirmed his support for women's suffrage. The basis for his views, however, was not feminism, but socialism and revolutionary logic. Cárdenas was also honest. What he stated publicly he did privately. He did not attack the Church and send his children to convents or publicly support women's rights and lock his wife in at night. Betty Kirk, an American reporter who interviewed First Lady Amalia Solórzano de Cárdenas in October, 1940, found her to be her husband's equal. She was modern and progressive.

Church and State both viewed women as a potential force as yet untapped and undertook vigorous campaigns to compete for their loyalties. In 1934 the Church began the publication of the monthly El Boletín Católico, aimed at the organization of Catholic women in "defense of the family" and more specifically, at preventing the acceptance of the new socialistic education. In every diocese in
Mexico women formed committees to promote traditional values and to fight against the encroachment of the State. Clubhouses with sewing machines and hand irons were established to attract lower-class women. Upper- and middle-class women ran the clubhouses and worked to gain community support.\(^6\)

In the tug-of-war between the Church and State, Cárdenas offered women participation in politics and suffrage in exchange for their backing in the 1934 election. To support his candidacy and to counteract the influence of the Church, he attempted to organize women more extensively than ever before. The Feminine Sector, later called Feminine Action of the PNR, sponsored delegates and sub-committees throughout the Republic. Lígas Femeniles were organized from the Laguna district in Coahuila, where Cárdenas was politically weak, to Quintana Roo. Young girls were incorporated into Brigadas Juveniles.\(^7\) Women in the PNR tackled a variety of problems from health, alcoholism, drugs and illiteracy to recruitment.\(^8\) They also formed vigilante groups to check consumer prices. Committees monitored price fluctuations on articles of prime necessity and denounced any infractions. Another program involved determining how much women paid for indispensable items.\(^9\) In addition, several members in the Cárdenas cabinet were supportive of women's rights. The Ministry of Agriculture under Tomás Garrido Canabal, the
Ministry of Communications directed by Francisco Múgica, and the Ministry of Public Education all had women's associations and women serving on their staffs.\textsuperscript{10}

With increased communication Mexican women in the 1930s were more aware and integrated into the world-wide feminist movement than ever before. They were sensitive that their sisters in neighboring countries were winning suffrage. In Latin America women were beginning to exercise their political rights—in Ecuador in 1929, Brazil and Cuba in 1934, Puerto Rico in 1935, Uruguay in 1938, El Salvador in 1939 and Chile in 1940.\textsuperscript{11} Several new organizations began in Mexico, attracted women of all social classes. The Ejército de Defensa de la Mujer, organized in 1934 to protect and defend Mexican women, the Ateneo Mexicano de Mujeres begun in 1936 by Amalia Castillo de Ledón, the Liga de Acción Femenina led by Elvia Carrillo Puerto and the Acción Femenina of the PNR all served important roles in uniting Mexican women.\textsuperscript{12} The centralizing organization was the Frente Unico Pro Derechos de la Mujer begun in 1935. Its main strength lay in its broad cultural appeal. Many new organizations were internationally oriented, such as the Club Internacional de Mujeres, formed in June, 1933 by women of all nationalities, the Unión de Mujeres Americanas, organized by Margarita Robles de Mendoza the following year, and the Unión Femenina Ibero-Americana (UFIA), begun by Palma Guillén in February, 1936.\textsuperscript{13} Mexican women also
attended and participated in several international conferences held in the United States, Mexico, Europe and Latin America.

Women demonstrated increasing interest in their own social betterment. In February, 1937 the first National Congress of Industrial Hygiene was held in Mexico City with five hundred seventy-six delegates attending. Hundreds of resolutions were adopted and referred to the proper government departments. On June 21 a real breakthrough occurred when a Child Welfare Bureau was established as a department of government to supervise all social welfare work for mothers and children in both public and private institutions. The welfare of women and children was also aided by the founding of the Asociación de Médicas by Dr. Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo in 1938. The same year a League of Mental Hygiene was begun in the capital. These institutions were reinforced in July, 1939 when the National Committee for Mother and Child was established in Mexico City.  

The All-Out Drive for the Vote

Dr. Esther Chapa noted with disgust in her book Woman's Right to Vote that the law excluding women from voting automatically placed them "in the same category as vagabonds, inmates of insane asylums, owners of houses of prostitution, ex-convicts, gamblers, fugitives from justice and other public charges to whom the vote is also denied."
To alter their status and to acquire what they considered to be an indispensable legal weapon, women decided to concentrate all their efforts on suffrage. Immediately preceding Cárdenas's administration, delegates to the Seventh Congress for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in July, 1930 accepted suffrage as one of their major goals. In 1931 the PNR, realizing women's enormous political potential, called the first officially sponsored meeting to deal exclusively with their rights, problems and needs. It was at this meeting that Cuca García boldly accused former President Calles and President Pascual Ortiz Rubio, both present, of murdering campesinos. She was immediately arrested and imprisoned. Within a few hours, as word of the event spread, thousands of women converged on the jail. Police, fearing a riot, were forced to release her. In January, 1932 Florinda Lazos León, Elvia Carrillo Puerto, Edelmira R. Vda. de Escudero, Guadalupe Joseph and María Ríos Cárdenas decided to go directly to Congress to demand women's suffrage. Amid the congressmen's laughter, Elvia protested, "We [women] need to live. Women ought to go to the Cámaras, because the nation is not made up of men only. . . ." Even under the pressure of repeated requests for suffrage, Congress decided that it was too early to allow women to vote.

Women participated to a greater degree than ever before in the 1934 presidential campaign. Edelmira R. Vda.
de Escudero organized the Feminist Revolutionary Party that worked with the PNR in support of Cárdenas. In return for feminine assistance, Cárdenas agreed to support a nationwide drive for woman suffrage. For the first time it appeared that a president was serious about keeping his promise. On December 29, 1934 at the request of Margarita Robles de Mendoza, Mexican delegate to the Inter-American Commission of Women, he announced Mexico's adherence to the Convention on the Neutrality of Women, signed by nineteen American republics. He also appointed Palma Guillén as Mexican Minister to Colombia. This made Mexico the first Latin American country to designate a woman diplomat. In his presidential message to Congress on September 1, 1935 Cárdenas pledged to create youth and feminine sectors for the party. He also stated that "the working women has the right to take part in the elections, since the constitution puts her on an equal footing with man . . ." Shortly after his congressional speech, the president approved the organization of a Feminine Action section to the PNR. This included the incorporation of women into the civic and political life of the nation, equal rights for women to develop themselves to the extent of their capabilities, campaigns against alcoholism, illiteracy and religious fanaticism and equal rights for women under the civil, social, economic and political laws of Mexico.
These events induced women to escalate their activities. The most powerful women's organization in the 1930s was founded in this promising atmosphere in 1935. In an attempt to provide organizational and pragmatic coherence which the women's movement lacked, Cuca García organized the Frente Unico Pro Derechos de la Mujer (FUPDM) and served as its first Secretary General. She was described as "a short, round little woman of forty with a serene face, an inexhaustible wealth of physical energy and the utter simplicity of all those who have dedicated their lives to a cause that is beyond all thought of self." From the middle to the late 1930s she increasingly came to be associated with Mexico's radical left led by General Francisco Múgica and Senator Ernesto Soto Reyes. Former President Emilio Portes Gil identified her with communist women who were directing a campaign headed by Dr. Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo to discredit him as President of the National Executive Committee of the Party. Their object was to put Múgica in the presidency in 1940.21

The women working in close collaboration with Cuca on the Frente were mostly leftists. They included Consuelo Uranga, René Rodríguez, Esther Chapa, Soledad Orozco Avila (who had participated in the Red Battalions during the Revolution) and Frieda Khalo (Diego Rivera's wife). Their goal was to reach beyond the demand for suffrage to establish a basis for collective solidarity from which to press
for the advancement of women. The Frente, in attempting to incorporate women from all social classes and backgrounds, presented a comprehensive program with the following objectives: the unrestricted right to vote and be elected to office, equalization of legal rights between the sexes through alteration of the Civil Code, modification of the Federal Labor Law to allow for the special maternity needs of women, amendment of the Agrarian Code to allow women who fulfilled the same qualifications as men to receive land, legislation to protect women government employees, integration of indigenous women into the social and political life of Mexico, organization of work centers for unemployed women, special programs for treatment of children's problems and protection of infants and establishment of a broad program of cultural education for women. The success of the Frente was reflected in both the composition of its constituency and its numbers. By 1939 it had consolidated hundreds of women's groups and encompassed eight hundred organizations with more than fifty thousand women.22

The Six-Year Plan presented in 1934 by the PNR recommended organizing a cooperative of women under the Ministry of Labor. Little was done to implement this provision during 1935 when Cárdenas was struggling to eliminate the Calles faction, but in January, 1936 he proposed to Congress that an Oficina Investigadora be established to
report on the working conditions of women and minors within the Ministry of Labor. This investigatory body was organized, although empowered only to make suggestions and to publicize its findings. Information was to be gathered not only on working conditions but on the relationship of work to the role of the woman as mother and family head. 23

In the spring of 1936 the PNR granted women the right to vote in party primaries. Women voted as members of labor unions, peasant organizations and women's sections. The Pan American Union reported that two thousand seven hundred and fifty women participated in these primaries in the Federal District, where female political activity was the greatest. At about the same time, the states began to grant women political rights. Guanajuato had allowed limited suffrage in 1934. Puebla followed in 1936, and later Veracruz, Durango, Tamaulipas and Hidalgo. 24

The tempestuous nature of Mexican politics in 1936 caused women's issues to be temporarily subordinated to politics. Cárdenas was preoccupied by both internal disension and foreign affairs. The country had polarized politically with radicals and conservatives carrying on pitched battles in the streets, Mexican labor was undergoing reorganization plans, and the PNR was suffering growing pains. The president's main concern, however, was the struggle within the PNR's upper echelon. The battle raged around Portes Gil, who before becoming president had been
Calles' Attorney General and then head of the PNR Executive Committee, and the radicals led by General Múgica. The Múgica faction looked upon Portes Gil as a conservative Calles holdover and demanded his resignation. Many leftist women—Cuca García, Esther Chapa, Esperanza Balmaceda de Josefé and Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo—joined the radicals in their attempt to remove him from power. In August, 1936 they succeeded. Feminists were overjoyed because they thought it would speed the passage of suffrage. General Múgica, who had presidential ambitions, openly courted the women's vote. His attempt to portray himself as a suffrage advocate was ironic since he had been absent when his own committee voted at the Constitutional Congress in 1917 and he had done very little for women in the meantime. 25 When his leftist politics made him unacceptable to Cárdenas as a presidential candidate, he withdrew.

Disputes with the Church also absorbed the president's attention. Unlike the 1920s, which were filled with widespread violence, the 1930s were characterized by scattered assaults. The main point of contention continued to be education. Socialized education had been incorporated as one of the goals of the Six-Year Plan and adopted by Congress in October, 1934 as part of the education Article. Under this Plan federal control over education was extended to primary, secondary and normal schools in an attempt to disentrench the Church. New definitions of the rights and
duties of both the student and teacher were instituted. The new provisions not only stated that the child deserved good schools and teachers, but also the companionship of members of the opposite sex. The boys "have a right to be educated with the girls, and the girls with the boys, because . . . the man does not live in a world exclusively masculine, or the woman in one exclusively feminine." The teacher now assumed a crucial role in society. Cárdenas stated, "The revolutionary teacher must be a social leader, an advisor, an orientor" who "must not only teach how to read and write, but . . . also show the proletariat the manner of living together better, of creating a more human and just existence." Official dogma held that the school was "the determining factor in the new economic and social order" and the child was to be "an agent of social transformation."26 Parents were deeply resentful over the new teaching methods. There was an attempt to launch another Cristero Rebellion, as well as renewed attacks on teachers and schools in 1935 and 1938. Cárdenas directed that all rural teachers be armed in order to defend themselves better. When parents refused to send their children to state-required classes, the government levied a fifty-peso fine on all those not complying with the requirement. Using skillful diplomacy, Cárdenas attempted to deter attacks against the Church led by Tomás Garrido Canabal in Chiapas and, at the same time, to loosen the hold of Saturnino
Cedillo’s State-Church administration in San Luis Potosí. Considerable violence was perpetrated on both sides but the president was able to ease tensions during his last years in office.

The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War was detrimental to the suffrage issue in Mexico because it raised serious questions about women’s loyalties. When Spanish women voted for the first time in the municipal elections in April, 1933 and nationally in November, the Socialist parties suffered setbacks. The Catholic Church, bitterly fighting the anticlerical reforms of the Republic, openly exerted its influence on feminine voters. Parties polarized, allowing General Franco to launch an attack against the Republic in 1936. The disastrous Civil War that followed led many Mexican legislators, fearing the same fate for Mexico, to reconsider giving women the vote.

Despite this setback, in 1936 it appeared that success was at hand. The Consejo Nacional del Sufragio Femenino met and decided in its January 29, 1936 meeting to launch a new attack for the vote. This meeting was attended by Mexico’s most illustrious feminist leaders: Margarita Robles de Mendoza, Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza, representing the Amigas del Pueblo, Elvia Carrillo Puerto, Cuca García and others. Women from the FUPDM planned to take the issue directly to the President and Congress in telegrams, letters and in person.28
The year 1937 opened with positive signs. In January General Múgica arranged asylum for Leon Trotsky and his wife, both known to favor equality of the sexes. In February, Cárdenas gave an interview to Joseph Freeman of *New Masses* in which he indicated his continuing support for women. He emphatically stated, "We intend to give to the women of Mexico all the opportunities to participate in social life in equality of circumstances with men." 29

In the primary elections of the PNR, held in early April, 1937 women participated in large numbers all over the nation for the first time. Cuca García and Soledad Orozco Avila were selected as candidates for the Chamber of Deputies in Uruapán, Michoacán and Guanajuato, although the national election law still restricted eligibility to male voters. They planned to run in the regular elections held in June and appealed to the Supreme Court to overrule Article 37 on electoral laws because it conflicted with Articles 34 and 35 which conferred citizenship upon all Mexicans. Although opposed by four PNR-supported candidates, the consensus at the time was that Cuca had won in Uruapán. Orozco, a widow with six children, also was rumored to have won. This forced a decision upon the National Executive Committee of the party. They ruled that a constitutional amendment would be needed before women could vote or stand as candidates in national elections. The electoral committee awarded the seats to their male opponents. 30
Under these adverse circumstances, women demanded to know the president's position. They occupied his residence but did not find him there. The women then launched an intensive search in the capital, intending to hold him to his promise. Frustrated in their attempts, they undertook their most radical action— they staged a hunger strike outside the president's home in late August. This continued for two weeks until Cárdenas, under pressure and unwilling to create any martyrs, promised in a speech before a women's conference in the port of Veracruz, to introduce a bill in the next congressional session that would establish equal political and civil rights for women.31

With the president's public pledge came an outpouring of articles and mail that flooded the Government palace in Mexico City urging that the vote be passed. Both individual women and organizations contacted Cárdenas requesting that he amend the suffrage articles. Elvia Carrillo Puerto, Margarita Robles de Mendoza, Cuca García, Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, and even Hermila Galindo, who had been in retirement since Carranza's death, sent messages encouraging suffrage.32 Telegrams streamed in from all over the world. Women in the United States expressed a special interest in their neighbors' fate. Anna Kelton Wiley, representing the National Women's Party, visited Mexico in May, 1937 and met with members of the Frente. Cuca gave her a message for American women. She asserted that the Mexican government had "taken
advantage of services, [and] sent us [women] back home" but "we are not discouraged by the indifference of our Government in denying us our rights." Of her own attempt for a place in the Chamber of Deputies, she stated that she had been nominated for Congress with a ten-thousand-vote margin but had not been allowed to take her seat. Cuca frankly admitted that she was displeased with the decision of the PNR Board because it "does not represent the will of the people." She defiantly vowed to run again and pledged to continue the fight for women's equality.33

Cárdenas, keeping his promise, sent his proposed amendment of Article 34 to include women as citizens to the Senate on November 23, 1937. When the committee recommended changes, the president, pressured by the powerful CTM and feminist organizations, sent it back. On December 18 the committee recommended passage of the original amendment and the Senate approved the measure by unanimous vote on December 21, 1937. Two days later the amendment went to the Chamber of Deputies. Here it was referred to committee but they adjourned without acting on it. Even though passage of the amendment was thus postponed, women were still optimistic. This was the closest they had ever come to political equality. With no intention of letting the opportunity slip away, they undertook efforts for increased activity.34
The president's attention, however, was soon absorbed by his pending proposals for reorganization of the PNR and with international relations. By the end of 1937 Cárdenas's reorganization plans for the PNR were complete. The name was changed to Partido Revolucionario Mexicano (PRM), a popular sector was formed with individual membership in which women had the same rights as men and a women's section with representation on the National Executive Committee was established. An international incident was barely avoided when national conflict with foreign oil companies resulted in their expropriation in the spring of 1938. The Mexican nation, including the Church, united behind the president. Feminist Leagues helped rally women to the aid of the Republic. In the capital, Amália Solórzano de Cárdenas headed a collection drive to help cover the expense of expropriation. Thousands of women from all social classes contributed everything from candelabras to gold wedding bands. The First Lady remarked, "I feel happy to see how the Mexican woman responds when she is called upon in the name of her country." Mexican leaders praised the generosity of the Mexican woman and her strong sense of nationalism but they would not give her the vote.

In June, 1938 Cárdenas called a special congressional session for early July. On July 6 the proposed amendment to Article 34 came up for consideration by the Chamber of
Deputies. There was some opposition but it was easily quelled. Since no one was willing to defy the president openly, the amendment was unanimously approved the same day and referred to state legislatures for ratification.37

During the period between adjournment in July and the opening session in September, 1938 women continued their drive for the vote. On September 1, in his annual address to Congress, Cárdenas expressed his firm support for seeing the measure through:

An estimable proportion of Mexican women has taken part for years in the social struggle of our nation. They have been of high quality and numerous. Frequently, when our pride permitted it, they have taken part in the most dangerous activities in behalf of the most advanced ideas. 38

Mexican women appeared strongly united in the fall of 1938 during the visit of Margarita Nelken, President of the Spanish Anti-Fascist League and former member of the Communist bloc in the Spanish Chamber of Deputies. Nelken was in Mexico to attend the Congreso Internacional Pro-Paz in mid-September in Mexico City. She was received by the First Lady and given a rally and banquet on September 14 by Mexico's most illustrious feminists. Cuca García, Esperanza Balmaceda, Concha Michel, Margarita Robles de Mendoza, Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, Esther Chapa, Amalía C. de Ledón, René Rodríguez, Julia Nava de Ruisánchez, Lenor Llach, Otilia Zambrano, Adelina Zendejas and others turned out to pledge their solidarity with the Spanish Republic and women.39
By the end of 1938 a majority of Mexican states had ratified Cárdenas's proposal. In May, 1939, however, with the session almost over, no action had been taken on the amendment, even though all twenty-eight states had ratified it. 40

The women's issue was preempted again with the PRM struggle to select a presidential candidate for the 1940 election. This was a crucial choice because conservatism had made a strong reappearance in old Cristero areas. An organization called the "Anti-Communist Center" founded in Guanajuato in 1936 by a Nazi propagandist and the Unión Nacional Sinarquista, begun in 1939, attracted mass support. Both issued a call for hispanidad (unity of the Spanish world) and for maintaining the institutions of the family and Church in a corporate state under a hierarchical, authoritarian government. Its main adherents were Catholics frustrated by the direction of the revolutionary government which they felt did not consider their needs. Mexico's extreme political divisions were foremost in Cárdenas's mind when he chose a successor. Fearing that General Múgica would only further disrupt the political balance, he turned to the moderate General Manuel Avila Camacho, National Defense Minister. Immediately Camacho assured the public that he and his wife were faithful Roman Catholics and that he would continue to support women's interests. 41
The conservatives, consolidated behind the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) and its candidate, General Juan Andreu Almazán, posed the most serious threat. Almazán campaigned against the communist influence, atheists, the godless public schools and the entrance of Spanish refugees. Capitalists, the clergy, the wealthy, the Cristeros, the fascists, unorganized labor and unconverted peasants provided him with a heavy backing. To win feminine support, the pro-Almazán coalition organized the Feminist Idealist Party in 1939. It immediately began to establish feminine groups in all parts of the country and threatened to control most of the feminine vote, if women gained the right to participate in the coming election.42

Why so many Mexican women chose to support Almazán is open to speculation—perhaps they were disillusioned with the failure of Congress to implement women's suffrage or disenchanted over Cárdenas's attempt to promote a socialist state. After all his efforts on their behalf, it is perplexing that many women deserted Cárdenas and the PRM. Perhaps they never identified with feminist demands for equality or could it be that the Church had defeated Cárdenas after all?

The role the specter of conservatism played in Congress's failure to act on suffrage in the summer of 1939 was also bewildering. With time running out, feminists went directly to the National Council of the PRM, as well
as to individual members of Congress to demand the vote. What happened is still unclear but Congress adjourned in July, 1939 without having altered the national election law. In a valiant last effort, Cárdenas, rapidly losing power, pressed for action on the pending suffrage amendment in the opening session of Congress on September 1, 1939.

He reminded the congressmen:

"From the very beginning of my term I have been urging that the grave injustice be rectified that cheats Mexican women of substantial rights while, on the other hand, it imposes upon them all the obligations of citizenship. Suffrage in Mexico should be made complete by giving women the right to vote. Otherwise, the electoral function remains incomplete. . . . Although the idea commonly prevails that women's suffrage, if enacted, will be accompanied by problems of a reactionary nature, this should not prevent the enactment of the measure, for it is one of our basic duties to organize and guide along channels that are favorable to the nation, the fundamental functions of the sovereign prerogatives of the people."

President-elect Camacho's cautious attitude caused hope to fade. Women realized that only drastic action could have any effect. The Feminine Action section of the party, its affiliated organizations, and other feminist groups combined to send Cárdenas a telegram on March 24, 1940 urging him to call a special session of Congress as soon as the regular session ended. They also pressed him to designate the pending suffrage amendment as the sole subject for consideration.

Cárdenas, true to his word, would not interfere in the election and refused to call a special session of Congress.
Women's suffrage failed and the nation turned its attention to industrialization and World War II.

**Journalists**

Women were extremely active in journalism with many publications being issued by women's groups. The Frente Único Pro Derechos de la Mujer had its own magazine, **Mujer Nueva**, directed by María Efraína Rocha. The Comité Coordinada Femenina para la Defensa de la Patria published **Unidad** under María Efraína Rocha and Adriana Lombardo, and later **Rumbos Nuevos**. The Unión Democrática de Mujeres Mexicanas joined the Unión Nacional de Mujeres Mexicanas to publish **Mujeres**.⁴⁶

In addition to feminist periodicals, women wrote for all major newspapers—Excélsior, El Nacional, and El Universal—and dozens of magazines. **Revista de Revistas** covered feminists, women in sports and general items of interest, although by 1936 gossip on Hollywood stars predominated. **El Universal Ilustrado** also covered women, with interest in Hollywood prevailing by the end of the period. Throughout the 1930s Emilia Enríquez de Rivera published **El Hogar**, focusing on women in the home. She maintained publication of the magazine until 1943. Soledad Orozco Avila, who had collaborated with her husband on El Bajío, assumed control after his death. In 1933 she moved to the
capital where she continued as a journalist, often contributing to *El Nacional*.47

Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza wrote extensively. Most of her work reflected her interest in indigenous culture and rural education. In 1936 she served as director of a school for women called the Industrial Femenina "Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez" in Morelia. Although Juana had always been interested in women's rights and education, her involvement lacked the fire of her earlier efforts. This may have been due to her age—she was in her sixties—or disagreements with the leadership. She broke away from feminists and Communists like Cuca García and Adelina Zendejas during the Cárdenas presidency over "their dogmatism."48

The bulk of Juana's time was spent in writing for magazines and newspapers and authoring pamphlets. *Alma Mexicana: Por la Tierra y Por la Raza* appeared on November 1, 1935 in Mexico City. This magazine was published only a short while there but reappeared in Morelia in 1941. Juana's despair, prompted by thirty-five years of incessant fighting, surfaced in the November 1, 1935 issue, when she complained, "My seventy years have not served me for anything." She explained that she had the right to shrug her shoulders or go to a corner of the world to rest but she had not found the corner. Her decision was to continue, even with the sad conviction that the struggle was futile. Rather than retreat in silence, of which she disapproved,
she published *Alma Mexicana* to serve as the "soul" of an inextinguishable race. In the November 15, 1935 issue Juana dealt with the disagreement raging at the time between feminists of the middle and left. In an article entitled "Las Mujeres Sin Patria" Juana expressed her disenchantment with the feminist leadership which she considered "unMexican." The example she provided was an incident involving Margarita Robles de Mendoza who had introduced a musical group from Michoacán and failed to pronounce names because she said they were too difficult. Juana strenuously objected because to her this revealed a lack of national pride. Juana also continued to write for other publications, such as *El Heraldo de México*, directed by Camilo Arriaga. She submitted articles on topics ranging in subject matter from girls' education to reconstruction after the Revolution and poetry.

Juana also wrote several short pamphlets on a variety of topics. *El Cuatatapá*, a children's story, and *Los Tres Problemas Nacionales* were published in 1933. In 1935, she published four pamphlets. The first, *Prelim-narias de Combate*, appearing in February, was dedicated in part to the Bloque Nacional de Mujeres Revolucionarias presided over by Lazos León. It was sponsored by the Amigas del Pueblo which had been reactivated. The next month *Camisas de Colores* came out, also sponsored by the Amigas del Pueblo. Published in May, *Antorcha Nueva*, a
homage to teachers and her granddaughters, was a long poem about struggle. *La Compañía de la Escuela*, written for the families of students in the Benito Juárez School where Juana worked, urged parents to take an interest in the education of their children. *República Femenina* was an important pamphlet in which Juana described her attitudes about women. She recommended the founding of a feminist bank and special schools for women. She also stated that women must not imitate men but develop their own interests. She concluded with the pronouncement that there cannot be democracy without popular suffrage. In 1940 Juana wrote a short pamphlet with several other women. In *Llamada la Atención a la Conciencia Nacional*, the authors, after criticizing the Church, demanded equal attention for women and at least 50 per cent of all employment opportunities. The demand was signed by Concha Michel, Dr. Antonia Ursúa, Elena Torres, Aurora Reyes, Juana and several others.

Besides writing and reactivating the Amigas del Pueblo, Juana was part of an unnamed women's group formed on May 24, 1936. Other members were Concha Michel, Laura Mendoza, Guadalupe Maciel de Graniel, Rosa G. de Maciel and Guadalupe Fernández de Lara. Aurora Martínez, Sara López Godína and Glorinda Martínez joined later.53

Among Juana's papers were plans for a girls' school in Morelia. This proposal was written in February and
April of 1941, but it was never realized because she died the following year.

Leadership

Women's groups revivified in the 1930s with a supportive president and women's organizations that reflected their interests. Many women who had been inactive emerged and re-emerged as leaders. Carmen Parra Vda. de Alaniz, an old revolutionary from Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, who had been imprisoned during the Revolution, became a representative for the Frente Unico Pro Derechos de la Mujer in Chihuahua and active in anti-fascist groups. Guadalupe Narváez from Puebla, who had worked with Carmen Serdán and the Constitucionalistas, helped found the Frentán and served as an officer. Julia Nava de Ruisánchez, a professor and writer from Nuevo León, joined the first women's revolutionary groups with Dolores Jiménez y Muro. In the 1950s she served as President of the Ateneo Mexicano de Mujeres. Soledad Orozco Avila, a teacher and writer from Jalisco, had been part of the Casa Obrero Mundial when very young. She worked for the government for years, ran for office in Guanajuato at the same time as Cuca, and remained active in the National Party.54

During the 1930s, some women who had been relatively unknown in the 1920s assumed leadership. Drs. Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo and Esther Chapa, Margarita Robles de Mendoza,
Amalia C. de Ledón, Palma Guillén, Eulalia Guzmán and Leonor Llach were professional women who played a seminal role in the women's rights movement. Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo, born in San Luis Potosí, had studied medicine with Esther Chapa. Both women joined the Communist Party and became staunch feminists. Esther Chapa was born in Tamaulipas but received her medical training in Mexico City where she became interested in prison reform, prostitution and women and child care. She wrote for numerous scientific journals and newspapers such as El Nacional. An active Communist, she made several trips to the People's Republic of China before her death from cancer in December, 1970.55 Margarita Robles de Mendoza was the first President of the Unión de Mujeres Américas and later Secretary of the Feminine sector of the PRM. Amalia C. de Ledón, from Tamaulipas, was a writer and founder of the Ateneo Mexicano de Mujeres and the Club Internacional de Mujeres. She was later appointed to serve on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and as Ambassador to Switzerland and Austria.56 Palma Guillén, an educator, was named first Mexican Ambassador to Colombia by Cárdenas and later served in Denmark. She was appointed Consul in Milan, Italy and Ambassador to the League of Nations. Leonor Llach, a writer, was a founder of the Ateneo Mexicano de Mujeres, Sección Mexicana de la Liga Internacional de Mujeres Ibéricas e Hispano-Americanas and the Organización Nacional
Femenina of the PNR. She held a variety of government positions in the Public Education, Health and Library Departments. Eulalia Guzmán was out of the country during most of the 1920s and for a good part of the 1930s. When in Mexico, she was an avid feminist who actively participated in women's organizations.  

Much of the leadership came from Communists. Besides Chapa and Rodríguez Cabo, Consuelo Uranga, Concha Michel, Esperanza Balmaceda and Adelina Zendejas helped focus attention on human rights and women's issues. Originally from Chihuahua, Uranga was imprisoned and persecuted for expressing her ideas. Michel from Jalisco was a writer and singer. An active, versatile person, in 1935 she helped organize the Bloque de Mujeres Revolucionarias, and with two hundred women and three hundred children participated in the take-over of an hacienda. She also founded an industrial school in the Pirámides of San Juan Teotihuacán. Balmaceda was a professor and second President of the Unión de Mujeres Américas. Zendejas, born in Toluca in 1915, was a young women in the 1930s but participated actively. She is still writing for newspapers and magazines, often under the pseudonyms "Victoria Miranda," "Yolia" and "Mara Blanco."  

There was also a group of women, small because their ranks had been thinned by death, who were active in all phases of the Revolution. Cuca García and Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza were among the few survivors who carried the
spirit of the Revolution into all their activities. It is a sad commentary on the Mexican government that both died unrewarded for their efforts. Cuca died a few years ago of malnutrition and Juana, poor and forgotten, died on July 13, 1942. 59

In the period from 1934 to 1940 it appeared that women would assume a new role in Mexican society. They came closer than ever before to acquiring basic political equality. A major dilemma was that women could not sever their link with the Church. Male revolutionaries never fully trusted women because in their minds women's rights and Church problems were inexorably tied. In addition, internal distractions—the Church, political intrigue and succession—and outside influences—the Spanish Civil War and the oil expropriations—took the focus away from the women's struggle. Moreover, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that old-fashioned machismo played some part in the refusal of Mexican men to recognize women as their political equals. 60
NOTES

CHAPTER V


5. Kirk, Covering the Mexican Front, pp. 75-76.


and there were several conferences and meetings on the subject. See, for example, Luis G. Franco, La Lucha de la Mujer Contra el Vicio del Alcohol (México: Secretaría de Industria, Comercio y Trabajo, 1930), a fifteen page pamphlet covering a conference on the subject.


13 de Navarrete, La Mujer, pp. 192, 203-204; Esperanza de Vázquez Gómez, "Historia y Finalidades del Club Internacional de Mujeres," Mujeres, No. 68 (August 25, 1961), p. 18; Amalia C. de Castillo de Ledón and Julia Nava de Ruisánchez were among the charter members of the Club Internacional de Mujeres.

14 Pan American Union Bulletin, LXXI, No. 9 (September, 1937), 729; LXXII, No. 7 (July, 1938), 434; and LXXIV, No. 5 (May, 1940), 415-416; de Navarrete, La Mujer, p. 204.

15 Millan, Mexico Reborn, p. 168.


18 El Nacional, January 28, 1932, pp. 1, 2, 8.


22 Adelina Zendejas, "El Movimiento Femenil Mexicano," El Día (June 16, 1975), p. 15; Millan, Mexico Reborn, pp. 164-166, reported that when she visited Frente headquarters, she found many women in the office were non-Spanish speaking Indians.


25 Portes Gil, Quince Años, p. 528; Millan, Mexico Reborn, pp. 106-107; Morton, Woman Suffrage, p. 27. Among the papers of Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza was a twenty-seven page pamphlet called Estatutos del Grupo "Acción Femenina" Centro Nacional Director Pro-Múgica (Mexico, n.p., 1939). It outlined General Múgica's work for women and even how he helped them in the 1917 Constitutional meeting! Juana's feelings on his candidacy are unclear. Adelina Zendejas, interview, July 21, 1976, Mexico City, told me that Múgica was not a feminist in his personal life. During this period he was married to Mathilde Rodríguez Cabo. They later divorced.

27 Dulles, *Yesterday in Mexico*, pp. 626-627.

28 *El Nacional*, January 21, 1936, pp. 1, 7; April 25, 1936, pp. 1, 4; and September 10, 1936, pp. 3, 4.


32 Archivo General de la Nación, Papeles Presidenciales, Ramo de Cárdenas, Paquete 528, 544/1, #41938, Elvia Carrillo Puerto to Cárdenas, August 27, 1937; #9905, María del Refugio García, Lucinda Villarreal, and Margarita Robles de Mendoza to Cárdenas, March 1, 1937. The women wanted to meet with the President to discuss suffrage. #49946, M. Rodríguez Cabo to Cárdenas, August 28, 1937; #42272, Hermila Galindo to Cárdenas, August 30, 1937.


34 *El Universal*, December 17, 1937, pp. 1, 6; CTM pledged its strong support for the amendment, December 22, 1937, pp. 1, 11; and December 23, 1937, pp. 1, 10.

36 El Nacional, April 11, 1938, pp. 1, 6; April 12, 1938, pp. 1, 5; April 13, 1938, pp. 1, 6; April 14, 1938, p. 1.


39 El Nacional, September 11, 1938, pp. 1, 7; September 13, 1938, pp. 1, 4, 8; and September 15, 1938, pp. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8. Verna Carleton Millan, author of Mexico Reborn, attended the banquet for Margarita Nelken.


42 Morton, Woman Suffrage, p. 39.

43 El Nacional, May 18, 1939, pp. 1, 7; May 25, 1939, pp. 1, 8; Morton, Woman Suffrage, pp. 40-41.

44 Townsend, Lázaro Cárdenas, pp. 334-335.

Adelina Zendejas, "La Mujer Mexicana en el Periodismo," El Gallo Ilustrado (June 22, 1975), p. 4. Mexican women's magazines during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, such as Ideas: Revista de Mujeres de México and Mujeres were packed with information on the women's struggle. Ideas had input from Mexico's top women writers: Patricia Cox, Eulalia Guzmán, Leonor Llach, Julia Nava de Ruisánchez, María Luisa Ocampo, Enriqueta de Parodi, Elena Sodi de Pallares, Elena Torres, Luz Vera and Artemisa Sáenz Royo. Mujeres, a monthly still publishing, ran several features on Mexican women from the period of the Aztec empire to the present. Sáenz Royo, Aelina Zendejas, Palma Guillén and María Elvira Bermúdez all contributed articles on women to Mujeres.


Susana Mendoza, interview, August 12, 1976, Cuernavaca.


El Heraldo de México, October 8, 1930, pp. 1, 4; December 3, 1930, pp. 1, 3; and April 29, 1931, p. 1.

Juana said that the three problems were the Constitution, national unity, and reintegration. Her intense dislike of Spaniards surfaced in Los Tres Problemas Nacionales.

The Amigas del Pueblo were a continuation of the original 1909 Club. Founders were Manuela Peláez, Laura Mendoza, Rosa G. Vda. de Maciel (Juana's sister) and Juana.

Juana B. Gutiérrez de Mendoza, unpublished papers.

55 Mujeres Mexicanas Notables, pp. 218-220; Rocha, Semblanzas, pp. 15-16, 19; C. Frerot, "Contribución de la Dra. Esther Chapa a la Liberación Femenina," Excélsior, January 31, 1976, pp. 1, 2, 6. It is interesting that Esther Chapa and Laura Mendoza (Juana's daughter) were married to the same man. After Lorenzo Rosendo Gómez, a Communist, divorced Laura, he married Esther. Rosendo was Esther's second husband. Her first was Ismael Cosío Villegas, brother of historian Daniel. Dr. Virginia Chapa (Esther's sister), interview, July 19, 1976, Mexico City; Susana Mendoza, interview, August 12, 1976, Cuernavaca.


57 Mujeres Mexicanas Notables, pp. 133-134, 156; Rocha, Semblanzas, p. 28.

58 Rocha, Semblanzas, pp. 22-23, 28-30.

59 Adelina Zendejas, interview, July 21, 1976, Mexico City, said that Cuca became separated from the group of women with whom she associated. While working as a servant for a young woman who had no inkling of her revolutionary career, she became ill and died; Rascón, "La Mujer," p. 143, states that Juana's family had to sell her typewriter to pay for her interment. Her family never mentioned this to me. Juana was poor and many of her papers were destroyed when she was forced to use them to build fires to heat the beans she sold on the street. Susana Mendoza, interview, August 12, 1976, Cuernavaca. Elisa Acuña y Rossetti was not active after the violent phase of the Revolution and Dolores Jiménez y Muro died on October 15, 1925.

60 Adelina Zendejas, interview, July 21, 1976, Mexico City; Millán, Mexico Reborn, pp. 160-161, states that "Man is the Mexican woman's worst enemy."
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Mexican Revolution had a profound effect upon the lives of women. Advances in industrialization which provided a host of new jobs and activities of feminists in the United States and Europe encouraged Mexican women to demand full participation in national affairs. During the Revolution, they undertook new responsibilities, traveled throughout the Republic and became politically aware. Unfortunately, their sacrifices were ignored. Ernest Gruening's observation in *Mexico and Its Heritage* that "the Revolution has done little, purposefully, toward the emancipation of women" is uncomfortably close to the truth. They participated in the fighting, plans and attempts to implement the goals of the Revolution, but were neither recognized for their efforts nor granted the political equality promised in revolutionary ideology. Some were awarded pensions and commissioned with rank, but most lived poverty-stricken and died unknown. Their failure to obtain suffrage in the Constitution of 1917 was a bitter disappointment for women. Ironically the conservatives favored allowing women to vote because they thought it would ensure their control over Mexico. The radicals, however, remained vehemently opposed because they feared that women would merely serve
conservative interests, destroying the Revolution and their domination over its direction. Both factions expressed more concern with manipulation of Mexico's political future than with women's rights, democratic government or fulfillment of the Revolution's goals of equality.

For Mexican women the first major break with discriminatory laws, customs and traditions took place during the Porfiriato (1876-1911). The most dramatic changes occurred in education. Middle-class women attended schools and universities and many entered the labor market as teachers, nurses and government employees. Politically they organized labor and anti-Díaz groups. Several women involved themselves journalistically, publishing books and magazines. No longer confining their subjects to music and religion, they wrote revolutionary poetry, criticized the Díaz regime and questioned women's submissive role in society. The lower-class women's situation remained dismal; they worked for a pittance as domestics or factory hands or turned to prostitution. So many were driven into prostitution that Mexico City had more registered prostitutes than Paris, a much larger metropolis. Women, irrespective of social class, suffered heavy legal discrimination. Their lives were severely circumscribed by laws prohibiting them from professions and locking them into marriage and family life. In addition, the Catholic Church reinforced institutionalized sexism by encouraging women to confine their existence to family and home.
From the outset of the Revolution, women immediately accepted new challenges since this afforded them the opportunity to prove their capabilities. They traveled, became educated, acquired new positions and learned the value of self-organization. Upper-class women worked for health organizations, middle-class women served in all capacities and lower-class women became soldaderas. Some gains were achieved in the legal sphere. Divorce was permitted for the first time and the 1917 Constitution guaranteed certain rights for working women. However, the concomitant political rights remained outside their grasp because of their close relationship with the Church, which revolutionaries believed must be destroyed if the Revolution were to succeed. The effects of the fighting—rape and pillage, death and the break-up of the family—were also devastating. Everyday living was disrupted by separations, deaths and new liaisons. Unprotected women were pressed into service, kidnapped and often abused. Under these circumstances, women organized to correct injustices and to demand their rights.

Between 1915 and 1924 the most intense struggle for women's rights in Mexico centered in the state of Yucatán. Site of the first two Feminist Congresses, Yucatán was the scene of the most active participation of women in Mexico. Yucatán's leadership resulted from the
support of its socialist governors, the progressive ideas of its women and wealth from its henequen production. In addition, it was one of the first Mexican states to open education to women. Salvador Alvarado expanded educational opportunities and improved working conditions in an attempt to incorporate women into the society. These programs were broadened further under Felipe Carrillo Puerto. Women were granted suffrage, allowed to run for office and provided access to birth control information and educational benefits. Elvia Carrillo Puerto, Felipe's younger sister, organized women into Feminist Leagues which sponsored meetings, conducted night schools and launched campaigns against illiteracy and superstition, alcoholism and improper hygiene and child care. The assassination of Carrillo Puerto by opposition forces in 1924 abruptly halted nine years of social reforms. The new administration dissolved the Feminist Leagues, removed women from their positions in municipal and state government, cancelled suffrage and stopped all social programs. After 1924 the attention centered on Mexico City where feminists in the 1920s and 1930s organized on a massive scale.

Women achieved only limited success in the period from 1920 to 1934. After helping to win the Revolution and to carry out its reforms, especially in education and health, they received few of its benefits. There were
several reasons: the ruling "Sonora dynasty" did not view women's rights as an integral part of the goals of the Revolution, national and international crises preempted attention and women's continued support of the Church against the government embittered revolutionary leaders who felt they must protect their control of the Revolution against this "fifth column" within Mexico. The arguments of those favoring women's rights were weakened by women's open sympathy for the de la Huerta revolt against the government in 1923, the Cristero Rebellion in 1926, the assassination of President-elect Obregón in 1928 and women's resistance to the government's program of socialist education. Finally, their disorganization and political divisiveness, evident in the 1925 Congreso de Mujeres de la Raza, damaged their image. Nevertheless, women organized on a broader scale and sponsored and attended many conferences. A few educated women assumed prominent positions in government and in the universities. By the end of the decade the PRM recognized women's political potential and acted to incorporate them into the party. However, women were still not full participatory members of society. The key ingredients for acquisition of political equality—a supportive president and strongly organized women's associations—were absent until after 1934.

During the six-year presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas well-organized women workedconcertedly towards winning
the vote. They faced fewer obstacles than in the past because by this time both the Church and State, struggling to protect their interests, needed and sought women's allegiance. Women rallied to Cárdenas since he offered what the Church could not—suffrage and participation in government. After accepting women's support in the presidential campaign, Cárdenas worked for feminine suffrage. Feminist Leagues were organized and women were officially incorporated into the PNR. In 1936 the PNR granted them the vote in party primaries and a few states allowed suffrage. After several attempts a suffrage amendment passed both houses of Congress in 1938 and was ratified by all twenty-eight states. However, Congress adjourned without completing the formal ratification process and the amendment never became law. Women's major stumbling block was their inability to sever their traditional connection with the Church. In addition, internal distractions—conflict with the Church, political intrigue and succession—and outside influences—the Spanish Civil War and the foreign oil expropriations—embittered leaders and stole the focus from the women's struggle. The overwhelming support from women for the conservative candidate in the 1940 presidential race confirmed suspicions about their disloyalty to the revolutionary government.
Despite their efforts and the support they marshalled, women remained disenfranchised. Nevertheless they were organized and acquired the experience of working together. However, much of this energy dissipated in the 1940s as problems of industrialization and World War II diverted attention from their concerns. In the postwar period, when women in the United States suffered severe reversals, Mexican women won the legal battle for political equality. On December 31, 1946 they officially received the municipal vote. Seven years later, on December 31, 1953, after the Church and State had arrived at a modus vivendi and PRI was firmly in control, they were granted complete suffrage. In 1958 Mexican women had the privilege of voting in their first presidential election and since then several women have served in Congress. In 1975 Mexico hosted the Año Internacional de la Mujer meeting. Unfortunately, it failed to stir sentiments akin to those championed by the strong women who participated so effectively in the Mexican Revolution.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES AND DOCUMENT COLLECTIONS


Biblioteca Carrillo Ancona. Mérida, Yucatán.

Biblioteca Nacional. Biographical Collection, Mexico City.

Biblioteca de la Oficina del Año Internacional de la Mujer. Mexico City.


Latin American Collection. University of Texas. Austin, Texas.


Zimmerman Library. University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, New Mexico.

B. PERIODICALS

I. Newspapers

Alma Mexicana, Mexico City and Morelia.

América India, Mexico City.

El Día, Mexico City.
El Diario del Hogar, Mexico City.
Excélsior, Mexico City.
El Gráfico, Mexico City.
El Heraldo de México, Mexico City.
El Machete, Mexico City.
Mexican Herald, Mexico City.
El Mundo, Mexico City.
El Nacional, Organo Oficial del Partido de la Revolución Mexico City.

Novedades, Mexico City.
El Popular, Mexico City.
El Pueblo, Mexico City.
La Revista de Yucatán, Mérida.
El Universal, Mexico City.
Vésper, Guanajuato.
El Voto, Mexico City.
La Voz de la Revolución, Mérida.

II. Magazines

Arte y Letras, Mexico City.
Diario Oficial del Gobierno del Estado de Yucatán, Mérida.
El Hogar, Mexico City.
La Mujer Moderna, Mexico City.
Pan American Union Bulletin, Washington, D.C.
Revista de Revistas, Mexico City.
La Semana Ilustrada, Mexico City.
La Semana de las Señoritas Mexicanas, Mexico City.
El Semanario de las Señoritas Mexicanas, Mexico City.
Siempre, Mexico City.
El Tiempo Ilustrado, Mexico City.
Tierra, Mérida
Todo, Mexico City.
El Universal Ilustrado, Mexico City.

C. WORKS CITED

I. Primary Sources: Books

Bases Que se Discutieron y Aprobaron en el Congreso Obrero. Méjico: Lígas de Resistencia, 1921.


Congreso Obrero de Izamal. *Segunda Gran Convención de Trabajadores Convocado por el Partido Socialista del Sureste de México.* Mérida: Compañía Tipográfica del Sureste, 1922.

Congreso Obrero de Motul. *Tierra y Libertad; Bases que se Discutieron y Aprobaron en el Congreso Obrero Celebrado en la Ciudad de Motul Para Todas las Ligas de Resistencia del Partido Socialista Yucatán.* México: Talleres Tipográficos del Gobierno del Estado, 1921.


Rodríguez Cabo, Mathilde. La Mujer y la Revolución. México: n.p., 1937.


II. Primary Sources: Articles


Carrillo Puerto, Felipe. "New Yucatán." *Survey,* LII (May 1, 1924), 138-142.


______ "Tres Razones Fundamentales del Grupo 'Indo América'" *América India.* December 25, 1929.


"La Instrucción Nocturna para Obreras." La Convención Radical Obrera, a. 12, No. 531 (January 16, 1898), 1.


———. "Voto por la Mujer." El Nacional. October 6, 1931.

Sáenz Royo, Artemisa N. ["Xóchitl"]. "Mujeres Revolucionarias: Elvia Carrillo Puerto." Mujer, No. 7 (January, 1933), 16.

Wiley, Anna Kelton. "Woman Suffrage in Mexico." Equal Rights, XXIII, No. 11 (June 15, 1937), 84-104.


III. Secondary Sources: Books


IV. Secondary Sources: Articles


Bercovich, Harry, Jr. "Yucatan's Slain Governor Was Savior of His People." *San Francisco Examiner.* March 16, 1924.


________. "A Maya Idyl: A Study of Felipe Carrillo, Late Governor of Yucatan." The Century Magazine, April, 1924, pp. 832-836.

Herrick, Jane. "Periodicals for Women in Mexico during the Nineteenth Century." Americas, XIV, No. 3 (October, 1957), 135-144.


"La Mujer en la Vida Sindical y el Artículo 123."

Newhall, Beatrice. "Woman Suffrage in the Americas."

Plenn, J. H. "Forgotten Heroines of Mexico: Tales of the Soldaderas, Amazons of War and Revolution."
Travel, LXVII (April, 1936), 24-27, 60.

Southern California Quarterly, XLV, No. 3 (September, 1963), 245-264.

Rascón, María Antonieta. "La Mujer y la Lucha Social."


Rip-Rip [Rafael Martínez]. "Las Mujeres en la Revolución."
El Gráfico. September 8, 1930.


——. "La Mujer Mexicana en el Periodismo." El Gallo Ilustrado (June 22, 1975), p. 3.

V. Pamphlets


VI. Unpublished Sources


Gutiérrez de Mendoza, Juana B. Unpublished papers. Cuernavaca, Mexico.


VII. Dissertations and Theses


VIII. Interviews


Ruz Menéndez, Rudolfo (head of University of Yucatán library, author). April 6, 14 and 16, 1976.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Shirlene Ann Soto was born in San Luis Obispo, California on January 22, 1947. She attended San Francisco State University, receiving her Bachelor of Arts in June, 1969. Her graduate work was undertaken at the University of New Mexico where she received a Master of Arts degree in August, 1971. She held a teaching assistantship with the Department of History from 1970-1972 and a Ford Foundation Fellowship from 1972-1976. During 1976-1977 she served as an Instructor for Chicano Studies. Her Doctor of Philosophy degree in History was awarded in August, 1977. In September she joined the History Department at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California.