Old library cards.

*  

Before moving on to the World War II manifestations of these universalist hopes of social science, there is one more Vasconcelos-related clue to examine. Back in 1927, to be sure, Vasconcelos was yet to launch his presidential campaign, becoming for a brief moment a Messiah of democracy—far from what he would eventually become in his post-election exile: a fanatic of his own idiosyncratic brand of Catholicism, virulently anti-American, anti-Protestant, and anti-Semitic. It is thus intriguing that the Regenstein Library holds yet another Vasconcelos clue—this one from this late period. The papers of Morris Cohen (1880-1947) include the records of Cohen’s daughter and his biographer, Leonora Cohen Rosenfield (1910-1982).

Cohen was one of the most prominent liberal philosophers and legal thinkers of the first half of the twentieth century, a member of the Conference on Jewish Relations, and a mentor of various prominent scholars over his many years at the City College of New York. For a time in the late 1930s, he also worked at the University of Chicago. Leonora Cohen was
originally trained as a scholar of French literature and taught at the University of Maryland for many years. Educated in the Romance-language tradition, she seems to have had a reading command of Spanish—at least in her 1958 correspondence with Vasconcelos. She also seems to have been committed to the spread of her father’s ideas in Spanish—something she tried to do through her contacts with Vasconcelos and the Mexican representative at the Organization of American States in Washington D.C., the poet Luis Quintanilla.

What is intriguing about this clue is to see Vasconcelos, already in his seventies, engaging with the very liberal thought of a very academic logician, a Jewish American scholar, mentor of characters as distant from Vasconcelos as Sydney Hook and Ernest Nagel—Cohen’s students. A year before his death, while he was director of the Biblioteca México, Vasconcelos seems to have been a bit more at peace with himself. As José Ortega y Gasset in his later years, he seems to have been nostalgic for true philosophical achievement. He appears to have wanted a philosophical legacy that went beyond *Ulises criollo* (memoirs), or *La raza cósmica* (travel writing/historical essay/civilizational manifesto). Having been self-consciously throughout his life a kind of George de Santayana—the Hispanic philosopher fully acquainted with the U.S. philosophical tradition—he kept reading more than his Santayana, his William James or his Josiah Royce (he disliked John Dewey). He thus became acquainted with Morris R. Cohen’s philosophy, which was liberal yet still critical of Dewey. In fact, before the Vasconcelos-Leonora Cohen correspondence, some of Cohen’s books had already been translated into Spanish. There was *Introducción a la lógica*, translated by Elí de Gortari (Mexico City, Brevarios del Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1952), and *Razón y naturaleza*, a translation of Cohen’s major work, with an introduction by none other than Gino Germani (Buenos Aires, Paidós, 1956). Vasconcelos found in Cohen—especially in his autobiography, *A Dreamers Journey*—a mirror that reflected his own blend of science, reason, intuition, and idealism. Thus his introduction to what is, to my knowledge, an

Predictably, Vasconcelos felt the need to cleanse Cohen from his Russian, Jewish origins. As a student in the City College of New York, said Vasconcelos, interacting with
Irish Catholics and Protestants, Cohen “dejó de ser hombre de secta para convertirse en lo que habría de ser toda su vida: ciudadano espiritual del mundo.” Then he used Cohen’s autobiography to go back to his phantom, Santayana, as well as his own past achievements as a great “memoirist”: “El filósofo de inclinaciones literarias tiene el escape de la literatura. Santayana se hizo rico con una novela justamente famosa, ‘THE LAST PURITANS’” (sic). And then Cohen’s blend of rationalism and idealism led Vasconcelos to write: “…se puede tomar la posición de Cohen como una prueba, como un ejemplo de mi propia tesis filosóíinformada a su vez en [Alfred North] Withehead, cuando afirmó: ‘que la filosofía está separandose de su etapa tradicional de subordinación al Logos, la razón, para entrar de lleno al dominio de la armonía, entendida como que dijera Platón en el Timeo’ (“Morris R. Cohen—Ensayo de interpretación…”).

In reviews and commentaries here and there, Cohen was strongly critical of “mystics” of the Hispanic persuasion, thinkers of Vasconcelos’s lineage, such as Salvador de Madariaga and Miguel de Unamuno. One can only imagine what it was like for old Vasconcelos to read Cohen’s *Reason and Nature*: “I am a rationalist in believing that reason is a genuine and significant phase of nature; but I am an irrationalist in insisting that nature contains more than reason. I am a mystic in holding that all words point to a realm of being deeper and wider than the words themselves.” And one can only picture his recall of the un-linguistic revelations of his beloved Fray Luis de León when reading Cohen’s words: “Genuine mysticism always holds fast to the idea that the substance of reality is altogether beyond the power of language.” We can guess his reaction at reading, in a *Dreamer’s Journey*, about Cohen’s hope “…to rescue the word ‘liberal’ from its association with laissez-faire economics, superficial politics, or mushy-minded sentimentality, and instead show liberalism as simply scientific method stubbornly at work on human problems.”
Returning to social science at the University of Chicago, it is clear that in the immediate aftermath of World War II, ideas of universalism achieved a renewed relevance, yet in a different fashion than in the 1920s. Thus, Robert Redfield was part of a Committee to Frame a World Constitution. Redfield collection, as well as those of philosopher Richard McKeon and sociologist Edward Shils, is filled with clues about why this project became important to the world and to the University of Chicago. Redfield and Tax participated in the UNESCO projects and were involved in post-war efforts to define post-racial societies. Tax’s papers include traces of this concern, as in his report “Democracy in Middle America,” which blended the post-war universalist preoccupation with the Cold War agenda of worldwide democracy. Tax viewed social science as action anthropology toward a better life, as he wrote in “The Credo of the Social Scientist”: the process wherein the determinism of nature is understood, rationally controlled, and harnessed for a better life.
Professor Robert Redfield
Dean, Division of Social Science
University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

June 9, 1941

Dear Professor Redfield:

To keep you informed concerning my efforts toward a more scientific approach to the problem of democracy in the present crisis, I am enclosing a copy of a tentative plan for organized a research council on democracy which is receiving some favorable comment here. The main problems in regard to organizing such a council are of course funds and personnel. The idea is that it would cooperate with the N.S.C., S.S.R.C., A.C.L.S., the Office of Education, the Office of Civilian Defense, etc. I would appreciate your comment.

Since leaving Chicago I have spent most of my time in Washington working on this and related aspects of the morale problem. Interest in these problems and awareness of the crisis are growing daily, it seems to me. We have, however, very far to go.

The meeting on applied anthropology at Cambridge was interesting and, I believe, successful. We now have our society and it remains to be seen what comes of it. I am hoping to gain the backing of the society in this project.

I was delighted to meet Mr. M.L. Wilson and had quite a chat with him. Also heard his excellent work at the Nutrition Conference.

My plans are indefinite but I am trying to get support for a research project concerning a special phase of the problem of personality development and democracy, namely discipline for democracy. I would like to show how the spread of democracy is allied with the spread of the scientific attitude and how an objective, experimental attitude may be developed in the child by the progressive use of directional rather than repressive types of discipline, the work to be written in simple terms for the use of teachers and parents. I think this more important just now than the work on educational problems in Hawaii and would like to work on it at the Summer Workshop on Individual Development at Chicago. This plan is, however, confidential since I have not relinquished my A.A.U.W. Fellowship for the Hawaii project.

Yours very sincerely,

[Signature]

L. Thompson’ letter to R. Redfield, Redfield papers.
Tax’s the Credo of the Social Scientist, S. Tax papers.

Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 as recorded are parts of an important proposed activity that should be given a high priority by UNESCO except as there are still more urgent needs in the liberated countries. Change priority from (2) to (1) on numbers 5 and 6.

Add to number 1, following word "attitudes": "developing methods of evaluation of projects, etc., aimed at promoting international understanding".

Number 6 - rewritten as follows:
UNESCO be charged with the immediate formulation of plans which will lead to the earliest possible establishment of an Institute to study processes, purposes and problems of UN. This Institute of specialists in the social sciences would be composed of a faculty functioning in the dual capacity of (1) serving as liaison between UNESCO, UN, and other specialized international agencies, and (2) assisting in the preparatory training of people engaging in work of international significance. The Institute, as focal point, would promote the study and understanding of world service and the social art of living together by offering training in those fields of social science recommended by the specialists in charge. The opportunity would be available to all nations on an exchange basis.
Curiously, the very first Congreso de Historiadores de Mexico y Estados Unidos, which took place in Monterrey in 1949, belongs to these kinds of efforts. Lewis Hanke (Hispanic Foundation, the Library of Congress), and Silvio Zavala began the efforts for such an encounter between U.S. and Mexican historians. It was part of an internationalist and
universalist agenda of which Chicago humanist tradition was very much a part. Redfield, Tax, and McKeon in the University of Chicago were part of the effort, as was Silvio Zavala, Jaime Torres Bodet (UNESCO director 1948-1952), and Edmundo O’Gorman in Mexico. There were in Chicago and other U.S. universities people preparing to rewrite history in a post-racial and post-nationalist way, as well as drafting a world Constitution (McKeon papers). The encounter between Mexican and U.S. historians was thought in this context, very much as had happened in 1935 with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which financed the rewriting of the history of U.S. – Canada relations. Certainly, the idea for the 1949 meeting in Monterrey was about dialogue between two historical experiences and two historiographical traditions, the U.S. and Mexico. Gradually, however, these meetings became encounters of historians of Mexico of various nationalities. Clues for this transformation can be found in other archives, such as the Stanley Ross Papers, at the N. L. Benson Latin American Collection University of Texas, Austin, and The Lewis Hanke Papers at the Special Collections of the University of Massachusetts Library, Amherst.

One last clue: the role of Mexico in the transformation of such universalist aspirations in to the plain and simple agenda of the intellectual Cold War. Traces can be found in the records of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) at the Regenstein Library’s Special Collections. The CCF was a liberal organization founded in 1950, against the excesses of U.S. imperialism and Soviet totalitarianism. For two decades, it became a front of the liberal anti-communist cause, though its close relation to the CIA (discovered in the 1960s) made it into a bête noire of the Latin American left. In fact, as Patrick Iber’s work has shown (The People’s Republic of Letters, forthcoming), the CCF was at the center of the civil war among progressive Latin American intellectuals. The Mexico-Chicago connection contains clues about this war. The CCF papers include essays and letters written by prominent Mexican intellectuals in and around the main CCF publication, Cuadernos del Congreso por la
Libertad de la Cultura (later Mundo Nuevo). The collection also includes information related to the CCF congress in Mexico City in 1956, and of seminars held by the CCF’s Latin American Institute for International Relations in Mexico. There are also two important Mexico-based Spanish exiles, and a Mexican labor leader and intellectual: Julián Gómez, aka Julián Gorkin; Pere Pagès, aka Victor Alba; and Rodrigo García Treviño. From Mauricio Magdaleno to Octavio Paz; from Rufino Tamayo to Juan Soriano; from Alfonso Reyes to José Emilio Pacheco—many intellectuals were involved with CCF activities. Its records, as well as those of sociologist Edward Shils, include the traces of this bizarre but important moment in the Cold War. Photographs of the meeting of the Inter-American Conference for Cultural Freedom in Mexico City (September 1956) show Mauricio Magdaleno, Sara de Ibáñez, Rómulo Gallegos, Salvador de Madariaga, Pedro de Alba, and Alfonso Reyes.

Inter-American Conference for Cultural Freedom, September 1956, in Mexico City. IACF collection.

* 

It is worth mentioning, if succinctly, another collection from Chicago social scientist; another anthropological image of Mexico: Manning Nash. He was a graduate of the University of
Chicago, and later a faculty member. He taught at the Graduate School of Business before joining the Anthropology Department. There, he developed an image of Mexico inspired, more than anything by the modernization theories of the 1950s. His graduate work at Chicago, assisted by Tax, had been on Guatemala: *Machine Age Maya: The Industrialization of a Guatemalan Community* (UCP, 1958). Later, as part of the National Science Foundation’s project, “Man in Nature,” he studied Tzeltal-speaking people. A number of young Mexican anthropologists were involved in this project and their reports can be found in Nash’s archive, for example “El paraje y la familia en Tenajapa,” by Andrés Medina Hernández. Most interesting are his notes for a study—never actually undertaken—of the oil-industry’s impact on Villahermosa.
Robert Redfield wanted to be a poet. So revealed his son, James Redfield, Chicago professor of Classics and at the Committee of Social Thought, commenting on the poetry of Chicago anthropologist Paul Friedrich ("Paul Friedrich: Ethnographer as Poet and Poet as
Ethnographer,” *Dialectical Anthropology*, 1986.) Indeed, México and Chicago style social science shared a level of interaction beyond the sometimes arid realm of social science. A connection also existed in poetry, language, and literature.

Edward Sapir (1844-1939), a student of anthropology and linguistics under Boas, revolutionized the study of cultures through the careful documenting and analyzing of languages. There was at the time a growing concern in Chicago anthropology with native languages of the Americas. Sapir taught in Chicago during the late 1920s, then later at Yale, where he trained distinguish linguist Norman McQuown (1914-2005). McQuown in turn taught at Chicago in the 1950s and 60s, leaving a lasting legacy in the study of the native languages of México. It was through such odd sociological, anthropological, and literary connections that Paul Friedrich (1927-) became professor of anthropology at Chicago in the 1960s. A linguistic, anthropologist, and poet, Friedrich brought serious political and linguistic considerations into the Chicago style study of “communities.” In this sense, his greatest contribution was the way he was able to combine a mastery of political theory with deep and rigorous ethnographic engagement in his studies of Tarascan “communities” in Michoacán.

It was only natural that such “dangerous liaisons” between poetry, literature, language, and social science would take place in Chicago. The university had gradually become a center of professionalization for the disciplines of linguistics and linguistic anthropology—and México was there from the beginning. In addition, poetry and literature were bound up in the University of Chicago’s prominent philological tradition. This tradition included Spanish language studies and a deep engagement with poetry and literature. The study of romance languages at Chicago had an established tradition by the 1920s. Spanish literature, however, was studied within the limits of the German-style Roman-languages tradition, with its focus on Spain’s golden age letters and on philological matters. This tradition went back to the earliest years of the University, when Karl Pietsch (1869-1930), a
prominent German philologist specialized in the Spanish language, established the study of Romance philology, with his publications on the Spanish fragments of the French Grail.

In fact, Pietsch contributed yet another clue about the Chicago-México connection: one of his students at the University was philologist Aurelio Espinosa (1880-1958). Born in Colorado, Espinosa became the most eminent scholar on the question of the Spanish language in the United States—focusing especially on New Mexico. As such, he formed part of the exclusive, international network of hunters of Spanish words, which included Pedro Henríquez Ureña and Franz Boas in México, along with Ramón Menéndez Pidal in Spain.
It was until the 1920s, however, that Mexican literature began to truly be studied in Chicago, thanks to pioneer scholar Carlos Castillo. The work of Carlos Castillo and his Chicago student, Luis Leal, is one of the least studied, but most important—and noble—moments in the institutionalization of the study of Mexican letters in the U.S. Later, in the 1940s, Chicago became the home of some of the most prominent exiled philologists and literary critics of Spanish letters: Joan Coromines, Francisco Ayala, Amado Alonso, Ricardo Gullón—all of whom taught at the University. This in the context of Chicago as an important center for discussion of twentieth-century American literature and among a faculty that has counted with some of its luminaries: Saul Bellow, Adam Zagaweski, and Mark Strand—the latter with important Mexican connections.

Small wonder, then, that Regenstein Special Collections contain the large archive of one of the most important poetry magazines of American modernism, *Poetry: a Magazine of Verse*, an institution since 1912. Harriet Monroe (1860-1936), a poet, cultural impresario, and great traveler, directed the magazine until her death in in Macchu-Picchu in 1936.
Monroe’s large archive includes a travel diary of her 1933 trip to México. She mentions her promenades through the city, Teotihuacán, and Xochimilco, guided by an elegant and interesting engineer and painter, Cecil O’Gorman (father of Juan and Edmundo). Monroe narrates her interactions with the México of Rivera, Simpson, and the legends of Hart Crane and other inhabitants of that old capital of revolutionary and aesthetic hopes. The Poetry archive also includes poems by, and complicated correspondences with, two women poets for whom México was both home and leitmotif: Mariam Storm, who lived in Uruapan and Guadalajara and wrote poems such as “Michoacán Scenes”; also Idella Purnell, based in Guadalajara, who along with Witter Bynner and Agustín Basave edited another important, though less well-known poetry magazine of American modernism, *The Palms* (1923-30).
Harriet Monroe’s diary, trip to Mexico.
Another clue is worth mentioning, if only in passing: the 1970s photographs of Mexican authors by the poet and photographer Layle Silbert (1913-2003); Octavio Paz, La China Mendoza, Sergio Nudelstejer, Sandro Cohen, and others.
As Luis Leal recalled, there were two professors of Spanish language at the University of Chicago in the late 1930s, Salvador Narciso Treviño and Carlos Castillo (Luis Leal: Auto/Biography by Mario T. García, Austin, University of Texas Press, 2000). According to don Luis, Castillo was a Spaniard, but had lived in México, and was one of the few Spanish professors in the U.S. teaching literature beyond the Golden Age period. The University of Chicago Press archive includes correspondence, reviews, and papers related to Castillo’s projects: The University of Chicago Spanish Dictionary; a New Concise Spanish-English and English-Spanish Dictionary of Words and Phrases Basic to the Written and Spoken Languages of Today (UCP, 1948, reissued many times); and the pioneer Antología de la literatura Mexicana (UCP, 1944), coauthored with Luis Leal. “Before I left for war,” recalled Leal, “Professor Castillo had asked me to collaborate with him putting together an
anthology of Mexican literature.” It was published because it was, as Carlos Castillo wrote to UCP, the only one of its kind in the United States: “The anthology does not include the young poet or prose writers of the present generation, but it does include certain living writers whose work has achieved wide recognition.” It was none other than prominent Colombian intellectual Germán Arciniegas, then visiting professor at Chicago and a prominent member of the CCF, who read and approved the anthology, though he suggested the inclusion of other authors, such as Mariano Azuela, Martín Luis Guzmán, Carlos Pellicer, Julio Torri, Antonio Caso, and Samuel Ramos –which Castillo did not include.
Castillo’s book cover, UCP records.
Mr. J. T. McNeill  
University of Chicago Press  
Faculty Exchange

Dear Mr. McNeill:

I have looked over Professor Castillo’s manuscript entitled Antología de la literatura Mexicana. It seems to me that it is a valuable book, of great assistance for teachers and students of Mexican literature. The choice of pieces is very well done and the colonial period seems to me especially complete. My advice is that the book would be a good one to publish.

Nevertheless, I want to make a few suggestions. The first is that at the end of each piece Professor Castillo should list the book from which it is taken, as he did in some of the selections like Amado Nervo’s. Second, I think that in the last part of the anthology Professor Castillo ought to include some other authors. You can suggest to him the following:

Novelists — Mariano Azuela, Lopez Puentes, Martin Luis Guzman,

Poets — Carlos Pellicer,

Essayists — Julio Torri, Antonio Gasco, and Samuel Ramos.

Sincerely yours,

German Arciniegas
INDICE GENERAL

I. MEXICO DESCRITO POR LOS ESPAÑOLES
   Hernán Cortés, 1485-1547
   Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, 1474-1566
   Fray Toribio de Motolinía, 1492-1568
   Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, 1499-1590
   Francisco López de Gómara, 1511-57
   Bernal Díaz del Castillo, 1492-1581
   Antonio de Solís y Rivadeneyra, 1610-86

II. EPOCA COLONIAL
   Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, 1512-75
   Bernardo de Balbuena, 1568-1632
   Don Juan Ruiz de Alarcón y Mendoza, 1587-1639
   Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, 1651-95
   Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, 1645-1700

III. DE LA INDEPENDENCIA A LA REFORMA, 1810-67
   José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, 1776-1827
   Don Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza, 1789-1851
   Don José Joaquín Pasado, 1801-60
   Ignacio Rodríguez Galván, 1816-42
   Fernando Calderón y Beltrán, 1809-45
   Guillermo Prieto, 1818-97
   Don José María Ron Bárceca, 1827-1908

IV. DE LA REFORMA A LA REVOLUCIÓN, 1867-1910
   Costumbristas y románticos
   Manuel Payno, 1810-94
   Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, 1854-93
   Vicente Riva Palacio, 1832-96
   Justo Sierra, 1848-1912
   Juan de Dios Pena, 1822-1910
   Manuel Acuña, 1849-73
   Manuel María Flores, 1840-86
   Manuel José Othón, 1858-1906
   José Peón y Contreras, 1843-1907
   Ángel de Campo, 1868-1908

Del modernismo a nuestros días
   Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, 1859-95
   Salvador Díaz Mirón, 1853-1928
   Luis G. Urbina, 1868-1934
   Amado Nervo, 1870-1919
   Enrique González Martínez, 1871-1911
   Rafael Delgado, 1873-1914
   José López Portillo y Rojas, 1850-1923
   Federico Gamboa, 1864-1939
   Francisco A. de Icaza, 1863-1925
   José Vasconcelos, 1881-
   Ramón López Velarde, 1888-1921
   Alfonso Reyes, 1889-

V. ROMANCES TRADICIONALES Y DE RELACION
   Don Gato
   El Payo
   La Pastorcita
   De Navidad
   La Rana
   Los Díez Perritos
   El Casamiento del Piejo y la Pulga

440 pages
507 pages

Introduction, Notes Bibliography

$9.50

Published by
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

ORDER FORM

The University of Chicago Press
5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois

Please send me ______ cop______ of

CASTILLO:
ANTOLOGIA DE LA LITERATURA MEXICANA
($3.50)

☐ Cash enclosed ☐ Charge to my account
☐ For examination

NAME

ADDRESS

Castillo’s Anthology, table of content, UCP marketing, UCP records.
Castillo was an intriguing case. On the one hand, he pioneered the study of Mexican literature in the U.S. His greatest legacies were perhaps the dictionary and the training of Luis Leal, who became a key personality in the institutionalization of the U.S. study, not only of Mexican letters, but also of Mexican-American literature. On the other, he seems to have been a true iberista, in the mold of José Vasconcelos in Mexico, R. Menéndez Pidal in Spain, or Aurelio Espinosa in the U.S. In iberista fashion, Castillo had a purist view of the essential Hispanic character of Mexican culture. In the Antología, he wrote about Mexican governments:

…han dejado infiltrar en el país un anglosaxonismo, ora saludable, ora nocivo, que ha diluido su latinidad e hispanidad. Empero, la lengua castellana háse conservado incólume, a tal grado que México sigue siendo lingüísticamente más castellano que algunas provincias de la península, pudiendo sus pueblos de la altiplanicie rivalizar con los de la mesa de Castilla en tesoros de rancia dicción. . .

With these views in mind, his text for the book Mexico (Chicago, Wheeler Publishing Company, 1939) becomes doubly intriguing. Castillo wrote the book in order to accompany the photos by well-known travel photographer Burton Holmes. From the turn of the century to the early 1940s, Burton Holmes was a prominent travel writer and photographer who published books on all sorts of places—full of exoticist views of alien civilizations. His pictures of Mexico included, for example, interesting exoticist depictions of children. As for Castillo’s argument, it was not very different from the majority of U.S. books published about Mexico between the 1880s and the 1940s. Yet the mystery of this text lies in the way it deals with women. Whereas travel accounts of the U.S. by Justo Sierra, Francisco Bulnes, or José Vasconcelos often spoke negatively of the power of the American Woman, Carlos Castillo depicted Mexico City as “A city ruled by woman.” At the same time, he deployed the exoticist imagery common to many U.S. accounts of Mexican travel: “…driving out of a boulevard, you find the traffic very heavy. Yet down the middle of the street, in the
midst of this traffic, you are as likely as not to see an Indian, driving a flock of turkeys to market. You cannot believe your eyes, but he goes, walking along slowly, quite unconcerned, his flock before him no more disturbed than their owner.”

*
In 1946, Norman A. McQuown joined the University of Chicago Anthropology Department. He studied under Sapir at Yale, and completed his dissertation under Leonard Bloomfield, one of the most distinguished philologists and linguists of the first part of the 20th century (also a Chicago professor from 1927 to 1940). As Mexican linguist and editor of McQuown’s work in Spanish, Paulette Levy, explains, the Chicago anthropologist dealt with “a grammar of the hitherto un-described Totonac language, the variety then spoken in Coatepec, Puebla. He was the first technical descriptor of any language of this linguistic family.” (P. Levy, personal communication.) He worked in the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia, and established the University of Chicago into one of the places where one could train to get to the field with enough knowledge of the most important languages for the Mesoamericanist. In fact, upon arriving in Chicago, McQuown found a vast quantity of material on various languages of contemporary Mexico and Guatemala, all collected in the 1930s by Manuel J. Andrade (1885-1941). According to historian Terry Rugerley (Of Wonders and Wise Men, Austin, Texas University Press, 2001), Andrade was a Cuban, though he might have been from the Dominican Republic. What is certain is that he was a student of Sapir, and close to Boas. Aside from his collection of materials for the University, Andrade elaborated a grammar of Yucateco Maya, which McQuown made accessible posthumously. As McQuown recalled:

“In September, 1946, I was placed in charge of Carnegie Institution of Washington's Mayan Linguistic Research Program, initiated by Manuel J. Andrade, and carried forward by Abraham M. Halpern after Andrade's death in 1941. Andrade collected materials extensively in the various languages of the Mayan family, including over 500 phonographic recordings (300 in Mam, 112 en Yucatec, 55 in Quiche, 37 in Kanjobal, 32 in Huastec, 23 in Quekchi, and 5 en Aguacatec), dictated texts in these (and in Lacandone, and Pokoman), a volume of Cakchiquel texts written by Juan de
Dios Rosales, grammatical and vocabulary materials in all the foregoing (and in Ohuj, Bachahom, Palencano, Pokoman, and Tzutuhil). A Yucatec grammar based on intensive analysis of 214 Yucatec texts was prepared by Andrade before his death and is at present being processed for publication” (Presentation to M. Andrade, *Yucateco Grammar*).

McQuown organized and microfilmed Andrade’s material, along with reports by Tax, Redfield, Villa Rojas, Ricardo Pozas, Fernando Cámara Barbachano and others, thus gathering an important archive of Mesoamerican languages. (Microfilm collection of Manuscript in Cultural Anthropology, [http://moca.lib.uchicago.edu/moca.pdf](http://moca.lib.uchicago.edu/moca.pdf)). He also founded the Language Laboratory (now Language Laboratories and Archives), along with Eric P. Hamp. As Levy explains, McQuown’s input in the study of the languages of Mexico was invaluable. He was a true cultural broker, a man who could write in English, Spanish, and German. In a spirit very unlike that of our contemporary U.S.-centered scholarship, he immersed himself in Mexico’s intellectual life, publishing and writing in Spanish. As Levy put it: “Most institutions dealing with Mexican Indian languages have, at their origin, either the participation of McQuown himself, or of one of his students: Hopkins at CIESAS, Thomas Smith-Stark at El Colegio de México, T. Kaufman documenting Indian languages for INALI. McQuown himself had two extended stays at Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, UNAM. . .”

Chicago professor John Lucy has continued this work at the University of Chicago, teaching and collecting invaluable material on Yucatec and other languages. He is currently directing the digitizing of the material, making it available at the Center for Latin American Studies ([http://cailla.uchicago.edu/?page=home](http://cailla.uchicago.edu/?page=home)).

*
Another clue about this language-anthropology-México constellation is Paul Friedrich collection. Friedrich joined the faculty at the University of Chicago in 1963, and over the years held appointments in the departments of anthropology, linguistics, and the Committee on Social Thought. Trained in languages and ethnology, he joined the war effort, offering his linguistic skills (just as McQuown, knowing German and Russian, had done). Professor Friedrich is a unique character. He read Tolstoy in Russian while doing fieldwork in Michoacán, in the mid 1950s. Two important anthropological and historical works dealing with agrarian conflict resulted from this fieldwork, *Agrarian Revolt in a Mexican Village* (1970); *The Princes of Naranja: an Essay in Anthrohistorical Method* (1986). On top of this he also studied the Tarascan language (*A Phonology of Tarascan, 1975*).

To examine Friedrich’s papers is to catch a glimpse of a renaissance man at work. The son of a prominent Harvard political theorist and a poet versed in classical Greek and Latin, as well as modern American and Russian literatures, Friedrich became interested in México when he read Redfield’s Tepoztlán as a Harvard undergraduate, although the young Friedrich was also bothered by many of Redfield’s conclusions. Years later, reflecting on these years in *The Princes of Naranja*, he wrote, “While fascinated by Redfield’s ideas about what he called the “folk-urban” continuum, and while very taken by his precise and literary style, I rebelled most fundamentally against his views on politics, leadership, and political history… I wrote in my personal notebook as follows: ‘I wonder off-hand whether or not Redfield oversimplifies the homogeneity, the uniformity, the contentment and the resignation of the Tepoztlatecos (sic)…’”

Indeed, throughout the Tarascan period of his scholarship, Friedrich became absorbed with the larger question of Chicago style anthropology, and felt the need to challenge it. The first installment of his dissertation, *Agrarian Revolt...,* consisted of a political, ecological, economic, and psychological history of Primo Tapia’s cacicazgo. (Perhaps another clue about
the México-Chicago connection, as Michoacán is one of the most common places of origin for Chicago’s Mexican immigrants and Tapia was for a while an immigrant in the U.S.) The book laid bare complex networks of violence, at local, state, and national levels—decades of caciques and assassinations. This very non-Redfield take on a small Mexican village was, needless to say, a healthy antidote to so many “community” studies.

Friedrich—whose papers and books are not short in autobiographical data—thought of returning to Naranja to write something else—an essay, more of a “think piece” on method and politics, using his 1950s ethnography as a point of departure. As the years passed, he worked on Russian literature, poetics, and other topics, often thinking of a new book on Naranja. Curiously, as he explains, it was in the Spring of 1981, in the context of the sixth Congreso de Historiadores de México y Estados Unidos, in Chicago, that “…Friedrich Katz crossed my path behind the Rockefeller Chapel (…) and urgently asked me to discuss the methods used in Agrarian Revolt with Jean Meyer, a French anthropologist (sic) specializing in México, who happened to be in Chicago for a two-day conference. I agreed and made a breakfast appointment. But then, feeling I didn’t fully understand or even remember the method, called the thing off, feeling guilty.” (The Princes of Naranja).

It was not until the death of his father, the political theorist, that Friedrich was able to write The Princes of Naranja, in order to reconnect, as he put it, with his prominent father… and with the Machiavellian moment he had experienced in Naranja (he found a copy of Machiavelli’s Prince, in Spanish, in the school library of Naranja). Friedrich’s papers include his field notes, among them annotations about Machiavelli in Naranja politics. His characters were far from the “traditional” Tonto, Listo, of Redfield’s Tepoztlán and of subsequent “community” studies.
It would be farfetched to say that Friedrich founded a school at the University of Chicago, the way Redfield and Tax did. His approach is unique—difficult to include in any
typology of anthropological or historical schools due to its literary, personal, psychological and historiographical nuances. But this makes his works all the more interesting. His papers at the Regenstein Library Special Collections include the careful narrative of daily experience, written in a poetic style, as well as complicated analyses of Tarascan Terms, where he tried to decipher, for instance, the different words used to refer to genitals. It includes intriguing pictures of Naranjas inhabitants in the 1950s, as well as poetry. Friedrich is among the selected few anthropologists—Renato Rosaldo, Stanley Diamond, and Michael Jackson among them—who have found secrets of language revealed in poetry, uncovering unsuspected dimensions of anthropological and social knowledge. (Friedrich wrote about this process in “The Culture in Poetry and the Poetry in Culture,” *Culture/Contexture: Explorations in Anthropology and Literary Studies*, edited by E.V. Daniel and J.M. Peck, 1996).

*These anthropological, linguistic, and literary clues have led us to the topic of poetry. Let us complete our investigation by following this trail.

The records of Poetry include what are, to my knowledge, the earliest English versions of Ramón López Velarde’s poetry. As it turns out, they were translated by a historian/anthropologist, H.R. Hays (1904-1980). He traveled to Mexico in 1939, knowing little Spanish. There he met the Revueltas brothers, learned Spanish, and translated José Revueltas’ *El Luto humano* (published as *The Stone Knife*, 1947). He became fascinated by poetry in Spanish and became one of the most influential translators of Neruda’s poetry into English. His 1943 translation of two poems by López Velarde (1888-1921) for *Poetry*, made the strange, complicated metaphors of the Zacatecas poet accessible in English:

What delightful madness to be saying
in my poverty, in my forsakenness,
I am most rich, richer that a grand vizier:
the heart that loved is turned into a beacon!

¡que adorable manía de decir
en mi pobreza y en mi desamparo:
soy muy rico, muy más, que un gran visir:
el corazón que amé se ha vuelto faro!

The poetry clues do not end there: in the Regenstein Library’s Special Collections, the papers of Drew McCord Stroud (Ryu Makoto) (1944-) also display an important Mexican connection. To this poet and translator, expatriate in Japan, a great connoisseur of Mexican letters, we ought the translation of Xavier Villaurrutia’s poetry. In his papers, one can witness the careful editing of the various versions of his translations, attempts at making accessible a poet who represented the cutting edge of the Mexican avant-garde while remaining a sort of formal classicist.

Where Villaurrutia (1903-1950) writes (“Inventar la verdad”) “Oigo mi corazón latir sangrando,” Stroud experimented with “I hear my wounded bloody heart,” but feels happier in the more poetic “I hear my heart beat as it bleeds.” And, in translating the conceptual deepness of Villaurrutia’s music, Stroud decided to highlight the music in translation:

¡Qué prueba de la existencia
habrá mayor que la suerte
de estar viviendo sin verte
y muriendo en tu presencia!
Esta lúcida conciencia
de amar a lo nunca visto
y de esperar lo imprevisto;
este caer sin llegar
es la angustia de pensar
que puesto que muero existo.

What better proof of being
than to have the luck in essence
to be dying n your presence
while I live you without seeing;
In this love without excrescence
just to wait without defying.
And this fall without bottom
in the anguish of a Sodom
where the proof of love is dying.
WHAT DELIGHTFUL MADNESS

Héctor López Velarde (Mexic)

tr. by H. R. Hays

What delightful madness to be saying
In my poverty, in my forsakenness
I am most rich, richer than a grand vizier;
The heart that loved is turned into a beacon!

When my flesh is wearied
Of tasting love beside the living flesh
And when I perish in amazement
Seeing the sorrow in the sand
My sex leaves in perennial supplication:
Suddenly I see the world transformed
Into a lovesick mausoleum...

And my heart drinks a black wine in its torture
And an echoing migratory skeleton
Like a lute goes walking down the road.

And so that I may know the password,
Beneath its skull are tied
The ribbons of the pastor's hat.

Within its empty aromatic cranium
An eternal essence of viaticum is borne
And, lastly, in the depths of its bright breast,
Bright with Zion and with Purgatory,
In the spot where once it had a heart.
It lets me drink the radiance of a beacon!
As the clues lead us through the connections between poetry-anthropology-Chicago-México—let us end with Paul Friedrich who in the midst of Naranja in 1953, ventured to lay down a poem among his sacrosanct scientific field notes:

A Leading Quatraine for Acculturation.

I know not who this Indian is
A bow within his hand,
But he is standing by a tree
and watching white men land.
***
When Daniel Boone goes by at night
the phantom deer arise
and all lost wild America
is turning their eyes.
Paul Friedrich, anthropologist, lover of the classics, scholar of the Tarascan language, explorer of a *purepecha* Machiavelli and of the knowledge powers of poetry, reached a higher poetic pitch in the 1970s, leaving behind the nostalgia of lost traditions,
(Neighboring Leaves Ride This Wind, Chicago 1976):

Poesis and Community

the poem arises as I reciprocate an Indian

who cannot read but hears the wind in the maize

and the language for that wind

from his shingled house outside an actual village

of wherever there lives an ensemble in empathy

of those who preserve

the essential cocked ear

for the code’s margin

where sounds tilt a bit toward a nakedness of vowels

and the antennae, unsigned, pick up what I intended

you should hear.

*

There are many more clues about the connections between the University of Chicago and Mexico in these archives. There are, for instance, the papers of my colleague and friend Friedrich Katz. But I have neither the perspective nor the detachment to sail those waters. Deceitful remembrance and reckless admiration would be my only guides. Let us leave these clues for a later time and sharper sleuths. The clues will certainly keep piling up at the Regenstein Library’s Special Collections.