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Waking the Gods: Archaeology and State Power in Porfirian Mexico

By

Larissa Kennedy Kelly

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Margaret Chowning, Chair
Professor John E. Lesch
Professor Rosemary Joyce

Fall 2011

Waking the Gods:

Archaeology and State Power in Porfirian Mexico

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Larissa Kennedy Kelly

Abstract

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During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the federal government of Mexico made concerted attempts to define, control, and manage a national archaeological patrimony. While these efforts had precedents dating back to the colonial period, the administration of Porfirio Díaz cemented connections between archaeology and state power. Core principles and administrative structures established during the Porfiriato withstood the Revolution of 1910, and continued to shape uses of the material past during the post-Revolutionary era. However, Porfirian efforts to assert control over pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts also met with resistance from a variety of foreign and domestic sources. My dissertation examines interactions between federal bureaucrats, site caretakers, professors of the National Museum, local community members, regional officials, scholars, explorers, and travelers to examine how state power was enacted – and how it faltered – on the ground.

Much scholarship on the history of Mexican archaeology focuses on changing intellectual approaches to the Mesoamerican past, or the symbolic and rhetorical uses of pre-Hispanic imagery. In contrast, I emphasize the administrative and legal practices by which the Porfirian regime asserted its authority over physical sites and artifacts. In particular, I look closely at the workings of the Inspección y Conservación de Monumentos Arqueólogicos (Inspectorate of Archaeological Monuments), an agency founded in 1885 to monitor the uses of pre-Hispanic sites and serve as a general clearinghouse for archaeological affairs. Under the direction of Leopoldo Batres, the Inspección played an active role in enforcing the prerogatives and property claims of the federal government. I argue that while the reach and influence of the federal archaeological bureaucracy increased considerably over the course of the Porfiriato, its authority remained fraught and contingent in application. Again and again, individuals and communities resisted or subverted the programs of the archaeological bureaucracy, forcing federal administrators to negotiate rather than command. Through detailed descriptions of specific incidents, I analyze competing uses of the pre-Hispanic material past in order to trace out some of the complexities of Mexican state formation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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Dedication

To my family – Jeff Hoppes, Mary Kennedy, Jerry Kelly, and Arianna Kelly. I love you all.

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Much of my source material was collected in Galería 5 of Mexico's Archivo General de la Nación. Many thanks to all who worked at the AGN and made this research possible, especially César, Ignacio, and David, who handled my unending requests for more Instrucción Pública files with friendliness and good humor. My work at the AGN was also made far easier by the intervention of Linda Arnold, who shared invaluable finding aids to the institution's collections. At the Museo Nacional de Antropología, the Maestra María Trinidad Lahirigoyen helped to introduce me to archival research, and was herself a living archive of the museum's history. Dra. Elsa Hernández Pons displayed great academic and personal generosity in sharing her knowledge of museums past and present. Genaro Díaz Fuentes of the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia provided me with a complete bibliography of the writings of Leopoldo Batres, and was always a kind, helpful presence. The same, in fact, could be said of all the librarians, archivists, researchers, staff, and guards that I met within the Museum, many of whom went well out of their way to support and befriend a visiting researcher. Thanks as well to the staff of the Archivo Histórico del Estado de Chiapas, the Centro de Apoyo a la Investigación Histórica de Yucatán, and UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library. If I return to this project in the future, I hope to draw on more sources from these fine institutions.

Funding for my graduate studies came from a History Department fellowship, a Graduate Division Summer Grant, a Dean's Normative Time Fellowship, and many, many teaching and grading jobs (which is how I became the proud owner of books on the debaucheries of Roman emperors, Italian Jesuits in China, the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, and the poetics of California suburbs). My thanks to all of those who provided me with this funding, and who saw to my employment, insurance, and ongoing historical education throughout graduate school.

Additional funding for dissertation research and write-up was provided, albeit in a somewhat unorthodox manner, by Sony Pictures Studios. My eternal thanks to Maggie Speak, Robert James, Tony Pandolfo, Corina Nusu, Glenn Kagan, John Lauderdale, Harry Friedman, Alex Trebek, Merv Griffin, the tireless editors of the J! Archive, and whichever Sony accountant said sure, let's give out large sums of money to anyone who can identify which two slackers "strike back" in a 2001 comedy. The world needs more accountants like that.

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Outside of academia (or at least, outside my particular corner of it), many other people have shared in the frustrations and joys of the last nine years. This dissertation's focus on the administrative mechanisms of state authority owes a great deal to the time that I spent working in the Seneca Center Training Department, where I was impressed again and again by the power of official paperwork, organizational structures, and individual actions. Thanks to Lori Slominski and Ken Berrick for hiring a wayward graduate student, to Morgen Humes for showing me what

a truly fantastic boss looks like in action, and to all of the coworkers and trainers who made it fun to go into the office every morning. At home, Robin, Debbie, Ruchira, and Saheli Datta have been wonderful landlords, providing an oasis of stability in the midst of many other changes. More generally, I am thankful to have experienced the friendship of Marjorie Andino, Karen Tran, Ray Yang, Mónica Solórzano-Bateson, Amber Taylor, Alyson Thoner, Maya Eddon, Juliana Froggatt, Bernardette Arellano, Amy Allen, Barbara Slote, Rebecca Mitchell, Margot Kane, and Karen Jou. In one way or another, this project reflects all of their influences.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"Wondrous is this stone-wall, wrecked by fate;
the city-buildings crumble, the works of the giants decay.
Roofs have caved in, towers collapsed,
barred gates are broken, hoar frost clings to mortar,
houses are gaping, tottering and fallen,
undermined by age. The earth's embrace,
its fierce grip, holds the mighty craftsmen;
they are perished and gone. A hundred generations
have passed away since then. This wall, grey with lichen
and red of hue, outlives kingdom after kingdom."

-"The Ruin," an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poem of the eighth century [1]

On February 2, 2011, the home page of the *New York Times* displayed a banner headline reading "Mubarak Foes and Allies Clash in the Streets."[2] Photos captured images of conflict and turmoil as demonstrators sought an end to the 29-year dictatorship of Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak. Shortly below these pictures of wounded men and waving flags was another headline: "Antiquities Chief Says Sites are Largely Secure." In this article, the newly promoted Minister of Antiquities Zahi Hawass assured a *Times* reporter that "A vast majority of Egypt's museums and archaeological sites are secure and have not been looted." Citing civilian efforts to halt thieves at the Egyptian Museum of Cairo, and the return of objects taken from a site on the Sinai Peninsula, Hawass expressed confidence that state functionaries and Egyptian citizens would stand together to prevent "outlaws" from seizing or damaging the nation's cultural patrimony.[3] Embedded in the article and in Hawass's comments were several major assumptions: that the protection of antiquities is a matter of both domestic and international concern; that antiquities and patriotism are intimately linked, and that national governments have the right as well as the duty to exercise control over the material remains of the distant past.

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[1] The poem likely refers to the ruins of Roman Bath. Reprinted in *The Anglo-Saxon World: An Anthology*, ed. and trans. Kevin Crossley-Holland (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 59.

[2] The headline on the *Times* home page linked to Anthony Shadid, David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareem Fahim, "Clashes Erupt in Egypt Between Mubarak's Allies and Foes," *New York Times*, February 2, 2011, accessed February 2, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/03/world/middleeast/03egypt.html.

[3] Kate Taylor, "Antiquities Chief Says Sites Are Largely Secure," *New York Times*, February 1, 2011, accessed February 2, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/02/world/middleeast/02antiquities.html. The story's placement was not as prominent in print, where it ran "on page A14 of the New York edition."

A hundred years before protesters gathered in Cairo's Liberation Square, another dictator faced the end of a decades-long regime. General Porfirio Díaz had seized power in an 1876 revolt against the government of fellow Liberal Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, taking control of a country racked by foreign and domestic challenges. He then dominated Mexican politics for the next 35 years, exercising direct executive authority for most of that time and serving as president continuously between 1884 and 1911.[4] Díaz skillfully manipulated federal, state, and local politics, suppressed dissent, tamed the fractious Mexican army, opened Mexico to foreign investment, and oversaw the beginnings of the country's industrial development. His supporters praised him as a brilliant statesman who had ended the violence and upheavals of the mid-nineteenth century and brought about a new era of peace and prosperity; his detractors stressed the inequality, autocracy, corruption, and systematic brutality of the political and economic systems that Díaz had fostered. As Díaz grew older the maneuvering to determine his successor increased, opening the door to electoral mobilization and, finally, armed rebellion. In 1911, the Anti-Reelectionist forces of Francisco Madero won their first victories against the Díaz government, sparking uprisings elsewhere in the country. Díaz resigned in May, boarded the steamer *Ypiranga*, and set sail for a comfortable French exile.

Other members of the Porfirian regime soon found it convenient to depart Mexico as well. Among them was Leopoldo Batres, a close associate of Díaz and an ardent loyalist to his administration, who had occupied the position of Inspector General of Archaeological Monuments since 1885. Batres had overseen the development of Mexico's archaeological service from a handful of volunteers to a centralized, professional agency, which employed caretakers and workers at dozens of pre-Hispanic sites. Over the course of his tenure, Batres had worked zealously to enhance federal control over the nation's archaeological monuments – and, not coincidentally, to increase his own power as well. The drive to expand federal authority had legislative, institutional, and cultural components, all aimed at imposing the preferences of a small group of cosmopolitan elites on a fantastically diverse array of interactions with the material remains of the past. Batres and his associates did not assume that the patriotism of ordinary citizens and the concern of the international community would act as bulwarks against the destruction of antiquities. Instead, members of Mexico's archaeological establishment feared what both foreigners and fellow countrymen might do in the absence of vigorous federal oversight.

[4] Díaz occupied the presidential chair from 1876 to 1880, except for a few months when Juan Méndez acted as interim president while Díaz confronted challenges to his rule. In 1880, Díaz left office to demonstrate his adherence to the principle of "*Sufragio efectivo, no reelección*," the slogan of the revolt that had brought him to power. From 1880 to 1884, the general Manuel González served as president of Mexico, while Díaz continued to play a prominent role in the nation's political life. Although González exercised some autonomy in office, he did not depart in any substantial way from the policies that Díaz preferred. "González was indeed [Díaz's] man, but out of choice not necessity. González was proud of his unblemished record of loyalty to his chief, something of a political oddity in an era of shifting allegiances. But this loyalty did not prevent González from being his own man while in office; Díaz could doubtless have exerted tremendous political pressure on him but was generally content to let him run the country and reap the blame for his mistakes. There was a continuity of power, but it was not dependent on Díaz's manipulation of González. This continuity was based upon common experiences, common goals, and common supporters; despite the gonzalista-porfirista feud, the personal ties between the two leaders were never broken." Don M. Coerver, *The Porfirian Interregnum: The Presidency of Manuel González of Mexico, 1880-1884* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1979), 297-8. After Díaz regained the presidency in 1884, he remained in office until the battlefield successes of Francisco Madero's forces convinced the elderly general to resign, and leave Mexico for safer environments.

In the half-decade following Madero's triumph many of the achievements of Porfirian archaeological administrators seemed to crumble away, like an ancient shroud newly exposed to the air. The handful of foreign archaeologists working in Mexico did little to preserve pre-Hispanic monuments, and in some cases faced danger themselves.[5] The Inspección y Conservación de Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República Mexicana (Agency for the Inspection and Conservation of the Archaeological Monuments of the Mexican Republic, henceforth identified as "the Inspección"), which Batres had directed and nurtured for so long, was transferred to the control of the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología (National Museum of Archaeology, History, and Ethnology, which, along with its predecessor, the Museo Nacional de México, will be referred to as "the Museo Nacional," "National Museum," or simply as "the Museo" or "the Museum").[6] Soon after the Revolution broke out,

[5] The disruptive influence of the Revolution can be seen in the case of the Escuela Internacional de Arqueología y Etnología Americana (International School of American Archaeology and Ethnology), which existed from 1910 to 1914. Carmen Ruiz writes that "The School ended in the midst of the Mexican Revolution, in an intense anti-American atmosphere, when North American troops landed in Veracruz, and Alfred Tozzer the director of the School at the time had to escape from Mexico, leaving the School in a complete state of chaos." Carmen Ruiz, "Insiders and Outsiders in Mexican Archaeology (1890-1930)" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003), 151.

[6] The exact name of the latter institution has been given in slightly different forms by various authors, with some referring to it as the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, and others labelling it the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etno*grafía* (or by translations of these terms). Historians of Mexican archaeology such as Mechthild Rutsch and Luis Vázquez León use the former, while the monumental history of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), compiled by Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom, uses the latter. Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard appears to use the two names interchangeably, writing in one case that "la conmemoración de las héroes de la independencia fue la causa definitiva de la separación de las colecciones naturales del Museo Nacional y la consecuente fundación, en la Casa de Moneda, del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología," and four pages later that "Durante las primeras décadas del siglo XX los objetos de la historia fueron revalorados bajo una nueva perspectiva…en el Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía." See Mechthild Rutsch, "Natural History, National Museum and Anthropology in Mexico: Some reference points in the forging and re-forging of national identity," *Perspectivas Latinoamericanas*, No. 1 (2004): 103; Luis Vázquez León, *El Leviatán arqueológico: Antropología de una tradición científica en México*, Second edition (Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2003), 49; Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom, eds., *INAH: Una historia*, Vol. 1 (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 25; and Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar: Objetos, colecciones y museos de la ciudad de México (1790-1910)* (Barcelona and Mexico City: Ediciones Pomares, 2004), 160 and 164.

Contemporaries themselves appear to have had conflicting views on the matter. In 1921, the former Museum director Jesús Galindo y Villa published a history of the institution which used the "Etnología" wording, while three years later another Museum director, Luis Castillo Ledón, wrote an institutional history that used "Etnografía" in its title. See Jesús Galindo y Villa, "El Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnologia: Breve Reseña," *Memorias de la Sociedad Científica Antonio Alzate*, Vol. 40 (August, 1921): 301 and Luis Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía, 1825-1925, Reseña histórica escrita para la celebración de su primer centenario* (Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos del Museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía, 1924). Some of the confusion may stem from the fact that the 1909 order that formally divided the Museo Nacional stated that "*desde la misma fecha, la institución que hasta ahora ha llevado el nombre de Museo Nacional, se denominará "Museo Nacional de Arqueología é Historia,'*" with no reference to either ethnology or ethnography. "Acuerdo por el que se crea el Museo Nacional de Historia Natural y nace el Museo Nacional de Arqueología e Historia," memo signed by Justo Sierra, January 28, 1909. Reprinted in *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, ed. Olivé Negrete and Cottom, 244. However, a set of rules issued for the Museum in 1913 identified the institution as the "Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología." "Tercer Reglamento del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia, y Etnología," reprinted in Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional*, 85-100. Moreover, "etnología" appears to have been the preferred wording in official correspondence throughout the late Porfiriato and the armed stage of the Revolution. In 1909, for instance, an official at Instrucción Pública ordered the payment of "*$109,446.92, para las*

many of Mexico's archaeological sites became dangerous places to visit. Zapatista guerillas operated in the vicinity of Xochicalco, while battles near Teotihuacán caused the site administrator to pass his nights hiding in a machine shed or in nearby caves.[7] The capital changed hands multiple times, as did the directorship of the Museum. Site caretakers and cultural administrators went unpaid, and found themselves subject to requisitions from armed troops. In the midst of warfare and political turbulence, Porfirian approaches to archaeological stewardship often seemed untenable.

Yet when the revolutionary convulsions subsided in 1917, the key Porfirian principle of federal control over the nation's antiquities remained firmly in place. Core archaeological institutions had survived, if in somewhat altered forms, retaining many of the same staff members who had once served under Díaz. The young archaeologist Manuel Gamio, already a rising star by the end of the Porfiriato, emerged during the Revolution as one of Mexico's most influential archaeologists. During the fighting and afterwards, Gamio spearheaded efforts to preserve a federal presence at the nation's pre-Hispanic sites, while also managing to carry out a groundbreaking series of archaeological and ethnological studies.[8] Moreover, the Revolutionary Constitution of 1917, which included transformative provisions for the nationalization of industry, the distribution of land, and the protection of workers, also granted the national Congress power "To establish professional schools of scientific research and fine arts, agricultural and trade schools, museums, libraries, observatories and other institutes of higher learning."[9] This provision foreshadowed the continuing significance of cultural administration within the Revolutionary state. Over the following decades, federal administrators continued to

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obras emprendidas en el Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología," while a 1917 letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to his superiors at Instrucción Pública was typed on official stationary, which bore the words "MUSEO NACIONAL DE ARQUEOLOGIA, HISTORIA Y ETNOLOGIA" under an image of the Aztec Calendar Stone. Letter from the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes [SIPBA] to the Secretaría de Hacienda, November 15, 1909, Archivo General de la Nación, Ramo Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes [AGN-IPBA], caja 154, exp. 68, f. 15, and letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to the Director General de las Bellas Artes, June 27, 1917, AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 6, f. 8. Consequently, I will also use the "Etnología" wording when giving the full name of the institution in this and future chapters. Following the lead of Jesús Galindo y Villa, who wrote in 1921 that the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología was "*conocido aún bajo el único y popular nombre de Museo Nacional*," I will also use the terms "Museo Nacional," "Museo," or "Museum" to refer to the institution which housed Mexico's primary national collection of pre-Hispanic artifacts.

[7] "*Por tal motivo yo solamente en el dia estoy en el Campamento, y en las noches: unas en las cuevas y otras en la casa de Máquinas, con un frio de primer orden, pero se salva el pellejo.*" Letter from Ignacio Herrera to Manuel Gamio, March 18, 1915, copied in letter from Manuel Gamio to SIPBA, March 18, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 25, f. 4.

[8] Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrua, 1992), 158-60, 163. For a detailed discussion of the origins of stratigraphic archaeology in the Americas, a practice which Gamio is sometimes said to have originated, see David L. Browman and Douglas R. Givens, "Stratigraphic Excavation: The First 'New Archaeology,'" *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 98, No. 1 (March, 1996): 80-95.

[9] Constitution of 1917, Section III, Article 73, Fracción XXVII, in *The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with the Constitution of 1857*, ed. and trans. H. N. Branch (Philadelphia: The American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1917), 57. In 1966, Mexico's constitution was modified so that Section III, Article 73, Fracción XXV permitted Congress "*legislar en todo lo que se refiere a dichas instituciones [concernientes a la cultura general de los habitantes de la nación]; para legislar sobre monumentos arqueológicos, artísticos e históricos, cuya conservación sea de interés nacional*." Reprinted in Alejandro Gertz Manero, *La defensa jurídica y social del patrimonio cultural* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976), 126.

demonstrate their commitment to the control and active management of Mexico's archaeological patrimony. Agency names and reporting lines changed, but core missions, legal principles, administrative mechanisms, and personnel linked the archaeological bureaucracies of the Porfirian and post-Revolutionary eras. This thesis will examine how Porfirian leaders built and sustained a national archaeological infrastructure, one capable of weathering the storms of revolution.

Paradoxically, the succeeding chapters will also devote a great deal of attention to the persistent weaknesses and routine failures of the Porfirian state. In order to resolve this paradox, it becomes necessary to distinguish between the durability and long-term influence of Porfirian archaeological institutions, and the strength and effectiveness of those institutions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The archaeological bureaucracy's power was generally fraught and contingent, even during the latter years of Díaz's rule. While national control over pre-Hispanic sites and objects clearly increased between the 1885 establishment of the Inspección and the removal of Díaz in 1911, this process was slow and often painful for all involved. Laws which granted the federal government sweeping powers to define, claim, and oversee a national archaeological patrimony did not accord with either the values or the interests of many other parties who possessed competing claims on the material past. The particulars of these claims varied greatly, reflecting numerous and often incommensurable ideas about cultural heritage, property rights, and the basic requirements of justice. However, archaeological officials frequently proved unable or unwilling to persuade their interlocutors that the material past *should* belong to the nation, rather than to particular individuals, communities, discoverers, or scientific institutions. The history that follows is therefore one of many small steps, setbacks and strategic retreats, as federal officials engaged in constant negotiations and struggles with foreign, regional, and local actors.

It is also a history replete with coercion, exploitation, and immense condescension towards ordinary Mexican citizens, on the part of the federal government as well as foreign explorers and excavators. Representatives of metropolitan science and government were particularly dismissive or contemptuous of the claims advanced by those who lacked wealth and political influence, and by those whom they defined as "Indians" (an ambiguous term that referred to markers of dress, diet, language, and occupation as well as heredity and appearance).[10] Since these categories encompassed most of the people who resided near pre-Hispanic ruins, the extension of federal authority over the material past resulted in routine and often bitter clashes between national officials and local community members. Unable to assert moral or ideological hegemony, representatives of the federal government instead resorted to cruder and more forceful strategies to exert control over pre-Hispanic sites and objects. Such approaches further eroded the state's moral standing in the eyes of local people, leading to self-perpetuating cycles of conflict which hindered the national government's supposed goal of archaeological preservation. In practice, the meanings of the pre-Hispanic past were as contested as rights to the sites and artifacts themselves.

What follows, then, is not a triumphalist narrative of science allying with the state to vanquish the forces of ignorance, greed, and senseless destruction. Instead, it is the far murkier tale of how a particular cluster of federal officials managed, over the course of decades, to partially edge out competing users of pre-Hispanic sites and objects. What members of the archaeological bureaucracy hailed as successes might, from other perspectives, represent

[10] See Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, ed. Richard Graham (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 73-6.

grievous losses. I will thus examine the establishment and expansion of archaeological administration as a facet of broader federal efforts to forge a unified nation subject to the control of Mexico City.[11] By taking control of sites and objects representing diverse regions and cultures, Porfirian leaders sought to institutionalize the narrative of an essential Mexican nation that maintained its core identity through both space and time.

I. Past in Present

Over the past several decades the history of archaeology has experienced something of a boom, as historians, art historians, and anthropologists have produced works examining a variety of periods and regions.[12] The historiography has increasingly moved away from internalist

[11] "When nationhood takes place, it is the fulfillment of a process of institutional construction, not the initiation of it. Thus, we may argue that Mexican identity, in some form, certainly existed prior to independence…but modern nationhood did not…a Mexican nation may have existed by about 1857, but it is doubtful whether even then we can speak of the existence of a Mexican nation-state because to be a nation-state implies that at least a majority of its subjects, including the ethnic elements who made up the majority, were consciously incorporated (or co-opted) into it. Thus, I invite reader to keep in mind the very subtle but practical distinctions that exist between formulation of a national government and consciousness of nationhood. Both are necessary, that is, there must be not only institutions but recognition of the legitimacy or authority of those institutions. I believe that at independence Mexico was neither a nation nor a nation-state, that in the years after independence it gradually formulated a national government…and that in the decades between 1857 and the 1920s it became a nation-state." Timothy E. Anna, *Forging Mexico, 1821-1835* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 8.

[12] For general histories and historical discussions, see Bruce Trigger, "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist," *Man*, New Series, Vol. 19, No. 3 (September, 1984): 355-70; Bruce Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Andrew L. Christenson, ed., *Tracing Archaeology's Past: The Historiography of Archaeology* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989); Peter R. Schmidt and Thomas C. Patterson, eds., *Making Alternative Histories: The Practice of Archaeology and History in Non-Western Settings* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1995); Philip L. Kohl, "Nationalism and Archaeology: On the Constructions of Nations and the Reconstructions of the Remote Past," *Annual Review of Archaeology*, Vol. 27 (1998): 223-46, and Margarita Díaz-Andreu, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). For the Middle East, see Neil Asher Silberman, *Digging for God and Country: Exploration, Archaeology, and the Secret Struggle for the Holy Land, 1799-1917* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982); Bruce Kuklick, *Puritans in Babylon: The Ancient Near East and American Intellectual Life, 1880-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Nadia Abu El-Haj, *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001); Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs?: Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity From Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002); Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003); Magnus T. Bernhardsson, *Reclaiming a Plundered Past: Archaeology and Nation Building in Modern Iraq* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005) and Elliott Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007). For Europe, see Stuart Piggott, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination, Ideas from the Renaissance to the Regency* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989); Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion, eds., *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996); Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Marie Louise Stig Sørensen, *Excavating Women: A History of Women in European Archaeology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998); Ève Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance de l'archéologie moderne, 1798-1945* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1998); Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999) and Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts:*

accounts of discoveries, intellectual developments, institutions, and individual researchers, to focus instead on the political, social, and cultural currents which influenced and were influenced by the study of the material past.[13] In particular, scholars have come to look closely at the threads connecting archaeology to questions of race, colonialism, and nationalism. These historical works overlap substantially with the literature on anthropological collecting and display, which also offers numerous examples of how the history of scientific pursuits may be integrated into broader accounts of social and political change over time.[14]

Affiliations between the pre-Hispanic material past and the Mexican state long predate the Porfirian era. Political and intellectual leaders throughout nineteenth-century Latin America used pre-Hispanic cultures as sources of identity and ideology, a phenomenon that Rebecca Earle describes as "indianesque nationalism."[15] During the struggles for independence, Creole leaders and intellectuals identified themselves as the moral heirs to the societies which had existed prior to the arrival of the Spanish. By claiming the political, aesthetic, and scientific accomplishments of pre-Hispanic cultures as a metaphorical patrimony, Creoles simultaneously sought to establish themselves as legitimate rulers, and to refute European claims of American inferiority. The rhetoric of Creole patriotism was particularly strong in Mexico, where urbanized societies had

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A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006). For India, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). For Australia, see Sarah Colley, *Uncovering Australia: Archaeology, Indigenous People and the Public* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002). For Latin America, see José Luis Lorenzo, "Notes on the history of Ibero-American archaeology," in *La arqueología y México*, ed. Jaime Litvak King and Lorena Mirambell Silva (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1998), 45-64; Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo, ed., *History of Latin American Archaeology* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994) and Sara Castro-Klaren, "The Nation in Ruins: Archaeology and the Rise of the Nation," in *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, ed. Sara Castro-Klaren and John Charles Chasteen (Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2003), 161-95. Works dealing specifically with Mexican and Mesoamerican archaeology will be discussed separately below.

[13] For a discussion of "internal" versus "external" histories of science, see Imre Lakatos, "History of Science and Its Rational Reconstructions," *PSA: Proceedings of the Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association*, Vol. 1970 (1970): 91-136.

[14] See Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr., *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846-1910* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981); George W. Stocking, Jr., ed., *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture, History of Anthropology, Vol. 3* (Madison and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine, eds., *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992); Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994); Flora E. S. Kaplan, ed., *Museums and the Making of "Ourselves": The Role of Objects in National Identity* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1994); Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996); Shepard Krech III and Barbara A. Hail, eds., *Collecting Native America, 1870-1960* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); Chris Gosden and Chantal Knowles, *Collecting Colonialism: Material Culture and Colonial Change* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001); Ira Jacknis, *The Storage Box of Tradition: Kwakiutl Art, Anthropologists, and Museums, 1881-1981* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002); Christina F. Kreps, *Liberating Culture: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation, and Heritage Preservation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003) and Conal McCarthy, *Exhibiting Maori: A History of Colonial Cultures of Display* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007).

[15] Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native: Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 24.

created great artistic and architectural monuments, many of which were still visible. In the aftermath of independence, Mexican governments used pre-Hispanic antiquities to buttress a national story of glory and destiny, the broad outlines of which remained the same under Liberal, Conservative and Imperial administrations. This story emphasized the center over the periphery, the achievements of long-dead indigenous peoples over the interests and potential of living Indians, and the high standard of learning evinced by Mexican scholarship. Prior to the Porfiriato, however, state claims on the material past lacked a stable institutional expression. Although a national museum and customs regulations forbidding the export of pre-Hispanic antiquities had existed since the 1820s, it was not until the the Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos was founded in 1885 that the federal government began to actively monitor pre-Hispanic sites.

The creation of the Inspección reflected fears that foreign travelers and researchers, who were demonstrating increasing interest in Mexico's pre-Hispanic past, would spirit archaeological treasures away to museums, universities, and private collections in the United States and Europe.[16] The invasions, territorial losses, and humiliations that Mexico had suffered in the decades since independence meant that federal leaders were extremely sensitive to symbolic infringements of national sovereignty. Given the longstanding links between pre-Hispanic cultures and national identity, failure to prevent the exportation or unauthorized excavation of pre-Hispanic artifacts was seen as evidence of state weakness. Conversely, federal control over the material past meant that Porfirian leaders could use pre-Hispanic sites and objects to present the image of a modern nation, pursuing the ideals of order and progress. By displaying pre-Hispanic artifacts at exhibitions and world's fairs, conducting scientific exchanges, and refurbishing major sites, the Díaz administration inserted Mexican institutions into international networks of cultural exchange, and impressed foreign and domestic audiences with the grandeur of Mexico's past.[17] Thus, at the same time as foreigners were receiving large

[16] For works dealing with the foreign study and appropriation of Mexico's pre-Hispanic past, see Victor Wolfgang von Hagen, *Maya Explorer: John Lloyd Stephens and the Lost Cities of Central America* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1990), first published in 1947 by the University of Oklahoma Press; Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971); Robert L. Brunhouse, *In Search of the Maya: The First Archaeologists* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1973); Robert L. Brunhouse, *Pursuit of the Ancient Maya: Some Archaeologists of Yesterday* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975); Carlos Echánove Trujillo, *Dos héroes de la arqueología maya: Teobert Maler y el Conde Waldeck* (Mérida: Universidad de Yucatán, 1975); Keith Davis, *Désiré Charnay: Expeditionary Photographer* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Lawrence Gustave Desmond and Phyllis Mauch Messenger, *A Dream of Maya: Augustus and Alice Le Plongeon in Nineteenth-Century Yucatan* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988); Clementina Díaz y de Ovando, *Memoria de un debate: La postura de México frente al patrimonio arqueológico nacional* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1990); Luis Ramírez Aznar, *El saqueo del cenote sagrado de Chichen Itza* (Mexico City: Producción Editorial Dante, 1990); Ian Graham, *Alfred Maudslay and the Maya: A Biography* (London: The British Museum Press, 2002); Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Archaeologist Was a Spy: Sylvanus G. Morley and the Office of Naval Intelligence* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003); R. Tripp Evans, *Romancing the Maya: Mexican Antiquity in the American Imagination 1820-1915* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004); Robert D. Aguirre, *Informal Empire: Mexico and Central America in Victorian Culture* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), and Mary F. McVicker, *Adela Breton: A Victorian Artist Amid Mexico's Ruins* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

[17] The classic work on Mexico's state-sponsored presentations of national identity during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). See also Michael J. Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico in 1910: Visions of the *Patria* in the Centennial Celebrations in Mexico City," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (August, 2007): 495-533 and Annick Lempériere and Lucrecia Orensanz, "Los dos centenarios de la

land and business concessions from the Porfirian state, the archaeological bureaucracy exerted increasingly tight control over the material remains of the past. This oversight made it possible for the federal government to welcome foreign researchers, while reducing the possibility that pre-Hispanic artifacts would be lost to the nation.

The greater willingness of Mexico's federal government to assert national ownership over antiquities, than over the nation's lands or mineral wealth, can be attributed to several factors. The first of these was that the economic value of antiquities paled in comparison to agricultural products or industrial materials. While foreigners might attempt to draw on the influence of their home governments in order to secure access to Mexico's material past, the pressure thereby exerted was far less than that brought to bear in the case of major economic investments. Additionally, incentives existed to protect antiquities that were largely absent in the case of mines or lands. An underdeveloped nineteenth-century state that attempted to strictly regulate the level of foreign involvement in its economy would win no praise from those whose interests it thwarted. In cultural matters, however, the situation was different. By preserving and displaying its pre-Hispanic antiquities, Mexico could proudly take its place among the nations which cultivated aesthetics and learning.[18]

Actions that were nationalist from one perspective, however, might appear imperialist from another. During the late nineteenth century Mexico was like a lumpy batter, with some areas thoroughly blended into the national community and others existing as distinct, unincorporated pockets. That a scholar or bureaucrat hailed from Mexico City rather than Europe or North America did not guarantee him a warm reception in local communities, where residents may have had little patience with the centralizing demands of the capital. Both Mexicans and foreigners could thus fill the role of arrogant outsiders, who used local labor to extract treasures and remove them to a far-away metropolis. Moreover, unlike foreign excavators, members of the archaeological bureaucracy could impose formal sanctions on unapproved uses of pre-Hispanic ruins. With the judicial power of the state behind them, archaeological authorities could not only injure local pride, but threaten local interests. Porfirian archaeology therefore bears comparison to that practiced in more overtly colonial contexts, such as Egypt or Iraq.[19] There as in Mexico,

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independencia mexicana (1910-1921): de la historia patria a la antropología cultural," *Historia Mexicana*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (October – December, 1995): 317-352.

[18] Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the Worlds' Fairs*, 81-3. For works dealing with the collection and display of pre-Hispanic objects, see Luis Castillo Ledón, *El Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, 1825-1925. Reseña histórica escrita para la celebración de su primer centenario* (Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, 1924); Miguel Ángel Fernández, *Historia de los museos de México* (Mexico City: Promotora de Comercialización Directa, 1987); Elizabeth Hill Boone, ed., *Collecting the Pre-Columbian Past* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection), 1993; Luis Gerardo Morales Moreno, *Orígenes de la museología mexicana: Fuentes para el estudio histórico del Museo Nacional, 1780-1940* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1994); Felipe Solís, "Historia de la colección arqueológica del Museo Nacional de Antropología," *Arqueología Mexicana*, Vol. 4, No. 24 (March – April, 1997): 32-7; Shelly Errington, *The Death of Authentic Primitive Art and Other Tales of Progress* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 161-87; Sophia C. Vackimes, "Indians in Formaldehyde — Nation of Progress: The Museo Nacional of Mexico and the Construction of National Identity," *Museum Anthropology*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Fall, 2001): 20-30; Ricardo Pérez Montfort, "El Museo Nacional como expresión del nacionalismo mexicano," *Alquimia*, Vol. 4, No. 12 (May – August, 2001): 27-31; Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*; Mechthild Rutsch, "Natural History, National Museum and Anthropology in Mexico," and Jesús Bustamante García, "La conformación de la antropología como disciplina científica, el Museo Nacional de México y los congresos internacionales de Americanistas," *Revista de Indios*, Vol. 65, No. 234 (2005): 303-18.

the representatives of a distant and generally disliked central power asserted ownership of ancient monuments, removed these monuments from their local context, and defined the meaning of the material past without reference to the understandings of communities that might have coexisted with the ruins for centuries. While the actions of foreigners helped to shape the contours of Porfirian archaeology, our understanding of the subject is incomplete without taking into account the intersections between federal power and local particularities.

If the history of archaeological administration in Mexico bears similarities to that of other regions, it is also a world unto itself. Besides works dealing with archaeology in a variety of world settings, I have also drawn deeply on the wealth of research on archaeology, anthropology, and uses of the pre-Hispanic material past within Mexico.[20] Facts and ideas from this vast corpus are scattered throughout the account that follows, and my project would not have been possible

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[19] See Reid, *Whose Pharaohs*, and Bernhardsson, *Reclaiming a Plundered Past*.

[20] See Luis Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía*; Ricardo Castañeda Paganini, *Las Ruinas de Palenque: Su descubrimiento y primeras exploraciones en el siglo XVIII* (Guatemala: Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educación Pública, 1946); Gertz Manero, *La defensa jurídica y social*; Jaime Litvak King, Luis González R., and María del Refugio González, eds., *Arqueología y derecho en México* (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1980); Daniel Schávelzon and Jaime Litvak King, eds., *Historia de la arqueología en Mesoamérica: Homenaje a Ignacio Bernal* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1983); Sonia Lombardo de Ruiz and Ruth Solís Vicarte, *Antecedentes de las leyes sobre monumentos históricos (1536-1910)* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1988); Paul Sullivan, *Unfinished Conversations: Mayas and Foreigners Between Two Wars* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989); Daniel Schávelzon, *La conservación del patrimonio cultural en América Latina: restauración de edificios prehispánicos en Mesoamérica, 1750-1980* (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, Facultad de Arquitectura, Diseño y Urbanismo, Instituto de Arte Americano e Investigaciones Estéticas "Mario J. Buschiazzo," 1990); Jeremy A. Sabloff, *The New Archaeology and the Ancient Maya* (New York: Scientific American Library, 1990); Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrua, 1992); Michael D. Coe, *Breaking the Maya Code* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992); Enrique Florescano, ed., *El patrimonio cultural de México* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993); Sonia Lombardo de Ruiz, *El pasado prehispánico en la cultura nacional*, vol. 1, *El Monitor Republicano* (1877-1896) (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1994); Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vols. 1-3 (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1995); José Luis Lorenzo, edited by Jaime Litvak King and Lorena Mirambell Silva, *La arqueología y México* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1998); Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *Las piedras negadas: De la Coatlicue al Templo Mayor* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998); Carlos Navarrete, *Palenque, 1784: El inicio de la aventura arqueológica maya* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2000); Julio César Olivé Negrete, *Antropología mexicana* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, Plaza y Valdés, 2000); Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso, *Descubridores del pasado en Mesoamérica* (Mexico City: Océano, 2001); Mechthild Rutsch, "Ramón Mena y Manuel Gamio. Una mirada oblicua sobre la antropología mexicana en los años veinte del siglo pasado," *Relaciones*, Vol. 23, No. 88 (Autumn, 2001): 80-118; Luis Vázquez León, *El Leviatán arqueológico*; Claudia Guerrero Crespo, "Historia de la arqueología mexicana á partir de los documentos del Archivo General de la Nación (1876-1920)," (Licenciatura thesis, Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2003); Carmen Ruiz, "Insiders and Outsiders in Mexican Archaeology"; Nelly M. Robles García and Alberto Juárez Osnaya, *Historia de la Arqueología en Oaxaca* (Oaxaca: Instituto Oaxaqueño de las Culturas, 2004); Christina Bueno, "Excavating Identity: Archaeology and Nation in Mexico, 1876-1911" (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2004); Mechthild Rutsch, *Entre el campo y el gabinete: Nacionales y extranjeros en la profesionalización de la antropología mexicana (1877-1920)* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, 2007); Christina Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*: The Making of Archaeological Patrimony in Porfirian Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (2010): 215-45; Christina Bueno, "Teotihuacán: Showcase for the Centennial," in *Holiday in Mexico: Critical Reflections on Tourism and Tourist Encounters*, ed. Dina Berger and Andrew Grant Wood (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 54-76.

without the essential historical and documentary framework supplied by authors such as Luis Castillo Ledón, José Luis Lorenzo, Alejandro Gertz Manero, Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard, Julio César Olivé Negrete, Bolfy Cottom, and, especially, Ignacio Bernal. Their works provide excellent explorations of how antiquarians and archaeologists have studied and thought about past civilizations, and of the administrative histories of particular institutions. My own project, however, is more closely affiliated with recent works by Mechthild Rutsch, Carmen Ruiz, and Christina Bueno. These scholars also look closely at state institutions, but emphasize questions of race, national identity, gender, professionalization, and the role of foreign investigators in Mexico. Following in the path that they have traced, I seek to distinguish my own project through the level of attention and detail which it brings to the ground-level mechanics of archaeological administration. Since others have admirably explored Porfirian discourses concerning archaeological science, national history, museum displays, and the status of indigenous people, the moment is ripe for a more in-depth look at the archaeological bureaucracy's functioning. By closely analyzing specific interactions between federal employees and the other parties with interests in the material past, I hope to illuminate how archaeological ideologies were enacted, subverted, or resisted.

II. *Poca política y mucha administración*

Here it is worth pausing to ask why, exactly, the mechanics of archaeological administration are worth considering in such detail. The very word "bureaucracy" tends to produce rolling if not glazing of the eyes, and evoke processes that are tedious, confounding, or both. Admittedly, many of the work products of Porfirian bureaucracy, such as the great piles of correspondence hashing out federal employee discounts on national railway travel, lack noticeable dramatic punch. Nevertheless, when taken as a whole the records of the institutions charged with overseeing and managing the pre-Hispanic material past provide compelling testimony to the centralization, growth, and professionalization of the Porfirian state. These changes were even manifest on the physical documents themselves, as handwritten notes and letters gave way to preprinted forms and typed memos duplicated in purple ink. The contents of those records, meanwhile, allow us to trace the creation and refinement of legal principles, the establishment and expansion of institutions, and the exploding complexity of government involvement in the daily life of the republic. In a very real way, the study of bureaucracy is the study of power, its applications, and its compromises. The well-known slogan of "little politics and much administration," with its complex shadings of irony and sincerity, both highlights the importance of bureaucracy within the Porfirian state, and reminds us that paperwork can be a continuation of politics by other means.

This response, however, refers to the study of Porfirian bureaucracy in general. Why study the *archaeological* bureaucracy in particular, given that other state institutions engaged in fiercer conflicts, and exercised more direct influence on the political history of the nation? One answer to this question can be found in the historian of science Martin J. S. Rudwick's insight that "characteristic" events and episodes are worthy of study in their own right.[21] The workings of the archaeological bureaucracy allow us to examine Porfirian governance as it operated outside the spotlight of national controversy, addressing situations that did not pose meaningful

[21] Martin J. S. Rudwick, *The Great Devonian Controversy: The Shaping of Scientific Knowledge Among Gentlemanly Specialists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), xxi.

threats to the stability of Díaz's rule. While Porfirian leaders had strong reasons for wishing to assert state control over pre-Hispanic sites and ruins, no great crisis would occur if a wall toppled over, or some clay figurines were successfully smuggled out of the country. Consequently, interactions between the archaeological bureaucracy and the various other parties that made claims to the material past tell us something about the state's general ability to impose authority, in the absence of particular pressure or scrutiny from the highest-ranking members of government.[22]

Another answer, drawn from the literature discussed above, is that even if the physical preservation of the pre-Hispanic past was not always an urgent priority, ideas about pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts have played and continue to play an important role in elite Mexican discourses of race, civilization, and national identity. By studying state control of the material past, it is therefore possible to compare the exuberant rhetoric of intellectuals and national leaders with the trade-offs and restrictions which occurred in practice. Even more, a study of federal policies regarding the pre-Hispanic material past allows us to examine the extent to which elite ideologies of nationalism were shared by the residents of local communities, and how local residents framed alternate understandings of the material past. These non-elite visions were seldom expressed in published forms, but can be analyzed through both the words and the actions of those who dealt with archaeological administrators. Non-elite perspectives were also demonstrated by employees of the archaeological bureaucracy, some of whom were themselves members of rural communities. As we shall see, Mexico City authorities found it difficult to control the activities of both local people, and of the appointees charged with preserving pre-Hispanic sites.

Such difficulties had deep historical roots. The bureaucracy of Porfirian Mexico was the heir to longstanding traditions of Iberian governance, stretching back to the colonial era. Early modern Spain led European states in developing systems to gather information and manage a sprawling world empire, during a time when communications could take months if not years to arrive at their destinations.[23] Under these circumstances, systems of bureaucracy inevitably co-existed and merged with other types of formal and informal authority. After the achievement of independence, bureaucracy continued to evolve alongside practices such as patronage, *compadrazgo*, nepotism, religious suasion, *mayordomías*, popular organizing, and the strategic application of armed force. If in theory a strict administrative hierarchy extended from Mexico

[22] In other areas of government, different administrative patterns might apply. Edward Beatty writes that "Federal bureaucrats within Fomento and Hacienda created pockets of semi-autonomous and highly institutionalized administration within a régime that in other respects was personalistic and patrimonial. The ministerial direction and the administrative capacity of Hacienda and Foment owere sufficiently strong to develop and administer policy initiatives independent of political pressures, whether those might be felt from the presidential office above, or from well-connected investors below. A consistent and largely impersonal administration of these policies contrasts sharply with the conventional perception that policy administration was both tightly centered around Porfirio Díaz and highly discretionary in its allocation of rights and adjudication of disputes…That said, it was, as we have noted, only a narrow elite who had recourse to the benefits of the policies." Edward Beatty, *Institutions and Investment: The Political Basis of Industrialization in Mexico Before 1911* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 202.

[23] See J. H. Elliott, "Spain and Its Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Spain and Its World, 1500-1700* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 14-8, and J. H. Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 192-211. For a study of distance and administration in the Spanish empire, focusing on the case of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Central America, see Sylvia Sellers-García, "Distant Guatemala: Reading Documents from the Periphery" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2009).

City outward to the provinces, in practice this simple hub-and-spoke structure was greatly complicated by the presence of the aforementioned factors.

The interplay among these varied influences meant that Porfirian archaeological administration diverged somewhat from the classic model of bureaucracy established by the German sociologist Max Weber. Weber emphasized the formal, rational, and legal qualities of bureaucracies, writing that "Bureaucratization offers above all the optimum possibility for carrying through the principle of specializing administrative functions according to purely objective considerations... [Bureaucracy's] specific nature, which is welcomed by capitalism, develops the more perfectly the more the bureaucracy is 'dehumanized,' the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation."[24] Some of the people engaged in conflicts with the archaeological bureaucracy might have agreed that it was "dehumanized" in its lack of concern for individual well-being. Considered as a whole, though, systems of archaeological administration were intensely human. Both the leaders and the low-level employees of the federal archaeological bureaucracy made use of patron-client ties, personal relationships, and their own independent judgment in order to secure their desired goals. Those goals, in turn, might differ from those pursued at the institutional level. Moreover, disputes might also arise among the various levels or branches of government, which held different priorities and responded to different constituencies. At all points, state cultural institutions and their individual members were participants in complex ecosystems of authority.

The specific state entities which will dominate this thesis are the Museo Nacional, the Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos, and the succession of federal ministries which oversaw them. During the Porfiriato, the Museo and Inspección were subordinate to the Secretaría de Justicia e Instrucción Pública (Ministry of Justice and Public Instruction, shortened as SJIP) until 1905, then to the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes (Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, shortened as SIPBA). However, the creation of the latter ministry did not noticeably disrupt federal management of the pre-Hispanic material past, as those functions were essentially transferred entire from Justicia e Instrucción Pública to its more narrowly focused offshoot. I will therefore refer to both ministries as "Instrucción Pública," in recognition of the essential continuities in structure, personnel, and mission that characterized the organizations' approaches to archaeological management. In the case of archaeology, the two ministries also shared a common sphere of influence. Although the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes only exercised power over education in the Federal District and in the federal territories, an 1897 law declaring pre-Hispanic constructions to be the property of the nation meant that the ministry could assert claims on such sites regardless of where they were located. Therefore both before and after 1905, institutions based within the capital continued to extend tendrils of influence throughout the republic.

This influence mostly took the form of definition, data-gathering, and reporting.[25] By itself, the archaeological bureaucracy was not well-equipped to manage situations through the

[24] Max Weber, "Bureaucracy," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 215-6.

[25] For wider discussions of these mechanisms of governance, see Benedict Anderson, "Census, Map, Museum," in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 163-185; Raymond Craib, *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 7-13, and James Scott,

use of direct force. Its employees could refer specific transgressions to judicial authorities, or call upon the police or military, but did not resort to such measures frequently in the normal course of business. Instead, the main deterrent to unauthorized uses of pre-Hispanic sites was the simple presence of Inspección caretakers, or *conserjes*. In the 1880s and 1890s, these caretakers were usually prominent members of the local community, while during the later Porfiriato they were selected from the ranks of local farmers and laborers. Conserjes cleared vegetation away from the ruins, accompanied visitors, monitored excavations, and provided a reminder of the federal government's claims to the pre-Hispanic material past. Away from the sites themselves, Batres and the professors of the Museum played an important role in establishing official narratives about pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts, and promoting their importance to Mexican national identity. The Museum and Inspección also served as clearinghouses for the archaeological issues which came to the attention of the various branches of the federal government. If a customs officer found undeclared pottery in a box being shipped to New York, or if a Mexican embassy received inquiries about artifact exchanges or excavation permits, leaders of the Inspección and Museo Nacional could provide guidance as to the appropriate response. By managing the flow of information about pre-Hispanic sites and objects, and by maintaining a consistent federal presence at selected ruins, members of the archaeological bureaucracy established a basis for claiming state ownership of an archaeological patrimony which they themselves had defined.

My analysis of these administrative systems is informed by recent literature on Porfirian culture and society, works which often draw from government sources and address state attempts to monitor and regulate individual and collective behavior. Scholars such Katherine Bliss, Mark Overmyer-Velázquez, and Pablo Piccato have studied how Porfirian administrators expanded the official surveillance of people marked in some way as "deviant," and created institutional systems to enforce specific conceptions of "order" and "progress."[26] Residents of towns situated close to pre-Hispanic ruins, or researchers from U.S. and European museums and universities, would likely have taken great umbrage at any comparison between themselves and urban prostitutes and pickpockets. Nevertheless, it is possible to trace broad continuities in official efforts to mark the boundaries of approved and illicit behaviors. Limited in its reach and effectiveness, the Porfirian state worked in many areas to intensify its collection of information, and to codify and centralize procedures of governance. However, the implementation of Porfirian policies generally depended on low-paid and low-statatus employees, whose own values and interests helped to determine the actual nature of state power.[27] In addition, the would-be

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Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 11-83.

[26] See Katherine Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); Mark Overmyer-Velázquez, *Visions of the Emerald City: Modernity, Tradition and the Formation of Porfirian Oaxaca, Mexico* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), and Pablo Piccato, *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900-1911* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001).

[27] Overmyer-Velázquez, for example, writes that "Throughout the Porfiriato, officials passed legislation to increase the number of watchmen of prostitution…Yet in an ironic turn of events, the watchmen themselves inflicted their own scandals on the Porfirian city. The inconsistent and arbitrary work of watchmen and medical assistants shows that these minor officials were not simple extensions of the ruling class. Instead they served as 'unintended intermediaries' between official regulations and the complicated reality of everyday life." Overmyer-Velázquez, *Visions of the Emerald City*, 118. See also Piccato, *City of Suspects*, 42-3.

subjects of state control also exercised considerable agency of their own, forcing authorities to reckon with particularities that disrupted and challenged official standards of order.

This dissertation draws inspiration as well from the writings of Paul Vanderwood and Terry Rugeley, whose work demonstrates how comparatively small incidents may provide eloquent testimony to the workings of larger social, cultural, or political systems. Rugeley and Vanderwood show how individuals such as the Mayan peasants who resisted priestly demands for goods and services, or the Sonoran villagers who venerated a teenaged girl as a living saint, were simultaneously agents in their own lives, and participants in the complex networks of power and influence that bound rural peripheries to metropolitan centers.[28] As I read through the voluminous records of the archaeological bureaucracy, I searched for telling comments and actions which might serve to link particularized experiences to larger tendencies and struggles. Much of the material that follows, then, centers on the examination of specific episodes, as these were captured by the correspondence in a single Instrucción Pública file. By offering numerous concrete examples of federal power in action, I seek to ground a discussion that might otherwise deal too much in abstractions. This approach also bears some similarity to the model of "thick description," as expressed by Clifford Geertz. Discussing anthropological attempts to study culture, Geertz writes, "Behavior must be attended to, and with some exactness, because it is through the flow of behavior – or more precisely, social action – that cultural forms find articulation."[29] The truth of this assertion applies to history as well as to anthropology. By examining the specific behavior of federal employees in a wide variety of contexts, I hope to provide the reader with tools for understanding the broader milieu of Porfirian governance.

III. Structure and Function

The chapters that follow employ both chronological and thematic approaches to recount the development of archaeological administration in Mexico. I begin by establishing the historical context of state control over the material past. In Chapter 2, I examine the status of pre-Hispanic objects within Spain's colonial empire, the role of such objects in the formation of Creole identity, and the creation of archaeological institutions and legislation within the independent Mexican state. This chapter discusses the continuities which extend from the colonial period into the national era, especially the longstanding claims of central authorities on objects created by pre-Hispanic cultures. In both the colonial and national periods, central governments took steps to survey pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts; established museums and gathered pre-Hispanic objects to fill their collections, and enacted laws and regulations meant to assert and entrench state authority over the material past. I argue that while colonial and national

[28] Terry Rugeley, *Yucatán's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996) and Paul Vanderwood, *The Power of God Against the Guns of Government: Religious Upheaval in Mexico at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). See also Paul Vanderwood, *Juan Soldado: Rapist, Murderer, Martyr, Saint* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), and Terry Rugeley, *Of Wonders and Wise Men: Religion and Popular Cultures in Southeast Mexico, 1800-1876* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001).

[29] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 17. Geertz took the term "thick description" from Gilbert Ryle, and described it as an effort to "draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts; to support broad assertions about the role of culture in the construction of collective life by engaging them exactly with complex specifics." Ibid., 6 and 28.

administrations were far less active than the Díaz regime in their approaches towards pre-Hispanic sites and objects, patterns established during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century would do much to shape later Porfirian practices.

I then provide a general overview of Porfirian archaeological legislation and administrative structures, with special attention to the circumstances and personalities responsible for the creation of the Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos. In Chapter 3, I emphasize the role of foreign excavators in spurring the federal government to develop and refine procedures for preserving the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past. I also examine the role of Leopoldo Batres, whose ambitions and arrogance were inextricably linked to the growth of the agency that he led. Although lacking in both archaeological knowledge and political finesse, Batres employed his considerable determination to increase the size, influence and funding of the Inspección. The efforts of the Inspección were also greatly aided by the passage of two major laws in 1896 and 1897. The first clarified the conditions under which archaeological excavations could be carried out in the republic, while the latter gave the federal government explicit ownership of all pre-Hispanic constructions (although not necessarily the land on which they stood). Despite these measures, though, the Inspección's control over the pre-Hispanic material past was never more than partial. For all the pride that Batres took in his work, he was frequently unable to prevent foreigners, Mexican citizens, or Inspección employees from turning sites and artifacts to their own uses.

Once this framework is in place, I turn in Chapter 4 to look more closely at the internal workings of the Inspección, focusing on the duties and experiences of site caretakers, or *conserjes de monumentos*. Conserjes were responsible for site maintenance and repair, for guarding ruins against looting or vandalism, and for welcoming tourists and official visitors. These employees, who operated with little direct supervision or guidance, were the local faces of federal power. Their choices and actions, therefore, were critical to determining the nature and extent of the Inspección's authority over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past. I trace the changing demographics of monument caretakers, as the position changed from an honorary one to a salaried federal job. While early caretakers were usually men who possessed wealth and local distinction, by the middle of the 1890s Batres and his superiors at Instrucción Pública had come to prefer peasant farmers who would be willing to reside among the ruins. This chapter also analyzes the conditions of employment within the Inspección, looking closely at how conserjes were hired, the duties which they performed, and their interactions with Mexico City administrators. I argue that the experiences of site caretakers reveal fundamental weaknesses of the Porfirian state, while also demonstrating the growth and centralization of state power which took place between 1885 and 1911.

In Chapter 5, I examine concepts of archaeological property, and the ways that individuals and organizations framed and defended competing claims to ownership of the pre-Hispanic material past. Ambiguities in archaeological legislation meant that the resolution of these claims often had as much to do with politics as with a straightforward application of the relevant laws. Yet even when the Inspección possessed clear legal authority over pre-Hispanic sites and objects, its moral authority was still a matter of dispute. The claims advanced by the Inspección were met by counter-narratives of ownership, legitimacy, patrimony, and the intrinsic meanings of the pre-Hispanic past. Alternative visions of ownership might arise from the conflicting imperatives of different branches of government, or from a collision between individual and state interests. State governors, for example, might wish for artifacts to remain within regional museums rather than being removed to Mexico City, while landowners might

insist that they had the right to dispose of the artifacts and monuments located on their property. The archaeological bureaucracy dealt with these disputes in diverse ways, but often failed to satisfy its interlocutors. Contradictory interests were accompanied by contrasting understandings of pre-Hispanic sites and objects, gaps which could not bridged merely by the blunt application of power.

Chapter 6 explores these differing understandings of the material past in more detail, focusing on interactions between the federal government and the individuals and communities located near pre-Hispanic sites. Some of the most intense disputes between federal and local actors arose when the demands of archaeological preservation conflicted with the immediate material needs of the present. Local community members tended to be unimpressed by federal claims that pre-Hispanic sites constituted a priceless national patrimony, especially when the works in question were neither monumental in scale nor aesthetically appealing. In particular, local landowners and town officials often sought to use pre-Hispanic constructions as a convenient source of stone for building projects. By looking closely at several case studies, I trace the difficulties of implementing federal archaeological policy at the local level. Although the power, influence, and local acceptance of the archaeological bureaucracy increased over the course of the Porfiriato, federal administrators never escaped the need to negotiate with local residents. The complexity and diversity of local attitudes meant local people might also seek to preserve the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past because they viewed these remains as possessing spiritual, scientific, or patriotic significance. As with destructive uses of the monuments, local efforts at preservation might not align with the goals or priorities of the federal archaeological bureaucracy. Thus, the principle of strict federal control over the pre-Hispanic material past, so absolute in the rhetoric of Batres and others, was inevitably compromised in practice.

While Chapters 4 through 6 consider events which took place throughout the period from 1885 to 1911, Chapter 7 returns to a more linear approach in order to tell the story of archaeological institutions in the midst of the Mexican Revolution. In keeping with the rest of the dissertation, my focus in this chapter is not on ideological and scientific innovations, but on individuals and the institutions which they served. Employees of the Museo Nacional and the Inspección de Monumentos found their lives and work severely disrupted by warfare and political chaos, but often responded to these challenges with great resiliency. I argue that although the Revolution was a source of great disruption, many of the fundamental structures and governing principles established during the Porfiriato remained in place despite frequent changes of national administrations. Physical violence, employee turnover, funding shortfalls, and revolutionary factionalism could not sever the enduring links between the national state and the pre-Hispanic material past, nor undo the administrative accomplishments of the past quarter-century. In the aftermath of Constitutionalist victory, the legislative and institutional patterns laid down during the Porfiriato would continue to influence federal efforts to define, claim, and manage Mexico's archaeological patrimony.

Perhaps the largest theme of this dissertation, then, is the continuing influence exerted by the literal and metaphorical structures of the past. Such edifices may become buried over time, reassembled into new forms, or made to serve purposes very different from those for which they were originally intended, but they are seldom eradicated completely. Surveying a landscape from above, it is possible to see how structures created long ago continue to shape the terrain, and to affect movements within it. The builders and artisans who created the material culture of ancient Mesoamerica, the colonial officials who claimed all "treasures" in the name of the Spanish

Crown, the Creole patriots and Hispanophiles who established a national museum for a newly independent Mexico, the Porfirian legislators who declared all pre-Hispanic monuments to be property of the federal government, the laborers and caretakers who asserted those claims on the ground, and the Revolutionary administrators who continued to budget funds for archaeological preservation despite major political and social upheavals, all left tangible and enduring evidence of their historical presence. In modern as in ancient times, relics possess power.

Chapter 2

Ruins of Empire

"Mute and deserted
You now look, pyramid. Better
That weeks of centuries be laid waste,
And may the superstition that you served
Sleep in the abyss of hell!
To our distant grandsons, nonetheless,
Let it be a healthy lesson; and to the man of today
Blind in his vain and futile knowledge
A Titan pridefully thundering to heaven
Let it be a disgraceful example
Of madness and human fury."

-"In the Temple of Cholula," José María Heredia[1]

Every age is haunted in some way by the physical remains of past societies. Reflections on relics and ruination have existed in all manner of forms, from the collections of Sumerian artifacts assembled by Babylonian royals, to the "Olmec jades" and Toltec "ceramics and ornaments" incorporated into later Mesoamerican ceremonies and monuments, to modern popcorn cinema such as *The Mummy* or *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.[2] The period stretching from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, however, stands out as a transformative era for

[1] "*Muda y desierta/ ahora te ves, pirámide. ¡Más vale/ que semanas de siglos yazcas yerma,/ y la superstición a quien serviste/ en el abismo del infierno duerma!/ A nuestros nietos últimos, empero,/ sé lección saludable; y hoy al hombre/ que ciego en su saber fútil y vano/ al cielo, cual Titán, truena orgulloso,/ sé ejemplo ignominioso/ de la demencia y del furor humano.*" Heredia, a Cuban who spent considerable time in Mexico, wrote this poem in December of 1820. José María Heredia, "En el teocali de Cholula," in *Un pasado visible: Antología de poemas sobre vestigios del México antiguo,* edited by Gustavo Jiménez Aguirre, with photographs by Javier Hinojosa (Mexico City: Artes de México, 2004), 17.

[2] For brief discussions of antiquarianism in the ancient world, see Glyn Daniel, *A Short History of Archaeology* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), 14 and Bruce Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 30. Byron Hamann provides a rich account of antiquarian traditions in pre-Hispanic, colonial, and twentieth-century Mesoamerica in "The Social Life of Pre-Sunrise Things: Indigenous Mesoamerican Archaeology," *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (June 2002): 351-82, quotes taken from page 351. Kevin McGeough's delightful survey of "Near Eastern Archaeology in the Movies" notes that many film portrayals of archaeologists bear considerable resemblance to "narratives…[invoking] danger and excitement," that were cultivated by the practitioners and sponsors of Near Eastern antiquarianism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. "These narratives were deliberately provided to the public and have remained very much a part of a public conception of archaeology, promoted by nation-states, corporations, and archaeologists themselves." Kevin McGeough, "Heroes, Mummies, and Treasure: Near Eastern Archaeology in the Movies," *Near Eastern Archaeology*, Vol. 69, No. 3/4 (Sep.-Dec., 2006): 174.

western approaches to antiquity. That this was also an age of revolutions, railroads, commerce and the Crystal Palace was no contradiction; the rush of change fostered fascination with what had been destroyed, and what might be resurrected. Images of ruins pervaded the elite culture of the time, appearing in paintings, poems, travel writing, nationalist proclamations, and scholarly publications. Developments in the last area were especially consequential, as diverse local traditions of study gradually coalesced into the international academic discipline of archaeology.[3] While the tempo and rigor of archaeological research increased exponentially during the second half of the nineteenth century, these later efforts built upon intellectual, institutional, political and cultural foundations established in an earlier era.

The increasing prominence of antiquities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was strongly correlated with the growth of state power, and the associated processes of nationalism, political centralization, and imperialism. Before the 1700s, antiquarian scholarship in the west was largely the preserve of leisured enthusiasts, who more often emphasized objects' spiritual or metaphysical properties than their value as empirical records of the past. While laws dealing with antiquities had existed in Europe since at least the twelfth century, these were not part of integrated programs for cultural preservation, and were enforced spottily if at all.[4] Similarly, although antiquarian objects had long been included in the private collections of European ruling houses, state policies placed little formal weight on the recovery, study and display of antiquities. It was the expansion of state administrative and legal structures which made possible large-scale, systematic programs for the investigation, acquisition, and maintenance of the material past. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European and American states sponsored expeditions and excavations, founded museums, paid salaries or stipends to scholars, underwrote the publication of antiquarian research, circulated objects and images, and in various ways sought to assert control over the material remains of diverse ancient cultures. Such activities, still minor in comparison to the far more massive state interventions

[3] In a discussion of periodization in the history of archaeology, Alice B. Kehoe points to the importance traditionally placed on the 1847 appointment of Jens Jacob Asmussen Worsaae as "the first state-supported official archaeologist in Denmark…an event signifying the institution of archaeology as a profession serving national interests." Kehoe also argues that "The critical different between those who did archaeology in what Willey and Sabloff (1974) term the Speculative Period (up to the 1840s), and those whose work dates after 1840 was not speculation and its absence nor was it a lack of scientific reasoning, but the vision of the modern state." Alice B. Kehoe, "Contextualizing Archaeology," in *Tracing Archaeology's Past: The Historiography of Archaeology*, ed. Andrew L. Christenson, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 102 and 106. Christenson also points to the mid-nineteenth century as a crucial turning point from antiquarianism to archaeology, writing that "Archaeology as a professional discipline began between the 1840s and the 1860s with the work of people like J. J. A. Worsaae and Jeffries Wyman, who devoted much of their time to and derived their livelihood from archaeology." Andrew Christenson, "Preface," in Ibid., ix.

[4] Leonard Barkan writes that "In August 1514, Leo X appointed Raphael to be *maestro della fabbrica*, or chief architect, of Saint Peter's, and a year later he was named *commissario delle antichità*, in effect protector of ancient marble," but notes that "Raphael's power…[had] more to do with eminent domain in acquiring marble for the construction of Saint Peter's than with humanist preservation. Indeed, we know of only one prosecution, when Raphael attempted to intervene not because ancient marble was being wantonly destroyed but because a collection was to be diverted from the pope's grasp for use in the Conservators' Palace…Raphael's efforts in general, like those of a succession of well-meaning decrees going back to 1162 and to papal bulls from Pius II (1462) and Sixtus IV (1474), do not seem to have done anything to halt the despoiling of ancient remains." Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 37.

that began in the late 1800s, nevertheless did a great deal to determine the subsequent meanings and uses of antiquities.

The general trend towards greater state involvement in antiquarian affairs took various forms as it was refracted by political circumstances. Margarita Díaz-Andreu argues that until the 1870s, Britain and the United States followed a "Utilitarian model" of state support for scientific research, based on a "reluctance to sponsor non-profitable areas." Therefore, when the British or U.S. governments did facilitate antiquarian research, this was done mostly as an offshoot of other state interests or commitments. Britain's consuls in Egypt, for example, often collected antiquities to donate or sell to the British Museum, while the Central American researches of John Lloyd Stephens were assisted by Stephens' status as a U.S. diplomat.[5] Other countries' leaders took more active steps to foster scientific institutions and activity. Díaz-Andreu writes that "the rest of the Western world" followed a "State Interventionist model," a model that was strongest in France.[6] The tight bond between science and the French state was famously illustrated by Napoleon's military expedition to Egypt, which launched in 1798 accompanied by "151 scholars and artists." These savants carried out detailed studies of ancient Egyptian monuments and inscriptions, and brought artifacts such as the Rosetta Stone to the attention of western audiences.[7] The interventionist model might also apply to antiquities located inside national borders. Greek authorities issued a law banning the export of Hellenic artifacts in 1827, while still struggling for independence from the Ottoman Empire.[8] Although Europe's Great Powers made sure that the achievement of Greek independence was soon followed by the installation of a Bavarian monarch, the study of antiquities was "a key element in the new government's attempt to establish a purified national identity closely linked with the classical

[5] Donald Reid describes "a century and more of Anglo-French Egyptological rivalry" starting in the early 1800s, which at one point "came to blows at Karnak, leading the rivals to agree to partition Egypt, with [British consul-general Henry] Salt working the antiquities on the west bank of the Nile, and [French consul-general Bernardino] Drovetti those on the east." Reid notes that while "Salt's and Drovetti's successors carried the Anglo-French rivalry into the 1850s," to the extent that one French consul "attracted attention by *not* being a collector," these efforts did not always bear the expected fruit. "Museums back home often brought patriotic collectors up short. The Louvre rejected Drovetti's first Egyptian offering, which ended up in his native Piedmont instead of France. The British Museum paid a paltry £2,000 for Salt's first collection, but the Louvre snatched his second collection up at five times the price. Mimaut's table of kings from Abydos also ended up on the wrong side of the Channel – in the British Museum." Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs?: Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity From Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 37-9. John Lloyd Stephens writes that his efforts to "buy" the Mayan ruins of Copán from a reluctant landholder, were expedited after he "*put on a diplomatic coat, with a profusion of large eagle buttons*" and presented himself as an "*illustrious incognito*." John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan*, vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1969), 127-8.

[6] Margarita Díaz-Andreu, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 16. Díaz-Andreu writes that "In post-revolutionary France the state would be very wary of any institutions besides itself, such as charitable foundations funding archaeology, especially if they had links with the Church. Besides, sponsorship coming from the wealthy was not welcome at a time when the state was trying to break up their large estates. The organization of scientific research was something that was perceived as being a state's duty and nothing to do with private initiative." Idem.

[7] Nina Burleigh, *Mirage: Napoleon's Scientists and the Unveiling of Egypt* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 2 and 113-4.

[8] Ève Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance de l'archéologie moderne, 1798-1945* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1998), 47.

past."[9] The continuing strain between Greece and the United Kingdom over the issue of the Elgin Marbles, sculptures removed from the Parthenon by the British Lord Elgin during the early nineteenth century, points to the enduring salience of such archaeological nationalism.

Like Greece, Mexico also won its independence in the 1820s, after a lengthy struggle in which insurgent leaders and writers invoked the glories of past civilizations.[10] Throughout Spanish America, the advocates of independence justified their cause "in part from the legitimacy of the preconquest civilizations that had governed America before the arrival of the Spanish," a practice that Rebecca Earle labels "Indianesque nationalism."[11] However, the pre-Hispanic past occupied a particularly prominent place in Mexican nationalist discourses. Mexico was home to the powerful, sophisticated civilizations of the Aztecs and Mayas, whose successes prefigured the hopes of the new nation. Unlike Peru, Mexico had no recent history of large-scale indigenous revolts, events which offered distressing reminders that those outside of elite circles might also lay claim to pre-Hispanic legacies.[12] Mexico also had a rich colonial tradition of historical and ethnographic scholarship, dating back to the works of missionaries such as Toribio de Benavente (Motolinía) and Bernardino de Sahagún, who themselves drew from intellectual legacies that predated the conquest. This tradition was unaffected by state crackdowns of the sort that occurred in eighteenth-century Peru.[13] Instead, towards the end of the colonial era a number of officials based in the viceroyalty of New Spain took active steps to further the investigation of the pre-Hispanic past. Some of these efforts focused on the acquisition of documents, as when viceregal authorities seized the "museum" of early colonial texts assembled by the unfortunate Italian collector Lorenzo Boturini. Other state initiatives revolved around the exploration of pre-Hispanic sites, or the recovery, study and display of specific artifacts. Official forays into antiquarianism were often carried out on an *ad hoc* basis, but the fact that they were carried out

[9] Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 73.

[10] David Brading notes that "Fray Servando Teresa de Mier's *Historia de la revolución de Nueva España, antiguamente Anáhuac*…had so puzzled a contemporary Englishman that Simón Bolívar wrote his famous Jamaica Letter to reassure him that the Mexican insurgents had no intention of reviving the worship of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, whom Mier had identified as St. Thomas the Apostle." David Brading, *The First America: The Spanish monarchy, Creole patriots, and the Liberal state, 1492-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xvii.

[11] Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native: Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 26.

[12] See Sara Castro-Klaren, "The Nation in Ruins: Archaeology and the Rise of the Nation," in *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, ed. Sara Castro-Klaren and John Charles Chasteen (Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2003), 161-95.

[13] After the 1781 execution of the Andean rebel José Gabriel Condorcanqui, who had taken the name Tupac Amaru II and had claimed descent from the Incan ruler of that name, the Spanish "state campaigned to root out all cultural elements of the neo-Inca nationalism that had emerged in the eighteenth century…Bishop Moscoso made a series of recommendations to Visitador Areche in April, most of which were carried out. He called for the destruction of all portraits of the Incas and for the prohibition of clothing associated with the Incas, certain dances, the use of "Inca" as a last name or title, literature that questioned the legitimate rights of the Spanish monarchy in the Americas (with harsh punishment for readers of subversive material), and customary law." Charles F. Walker, *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), 53-4.

at all demonstrates that the cultivation of antiquarian knowledge had become part of the apparatus of enlightened rule.

This chapter will examine the changing uses of Mesoamerican antiquities as the Bourbon viceroyalty of New Spain became the independent republic (and occasional empire) of Mexico. The story of Creole patriotism is a familiar one, and this chapter will not attempt to do more than lightly review the nuanced accounts provided by historians such as David Brading, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, and Rebecca Earle. Nor is this chapter primarily concerned with the details of how eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scholars interpreted the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past, a subject ably explored in other historical writings.[14] Instead, emphasis will be placed on the sorts of claims that state representatives made to pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts, and the ways those claims were asserted or ignored in everyday practice. By peering through this lens, we can better appreciate the extent to which the lofty rhetoric of scholars and statesmen was matched by a real commitment of monetary resources and administrative effort. In both colonial and national contexts, antiquarian ambitions frequently exceeded the administrative capacities of fragile, fragmented states. The shaky implementation and frequent failures of antiquarian policy, especially during the middle third of the nineteenth century, demonstrate the limited hegemony that central governments exercised over territory that they theoretically controlled.

A focus on scientific institution-building and government mechanisms also allows us to see the strong continuities which existed between the colonial and national periods. Although many Mexican writers and officials harshly condemned the destruction wrought by conquistadors and priests during the conquest of the Americas, the antiquarian policies of independent Mexico owed a great deal to Spanish practices and legal precedents. Starting in the sixteenth century, the Spanish Crown claimed sweeping authority over American "treasures," a category that could include pre-Hispanic objects. While these laws were intended to enhance royal revenues rather than to promote cultural preservation, the principle of a strong state interest in valuable artifacts persisted. The decade following independence also saw the flowering of ideas first put forward in the colonial period by Creole scholars such as José Antonio Alzate and Antonio de León y Gama, who identified the achievements of pre-Hispanic cultures as sources of regional pride and self-definition. These concepts had sufficient currency that the conservative Hispanophile Lucas Alamán, who opposed the break with Spain and agitated for the importation of a European monarch, could spearhead the establishment of a national museum containing pre-Hispanic objects. In antiquarianism as in so many other areas, the long colonial experience bequeathed lasting legacies.

Continuities with the colonial past did not mean that antiquarian policies remained static after independence, or marched in lockstep with those of European nations. The Mexican state's role continued to evolve (or devolve), as the new country struggled with the imperial ambitions of its neighbors and trading partners, the push and pull between centralist and federalist factions, military"pronouncements" and civil unrest, a cash-strapped treasury, and the persistence of deep racial divisions. In this context, the officials and appointees of the Mexican state developed approaches towards antiquarian patrimony that diverged in significant ways from contemporary practices in western Europe or the United States. The distinctiveness of these approaches derived from a fundamental paradox of early Mexican nationalism. Elites of European descent desired

[14] See for example Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrua, 1992), Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971), and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2001).

both to celebrate and to conscribe the country's indigenous heritage, identifying pre-Hispanic achievements as sources of national legitimacy and pride, while adhering to ideas of citizenship and civilization that excluded most of Mexico's population. By examining state uses of pre-Hispanic antiquities during the national era, we can gain insight into the ways that Mexico's process of nation-building differed from those of other nineteenth-century states. We can also see the establishment and elaboration of fundamental patterns, ways of interacting with the material past that conditioned future developments in Mexican archaeology.

I. Treasures of the Indies

Prior to the mid-eighteenth century, the cultural policies of the Spanish empire placed extremely little emphasis on the study or preservation of America's material past. While some indigenous American objects made their way intact into European collections, where they excited the admiration of figures such as the artist Albrecht Dürer and the humanist courtier Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, these items were not used to carry out systematic investigations of the societies that had produced them.[15] Instead, such artifacts took on the status of "curiosities," objects notable for their rarity, beauty, or ability to provoke interest. Placed in collections or "cabinets," curiosities indicated the taste, wealth, and learning of their owners, and evoked neo-Platonic ideas of a grand network of connections linking the diverse phenomena of the world.[16] This sort of collecting, opportunistic and proudly eclectic rather than systematic or comprehensive, exerted no discernible influence on official Spanish approaches towards America's material past. Although the Early Modern Spanish empire diligently gathered all sorts of information about its territories through surveys "gathered and remitted in response to royal orders in a hierarchical chain of local to central administrators," a "bureaucratic tradition" known as the *Relaciones geográficas*, these surveys "for the most part requested only descriptions – not physical specimens – of the geographic, demographic, and ethnographic characteristics of local populations."[17] Moreover, the material submitted for the *Relaciones geográficas* does not seem

[15] For a discussion of "enthusiasm" and "pleasure" with which some Europeans regarded the material productions of the newly conquered Aztec empire, see Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 64-5 and 69-70. Juan Pimentel also discusses sixteenth-century collections of objects from the New World (a category that included plants and animals as well as manmade artifacts), writing that "No hubo, sin embargo, en la España de las Austrias una política [de coleccionismo] precisa y activa semejante a la que hubo tras las relaciones y los cuestionarios…Huelga decir que miembros de la nobleza como Diego Hurtado de Mendoza o el conde de Guimerá contaban entre sus pertenencias con ídolos aztecas, por no mencionar a mecenas de la talla de Lastanosa. Pero también se sabe que ya en 1524 el archiduque de Austria se había hecho con un juego de plumas mexicanas. En esto no se diferenciaba de Carlos V. Y ni mucho menos de Cosimo de Medici, quien tenía en 1539 una colección de vestidos indígenas y arte plumario digna de un emperador. Es conocida la actividad colectora del príncipe Mauricio de Nassau en el Brasil holandés. Pronto hubo máscaras procedentes de Teotihuacán en Florencia y loros novohispanos en colecciones tan representativas como las de Schloss Ambras y Ferdinando Cospi." Juan Pimentel, *Testigos del mundo: Ciencia, literatura y viajes en la Ilustración* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2003), 157.

[16] "Through the revelation of hidden connections invisible to the uninitiated, and through the discovery of an essential affinity between objects far removed from each other in geographical origin and in nature, collectors offered their visitors a glimpse of the secret that lay at the heart of all things: that reality is all one and that within it everything has its allotted place, answering to everything else in an unbroken chain." Patrick Mauriès, *Cabinets of Curiosities* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002), 34.

to have contained more than glancing notice of America's pre-Hispanic sites, except as these happened to define the local landscape.[18] The same applied to other state-sponsored research on the New World, such as that carried out by the Spanish physician and naturalist Francisco Hernández during the 1570s, which again focused on documents and testimonies rather than the study of physical objects.[19] The considerable interest that officials and agents of the Crown displayed towards the history and ethnography of the Americas was not matched by similar curiosity about pre-Hispanic material culture.

Other scholarship on the pre-Hispanic cultures of the Americas stemmed more from personal interest and private efforts than from official directives, although these studies might draw upon or became associated with the institutional apparatuses of the Church or state. As with the information-gathering projects of the Crown, the work of scholarly priests such as Motolinía, Jerónimo de Mendieta, or Bernardino de Sahagún did not involve an organized program of research into the material past. Independent Spanish investigations into indigenous American cultures also received a blow in the 1570s, when the government of Philip II sought first to centralize all such projects under the direction of Chronicler-Cosmographer of the Indies Juan de Ovando, then, after Ovando died, to shut down such projects altogether.[20] Ignacio Bernal writes

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[17] Paula De Vos, "Natural History and the Pursuit of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Spain," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Winter, 2007): 214.

[18] "This map locates the town of Solcuautla [Veracruz] at the top center…In the text that accompanies the map a short description of each estate is given: most significant from the archaeological point of view is the mention of each parcel with reference to *cues* or *cuecillos* (*nahuatl*for 'temple' or 'pyramid', archaeological mounds)…*Cues* are mentioned in this map as a feature of the Gulf coast landscape along with marshlands, hills, and untilled fields, but by using the nahuatl term '*cue*', the Spanish were acknowledging that they were artificial structures." Chantal Esquivias, "*Cuecillos*: Early Colonial mapping of Precolumbian mounds," *Antiquity*, Vol. 76, No. 291 (March, 2002): 37.

[19] Hernández authored "an ethnographic volume that he called *Antiquities of New Spain*," after "Philip II of Spain sent Hernández to the New World to research and describe the natural history of the region, assess the medicinal usefulness of the natural resources, and gather ethnographic materials for an anthropological history." Simon Varey, "Preface and Acknowledgments," in *The Mexican Treasury: The Writings of Dr. Francisco Hernández*, ed. Simon Varey, trans. Rafael Chabrán, Cynthia L. Chamberlin, and Simon Varey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), xi. This work mentioned the material products of pre-Hispanic societies, but did not concentrate on this subject matter, or analyze the clues that material objects provided to the past. The brief treatment given to pre-Hispanic ruins can be seen in a discussion of the "Admirable Things of New Spain," where Hernández wrote "*Y en la misma* [Yucatán] *se ven ruinas de edificios fabricados con arte admirable; otras semejantes se encuentran de la misma medida y que al contacto de la cosa más insignificante se solían moverse y estremecerse, pero ahora (según dicen) están inmóviles, porque debido a la injuria del tiempo y la incuria de los indios, se ha perdido la piedra donde se encerraba oculta casi toda la fuerza de ese arte y estructura maravillosa*," before going on to discuss a lake populated by axolotls, volcanoes and their eruptions, and a variety of natural springs with curious chemical properties. Francisco Hernández, ed. Ascensión Hernández de León-Portilla, *Antigüedades de la Nueva España* (Madrid: Dastin Historia, 1986), 108.

[20] "There reached Spain from Mexico grave admonitions against the effect which might be produced by these histories of the government and rites which the natives had, because, they said, any assistance in conserving the memory of these beliefs, ceremonies, and superstitions could make it easier for the Indians to learn or remember their ancient religion. As a consequence of so much disturbance on such a delicate theme, Philip II resolved, by a cédula of April 22, 1577, to advise the Viceroy of New Spain 'not to consent that in any manner anyone should write things which concern the superstitions and manner of life which these Indians had…, for thus it is best for the service of God.'" Demetrio Ramos, trans. Fintan B. Warren, "The Chronicles of the Early Seventeenth Century: How They Were Written," *The Americas*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (July, 1965): 42-3. This order did not halt all inquiries into New Spain's indigenous past, but may have dampened their subsequent influence. The Dominican friar Diego

that from 1520 to 1670, "no excavations having even antiquarian objectives were carried out, but descriptions were written, sometimes magnificent ones, of sites and monuments, and even occasionally of objects."[21] During the late seventeenth century the Creole scholar Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, "the most learned (*sabio*) man of his era in Mexico," did conduct some small-scale excavations at the Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacán. These works were not imitated, however, and Sigüenza y Góngora's descriptions of his work at Teotihuacán are apparently lost.[22] Ignacio Bernal labels the period from 1670 to 1750 as one of "Curiosos investigadores de papeles antiguos," in which scholars concentrated on gathering and consolidating documentary sources rather than treating the material past itself as an important focus of study.

Before the late eighteenth century, efforts to preserve the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past were almost wholly restricted to indigenous communities, some of whose members went to great lengths to hide objects that possessed spiritual or economic value. The eighteenth-century Creole scholar Antonio de León y Gama wrote that in the decades following the conquest, "the Indians themselves, for fear of the Spanish, hid in the wild areas or buried in the earth, not only their household gods, but all those jewels, gems and worked pieces, and instruments of which they knew they could be despoiled."[23] According to Serge Gruzinski, the "idolclasty" of the Spanish met a well-coordinated response from the Nahua clergy and nobility, who arranged for the concealment and protection of "effigies and the numerous, equally precious ceremonial objects." These efforts dwindled over time, as "Death, forgetfulness, the reigning confusion, the rotting of effigies and adornments, persecution and denunciation undermined the network of clandestine sanctuaries everywhere."[24] Other members of colonial American society sometimes reappropriated the pre-Hispanic material past, although these activities fell well outside modern ideas of preservation. According to the Franciscan historian Jerónimo de Mendieta, "some of the principal houses of Mexico" contained stone "idols…placed in the corners of the foundation."[25] While such practices indicate the powerful symbolic charge carried

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Durán, for instance, completed a major work in the 1580s that "numbers among the most important sources on [Mexica] history. But his interest was apparently peculiar to himself, his chronicle soon lost, and his Dominican brethren unconcerned by its supression." David Brading, *The First America*, 124.

[21] "En resumen, durante estos 150 años no se efectuaron exploraciones con fines siquiera anticuarios, pero hubo descripciones, a veces magníficas, de sitios y monumentos, y en ocasiones aun de objetos." Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 44.

[22] "Dentro del moderno espíritu cartesiano indudablemente fue el hombre más sabio de su época en México…lleva a cabo la primera exploración francamente arqueológica, en la que trata de utilizar un monumento para esclarecer algún problema histórico. No sabemos si escribió algo sobre esta exploración, ya que, como señalé, la mayor parte de sus relatos históricos o anticuarios se han perdido." Ibid., 46-7.

[23] "*Los mismos indios por temor de los españoles escondieron en los montes y sepultaron en la tierra, no solamente los ídolos caseros, sino todas aquellas alajas, piedras y labrados, é instrumentos de que conocían poderlos despojar*." Antonio de León y Gama, ed. Carlos María de Bustamante, *Descripción histórica y cronológica de las dos piedras que con ocasión del nuevo empedrado que se está formando en la plaza principal de México, se hallaron en ella el año de 1790*, vol. 2 (Mexico City: Imprenta del ciudadano Alejandro Valdés, 1832), 81.

[24] Serge Gruzinski, *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to Blade Runner (1492-2019)*, trans. Heather MacLean (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 52-3 and 60.

[25] "*Habia entre ellos grandes escultores de cantería, que labraban cuanto querian en piedra, con guijarros ó pedernales…como se echa hoy de de ver en algunas figuras de sus ídolos que se pusieron por esquinas sobre el*

by the fragments of a vanquished empire, they also reveal European elites' disinterest in using material culture to investigate the pre-Hispanic past.

Instead of emphasizing study or preservation, then, colonial officials approached the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past in whatever ways seemed likely to achieve the pressing goals of economic gain, Christian evangelization, and social cohesion. In practice, this typically meant that pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts were destroyed, melted down, dismantled, re-purposed, or ignored by Spanish political and ecclesiastical authorities. In the case of objects that possessed special cultural or spiritual significance to indigenous communities, many state and ecclesiastical authorities were actively hostile. Sites and objects associated with indigenous religions were subject to fierce assaults, both during the initial wave of evangelization and during the periodic "extirpation of idolatry" campaigns that followed. According to León y Gama, one of the reasons why colonial officials smashed or buried pre-Hispanic objects was so that "their sight would not cause the Indians to recall their former government and religion."[26] In 1531, the bishop of Mexico City Juan de Zumárraga wrote of "five hundred temples razed to the ground, and above twenty thousand idols of the devils they worshipped smashed and burned."[27] In 1562, a ferocious Franciscan campaign against idolatry led Maya residents of the Yucatán to retrieve "suspiciously old and mossy" figures from "the ruins of Coba," in order to provide priests with all of the idols that they demanded.[28] In the Andes, the quest to root out reminders of indigenous religions even extended to aspects of the natural world, such as a rock formation that held important spiritual connotations.[29] Such destructive activities might easily co-exist with priestly

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cimiento en algunas casas principales de México, aunque no son de la obra curiosa que solían hacer." Jerónimo de Mendieta, ed. Joaquín García Icazbalceta, *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana* (Mexico City: Antigua Librería, F. Díaz de León and Santiago White, 1870), 403. León y Gama notes that after 1600, many of the pre-Hispanic carvings placed into the corners of Mexico City houses were effaced or destroyed. León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica*, vol. 2, 80. However, the practice of using pre-Hispanic stonework to decorate mansions continued through the end of the colonial period and beyond. The palace of the counts of Santiago Calimaya, constructed in 1779, incorporated a large block of stone carved into the shape of a fanged serpent, which was placed on one of the lower outside corners. Justino Fernández, trans. Joshua C. Taylor, *A Guide to Mexican Art* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), 95. Similarly, John Lloyd Stephens writes of the hacienda owner whose property contained the ruins of Uxmal, "*From the ruin to which all was hurrying, Don Simon cared only to preserve this serpent's head. He said that we might tear out and carry away every other ornament, but this he intended to build into the wall of a house in Merida as a memorial of Uxmal.*" John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*, vol. 2 (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), 179. As the serpent decorations remained at Uxmal decades later, however, "Don Simón must not have carried out his plan." Lawrence Gustave Desmond and Phyllis Mauch Messenger, *A Dream of Maya: Augustus and Alice Le Plongeon in Nineteenth-Century Yucatan* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 79.

[26] "*Pero habiendose destruido los templos y casas despues de la conquista para fabricar la nueva ciudad, se demolieron tambien muchas de sus piedras; otras se sepultaron en los cimientos, y las demas de que por entónces se habia hecho poco aprecio, se fuéron succesivamente destruyendo; ya por órden que para ello se dieron, con pretesto de que á su vista no recordáran los indios su antiguo gobierno y religion…yá, por aprovecharse los dueños de las fincas de los pedazos de unas piedras que no podian emplear enteras*." León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica*, vol. 2, 79-80.

[27] Esquivias, "*Cuecillos*," 37.

[28] Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 83.

[29] In 1664, one ambitious Peruvian *visitador* discovered "a great pinnacle of rock 'in the form of a human head', the features of which the notary felt especially obliged to remark upon. When they were questioned the

research into the pre-Hispanic past, which was justified on the grounds of "know thy enemy." By gaining knowledge of pre-Hispanic beliefs and practices, priests such as Sahagún believed that they could better identify and combat the subversion of Catholic evangelization.[30]

In other cases, artifacts and buildings were destroyed for reasons of economics or expediency. Urban builders and rural proprietors in search of stone or other construction materials looked to the remains of Native "temples and houses." Such initiatives might not emanate in any direct sense from the royal court; the geographical expanse of the Spanish empire, the slowness of communications, the diversity of local conditions, and the weakness of some monarchs meant that lower-level authorities exercised considerable autonomy on the ground. Moreover, the destruction of the pre-Hispanic material past was not always a matter of conscious intent, as many artifacts were damaged, lost, or destroyed through the passage of time and lack of active preservation efforts; in León y Gama's words, through the "*poco aprecio*" that they received.[31] Nevertheless, the destruction or dismantling of pre-Hispanic creations, whether for ideological or other reasons, was a matter of accepted practice – as long as "treasures" were searched for and divided according to the Laws of the Indies. These laws were partly directed towards the advancement of the Catholic faith and the maintenance of public order, but their overriding purpose was to secure royal access to metals and gemstones that had once been worked by indigenous craftsmen.

The early modern Spanish state staked out a strong legal position concerning indigenous American artifacts, partly based on "the traditional legal doctrine that all natural deposits of precious metals belonged to the royal patrimony."[32] The "royal fifth," a 20% tax on mineral wealth, applied both to mining outputs and to cultural objects containing valuable metals or gemstones. During the conquest and its aftermath, countless pre-Hispanic objects were melted down and reshaped into interchangeable ingots to serve the needs of Spain's sprawling, cash-strapped empire.[33] Throughout the sixteenth century the imperial government also issued laws

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Indians explained that this was *Vicho Rinri* (the notary's rendering), a *huaca* ancestor who was much celebrated in dances and songs. Three attempts to dislodge the *huaca* with sticks and levers – the last of which involved a new, thicker lever, an invocation of God and the addition of the exertions of the *visitador* – finally sent *Vicho Rinri* plummeting into the ravine below." Kenneth Mills, "The Limits of Religious Coercion in Mid-Colonial Peru," *Past & Present*, No. 145 (November, 1994): 105.

[30] "Of no value was the forethought which Sahagún had taken in times past concerning this point of view, when he had justified the value of his work by the example of the need of a doctor to know a disease in order to give a remedy, and by the fact that the knowledge of the ancient rites was the best aid to the missionary in order to discover false conversions and hidden practices." Ramos, "The Chronicles of the Early Seventeenth Century," 43.

[31] See quotation in footnote 26. León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica*, vol. 2, 80.

[32] D. A. Brading and Harry E. Cross, "Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (November, 1972): 560.

[33] The conquistador Bernal Díaz, who witnessed the division of Mexican treasures among the forces of Hernan Cortés, wrote "*It took us three days to examine it and remove all the embellishments with which it was decorated…With the help of the Indian goldsmiths from Atzcapotzalco we began to melt this down into broad bars a little more than two inches across.*" Bernal Díaz, trans. J. M. Cohen, *The Conquest of New Spain* (London: Penguin Books, 1963), 271-2. While Díaz noted that in this instance "*The rich jewellery, however, was not stamped, since we did not think it ought to be broken up*," other participants in the imperial project were less scrupulous. Sabine MacCormack provides a memorable description of the destruction carried out by Spanish conquerors in the Inca capital of Cuzco: "Before long, therefore, the gold plaques that adorned Coricancha were on their way to Seville. The bodies of Inca rulers and their queens were despoiled of their gold and silver ornaments; the countless small

relating specifically to the discovery and disposition of "treasures," defined in 1536 as "gold, silver, stones, pearls, copper, lead, tin, clothing and other things, whether they be in burials, tombs, *oques*, houses or temples of the Indians, or in other places where they offered sacrifices to their idols, and hidden or buried in houses, estates, the earth or any other location, whether it be public, secret, conciliar or private property; offered to the sun, *huacas*, or idols; deliberately sought out or found by accident."[34] These laws asserted royal authority over any American treasures that might be found, and made provisions for such finds to be registered, supervised, and heavily taxed. Scant weight was given to the ethnographic or historical value of American objects, but court policymakers were highly interested in the monetary wealth that such objects represented, and committed to defending the Crown's right to its cut.

At least as a matter of law, royal authority over mineral wealth took precedence over the efforts of Catholic missionaries to suppress customary forms of indigenous worship. In practice, of course, the interests of Church and Crown often overlapped. Royal authorities were generally supportive of evangelization efforts, and the Habsburg emperor Charles V had issued a decree as early as 1525 ordering the destruction or removal of indigenous shrines and "idols," while forbidding indigenous Americans to commit idolatry, eat human flesh, "or perform other abominations against our holy Catholic faith and all natural reason."[35] In the 1536 law on treasures, however, Charles clarified that Indians should not be "defrauded" of their property if they had hidden it "out of fear or for another just cause."[36] In 1537, Charles also ordered that

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statuettes of llamas and people that had been deposited as offerings in sand of the square of Haucaypata were dug up and melted down; the silver plaques that adorned the entrance of Atahuallpa's palaced were removed; gold and silver effigies of Inca rulers and their consorts were dragged from their shrines; the golden doors that gave access to the cave at Pacaritambo whence the first Incas had emerged, and the two golden trees that flanked the doors, were all dismantled, and where the hunger for precious metals did not reach, Christian zeal desecrated what was left." Sabine MacCormack, "History, Historical Record, and Ceremonial Action: Incas and Spaniards in Cuzco." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (April, 2001): 342. The actions of the Spaniards in Cuzco were sanctioned at the highest state levels. In 1535, the Habsburg monarch Charles V ordered "that all the gold and silver from Peru should be melted in the royal mints at Sevilla, Toledo, and Segovia," resulting in the destruction of those Incan objects which had managed to reach Spain intact. Samuel K. Lothrop, *Inca Treasure As Depicted by Spanish Historians* (1938; repr., Los Angeles: The Southwest Museum, Administrator of the Fund, 1964), 46. Lothrop lamented that "so far as I am aware, not even one object from the loot of Peru has survived to this day."

[34] "*De todos los tesoros que se hallaren en oro, plata, piedras, perlas, cobre, plomo, estaño, ropa y otras cosas, asi en enterramientos, sepulturas, oques, casas ó templos de indios, como en otros lugares en que ofrecían sacrificios á sus ídolos, y escondidas ó enterradas en casa, heredad, tierra u parte pública, secreta, concejil ó particular, ofrecidas al sol, guacas ó ídolos, buscadas de propósito ó halladas acaso, se nos ha de pagar…*" Ley II, "*Que de los tesoros hallados en sepulturas, oques, templos, adoratorios, ó heredamientos de los indios sea la mitad para el rey, habiendo sacado los derechos y quintos*," Título XII, "De los tesoros, depósito y rescates," in *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias*, vol. 3, fifth edition (Madrid: Boix, 1841), 68-9.

[35] "*Ordenamos y mandamos…que en todas quellas [sic] provincias hagan derribar y derriben, quitar y quiten los ídolos, ares y adoratorios de la gentilidad, y sus sacrificios; y prohiben espresamente con graves penas à los indios idolatrar y comer carne humana…y hacer otras abominaciones contra nuestra santa fe católica y toda razon natural, y haciendo lo contrario, los castiguen con much rigor*." Ley VII, "*Que se derriben y quiten los ídolos, y prohiba á los indios comer carne humana*," Titulo I, "De la santa fé católica," in *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias*, vol. 1, fifth edition (Madrid: Boix, 1841), 2.

[36] "*…con que por esto no hayan de ser ni sean defraudados los indios de lo que tuvieren por suyo, para tenerlo guardado ó escondido por temor ó por otra justa causa.*" Ley II, "*Que de los tesoros hallados en sepulturas, oques, templos, adoratorios, ó heredamientos de los indios sea la mitad para el rey, habiendo sacado los derechos y*

discoverers of tombs or temples should register the sites with royal treasury officials before removing "gold, silver, and other things," or else lose all rights to a share of the treasure.[37] Charles' son, the Spanish monarch Philip II, also took steps to establish the Crown as the sole entity which could legitimately dispose of American wealth. In 1573, Philip expressed concern that Indians might not reveal the location of hidden treasures for fear of being punished as idolators, and ordered that common procedures apply to both Spanish and indigenous discoverers.[38] Two years later, Philip criticized the behavior of both regional officials and local churches in Peru, which had made unjustified claims of ownership over "the treasures that they find." (In this case, the treasures in question included not only man-made artifacts, but also the lands and livestock "that superstition dedicated to light and the sun, and to the service of the idols and huacas.") The king emphasized that all such valuables "belong to Us, and not to *visitadores*, churches, or private citizens." In a clear statement of royal priorities, Philip ordered that illicitly acquired livestock be sold, with all profits going to the Crown.[39] Philip's stance did not contradict the Catholic agenda of evangelization, but the king's claims did supersede the interests of the Church. The 1575 decree emphasized, yet again, that secular and not religious authorities had final control over the uses of pre-Hispanic objects.[40]

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quintos," Título XII, "De los tesoros, depósito y rescates," in *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias*, vol. 3, 69.

[37] "*El que hallare sepulturas ó adoratorios de indios antes de sacar el oro, plata y otros cosas que hubiere, parezca ante los oficiales de nuestra real hacienda de la provincia ó sus tenientes, donde los hubiere, y alli lo manifieste y registre cuanto antes sea posible; y sin esta diligencia no lo aprehenda ni saque, pena de haber perdido la parte que ha de haber, aplicada á nuestra cámara.*" Ley III, "*Que el que hallare sepulturas las registre*," Título XII, "De los tesoros, depósito y rescates," in Idem.

[38] "*En algunas provincias se presume que hay muchos tesoros escondidos y enterrados…y que los indios no se atreven á descubrir, persuadidos á que no se les ha de dar parte, y han de ser castigados, y por estas causas encubren minerales ricos de oro, plata y esmeraldas que labraban antes de aquel descubrimiento y ahora los tienen ocultos: Ordenamos y mandamos que si los indios descubrieron guacas, enterramientos ú otro cualquier tesoro ò mina, se guarde con ellos todo lo ordenado respecto de los españoles, sin hacer novedad ni admitir diferencia, de forma que no reciban agravio, y se les dé todo el favor conveniente.*" Ley IV, "*Que en el descubrimiento de tesoros, guacas, enterramientos y minas se guarde con los indios lo ordenado con los españoles*," Título XII, "De los tesoros, depósito y rescates," in Idem.

[39] "*Pretenden los visitadores nombrados por los vireyes, presidentes y audiencias en sus distritos, tener derecho á los tesoros que hallan; y si no hay descubridor en algunos adoratorios, guacas ó partes donde los indios acuden á sacrificar, pretenden los iglesias que les pertenecen, y asimismo las tierras, ganado, chaquiras, joyas y otras cosas que eran de los Ingas* [sic] *del Perú, y dedicó la supersticion al rayo y sol, y servicio de los ídolos y guacas. Y porque todo lo referido, conforme á derecho y lo que está proveido nos pertenece, y no á los visitadores, iglesias ni personas particulares: declaramos y mandamos que asi se guarde y aplique á nuestra real hacienda, sin diminucion, y que los vireyes, presidentes y oidores, y jueces para esto diputados, hagan vender en pública almoneda todo el ganado que de esta forma se hallare, con asistencia de nuestros oficiales, y su procedido entre en las cajas reales…*" Ley V, "*Que los visitadores é iglesias no tienen derecho á los tesoros ni bienes de adoratorios y guacas, y el ganado se aplique al rey*," Título XII, "De los tesoros, depósito y rescates," in Idem.

[40] Besides defending its financial interests, the Crown also sometimes placed the maintenance of public order above the zeal of Catholic missionaries. In 1573, Philip II ordered that the instruction of "*los naturales, y sus repúblicas*" in "*los misterios y artículos de nuestra santa fé católica*" be carried out "*con mucha prudencia y discrecion…usando los medios mas suaves…y no comiencen a reprehenderles sus vicios, ni idolatrías, ni les quiten las mugeres, ni idolos, porque no se escandalicen, ni les cause extrañeza la doctrina cristiana: enseñénsela primero, y después que estén instruídos, les persuaden á que de su propia voluntad dejen lo que es contrario a nuestra santa fé católica, y doctrina evangélica, procurando los cristianos vivir con tal ejemplo, que sea el mejor y*

Finally, in 1595 Philip decreed a set of organized procedures for prospective treasure hunters to follow, rules which once again emphasized royal rights to pre-Hispanic objects and to the wealth that they represented. Those who wished to make their fortune by opening tombs or searching out forgotten temples first had to make arrangements with royal administrators to pay the Crown's expected share of the treasure, and post a bond to insure against any damage that might occur to private property in the course of excavations. Once royal officials were notified of the prospective treasure, the law obligated them to appoint a trusted individual to supervise the excavations and division of any finds. The law explicitly designated this appointee as a representative of the Crown, to defend its interests with regards to "what by right belongs to Us."[41] As much as the intent of these colonial decrees differed from later Mexican archaeological legislation, they established an enduring principle of the state's right to claim ownership of pre-Hispanic antiquities. In the eighteenth century this principle would be applied in new ways, to aggrandize the cultural prestige of the Spanish empire.

II. Alligators and Idols

In 1752, Madrid's Bourbon government issued an order that must have resulted in grumbling throughout the Spanish American colonies. The royal edict, which viceroys were to circulate among mine owners in Peru, New Spain, and New Granada, was part of the Crown's ongoing efforts to assume greater control over the administration and economic production of its colonies.[42] Mine owners were instructed to answer a number of detailed questions, such as when

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mas eficaz maestro." Ley II, Ordenanza 140, "*Que hecha amistad con los naturales se les predique la santa fé conforme á lo dispuesto,"* Título IV, "De las pacificaciones," in *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias*, vol. 1, 101. These sorts of restrictions had little effect on the practice of evangelization, but did serve to emphasize Crown claims to authority over indigenous Americans and their material creations.

[41] "*Ordenamos que si alguno intentare descubrir tesoros en las Indias, capitule primero con Nos ó los vireyes, presidentes ó gobernadores, la parte que se le ha de dar de lo que sacare, y obligándose con su persona y bienes, con fianzas bastantes de que satisfará y pagará los daños y menoscabos que de buscar el tesoro se siguieren en las casas, heredades ó posesiones á los dueños donde presumiere que está, como fuere tasado por personas de inteligencia y experiencia nombradas para ello, y hará el descubrimiento por su cuenta, y pagará de su hacienda todas las costas y gastos necesarios (hecha esta prevencion) el virey, presidente ó gobernador elija otra de confianza, rectitud y satisfaccíon, que vaya y asista con el descubridor, y tenga cuenta y razon de lo que se hallare, con órden de que lo haga avaluar y tasar, y acuda al descubridor con la parte que le pertenece, conforme á lo resuelto ó por concierto ó capitulacion se le hubiere concedido, menos los derechos y quintos que á Nos pertenecen, y traiga la restante cantidad á la parte que se le señalare, dándonos aviso de todo y remitiéndolo á estos reinos. Y asimismo ordenamos que para el cumplimiento de lo referido, y allanar las casas, heredades y posesiodes* [sic] *que el descubridor señalare, el virey, presidente ó gobernador dé comision, encargando á la persona que ha de asistir que use de ella con limitacion, y á las audiencias y justicias de las ciudades, villas y lugares donde se hubieren de hacer las diligencias, que le den el favor y ayuda pedido y necesario la ejecucion, que Nos en virtud de esta ley damos poder y facultad á los que fueren nombrados, para que en compañía de los descubridores, ó de quien su poder tuviere, busquen los tesoros, y hagan todas las diligencias necesarias al descubrimiento y hallazgo, en que se pondrá el cuidado que todos deben tener, como hacienda que de derecho nos pertenece.*" Ley I, "*Que en descubrir tesoros se guarde la forma de esta ley*," Título XII, "De los tesoros, depósito y rescates," in *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias*, vol. 3, 68.

[42] The efficient extraction of wealth from Spain's American colonies was a major priority of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Bourbon rulers. In 1804, for example, the "councillor of the Indies and once *visitador general* of Peru" Jorge Escobedo made a "reference to the colonies as 'aquellos países de donde queremos sacar el

their mines were first discovered, how many workers their mines employed, and what methods were used to extract metal from ores. The Crown also ordered proprietors to send mineral specimens to Spain, the largest and finest pieces that their mines had produced. (Notably, the edict did not include any mention of compensation for these "exquisite" samples.)[43] The requested items would adorn the collections of the newly formed Real Gabinete de la Historia Natural de las Minas, or Royal Museum of the Natural History of Mines. Contained within the museum, the objects would both represent Spanish imperial power, and provide clues as to how that power could be expanded.

The museum's holdings, however, would encompass more than just metal and stone. Towards the end of the edict, almost as an afterthought, the Crown made another request of its American officials. Viceroys and governors were told to send the Real Gabinete "all manner of curious things, which can be connected to the time of gentility [that is, before the Spanish conquest of the Americas], formed into models or vessels of gold, as are customarily found in the graves, or burial mounds, of the Indians, and the adornments that they wore, whatever metal or material they may be, as well as instruments, or other things."[44] It is possible that Spanish authorities called for Indian artifacts in the hope that these would provide clues to the location of mines worked before the conquest. Yet by bundling together the requests for mineral and cultural artifacts, Spain's imperial government also implicitly categorized the material remains of America's pre-Hispanic past as valuable objects that emerged from the earth, as aids to technocratic governance, and as appropriate subjects for scholarly investigation.

A similar call for specimens was issued a quarter-century later, on behalf of the Real Gabinete de Historia Natural (Royal Museum of Natural History). The better-favored and more comprehensive descendant of the earlier natural history museum, the Real Gabinete de Historia Natural was created in 1771 when the Guayaquil-born scholar Pedro Franco Dávila arranged to

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jugo'." Jacques A. Barbier, "Peninsular Finance and Colonial Trade: The Dilemma of Charles IV's Spain," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (May, 1980): 33. Peter Bakewell writes that Escobedo's words were "no more than a plain statement of the prime aim of Bourbon policy toward America, formulated before the mid-eighteenth century and applied mostly after then." Peter Bakewell, *A History of Latin America, c. 1450 to the Present*, second edition (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 289.

[43] "*… si en alguna Mina, como suele suceder, se encontrare algun pedazo de Mineral exquissito por su riqueza, y por su tamaño, este se enviará en caxon separado acompañado de una noticia correspondiente…*" Royal circular transmitted by Viceroy of New Spain Juan Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas, Count of Revillagigedo, June 6, 1752. AGN-Bandos, vol. 4, exp. 28, f. 120. Other cases, however, suggest a more balanced relationship between the Crown and those who donated to the royal collections. For example, when the Spanish government requested in 1771 that a large lump of gold belonging to a recently deceased resident of New Spain be sent to the Real Gabinete de Historia Natural (Royal Museum of Natural History), authorities specified that the man's heirs be paid the "*lejitimo valor*" of the metal. Royal order transmitted by Viceroy of New Spain Antonio Bucareli, October 26, 1771. AGN-Reales Cédulas, vol. 99, exp. 130, f. 305. Moreover, the Crown took favorable note of those who sent specimens to its institutions of learning, and for some ambitious subjects this may have been incentive enough. In 1802, for instance, the subdelegate of Huetamo sent a large piece of virgin copper to the Real Gabinete, upon which thanks were transmitted in the royal name. Letter from Joseph Caballero to Viceroy of New Spain Félix Berenguer de Marquina, June 19, 1802. AGN-Reales Cédulas, vol. 185, exp. 73, f. 75.

[44] "*Vltimamente, que cada Virrey, ó Governador vaya enviando á España…todas las cosas curiosas, que pueda juntar del tiempo de la Gentilidad, ya sean modelos, o vasijas de Oro, de los, que suelen encontrarse en los Entierros, ó Tolas de los Yndios, y adornos de los, que usaban, de qualesquiera metal, ó material, que sean, ya instrumentos, ú otras cosas…*" Royal circular transmitted by Viceroy of New Spain Juan Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas, Count of Revillagigedo, June 6, 1752. AGN-Bandos, vol. 4, exp. 28, f. 120.

donate his extensive collections to the Crown in exchange for the position of museum director.[45] Once installed in his new post, Dávila gave free rein to his collecting impulses and employed the machinery of imperial administration to amass all sorts of strange and wonderful specimens. According to one royal official, the Real Gabinete de Historia Natural would survey "not only the animals, vegetables, minerals, rare stones and whatever Nature produces in the vast Dominions of His Majesty, but also all that it is possible to acquire from foreign lands."[46] In 1776 administrators throughout the Spanish empire received a pamphlet, likely written by Dávila, which described the many items desired for inclusion in the museum's collections. The requests were often extravagant; one can imagine the reaction of colonial authorities asked to locate massive boa constrictors, poisonous vipers, eagles with two heads, scorpions, rheas, hammerhead sharks, several varieties of narwhal, and the largest caimans, alligators, and crocodiles that it was possible to obtain.[47] Far less sweeping or ambitious, however, was a small section at the end of the pamphlet. A paragraph titled "Curiosities of Art" (which consumed less than a tenth as much space as an earlier section devoted to seashells) stated:

> As the intention of the king is to complete his Cabinet to the extent possible, not only with the substances comprehended in the three kingdoms of nature (mineral, vegetable and animal), but also with other curiosities of art, such as clothes, arms, instruments, furniture, machines, idols and other things used by the ancient Indians, or other nations, we would appreciate whatever pieces can be acquired from any of these categories, such as the antiquities of the Indians, *Quipos*, and any other items that continue to exist in the present.[48]

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[45] Although the agreement between Dávila and the Crown was reached in 1771, the Royal Museum of Natural History only opened to (well-dressed members of) the public in 1776. María de los Ángeles Calatayud Arinero, "Pedro Franco Dávila: Aspectos de una vida," in Diana Soto Arango, Miguel Ángel Puig-Samper, and María Dolores González-Ripoll, eds., *Científicos criollos e Ilustración* (Madrid: Ediciones Doce Calles, 1999), 174-6.

[46] "*El Rey ha establacido en Madrid un Gabinete de Historia Natural en que se reúnan no sólo los animales, vegetales, minerales, piedras raras y cuanto produce la Naturaleza en los vastos Dominios de S.M., sino también todo lo que sea posible adquirir de los extraños.*" Letter from Joseph de Gálvez to Viceroy of New Spain Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, May 10, 1776. Reprinted in Ernesto Lemoine Villicaña, "Instrucción para aumentar las colecciones del gabinete de historia natural de Madrid – 1776, Estudio preliminar," *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación*, Segunda Serie, Vol. 2, No. 2 (April-June, 1960): 223.

[47] "Instrucción hecha de orden del Rey N.S. para que los virreyes, gobernadores, corregidores, alcaldes mayores e intendentes de provincias en todos los dominios de S.M. puedan hacer escoger, preparar y enviar a Madrid todas las producciones curiosas de naturaleza que se encontraren en las tierras y pueblos de sus distritos, a fin de que se coloquen en el Real Gabinete de Historia Natural que S.M. ha establacido en esta corte para beneficio e instrucción pública." Reprinted in Lemoine Villicaña, "Instrucción para aumentar las colecciones del gabinete de historia natural de Madrid," 207-12. Terry Rugeley points out that in an 1804 conflict between the priest Raymundo Pérez and "the peasants in his backwater Tabascan parish of Macuspana," over the excessive demands Pérez placed on the community, "[f]rom the peasants' point of view, the worst indignation was having to hunt alligators to satisfy Pérez's demands for tribute." Terry Rugeley, *Yucatán's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 23.

[48] "*Como la intención del rey es completar cuanto sea posible su Gabinete, no solamente de las substancias comprendidas en los tres reinos de la naturaleza: mineral, vegetal y animal, sino también de otras curiosidades del arte, como son vestidos, armas, instrumentos, muebles, máquinas, ídolos y otras cosas de que usaron los antiguos indios, u otras naciones, será muy estimable cualquier pieza de aquella clase que se pudiere adquirir, como por*

Once again the material remains of America's pre-Hispanic past were incorporated, if only in a minor way, into the architecture of enlightened Bourbon governance. To take full stock of the land and its resources, it was necessary for royal institutions to consider "curiosities of art" along with the productions of the natural world. Spain's government therefore asserted its rights over pre-Hispanic objects, seeking to possess and preserve them in order to advance the interests of the empire and its rulers.

We have already seen that the Spanish government had longstanding claims on material objects created before the conquest of the Americas. The placement of pre-Hispanic objects in state museums, though, represented a striking departure from the way that those claims had traditionally been expressed. As late as 1753 or 1754, colonial officials in the viceroyalty of New Spain ordered that a large, impressive carving of an Aztec emperor be effaced, an indication that such artifacts were still targets of local suspicion.[49] Why, then, did peninsular agents of the Crown specifically seek out pre-Hispanic antiquities for inclusion in state museums? What caused the shift, slight though it was, away from destruction and neglect and towards preservation and display? While the 1752 and 1776 calls for specimens were less than explicit about the purposes that such collecting was meant to serve, it is possible to sketch out the broad trends that led state officials to embrace an expanded antiquarian mission.

One partial explanation is that eighteenth-century Spanish authorities continued to view antiquities as a form of wealth, but had broadened their definition of wealth to include more than precious metals and gems. The Bourbon rulers who took power in Spain after the 1714 conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession put into place a number of policies to promote learning, emphasizing that knowledge itself was a valuable commodity. A branch of the French ruling family, Spain's Bourbon monarchs founded or promoted cultural institutions resembling those found north of the Pyrenees, including academies and museums. These trends in Spanish government became especially pronounced during the reign of Carlos III (1759-1788), who embraced Enlightenment ideals in order to centralize and rationalize the administration of an empire that many Spanish elites feared was in decline. Carlos III and many of his administrative appointees saw themselves as pragmatic patrons of learning, fostering the "technical skill and practical knowledge" that would "increase the strength of the state and the prosperity of its

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ejemplo algunas antiguallas de los indios, Quipos*, y otros que en el día subsisten.*" "Instrucción hecha de orden del Rey N.S. para que los virreyes, gobernadores, corregidores, alcaldes mayores e intendentes de provincias en todos los dominios de S.M. puedan hacer escoger, preparar y enviar a Madrid todas las producciones curiosas de naturaleza que se encontraren en las tierras y pueblos de sus distritos, a fin de que se coloquen en el Real Gabinete de Historia Natural que S.M. ha establacido en esta corte para beneficio e instrucción pública." Reprinted in Lemoine Villicaña, "Instrucción para aumentar las colecciones del gabinete de historia natural de Madrid," 218.

[49] "*Hasta aquel tiempo, y muchos años despues permanecieron dos hermosas estátuas de grande magnitud, curiosamente grabadas de bajo relieve en dos durísimos peñascos del cerro de Chapultepec, una mayor que otra: la que miraba á la parte del Norte representaba al rey Axâyacatl, y la otra que miraba á la ciudad por el rumbo del Oriente, era retrato de su hijo el gran emperador Moteuhzoma. La primera no alcancé yo á vér; pero exîstía aun en principios de este siglo, como me aseguraron varias personas que la vieron: despues se dió órden de picarla, y así borrada, ví la peña donde estuvo esculpida, cuando veía juntamente la segunda que permaneció gravada con gran perfeccion, hasta los años de 1753, ó 754 en que tambien se mandó borrar.*" León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica,* vol. 2, 80. Additionally, in 1741 religious officials in town of Acatlán, located in the present-day state of Oaxaca, made it clear that finding and destroying "*Ydolos*" that had been buried in a nearby hill was a major local concern. (It should be noted, however, that in this case it is difficult to know exactly what was meant by the word "Ydolo." It may be that the "idols" in question were not pre-Hispanic artifacts, but objects used for some unacceptably heterodox form of Catholic worship.) See AGN-Indios, vol. 55, exp. 60.

subjects."[50] They faced additional pressure to implement reforms and seek out information after the 1763 conclusion of the Seven Years War, which saw Spain and France lose overseas territories and influence to an ascendant Great Britain. In the expanding theaters of imperial competition, where political boundaries were often fluid, effective control over territory depended on the accurate knowledge of geography, environments, resources, and human populations. Projects to describe and order the natural and manmade contents of the landscape therefore implicitly supported the appropriation of the land itself.[51]

Besides furthering the concrete goals of political and technological control over the natural and human worlds, the establishment of state museums advertised the progress of scholarship and learning within the Spanish empire. During the eighteenth century, public museums founded or supported by state action mushroomed across Europe.[52] The British Museum, for example, was formed in 1753 after the Irish-born doctor and traveler Sir Hans Sloane left his massive personal collections, which contained objects representing "all three Natural Kingdoms, Antiquities, Anatomy, and many Curiosities," to "the King for the nation."[53] In France, natural history collections at the Jardin du Roi were "definitively named a 'cabinet of natural history,'" in 1729, while in Russia a museum of natural history opened to the public in 1719, the "nucleus" of which was "the famed natural history collection of the Dutch anatomist

[50] John Lynch, *Bourbon Spain, 1700-1808* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 259-60.

[51] "Determined to transform these viceroyalties into colonies, the Spanish Bourbons turned to the new sciences. The Spanish empire had long been losing territories along with status and prestige in the New World to other European powers. Some Spanish intellectuals maintained that the loss of territories began with losses in the struggle over naming, surveying, and remembering. The writing of histories of 'discovery' and colonization and the launching of cartographic and botanical expeditions therefore became priorities for the state, and many such expeditions visited the New World." Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Nature, Empire, and Nation: Explorations of the History of Science in the Iberian World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 122. See also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 15-37. Besides the symbolic power inherent in acts of naming and classification, natural history expeditions could also advance political goals in more straighforward ways, through reconnaissance, espionage or subversion. A document written in 1782 by José de Gálvez reveals the fear of Spanish officials when confronted with a seemingly innocuous party of four Germans, charged with collecting and describing the plants and animals of the Americas on behalf of Prussia's Imperial Cabinet and Garden. Although the researchers were permitted to enter the territory of New Spain as a favor to the Prussian monarch, the anxious Gálvez urged that they be surreptitiously watched at all times, "*cohonestando esta providencia con titulo de cortèjo que se les hace, or de auxilio que se les presta para maior seguridad de sus personas ó mejor acierto en sus operaciones*," so that "*los citados comisionados no abusen del permiso que se les hà concedido con franqueza, ni se ocupen en otros objetos que los referidos*." While this letter illustrates Spain's paranoia regarding foreign access to its colonies, it is not that difficult to see the reasoning behind such fears. A natural history expedition indeed offered excellent cover for military as well as scientific fact-gathering. Letter from José de Gálvez to the viceroy of New Spain, August 3, 1782. AGN-Reales Cédulas, vol. 23, exp. 25, fs. 60-1.

[52] Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 394-5.

[53] William T. Stearn, *The Natural History Museum at South Kensington: A History of the British Museum (Natural History), 1753-1980* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1981), 6 and 8. The first quote is taken from an account "written in Swedish in 1748 by Pehr Kalm and translated into English in 1892 as *Kalm's Account of a Visit to England* (pp. 97-106)." Stearn, *The Natural History Museum*, 6.

Fredrik Ruysch."[54] Unlike the earlier cabinets of curiosities, which were meant to produce startling juxtapositions or evoke mystical connections between different items, these new institutions were intended to rationally order, understand and control both the natural and social worlds.[55] Their presence in imperial capitals, therefore, was an indication of state commitment to the acquisition of knowledge. As European writers increasingly depicted Spain as an empire long past its prime, sunk in a slough of ignorance, superstition, and obsession with idle luxury, the establishment of state museums was one of the ways that Spanish governments could assert an alternate claim to dynamism and international competitiveness.[56]

It was hardly inevitable, however, that the pursuit of knowledge and the advertisement of enlightened rule would lead to the study of the material past. The French collections at the Jardin du Roi, for instance, encompassed "animals, minerals, and dried plants but not antiquities."[57] If antiquities were not essential to museums, neither were they obligatory subjects of state information-gathering efforts. As mentioned above, the Spanish bureaucracy had sought to acquire accurate knowledge of the empire's territories long before the dawn of the eighteenth century. At the height of Habsburg rule, peninsular officials had attempted to gather and compile reliable information about the reaches of the empire, using mechanisms such as the *Relaciones geográficas*.[58] Bourbon officials intensified the pursuit of knowledge and placed a new emphasis on the collection of physical specimens, but if the Habsburg monarchs had chosen to systematically study and collect the material remains of the past, they had readily available means at their disposal to do so. The question thus arises of why, specifically, eighteenth-century Spanish officials came to consider American antiquities worthy of study along with the products of the natural world. What new meanings did antiquity assume in the discourses of the Enlightenment? Did Catholic antagonism towards such artifacts decline? How were developments in the Iberian Peninsula connected to processes occurring at the Spanish empire's periphery?

One reason why the collection of antiquities might have appeared as a worthwhile endeavor was the emergence of "rational" forms of antiquarianism, ethnography, and historiography during the eighteenth century. Although authors such as the Scottish William

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[54] Anita Guerrini, "Duverney's Skeletons," *Isis,* Vol. 94, No. 4 (December, 2003): 592, and Alexander Vucinich, *Science in Russian Culture: A History to 1860* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), 58.

[55] "By the early eighteenth century ideas about the function of the museum began to change, although historians debate the extent and rate of that change. The all-encompassing cabinet of curiosities began to make way for more specialized collections, and the individual collector began to be displaced by institutions. The public and permanent institution of the museum replaced the private collection dependent on a single collector." Guerrini, "Duverney's Skeletons," 591-592.

[56] An equivalent process can be seen in the eighteenth-century Spanish sponsorship of overseas expeditions. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra argues that the "wholesale attack on Spain as a non-European frontier, or as the 'other' in Europe, at times took on comical proportions. In Spain, however, it generated great anxiety, which created the political will to send out many scientific expeditions…There was, to be sure, a utilitarian streak behind all these expeditions by which the Spanish Bourbons struggled to revamp the empire. Yet a strong nationalistic undercurrent underlined all efforts…the new expeditions were to prove to northern Europeans that Spaniards were reliable philosophical observers." Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World,* 159-60.

[57] Guerrini, "Duverney's Skeletons," 592.

[58] See Cañizares-Esguerra, *Nature, Empire, and Nation,* 7-13, and De Vos, "Natural History and the Pursuit of Empire," 214.

Robertson and the French Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon disagreed with each other about various issues, including the application of overarching "systems" to history, they were part of a movement to categorize and evaluate documentary information about the human past with the same skeptical rigor that was increasingly being applied to investigations in natural history and philosophy. Bruce Trigger writes that Robertson and his associates engaged in "the comparative study of living peoples whose cultures were judged to be at different levels of complexity and arrang[ed] these cultures to form a logical, usually unilinear, sequence from simple to complex…it was believed that these sequences could be regarded as historical ones and used to examine the development of all kinds of social institutions."[59] Enlightenment writers on human affairs thus held out the tantalizing possibility that properly constituted scholarship could provide practical, utilitarian knowledge of human societies. Intellectual developments in the 1700s also included the creation of formal structures to encourage investigation of the material past. Members of the London Society of Antiquaries, "founded in 1717 and received its charter in 1751," pursued research on "medieval England;" the British Society of Dilettanti, "founded in 1734…made important contributions…to classical archaeology;" the German art historian Johann Winckelmann "was appointed papal antiquary" in 1763 and "helped lay the foundations for the long tradition of passionate German involvement with the classical Mediterranean."[60] These developments did not represent the first European instances of organized antiquarian activity, which can be dated back at least to the 1600s, but they do serve as indications of antiquarianism's growing intellectual and social prominence during the eighteenth century.

The development of more systematic, "rational" approaches to the past was entangled with concurrent changes in religious beliefs and institutions. In Spain as elsewhere in the Christian world, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of new approaches to faith, which "attempt[ed] to downplay revelation in favour of reason."[61] Some of the foremost Enlightenment crusaders against "superstition" were priests or members of religious orders, such as the Spanish Benedictine Benito Gerónimo Feijóo y Montengro.[62] The social and political contexts of Christianity were also changing during the eighteenth century, as European monarchs attempted to assert the power of the state over that of the church. In the Spanish empire, such efforts were embodied by state actions such as the 1767 expulsion of the Jesuit order, a 1795 decree which ended clerical immunity from royal justice, and orders to sell off Church property which were issued in 1798 and 1804.[63] The enactment of policies to curb the power of the Catholic Church

[59] Bruce Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 59.

[60] Ibid., 66, and Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts*, 2-5.

[61] Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 39.

[62] "[Feijóo] was a man of encyclopedic learning and a prolific writer who was appalled by the tragic decadence of eighteenth-century Spain. Intent on eradicating ignorance, superstition, and cultural langour, he sought to enhance the welfare of Spaniards by educating them not only in medicine but alsoin such diverse subjects as agriculture, physics, biology, chemistry, geology, history, economics, and mathematics." Richard G. Anderson, "Benito Feijóo, Medical Disenchanter of Spain," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (January, 2000): 68.

[63] Brading, *The First America*, 467-8 and 512. Brading writes that "In effect, if the religious orders had figured as the prime target for reform during the early years of Charles III's reign, by the 1780s the privileges and wealth of the secular clergy became the chief object of attack…Campomanes and other ministers now defined the

meant that many Spanish administrators were under less pressure than previously to enforce strict religious orthodoxy. In the viceroyalty of New Spain, these broader trends towards increased flexibility in religious matters were aided by the apparent success of earlier campaigns of evangelization. At least in central Mexico, conversion had occurred with sufficient thoroughness as to greatly diminish elite fears of backsliding and paganism. All of these factors played roles in opening up the possibility of state-directed investigations into America's pre-Hispanic past.

Besides changes in antiquarian and religious practices, the eighteenth century was also a period in which European racial attitudes were beginning to place a greater emphasis on the biological differences that marked the world's populations. As Keith Thomas has argued, when Europeans began to believe that the natural world should be understood on its own terms, rather than as something subordinate to human life and society, they also began to blur the distinctions between humans and other sorts of living beings. While Thomas claims that this perceptual shift led to a new appreciation and respect for plants and animals, he also notes that the eighteenth century saw the resurgence of the idea that the general category of humanity could be divided into different grades, with some groups accounted physically and mentally inferior to others.[64] Although the ascription of inferiority to non-Europeans was not a new phenomenon, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries such beliefs referenced cultural factors, the harsh judgment of God, or the constraints of the local environment. Sixteenth-century arguments such as those put forward by Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, that indigenous Americans met the criteria for Aristotle's category of "natural slaves," were ultimately rejected by Spanish policymakers.[65] Moreover, once the full humanity of American peoples had been admitted, belief in the universality of the human soul acted as a great leveler (in theory if not always in practice), as all men could aspire to the same heaven. In the eighteenth century, however, the rise of secularism and changing attitudes towards the natural world fractured the perceived unity of the human species. Although thinkers like Rousseau would positively contrast "natural" states with the corruption of Western civilization, such praise widened rather than bridged the perceived differences between groups.[66] The pernicious question of who could claim full humanity, and

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Church as a privileged corporation within the State, whose rights and property derived from the Crown's concession. And what the State or sovereign conferred, it could equally retract." Ibid., 512.

[64] "In the eighteenth century, therefore, popular and learned notions about animals combined to weaken the orthodox doctrine of man's uniqueness. To say that there was no firm line between man and beast was to strike a blow at human pride. That pride, however, was salvaged, at least for Europeans, by the emergence of doctrines which would nowadays be called racialist." Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 135.

[65] As Anthony Pagden makes clear in *The Fall of Natural Man*, the view of Indians which ultimately prevailed in the sixteenth century was one which depicted indigenous Americans as child-like rather than brutish. This position was first sketched by the Salamanca theologian Francisco de Vitoria, who argued that "the Indians were not simply *irrationales* or some other species of beast-men. As he had written to [Miguel de] Arcos five years earlier, 'If the Indians were not men, but monkeys, they would be incapable of injury.' They would also be Spanish property since animals have no territorial rights, and the whole matter would be a simple question of human law. But any common-sense observation would be enough to demonstrate that 'these are men (*sunt illi homines*)'." Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 68.

[66] Dorinda Outram offers a useful look at the ambiguity of European ideas about nature and "exotic" peoples, and points out that the same concepts of "naturalness" applied to non-Europeans were also crucial to

who was more beast than man, efficiently ratified colonial hierarchies by making them the results of inescapable differences. The full florescence of scientific racism would only occur in the wake of Charles Darwin's 1859 publication of *The Origin of Species*, but its early buds may be seen in eighteenth-century debates as to whether Indians and Europeans were the products of separate creations, or whether the supposedly cold and wet climate of the New World had debilitated the bodies and minds of its inhabitants.[67] These changing views of race provided further reasons why the collection of antiquities could serve similar functions to the collection of plants and animals. When it became possible to view American antiquities as representative *specimens*, rather than just curiosities, these could become suitable objects of imperial knowledge.

In this light, is notable that the 1776 request for manmade objects focused almost entirely on items produced by American Indians. While there is a brief nod to the artifacts of "other nations," the pamphlet's writer made no mention of anything exclusively pertaining to classical European antiquity. Such objects certainly could have been found, as the Spanish empire included substantial holdings in Italy. Before his ascension to the Spanish throne, the future Carlos III had overseen excavations at the ancient Roman cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, which had produced some remarkable finds. These Roman artifacts, however, were placed in museums close to Naples, and were not assimilated into the Bourbons' natural history collections. In fact, when Carlos III left Naples in 1759 to become king of Spain, he deliberately left behind all artifacts from the excavated cities, even removing a cherished Roman ring from his finger moments before departure.[68] By contrast, although the 1776 instruction booklet acknowledged that Indian artifacts did not exactly belong to "the three kingdoms of nature," it

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eighteenth-century thinking about gender. Her comments on women's supposed links to nature provide a valuable perspective for thinking about contemporary European approaches to the Americas: "Women were increasingly defined as closer to 'nature' than were men, as well as being more determined by 'nature,' meaning anatomy and physiology. Women were especially affected by a definition of nature as that realm upon which mankind acts, partly to manipulate, partly to render intelligible. 'Nature' could be taken to be that part of the world, which human beings have understood, mastered and made their own...In spite of the Enlightenment tendency to define the 'natural' as 'the good,' women's equation with 'nature' did not operate in such a way as to giver her equality with or superiority over men; rather, paradoxically, it operated to place women at one remove from men, to define them as 'the other': as that which has to be defined, rather than that whose nature is obvious and right." Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 83-84. See also Ibid., 66-67 and 74-79.

[67] The notion that some of the world's peoples might not trace their ancestry back to the Biblical Adam was "first raised as an issue in modern times by the French Calvinist librarian Isaac de La Peyrère (1594-1676) in 1655." Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 112. In the seventeenth century, however, La Peyrère's ideas were given little credence. According to Anthony Grafton, La Peyrère's book on *Pre-Adamic Men* "brought down on its author a fantastic storm of abuse and refutation - twelve full-scale rebuttals in the first year alone... [La Peyrère] was discredited, and finished his life in a sort of honorable house arrest with the Oratorian fathers, the object of one of the first great intellectual smear campaigns in modern history." Anthony Grafton, with April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 237-9. By the second half of the eighteenth century, however, the possibility of separate creations was an acceptable subject for philosophical speculation. See Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 112 and Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 71-4. For arguments invoking the damaging effects of the American climate, see Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 249-51.

[68] Félix Fernández Murga, "El rey y Nápoles: Las excavaciones arqueológicas," in *Carlos III y la ilustración*, Vol. 1, ed. Comisión Nacional Organizador del Bicentenario, Ministerio de Cultura (Spain: Lunwerg Editores, 1988), 384.

also indicated that such objects would serve to "complete" a natural history museum. Without denying that American Indians were men with rational souls, the museum director Pedro Franco Dávila and his associates drew an unspoken distinction between American and European artifacts. Unlike the Roman objects, which were acknowledged as the irreplaceable patrimony of Italy, in this case American antiquities were not assumed to possess great symbolic resonance. Instead, indigenous artifacts and the peoples who had made them were treated simply as parts of the environmental matrix in which Spain had embedded its colonies, having no greater meaning for the residents of the Americas than would a particularly fine stone or exotic animal.[69]

Despite his American birth, Dávila had spent a considerable portion of his adult life in France, and therefore was likely to have been influenced by the intellectual trends of northwestern Europe. Other representatives of the Spanish state might adopt alternate approaches to the material remains of America's pre-Hispanic past, placing more emphasis on the impressive cultural achievements of indigenous American societies. Praising the might of American empires was, after all, an indirect way of praising the military prowess of the Spanish *conquistadores*.[70] Spanish officials might also focus on perceived cultural connections between the Old and New

[69] The association between antiquities and natural history also appeared in other contexts, such as the expedition led by the Italian-born naval officer Alejandro Malaspina between 1789 and 1794. Malaspina and his men surveyed a variety of lands touching the Pacific, as well as the southeast coast of South America. Over the course of their travels, the expeditionaries described numerous plants and animals, made astronomical observations, took multiple readings with a barometer and thermometer, updated Spanish maps, and inquired into the methods employed by colonial mines. Malaspina was also charged with collecting and bringing to Spain documents formerly owned by the Italian scholar Lorenzo Boturini, which represented the largest body of indigenous-language sources relating to pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican society available at the time. However, the collection never left the viceroyalty of New Spain, which Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra argues was the result of a "vast Creole conspiracy to keep indigenous sources." Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 303.

Although the collection of pre-Hispanic artifacts was not a major focus of the expedition as a whole, Malaspina seems to have been personally interested in American antiquities. Virginia González Claverán, *Expedición científica de Malaspina en Nueva España, 1789-1794* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1988), 101. At Port Mulgrave, located in modern-day Alaska, Malaspina noted in his log "the acquisition of the tools, arms and products [from the local Tlingit community] that I had to assemble for the Real Gabinete in Madrid." Malaspina also removed several objects from a Tlingit burial ground, "for the Real Gabinete," in the belief that they could "shed so much light on the religious principles of these peoples." Alejandro Malaspina, ed. and trans. Andrew David, Felipe Fernández-Armesto, Carlos Novi and Glyndwr Williams, *The Malaspina Expedition, 1789-1794: Journal of the Voyage by Alejandro Malaspina, Volume II, Panama to the Philippines* (London and Madrid: The Hakluyt Society, in association with the Museo Naval, 2003), 113 and 120. As John Kendrick comments, "the deliberate collection of articles for scientific purposes was a departure from the habits of other western Europeans; the few artifacts brought back from earlier Spanish voyages seem to have been purchased casually as souvenirs." John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina: Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 57. By collecting information on the indigenous peoples of the Americas, including their past or present artifacts, Malaspina seems to have hoped to discover the principles whereby these groups could be most beneficially incorporated into the Spanish empire. Much as surveys of colonial natural resources could lead to more rational methods of exploitation, so could surveys of human societies. When producing his final report, Malaspina wrote: "'If the habits, the nature, the instinct, and the rights of the Indian subjects are known, then we can look on them as a part [of the Empire] valuable in itself, we can arouse them and make them happy with the alternative of work and profit.'" Malaspina, *The Malaspina Expedition*, 135. Unfortunately for Malaspina, however, his bold pronouncements about the state of colonial governance, combined with intrigues at court, led to his downfall and imprisonment. Its author disgraced, the expedition's official report was then suppressed. Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina*, 33-6.

[70] Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 287.

Worlds; in the case of older ruins it was often unclear to European and Creole observers whether the structures had been created by the ancestors of contemporary indigenous people, or by some vanished strain of Greeks, Romans, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Carthaginians, Chinese, or any of a dozen other groups. Additionally, administrators who spent time in the Americas might take a personal interest in the material legacies of pre-Hispanic societies, or find themelves influenced by Creole scholars who praised the efforts of pre-Hispanic builders and craftsmen. Creole intellectuals from the viceroyalty of New Spain offered particularly strong challenges to European disparagement of American nature and peoples, by using the best resources at their disposal: their factual knowledge of America's geographical and cultural landscape.

III. Monuments of Creole Patriotism

The historian of science Steven Shapin has argued that the creation of "matters of fact" is a social process, one that relies on the assent of qualified observers to the truth of the phenomenon in question. Shapin writes that during the seventeenth century natural philosophers created a variety of strategies to ensure such general agreement, such as staging public displays, encouraging the replication of experiments, and most importantly "by *writing* scientific narratives in a way that offered distant readers who had not directly witnessed the phenomena - and probably never would - such a vivid account of experimental performances that they might be made into *virtual witnesses*."[71] In eighteenth-century debates over the nature and potential of the New World, the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past took on considerable importance, because they seemed to offer an unmediated glimpse of the capabilities of indigenous American societies. Texts, on the other hand, were slippery things. Words changed their meanings over time and the trustworthiness of past observers could be difficult to assess. With objects, however, descriptions could be reliably verified by multiple witnesses, both directly and indirectly. While most European writers would never actually gaze upon indigenous Mesoamerican artifacts, the Mexican Creole savants José Alzate y Ramírez and Antonio de León y Gama attempted to transcend the inherent dubiousness of written testimony through the strength and precision of their descriptions, in effect placing the monuments of the Indian past before the eyes of a European audience. In their writings, Creole scholars attempted to combine the directly translatable experience of the eyewitness with the scholarly rigor required by the eighteenth-century intellectual community.[72]

In writing of indigenous artifacts, the Creole authors confronted a tradition of entrenched European skepticism as to those objects' impressiveness and existence. While William Robertson acknowledged that there was considerable truth in early Spanish accounts of Aztec society, he

[71] Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996): 108.

[72] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra has spoken in a somewhat different context of the "patriotic epistemology" produced by Creoles and some Spaniards during the eighteenth-century debate over the Americas. While the epistemology of which Cañizares-Esguerra speaks was mostly concerned with the interpretation of written documents and "validated the historical knowledge produced only by learned clerical observers and by precolonial and sixteenth-century Amerindian nobles," it questioned the reliability of observers who were not deeply rooted in American society. Clearly, this facet of Cañizares-Esguerra's "patriotic epistemology" bears a strong resemblance to the arguments put forth in relation to Native American monuments. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History*, 207-208.

also argued that "With respect to many particulars, the Spanish accounts of [Aztec society's] progress appear to be highly embellished" and that "If buildings corresponding to [Spanish] descriptions had ever existed in the Mexican cities, it is probable that some remains of them would still be visible...As only two centuries and a half have elapsed since the conquest of New Spain, it seems altogether incredible that in a period so short, every vestige of this boasted elegance and grandeur should have disappeared."[73] The Dutch writer Cornelius de Pauw took an even harsher tack, claiming that "'The so-called palace occupied by the Mexican kings was a hut; Cortés could not find a dwelling suitable for him to occupy in the capital of the realm he had just conquered. These things make clear the extravagant and fantastic character of the portrait that has been drawn of this American city.'"[74] In de Pauw's eyes, the buildings of the celebrated Aztecs and Incas were little more sophisticated than those constructed by the less sedentary societies to the north. De Pauw's attacks were so stinging as to draw a rebuttal in 1777 from Buffon himself, who had written several decades earlier that "although the first relations of the discovery and the conquests of America...tell us that the Spaniards had to combat great armies, it is easy to see that these feats are strongly exaggerated...by the scarcity of monuments that remain to show the alleged grandeur of these peoples."[75] While a few other Europeans defended the capabilities of American societies, notably the aforementioned Spanish savant Benito Feijóo, it was Creoles and European residents of the Americas who offered the most stinging rebuttals to anti-American claims.

The Mexican Creole priest and polymath José Antonio Alzate y Ramírez made full use of his first-hand knowledge of indigenous artifacts to challenge European criticisms of America. During the 1780s, Alzate y Ramírez wrote descriptions of two major pre-Hispanic sites, the ruins of Tajín, located in the present-day Mexican state of Veracruz, and of Xochicalco, in what is now Morelos. While the account of Tajín was written in a straightforward manner with little editorializing, Alzate y Ramírez presented his descriptions of Xochicalco as direct refutations of European slurs against American creative and technical capacities, a case easy to make given the scale and artistry of the buildings being described. Alzate y Ramírez first commented on Xochicalco in the August, 1785 edition of the *Gazeta de México*, and eventually published a longer essay in 1791. In his initial announcement, Alzate y Ramírez had written that the description of the ruins would "dispel various false assertions, that have principally been

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[73] William Robertson, *The History of the Discovery and Settlement of America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1837), 327.

[74] Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 262.

[75] "*Les Américains sont des peuples nouveaux: il me semble qu'on n'en peut pas douter lorsqu'on fait attention à leur petit nombre, à leur ignorance et au peu de progrès que les plus civilisés d'entre eux avaient faits dans les arts; car quoique les premières relations de la découverte et des conquêtes de l'Amérique nous parlent du Mexique, du Pérou, de Saint-Domingue, etc., comme de pays très peuplés, et qu'elles nous disent que les Espagnols ont eu à combattre partout des armées très nombreuses, il est aisé de voir que ces faits sont fort exagérés, premièrement, par le peu de monuments qui restent de la prétendue grandeur de ces peuples*." Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon, *Histoire Naturelle de l'Homme* in *Chefs-d'Oeuvre Littéraires de Buffon, avec une introduction par M. Flourens*, vol. 1 (Paris: Garnier Frères, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1864), 333-4. In 1777, Buffon called attention to "'the monuments of the Mexicans and the Peruvians, whose existence [de Pauw] denies, but the remains of which exist to demonstrate the grandeur and genius of the people whom he regards as stupid beings, degenerates from the human species in both body and mind,'" and claimed that degeneration had only occurred in particular areas of the Americas. However, as Benjamin Keen notes, "Buffon's protest and partial retreat from his own positions seem to have gone unnoticed." Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 263.

expressed by certain foreign authors."[76] As promised, in the longer paper Alzate y Ramírez gleefully used the impressive edifices of Xochicalco as a cudgel with which to demolish the arguments of his European opponents. Stating as his first principle that "The architectural monuments of ancient nations, which continue to exist today despite the ravages of time, serve as excellent resources for understanding the character of those who built them...it is certain that civilization or barbarism is manifested by the progress nations make in the sciences and arts," he then went on to argue that the present condition of indigenous Americans should not be taken as an indication of their past history, just as the despondent condition of the Greeks under Turkish rule did not hint at the glories of ancient Hellas. In both cases, Alzate y Ramírez contended, the base condition of the people was due to social and economic subordination: "In what nation of the world have plebeians ever been accounted knowledgeable?"[77] Alzate y Ramírez also refuted arguments that the speed with which the Aztec state fell to its Spanish conquerors, or the Mesoamerican practice of human sacrifice, were examples of Indian barbarism. In the first case, did not the sixteenth-century conquistadors have the assistance of numerous indigenous nations in their wars against the Aztecs, and was not Spain similarly conquered by the Arabs? As for the issue of human sacrifice, Alzate y Ramírez claimed that most other nations did likewise "until the light of the Gospels dispelled the shadows of paganism."[78] While not every aspect of pre-Hispanic society was praiseworthy, Alzate y Ramírez was adamant that Indian errors were no more damning than similar missteps made on European soil. And in those areas where the indigenous states had been successful, their acheivements more than matched those of the

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[76] "*En el año de 1777 D. Joseph de Alzate registró un monumento antiguo de los Indios en el sitio que nombran de Xochicalco: es una estupenda obra de Arquitectura, émula (atendidas las circunstancias) de las de Palmira y de las que se comprenden en lo que se entiende por antigua Roma. Como es un monumento por cuya descripcion se aclaran varias dudas pertenecientes á la Historia de la nacion Mexicana, y que al mismo tiempo desvanece varias aserciones falsas que han vertido, principalmente algunos Autores estrangeros, se desea dar á la luz pública dicha descripcion…*" "Encargos," in *Gazetas de México, Compendio de noticias de Nueva España, desde principios del año de 1784*, vol. 1, no. 44, August 9, 1785, ed. Manuel Antonio Valdés (Mexico City: Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1785), 370. For Alzate y Ramírez's account of Tajín, see "Papantla," in *Gazetas de México, Compendio de noticias de Nueva España, desde principios del año de 1784*, vol. 1, no. 42, July 12, 1785, ed. Manuel Antonio Valdés (Mexico City: Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1785), 349-51.

[77] "*Los monumentos de Arquitectura de las Naciones antiguas, que permanecen á pesar de las injurias del tiempo, sirven de grande recurso para conocer el caracter de los que fabricaron, siempre que hay falta de Autores coetaneos, como tambien para suplir á la omision ó mala fe de los Historiadores. Un Edificio manifiesta el caracter y cultura de las gentes; porque es cierto que la civilidad ó barbarie se manifiesta por el progreso que las Naciones hacen en las Ciencias y Artes… La Nacion Mexicana en el dia (no obstante su existencia) debe reputarse por antigua; porque una ves avasallada por la Nacion Española, de quien recibió su legislacion, sus costumbres, la verdadera Religion, perdió aquellos caracteres que la distinguian de las otras Naciones, de modo que en el dia los Indios Mexicanos son, respecto de los anteriores á la Conquista, lo mismo que los modernos habitantes del Peloponeso ó Morea, respecto de los antiguos Griegos; por lo que se hace patente aquella decision precipitada de algunos Aristarcos ridículos, que sin haber hecho estudio de los pocos Autores que han tratado de las antiguas costumbres de los Mexicanos, los reputan por rústicos, no por otra razon, sino que á sus descendientes los miran en este estado; no se hacen cargo que en el dia los Indios componen lo que se llama ínfima plebe, tan solamente reducidos á las penosas ocupaciones y trabanos mecánicos. ¿La plebe en que Pais del mundo se reputa por instruida?*" Jose Antonio Alzate y Ramírez, *Suplemento a la Gaceta de Literature. Descripción de las antigüedades de Xochicalco, dedicada a los señores de la actual expedición maritima al rededor del orbe*. (Mexico City, Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1791), 2-3.

[78] "*Otros reputan á los Mexicanos por bárbaros á causa de los sacrificios que hacian á sus Dioses de los Prisioneros. En realidad que no puede darse mayor inhumanidad; ¿pero las mas de las Naciones no han hecho lo mismo, hasta que la luz del Evangelio ha desterrado las tinieblas del Paganismo?*" Ibid., 7.

acclaimed ancient societies of Egypt or Greece.[79] Indeed, Alzate y Ramírez chided the "paradoxical Count Buffon and the Swede Bomare, who treat the ancient Mexican Nation as sparsely populated, ignorant and scarcely civilized" when their own countries "cannot display anything equal [to Xochicalco], constructed by the Gauls or Germans."[80]

Fortunately for the memory of the past, its glory had endured in stone. While Alzate y Ramírez's comments on the practice of antiquarianism did not reveal any particularly subtle strategies for extracting information from the material remains of the past, his writings demonstrate that he valued artifacts not just for their intrinsic beauty or curiosity, but as sources of evidence for historical reconstruction. Alzate wrote, "The study of antiquities has always been much esteemed in those centuries in which science has flourished, and by its means has been torn the dark veil of time, that hides the origin of nations, their mutual commerce, etc. We know that many historical facts have been confirmed or destroyed by virtue of finding a medal or an inscription."[81] Nor could it be said that insufficient evidence remained from pre-Hispanic times to form an accurate conception of indigenous civilizations. Although Alzate y Ramírez lamented "the indiscreet zeal of some, and the covetous ignorance of others," which had destroyed many great monuments and made it more difficult to probe into the "the true origin of the Indians, their customs, their laws, the character of their monarchs, their commerce," his description of Xochicalco made it clear that much of great worth had survived.[82] Alzate y Ramírez even confessed that he did not believe the first person to tell him of Xochicalco, holding his informant's stories to be "close to fairy tales, and other such childish things," but that when he visited the place for himself he found that the reality outpaced his expectations.[83] In this way, Alzate y Ramírez tacitly acknowledged that many of the sights he recounted might have seemed unbelievable to his readers, but he also took pains to establish that his report was based on a respectable eighteenth-century epistemology, that of direct observation by a witness attuned to the requirements of rationality. Alzate y Ramírez even reinforced his own credibility by ridiculing local accounts that the ruins were haunted, and the other fantastic stories that circulated nearby. One such tale declared that the ruins' subterranean tunnels extended all the

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[79] Ibid., 5 (note 1).

[80] "*El Paradóxico Conde Buffon y el Sueco Bomare, que tratan á la antigua Nacion Mexicana de poco numerosa, de ignorante y poco civilizada, deben mudar de dictamen, puesto que se les presenta documento que en su Patria no pueden manifestar igual, construido por los Gallos ó Germanos.*" Ibid., 22 (note 10).

[81] "*El estudio de las antiguedades siempre ha sido de mucho aprecio en los siglos en que han florecido las Ciencias, y por su uso se ha rompido aquel velo obscuro de los tiempos, que oculta los orígenes de las Naciones, su mutuo comercio &c. Sabemos que muchos hechos históricos han sido confirmados ó destruidos en virtud del hallazgo de una Medalla, ó de una Inscripcion. ¿La decadencia de los Imperios no se manifiesta comparando fábricas á fábricas? Las antiguedades del tiempo de Augusto y de Trajano, comparadas á las del tiempo del Grande Constantino, hacen visible esta realidad.*" Ibid., 2-3.

[82] "*Si el zelo indiscreto de algunos, y la codiciosa ignorancia de otros, no hubiesen destruido los Monumentos Mexicanos, se podria colectar una grande porcion de antiguedades con que averiguar el legítimo origen de los Indios, sus costumbres, su legislacion, el caracter de sus Monarcas, su comercio, y finalmente se haria patente el que era una Nacion de las mas poderosas del Orbe.*" Ibid., 3.

[83] "*Se me advirtió por uno registrase el Castillo de Xochicalco: me pintó la magnificencia de la obra, y me profirió tantas cosas acerca de encantos, y otras puerilidades, que ya desconfiaba de su informe; quando hallé ser cierta (habiendo llegado á Cuernabaca) la exîstencia de esta preciosa antiguedad; y aunque por algunos se me describia como una obra de quantia, mis esperanzas hallaron mas de lo que solicitaba.*" Ibid., 9.

way to the hill of Chapultepec, in the Valley of Mexico, while a "person of character" told Alzate y Ramírez that enchanted statues armed with maces blocked the path of unwelcome visitors to the tunnels. By rejecting the plausibility of such accounts, which he attributed to the "lack of critical thought [*crítica*]" and to the "popular errors" that cluster around "ancient works of magnificence in all places," Alzate y Ramírez established that he was no credulous colonial, inclined to believe whatever he heard. Instead, he was a reasoned man of science in whose words European scholars could place confidence. Cleverly, Alzate y Ramírez even pressed the fables themselves into the service of his argument, indicating that such stories were the natural result of untrained minds encountering works too wonderful to be easily comprehended.[84] In his account of Xochicalco, the methods and language of science were used to exalt rather than to belittle indigenous American achievements.

The establishment of credibility was important, because Alzate y Ramírez's essay on Xochicalco made strong - and from the perspective of European writers such as Robertson or de Pauw, unlikely - claims about the wisdom, political power and technical skill possessed by the place's original builders. Alzate y Ramírez argued that the hilltop site was well planned from a strategic point of view, and that the stone fortifications "demonstrate the knowledge the Indians possessed of the military art" and of mechanics. Moreover, he spoke of "beautiful architecture, that can be compared to the pyramids of Egypt in its solidity and conic structure," and the "hieroglyphs" that decorated the buildings.[85] Since there appeared to be no readily available source of water at the top of the hill, Alzate y Ramírez also postulated that a powerful state apparatus must have been required to transport the necessary liquid from a distant source.[86] In all of this, Alzate y Ramírez evokes the distinctly human skill and rationality of Xochicalco's creators. Rather than being the products of their environment, the ancient builders were the masters of it.[87]

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[84] "*Aunque suspendí la averiguacion, fue con el ánimo de volver al sitio al tiempo que los zacatones y yerbas están secos…y con esto inquirir la boca, ó desengañarme de la realidad de obra tan decantada, pues en Cuernabaca aseguran algunos, que el subterraneo llega hasta el Cerro de Chapultepec; (patraña ridícula!) otros lo tienen como á parage encantado; y llega á tal la vulgaridad, que una persona de carácter me dixo, que en el subterraneo se hallan dos Estatuas, las que tenian mazos en las manos, con los que impedian la entrada á quien intenta registar la excavacion. Esto lo profiero, para que se vea lo que hace la falta de crítica , y como á las obras antiguas de magnificencia en todas partes acompañan errores populares.*" Ibid., 17-18.

[85] "*Esta hermosísima Arquitectura, que puede compararse á los Piramides de Egipto por su solidez, y en mucha parte por su figura cónica, fue destruida por la avaricia de los Dueños ó Administradores de las Haciendas de Azucar… Todo dicho primer cuerpo está adornado con geroglificos Mexicanos, esculpidos á medio relieve; y se conoce que los esculpieron ya fabricado el Castillo, porque de otro modo no era posible que los Figurones que ocupan dos, tres, ó mas piedras, guardasen entre sí la bella disposicion en que están: algunas fallas de la escultura, y tambien algunas junturas de piedra á piedra están suplidas con mezcla de cal y arena.*" Ibid, 11-12.

[86] Ibid, 22-23.

[87] Indeed, Alzate y Ramírez seems to have seen nature as directly opposed to indigenous monuments, rather than aligned with them. Apart from passing references to the geographic setting and altitude of Xochicalco, nature only intrudes upon Alzate y Ramírez's narrative when he speaks of the ruins' current, lamentable state. Although pleased that the owners of local sugar plantations no longer raided the site for stones, Alzate y Ramírez mourned destruction caused by the growth of trees. The spread of vegetation "*está ya amenazado ruina*" to the northwest corner of the site, which had hitherto been the best-preserved segment. Ibid, 18 (note 6). In Alzate y Ramírez's portrayal the works of man and nature are not complementary, but are instead antagonists locked in a struggle for mastery. While it would not do to read too much significance into a factual description, it is nevertheless striking that a dedicated natural philosopher such as Alzate y Ramírez would pay so little attention to extra-human causes

Alzate y Ramírez was not the only figure in New Spain to carry out direct investigations of pre-Hispanic sites. During the 1780s, colonial officials sponsored several expeditions to the Mayan city of Palenque, located in the modern-day state of Chiapas. Unlike Alzate's trip to Xochicalco, the missions sent to Palenque do not seem to have been carried out for the direct purpose of refuting European slurs on the Americas. Instead, the idea of carrying out studies of the site seems to have arisen from a mixture of personal connections, curiosity, and a desire to impress bureaucratic superiors. The idea had originated in the 1770s, after the priests Antonio de Solís and Ramón Ordóñez had conducted visits to the site in order to satisfy personal curiosity, and perhaps also to gain favor with members of the Audiencia de Guatemala. In the 1780s, Audiencia president Joseph Estachería, "under Carlos III's direction," sent several individuals to survey and describe the ruins.[88] These expeditions raised the profile of Palenque, generated some overenthusiastic theories about pre-Hispanic contact between the Old and New Worlds and provided the Real Gabinete de Historia Natural with some choice specimens, but overall were fairly small-scale operations. Nevertheless, they demonstrated that under the right circumstances both central and regional authorities might express positive interest in studies of the pre-Hispanic material past. Ruins such as those at Palenque were the objects of study, not dangerous manifestations of idolatry.

The investigations at Xochicalco and Palenque, which established the physical impressiveness of pre-Hispanic monuments, were soon followed by the development of museums in the viceregal capital of Mexico City. In April of 1790, the *Gazeta de México* announced that New Spain's first museum of natural history (called simply the Museo de Historia Natural) would soon open its doors.[89] This museum was founded by José Longinos Martínez, a naturalist who had come to New Spain as part of the Royal Botanical Expedition (1787-1803), but quarreled with the expedition's other members. Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard writes that "The formation of [the Museo de Historia Natural] was not the result of official action undertaken by the government authorities, but stemmed from the initiative and private wealth of

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when discussing indigenous artifacts. It is possible to speculate that for Alzate y Ramírez, the dignity of the ancient monuments was not compatible with a view of indigenous Americans as a part of nature.

[88] R. Tripp Evans, *Romancing the Maya: Mexican Antiquity in the American Imagination 1820-1915* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 17. For other accounts of the Palenque expeditions, see Carlos Navarrete, *Palenque, 1784: El inicio de la aventura arqueológica maya* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2000); Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 79-82, Robert L. Brunhouse, *In Search of the Maya: The First Archaeologists* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1973), 5-16, and Ricardo Castañeda Paganini, *Las ruinas de Palenque, su descubrimiento y primeras exploraciones en el siglo XVIII* (Guatemala: Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educación Pública, Tipografía Nacional, 1946). The latter contains a transcription of the royal order of March 12, 1788 which required that antiquities collected at Palenque be sent to the Real Gabinete de Historia Natural.

[89] "México," in *Gazetas de México, Compendio de noticias de Nueva España, de los años de 1790 y 1791*, vol. 4, no. 8, April 27, 1790, ed. Manuel Antonio Valdés, (Mexico City: Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1792), 68-71. The Museo de Historia Natural formally opened on August 25, 1790 and remained in existence for eleven years. It is true that Luis Castillo Ledón has argued that '"los primeros principios' del primitivo Museo Nacional de Mexico" date to the 1770s, when the viceregal government ordered the documents collected by the Italian traveler Lorenzo Boturini to be placed in the Real y Pontificia Universidad de Mexico. However, it does not appear that objects other than documents were sent to the university until the summer of 1790, when pre-Hispanic artifacts uncovered in the main plaza were placed there. Luis Castillo Ledón, *El Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, 1825-1925. Reseña histórica escrita para la celebración de su primer centenario* (Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, 1924), 7-8. Moreover, Ignacio Bernal mentions that the Boturini documents left the university at some point during the reign of Charles IV. Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 125.

Longinos," in part so that the temperamental naturalist could have more flexibility to carry out his duties as he saw fit. She also notes, however, that the project was approved by the viceroy and by members of the local elite, who were proud to have a museum located at the center of their own capital.[90] The mixture of European expedition members with the intellectual culture of the capital thus provided fertile ground for the colonial replication of metropolitan institutions and intellectual developments.

According to the announcement in the *Gazeta*, visitors to the museum would encounter an ambitious scheme of collections, encompassing a number of different branches of knowledge such as anatomy, zoology, botany, and mineralogy. Nineteenth in the list of collections that the museum would contain, in between "products of volcanoes" and "products of the sea," was "earths and antiquities" (*tierras y antigüedades*). Unfortunately the article's author did not elaborate on the types of antiquities to be collected, but based on contemporary usages it is plausible that the "antiquities" listed were in fact pre-Hispanic artifacts.[91] The foundation of the Museum of Natural History, therefore, quite possibly set a precedent in New Spain by linking the public display of indigenous American objects to the practice of scientific investigation. [92] Although the Museum of Natural History declined after the departure of Longinos, its collections removed to the Jesuit Colegio de San Ildefonso in 1802, during its brief existence the museum modeled European forms of scholarship, public cultures of learning, and the valorization of the pre-Hispanic past.[93] Many of those who visited the museum must have been impressed with the possibilities that such an institution offered for producing and disseminating narratives about the land, its contents, and its history.

A few months after the *Gazeta* announcement introducing the Museo de Historia Natural, a massive stone artifact emerged from the earth, brought to light by the activities of workmen engaged in levelling, draining, and repaving Mexico City's central plaza. When the monolith was cleaned of its centuries of accumulated dirt, it was revealed to be a standing figure, wearing a necklace and a belted skirt. On one end of the figure were large clawed feet, while on the other a pair of fanged serpent heads rested against each other in profile. The figure's carved skirt appeared to be woven from writhing snakes, its belt formed in the shape of a human skull. A

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[90] "La formación de este museo no fue el resultado de una acción oficial prevista por las autoridades gubernamentales, sino que surgió de la iniciativa y el peculio de Longinos. Le sirvió para cumplir, muy a su manera, como expedicionario, con un proyecto novedoso que llenaría de orgullo a la sociedad novohispana, al virrey, que estuvo de acuerdo con la inauguración del museo y al propio rey." Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar: Objetos, colecciones y museos de la ciudad de México (1790-1910)* (Barcelona and Mexico City: Ediciones Pomares, 2004), 89.

[91] "*El 18 con producciones de Volcanes. El 19 Tierras y Antiguedades. El 20 y 21 producciones de mar, como Testaceos, Crustaceos, Madreporas, Lythophytos, Zoophytos, Corales, Coralinas &c*." "México," in *Gazetas de México, Compendio de noticias de Nueva España, de los años de 1790 y 1791*, vol. 4, no. 8, April 27, 1790, ed. Manuel Antonio Valdés, (Mexico City: Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1792), 70. Ignacio Bernal's comments about this museum's contents are ambiguous. While he writes in one place that the Museo de Historia Natural was "dedicado exclusivamente a historia natural," he later speaks of the museum's collections as pertaining both to natural history and "objetos prehispánicos." Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 123 and 126.

[92] Miguel Ángel Fernández, *Historia de los museos de México* (Mexico City: Promotora de Comercialización Directa, 1987), 83. Fernández notes that a collection containing antiquities and natural history objects may have existed in the Colegio de San Ildefonso as early as the late seventeenth century, but stresses the importance of the Museo de Historia Natural's public character. Ibid., 82-3.

[93] Ibid., 91.

necklace, draped over sagging breasts, was decorated with images of hearts and severed hands. It is difficult to imagine an artifact that could have represented a greater challenge to the aesthetic and religious sensibilities of New Spain's colonial elites.[94] The English traveler William Bullock also found the statue appalling, describing it in the 1820s as a "colossal and horrible monster…uniting all that is horrible in the tiger and rattle-snake," although acknowledging that "It is scarcely possible for the most ingenious artist to have conceived a statue better adapted to the intended purpose; and the united talents and imagination of Brughel [sic] and Fuseli would in vain have attempted to improve it."[95] Yet the stone monolith, now identified as a representation of the Nahua earth goddess Coatlicue ("Lady of the Serpent Skirts"), was not destroyed. Instead, the viceroy Juan Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas, Count of Revillagigedo, ordered in September that it be transported to the patio of the Real y Pontificia Universidad de México. As Ignacio Bernal comments, this was "the first official act, albeit unintentional, creating a museum of antiquities" in the viceroyalty.[96]

The decision to place the statue within the university owed a great deal to the *corregidor* Bernardo Bonavía y Zapata, who apparently took a personal interest in the figure and in the history of Mexico more generally. In a September 5 letter to Revillagigedo, Bonavía wrote that the statue was "worthy of being conserved, because of its antiquity, because so few monuments remain to us from those times, and for what it could contribute to their enlightenment." Bonavía stated that he was certain that the Dominican university would "admit [the statue] with pleasure." He also volunteered to have the object "measured, weighed, drawn and engraved," so that these data could be published along with any additional information that could be discovered about the statue's origin.[97] Revillagigedo agreed to Bonavía's request "with pleasure."[98] Here, it should be

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[94] According to Benjamin Keen, "The colossal basalt figure of Coatlicue that was found in 1790 on the site of the main temple of Tenochtitlán may serve as a touchstone of Western attitudes toward Aztec art. Before 1900 only two observers, both uncommonly artistic and gifted men, had ventured to praise the awesome earth goddess. One wa Alfredo Chavero, who described her as the most beautiful idol in the Museo Nacional; the other was William H. Holmes, who placed the Coatlicue, 'brutal and terrible as it is,' very close to the head of the list of American sculptures. Far more typical was the complaint of the celebrated German art critic Karl Woermann that Indian sculptures suffered from 'incompletion and a barbarian overloading.'" Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 509-10. For more detailed accounts of how the Coatlicue statue has been interpreted over time, see Ann De León, "Coatlicue or How to Write the Dismembered Body," *MLN*, Vol. 125, No. 2 (March, 2010): 259-86, and Jean Franco, "The return of Coatlicue: Mexican nationalism and the Aztec past," *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (August, 2004): 205-219.

[95] William Bullock, *Six Months' Residence and Travels in Mexico; Containing Remarks on the Present State of New Spain, Its Natural Productions, State of Society, Manufactures, Trade, Agriculture, and Antiquities, &c*. (London: John Murray, 1824), 340. Bullock also commented that the statue's "*drapery is composed of wreathed snakes, interwoven in the most disgusting manner*" and that "*It has evidently been painted in natural colours, which must have added greatly to the terrible effect it was intended to inspire in its votaries.*" Ibid., 340-1.

[96] "Resulta el primer acto oficial que, sin saberlo, inicia un museo de antigüedades." Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 77-8.

[97] "*La considero digna de conservarse, por su antigüedad, por los escasos monumentos que nos quedan de aquellos tiempos, y por lo que pueda contribuir á ilustrarlos. Persuadido que á este fin no puede ponerse en mejores manos que en las de la real y pontificia universidad, me parece convendrá colocarse en ella, no dudando la admitirá con gusto; quedando á mi cargo, si á V.E. le parece bien, el hacerla medir, pesar, dibujar y grabar, para que se publique con las noticias que dicho cuerpo tenga, indague ó descubra acerca de su origen.*" Letter from Bernardo Bonavía y Zapata to Viceroy Revillagigedo, September 5, 1790, transcribed in León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica*, vol. I, 9.

noted that Bonavía was not a Creole, but "a native of Foro, in the kingdom of León, Spain."[99] Future events also suggest that Bonavia was unlikely to have been motivated by any desire to see Mexico differentiate itself culturally from Spain, as in 1812 he was among the "high-ranking royalists" executed by Hidalgo's forces in Oaxaca.[100] Viceroy Revillagigedo, for his part, had been born in Cuba to a father who also served as viceroy of New Spain, but was "reared in the Spanish court and the Spanish military academy," and spent much of his career in Europe.[101] It is difficult, therefore, to attribute the official decision to preserve the statue to any straightforward manifestation of "Creole patriotism." Instead, the sentiments of patriotic Creoles were incorporated into the tapestry of enlightened Bourbon administration, interwoven with other threads such as an emphasis on concrete, measurable knowledge, the subordination of religiosity which contravened the interests of the state, and the desire to burnish the reputation of culture and scholarship within the Spanish empire.[102] As of 1790, the interests of colonial administrators and Creole investigators of the past could still merge seamlessly.

In mid-December of 1790, two more stones were uncovered by workmen in the central plaza. Like the figure of Coatlicue, both of these new finds were large, heavy monoliths. One, now known as the "Stone of Tizoc," was a low-rising cylinder, "featuring a colossal image of the sun on its upper surface and conquered enemies grasped by Aztec victors around the perimeter,"

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[98]"*Convengo gustoso en que se conduzca á la real y pontificia universidad la figura de piedra hallada en las excavaciones de la plaza…*" Letter from Revillagigedo to Bernardo Bonavía y Zapata, September 6, 1790, transcribed in León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica*, vol. I, 9.

[99] Nettie Lee Benson, "The Elections of 1809: Transforming Political Culture in New Spain," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Winter, 2004): 7. (The article was edited by Kathryn Vincent, "from a preliminary draft of a study found in Nettie Lee Benson's papers after her death in 1993." Ibid., 1.)

[100] Peter Guardino, *The Time of Liberty: Popular Political Culture in Oaxaca, 1750-1850* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 135-6. Bonavía's support for the royalist cause was, however, tempered with concern for his personal safety. In 1811, one recently arrived Spanish commander complained that Bonavía was avoiding confrontation with Hidalgo's insurgent forces, "hunkered down in his 'rabbit warren of Durango.'" According to Christon I. Archer, Bonavía was part of a generation that was "older, accustomed to sedentary peacetime service, and…quite incapable of making the difficult transition to wartime duty and combat in a bloody and complex war." Christon I. Archer, "The Militarization of Politics or the Politicization of the Military? The *Novohispano* and Mexican Officer Corps, 1810-1830," in *The Divine Charter: Constitutionalism and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Mexico*, ed. Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 216.

[101] Juana Vázquez-Gómez, *Dictionary of Mexican Rulers, 1325-1997* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 47-8.

[102] These tendencies can be seen in other aspects of both Bonavía's and Revillagigedo's careers. At various points, Bonavía moved to restrict local festivities in both Oaxaca and New Mexico, sometimes meeting with the ire of area priests. For example, "In Father Juan Pio Alvarez's long 1793 complaint to the viceroy about the subdelegado Bernardo Bonavía, he explained that the villagers of San Juan Yetzecovi, one of the outlying settlements of his parish, refused to construct arbors in the parish seat for Corpus Christi. When he scolded them about this, they argued that the obligation had been removed, and when he insisted, they told him they would explain the case to the subdelegado. Bonavía backed the village." Guardino, *The Time of Liberty*, 106. See also Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 240. Revillagigedo, in turn, used his time as viceroy to conduct "a thorough census of the country's population. He also ordered a written history of the Royal Treasury, an enterprise that required thirty volumes…He also tried to improve the quality of higher education, bringing teachers from Spain to teach subjects such as art, mathematics, botany, architecture, and many more." Vázquez-Gómez, *Dictionary of Mexican Rulers*, 47.

and containing a depression in the center that had once been used to hold sacrificed human hearts.[103] The other object was a disc carved with a complex series of interlocking images, centered on a grinning face sticking out its tongue. This was the monument that has come to be popularly known as the "Aztec Calendar Stone," a piece which attracted great admiration from Creole scholars such as Antonio de León y Gama. The object was first kept near the location where it was found, then placed against a tower of Mexico City's Metropolitan Cathedral, where it would remain until 1885. The stone of Tizoc was also removed to the Cathedral precincts, where the English traveler William Bullock saw it partially buried, with only its "upper surface" visible.[104] The recovery and preservation of the plaza monoliths is generally identified by modern writers as a key episode in the history of Mexican archaeology, one which crystallized changing social and political attitudes towards the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past. As Ignacio Bernal writes, "If the discovery [of the Calendar Stone and Coatlicue] was by chance, there was no accident in the change of attitude in the viceregal government."[105] Despite the stones' clear connections to both indigenous religions and displays of Creole patriotism, the capital's authorities do not seem to have been overly concerned that the objects represented threats to the religious or social order.

Subsequent events, however, demonstrated the difficulties of this abstracted approach. "Exposed to the public, and without any care taken of it," the Calendar Stone was subject to assaults from those that León y Gama scornfully described as "coarse [*rústica*] and childish people," who "maltreated various of its figures with stones or other objects." León y Gama felt compelled to publish his *Historical and Chronological Description of the Two Stones Found in the Central Plaza of Mexico* in part because he feared that if the Calendar Stone was destroyed and the personal drawing he owned of it was lost, "neither a copy nor an account would remain of what such a beautiful monument contained."[106] Bullock noted that passersby were also displaying hostility towards the Stone of Tizoc in 1823. He wrote, "I have seen the Indians themselves, as they pass, throw stones at it; and I once saw a boy jump upon it, clench his fist, stamp his foot, and use other gesticulations of the greatest abhorrence." The Coatlicue statue proved even more troublesome for the elites of New Spain and Mexico. Concerned colonial authorities made the unusual decision to rebury the monument, apparently wishing to keep it out of view without destroying it. The monolith was dug up to display to the German traveler

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[103] Emily Umberger, "Notions of Aztec History: The Case of the Great Temple Dedication," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 42 (Autumn, 2002): 100.

[104] Bullock, *Six Months' Residence and Travels*, 335.

[105] "Pero si su hallazgo fue casual, no fue un accidente el cambio de actitud en el gobierno virreinal." Bernal, *Historia de arqueología*, 75.

[106] *"Por estár expuesta al público, y sin custodia alguna, no se pudo preservar de que la gente rústica y pueril la desperfeccionas, y maltratase con piedras y otros instrumentos varias de sus figuras, á mas de las que padecieron al tiempo de levantarla; por lo que ántes de que la maltrataran mas, ó que se la diese otro destino, como ya se pensaba, hice sacar, á mi vista, copia exácta de ella, para mantenerla en mi poder…Pero habiéndolo sabido varias personas curiosas, me han instado á que publique su explicacion; y conociendo yo que de omitirla, y no dar á luz su estampa (si por algun acontecimiento se demolia, ó daba el destino que se habia pensado, perecia lo labrado, y no quedaba ejemplar ni noticia de lo que contenia tan bello monumento) padecería la historia antigua de México el mismo infortunio que ha padecido en tantos años, con la pérdida de otros que se arrojaron al fuego…*" León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica*, vol. I, 3-4. See also Bullock, *Six Months' Residence and Travels*, 335.

Alexander von Humboldt in 1803, placed in the earth once more, dug up again in 1823 so that Bullock could make a cast of it, reburied, and finally excavated for good in 1824.[107]

Several explanations have been offered for the statue's repeated concealments. According to Humboldt, the Dominican professors of the university "did not want to place the idol before the Mexican youth," while Ignacio Bernal mentions that the professors were also concerned about the unsuitability of housing such a work near the reproductions of Greek and Roman statues donated by Charles III.[108] Another possibility, which Bernal deems more credible, is that viceregal officials were unnerved by the attention that the statue attracted from the Indian residents of the capital. William Bullock attested to indigenous interest in the Coatlicue statue shortly after independence, writing

> "During the time it was exposed, the court of the University was crowded with people, most of whom expressed the most decided anger and contempt. Not so however all the Indians: - I attentively marked their countenances; not a smile escaped them, or even a word – all was silence and attention. In reply to a joke of one of the students, an old Indian remarked, 'It is true we have three very good Spanish gods, but we might still have been allowed to keep a few of those of our ancestors!' and I was informed that chaplets of flowers had been placed on the figure by natives who had stolen thither, unseen, in the evening for that purpose; a proof that, notwithstanding the extreme diligence of the Spanish clergy for three hundred years, there still remains some taint of heathen superstition among the descendents of the original inhabitants."[109]

Bullock's description underscores the challenges of assigning official meanings to the material remains of the past. Faced with an object that seemed politically and spiritually dangerous, yet which nevertheless possessed clear historical importance, colonial and national officials seemingly wavered between the values of the spiritual conquest and those of the Enlightenment. However, the trepidation displayed towards the massive serpent goddess represents something of an anomaly. Despite the repeated interments of the Coatlicue statue, the early nineteenth century saw the most ambitious efforts yet to investigate the pre-Hispanic sites of Mesoamerica.

Several decades after the intial discoveries of the Coatlicue and Calendar Stone, the Spanish government of Carlos IV decided to sponsor a complete survey of the area's antiquities, to be carried out by the retired military captain Guillermo Dupaix. Dupaix's mandate was considerably more ambitious than that given to the earlier explorers of Palenque, who had made

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[107] For the 1803 date, see Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 78. However, Bernal mistakenly states that Bullock saw the statue in 1824, "después de su tercero y última exhumación," while Bullock himself is clear that he made a cast of the statue in 1823, after which "the goddess [was] again committed to her place of interment, hid from the profane gaze of the vulgar." Bullock, *Six Months' Residence and Travels*, 342. For costs associated with the disinterment of the statue in 1824, see the Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal, Historia en General (1824-1832), num. de inventario 2256, exp. 153.

[108] "*Los profesores, que por entonces eran religiosos dominicos, no quisieron oponer el ídolo a la juventud mexicana…*" Alexander von Humboldt, trans. Bernardo Giner, *Vistas de las Cordilleras y monumentos de los pueblos indígenas de América* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2010), 183. Bernal writes that "Los profesores de la Real y Pontificia Universidad no deseaban exponerla a la vista de la juventud mexicana porque según unos la diosa mexicana era indigna de figurar al lado de las réplicas griegas y romanas allí expuestas que había donado Carlos III, gran amante de la arqueología." Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 78.

[109] Bullock, *Six Months' Residence and Travels in Mexico*, 341-2.

only brief visits to a single site. Dupaix ultimately conducted three surveys between 1805 and 1808, showing himself willing to journey long distances and endure considerable hardships for the sake of his mission. (At one point Dupaix, a native of the Austrian Netherlands, was imprisoned as a French spy.)[110] Along with the artist Luciano Castañeda, Dupaix canvassed sites throughout central Mexico, Oaxaca, the Yucatán, and Chiapas. In 1813, he generated a remarkably thorough report, titled *Expediciones acerca de los antiguos monumentos de la Nueva España, 1805-1808*. When describing Mexico's ruins for the benefit of colonial authorities, Dupaix testified to the technical skill and aesthetic discernment possessed by the monuments' original creators.

On the surface the Dupaix expedition possessed similarities to earlier surveys of New Spain's natural resources, particularly the botanical expeditions of the 1780s and 1790s. However, Dupaix's account did not treat the antiquities it discussed as akin to plants or animals.[111] While much of Dupaix's narrative is straightforward description of the things that he saw, with little in the way of historical interpretation or attempts to infer past modes of human behavior, Dupaix does offer considerable praise for the achievements of pre-Hispanic creators. When writing about Xochicalco, for example, he enthused that all of its features gave it "a serious and majestic aspect, which fills and satisfies the understanding."[112] Dupaix also took it upon himself to directly challenge the mistaken assumptions of European writers, ridiculing the notion that the New World was in fact any newer than the old one, and declaring that the squat, misshapen figures that populated Mesoamerican texts and sculptures reflected specifically mythological ideas, not the reality of deformed indigenous bodies.[113] Although for the most part

[110] José Alcina Franch, "Introducción," in Guillermo Dupaix, *Expediciones acerca de los monumentos de la Nueva España, 1805-1808*, Colección Chimalistac de libros y documentos acerca de la Nueva España, 27, ed. José Alcina Franch (Madrid: Ediciones José Porrua Turanzas, 1969), 6.

[111] Dupaix's generally positive assessment of Mesoamerican artifacts seems to have led him to largely discount the influence of natural forces. When nature does appear in the Dupaix report it is usually as the enemy of man's works, the great leveler that along with time transforms magnificent palaces and complex works of art into piles of rubble. Again and again, Dupaix noted the damage that had been done to indigenous monuments by the intrusion of tree roots and other forms of vegetation. For example, in describing the Zapotec site of Monte Albán he wrote "*Es mucha lástima que el tiempo juntamente con los vegetales antagonistas de las fábricas (en particular de los monumentos que pertenecen a la antigüedad) confundirán el arte con la naturaleza, y con brevedad limitaran su duracion.*" Guillermo Dupaix, *Expediciones acerca de los monumentos de la Nueva España, 1805-1808*, Colección Chimalistac de libros y documentos acerca de la Nueva España, 27, edited by José Alcina Franch (Madrid: Ediciones José Porrua Turanzas, 1969), 111-2. (Dupaix's travels also seem to have exacerbated the captain's dislike for some other aspects of nature, as he comments on the unpleasant insects, serpents and giant tarantulas that he encountered at the Oaxacan site of San Pablo Mixtlan. Ibid, 120.)Throughout Dupaix's discussion of indigenous artifacts, pertinent comparisons were to other human societies that had achieved comparable levels of material culture, rather than to the natural context in which the antiquities were placed.

However, while Dupaix does not seem to have seen his activities as relating to natural history, this may not always have been true of his superiors. In an 1804 royal communication sent to José de Iturrigaray, the viceroy of New Spain, a Spanish official mentioned that the king had been informed that certain works of natural history could not be found, before going on to request that Iturrigaray provide Dupaix with the support necessary to survey the "*monumentos antiguos que conduzcan á la inteligencia de la Historia del Pais, no menos que á dar idea del gusto y perfeccion que sus naturales consiguieron en las Artes*." Letter from Joseph Caballero to the Viceroy of New Spain, May 2, 1804. AGN-Reales Cédulas, vol. 193, exp. 31, f. 32.

[112] "*Todo lo expresado le dán un aspecto serio y magestuoso, que llena y satisface el entendimiento.*" Dupaix, *Expediciones acerca de los monumentos de la Nueva España*, 68.

[113] Ibid, 230-1 and 116.

Dupaix did not believe that there was a genealogical connection between the builders of the ancient monuments and contemporary Indians, he did argue that there was no evidence of pre-Hispanic trans-Atlantic contact, a position that "served as a principal stepping-stone for the work of later North American explorers."[114] To Dupaix, Mesoamerican monuments were most likely the product of cultures with a long presence in the region.[115]

Dupaix frequently likened the civilizations of Mesoamerica to that of Egypt, an intriguing comparison that is worth looking at closely. During the early nineteenth century, the material remains of the Egyptian past were assuming new significance in the minds of educated Westerners. Although European scholars had been fascinated by Egyptian hieroglyphs for centuries, and classical authors had provided some information about Egyptian mythology, not a great deal was known about the actual history and monuments of ancient Egypt. This situation began to change in 1798, when Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt and briefly ruled it. As a forward-thinking leader, Napoleon was interested not just in military but in intellectual conquest, and brought along a phalanx of scholars to describe the Egyptian landscape and ruins, extracting particularly interesting pieces for study back in Europe.[116] Although Napoleon was soon driven out of Africa by British forces, his exploits succeeded in bringing the accomplishments of ancient Egypt to a much wider audience, including Guillermo Dupaix. As Dupaix's many references to Egyptian myth, art and architecture make clear, he was keenly interested in the emerging treasures of the Egyptian past, and convinced that analogies with Egypt offered an effective way to explain the glorious Mesoamerican antiquities that he was uncovering. While Dupaix had little patience with theories that Egypt and Mesoamerica had actually been in contact at some point during the past, he would often make references to Egyptian mythology or sculpture.

The analogy with Egypt was a useful one because it allowed Dupaix to describe Mesoamerican antiquities as the products of an advanced culture, without putting them on the same footing as the art and ruins of Greece and Rome. As revealed by the fearful and disgusted reactions to the statue of Coatlicue, the difference between Mesoamerican and Greco-Roman aesthetic ideals was so extreme that very few Europeans would have accepted the comparison as justified. Egyptian art, however, was less concerned with proportion and the accurate representation of the human figure than was its Greco-Roman equivalent, and so was more likely to be acceptable as a point of reference. However, it would be a mistake to treat Dupaix's references to Egyptians as being mainly disparaging towards Mesoamerican antiquities. Dupaix himself seems to have regarded the Egyptians as a sophisticated people, and was also willing to reference Greece and Rome if he felt the situation called for it (and he was a man who knew whereof he spoke, as he had actually visited both those places).[117] Moreover, by drawing connections between Egyptian and Mesoamerican antiquity Dupaix was directly combating the

[114] Evans, *Romancing the Maya*, 24.

[115] Dupaix, *Expediciones acerca de los monumentos de la Nueva España*, 230.

[116] See Bruce Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 39. For a comparison of Napoleon's activities in Egypt and those of Dupaix in Mesoamerica, see Evans, *Romancing the Maya*, 23.

[117] Dupaix, *Expediciones acerca de los monumentos de la Nueva España*, 225.

assumptions of some European writers that all American peoples were barbarians, who could never rise above their savage state.[118]

The Dupaix expedition was matched by the 1808 formation of a "Junta de Antigüedades" in Mexico City, which seems to have been intended to give institutional form to the study and oversight of the pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts. Unfortunately, I have found very few original sources dealing with this intriguing attempt to impose centralized control over the material past, while references in the secondary literature are terse as well. The light impression which the Junta left on the historical record may be explained as a case of bad timing. According to Luis Gerardo Morales Moreno, the Junta's "labor was interrupted by the independence movements led by the priests Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos."[119] The upheavals which attended the struggle against Spain also relegated Dupaix's report to temporary obscurity.[120] It was not until the establishment of an independent Mexican state that government officials would once more turn their attention to the creations of pre-Hispanic cultures.

IV. The Museo Nacional

Mexico's nineteenth century was replete with processes of becoming, by the upheavals of revolutions, war and invasions; the evolution of the viceregal administration into federalist, centralist and Liberal republics, and the volatile interactions of social and ethnic groups pursuing divergent and often opposed interests. The nineteenth century was also marked by strong continuities with the colonial past, as some individuals and communities fiercely defended the religious, cultural and legal practices established under Spanish rule. The tensions between change and continuity often led to political discord or open violence between groups with conflicting interests and visions of the ideal society. At the beginning of the national period, however, such tensions did not greatly affect state management of the material past. While elite Mexicans generally ignored or were contemptuous towards the indigenous communities of their own day, they found the cultures which predated the Conquest to be far more compelling. With the more foreign or threatening features of these civilizations obscured by the passage of time, it was possible for intellectuals and statesmen to admire pre-Hispanic achievements, and for the new state to cast itself as the rightful heir to the vanquished Aztec empire.[121] To establish this political genealogy, Mexico's nineteenth-century governments availed themselves not only of the symbols and stories of the past, but of its material remains as well. During the 1820s, the monuments of the pre-Hispanic past became formally linked to state narratives of authority and legitimacy.

The establishment of a National Museum from the university collections was an

[118] At one point, Dupaix says that those who would bestow the "*despreciable epiteto*" of barbarian on the ancient builders of the monuments were "*ignorantes*." Ibid, 143.

[119] "Al mismo tiempo, durante los años de 1808-1813 se intentó hacer funcionar una Junta de Antigüedades cuya labor fue interrumpida por la insurrecciones independentistas encabezadas por los clérigos Miguel Hidalgo y José María Morelos." Morales Moreno, *Orígenes de la museología mexicana*, 34.

[120] Dupaix's work would, however, eventually be published in France and the Britain during the 1830s. Evans, *Romancing the Maya*, 35.

[121] For discussions of how independence-era leaders and intellectuals made use of the pre-Hispanic past, see Earle, *Return of the Native*, 21-46; Brading, *The First America*, 576-7, and Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 316-9.

enterprise that crossed party lines, championed by Liberals and Conservatives alike.[122] The state's claim to these collections was established as early as 1822, under the government of Emperor Agustín de Iturbide.[123] Although Iturbide did not keep power for long, successive national governments maintained possession of the material housed at the university. Under the republican presidency of Guadalupe Victoria, the project of creating a Museo Nacional was spearheaded by a young official named Lucas Alamán, who would later become a leading Conservative statesman and historian. Alamán was in some respects an unusual advocate for a museum celebrating the Mexican nation. As a teenager, he had witnessed the sack of Guanajuato, carried out by the revolutionary priest Miguel Hidalgo's mostly indigenous troops. This traumatic experience helped to convince him of the necessity of elite rule, and the danger of democratic principles.[124] Later in life, he would support the transfer of sovereignty to a European monarch who could restore order to his strife-ridden country, and "[dismiss] the attempt to constitute the Aztec empire as the historical foundation of contemporary Mexico."[125] Alamán was not, therefore, a man to lightly forsake European practices and models. He conceived of the Museo Nacional as an institution which would emulate European institutions of high culture, fostering research into the useful arts and elevating the tone of intellectual discourse.

In a report that he prepared for the National Congress in 1823, Alamán recommended reorganization of the capital's botanical gardens, national archives and university collections, suggesting at one point that a combined garden, museum and school of medicine be established, and in another that "a department of museums or of libraries...should be established...which would gather together manuscripts and curious works which are currently found scattered in diverse archives and libraries in the capital, with little profit to scholars. Studious persons would then be able to read and examine these works without obstacles or difficulties." Alamán also had words of praise for indigenous artifacts, as he remarked in the same report that national collections contained "very precious monuments of Mexican antiquity and from the first years of

[122] Here it may be useful to define the terms "Liberal" and "Conservative" in the context of nineteenth-century Mexican politics. In broad strokes, conservatives supported the traditional rights of the army and Catholic Church, believed that society functioned best when organized by hierarchies of race and class, and favored protectionist trade policies and political centralization. Liberals wished to remove quasi-governmental powers from the Church and army and strengthen the legal institutions of the new state; advocated rights such as freedom of assembly, speech and the press; believed in open markets, free elections, state-sponsored education, rationalism and the benefits of technological progress, and were theoretically in favor of federalism, although this commitment tended to falter whenever they actually attained national power. Tensions between the Liberal and Conservative parties rose throughout the mid-nineteenth century, eventually boiling over into the vicious War of the Reform, which lasted from 1857-1860 and ended with a Liberal victory. The Liberal president who assumed power in 1861 was Benito Juárez, a Zapotec from the state of Oaxaca who was Mexico's first indigenous president. During the 1860s, the struggle between Liberals and Conservatives was defined by Conservative support for Maximilian, an Austrian archduke imposed as the "emperor of Mexico" by the French emperor Napoleon III. The eventual ouster of the French troops and execution of Maximilian in 1867 essentially put an end to Conservatism as a viable political movement, although succeeding Liberal governments became increasingly conservative in practice.

[123] Fernández, *Historia de los museos*, 119.

[124] Leslie Byrd Simpson, *Many Mexicos*, Fourth edition revised (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 212-3.

[125] Brading, *The First America*, 645-6. Brading has also written that "Alamán's [1840s] *Dissertations* were written to celebrate the life of Cortés, the conquest, and the foundation of colonial society. Careful not to disparage the Aztecs, he simply ignored their acheivements." David A. Brading, *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism* (Cambridge: Centre of Latin American Studies, 1985), 77.

Spanish domination."[126] Indeed, it seems to have been a particularly compelling collection of pre-Hispanic antiquities that finally pushed the Mexican government to formally establish a national museum. In an 1825 directive to the rector of the university, Alamán wrote "His Excellency the President of the Republic has resolved that the antiquities which have been brought from the Isla de Sacrificios and others which exist in this Capital, be formed into a National Museum...to this end His Excellency desires that you choose the room which will be dedicated to a purpose at once useful and conducive to the national glory."[127] Alamán's writings show that he valued the collection of pre-Hispanic antiquities primarily because these shed luster on the national state as a patron of learning and as the heir to a rich cultural legacy. The meanings that such artifacts may have held for their creators, or the value they might have possessed for contemporary indigenous communities, were treated as unimportant in comparison.

Alamán's stuffiness and attachment to European culture make it tempting to see the early Museo Nacional as he did - an institution that would follow in the footsteps of the national museums of Spain, Britain and France, and which would provide some of the prestige that Mexico still lacked in European eyes. However, the circumstances of the Museo's foundation were such that it could not avoid differing significantly from its European predecessors. The British Museum, for example, had been formed in 1753 from objects posthumously donated by the private collector Hans Sloane. In forming his collection, Sloane was restricted only by the limits of his own curiosity and funds, rather than by national borders.[128] Sloane's precedent of eclecticism was followed by the nineteenth-century British Museum, which absorbed treasures from all over the world with few scruples as to the claims that others might make to the artifacts. The French and Spanish national museums, formed from royal collections, also aspired to universality. The Louvre's stockpile swelled with loot from Napoleon's conquests, while we have already seen that during the eighteenth century the director of Spain's Real Gabinete de Historia Natural had sought specimens from every corner of the earth.[129] In Western Europe, national

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[126] "*El mismo desorden mencionado ha producido otro mal difícil de reparar: existían en el archivo de aquella secretaría monumentos muy preciosos de las antigüedades mexicanas y de los primeros años de la dominación española…Se han recogido con cuidado estos apreciables restos, se ha dispuesto un índice exacto de ellos, y están destinados a formar, con los dibujos y antigüedades del viajero Dupée* [sic] *que se trata de publicar, y otros que puedan recogerse, un departamento del museo o de la biblioteca que debe establecerse, y en la que han de reunirse los manuscritos y obras curiosas que se hallan esparcidas en diversos archivos y bibliotecas de esta capital, sin ningún fruto de las personas estudiosas, que lograrán entonces leerlos y examinarlos sin trabas ni dificultades. Esto mismo pudiera practicarse en las demás ciudades de provincia con gran utilidad de la nación*." Alamán's suggestion of regional museums, however, does not appear to have been carried out. Lucas Alamán, "Memoria que el Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de Relaciones Exteriores e Interiores presenta al Soberano Congreso Constituyente sobre los negocios de la Secretaria de su cargo, leída en la sesión de 8 de noviembre de 1823." Reproduced in Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*, 287.

[127] "*Su Ecselencia el Presidente de la República, se ha servido resolver q.e con las antigüedades que se han traído de la isla de Sacrificios y otras que existen en esta Capital, se forme un Museo Naiconal, y q.e a este fin se destine uno de los salones de la Universidad, erogándose por cuenta del Gob.no Supremo los gastos necesarios p.a estantes, cerraduras, custodio del Museo, &a. A este fin quiere S. E. q.e proceda V. S. a asignar el Salón q.e pueda destinarse a este objeto de utilidad y lustre nacional, avisándolo a este Minist.o p.a q.e comisione persona con cuyo acuerdo se proceda*." Letter from Lucas Alamán to the Rector de la Universidad of the capital, March 18, 1825. Reproduced in Luis Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía*, 59.

[128] Philipp Blom, *To Have and to Hold: An Intimate History of Collectors and Collecting* (Woodstock and New York: The Overlook Press, 2002), 77-88.

museums were not meant to glorify their countries by displaying local products, but to blazon the political, military and economic power which permitted the acquisition of other lands' natural and cultural artifacts. Consequently, Western European museums granted comparatively little attention to their own countries' ancestral cultures. Suggestions that the British Museum prioritize the collection of Saxon artifacts, or that the Louvre concentrate above all on the material culture of the Franks, would have met even less sympathy in the nineteenth century than in the present day.

If the Museo Nacional de México distinguished itself from European institutions by the emphasis of its collections, it also differed from North American museums by virtue of its close connection to a national government. While museums existed in the United States by the early nineteenth century, these were private institutions, founded by local societies or individuals in search of profit. The U.S. government would not trouble to found a national museum until 1846, 11 years after the Englishman James Smithson forced the issue by willing a substantial sum for that purpose. Even then, the Smithsonian's first director fought to use the bequest to sponsor research rather than assemble public collections of specimens and artifacts.[130] While the Smithsonian Museum would eventually devote considerable resources to studying Native American societies, these inquiries were predicated on the idea that indigenous people were culturally and often politically distinct from the population of the United States. The Smithsonian's research therefore excluded indigenous peoples from U.S. national identity, rather than incorporating them into patriotic narratives.

It should be noted that the directors of the Museo Nacional were not philosophically opposed to the inclusion of non-Mexican artifacts in its collections, at least during some points in its history. For example, letters to the museum's director in 1852 discuss negotiations to trade Mexican antiquities for a collection of Egyptian mummies, and record the donation of a stick "whose sole merit [was] to be from the forests...of the celebrated Mount Parnassus" in Greece.[131] The importance of pre-Hispanic artifacts in the Museo doubtless owes something to those objects' accessibility; if Mexican nationals had the same opportunities as the British and French to scour the world for treasures, they likely would have done so. Nevertheless, unlike its European counterparts the Museo Nacional was founded in a country that had only recently become independent, and where social divisions were established on racial as well as class lines. Racial divisions also existed in the United States but early governments felt less need to symbolically resolve these, perhaps because the U.S. vision of nationhood was more inclusive than Mexico's in theory and more exclusive in practice.[132] The Museo Nacional, then, appears as

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[129] Blom, *To Have and to Hold*, 118, and Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 116-23.

[130] Edward P. Alexander, *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1979), pp. 47-53.

[131] AMNA, vol. 1, exp.15, f. 49. "*Con esta entregará á V. el portador un baston que en marzo del año proximo pasado adquirí en Aténas y cuyo único mérito es el ser de los bosques, hoy incultos del celebre monte Parnaso, acerca de cuya autenticidad tengo toda seguridad.*" Letter from José M. Peón to José Fernando Ramírez at the Museo Nacional, October 20, 1852. AMNA, vol. 1, exp. 18, f. 54.

[132] David Brading has compared the independence movements of the two countries, arguing that when North American revolutionaries "sat down to frame a constitution, as true children of the Enlightenment, they appealed, not to any specific British tradition or ancestry, but instead invoked the natural rights of all humanity.

an oddity among the museums of the trans-Atlantic world.

It could also appear odd to its visitors. In 1827, a woman named Rosa Isidica (or someone writing under that pseudonym) visited the recently founded National Museum of Mexico, and found the experience to be a disappointing one. Although the museum possessed some admirable items, particularly an equestrian statue of the Spanish king Charles IV "worthy of being placed among the works of the celebrated Pheidias," Isidica's overriding impression was of insignificant collections, arranged chaotically. Writing to the editors of the newspaper *El Sol*, Isidica exclaimed "If a shelf is made to contain a little idol, a stuffed parrot, a crystallization, an herb, a doll, a little bird made of wax, a small shell, etc., then already such a shelf is not a museum (*Gabinete*), but should more appropriately be called a showcase, such as those with which our grandmothers decorated their sitting rooms in former times." Isidica then exhorted the Museo Nacional to do a better job collecting specimens from "a land that is so rich in exquisite productions, which Europe collects avidly but which are not known in our own *Gabinete*," insisting that "a curious, solicitous and inquiring spirit would be able to form at little cost the best museum in the world." As things stood, though, she felt that the museum did little either to instruct the public, or to glorify the newly independent nation.[133]

There were good reasons why the Museo Nacional might have presented an unimpressive sight in 1827. The Mexican government provided little in the way of support to the museum until

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Their constitution was to serve as the foundation of a new order of society; it marked a fresh start in world history...[Creole patriotism]'s predominant modes of expression were historical and religious, all cast in intensely particularistic terms. It offered few lessons in political theory, still less in political practice...The Creole mind endlessly returned to the dramatic events of the conquest, to the figures of Cortés and Moctezuma. Like the Irish or the Greeks, the Mexicans could never forget the past." Brading, *Origins of Mexican Nationalism*, 54. However, the universalist rhetoric of the United States fell short when applied to those of African or indigenous descent. By contrast, the historical basis of Mexican nationalism, and the fact that a large majority of Mexico's population possessed some indigenous or African ancestry, meant that despite the social importance of race it did not provide automatic grounds for exclusion from the nation.

[133] *"Un día de estos pasaba por la Universidad, y advirtiendo que en su patio se hallaba situada la hermosa estatua colosal que antes existía en la Plaza Mayor, me determiné a entrar allí a examinarla de cerca…mi admiración creció mientras más inspeccioné las dimensiones y módulos de aquella obra maestra, digna de colocarse entre las del célebre Fidias…Al estar en estas observaciones, vi grupos de gente que subían a una sala de arriba, pregunté qué había allí y me dijeron que el Museo…En el momento que puse los pies en este establecimiento, me ocuparon objetos de lástima, vergüenza y de risa, porque vi obras de mérito degradadas, unidas a cosas miserables y ridículos con colocación y tono de importancia…debe respetarse el sistema y orden de la naturaleza, y no confundir sus producciones, sino colocar sistemada y simétricamente la de cada ramo, lo animal con lo animal, lo mineral con lo mineral…pues si se compone un estante con un idolito, un perico disecado, una cristalización, una yerba, un muñeco, un pajarito de cera, una conchita, etc., ya el tal estante no es de Gabinete, sino que le vendrá más bien el nombre de escaparate, de aquellos con que adornaban sus asistencias nuestras abuelas en tiempo de antaño…No es esto sólo lo que allí se nota; irrita el ver que se haya echado mano de material superfluo en un país tan fecundo de producciones exquisitos que la Europa colecta con ansia y que en nuestro Gabinete no se conozcan…En fin, un genio curioso, solícito e investigador, podría formar aquí a poca costa el mejor Gabinete del mundo…*" Rosa Isidica, Untitled article, *El Sol*, November 4, 1827. Reprinted as "El Museo Nacional en 1827," *Boletín del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología*, 5th época, Vol. 1, No. 10 (October, 1932): 193-5. Isidica also suggested that if the museum's directors needed assistance in organizing the collections, they consult the set of collecting instructions sent to the colonies in 1776 by Madrid's Real Gabinete de Historia Natural. This comment, along with Isidica's lavish praise of the statue of Charles IV, and the fact that her essay appeared in the conservative *El Sol*, suggests that she may not have been inclined to look favorably upon the institutions of the current liberal government, which shortly thereafter would expel most Spaniards from the national territory.

1831, when a comprehensive scheme for its organization and funding was finally set forth.[134] Even then, the museum's needs often outstripped the available monies, limiting the institution's ability to mount impressive displays or to sponsor original scholarship.[135] Fanny Calderón de la Barca, the perceptive and often acerbic wife of Spain's first ambassador to Mexico, visited the Museum in 1840 and left an account that differed little from that written by Isidica. She remarked that the Museum, along with the Botanical Garden and the School of Mines, left "a certain disagreeable impression on the mind, since, without having the dignity of ruins, they are fine buildings neglected."[136] This neglect was shown not only in the condition of the building, but in the state of the collections. Calderón wrote, "The Museum...contains many rare and valuable works, many curious Indian antiquities, but they are ill arranged." In its cramped and perpetually underfunded state, the early Museo Nacional had a limited effect on Mexican culture during the first several decades following independence. During this period, the Museo's mission was not primarily to educate and enculturate the general population, but to provide a venue where elites could engage in learned pursuits and patriotic contemplation of the museum's collections.[137] Thus, the great majority of people in early and mid-nineteenth-century Mexico likely went about their lives without sparing any thought for the national museum.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that, at least in the Valley of Mexico, indigenous communities were aware of the museum and could use it for their own ends. In an 1838 letter, a lawyer engaged by the town of San Pedro Tláhuac described a history of disputes over a locally revered cross, which had previously been stolen by residents of a rival town before San Pedro Tláhuac had successfully sued in court for its return. Fearful that their rivals would attempt to steal the cross again, the village decided to donate its prize possession to the museum, in the hope that the cross would "in some small way attract the admiration of persons from foreign societies who frequent our Mexican museum...and in this manner be able to further spread the news of the marvels and great achievements of the Mexican People."[138] The letter is a reminder

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[134] Fernández, *Historia de los museos*, 122. See also the November 21, 1831 law reproduced in Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía*, 63-5.

[135] In 1852, for example, Museum director José Fernando Ramírez complained that the needs of the establishment outstripped its allotted budget. AMNA, vol. 1, exp. 14.

[136] Fanny Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 135-6. This work was originally published in 1843.

[137] The museum's limited ambitions to reach a broad public can be seen from its scheduled times of operation. In 1826, the museum was only open to the public on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 am - 2 pm, with the rest of the time reserved for scholarly study. Isidro Ignacio Icaza, "Reglamento para el Museo Nacional aprobado por el excelentísimo Señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," June 15, 1826. Reproduced in Castillo Ledón, *El Museo Nacional*, 61. By 1834, the only time that the public was freely permitted to enter the museum was on Tuesdays from 11 am - 2 pm. However, "*las personas que obtengan…un permiso escrito del director*" were allowed to visit on Thursdays, while those willing to pay the considerable fee of two reals per person could enter during other days of the week. Proclamation signed by Valentín Gómez Farías and Manuel Eduardo de Goroztiza, "Reglamento para sistemar la Instrucción Pública, en el Distrito Federal, Sección Séptima, Museo Mexicano, Capítulo único," June 2, 1834. Reproduced in Ibid., 67.

[138] "*…los del Pueblo de Tlahuac consiguieron una victoria legal y p.r ella ha continuado la posecion civil. Mas mis representados p.a contar y evitar en lo inclusivo toda clase de desavenencias q.e suelen ser muy funestas entre Pueblo y Pueblo: atiendiendo p.r otra parte la propiedad q.e tienen en la cruz, pr. Consiguiente son y han sido dueños legitimos de ella y teniendo sobre todo el gran placer de contribuir en una muy pequeña parte p.a atraer la admiracion de los individuos de las sociedades estrangeras q.e frecuentan sus visitas á n.tro museo mejicano,*

that as much as the Museo was an instrument of the national government, affiliated with state-sponsored visions of the national identity, the flow of information was not one-way. By sending an artifact for inclusion in the museum, communities such as San Pedro Tláhuac could promote their own idea of a national identity, one based on the magnification of local symbols and practices. Residents of the community also showed themselves capable of making use of federal administrative structures to promote specifically local interests. Such creative interactions with state cultural institutions would become more frequent during the Porfiriato, as these institutions increased their presence at the local level.

V. Preliminary Patrimonies

Shortly after Alamán sent his memo to the university rector founding the Museo Nacional, the priest and scholar Isidro Ignacio de Icaza was appointed to take charge of the new institution, which he would lead until his death in 1834. A plan for the organization of the museum written by Icaza in 1826 places pre-Hispanic objects first when listing the different classes of objects to be displayed, suggesting that he regarded them as central to the institution's collections.[139] Although there are comparatively few other sources relating to the Museo Nacional's activities during the 1820s, what little exists underlines the persistent connection between pre-Hispanic antiquities and state-sponsored patriotism.[140] However, the nature of this association changed somewhat during the mid-1820s. While Alamán believed that Mexico should create a museum as part of a general program to promote knowledge and progress, and had even engineered an 1824 exhibition of Mexican artifacts in London, other national leaders adopted a more protectionist stance. From this perspective, the collection of antiquities and natural history specimens was a means of emphasizing Mexican distinctiveness, and safeguarding the country's patrimony from rapacious foreigners.[141] In the context of broader agitation against manufactured foreign imports and the Spanish still resident in Mexico, the government's antiquarian rhetoric shifted from a genteel appreciation of scholarship to a more fervent insistence on the value of the national patrimony, and the state's right to take possession

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gustosam.te ocurren á V.E. p.r mi conducto á fin de q.e se digne aceptar la cecion q.e hacen de la mencionada cruz al Museo Nacional, p.a q.e acaso de esta manera podran dilatarse mas alla las maravillas y grandesas del Pueblo Mejicano." Copied letter from Faustino José Galicia, 1838. AMNA, vol. 1, exp. 2, f. 7. The donation was accepted on May 22, 1838. Letter from the Gobierno del Departamento de México to Galicia, May 22, 1838, copied in letter from the Gobierno del Departamento de México to Isidro Rafael Gondra at the Museo Nacional, May 23, 1838. Ibid., fs. 8-9.

[139] "*Art. 3.o Tendrán lugar en ese establecimiento: 1.o Toda clase de monumentos Mejicanos, anteriores ó coetaneos á la invasión de los Españoles.*" Isidro Ignacio Icaza, "Reglamento para el Museo Nacional aprobado por el excelentísimo Señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," June 15, 1826. Reproduced in Castillo Ledón, *El Museo Nacional*, 60.

[140] In 1827, for example, the Museo Nacional published a book of lithographs depicting antiquities in the institution's collections. Isidro Icaza and Isidro Rafael Gondra, who would later serve as director from 1835-1852, offered detailed comments on the illustrations of the German artist Frederick Waldeck. Waldeck himself also contributed an essay to the volume. Isidro Icaza, Isidro Gondra, and Federico [Frederick] Waldeck, with lithographs by Federico Waldeck, *Colección de las antigüedades mexicanas que ecsisten en el museo nacional* (Mexico City: Pedro Robert, 1827).

[141] For the reference to the London exhibit, see Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*, 191.

of cultural and scientific commodities.

This change in attitudes can be seen in circular letters sent to Mexican religious authorities by the Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Relations, headed by the priest and lawyer Miguel Ramos Arizpe.[142] In an 1825 circular, national authorities complained that ecclesiastical bodies or individuals had "given various significant monuments of antiquity and very curious natural or artificial productions as presents to foreigners," when they might have been sent to the museum ("*Gabinete Nacional*") for the "glory and prosperity of the Fatherland (*Patria*)." Thus, the letter was meant "to excite your zeal to send to this Ministry all the curiosities and antiquities which you have and desire to contribute to the stated purpose, so doing a notable service to the Nation, whose progress in all the branches of enlightenment should arouse great interest in all good Americans."[143] The following year, the Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Relations sent a slightly more conciliatory letter to Mexico's bishops, informing them that the priest Isidro Icaza had been appointed as curator of a national museum, and urging them once more to send objects that would enhance the institution's collections. This letter stated, "The glory and the benefit of the Mexican nation are equally connected to the discovery and conservation of the monuments of its History, and the manifestation of the exquisite products of its Soil. Even the Spanish Government perceived the importance of these objects…As the Supreme Government of the Federation is much more interested, and for much more generous motives in the progress of national enlightenment, it has not forgotten to stimulate [the "discovery and collection of antiquities"]."[144] Such documents point to a fundamental philosophical alignment between state representatives and the Church hierarchy on

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[142] "The entrance of Ramos Arizpe into the ministry caused the resignation of Lucas Alamán, minister of relations, from that body because he did not get along well with the ecclesiastic." Lillian E. Fisher, "A Comanche Constitutionalist: Miguel Ramos Arizpe," in *Hispanic American Essays, A Memorial to James Alexander Robertson*, ed. A. Curtis Wilgus (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1942), 253.

[143] "*El Presidente de la Republica ha llegado á entender que algunas corporaciones Eclesiasticas, ó individuos suyos han facilitado y regalado á los estrangeros varios monumentos apreciable de la antiguedad y producciones naturales ó artificiales muy curiosas, q.e pudieran haberse destinado al Gabinete Nacional cuyo establecimiento se trata de formar si los mismos cuerpos ó sus miembros, q.e las poseen, hubiesen franqueadolas al Gobierno, prefiriendo la gloria y prosperidad de la Patria á toda otro consideracion. Con tal motivo me manda el Presidente excite el celo de N.S.J. á fin de que todas las curiosidades y antiguedades que tenga y quiera proporcionar p.a el indicado objeto las dirija á este Ministerio, haciendo asi un servicio recomendable á la Nacion, cuyos progresos en todos los ramos de ilustracion deben procurarse con mucho interés por los buenos americanos.*" Circular sent by the Ministro de Justicia y Negocios Ecclesiásticos to Prelados Diocesanos, Cabildos Ecclesiásticos, and Provinciales de las Religiosas, March 5, 1825. AGN-Archivo Histórico de Hacienda, vol. 92, exp. 14, f. 3.

[144] "*La gloria y el provecho de la nacion Mexicana se interesan igualm.te en el descubrim.to y conservacion de los monumentos de su Historia y en el conocim.to y manifestacion de los exquisitos producciones de su Suelo. Aun el Gobierno Español penetrado de la importancia de estos objetos, dictó con relacion á ellos en diversos tiempos algunos provid.as entre las cuales debe mencionare la orden de 2 de Mayo de 1804 q.e sus Ministros promovieron eficazm.te y se dirijio al descubrim.to y coleccion de antigüedades. Mucho mas interesado, y por mas generosos motivos el Supremo Gobierno de la federacion en los progresos de la ilustracion nacional, no se ha olvidado de promoverla en estos ramos; y al efecto ha nombrado al Sr. D.r D.n Ysidro Ycaza, conservador de los monumentos y objetos q.e ya se habian reunida, y puedan en adelante colectarse p.a preparar el Establecim.to de un Museo y Gabinete de Historia natural… Persuadido pues el Exmo. Sr. Presidente de q.e á tan recomendable é interesante prop.o contribuirá sobre manera el ilustrado Zelo y patrimonio de V.E.…. se sirva cooperar a q.e el deposito exîstente se enriquezca con los objetos q.e puedan adquirirse en ese Estado, participando á este Ministerio los q.e se puedan proporcionar para q.e los reciba el Expresado Sr. conservador.*" "Circular a los diocesanos," October 5, 1826, copied by Juan José Espinosa de los Móntelos, October 4, 1826. Ibid., f. 1.

the subject of antiquarian investigation (thanks not least to the influence of state officials who were themselves priests, and the Museum's location within a Catholic university). By the mid-1820s, Ramos Arizpe apparently had no question that the bishops would regard research into the pre-Hispanic past, with all its contemporary connotations of paganism and human sacrifice, as anything other than a legitimate patriotic endeavor.

The bishops' responses confirm that Ramos Arizpe was correct. Most who replied were compliant or even enthusiastic, with the bishop of Puebla calling the collection of items for the museum "a goal of such interest and honor for the Republic," and the bishop of Guadalajara praising the "noble and patriotic designs of the Supreme Leader of the nation." Others regretfully declined to assist in adding to the museum's collections, citing a lack of appropriate objects in their districts, or an already overwhelming workload.[145] Notably, though, none of the bishops cited sacrilege or impiety as reasons to avoid collecting the artifacts. If such objections still existed, it was apparently no longer considered appropriate to raise them.

Two years later, the national government would take another step to assert control over Mexico's pre-Hispanic antiquities, by passing a law forbidding their export. In fact, post-independence Mexican governments appear to have regarded the export of pre-Hispanic artifacts as more worthy of prohibition than damage done to those same objects within the national boundaries. This may have been a reflection of the tenuous authority of Mexico's federal governments during the period, as the state was better able to exert control over customs houses and shipping than over the interior of the country. Nevertheless, early laws regarding antiquities seem concerned mainly that the items remain within Mexican territory, as an aspect of the nation's wealth. An 1827 law is particularly explicit in this regard, forbidding the export of "Mexican monuments and antiquities" in the same sentence that it banned gold, silver and the seeds of the cochineal cactus (involved in the production of a valuable dye) from leaving the country.[146] This law was reaffirmed in 1845 and 1853.[147] In 1832, another national

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[145] The bishop of Puebla wrote that "…*cooperando a un obgeto de tanto interes y honor de la Republica, doy orden con esta fha. á los Curas de lo Diócesis para q.e hagan por su parte otro tanto colectando cuantos monumentos puedan encontrar analogos al establecimiento, previniendoles que los remitan á mi Secretaria, o en derechura á ése Ministerio; y yó por la mia proporcionaré lo que pueda, q.e hasta ahora no he podido adquirir*…" Copied letter from the bishop of Puebla to Miguel Ramos Arizpe at Justicia y Negocios Ecclesiásticos, October 11, 1826. Ibid., 6. Bishop of Guadalajara Diego Aranda wrote that "*Protesto á V. Exia. que cooperaré gustosamente…con el Exmo S.or Governador de este Estado á los nobles y patrioticos designios del Supremo Gefe de la nacion para el descubrimiento de los monumentos de su historia y adquisicion de preciosas producciones de su suelo capaces de aumentar y enriquecen el establecimiento glorioso de un Museo y Gavinete de historia natural de que trata el Exmo S.or Presidente de la Republica que se ha servido nombrar al S.or D. D. Ysidro Ycaza para Conservador de los monumentos y obgetos reunidos ~ yá, y de los q.e en adelante puedan colectarse*…" Copied letter from Diego Aranda to Ramos Arizpe at Justicia y Negocios Ecclesiásticos, October 17, 1826. Ibid., f. 7. However, the bishop of Valladolid wrote "…*reitera V.E. lo q.e sobre este mismo punto se previno en Circular de 5 de Marzo del año pp.do á q.e procurará darse el debido cumplim.to en quanto lo permitan las circunstancias; pues la suma escases de Eccos. q.e dolorosam.te se experimenta en esta Dioces; tiene á los q.e podrian hacer esta indagacion quales son los Parrocos, precisam.te ocupados en las funciones de su Ministerio q.e les daran poco ó ningun lugar p.a dedicarse á otras atenciones, lo q.e hago presente p.a q.e no se estrañe la demora ó falta q.e pueda haber en el particular.*" Copied letter from Angel Mariano Morales to Ramos Arizpe at Justicia y Negocios Ecclesiásticos, October 12, 1826. Ibid., f. 6.

[146] "Arancel para las aduanas marítimas y de frontera de la República Mexicana," passed November 16, 1827 and reproduced in Morales Moreno, *Orígenes de la museología mexicana*, 179.

[147] "Prohibición de exportar monumentos y antigüedades mexicanas," October 4, 1845 and "Prohibición de exportar monumentos y antigüedades mexicanas," June 1, 1853. Ibid, 216-217.

administration decreed that "as protector of scientific establishments," it "enjoy[ed] the right of first purchase of the beautiful productions of art and science, which are discovered on the property of individuals" and that it was "empowered to prevent the removal from the Republic of those same productions which are currently known or may be discovered."[148] Tellingly, the federal government was not yet assertive enough to claim direct ownership of pre-Hispanic artifacts, or to control how objects and sites were used within Mexico – an important lacuna at a time when villages frequently used nearby ruins as convenient sources of building stone.[149] The value of pre-Hispanic artifacts during this period, then, derived less from their artistic or scientific meaning than from their status as *Mexican*, the patrimony of a state still struggling to define itself.

Even these limited efforts to control antiquities, however, often fell short. A plaintive 1835 memo from the Mexican consul in Bordeaux, describing the arrival of a French ship loaded with two crates of Mexican antiquities, indicates that the 1827 law was not strictly enforced. The consul pleaded that customs authorities be enjoined to "scrupulously" prevent the extraction of "such precious objects, as to do otherwise would render meaningless the wise measures of our legislators, who in decreeing said prohibition doubtless had in mind the damage that would result to the nation if it permitted the loss of those few monuments that escaped the devastating furor following the conquest."[150] The consul's words produced little tangible effect. As of 1850, the collections of the Louvre Museum in Paris contained over 800 pre-Hispanic artifacts from Mexico.[151] In addition, the independent Republic of Yucatán which existed for most of the 1840s did very little to prevent the export of Mayan antiquities. The U.S. diplomat, traveler, and author John Lloyd Stephens, who visited Yucatán in the early 1840s, cleared and excavated ruins in the state with essentially no formal oversight. As he carried out his investigations, Stephens reached case-by-case agreements with local communities and landholders, or simply set to work without asking for any permission.[152]

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[148] "Derechos sobre facultades del supremo gobierno como protector de establecimientos científicos," March 14, 1832, reproduced in Ibid, 206-207.

[149] For example, even during the late 1870s, residents of the town of San Francisco were still extracting large stones from the pyramids of Teotihuacán. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 17, f. 14.

[150] "*El cónsul mexicano en Burdeos me dice…'Conforme á la declaración hecha en esta aduana entre los objetos del cargamento que el buque francés la 'Joven Emilia' condujo en su último viaje, procedente de Veracruz, figuran dos cajas, conteniendo antigüedades mexicanas, cuya extracción de la República está prohibido por el artículo 41 de la ley de 16 de Noviembre de 1827…me apresuro a ponerlo en conocimiento de V. E., para que si S. E. el presidente lo dispone, se le dé la correspondiente órden por el Ministerio de Hacienda, á fin de que se vigile escrupulosamente por los empleados de las aduanas, el que no se extraigan unos objetos tan preciosos, pues de lo contrario se hará ilusoria la sábia disposición de nuestros legisladores, que al decretar tal prohibición tuvieron sin duda presente el menoscabo que resultaría á la nación, permitiendo la salida de los pocos monumentos que escaparon al furor devastador que sobrevino á la conquista.*'" "Circular de la Secretaria de Relaciones.-Que se verifique el cumplimiento de la prohibición de extraer monumentos y antigüedades mexicanas," October 28, 1835. Reproduced in Alejandro Gertz Manero, ed., *La defensa jurídica y social del patrimonio cultural* (Mexico City: Archivo del Fondo, 1976), 59.

[151] Adrien Longpérier, *Notice des Monuments Exposés dans la Salle des Antiquités Américaines (Mexique et Pérou), Au Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Vinchon, Imprimeur des Musées Nationaux, 1850).

[152] For example, see John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*, vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1963), 224-8, in which he discusses works carried out at the ruins of Kabah. Stephens comments, "*The sensation we had created in the village had gone on increasing, and the Indians were really indisposed to work for us at all. The*

The late 1820s and early 1830s seem to have been the high water mark for state involvement in antiquarianism up through the 1850s. This shift may have reflected broader changes on the national stage, as a Conservative rebellion led by Anastasio Bustamante was successful in seizing power from the Liberal president Vicente Guerrero in 1829. Although the presidency would change hands between parties many times during the ensuing decades, the overall trend was one of Conservative dominance. Conservative governments continued to support the Museo out of patriotic sentiment, but did not promote significant research into the pre-Hispanic past. The interest displayed by Alamán in the early 1820s had dissipated and, according to José Luis Lorenzo, most Conservatives "looked upon the autochthonous past as a mere curiosity."[153] While the scholar and statesman José Fernando Ramírez brought new energy and organization to the Museum in the 1850s, the institution still lacked prominence in Mexican life and politics.[154]

This state of affairs finally began to change under the administration of Maximilian von Habsburg, an Austrian archduke who for a brief period during the 1860s was installed as emperor of Mexico through the force of French armies. As a foreign ruler who occupied a throne that had not even existed before his arrival, Maximilian strove to demonstrate a genuine connection to Mexican culture, and to associate himself with the symbols of Mexican nationalism.[155] It was therefore on his orders that the Museo Nacional was given space in a new

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arrival of a stranger even from Merida or Campeachy was an extraordinary event, and no Ingleses had ever been seen there before. The circumstance that we had come to work among the ruins was wonderful, incomprehensible. Within the memory of the oldest Indians these remains had never been disturbed. The account of the digging up of the bones in San Francisco had reached them, and they had much conversation with each other and with the padrecito about us. It was a strange thing, they said, that men with strange faces, and a language they could not understand, had come among them to disinter their ruined cities; and, simple as their ancestors when the Spaniards first came among them, they said that the end of the world was nigh…The same labour was repeated the next day with a new set of men, but, by continual supervision and urging, we managed to get considerable work done [at the site]." Ibid., 226-7.

[153] José Luis Lorenzo, ed. Jaime Litvak King and Lorena Mirambell Silva, *La arqueología y México* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1998), 75. Lorenzo also writes that "While the liberals considered the Indian part of the nation," both factions "coincided in regarding the living Indian as nothing more than a worker, a rude, dirty and sometimes dangerous peon." Idem.

[154] Writing in a collection titled *Noticias de la Ciudad de México y sus Alrededores*, whose chapters lavished praise on dozens of Mexico City districts and monuments, the historian Manuel Orozco y Berra lauded the museum's collection of antiquities as containing "*verdaderas preciosidades dignas de mucha estima*," but remarked that "*Visto el establecimiento como solo de curiosidad, y sin atribuirle mayor importancia, pasa desapercibido en México*." Fortunately, "*En 1854 ha tenido un verdadero y científico arreglo, debido al trabajo personal y á la inteligencia de su actual conservador el Sr. D. José Fernando Ramírez*." To Orozco y Berra, who would briefly serve as director of the museum himself in the 1860s, the institution's glory days still lay ahead, under the leadership of an enlightened, "scientific" director. Manuel Orozco y Berra, "Museo," in *Noticias de la Ciudad de México y de sus Alrededores. Artículos tomados del "Diccionario Universal de Historia y de Geografia" que actualmente se publica en esta capital*. (Mexico, Tipografia de F. Escalante y Compañía, 1855), 178.

[155] One English supporter of Maximilian went so far as to claim, unconvincingly, that Indian communities regarded the Austrian archduke as a returning pre-Hispanic deity. "*There is a legend among these people which has been handed down to posterity…Since the period when the tribe called the Toltecs ruled the land…their favourite god was Quetzal…He is described as a large, fair man, with a long beard, and the Indians, who had always been longing for his return, were at length persuaded that he had come in the person of Maximilian, whose appearance exactly coincided with the description of their long-lost god.*" J. J. Kendall, *Mexico Under Maximilian* (London: T. Cautley Newby, Publisher, 1871), 254-5.

building, on the same block as the National Palace, or main government building.[156] Even after Maximilian was captured and executed by Liberal forces, the museum remained in its new location. While the institution would soon find itself cramped for space again as its collections expanded and other government agencies were given offices within the building, Maximilian's order bestowed a new importance on the National Museum. The Liberal administrations which followed would expand the institution greatly. They would also move to assert ownership over pre-Hispanic sites outside of the capital, reclaiming the prerogatives once claimed by the Spanish Crown.

VI. Conclusion

Colonial laws concerning pre-Hispanic antiquities established the predominant authority of the central state and its representatives, a principle that informed antiquarian policies long after the achievement of independence. Putting this principle into practice, however, was a challenging affair. Here, we should reflect that the "ruins" of nineteenth-century Mexico were not necessarily pre-Hispanic in origin; many were buildings of more recent construction which had been damaged in the conflicts of the independence and national era, or by simple want of attention over time.[157] Writing in the early 1840s, Fanny Calderón de la Barca provided a description of the capital in the immediate aftermath of an armed uprising:

> The palace and houses near it are certainly in a melancholy condition. The palace, with its innumerable smashed windows and battered walls, looks as if it had become stone blind in consequence of having the smallpox. Broken windows and walls full of holes characterize all the streets in that direction, yet there is less real damage done than might have been expected, after such a furious firing and cannonading. To read the accounts

[156] Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*, 121-3.

[157] Many scholars have testified to the destruction which characterized diverse parts of Mexico before the Reform, caused by war, economic upheaval, and changing social and religious policies. "The first impressions of Veracruz combined spectacle and disillusionment…Between 1822 and 1861 when the port was subject to numerous sieges and bombardments, the interior of the city contained many ruins." Daniel D. Arreola, "Nineteenth-Century Townscapes of Eastern Mexico," *Geographical Review*, vol. 72, No. 1 (January, 1982): 7. "Along with Guanajuato to the north, Michoacán suffered considerable economic destruction and social dislocation during the Wars of Independence from 1810 to 1821…Once the wars were over, Michoacán landowners faced trying times. Many found their properties in ruins…." Jennie Purnell, "With All Due Respect: Popular Resistance to the Privatization of Communal Lands," *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1999): 99. "In New Mexico, where the number of priests both secular and regular had fallen to about a dozen in 1831, Barreiro reported that abandoned churches were falling into ruins…" David J. Weber, "Failure of a Frontier Institution: The Secular Church in the Borderlands under Independent Mexico, 1821-1846," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (April, 1981): 138. "By 1840 the [California] missions were in ruins. As one Fernandino wrote, 'all is destruction, all is misery, humiliation and dispair.'" Jane M. Rausch, "Frontiers in Crisis: The Breakdown of the Missions in Far Northern Mexico and New Granada, 1821-1849," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (April, 1987): 343. "When the first party of English officers and employees reached the town [of Real del Monte, Hidalgo] in July 1825, it found almost total ruin. One of the party described Real del Monte as a place that 'once existed': 'I say *once existed* because it now has the air of a village sacked by a horde of Cossacks, or something yet more desolute [sic]…The roofs are perforated and falling in the walls crumbling down, and, in short, the whole village converted into a mass of ruins…'" Robert W. Randall, "British Company and Mexican Community: The English at Real del Monte, 1824-1849," *The Business History Review*, Vol. 59, No. 4, Business in Latin America (Winter, 1985): 633-4.

> published, and of the truth of which we had auricular demonstration, one would have expected to find half the city in ruins…As 'every bullet has its billet,' they must all have lodged somewhere…Some houses have become nearly uninhabitable – glass, pictures, clocks, plaster, all lying in morsels about the floor, and air-holes in the roofs and walls, through which these winged messengers of destruction have passed.[158]

As Calderón de la Barca's description reveals, the governments and citizens of mid-nineteenth century Mexico often faced more pressing concerns than the preservation and commemoration of pre-Hispanic sites and objects. The state's initial burst of enthusiasm was quickly tempered by political turmoil and overwhelming demands on the national treasury. Scholars and administrators throughout this period continued to devote attention to pre-Hispanic sites and objects, but their efforts were often unstructured and unsynchronized. With the return of comparative political stability during the last third of the nineteenth century, federal officials could build more enduring structures to manage the pre-Hispanic material past.

[158] Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, 262-3.

Chapter 3

Assertions of Authority

"Your death is immortal, giant wall
interposed between man and the past,
tomb whose epitaph has been erased
shadow that makes the Sun a dark sphere […]

When the earth dies and in the boneyards
the desert areas are changed to ice,
perhaps, fleeing his glacial shroud,

the last man will call at your doors…
and seeing his final throes, the dead races
will awaken, from a thousand years of dust."

-"Uxmal," Justo Sierra[1]

Renaissance cabinets of curiosity were designed to act as microcosms, small-scale representations of the world's natural and metaphysical order. The National Museum of Mexico continued this tradition of collecting and display, bringing together a wide variety of objects to symbolize the young country's past heritage, present refinement, and future economic potential. More than this, however, the condition of the institution reflected the strengths and weaknesses of Mexico's federal administrations. In 1856, shortly after the final ouster of Santa Anna and the outbreak of civil war between Liberal and Conservative factions, the interior of the museum indicated a national state in disarray. According to the English traveler and future anthropologist Edward Tylor, "The lower storey had been turned into a barrack by the Government, there being a want of quarters for the soldiers…The soldiers had laid several of the smaller idols down on their faces, and were sitting on the comfortable seat on the small of their backs, busy playing at cards. An enterprising soldier had built up a hutch with idols and sculptured stones against the statue of the great war-goddess Teoyaomiqui [Coatlicue] herself, and kept rabbits there."[2] By 1909, however, the fortunes of the Museum were very much the reverse of what they had once been. The institution was engaged in so many activities, and its collections and staff had grown so large, that it underwent a kind of mitosis. Federal officials split the Museo Nacional in two,

[1] "*Tu muerte es inmortal, gigante muro/interpuesto entre el hombre y el pasado,/tumba en que el epitafio se ha borrado,/sombra que haces del Sol un orbe oscuro/…Cuando la tierra muera y en osario/trueque el hielo las zonas ya desiertas,/quizá esquivando su glacial sudario/el último hombre llamará a tus puertas…/y a verlo agonizar, del milenario/polvo, despertarán las razas muertas.*" Sierra wrote this poem in 1872. Justo Sierra, "Uxmal," reprinted in *Un pasado visible: Antología de poemas sobre vestigios del México antiguo*, edited by Gustavo Jiménez Aguirre, with photographs by Javier Hinojosa (Mexico City: Artes de México, 2004), 20.

[2] Edward B. Tylor, *Anahuac: or, Mexico and the Mexicans, Ancient and Modern* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861), 222.

moving the natural history collections to a separate building and creating the more specialized Museo Nacional de Historia Natural and Museo Nacional de Antropología, Historia e Etnología. A 1910 account of the latter establishment described it as having "a wonderfully wide scope, and a most brilliant future…[it] is generally the first place sought out by the thousands of tourists who pour into the country each year. And it is well worth a visit, for it offers certain things which no other museum in the world could offer to the eyes of the curious."[3] Over half a century, a jumbled and chaotic space had become a symbol of national order and progress.

A similar if less complete story of transformation can be told about Mexico's pre-Hispanic sites. Mid-century visitors to Mexican ruins stressed the apparent abandonment of the structures that they observed, describing buildings covered in vegetation and and unappreciated by local residents. Despite laws forbidding the export of antiquities and allowing the Museo Nacional to claim exceptional artifacts, few official impediments stood in the way of excavations or the removal of pre-Hispanic objects. This was especially true in the southern reaches of the country, where the antiquarian strictures of the federal government held little sway.[4] Recounting an 1854 visit to the Oaxacan site of Mitla, for example, the Prussian traveller Gustavus Ferdinand von Tempsky wrote that "The inside of these buildings had been plundered, long ago, of all interesting ornaments, such as idols, &c., and there remained but the naked inner walls of round stones. The soil of the inner court-yard…had been turned, at various times, by treasure-hunting governments, officials, and private individuals."[5] Von Tempsky portrayed the site as essentially abandoned, except for the "swarm of pretty little Indian girls…all offering little idols of clay or sandstone for sale," who "flew about, fawnlike, from room to room, laughing, joking, and playing the happy games of childhood, over the graves of the glories of their forefathers."[6] Although impressive buildings still remained at Mitla, the federal government was unable or unwilling to make arrangements for their investigation or preservation.

This state of affairs would change considerably by the end of the nineteenth century, as Mexico's federal government placed caretakers at a number of major sites, enacted laws to strengthen and centralize its control over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past, assigned large sums of money to archaeological exploration, preservation, and publication, and created or expanded national archaeological institutions. Thus, when the English writer Ethel Tweedie visited Mitla in the early 1900s, she found the site humming with the work of excavation and repair. The U.S. archaeologist Marshall Saville "was completing his researches at Mitla," while federal Inspector of Monuments Leopoldo Batres was "employed at Mitla restoring parts of the temples, where walls had fallen down with age or been cracked by earthquakes." Tweedie noted

[3] George Vest Guyer, "The National Museum of Mexico," *Bulletin of the International Union of the American Republics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (February, 1910): 247.

[4] In an extreme example of these centrifugal tendencies, the state of Yucatán declared its independence in 1841, and existed as an independent republic until 1848. Federal authority was also extremely tenuous in the northern regions of Mexico, as demonstrated by the Texas revolt of 1835-36 and the territorial losses that Mexico suffered during its 1846-48 war with the United States. However, the pre-Hispanic ruins in these areas, which were less monumental and more difficult to visit than those of southern Mexico, did not receive substantial public attention until the late nineteenth century.

[5] Gustavus Ferdinand von Tempsky, ed. J. S. Bell, *Mitla. A Narrative of Incidents and Personal Adventures on a Journey in Mexico, Guatemala, and Salvador, in the Years 1853 to 1855, With Observations on the Modes of Life in Those Countries* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts: 1858), 252.

[6] Ibid., 254-5.

the kind attentions offered to her by government officials, noting that the governor of Oaxaca had arranged for a prominent local intellectual and archaeological collector to serve as a guide to the site.[7] While she wrote that "terrible desecration has gone on in the past few years, owing to tourists and others" and chided that "Mexico ought to guard her ancient ruins as her proudest possessions; they are unique, and not a stone of such a history should be destroyed by the hands of modern man," she also emphasized the strides being made "under the able guidance of President Diaz," and the active, if belated, steps that the federal government was taking to define, claim, and defend the nation's cultural patrimony.[8] In contrast to von Tempsky, whose visit to Mitla led him to muse on the incipient extinction of "the red race of America," Tweedie gazed on the site and fancied that she saw the past restored to life.[9]

The accounts of foreign visitors tend to document what a traveler is already predisposed to see, and what foreign audiences expect to read. Von Tempsky and Tweedie both repackaged the conventional wisdom of contemporary elites, leading the former to take a dim view of Mexico's government and people, and the latter to overstate the strength and permanence of the regime which governed Mexico at the turn of the twentieth century. As we will see in the chapters which follow, the control which the pre-Revolutionary state exercised over the material remains of the past was always contingent and fragile. Federal authority often faltered in the face of cultural and economic pressures, resistance from individuals and communities, and fissures within the government itself. I argue that the difficulties of federal archaeological management during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century are indicative of larger contradictions within the Mexican state, gaps between means and ends that ultimately proved unsustainable. I also argue, however, that the many struggles and setbacks of federal archaeological institutions should not lead us to discount the overall trend towards greater state control over the material past. Significant strides in federal archaeological management took place during the decades preceding the 1910 Revolution, as national administrators established legal and institutional frameworks whose basic elements endure to this day. Such changes signified genuine realignments in the practice of Mexican government, shifts too substantial to be reversed even by years of instability and violence.

This chapter will examine the complexities of federal power in pre-Revolutionary Mexico through the lens of archaeological policy. During the late nineteenth century, federal officials claimed unprecedented authority over pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts. The mechanisms

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[7] Ethel Tweedie, *Mexico as I Saw It* (London, Edinburgh, and New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1911), 398.

[8] Tweedie, *Mexico as I Saw It*, 400-1.

[9] Von Tempsky wrote, "*Unhappy, ill-fated America! how all thy children seem to have been doomed to fall from one depth of darkness into another, until they are now disappearing fast from the face of the earth! They first built altars to their own bloody gods, and afterwards were dragged before a still bloodier tribunal the white man had brought from the East; from which he, in mockery of a God of love, blessed them with blood-red hands! And now, the powerful vices of Europe, with which only a well-trained mind has any chance of a successful struggle, are raging amongst these helpless creatures. The name of the red race of America will ere long have become a myth*." Von Tempsky, *Mitla*, 254-5. Like Von Tempsky, Tweedie was fascinated by the gory reputation of pre-Hispanic religions, but juxtaposed such practices with the present day rather than situating them at the beginning of a long narrative of decline. "*In that solitude of those ruined temples and places in that silent valley, we seemed to see the triumphal dance of the Indians as they capered around the wretched prisoners of war, always offered up in sacrifice. We could picture their feathered heads and jewels, their breast-plates of gold, and weapons of war...Yes, we seemed to see it all in the moonlight. We could almost hear the cry of the victims whose blood was poured out on that central stone…We could picture that feast of human flesh…*" Tweedie, *Mexico as I Saw It*, 409-10.

that they used to assert, expand, and consolidate that authority reveal much about their assumptions and priorities, as well as the constraints which limited the federal government's ability to intervene on the local level. This chapter and those that follow will place particular emphasis on the implementation of federal control over sites containing pre-Hispanic ruins, a process which vividly illustrated the capabilities and failings of Mexico's national government. While the Museo Nacional was literally a stone's throw away from the seat of federal power, nestled within the same block-sized complex which housed the National Palace, Mexico's major pre-Hispanic sites were far less subject to state scrutiny. Strategies to exert control over these spaces, which were often located in rural areas distant from the capital, therefore provide more widely applicable insights into the nature and scope of federal power.

The vast bulk of the aforementioned changes to federal archaeological policy took place after 1885, under the authoritarian regime of the Liberal general Porfirio Díaz. During the three and a half decades of Díaz's rule, a period commonly known as the *Porfiriato*, Mexico's national leadership implemented a number of projects to promote economic development, subject provincial regions to federal control, modernize the nation's infrastructure, reform the manners and morals of the lower classes, cultivate science and the arts, and raise Mexico's stature in the eyes of the world. Such policies were influenced by both European philosophies of positivism and by the arguments of homegrown intellectuals, who advocated "the strengthening of central authority" as a means of forestalling chaos.[10] As studies by Katherine Bliss, Mark Overmyer-Velázquez, Claudia Agostoni, Paul Vanderwood, and Pablo Piccato have demonstrated, Porfirian attempts to impose order on an unruly social and political landscape applied to diverse places, processes, and people.[11] Consistent patterns of governance can be observed in state efforts to regulate sanitation and hygiene, sexual behavior, the construction and display of historical monuments, displays of religious devotion, and urban crime. The management of pre-Hispanic sites and ruins, therefore, was only a single front in these broader campaigns of national transformation.

The reforming visions of Porfirian planners blurred readily into the endorsement or acceptance of violence, corruption and despotism. Under the Díaz government, peasant farmers gradually lost access to land and natural resources, legal decisions favored the wealthy and well-connected, administration officials cut themselves sweetheart deals with business interests,

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[10] Charles A. Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 218. Hale writes that the intellectual and educational reformer Justo Sierra, who directed the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes during the last years of the Porfiriato, "explicitly tied the increase in individual activity to the development and greater precision of 'the sphere of social action, whose primary representative is the state'…these statements were embedded in *La Libertad*'s main argument, namely that authority must be strengthened to overcome anarchy and to ensure economic progress." Idem. As we will see later, however, Sierra's interest in state authority was more instrumental than absolute. In an 1880 debate over the export of antiquities, Sierra argued that tight restrictions on exportation were counterproductive, because they deprived the nation of the knowledge that might be gained by foreign researchers. From Sierra's perspective, the operations of foreign investigators promised to bring order and enlightenment, rather than dispossession and anarchy.

[11] See Katherine Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); Mark Overmyer-Velázquez, *Visions of the Emerald City: Modernity, Tradition and the Formation of Porfirian Oaxaca, Mexico* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006); Claudia Agostoni, *Monuments of Progress: Modernization and Public Health in Mexico City, 1876-1910* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2003); Paul Vanderwood, *The Power of God Against the Guns of Government: Religious Upheaval in Mexico at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), and Pablo Piccato, *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900-1911* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001).

journalists and critics of the regime were harassed or jailed, the indigenous Yaqui people of Sonora were deported and enslaved, and elections became little more than polite fictions. These aspects of Porfirian governance became especially prominent from the mid-1890s onward, as "Díaz's personal dictatorship was not only established, but was clearly seen to be established" and "democratic hopes" gave way before "the primacy of material progress and the need to match political reforms to the level of economic development."[12] The vaunted stability of the Díaz regime was a thin crust, stretched over a molten interior. Authoritarian tendencies can also be seen in the history of Porfirian archaeology. Although little outright violence occurred, injustice and offical callousness were recurring features in federal efforts to gain control over Mexico's pre-Hispanic sites. As in many other areas, the goals and methods of Porfirian administrators often ran at cross-purposes to the values and desires of ordinary Mexican citizens.

If the actions of Porfirian officialdom did not synchronize with the will of the majority, this was partly because foreign as well as domestic factors were in play. Mexico had spent much of the nineteenth century as the object of both formal and informal imperialism, buffeted by repeated interventions, invasions, and land grabs. Porfirio Díaz, who first gained prominence in the struggle against the French Intervention and Second Empire, was keenly aware of international perceptions and managed them shrewdly.[13] When Díaz assumed power, one of his primary goals was to smooth out relations with the major powers of the North Atlantic, and secure foreign investment in Mexico's shaky economy. The Díaz administration eventually succeeded at both aims, raising the country's international profile and greatly increasing the foreign business presence in Mexico.[14] Besides issues of politics and economics, Porfirian engagements with the international community also contained major cultural components. Mexican elites, often employed by or affiliated with the federal government, produced and

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[12] Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Vol. I: Porfirians, Liberals, and Peasants* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 21. First published in 1986 by Cambridge University Press.

[13] It is notable that in the 1860s, some of Maximilian's most fervent foreign supporters had strong words of praise for the Liberal general Porfirio Díaz, then in his late thirties. The Prussian prince Felix Salm-Salm, for instance, wrote that "*The general is a good patriot, but by no means a follower of Juárez…He has in his state a large party, and had not his noble character and patriotism checked his ambition, he might have made himself president by force of arms…I tried to lead the conversation to Juárez, and said how far better it would have been for Mexico if he, the general, were its president. The general, however, was very cautious and reserved, and answered only with a smile. The colonel and other officers with whom I spoke later were not so reserved, and spoke loudly about their love for Porfirio Díaz, and that they wished him to be president…I really believed then that Porfirio Díaz had the intention of making himself master of Mexico, which, however, has not proved true*." Felix Salm-Salm, *My Diary in Mexico in 1867, Including the Last Days of the Emperor Maximilian; With Leaves from the Diary of the Princess Salm-Salm, Etc., Vol. II* (London: Richard Bentley, 1868), 162-5. The British soldier J. F. Elton similarly wrote that "*There was one notable exception amongst the ranks of the dissident party – Porfirio Diaz, one of the best leaders of the Juarez side, and a man who showed an example of humanity and justice to his colleagues… we heard that, acting with a true soldier-like spirit, he had erected a monument over the bodies of those who had fallen fighting against him, -publishing, at the same time, an order, in which he put forth the principle that both French and Austrian soldiers only performed their duty in opposing his cause, and that it was an action unworthy of those who professed to support 'Liberty,' to dishonour her name by violent reprisals, the shooting of prisoners, or failing in respect to the remains of those killed on the scene of action. Had the Liberal party been fortunate enough to have had many leaders like Porfirio Diaz, there can be little doubt that their cause would have prospered…*" J. F. Elton, *With the French in Mexico* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1867), 185-6.

[14] Mark Wasserman, *Capitalists, Caciques and Revolution: The Native Elite and Foreign Enterprise in Chihuahua, Mexico, 1854-1911*. (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 74.

synthesized representations of their homeland as a place of peace, science, and progress.[15] These works of Porfirian self-description are perhaps best known through the displays created for international expositions. Discussing the "Aztec Palace" constructed for the 1889 Paris World's Fair, Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo writes that "In the 1880s…an anthropological focus had been laboriously developed to account for the past, present and future of Mexico in a scientific fashion…Mexico's past thereby obtained a distinctively Mexican coherence and logic, but with a modern, progressive and evolutionist structure that was easily recognized and understood by modern European standards."[16] The revitalization of the National Museum and the preservation or restoration of pre-Hispanic monuments served similar functions. Such efforts simultaneously affirmed the worth of Mexico's cultural history, and staked a claim to full membership in the community of "civilized" nations.

The significance of antiquities can be seen in an account composed by the Wisconsin doctor and state senator John A. Rice, who visited Mexico in 1879 as part of a group of Midwestern businessmen and notables invited by the Díaz government in order to promote investment and mutual understanding. Rice was dazzled by the hospitality heaped upon him and his fellows, and wrote warmly of the "courtesy" and "constant attention" he received from generals and "men occupying high positions in the Mexican government." Among the many positive impressions that he received of Mexico, he declared that its antiquities were "as wonderful as any to be found, and to the archaeologist it will always be as interesting as any portion of the globe…her pyramids will compare in size and number with those of Egypt…you cannot lift a spadeful of earth anywhere in the valley of Mexico without throwing up some relic of ancient civilization."[17] To the Protestant Rice, the monuments of Teotihuacán, Cholula, and Xochicalco were testaments to the intrinsic merits of a culture that had long labored under the burden of Iberian Catholic institutions.

Porfirian archaeological administrators knew, however, that dealings with the international community involved risks as well as benefits. As we have already seen, post-independence legislation on antiquities emphasized above all else that artifacts must remain within the national borders. Foreign visitors generally had little knowledge of these laws, however, and removed objects with ease and virtual impunity. Rice himself provides an example of the challenges facing federal authorities. The Wisconsinite took advantage of his trip to Teotihuacán to conduct excavations, discovering "in a distance of twelve feet, four *distinct* and *perfect* cement floors…the ground was literally filled with fragments of pottery, stone and obsidian implements."[18] Officials at the Ministry of Justice and Public Instruction were not

[15] "In addition to being historians, museum directors, and archeologists, many of Díaz's cultural and scientific promoters (Peñafiel, Chavero, del Paso y Troncoso) were also surgeons, lawyers and military men. Some were also members of the Statistical and Geographical Mexican society, in charge of developing maps, population and linguistic censuses." Ann de León, "Archeology, Monuments, and Writing the Mexican Nation: Antonio Peñafiel and the 'Aztec' Palimpsest," *The Colorado Review of Hispanic Studies*, Vol. 6 (Fall, 2008): 39.

[16] Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 95.

[17] John A. Rice, "Mexico. The Great West of the Near Future [Address delivered in the Senate Chamber at the Capitol, at Madison, Wis.]," *Transactions of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, Including Proceedings of the State Agricultural Convention, Held in February, 1879, and Practical and Useful Papers*, Vol. 17 (1878-1879): 365 and 367-8.

pleased when they learned of Rice's digging, which specifically contravened an order given to authorities at Teotihuacán the previous year.[19] One of the chief objectives of Porfirian archaeological management, then, was to prevent foreign attention to Mexican antiquities from descending into sheer plunder. Even when artifacts remained within the country, other dangers remained. Foreigners might damage buildings or sculptures in the course of their investigations, assume a proprietary role over sites, or represent the pre-Hispanic past in ways unflattering to the modern nation. Federal administrators therefore walked a careful line, proudly displaying their archaeological treasures to the world while fearing that the world might snatch those treasures away. The development and elaboration of a formal archaeological bureaucracy owed a great deal to such tensions.

I. Pressures and Precedents

Over the roughly two decades following the restoration of republican rule, Mexico's federal government faced increasing pressure to devote official attention and resources to the management of pre-Hispanic sites and objects. Sometimes this pressure came directly from local communities. For example, in 1868 the town council of Santiago Tulyehualco informed the Museo Nacional of a nearby pre-Hispanic site containing "objects and cadavers," buried beneath a lava flow from a now-extinct volcano. The site was originally discovered in 1857, during repair works necessitated by the collapse of an ancient causeway that had also served as a dike against the waters of Lakes Chalco and Xochimilco. Although "the objects worked in clay that were removed" from the site "provided indications that when the town succumbed, it took with it secrets that could advance our industry," political disturbances and a lack of funds had put both repairs and archaeological investigations on hold. According to the Tulyehualco councilmembers, "The no-good, cursed Plan of Tacubaya [a Conservative reaction against the Liberal Constitution of 1857], whose final consequences came to pass on the Hill of the Bells [where Maximilian von Habsburg was executed along with two of his top generals], prevented the scrutiny of the buried town," but now that "the revolutions have ended forever, and a government has been established whose enlightenment and patriotism represent the security of the country," the ruins could once more be examined. The council was eager to have these investigations carried out, "for the service that will be provided to the sciences," and "secondarily" so that work could finally be completed on the causeway.[20]

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[18] Rice, "Mexico," 368. Upon his return to Wisconsin, Rice presented the State Historical Society of Wisconsin with a "*Variety of antiquities of burnt and dried clay, ornamental pieces, pottery, obsidian knives, two stone arrow heads, one stone weapon with handle, used for defense; specimens of wheat, coffee, and dried fruit, from Mexico…also…a plaster cast, reduced, of the celebrated 'Mexican Calendar Stone.'*" "Additions to the Cabinet," in *Report and Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, For the Years 1880, 1881, and 1882*, Vol. 9 (Madison: David Atwood, 1882), 19.

[19] AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 42.

[20] "*Destruido en su totalidad la calzada conocida con el nombre de Tlahuac que fué el dique principal que los antiguos Aztecas hicieron para guarecer á la ciudad de Méjico de las inundaciones, nos encontramos por mucho tiempo incomunicados con Méjico y los demas pueblos que quedan al norte de los lagos de Chalco y Xochimilco; esta necesidad nos obligó á buscar los medios de repararla… al verificar esta reposicion el año de 1857 hemos quedado sorprendido al haber encontrado un pueblo, de que no tenia ní razon, sepultado bajo las ruinas del volcan que hoy esta apagado y se conoce con el nombre de Tierra blanca. La actualidad en que se hallaban los cadaveres*

Museo Nacional director Ramón Alcaraz urged Instrucción Pública officials to forbid all local "explorations or excavations" at Tulyehualco, and to "name a commission that will inform the Government of the importance that should be given to the discovery…and the class of works that should be carried out in case the discovery is important." Alcaraz stressed that it was particularly important to publicize these orders in a way that left no doubt that the site had come to the Ministry's attention, in order to prevent residents of the capital, "especially foreigners," from looting the site. The museum director believed that he had the best claim to any valuable artifacts, based on the 1831 law establishing the Museo Nacional which decreed that "all classes of antiquities discovered in the Republic belong to this institution."[21] This request was carried out. A presidential decree ordered the governor of the state of México to take all measures necessary to prevent private individuals from exploring the site, as according to current law "all the antiquities found throughout Republic" belonged to the federal government, which was responsible "where possible for conserving them in the National Museum."[22] Somewhat later, a duly named commission visited the site, eventually producing a report which Instrucción Pública presented to Congress as part of a memorandum detailing the Ministry's recent activities.[23] However, Instrucción Pública officials did not take any further action concerning the Tulyehualco finds. In the 1860s, the national government had neither the resources nor the

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los objetos que se encontraban en las casas llamaron la atencion del Gobierno, á quien dimos parte, y mandó cientificos á quienes dimos noticias al hacer el reconocimiento porque á la verdad las obras ejecutadas en barro, que sacaron daban indicio que ese pueblo al sucumbir se llevó secretos que harian adelantar nuestra industria. El nunca bien maldito plan de Tacubaya cuya consecuencia vinieron á finalizar en el cerro de las Campanas impidieron el escudriñar el pueblo de que he hecho mencion. = Comprendiendo que acabaron para siempre las revoluciones y que esta establecido un Gobierno cuya ilustracion y patriotismo son la garantia del pais el Ayuntamiento de esta Municipalidad , en sesion de hoy, acordó se dirija á U. esta relacion para que por su conducto llegue al conocimiento de quien corresponda á fin de hacer el descubrimiento de objetos q.e pueden muy bien enriquecer el Museo Nacional. No dudando de la eficacia de U. me anticipo á darle á nombre del Cuerpo Municipal las mas espresivas gracias por el servicio que preste á las ciencias y á estos aun que secundaria porque al hacer el descubrimiento de la poblacion acabará la reposicion de la calzada que no pudo tener efecto porque los recursos que se le ministraron no fueron suficientes de lo cual hará desaparecer el dique de mas arriba que tantas males esta causando." Letter from the Ayuntamiento de Tulyehualco to Ramón Alcaraz, copied in letter from Alcaraz to SJIP, August 29, 1868. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 42, fs. 1-2.

[21] "*…en mi concepto la primera providencia que debe dictarse es impedir que se hagan exploraciones y excavaciones ya sea por mandato de autoridad alguna local ó por particulares mientras el Gobierno general no nombre una comision que le informe de la importancia que debe darse al descubrimiento á que se refiere el Ayuntamiento de Tulyahualco y la clase de trabajos que deban emprenderse en el caso de que ese descubrimiento sería importante. Es tanto mas urgente dictar esta providencia cuanto que sé á no dudarlo y entiendo que ha llegado tambien á conocimiento de ese Ministerio, que en esta Capital se disponen algunos particulares, especialmente extrangeros, á marchar á aquel punto á emprender excavaciones para apropiarse los objetos que allí encuentren. La ley de 21 de Nov. de 1831 que organizó el Museo Nacional declaró que pertenecian á este Establecimiento todos los objetos de antigüedades que se descubriesen en la República; por consiguiente al Gobierno federal corresponde dictar todas las medidas que tengan relacion con el descubrimiento y recoleccion de esa clase de objetos.…*" Letter from Ramón Alcaraz to SJIP, August 29, 1868. Ibid., fs. 2-3.

[22] "Resolución acerca de que ningún individuo particular puede efectuar exploraciones en la república." Letter from Secretario de Justicia e Instrucción Pública Ignacio Mariscal to the Governor of México State, August 28, 1868. Reprinted in *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, ed. Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 235. As this letter was sent one day before Alcaraz's letter to SJIP, it is possible that the museum director informed his superiors verbally about the find at Tulyehualco.

[23] Note signed by Ignacio Mariscal at SJIP, December 15, 1868. Ibid., f. 19.

institutional frameworks to carry out sustained efforts of archaeological exploration and preservation. The ad-hoc nature of the commission, which had to be specially named and which did not contain a single archaeological professional, indicates that the investigation of pre-Hispanic sites fell outside the routine scope of federal activity.[24]

Discoveries made in the course of construction and development projects also generated pressure for federal involvement in archaeological affairs. The restoration of republican rule accelerated the creation of new buildings and modern urban infrastructure, leading to the accidental discovery of buried artifacts. Drainage and gas works in the perpetually sinking Mexico City, built atop the Aztec cities of Tenochtitlán and Tlatelolco, proved particularly productive in this regard. In 1873, for instance, gas company employees found "an idol and two pots (*ollas*)" in Puente del Carmen Street, objects which were passed along a bureaucratic chain to the Museo Nacional.[25] Alcaraz determined that the latter objects were genuine "utensils of the Aztecs," but that the so-called idol, a figure in the shape of a dog's head, had once served as a spout on a post-Conquest fountain. He therefore returned the latter artifact to Instrucción Pública, an indication of the disparate treatment applied to objects from the colonial period and to those pre-dating the arrival of the Spanish.[26] A few months later, gas company workers digging in the cemetery of the Metropolitan Cathedral uncovered a "monolith…which could be a historical monument important enough to merit conservation." Again, Instrucción Pública officials offered to donate the find to the museum's collections.[27] In the absence of a formal system for evaluating discoveries, cultural authorities had to deal with each case on an impromptu basis.

Instrucción Pública officials faced additional pressure from the directors of the Museo Nacional, who were frustrated by the limited resources available to the institution and its

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[24] The commission members were "*Joaquin Arriaga, Topografo (Recolector de la parte científica de la Revista);Ant.o Peñafiel, Preparador de Zoologia del Museo Nacional.Entusiasta en el ramo; Jesus Sanchez, Ayudante del anterior, entusiasta también – Médico de prof.n; Manuel Villada, Preparador de Zoologia en la Escuela de Agricultura.*" Private letter from Antonio del Castillo to Ignacio Mariscal at SJIP, August 29, 1868. Ibid., f. 4. Peñafiel later became an important figure in the world of Porfirian scholarship, earning distinction in a number of different fields, while Sánchez would later serve as director of the Museo Nacional. The commission was also joined by Enrique Chávarri, Kane O'Donnel [sic], and Roberto B. Gorsuch, private citizens who paid their own expenses. SJIP memos, October 10 and October 13, 1868. Ibid., fs. 10 and 12.

[25] "*Tengo el honor de acompañar á U. un ídolo y dos ollas que fueron encontrados por los operarios de la empresa de gas hidrógeno al poner unos tubos en la Calle del Puente del Cármen, cuyos objetos han sido remitidos á este Gobierno por el Señor Bárron, á la primera indicacion, con el objeto de que figuren en el Museo Nacional, conforme á las prescripciones del Código.*" Letter from J. Montiel, Gobierno del Distrito Federal, to SJIP, June 13, 1873. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 44, f. 1.

[26] "*…dos ollas, q.e por el barro, barniz y de mas caracteres se pueden considerar como utensilios de los aztecas y una cabeza de perro en piedra la cual evidentemente no tiene las caracteres de antigüedad azteca, puesto q.e los antiguos mexicanos no conocieron la raza q.e en ella se figura y aun podria asegurarse por los taladros q.e tiene q.e sirvió de adorno y como surtidor de alguno fuente hecha despues de la conquista de Mexico…*" Letter from Alcaraz to SJIP, June 26, 1873. Ibid., f. 4.

[27] "*La Empresa de gaz ha descubierto en una de las esquinas del cementario de la Catedral, un monolito… Como este sea un monumento histórico que debe ser concervado por su importancia, he de merecer á U. se sirva decirme en respuesta si dicho monólito ha de ser recojido por ese Ministerio ó si este Gobierno puede exigir á la Empresa referida que lo mande quitar del lugar en que se halla abandonado para que no siga destruyéndose.*" Letter from the Gobernador del Distrito Federal to the Secretaría de Fomento, July 29, 1873, quoted in letter from Fomento to SJIP, July 30, 1873. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 43, f. 1. The monolith was offered to Alcaraz in an August 1, 1873 letter from J. Díaz Covarrubías at SJIP. Ibid., f. 2.

archaeological pursuits. Museum directors complained that they could not properly represent Mexico's past, leaving the country's image tarnished in the eyes of citizens and foreign visitors. The attention of foreigners in particular became an important bargaining chip in intra-governmental negotiations. When attempting to coax additional funds or favors from their superiors at Instrucción Pública, directors of the Museo Nacional frequently underscored the importance of antiquities in shaping Mexico's international reputation. The Museum director Gumesindo Mendoza, engaged in a literal turf struggle with the other government agencies, argued in 1879 that unless the Museo could take back the space then occupied by the tax and telegraph offices, "the Antiquities Section cannot be opened to the public. This section is preferred by visitors, above all foreigners wish to come, and as you know Citizen Minister, that the state of the Nation's progress is judged from this type of establishment."[28] Six years later, another director still fighting the same battles complained that "it is truly shameful that the National Museum of Mexico, one of the organizations that should serve as an example by which to judge the progress of the country, has been unable to open the Anthropology Sections for want of space, although these have existed for some time in the establishments of countries considered more backwards than our own."[29] In their struggle to advance institutional interests, Museum administrators believed they had found a potent weapon in the specter of foreign disdain. Although their rhetorical efforts often failed in light of the very real constraints under which the federal government operated, they laid the groundwork for the museum's expansion during the more prosperous years of the later Porfiriato.

A number of factors, then, converged in the decades after the fall of the Second Empire to encourage federal officials to devote greater attention to archaeological issues. Perhaps the most significant development, however, was the growing interest in pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts on the part of both Mexicans and foreigners. The establishment of political stability in Mexico coincided with the expansion of archaeology worldwide, providing both opportunity and motive for sustained investigation of the Mesoamerican past. As finds such as those of Heinrich Schliemann at Troy attracted significant public attention, scholars and amateur enthusiasts found themselves wondering what similar revelations might lie beneath Mexico's soil. Although the incipient markers of disciplinary professionalization were already present, in the form of a few scattered university posts and an expanding body of specialist literature, the field's boundaries were still porous enough that the self-financed and self-taught could hope to make important contributions and win distinguished reputations. Consequently, a wide range of people conducted archaeological explorations and excavations in Mexico during the 1870s and early 1880s. Few of these individuals possessed formal training in the study of the material past, although they might be affiliated with scientific societies or institutions. They carried out their studies largely as they

[28] "*Repetidas veces se hizo presente al Supremo Gobierno la necesidad imperiosa que habia para que se devolverse á este Establecimiento tanto el local q.e ocupa la oficina de Contribuciones, como el que tenia el Telégrafo de Veracruz puesto que de no ser así, no podria abrirse al público la Seccion de Antigüedades que es á la que de preferencia, sobre todo los extrangeros desean visitar y como ud sabe C. Ministro, que por esta clase de Establecimientos se juzga del estado de progreso de la Nacion, es verdaderamente sensible que despues de tantos años no haya podido establecerse.*" Letter from Gumesindo Mendoza to SJIP, December 26, 1879. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 21, f. 4.

[29] "*…verdaderamente es ya vergonzoso que el Museo Nacional de Mexico, uno de los planteles que debe servir como de tipo para juzgar del adelanto del pais, por falta del mismo local no haya podido aun iniciar las Secciones de Antropologia que en establecimientos de paises que se juzgan mas atrasados que el nuestro, hace tiempo se han formado*…" Letter from Jesús Sánchez to SJIP, September 17, 1885. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 48, f. 2.

saw fit, following idiosyncratic research agendas which might or might not align with the priorities of federal administrators.

Some investigations presented few difficulties, such as those carried out by unnamed parties at the Oaxacan site of Mitla in 1879. According to the Mexico City newspaper *El Monitor Republicano,* these digs produced "the head of a tiger, four times natural size, done in red clay and with such perfection of details, lines, protuberances, curves, and with such an expression of vigorous and savage life that one cannot do less than confess that the author who created such an archaeological jewel, was truly a man of genius." The former general Francisco Meijueiro, a wealthy state powerbroker described by Patrick J. McNamara as a "trusted ally" of Porfirio Díaz, had the artifact transported in a litter to the city of Oaxaca. Meijueiro then presented the clay head as a gift to the statesman and polymath scholar Alfredo Chavero, "in whose house [a reporter] had the pleasure of admiring it."[30] The newspaper article concluded by congratulating Chavero on "the acquisition of such a clear token of the artistic culture of the prehistoric races of Mexico," without a trace of indignation towards this private appropriation of national patrimony.[31] The high status of Meijueiro and Chavero, and the fact that the valuable artifact remained securely within Mexico's national borders, meant the excavations at Mitla set off no bells of alarm. The excavations practiced in 1881 by the *Chicago Times* correspondent S. B. Evans met with similar approval from federal officials. In a letter seeking "permission to excavate…[and] the favorable consideration and protection of the local authorities, police and inhabitants of the States in which I may operate," Evans told the director of the Museo Nacional that "being aware that a law of the Republic exists prohibiting the removal of such objects from the country I desire to assure you that I have no such design, but agree to deliver to you all such objects that I may discover. My purpose is not for such gain but in the interest of science and to add to the general knowledge on the subject of American history as can be gleaned from the antiquities of the continent."[32] By conceding from the outset that he would leave all excavated material in Mexico, Evans preempted the fears of cultural authorities and obtained the permissions and protection that he sought.

Other investigators lacked the political connections of Meijueiro, or the scrupulousness of Evans. As they pursued their own interests, they ignored or flouted the national government's claims to authority over the material past. These casually possessive attitudes towards pre-Hispanic sites and objects drew the censure of newspaper writers and government authorities, who stressed the importance of archaeological objects to science and the nation. While it is likely

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[30] Patrick J. McNamara, *Sons of the Sierra: Juárez, Díaz, and the People of Ixtlán, Oaxaca, 1855-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 96.

[31] "*Haciendo unas excavaciones en las famosas ruinas de Mitla, se encontró un trabajo exquisito de cerámica…Representa el admirable trabajo de que hablamos una cabeza de tigre, cuatro veces más grande que el natural, hecha con barro rojo y con tal perfeccion de detalles, líneas, prominencias, curvas, y tal expresion de vida vigorosa y salvaje que no se puede ménos de confesar que el artífice á quien se debe tal joya arqueológica, era un verdadero hombre de génio…Lo trajo en litera de Oaxaca el Sr. general Meijueiro, y se la regaló al Sr. Lic. Alfredo Chavero en cuya casa tuvimos el gusto de admirarla por largo espacio de tiempo…Felicitamos al Sr. Chavero por la adquisicion de tan palmario testimonio de la cultura artística de las razas prehistóricas de México.*" "Ocelotl," *El Monitor Republicano*, April 22, 1879. Reproduced in Sonia Lombardo de Ruiz, *El Pasado Prehispánico en la cultura nacional (Memoria hemerográfica, 1877-1911)*, Vol. 1, *El Monitor Republicano* (1877-1896) (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1994), 63-4.

[32] Letter from S. B. Evans to the Director of the Museo Nacional, May 7, 1881. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 33, f. 3.

that many excavations occurred without attracting official notice, enough did so that Instrucción Pública officials were regularly confronted with the question of how to regulate uses of pre-Hispanic sites and objects. In their attempts to reign in freewheeling excavators, federal officials established precedents and clarified principles that would do much to structure the later archaeological bureaucracy. We shall now examine two of these cases in greater detail.

The Explosive Statements of Augustus Le Plongeon

Of the various figures who provoked the Mexican government during the 1870s and early 1880s, perhaps the most colorful were Augustus and Alice Le Plongeon. Augustus hailed from the island of Jersey, but left Europe as a young man to travel and work in South America and the United States. In the course of his journeys, he eventually came to identify himself as a medical doctor and as a U.S. citizen. In 1873 the middle-aged Augustus married the Englishwoman Alice Dixon, his junior by a quarter-century.[33] Soon afterwards, the newlyweds set off to explore the Maya ruins of the Yucatán Peninsula, where they made plaster molds of building facades and sculptural details, and took impressive photographs of architectural features which have since been lost or degraded.[34] These researches were conducted with the permission of the Yucatecan state government, and the Le Plongeons sometimes received military protection when working in areas where there was a risk of encountering rebel Maya forces.[35] One of these dangerous locations was the site of Chichén Itzá. There, Augustus made a find which would set him on a collision course with the Mexican state.

Unfortunately for his scholarly reputation and future career prospects, Augustus had come to believe that he could decipher pictorial aspects of ancient Maya paintings and inscriptions with great specificity and accuracy. Le Plongeon's confidence in his own abilities was solidified by the 1875 discovery of a large statue, to which he was fortuitously led by his

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[33] Lawrence Gustave Desmond and Phyllis Mauch Messenger, *A Dream of Maya: Augustus and Alice Le Plongeon in Nineteenth-Century Yucatan* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 2-13. In an 1880 letter to Instrucción Pública, Augustus wrote that he was "*ciudadano de los Estados Unidos de America, Doctor en Medicina, miembro de la academia de ciencias del Estado de California, miembro de la Sociedad microscopica de San Francisco de California. Miembro de la Sociedad filologica de Nueva York. Miembro de la Sociedad Americana de Anticuarios de Worcester. Massachusett* [sic]. *Miembro correspondas de la Sociedad de Geografia y Estadistica de Mexico & & & &*." Letter from Augustus Le Plongeon to SJIP, September 28, 1880. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 28, f. 1.

[34] Lawrence G. Desmond, "Of Facts and Hearsay: Bringing Augustus Le Plongeon into Focus," in *Tracing Archaeology's Past: The Historiography of Archaeology*, ed. Andrew L. Christenson, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 144-5.

[35] Desmond and Messenger, *A Dream of Maya*, 26. In a 1901 inspection of the site of Chichén Itzá, the Yucatecan Inspector of Archaeological Monuments Santiago Bolio also wrote that "*Es verdad que en algunos Edificios existen en sus paredes interiores y exteriores algunas desperfectos, pero esto fue ocasionado por las escavaciones hechas por el Arqueólogo Norte-Americano Augustus Le Plongeon el año de 1876 con permiso del Gobierno del Estado, y ayudado por los soldados de G. N. que en aquel tiempo guarnecian esos lugares entonces abandonados.*" Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, July 13, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 15, f. 1. Augustus also had contacts at the Museo Yucateco in Mérida, whose director solicited funds in 1876 in order to buy fifty of Le Plongeon's photographs of Chichén Itzá. "*Cumpliendo como debo en cuanto tienda á enriquecer el Establecimiento que es á mi cargo, ocurrí al Superior Gno del Estado solicitando fuesen compradas para el Museo al Dr. Augustus Le Plongeon por solo la suma de cincuenta pesos cincuenta vistas fotográficas de sus resientes descubrimientos en las célebres ruinas de Chichen Ytzá.*" Letter from Juan Peón Contreras to the Consejo de Instrucción Pública del Estado de Yucatán, May 15, 1876. CAIHY, Fondo Reservado, Siglo XX, vol. 190, f. 33.

interpretation of a recurring motif of spots in the murals and reliefs of Chichén Itzá. The statue represented a reclining man wearing a headdress, a bowl resting on his stomach. Le Plongeon identified the figure as the Mayan prince "Chaacmol," a key player in the complicated mythology that Le Plongeon had devised out of his own imagination and unconventional readings of Maya imagery. (A variant of this name, "Chacmool," is still widely used for the statue and others resembling it.) According to Le Plongeon, a fratricidal conflict among royal brothers over the hand of their sister, the beautiful Queen Móo, had eventually led Móo and her followers "to flee to Egypt…thus proving, as far as Augustus was concerned, that Egyptian civilization had been originated by the ancient Maya."[36] When rebel hostilities and state fears over the loyalty of Maya soldiers forced the Le Plongeons to disarm their guard and leave Chichén Itzá in early 1876, they "concealed the heavy statue" in dense growth, and "wrote a letter to President [Sebastián Lerdo de] Tejada, asking that they be allowed to exhibit the Chacmool in Philadelphia at the American Centennial Exposition."[37] Both the decision to hide the statue and the request to send it abroad demonstrate the proprietary attitude which the Le Plongeons assumed towards this major work of pre-Hispanic art. The statue was theirs, they believed, by virtue of the time, money, and effort they had expended in its discovery.

Mexican officials disagreed. The first rebuff to the Le Plongeons' claims of ownership occurred when the Lerdo administration informed them that the 1827 law on antiquities forbid the statue's exportation.[38] The basic principle of state authority over antiquities was reconfirmed with increased vigor following the displacement of Lerdo and the rise of Díaz, when both state and federal actors moved to gain custody of the Chacmool figure. In early 1877, director of the Museo Yucateco Juan Peón Contreras retrieved the statue from the location where it had been hidden, and placed it in his own institution. Stephen Salisbury, Jr., director of the American Antiquarian Society and a sponsor of the Le Plongeons' early work, translated a statement that Peón Contreras gave concerning these events:

> Ignorant of the laws of the country, this American traveller thought that he might at once call himself the proprietor of the statue…in the meantime the Government of the State asserted that the statue was the general property of the nation and not of the discoverer…At the suggestion of the subscriber the Governor allowed the transportation of this statue to the Museo Yucateco, and the Director of the Museo, in compliance with his duty, counting upon the assistance of an armed force necessary for an expedition of such a dangerous character, left this capital February 1, 1877 to the end of securing the preservation of an object so important to the ancient history of the country….the colossal statue was dragged along by more than 150 Indians, in turn, who, in their fanatical superstition, asserted that, during the late hours of the night there came from the mouth of the figure the words "*Conex! Conex!*" which signifies in their language, "Let us go! Let us go!"
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> Upon the 26th of the same month and year, the historical and monumental city of Izamal received with enthusiastic demonstrations the statue of the king Chac-Mool.

[36] Desmond and Messenger, *A Dream of Maya*, 30-6.

[37] Ibid., 40-1.

[38] Desmond and Messenger, *A Dream of Maya*, 41-2.

> Brilliant compositions referring to it were read…when it arrived at Mérida it had a no less lively reception on the morning of the 1st of March, 1877.[39]

In this account, the discovery of the statue was an incidental fact which conveyed no meaningful property rights. Legitimate claims to ownership instead derived from the *relationship* between the artifact and the residents of Yucatán, a bond metaphorically acknowledged by the statue itself.

Federal authorities quickly offered a third theory of archaeological property, in the form of a "war steamer" which arrived near Mérida to acquire the statue for the Museo Nacional. The blunt forcefulness of this action indicated that neither individual nor regional interests would be allowed to supersede the rights of the nation in general and the Díaz administration in particular. By taking the statue to the distant capital, the national government enacted a tableau of idealized hierarchy. Juan Peón Contreras cloaked his disappointment when describing this blatant display of federal power, writing that "At the decision of the Governor of the State…[the statue's] transfer to the National Museum of Mexico was permitted, where so notable an archaeological monument will show to better advantage." He pointedly noted, however, that "the unexpected arrival and early return to Vera Cruz" of the ship transporting the statue "gave no time in which a copy of it could be taken in this capital, the Government of the State reserving the right to ask of the President of the Republic, who resides in Mexico, to send such a copy to the Museo Yucateco, as a just compensation."[40] Augustus Le Plongeon was less attuned to political realities and petitioned Díaz several times in hope of receiving compensation, even attempting to secure the involvement of U.S. representatives in Mexico. Neither U.S. nor Mexican officials took much interest in Le Plongeon's verbose complaints, which lacked a firm basis in Mexican law.[41]

The Le Plongeons continued their work in Yucatán, but faced greater scrutiny and restrictions on their operations. In August of 1880, Yucatán's governor informed Instrucción Pública that when Augustus "solicited official authorization from the Government to visit the ruins that exist in the territory under its control, this was denied in order to avoid the difficulties that sooner or later would present themselves, from the claims or indemnities that he would try to bring or request." According to the governor, such temporary measures were less than ideal. What would be better, he suggested, was if federal authorities appointed a permanent, salaried caretaker for the site of Uxmal. (The governor believed that Uxmal stood in most need of a guardian, as Yucatán's other major pre-Hispanic sites were "not visited with the same frequency…owing to the dangers that travelers run by entering the country of the savage Indians.") These steps were necessary "to secure those lovely monuments which speak so highly in favor of the generation that constructed them and with such justice call the attention of

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[39] "Official Statement of the Director of the Museo Yucateco," sent by Juan Peón Contreras to Augustin Del Río, Provisional Governor of the State of Yucatan, April 6, 1877. Translated by Stephen Salisbury, Jr. and reprinted in Stephen Salisbury, Jr., *The Mayas, The Sources of Their History. Dr. Le Plongeon in Yucatan, His Account of Discoveries, From Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society of April 26, 1876, and April 25, 1877* (Worcester, MA: Press of Charles Hamilton, 1877), 78.

[40] Ibid., 79.

[41] As Peón Contreras had instantly recognized, the most that Augustus could hope for was a copy of the statue he prized so dearly. In 1880 Augustus received permission to make a paper mold of the figure in the Museo Nacional, "*cuidando que por ello no se deteriore el original.*" SJIP memo, September 28, 1880. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 28, f. 2.

nationals and foreigners."[42] Small in itself, the governor's proposal links the activities of troublesome foreign investigators such as Augustus Le Plongeon to the establishment of a federal archaeological bureaucracy.

Instrucción Pública officials did not immediately name a caretaker for Uxmal, but they did agree that wariness towards Augustus was justified. In September of the same year, Ministry bureaucrats granted Augustus permission to "conduct scientific investigations of the ancient monuments found in the Yucatán peninsula" and to search for inscriptions, "make paper or clay molds, take photographs, and export these molds and photographs," as long as "these investigations are conducted without damaging the monuments and are subject to the dispositions ordered by the state government." Agreement was reached that Augustus and his party would receive some military protection, in return for giving up all claims against the Mexican government and "renouncing…all intervention on the part of the United States Government or any other Government" in the event of harm caused by rebel Maya forces.[43] However, Mexican officials specifically rejected Le Plongeon's proposals that he be allowed to dispose of loose artifacts at the site. They also ignored his suggestions that any privileges granted to the archaeologists of other nations be extended to him as well, and that Yucatecan officials should be ordered not to place obstacles in his path. The final contract emphasized the rule of law and the authority of the state and federal governments, bulwarks raised to channel unruly individual behavior.

All of these interactions between Augustus Le Plongeon and state officials influenced Mexican perceptions of a strange episode in which the doctor demonstrated an extraordinarily cavalier attitude towards basic principles of territorial sovereignty. In June of 1881, the Le Plongeons found another large statue at the Yucatecan site of Uxmal, which they identified as a

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[42] "*…en este Estado se encuentra el Sr. Augustus Le Plongeon, con el objeto de hacer estudios arqueológicos; y que aunque solicitó de este Gobierno autorizacion oficial para visitar las ruinas que existen en el territorio de su cargo, se la negó con el fin de evitar las dificultades que tarde ó temprano se presentasen, por reclamaciones ó indemnizaciones que pretendiese promover ó solicitar.*

Quedan dictados las órdenes convenientes para impedir se extraigan objetos de dichas ruinas; pero á juicio de este Gobierno lo mejor sería que el Ejecutivo de la Nacion mandase establecer un empleado con el nombre de Celador, que habitase en las célebres é importantes ruinas de Uxmal, para que este cuidase de ellas, señalándole un sueldo de veinticinco ó treinta pesos mensuales.

Existen otras ruinas de importancia en el Estado como las de Chichen Ytzá, mas estas no son visitadas con la frecuencia q.e las de Uxmal, por el peligro que corren los viajeros en virtud de estar en campo de los indios bárbaros.

En vista, pues, de lo relacionado, esa Secretaría con el celo que acostumbra resolverá lo conveniente á fin de asegurar aquellos preciosos monumentos que tan alto hablan en favor de la generacion que los edificó y que con tanta justicia llamarla atencion de nacionales y extrangeros." Letter from the Governor of Yucatán to SJIP, August 31, 1880. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, f. 113.

[43] *1a. Se permite al Sr. Augustus Le Plongeon hacer investigaciones científicas de los monumentos antiguos que se hallan en la península de Yucatan; siempre que tales investigaciones se hagan sin deterior dichos monumentos y con sujesion á las disposiciones que para este efecto dicte el Gobierno del Estado. 2o. Se le permite igualmente, buscar todas las inscripciones relativas á la historia de los pueblos que habitaron la misma península de Yucatan, sacar de ellas moldes de papel ó de yeso, tomar de ellas fotografías, y exportar esos moldes impresiones y fotografias.…5o. El Sr. Le Plongeon se compromete á que no en su nombre, ni en el de los que lo acompañan hará en ningun caso reclamacion alguna al Gobierno Mexicano por cualquiera desgracia que á él ó á sus compañeros pudiera acontecerles á mano de los indios de Chan Sta. Cruz, con motivo de sus expediciones; renunciando por lo mismo desde ahora á toda intervencion de parte del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos del Norte ó de cualquier otro Gobierno para tal evento.*" SJIP memo, undated (placed in between documents from September 28, 1880). AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 28, f. 3.

brother of Chaacmol. Fearing that the sculpture might be taken from them, and concerned that the mayordomo of the Hacienda Uxmal intended to take stones from the ruins for use in building projects, Augustus crafted a rumor to deter prospective interlopers.[44] In a July letter to the Mérida newspaper *El Eco de Comercio,* he claimed to have laid explosive charges around Uxmal, packed with dynamite and "another, even more dangerous ingredient."[45] The deeper implications of an American with a French surname placing mines on Mexican soil apparently escaped him. The governor of Yucatán spelled these out in the state's official state newspaper, stating "This is an attack. A dangerous situation is at work in the national dominions, which could have the most momentous consequences, not only for individual persons, but for the monumental city, which should be guarded and conserved with care." In a subsequent letter to Instrucción Pública, the governor wrote that he had immediately involved judicial authorities in the matter, fearing that there had been "a grave crime which would wound the national dignity."[46] Unwittingly, Augustus had challenged the Mexican state's authority in a manner reminiscent of previous foreign incursions.

The scandal over dynamite at Uxmal ultimately fizzled, when it was proved that Le Plongeon's imagination had once again outpaced reality. The hapless researcher was entirely cleared by the visit of the district judge José Maldonado, who declared that Le Plongeon had been attempting "to guard, according to his way of thinking, the precious monument…He does not wish to appropriate the objects that he discovers in these ruins, and recognizes the dominion that the Nation has over these monuments of the primitive civilization of a grand people." During this official inquiry Augustus seems to have benefited greatly from the presence of his wife Alice, who Maldonado deemed "a heroine worthy of the highest praise…a great figure: she works incessantly, and her studies, her investigations, compensate her for the little notice taken of those sites and she appears happy and satisfied: she has formed a collection of molds, which she herself has manufactured, to faithfully reproduce in all their dimensions many of the most important archaeological pieces."[47] Maldonado concluded that Augustus did not act out of a

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[44] Desmond and Messenger, *A Dream of Maya*, 80-1.

[45] "*Porque en esos documentos, por confesion propia del mismo Dr. Le-Plongeon, con el pretexto de encubrir y defender el descubrimiento científico de una estátua por él hecho en las ruinas monumentales de la antigua ciudad de Uxmal, ha colocado dos cargas cada una de dos onzas de dinamita, y otro ingrediente aun mas peligroso, en lugares convenientes, á fin de que el que se atrevan á víolar ó tocar las piedras sin direccion é instruccion suya, pague con la vida su atrevimiento.*" Letter from Governor Manuel Romero Ancona to the First Criminal Judge of the Department, printed in *La Razón del Pueblo*, 3.a Época, Año IV, Mérida, July 20, 1881, 3, in the column *Gobierno del Estado*. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 34, f. 5.

[46] "*Este es un atentado. Se ejerce una accion peligrosa en dominio nacional, que puede ser de trascedentales consecuencias, no ya solo para las personas sino aun para la ciudad monumental, que debe guardarse y conservarse con cuidado.*" Idem. To Instrucción Pública, Yucatán's governor wrote that "…*este Gobierno desde el mismo dia que vió la luz pública el número 158 del periódico "El Eco del Comercio" dirigió al Juez 1.o del ramo criminal, el oficio q.e corre impreso en el n.o 86 de "La Razon del Pueblo" órgano oficial de este Estado…para q.e procediese á esclarecer los hechos á que se refieren las dos cartas del Sr. Augustus Le Plongeon. Ni podia ser de otra manera porque en ello estaba interesada la vindicta pública por tratarse de un delito grave á la vez que se heria á la dignidad nacional.*" Letter from the Governor of Yucatán to SJIP, August 9, 1881. Ibid., f. 3.

[47] "*El Sr. Le-Plongeon, ha declarado que su único objeto al publicar la especie que provocó esta judicial averiguacion, ha sido y es, que el temor que inspire sirva para guardar en su concepto, el precioso monumento de que hace referencia…No pretende apropiarse los objetos que descubra en estas ruinas, y reconoce el dominio que la Nacion tiene sobre tales monumentos de la primitiva civilizacion de un gran pueblo…Mrs. Le-Plongeon, es una heroina digna del mayor elogio: en ese campamento de la ciencia que los viajeros ilustres han establecido en los*

desire to secure his own rights to the artifacts of Uxmal, and the affair concluded without judicial prosecutions.

The absence of criminal penalties, however, did not mean the absence of repercussions. In reporting on the affair to Instrucción Publica, Yucatán's governor repeated his request of the previous year that a guardian be placed at the ruins of Uxmal, writing that "This Government takes advantage of the present occasion to declare to the President, the desirability of naming a Guard for the aforesaid ruins…which employee would take care that not a single object of the many precious ones buried there would be removed, at the same time impeding the advances of the owner of the Hacienda Uxmal, as…the ruins exist on his lands."[48] Again, federal authorities faced political pressure to commit sustained resources to the cause of archaeological preservation. The reputation of the country, the security of a notable pre-Hispanic site, and state officials' peace of mind all demanded a more formalized framework to monitor and preserve the material remains of the past. So often disappointed in his professional hopes, Augustus Le Plongeon likely never realized that, in his own distinctive way, he had encouraged Mexico's government to protect the monuments which he cherished.

The Contract and the Congress

Désiré Charnay was the opposite of Augustus Le Plongeon in prestige and political influence, enjoying the recognition of national governments and the sponsorship of wealthy patrons of archaeology.[49] Like Le Plongeon, however, Charnay played an accidental but important role in the shaping of Mexican archaeological policy. An explorer, travel writer, and photographer, who did not shy away from self-promotion or the display of his bare-chested figure, the French Charnay first visited Mexico in the 1850s.[50] In 1858, "he was commissioned by the French Ministry of Education to photograph the great ruins of Mexico," and later served

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lugares mismos que ocuparon esos sabios, ó reyes, ó pontífices ó poetas de la antigua Uxmal, á quienes interrogan en tan inmemorables documentos que han dejado en piedras inmortales, en ese campo de meditacion. Mrs. Le-Plongeon es una gran figura: trabaja incesantemente, y sus estudios, sus investigaciones, la compensan de la incuria de aquellos sitios y parece estar alegre y satisfecha: ha formado una coleccion de moldes, que ella misma ha confeccionado, para reproducir fielmente en todas sus dimensiones, muchas de las mas importantes piezas arqueológicas." Letter from José E. Maldonado to the Governor of Yucatán, July 23, 1881, printed in *La Razón del Pueblo*, 3.a Época, Año IV, Mérida, July 25, 1881, 1, in the column *Gobierno del Estado*. Ibid., f. 6.

[48] *Aprovecha este Gobierno la presente ocasion para manifestar al Presidente, lo conveniente q.e sería se acordarse el nombramiento de un Celador de dichas ruinas, como se le propuso por conducto de esa Secretaría, en oficio de 31 de Agosto del año ppdo., cuyo empleado cuidaría no se extrajese objetos alguno de los muchos y muy preciosos que encierran, á la vez de que impediría algunos avances del propietario de la hacienda Uxmal, que, como se indica en esta nota, las ruinas estan en sus tierras.*" Letter from the Governor of Yucatán to SJIP, August 9, 1881. Ibid., fs. 3-4.

[49] According to Desmond and Messenger, "Charnay always found an excuse to avoid Augustus," while "there was something about Charnay's personality that irritated Augustus. Possibly it was his elitist attitude toward the Maya, or perhaps his official connections with the French government…Or possibly it was Charnay's accomplishments themselves, which Augustus saw as small considering the financial assistance he received." Desmond and Messenger, *A Dream of Maya*, 60 and 84.

[50] "Dentro de la Comission Scientifique du Méxique…el arqueólogo más conocido fue Désiré Charnay, cuyo primer viaje a México fue aun antes de la existencia de la Comisión en 1853-9." Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1992), 113.

on Napoleon III's Commission Scientifique du Méxique.[51] After travels in various parts of the world, Charnay returned to Mexico in 1880 upon receiving a commission from the governments of France and the United States to investigate Mexico's pre-Hispanic ruins. His work was funded in part by the New York tobacco magnate Pierre Lorillard IV, who expected to "receive part of the products of the scientist's researches," although it was unclear whether these would consist of "photographs, fac-similes or antiquities." Speaking to a *New York Times* reporter in April of 1880, who "asked whether he thought the Mexican Government would permit him to remove any of the antiquities that he might come across in his excavations, M. Charnay said he hoped it would," since his "very thorough researches…would benefit scientific circles in Mexico as well as in the United States and France; but if they were to withhold the permission, he would confine himself to taking photographs, impressions of the hieroglyphics and engravings, and making fac-similes of the antiquities." [52] While Charnay did eventually negotiate an excavation contract granting him provisional permission to export pre-Hispanic artifacts, he could not secure the sweeping rights that he initially sought. Moreover, obtaining congressional approval of the contract was not the pro forma matter it first appeared to be. At the conclusion of his expedition Charnay found himself embroiled in a major political battle, one which pitted visions of universal science against the patriotic defense of the national heritage.

After arriving in Mexico City in the spring of 1880, Charnay contacted Instrucción Pública in order to define the legal basis for his planned explorations and excavations. As it had "come to [his] notice that a law of the Republic opposes the exportation of antiquities," Charnay proclaimed to Mexican officials that "Science does not have any nationality, but embraces and serves all peoples. My mission does not have as its object the despoilment of Mexico, but its enrichment."[53] Therefore, he proposed to give the Museo Nacional a third of the objects to be collected during his expedition, with the rest remaining in his possession. Charnay also promised give the Museum copies of all plaster molds that he produced. The wrangling which then ensued over the terms of the contract provides an instructive case study of how national leaders during the early Porfiriato understood the ownership, use and value of archaeological artifacts. While these concepts were far vaguer than those which would be encoded into law by the end of the century, the negotiations between Charnay and Instrucción Pública created a kind of template for the state supervision of archaeological activity, one which would be refined and expanded upon in the years to come.

Given the forceful claims to state ownership made by later archaeological legislation, and the intense opposition that the contract with would arouse later that year in the Chamber of Deputies, officials at Instrucción Pública were surprisingly receptive to Charnay's suggested plan of division. From the outset, they conceded permission for the French explorer to retain two-thirds of the objects acquired in his excavations, with the proviso that if Charnay discovered any

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[51] Ian Graham, *Alfred Maudslay and the Maya: A Biography* (London: The British Museum Press, 2002), 124.

[52] "Lorillard's Aztec Expedition: Mexican and South American Ruins to be Explored by Prof. Charnay," *The New York Times*, April 9, 1880.

[53] "*Habiendo llegado á mi noticia que una ley de la República se opone á la exportacion de las antigüedades y como en cuanto á lo que concierne solo las escavaciones me encontraría en contradiccion con dicha ley tengo el honor de dirijirme a V. E. Ministro con el objeto de conseguir una autorizacion temporal que me permita llevar a buen fin la mision…La ciencia no tiene nacionalidad, su objeto abraza todos los pueblos; ella trabaja para todos ellos y mi mision no tiene por objeto el despojar á México pero si de enriquecerlo*." Letter from Desiré Charnay to the Ministro de Justicia e Instrucción Pública, undated. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, f. 1.

important new sites he would leave those areas undisturbed. The question was how to allocate the government's third. The contract which federal administrators sent to Charnay in May of 1880 proposed that the division be made by a panel consisting of Charnay, the director of the Museo Nacional, and a third member to be appointed by Instrucción Pública. The panel members would sort the objects into two categories: "a smaller one in which will be placed those which are of great importance, because of their uniqueness or special circumstances, and another larger one to be formed of those [objects] considered of secondary importance."[54] The Museum director would freely select a third of the objects from the first category, leaving the remaining two-thirds to Charnay. Charnay would pick first from the second category, and leave the remainders to the Museum. Duplicate or triplicate objects would be divided in a "proportional, equitable manner."[55] These relatively modest conditions, however, proved unacceptable to Charnay. Abandoning Spanish for his native French, he swiftly wrote back to Instrucción Pública with a set of counterproposals.

Charnay suggested that rather than having all objects sent back to Mexico City to be evaluated there, items found in distant places should instead be sent to state capitals, to be partitioned there according to the terms of the contract. For those objects that did return to Mexico City he asked that the French Minister be named as a member of the panel, invoking the full force of the diplomatic establishment to support his interests. Finally, Charnay protested against the idea of categorizing objects into classes of greater and lesser importance, since such a procedure was bound to muddle "objects pertaining to diverse Provinces and peoples." Instead, the explorer wrote that "It would appear more logical to me to classify each object by its location and tribe, as coming from diverse civilizations."[56] Once these local collections had been formed, the Museum could have first pick of half the groupings, and Charnay of the other half. Even better, Charnay suggested, would be to switch off the selection within each grouping, so that for example the Museum might pick the first object from a group, Charnay the second, the Museum the third, and so on. Both parties would have equal opportunity to choose first from among the various collections.[57] In either case, Charnay was unequivocal in his rejection of Instrucción Pública's initial proposal: "The National Museum having the right to choose first, among all the

[54] "*Para el reparto de los objetos encontrados por Mr. Charnay y depositados en el Museo Nacional, se hará préviamente su calificacion por un Jurado compuesto del Director del Establecimiento, del mismo Mr. Charnay y de otra persona, que el Ministerio nombrará cuando llegue el caso. Este Jurado dividirá los objetos en dos clases; una menos numerosa en que entrarán los que sean calificados como de grande importancia, por su singularidad ó circunstancias especiales, y otra mayor que se formará de aquellos que se consideren de importancia secundaria.*" Contract sent from SJIP to Charnay, May 21, 1880. Ibid., f. 6.

[55] "*Si entre los objetos hubiere duplicados, triplicados etc., la reparticion se hará de una manera proporcional y equitativa*." Idem.

[56] "*Yl serait difficile de séparer les objets en deux classes seulement, comme le demande l'article 9, car on s'exposerait ainsi à mélanger des objets appartenant à des Provinces et à des peuples divers; il me paraîtrais plus logique, de classer chaque objet par lieux et par peuplades, comme provenant de civilisations diverses.*" Letter from Charnay to Ministro de Justicia e Instrucción Pública, undated. Ibid., f. 14.

[57] "*Ne serait-il pas plus équitable, que les objets etant classés par régios, selon l'observation soumise au sujet de l'article 9, fussent divisés par tiers pour le Mexique et deux tiers pour Monsieur Charnay; le Mexique choisissant le premier pour telle localité et Monsieur Charnay choisissant le premier pour une autre, et ainsi de suite pour toutes les collections provenants de peuples divers? Mais no vaudrait-il pas mieux encore que dans chaque collection, l'un choisit une piece et l'utre deux jusqu'à épuisement, chacun ayant à son tour le droit de primauté?*" Idem.

important or rare pieces grouped together, would probably leave nothing for France and the United States except those objects of little worth; and it would be impossible for Monsieur Charnay to be able to accept this clause."[58] For Charnay, the Mexican government's position on antiquities was not a matter of settled law, to be recognized and obeyed, but a bargaining position that could be shifted by tough negotiation.

As it turned out, Charnay was partially correct. Instrucción Pública was not willing to completely accede to his suggestions, but it would bend to them. The finalized version of the contract, signed by Charnay on July 1, 1880, incorporated the proposal to organize artifacts according to the locations in which they were found. Objects from the expedition would be stored either in the Museo Nacional, or in a place designated by Museum officials. When it was time to divide the collections, the director of the Museo would pick first, Charnay second, and so on until two-thirds of the items had been selected, leaving the remaining third to Charnay. Notably, however, the Museo seems to have had first pick in every case. Charnay was permitted to designate a proxy in the selection process, but the contract specified that this person "will not have any official character," to minimize the likelihood that the allocation of artifacts would debouche into an international incident.[59] Although the documents themselves do not draw attention to the geopolitical situation during the summer of 1880, Barbara Tenenbaum reminds us that it was precisely during these months that Mexico was reestablishing formal diplomatic relations with France, after a long rupture following the ignominious end of the Intervention. Tenenbaum also speculates that the intense hostility that the Chamber of Deputies would later express towards the contract with Charnay demonstrated displaced anger and patriotic anxiety over the normalization of ties with Mexico's former invader.[60]

Besides the question of how the artifacts were to be divided, the conditions of their exportation also had to be settled. Instrucción Pública officials initially suggested that Charnay be allowed to export his photographs, plaster molds and his two-thirds share of the artifacts free of duty, assuming that Mexico's congress ratified the contract and granted Charnay a formal exemption from laws forbidding the export of archaeological objects. Until congressional permission was granted, all of these objects would be deposited for safekeeping in the Museo Nacional.[61] Other aspects of the contract were also modified by negotiation, including some bargaining over the degree of protection and logistical support to be afforded by state governors.

However, the most significant of these changes concerned the role of the federal

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[58] "*Le Musée National ayant le droit de choisir le premier parmi toutes le pieces importantes ou rares mises à part, ne laisserait probablement à la France et aux États-Unis, que des objets de peu de valeur; et il serait impossible à Monsieur Charnay de pouvoir accepter cette clause.*" Idem.

[59] "*De cada grupo, así formado, tomará primero un objeto el Director del Museo Nacional, ó en su caso, la personal nombrado por el Ministerio, y á la que alude la clausula anterior; y despues otro objeto Mr. de Charnay ó la persona que él comisione al efecto y que deberá no tener caracter oficial alguno; y así seguirán tomando alternativamente los objetos, del uno en uno, hasta llegar á los dos tercios de los que componer el grupo quedando el tercio restante á beneficio de Mr. de Charnay.*" Contract between SJIP and Charnay, signed by Charnay and dated July 1, 1880. Ibid., f. 21-2.

[60] Barbara Tenenbaum, "Mexico and the Royal Indian – The Porfiriato and the National Past." Latin American Studies Center Series, No. 8, 1994, 16 and 18. Accessed online at http://www.lasc.umd.edu/Publications/WorkingPapers/LascSeries/LASCS8.pdf, October 8, 2009.

[61] Clauses 14a and 6a in the contract sent from SJIP to Charnay, May 21, 1880. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, f. 7.

inspector who was to accompany Charnay on his travels, ensure that no damage was done to the sites, verify the number of artifacts found and submit regular reports to Instrucción Pública. The parties agreed that the federal government would name the inspector and pay his salary, while Charnay would cover the employee's travel and food expenses. The sticking point was the definition of the inspector's duties. Charnay wished to specify that the inspector would aid in the excavations as well as keep watch on them, and would be "fully subject to [Charnay's] orders."[62] Although it was Charnay himself who had originally suggested that the Mexican government appoint an inspector so that "all my operations will be supervised by said person and that my good faith in the contract…will be above any suspicion," he seems to have chafed against any attempt by the inspector to exercise real power over him.[63] Several times during the course of the actual expedition Charnay attempted to assert his authority over Lorenzo Pérez Castro, the young army engineer named as Inspector, at one point referring to Pérez Castro as "my adjutant in the archaeological campaign that I am going to undertake."[64] Federal authorities struck a posture of bland conciliation, conceding in the final agreement that the inspector "will for his part assist Mr. De Charnay in his operations, as much as possible and where this does not run counter to his proper functions of oversight."[65] When Charnay attempted to exert additional influence over Pérez Castro, officials at Instrucción Pública impassively told Charnay that the Inspector had received a copy of the contract, and was to follow its terms.[66]

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[62] "*Il serait entendu que l'Inspector que le Gouvernement veut bien m'adjoindre, m'aiderait dans mes travaux en même temps qu'il surveillerais mes operations et serais tout a fait sous mes ordres.*" Letter from Charnay to SJIP, undated. Ibid., f. 15.

[63] "*Yo pediria además que el Gobierno…me adjuntase una persona (de la cual yo pagaria los gastos) para acompañarme y ayudarme en mis trabajos, para que asistiese á los inventarios que serian hechos de todas mis moldeaduras y de los objetos encontrados en las escavaciones de manera que todas mis operaciones fueran fiscalisadas por dicha persona y que mi buena fé en el tratado que propongo celebrar fuese puesta fuera de toda sospecha*." Letter from Charnay to SJIP, undated. Ibid., f. 1-2.

[64] Acknowledging receipt of a letter naming Pérez Castro as Inspector, Charnay called him "*mon adjutant dans la campagne archéologique que je vais entreprendre.*" Letter from Charnay to SJIP, June 24, 1880. Ibid., f. 33.

[65]" *Este Ynspector, por su parte auxiliará á Mr. De Charnay en sus operaciones, en cuanto fuere posible y no contario al ejercicio de sus propias funciones de inspeccion.*" Contract between the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública and Charnay, signed by Charnay and dated July 1, 1880. Ibid., f. 20.

[66] "*…al dar su nombramiento al Sr. Lorenzo Perez Castro, se le entregó tambien una copia del contrato relativo, el cual, al proporcionarle las instrucciones necesarias, le determina el caracter con q.e deberá acompañar á V. en sus exploraciones, y la facultades y atribuciones que le corresponden.*" Letter from Ignacio Mariscal at SJIP to Charnay, June 26, 1880. Ibid., f. 34. While Charnay and Pérez Castro generally seem to have gotten along with each other, they sometimes butted heads over their differing interpretations of the contract. For example, in August of 1880 Pérez Castro insisted on conducting an exact inventory of Charnay's finds at the site of Apatlepitanco, a procedure to which Charnay objected. Pérez Castro queried Instrucción Pública about the matter: "*habiendo pretendido Mr. Charnay que solo tomare yo nota del número de huacales y de la cantidad aprocsimada de objetos que contenian, para remitirlos despues al Museo Nacional, yo le manifesté que debié de formar el inventario de todos los objetos aunque careciéran de valor, para lo cual teniemos que proceder á abrir los huacales; pero como el repetido Sr. creyó inutil y dilatada ese operacion; ocurrió á V. en solicitud: de la dispensa del requisito que yo exijia para cumplir con mi deber, habiéndome traido despues la resolucion que recayó á su solicitud: que, por último, ordenándome en este que proceda por esta vez á 'hacer un inventario (general) de los expresados objetos en términos generales,' lo cual supone Mr. Charnay que equivale á que yo diga que he tenido nota de la existencia y remision de esos ocho huacales; y creyendo yo que no es esa la ida de la órden á que me refiero, si no que este solo me dispensa de enumerar uno por uno los objetos repetidos, teniendo que reunirlos por grupos de una misma clase*

If officials at Instrucción Pública found the terms of the contract satisfactory, however, members of Mexico's Congress did not. When the Chamber of Deputies considered the Charnay contract in October of 1880, the Executive Branch discovered to its chagrin that certain legislators were prepared to strenuously resist the exportation of pre-Hispanic artifacts. The opposition was spearheaded by Gumesindo Enríquez, "an obscure deputy from Mexico State."[67] Enríquez complained about the presumption of both the foreigners who stripped away Mexico's cultural patrimony, and the national authorities who sought to violate established law. Why, Enríquez asked, did Instrucción Pública agree that Charnay could export two-thirds of the objects that he found, rather than assert the federal government's legal right to buy those artifacts for the Museo Nacional? Even the usurper Maximilian had denied French scholars permission to export Mexican antiquities; how then could a republican government display less concern for the nation's interests? Enríquez argued that federal finances could surely stretch to fund archaeological excavations, so that Mexicans would not have to visit European museums in order to learn their own history. To the "hearty applause" of his fellow deputies, Enríquez inveighed against a contract that "impugns our civil legislation, impugns the national dignity, and everything that Mexico holds most sacred."[68]

Some deputies defended the contract with Charnay. Antonio Carbajal took a pragmatic view of the matter, and argued that Mexico's international reputation would suffer if the congress refused to honor the agreement reached by Instrucción Pública. Carbajal also pointed out that the Charnay expedition provided the Museum with artifacts and knowledge at no cost to the state, an important consideration given the scant efforts that the federal government had

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para dar una idea de los que dichos huacales contienen, á V. he de merecer se sirve decirme si es Mr. Charnay ó yo quien interprete mal la resolucion que espresos entre comillos, bajo el concepto de que este Sr. lo que desea es evitar la apertura de los huacales, sin que en esto tenga la intencion de ocultar á mi vista los objetos encontrados en Apatlatepitanco, asi como yo me tengo mas objeto de dirijirle á V. la presente, que buscar el acierto de mis actos para desempeñar la comision con que se me ha honrado." Letter from Pérez Castro to SJIP, August 7, 1880. Ibid., fs. 104-5. Pérez Castro won out in this case, as Minister of Justice and Public Instruction Ignacio Mariscal supported his more punctilious approach. Letter from Mariscal at SJIP to Lorenzo Pérez Castro, August 21, 1880. Ibid., f. 106.

[67] Tenenbaum, "The Royal Indian," 17.

[68] "*De manera que el Ejecutivo no podía estipular este contrato, sino que tenía obligación precisa é indeclinable de hacer una compra de todos los objetos arqueológicos que descubriera Mr. Désiré Charnay. Si el Ejecutivo no cumple ésto, si al contrario viene a estipular que los objetos que se descubran han de ser en una parte para Mr. Charnay, es claro que infringe este precepto legal…Mr. Charnay, según informes que tengo, vino con el cuerpo expedicionario francés, agregado á una comisión científica que fué a hacer excavaciones á Yucatán…se solicitó del llamado gobierno de esa época permiso para hacer la exportación de los objetos arqueológicos. Aquel llamdo gobierno, celoso de que las antigüedades mexicanas no figuraran en los museos extranjeros, negó este permiso. Y yo pregunto ahora…lo que esos extranjeros invasores del país hicieron por la dignidad del país mismo, ¿no hemos de hacerlo nosotros?...Por qué no hacer que el gobierno, que en otras cosas gasta mucho dinero, gaste una pequeñez en emprender por su cuenta esas excavaciones, sin permitir que las haga un extranjero y que exporte estos objetos de la arqueología mexicana para que siga sucediendo lo que hasta aquí sucede, que para aprender bien la historia de México, para obtener datos de su orígen en general, se necesita ir á los museos Europeos que es donde existen los más preciosos datos á este respecto?...[E]l contrato celebrado con el Ejecutivo pugna con nuestros principios constitucionales, pugna con nuestra legislación civil, pugna con el decoro nacional y con lo que tiene de más sagrado Mexico…(Nutridos aplausos.)*" Speech by Gumesindo Enríquez, reproduced from the *Diario de los Debates de la Cámara de Diputados, Décima Legislatura Constitucional de la Unión, Año de 1880*, Vol. 1, correspondiente á las sesiones ordinarias y extraordinarias durante el primero período del primer año (Mexico City: F. Mata, 1880). Reprinted in Clementina Díaz y de Ovando, *Memoria de un debate: La postura de México frente al patrimonio arqueológico nacional* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1990), 67-8 and 72

made thus far to investigate pre-Hispanic sites.[69] The 32-year-old Justo Sierra, who would eventually become one of the most prominent intellectuals of the Porfiriato and direct the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes from 1905 to 1911, also advocated for the contract's ratification. Sierra attempted to convince his fellow deputies that there was no essential conflict between the interests of universal science and those of the nation writ large, as demonstrated by the many contributions that foreign scholars had made to the study of Mexico's ancient history. Sierra bluntly compared the research efforts of foreigners to those of Mexican scholars, asking "Where, then…is the great history, the great result that we have obtained from the inspection and study of our ruins? Those results, if they exist, have come to us from Europe."[70] When the distinguished Liberal historian, statesman, and general Vicente Riva Palacio urged the Chamber to reject the contract, proclaiming that his "savage" patriotism meant that he "would prefer the flames [to destroy artifacts] rather than submit to the domination of the foreigner," Sierra offered a vision of "enlightened patriotism" in rebuttal. To Sierra, the pursuit of knowledge surmounted nationalist barriers, so much so that he asked "Who has told us that our ancient history is the exclusive patrimony of Mexico?"[71] This extreme stance, however, attracted little support among Sierra's fellows. The Chamber of Deputies voted to reject the contract with Charnay, with 114 members opposed and only six voting in favor.[72]

Despite this sharp rebuff, Charnay continued his expedition until health problems forced him to halt in February of 1881.[73] As he concluded his stay in Mexico, Charnay wrote to Instrucción Pública to suggest a modified scheme for the division of artifacts. Exportation was now clearly impossible, but Charnay hoped that he would still receive his two-thirds share, to use and distribute as he saw fit within the national territory.[74] This proposal foundered. Although the

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[69] "*Tuvieron también presente la consideración de que si en el primer negocio practicado bajo estos auspicios, el Ejecutivo en representación de la nación, no llenaba los compromisos contraídos en este contrato, resultaría el desprestigio y consiguientemente se cerraría la puerta para siempre, si no á cosas idénticas, que el Sr. Enríquez califica de perjudiciales, sí á otras que pudieran ser provechosas…Habia gastos, y gastos que no habia hecho el gobierno de la nación. Parece, pues, que esos gastos merecían alguna consideración por parte de las comisiones…Mucho tiempo ha pasado desde que somos nación independiente, y sin embargo, de una manera oficial no tienen las comisiones noticia de que se haya emprendido nada en este sentido. Los tesoros existen, ¿pero a quién aprovechan?*" Speech by Antonio Carbajal, Ibid., 73.

[70] "*En dónde, está, señor, la gran historia, el gran resultado que hemos sacado nosotros de la inspección y del exámen de nuestras ruins?*

Estos resultados, si los hay, nos han venido de Europa, nos los ha dado el extranjero, las publicaciones si existen deben á la explendidez de algún inglés. Esta es la verdad." Speech by Justo Sierra, Ibid., 82.

[71] "*Confieso que estoy profundamente conmovido. Yo amo a la ciencia, pero del patriotismo tengo una idea salvaje si se quiere, porque prefiero el incendio antes que la dominación del extranjero*." Speech by Vicente Riva Palacio, Ibid., 83. "*Si el Sr. Riva Palacio ha creído que este era el momento oportuno de invocar un patriotismo salvaje, en mi concepto está en un error, porque lo que debemos invocar es un patriotismo ilustrado...¿Pues quien nos ha dicho a nosotros que nuestra historia antigua es patrimonio exclusivo de México?*" Speech by Justo Sierra, Ibid., 84-5.

[72] Ibid., 89.

[73] Letter from Charnay to SJIP, March 2, 1881. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, f. 143.

[74] "*1o. Me sera entregada la parte de antiguedades que me pertenece conforme a la reparticion que fue hecha de ellas en el museo nacional, y yo hare de esas antiguedades lo que me convenga en el territorio de la Republica.*" Letter from Charnay to SJIP, March 4, 1881. Ibid., f. 144.

objects were divided according to the terms of the original contract, the portion allocated to Charnay remained boxed up at the Museo Nacional. Given the chilly political climate, Instrucción Pública officials insisted that Charnay fulfill every jot of his obligations under the original contract before the objects could be released, including repayment of the money that the Mexican government had expended on his behalf.[75] A year later, Charnay tried another tack, and proposed giving the Museo Nacional copies of the molds that he had made at Tula and Palenque in exchange for the artifacts deposited at the Museum.[76] This attempt met with another rebuff from Instrucción Pública, where officials continued to insist that the matter should be shelved until Charnay had met all of the conditions agreed upon in 1880.[77] Charnay and his representatives made more queries about the boxes in 1886, 1893, and 1895, which also proved fruitless.[78] It was not until 1900 that the French minister to Mexico finally prevailed upon the federal government to release the crates from their bureaucratic limbo, and permit their exportation to France.[79] Over the long run, reconfigurations in archaeological policy and international relations had drained the issue of the emotional and patriotic significance it had once possessed. By the turn of the twentieth century, Mexico's archaeological establishment was stable enough that the exportation of a few crates, containing objects now deemed to be of little scientific value, did not generate special controversy.

Like Augustus Le Plongeon, Désiré Charnay unintentionally fueled the development of Mexican archaeological nationalism. The debates in the Chamber of Deputies established a principle of strong state control over the material remains of the past, while the excavation contract itself offered a partial template for how that control might be exercised. The contract's most significant aspect was its stipulation that an agent of the federal government would monitor foreign excavations within Mexico, to ensure that pre-Hispanic monuments were not looted or damaged. While Lorenzo Pérez Castro does not appear in the annals of Mexican archaeology after 1881, his diligent service and detailed reports seem to have influenced later government understandings of how to supervise archaeological excavations. Moreover, the mere presence of a federal archaeological inspector represented a major change from past practices, and foreshadowed greater state involvement in the practice of archaeology. Within a few years of Charnay's travels, the federal government would appoint a full-time Inspector of Archaeological Monuments, who reported directly to the Minister of Public Instruction.

The Charnay contract also codified previously vague standards for archaeological activity, providing a baseline for future interactions between foreign investigators and the Mexican state. For example, in a July 1880 newspaper article alleging that "an English or German archaeologist named Bashan…had come to the Republic with the purpose of studying its ancient monuments," the journalist Ignacio Altamirano argued that if Bashan was in fact

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[75] Letter from Gumesindo Mendoza to SJIP, June 1, 1881, and letter from SJIP to Julio Labradie, June 22, 1881. Ibid., fs. 153-5.

[76] Letter from Charnay to SJIP, April 27, 1882. Ibid., f. 158.

[77] Letter from Gumesindo Mendoza at the Museo Nacional to SJIP, May 31, 1882, and letter from SJIP to Charnay, June 3, 1882. Ibid., fs. 160-2.

[78] AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 19. Letter from Mariscal at the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores to SJIP, December 28, 1893, and letter from Julio Labradie to Governor of Tlaxcala Próspero Cahuantzi, September 21, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, fs. 167 and 170.

[79] Letter from the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores to SJIP, January 24, 1900. Ibid, f. 197.

conducting excavations, he "should be subjected to the same conditions imposed on Sr. Charnay." Altamirano stressed that "The Minister of Justice should ask for reports about the mission of Sr. Bashan from the authorities of Yucatán, so that unlike [Charles Étienne Brasseur de] Bourbourg and Le Plongeon, [Bashan] will not believe himself authorized to conduct excavations and extract monuments while claiming ownership of them."[80] Charnay himself tried to take advantage of the contract's formal provisions, by wielding them as a cudgel against the potential competitor. After reading about Bashan's supposed explorations, Charnay argued that such activities should be prohibited as violations of both the contract and of national sovereignty, as "Mexico is master of its antiquities."[81] While federal authorities reminded Charnay that his contract in no way gave him exclusive rights to excavate in Mexico, they also admitted that they had not previously extended any permissions to Bashan, and planned to follow up on the matter.[82] In August of 1880, the governors of Yucatán and Chiapas duly received orders to prevent the "clandestine exportation" of artifacts, and more broadly to preserve "archaeological objects" in their original locations.[83] Whether or not "Bashan" existed, the incident illustrates how state archaeological management built upon itself, as the definition of certain rights and responsibilities encouraged further demands for clarification and uniform administrative structures.

Nevertheless, the mechanisms established to deal with Charnay were clearly insufficient to govern all archaeological activites within Mexico. This point was underscored by the actions of the U.S. consul in Mérida Louis Aymé, who posed ongoing concerns to federal administrators. In July of 1882, an article in the newspaper *El Diario del Hogar* claimed that Aymé had been commissioned "to send Mexican antiquities to the Peabody Museum of the University of Cambridge [Harvard]," a charge that prompted Instrucción Pública officials to contact the governor of Yucatán.[84] In 1883, the U.S. ambassador in Mexico City attempted to secure

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[80] "*Han sido visitadas y su actualmente objeto de los estudios [sic] de un arqueólogo inglés o alemán llamado Bashan quien ha venido a la República con el fin de estudiar los monumentos antiguos…debe sujetarse al Sr. Bashan a las mismas condiciones impuestas al Sr. Charnay…De todos modos creemos que el ciudadano Ministro de Justicia debe pedir informes a las autoridades de Yucatán, sobre la misión del Sr. Bashan, no vaya a suceder que éste lo mismo que [Charles Étienne Brasseur de] Bourbourg y Le-Plongeon se crea autorizado para hacer excavaciones y extraer monumentos con pretensiones de propiedad sobre ellos.*" "Las ruinas de Uxmal." Reprinted from *La República* in *La Libertad*, July 31, 1880. Quoted in Clementina Díaz y de Ovando, *Memoria de un debate*, 14. Díaz y de Ovando describes *La Libertad* as a "periódico liberal conservador, cuyo director era Justo Sierra." Ibid., 11.

[81] "*Le Mexique est maître de les antiquités et j'en appelle Monsieur le Ministre à votre autorité pour défendre les fouilles à ce nouvel explorateur, qui ferais un tort considerable à notre expedition.*" Letter from Charnay to SJIP, July 14, 1880. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, f. 40.

[82] Letter from Ignacio Mariscal at SJIP to Charnay, July 17, 1880. Ibid., f. 41.

[83] "*…ha dispuesto el Presidente de la Rep.ca se sirva V. dictar las providencias que creyere oportunas para evitar esa exportacion clandestina, caso de es cierto el hecho que refiere; y disponer á la vez, que en general los objetos arqueologicos que hubiere en este Estado se conserven en donde se encuentren á bien que sean remitidos al Museo Nacional.*" Letter from Mariscal at SJIP to the governors of Yucatán and Chiapas, August 7, 1880. Ibid., f. 42.

[84] "*Pídase informe al Gobernador de Yucatan sobre el denuncio que en el "Diario del Hogar" del dia 28 de junio á (?) se hace de que el Sr. Aymé, consul americano en Mérida, tiene comision de mandar antigüedades mexicanas para el Museo Peabody de la Universidad de Cambridge…*" SJIP memo, July 8, 1882. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 4, f. 13. The governor responded, "*Tiene el honor este Gobierno de informar á U. para conocimiento del*

permission for Aymé to export "paper molds…photographic dry plates, crates or barrels of earth, [and] broken pieces of pottery and other materials that could be of interest for the students of antiquities in the United States, and that do not have intrinsic value or any value other than to students of science," a request that appears to have met with silence from Instrucción Pública.[85] Notwithstanding this lack of authorization, Aymé still tried to send artifacts to the United States. In 1884, a Yucatecan customs official seized two crates that Aymé had labelled as "common soils" and "pottery fragments," on the grounds that these in fact contained Mexican antiquities.[86] In the dispute that followed, which partially focused on the question of whether small or broken objects met "the conditions that the law requires to forbid their exportation," one Instrucción Pública official essentially threw up his hands and advised that the ministry not involve itself in the matter, since customs enforcement fell outside of its jurisdiction.[87] The 1884 episode, then, served as yet another reminder that Mexico lacked formal institutions to coordinate the defense of archaeological patrimony. No single individual was empowered to oversee the uses of pre-Hispanic sites and objects, or establish and enforce a consistent federal archaeological policy. When such an individual presented himself, he found that the moment was ripe.

Presidente de la República, que no ha llegado á su noticia que el ciudadano americano Sr. Aymé, esté comisionado en este Estado p.a remitir al Museo de Peabody de la Universidad de Cambridge, objetos de antigüedades mexicanas; pero que en el caso de que así sea no se permitirá la extraccion de ellas como está prevenido por diferentes disposiciones del Gobierno de la Union." Letter from the governor of Yucatán to SJIP, July 24, 1882. Ibid., f. 15.

[85] "*Remito con esta nota copia de una carta, fecha 25 de Agosto último, de los Señores Stephen Salisbury Jr, y Alex Agassiz al Secretario de Estado en Washington, en que piden, á nombre de ciertas sociedades que en ella nombran, que se obtenga permiso del Gobierno de Vuestra Señoria, para que Mr. Louis H. Aymé, Cónsul de los Estados Unidos en Mérida, pueda hacer exploraciones arqueológicas en Yucatan y enviar á los Estados Unidos satisfactoriamente sellados, moldes de papel, láminos fotográficas sin carton (photographic dry plates), cajas ó barriles de tierra, objetos rotos de alfarería y otros materiales que puedan ser de interes para los estudiantes de antigüedades en este país (los EU), y que no tengan valor intrínseco ó siquiera valor posible si no es para los estudiantes científicos.*" Letter from the U.S. ambassador in Mexico City to the Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Relaciones Exteriores, September 20, 1883, copied in a letter from the Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Relaciones Exteriores to SJIP, September 22, 1883. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 4, fs. 1-2.

[86] "*Declarada contener tierra comun, contiene en efecto la tierra dicha; pero esta ocultaba el objeto que en los dibujos represente el n. 2; expera así mismo que la caja A. con 230 Ks. b.to declarada contener fragmentos de barro, contiene varios saquitos con multitud de fragmentos de piedra, de barro y de hueso de procedencia antigua; unos pulimentados, otros barnizados, algunos solo cocidos, la mayor parte con figuras y cométricas trazadas en la superficie, algunos trozos pequeños de obsidiana y ademas los objetos que en los dibujos representan los n.s 1. 3. 4. 5. y 6.*" Letter from the administrador de la Aduana Marítima de Frontera to the Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Hacienda y Crédito Público, June 26, 1884, transcribed in letter from Hacienda to SJIP, July 7, 1884. Ibid., f. 7.

[87] "*…me permito recordarle el trámite de que dichos objetos sean reconocidos por el Director del Museo Yucateco, y que sean entregados á la interesada aquellos que, á juicio del expresado Director, carezcan de las condiciones que exije la ley para prohibir su exportacion.*" Personal letter from the administrador de la Aduana de Progreso Pedro Argüelles to Joaquín Baranda at SJIP, November 6, 1884. Ibid., 10. The Instrucción Pública official Jesús Arévalo argued that "*La participacion que esta Sria. puede tiene en el negocio es muy indirecta y consiste en que, desde que fueron deconsisadas las cajas de que se trata, el Ministerio de Hacienda desde el 10 de Junio p.o p.o dio aviso á esta Sria.…á fin de que las antigüedades contenidas en ellas fuesen colocadas en el Museo Nacional.*" SJIP memo written by Jesus Arevalo, December 18, 1884.

II. The Formation of the Inspección

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, numerous states and governing regimes moved to impose systematic control over antiquities. As early as 1830, French Minister of the Interior François Guizot "created a post of Inspector General of Historical Monuments and National Antiquities," which combined with other institutions formed around the same time "to organize an immense system of investigations concerning intellectual and moral history, as well as 'material' history."[88] Egyptian law placed restrictions on the export and destruction of antiquities by 1835, although little was done to enforce these provisions until the 1858 installation of the French Auguste Mariette as "'Maamour,' director of Egyptian Antiquities."[89] In 1874, the government of Greece negotiated stiff terms with German archaeologists who wished to excavate at Olympia, permitting them to take "only casts and a few duplicates back to Germany."[90] The Ottoman Empire promulgated antiquities legislation in 1869 and 1874, although Wendy M. K. Shaw notes the comparative "weakness" of Ottoman archaeological policy in contrast to that of Greece and Egypt.[91] Italy created an archaeological service "placed under the Ministry of Public Instruction" in 1875, shortly after its national unification.[92] In British India, "a new Department of the Curatorship of Ancient Monuments was set up" in 1880, as part of a broader move towards archaeological conservation.[93] In all of these cases, the official regulation of antiquities was implicitly linked to geopolitical status.[94] In colonized areas, state support for archaeology and for the preservation of ancient ruins helped to justify imperial rule,

[88] "Elles ont pour but, en renouant avec la tradition bénédictine, d'<<organiser>> un immense système d'investigations sur l'histoire intellectuelle et morale, aussi bien que sur l'histoire <<matérielle>>." Ève Gran-Aymerich, *Naissance de l'archéologie moderne, 1798-1945* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1998), 114.

[89] Margarita Díaz-Andreu, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 120-1. Díaz-Andreu mentions that a Cairo museum formed in 1835, meant "to house antiquities belonging to the government and obtained through official excavations" was instead used as "a source of gifts for foreign visitors; the last objects dispatched in this way were sent to the Archduke Maximilian of Austria." Ibid., 120.

[90] Stephen L. Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 83-4. See also Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 106.

[91] Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed*, 105-6.

[92] Dyson, *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts*, 99-100.

[93] Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 55-6.

[94] It is telling that in the debates over Charnay's contract, several deputies took offense to Justo Sierra's comparison of Mexico with Egypt and India. While Sierra argued, "*¿Para qué han servido estos monumentos en Egipto; y para qué en los museos de Europa? Para una cosa bien sencilla…La historia de Egipto se ha conocido desde el momento en que esos monumentos han ido a ser confrontados con las diversas civilizaciones, en los museos europeos. Allí se han podido estudiar estos datos, y esto ha enriquecido con series de siglos la historia del progreso humano*," Vicente Riva Palacio strongly objected to statements that equated Mexico to "*Egipto en su decadencia y con la India en la barbarie*." Likewise, Guillermo Prieto asked "*¿Estamos nosotros en este caso de degradación? ¿Se puede citar al Egipto como un país en que la civilización florezca?*" Speeches by Justo Sierra, Vicente Riva, and Guillermo Prieto, quoted in Díaz y de Ovando, *Memoria de un debate*, 37, 39 and 43.

while also filling the museums of colonizing powers with rare and valuable objects. In nation-states, archaeological services were one of the accoutrements of civilization, as well as a means of taking both practical and symbolic control over the national past. The latter was particularly important for states such as Mexico, where the rule of national governments had been repeatedly shaken by internal and external challenges.

By 1885, therefore, both international and domestic factors were aligned for the creation of a federal archaeological agency in Mexico. On October 17, Instrucción Pública issued a public decree stating that the president had named Leopoldo Batres as Inspector of Archaeological Monuments. Batres was charged with "the conservation of all the archaeological and historical monuments of the Republic," and given the right to name honorary caretakers. He would prevent unlawful excavations, and supervise those authorized by Instrucción Pública. All artifacts that entered the collections of the Museo Nacional would first be received and recorded by Batres, including any artifacts seized by customs inspectors.[95] The creation of this position thus did a great deal to streamline state management of archaeological patrimony, and can be explained in those terms. Given the importance that the pre-Hispanic past had possessed for Mexican national identity since the colonial era, and the administrative pressures described in the preceding section, it is probable that the federal government would have formed some sort of archaeological service in the 1880s or 1890s regardless of the specific personalities involved. That Mexico's archaeological agency took the form it did, however, owed much to the temperament, political standing, and ambitions of Batres himself. Over the succeeding years, Batres built a full-fledged agency around himself, the grandly named Inspección y Conservación de Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República Mexicana (henceforth simply "the Inspección"). While in theory the Inspección was a subordinate branch of Instrucción Pública, in practice Batres ran the agency as a semi-autonomous fiefdom until the summer of 1911, when the revolutionary successes of Francisco Madero pushed him from office. The rest of this chapter will examine Batres and the expansion of the agency he led.

The Inspector General

Photographs of Leopoldo Batres show a sleekly corpulent man with a walrus-like mustache, who always seems to be looking down at the camera. He began his career in the military, where he achieved the rank of cavalry captain. Assigned to serve along the swampy

[95] "*1a. El inspector cuidará de la conservacion de todos los monumentos y ruinas arqueológicas é históricas de la República. Al efecto, podrá nombrar á los vigilantes ó conserjes que en cada departamento fueren necesarios…2a. Impedirá que se hagan excavaciones, traslaciones de monumentos, etc., sin la debida autorizacion de la secretaría de justicia…3a. Las antigüedades que se remitan al Museo Nacional, ya sea por compra hecha por el mismo establecimiento ó por donacion de las autoridades de los estados, del extranjero ó de particulares, se dirigirán precisamente al inspector para que éste tome nota de ellas, y por inventario las entregará al Museo…4a. Le serán igualmente dirigidos los objetos antiguos decomisados en las aduanas, con arregló á las disposiciones vigentes, á fin de que por su conducto lleguen á poder del Museo Nacional, en los mismos términos prevenidos en la fraccion anterior.*" Letter from Ignacio Mariscal at SJIP to the governor of México State, August 28, 1868. Reprinted in *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, ed. Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 235. In 1909, the Díaz government further specified the responsibilities and powers of the Inspector de Monumentos Arqueológicos and of the agency that he led. This legislation essentially ratified existing practices, but did serve to somewhat distinguish the position of Inspector from the person of Leopoldo Batres. Luis Vázquez León, "Mexico: The Institutionalization of Archaeology, 1885-1942," in *History of Latin American Archaeology*, ed. Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo (Aldershot, U.K.: Avebury, 1994), 70.

shores of the Bahía de Magdalena in Baja California, Batres apparently began to turn his mind to other pursuits. In 1877 he secured a permanent leave from the army, and began to devote himself to archaeology as both intellectual pastime and profitable pursuit.[96] Batres studied in France under the anthropologist and ethnologist Ernest Hamy, although he did not earn a degree.[97] After returning to Mexico Batres formed connections at the Museo Nacional, selling the institution at least $3,000 worth of antiquities between May of 1881 and July of 1885.[98] He even found employment there in 1885, charged with organizing the institution's archaeological collections. However, Batres left this post within a month. Rather than working in a subordinate position at the Museum, Batres used his close personal relationship with Porfirio Díaz to create and secure the post of Inspector of Archaeological Monuments.[99] Throughout his career in the archaeological bureaucracy, Batres relied on Díaz's favor and forbearance.

Despite his personal interest in archaeology, Batres was in some ways an unlikely addition to the genteel world of Mexican cultural politics. He did not have many academic accomplishments to his name, and could not boast the same level of disciplinary expertise as most of the professors at the Museo Nacional. In addition, Batres was choleric and vain, unwilling to admit error, and apt to provoke rage in others. Once installed as Inspector, he relied upon three qualities to repel accusations of scholarly or managerial incompetence: an assiduous work ethic, unshakeable loyalty to Díaz and the Porfirian regime, and a profound, if frequently unjustified, sense of self-confidence. These attributes gave Batres the institutional longevity that allowed him to play a definitive role in Porfirian archaeology. Over a period which saw numerous directors come and go at the Museo Nacional, Batres had more than a quarter-century in which to consolidate power and influence.[100] For those two and a half decades, Batres appointed and dismissed Inspección staff, oversaw the work of foreign investigators, directed digs, surveys and reconstruction projects, and acted as an official spokesman for Mexican archaeology on both national and international stages. After the passage of laws governing archaeological patrimony in 1896 and 1897, Batres vigorously asserted the principle of federal

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[96] Order signed by Porfirio Díaz and sent to the Ministro de Guerra, January 22, 1877. Archivo Batres, f. 14.

[97] Christina Bueno, "Excavating Identity: Archaeology and Nation in Mexico, 1876-1911" (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2004), 80.

[98] Archivo Histórico del Museo Nacional de Antropología (AHMNA), vol. 5, fs. 78, 80, 83, 141, 144, 147-148; vol. 6, fs. 6, 7, 10, 10a, 12, 14, 29-31, 65, 72, 100-102, 104. In 1884, Batres also acquired "*algunas mómias deterioradas y otros objetos que no son de ninguna utilidad para el Museo*" in exchange for "*ejemplares de arqueología, historia antigua de México y manuscritos importantes que se relacionan con la misma historia.*" Letter from Leopoldo Batres to Jesús Sánchez, August 7, 1884, copied in letter from Jesús Sánchez to SJIP, August 8, 1884. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 6, f. 1.

[99] Bueno, "Excavating Identity," 81-2.

[100] Between 1883 and June of 1911, seven different men served as *de facto* directors of the Museo Nacional and Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología. (While Francisco del Paso y Troncoso technically occupied the post of director from 1889 to 1910, he left for Europe in 1892 and never returned to Mexico. Between 1892 and 1910, four individuals with the title of "subdirector" conducted the daily administrative business of the Museum.) The longest-serving individual was the botanist Manuel Urbina, who had several stints as interim director and subdirector that totalled about fifteen years. The shortest service was that of Alfredo Chavero, who was subdirector from December of 1902 to May of 1903. Luis Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía*, 39.

dominion over all archaeological sites and objects. He framed the Inspección's work within an official ideology of the patriotic defense of national treasures, and cast himself as a ferocious watchdog against any diminution of Mexico's archaeological heritage.

Others were less impressed with the nobility of the Inspección's purpose, and the qualifications of its leader. The Inspector General's talent for acquiring enemies extended to men and women of considerable prominence within the international archaeological community, who lambasted Batres and his subordinates with accusations of venality, corruption, ignorance and dereliction of duty. Discussing restorations that Batres carried out at Xochicalco, the British painter of monuments Adela Breton wrote, "Words fail to express my feelings at such an atrocity. I can only say that Batres' cup of iniquities has now overflowed…Some people are appointed afflictions and one can only wait patiently until they are removed."[101] In 1910, the U.S. archaeologist Zelia Nuttall resigned her honorary professorship at the Museo Nacional in protest after Batres appropriated one of her research sites for himself.[102] Batres also had a long-running feud with the Mexican historian, archaeologist, and statesman Alfredo Chavero, which erupted into a public scandal at the 1902 Conference of Americanists. According to a *New York Times* article on the incident, "[Chavero] said that to Dr. M. H. Saville of the American Museum of Natural History was due the honor of starting the explorations [at Monte Albán]. Señor Batres arose and demanded that the presiding officer recall his remark and give the credit to him (Batres) because he had made the discoveries. Señor Chavero refused to do that, and there was a noisy scene." As a result of this incident, Batres was recalled from the Congress by the Minister of Public Instruction Justino Fernández, but not before engaging in a "loud and heated interview" with the Duc de Loubat, a major patron of archaeological studies who was serving as the meeting's Honorary President.[103]

After Batres' departure in 1911, the accusations against him became even more vitriolic. The English journalist Henry Baerlein referred to Batres as a "villain," with "predatory instincts," who "was for many years a wholesale and a retail merchant of the antiquities of Mexico…he has received payment for 'affording facilities' whereby these objects could be taken from the country." [104] Charges also surfaced that Batres had misappropriated federal funds, or used workers at archaeological sites as personal servants.[105] Batres would additionally be condemned for his reckless and destructive "restorations" of archaeological sites, especially

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[101] Letter from Adela Breton to Alfred Tozzer, January 19, 1911. Quoted in Mary F. McVicker, *Adela Breton: A Victorian Artist Amid Mexico's Ruins* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 149.

[102] Ross Parmenter, *Zelia Nuttall and the Recovery of Mexico's Past*, BANC MSS 2009/115, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 820-1 and 827.

[103] "Mexican Delegate Discharged from Office; The Result of the Controversy About Credit to Senor Batres; Senor Chavero Resumes Attendance at the Sessions of the Americanists – The Last of the Discussions." *The New York Times*, October 26, 1902.

[104] Henry Baerlein, *Mexico, the Land of Unrest: Being Chiefly an Account of Produced the Outbreak in 1910, Together with the Story of the Revolutions Down to this Day* (Philadephia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1913), 105-6.

[105] In 1913, Batres collected several letters from individuals who had worked for the Inspección under his supervision, who testified that they had observed no improper activities or illegitimate payments. The machinist Pedro Moreno, for instance, wrote that "*en las obras de las Pirámides de San Juan Teotihuacán bajo las ordenes de Ud. nunca observé nada que no fuese de rigurosa y severisima honradez en aquellas obras*…" Letter from Moreno to Batres, May 15, 1913. Archivo Batres, f. 237.

those carried out at Teotihuacán in preparation for the great Centennial celebrations of 1910. The English archaeologist Alfred Maudslay, for instance, "called Batres' work [at Teotihuacán] 'a stupendous monument of self assertion and incompetence.'"[106] Although at least one archaeologist of Mesoamerica has recently praised Batres' efforts at archaeological reconstruction, writing that Batres' work at the Morelos site of Xochicalco "was a faithful and accurate job," the scientific reputation of Mexico's first Inspector General of Archaeological Monuments remains generally low.[107]

Although the Inspección and the Museo Nacional were theoretically meant to function in tandem, Batres also managed to infuriate a number of people associated with the Museo. In 1894, Museum subdirector and botany professor Manuel Urbina wrote "with great displeasure" to Instrucción Pública, complaining that Batres was coming to the establishment during the hours that it was open to the public, "the only times he is free to do so, for the grave reasons that are known to the Ministry." At the Museum, Batres made loud statements, "under the pretext of serving as a guide" to those who accompanied him, "'that the archaeological collections have been changed, that the staff of the Museum disrespects the public, fooling them with false (*mentirosas*) classifications, and far from attending to the Archaeological Section, which is most important, they misuse the funds that the Government entrusts to them on decorations for the building, neglecting what is fundamental.'" Urbina indignantly protested to his superiors that the archaeological collections had not been altered since Museum Director Francisco del Paso y Troncoso left to conduct studies in Europe. He also argued that Batres' loud statements were particularly damaging, since they came from someone "recognized as having the responsibility to inspect and conserve the national monuments," making the Inspector General's words "an accusation, if not a calumny" against the employees of the Museum and the government that had placed its faith in them.[108] Batres survived this affair as he did so many others, with the matter

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[106] Robert L. Brunhouse, *Pursuit of the Ancient Maya: Some Archaeologists of Yesterday* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 44.

[107] Kenneth Hirth, *Archaeological Research at Xochicalco, Volume One. Ancient Urbanism at Xochicalco: The Evolution and Organization of a Pre-Hispanic Society* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2000), 40.

[108] "*Con sumo desagrado, me permito informar á U., que el C. Ynspector y Conservador de Monumentos Arqueológicos Don Leopoldo Batres, ha venido varias veces a visitar este Establecimiento á la hora que está abierto al público, única que por acuerdo de esa Secretaria, puede tener libre para hacerlo, por graves motivos que esa superioridad conoce; pero el citado Sor Batres, viene simpre acompañado de algunas personas á quienes á pretexto de servir de guia en la visita á los salones, manifiesta en voz alta como sucedio hoy, "que las colecciones Arqueológicas están cambiadas; que el personal del Museo falta al respeto al público, engañandolo con clasificaciones mentirosas, y que lejos de atender la seccion de Arqueologia, que es la más importante, distrae los fondos que le confia el Gobierno, en adornos del edificio, desatendiendo la parte fundamental." A este respecto manifestaré á U., que desde que el C. Director Don F. del Paso y Troncoso, se fué á Europa, no se han tocado sino para asear los exteriormente, los estantes que contienen objetos de Arqueologia, sino que permanece cerrados y sellados como él los dejó en los propios lugares…tratándose del empleado que tiene caracter oficial reconocido para inspeccionar y conservar los monumentos nacionales, las afirmaciones referidas envuelven una acusacion, sino fuera una calumnia; que desprestigia al Gobierno, por aparecer que el personal que tiene el Establecimiento, por disposicion suya, es indigno de su confianza; y por lo mismo se deduce, que ignora lo que hace al nombrar empleados que no llenan sus funciones, ó los tolera á sabiendas, en perjuicio del Establecimiento y del público á quien se engaña, sorprendiendo su buena fé y su deseo de ilustrar sus conocimientos.*" Letter from Manuel Urbina at the Museo Nacional to SJIP, April 19, 1894. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 23, fs. 1-2.

apparently resolved through face-to-face consultations that evaded the documentary record.[109] Batres also eventually secured his wish to rearrange the Museum's collections as he saw fit. However, when the tables turned during the Revolution, it would be Batres' classifications that faced harsh criticism from Museum staff. In 1915, the professor of archaeology at the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología expressed relief that "this Museum is now free from the archaeological and artistic attacks perpetrated by Sr. Leopoldo Batres, with the complicity of the former Minister of Public Instruction and Lic. Genaro García, Director of the Museum."[110] Mechthild Rutsch has argued that feuds between the Museum and the Inspección were sufficiently deep-rooted that they endured well past the point when Batres ceased to play an active role in Mexican archaeology.[111]

Batres' prickly personality was a major impediment to cooperation between the Inspección and the Museo. However, structural factors also exacerbated difficulties between the institutions, as the jurisdiction of the Inspección overlapped in important ways with the research and conservation activities centered in the Museo Nacional. Before the formation of the Inspección in 1885, the professors and directors of the Museo Nacional had exercised considerable influence over archaeological questions, and had a relatively free hand in the acquisition and disposal of artifacts. Although some of the Museo's activities were superseded by the Inspección, museum researchers continued to pursue independent projects and to inject their opinions into archaeological debates throughout the Porfiriato. Thus, even when Batres was personally friendly towards the Museum director, institutional frictions might still occur in the absence of effective coordination from Instrucción Pública. For example, in 1908 Instrucción Pública officials failed to inform Batres of excavations being conducted at the Zacatecan site of Chalchihuites by Manuel Gamio, then a student of archaeology at the Museo Nacional. Although authorities at Instrucción Pública had received advance notice of Gamio's plans and had even allocated $400 to the Museo Nacional so that the excavations could be carried out, Batres only learned of the work at Chalchihuites when he saw an article in *El Imparcial* which lauded Gamio's discoveries.[112] The Inspector General was seriously alarmed by this circumvention of his authority. Writing to Justo Sierra, who was then serving as Minister of Public Instruction, Batres asked almost plaintively, "What, then, of the Law of Archaeological Monuments? What, then, of the zeal to conserve our monumental archives intact, if we permit the first passerby to

[109] The only written response that Minister of Public Instruction Joaquín Baranda provided to Urbina's indignant letter was "*Quedo impuesto por el of.o de Ud fecha 19 del mes p.o p.o de la conducta que observa el C. Leopoldo Batres cuando concurre á ese Establecimiento, y en contestacion le manifiesto que ya se dicten las providencias conducentes á evitar que se repita el hecho que se denuncia en su atado oficio.*" Letter from Baranda at SJIP to Urbina at the Museo Nacional, April 19, 1894. Ibid., f. 3.

[110] "*Asi quedará ya libre este Museo de los atentados arqueológicos y artísticos que perpetraba el Sr. Leopoldo Batres en complicidad con el Ministerio de Instrucción Pública de entonces y el Lic. D. Genaro García, Director del Museo.*" Letter from Ramón Mena to Elías Amador, September 10, 1915, copied in letter from Amador to the Encargado del Despacho de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, September 13, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 160, exp. 89, f. 1.

[111] Mechthild Rutsch, "Ramón Mena y Manuel Gamio. Una mirada oblicua sobre la antropología mexicana en los años veinte del siglo pasado," *Relaciones*, Vol. 23, No. 88 (Autumn, 2001): 101.

[112] Memo from SIPBA to the Secretaría de Hacienda, August 8, 1908, AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 38, f. 2, and letter from Batres to SIPBA, October 25, 1908, Ibid., fs. 7-8.

profane them?"[113] As the archaeological bureaucracy expanded, its component parts sometimes jostled each other uncomfortably.[114]

Batres succeeded in stopping Gamio's excavations at Chalchihuites, but in the years that followed he could do little but watch as Gamio eclipsed him in scientific prestige and political influence. During the 1910s, Gamio's stratigraphic and ethnological studies of the Valley of Teotihuacan transformed the practice of Mexican archaeology and anthropology. Besides his coursework at the Museo Nacional, Gamio also studied for several years with the anthropologist Franz Boas at Columbia, and developed an intellectual approach to the pre-Hispanic past that mixed scientific rigor with *indigenista* concern for national development. By the 1920s Gamio had became one of the most important figures in Mexican anthropology, and made significant contributions to the formation of federal social and cultural policy. Gamio's many accomplishments have made him a perfect historiographical foil to the vainglorious, error-prone Batres; in the words of Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, Gamio was "*la otra cara de la moneda*."[115] Consequently, Batres and the agency he directed have often been seen in essentially negative terms as representatives of a sterile archaeological Scholasticism, destined to be swept away in Mexico's post-Revolutionary cultural renaissance.

Yet while the many negative portrayals of Batres have an indisputable basis in reality, they provide only a partial (in both senses of the word) understanding of federal archaeological management during the Porfiriato. There is substantial evidence to support the view that Batres was undereducated in archaeology, aggressively self-serving, petty, vindictive and personally proprietary towards pre-Hispanic ruins. There is also considerable basis for believing that his

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[113] "*A qué, entonces, la Ley de Monumentos Arqueológicos? ¿A qué, entonces, el celo de la conservación intacta de nuestros archivos monumentales, si permitimos que el primer venido vaya á profanarlos?*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, October 25, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 38, f. 7.

[114] In 1910 Porfirio Aguirre, another student enrolled in archaeology classes at the Museo Nacional, conducted excavations "*sin que haya habido la autorización necesaria para hacerlas y sin que esta Inspección General haya tenido la intervención que le corresponde según las disposiciones vigentes*." Batres urged Instrucción Pública officials not to renew the stipend assigned to Aguirre "*para hacer sus estudios de arqueología, los que principia muy mal, supuesto que infringe las disposiciones vigentes en materia de conservación de monumentos arqueológicos, que está obligado á conocer y respetar*," and pointedly noted that according to the letter of the law, Aguirre should be turned over to the district judge. While Batres did not endorse bringing criminal charges against the student excavator, "*como la pena que tocaría al Sr. Aguirre podría ser demasiado severa*," he stressed the importance of the oversight provided by the Inspección "*para salvaguardia de los tesoros arqueológicos de nuestra República.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, October 12, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 100, f. 1. Aguirre's career does not seem to have suffered greatly from this incident, in part because Batres did not remain in office for much longer. However, if Batres had lived until 1935, he might have taken a grim satisfaction in seeing Aguirre charged with stealing artifacts from the Museo Nacional. These accusations, brought by the archaeologist Alfonso Caso, caused Aguirre to lose his job at the Museum and disappear from the archaeological profession. Mechthild Rutsch, *Entre el campo y el gabinete: Nacionales y extranjeros en la profesionalización de la antropología mexicana (1877-1920)* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, 2007), 276.

[115] Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *Las piedras negadas: De la Coatlicue al Templo Mayor* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998), 79. Unsurprisingly, Batres and Gamio had a tense relationship. In a 1911 defense of his directorship of the Inspección, Batres named Gamio as one of "Mis envidiosos." Leopoldo Batres, *Memorandum dirigido al Sr. Lic. D. Miguel Díaz Lombardo, Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes*. (Barcelona: Imprenta litografía Viuda de J. Cunill, 1911), 23. Luis Vázquez León writes that "Even in 1921, only five years before his death, [Batres] railed against 'dilettante empiricist excavators' and 'fakers' – an open allusion to Franz Boas and Manuel Gamio." Luis Vázquez León, "Mexico: The Institutionalization of Archaeology," 71.

work and agitation yielded real dividends in the protection of archaeological sites, and the promotion of archaeology as a central component of Mexican national identity. Although the Inspección often faltered in its mission to preserve archaeological monuments (and sometimes actively damaged them by misconceived attempts at restoration) the formation of a national agency dedicated to the oversight of pre-Hispanic sites was a watershed moment.[116] For the first time, the federal government actively asserted its right to monitor sites whose usage had traditionally been defined by local claims and associations, the first step in claiming these sites as property and patrimony of the Mexican nation. Whether this change is viewed in positive or negative terms – and it did cause real harm to some individuals and communities – the shift to centralized state control over archaeological sites was transformative.

III. The Growth of the Archaeological Bureaucracy

Between 1885 and 1911, both the Inspección and the Museo Nacional expanded considerably, and took on a wide range of new responsibilities. Much of this growth happened organically, as institutional leaders built upon existing structures and gradually coaxed additional money from Instrucción Pública to add staff, acquire resources, and expand the range of their institution's activities.[117] However, international expositions, scientific gatherings, and national commemorations provided particular impetus for Mexican leaders to invest in cultural institutions and archaeological projects. The activities of foreign excavators within Mexico also provoked responses from federal administrators, who continued to walk a tightrope between the promotion and protection of the nation's archaeological patrimony. The remainder of this chapter will briefly sketch out major developments in the federal management of archaeological activities from the appointment of Batres to the end of the Díaz regime. The following three chapters will look more closely at the functioning of the Inspección, and how the agency administered pre-Hispanic sites, defined and claimed archaeological property, and interacted with local communities. Out of consideration for space, relevance, and the reader's patience, this section will focus on those events and processes that best contextualize the material in subsequent chapters. Of necessity, much is omitted that contemporaries would have considered of central importance (for example, the growing number of publications issued by the Museo

[116] This interpretation is consistent with that of the Mexican archaeologist Ignacio Bernal, who wrote that Batres "exploraba desconociendo toda técnica y aun todo estudio serio…Pero con todo hay que recordar que fue verdadero pionero en el centro de México, y que a través de él por primera vez el Estado mexicano aportó fondos para la excavación y reconstrucción de monumentos antiguos, lo que no había ocurrido desde tiempos de los últimos Borbones en Palenque ni en los recorridos de Dupaix. Por tanto, al entusiasmo de Batres se debe la reanudación de esa tradición que ha permitido hasta nuestros días seguir estudiando las ruinas." Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología en México* (Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Porrua, S.A., 1992), 141.

[117] In a paper presented at the 18th International Conference of Americanists in 1912, the doctor, son-in-law of Batres , and future rector of Mexico's National University Alfonso Pruneda stated that "*Y, sobre todo, ha ido desarrollándose, gradual y progresivamente, una oficina dependiente de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, denominada Inspección General de Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República, que tiene a su cargo la vigilancia y cuidado de dichos monumentos, la exploración de los mismos y constituye un verdadero cuerpo consultivo que entre otras cosas, dictamina cuando se pretende hacer esas exploraciones por particulares y cuando se intenta la exportación de objetos arqueológicos.*" "La legislación mexicana sobre monumentos arqueológicos. Trabajo presentado al XVIII Congreso Internacional de Americanistas por el Doctor Alfonso Pruneda, Delegado de México (London, 27 de mayo, 1912). In report from Pruneda to SIPBA, written on board the *Lusitania*, en route between Liverpool and New York, June 1912. AGN-IPBA, caja 287, exp. 22, f. 79.

Nacional, numerous excavations and their scientific findings, or the various reclassifications of the Museum's collections).[118] Instead, I will emphasize the means by which Mexico's federal government extended its control over the material past, in order to provide a framework for the more in-depth discussions of the succeeding chapters.

One of the first tasks that Batres carried out after his appointment as Inspector was to form an archaeological map of the Mexican Republic, noting the existence of ruins, burial mounds, and pyramids scattered across the national landscape.[119] As Benedict Anderson and Raymond Craib have pointed out, mapping is one of the fundamental mechanisms modern nation-states use to control territory, "giv[ing] space a stable signification, permitting it to be more effectively appropriated, transformed, and regulated."[120] By placing rectangles, triangles, and squares down on paper, Batres established the preliminary extent of his jurisdiction. Batres also moved to exert federal authority in a more direct manner, by naming honorary caretakers of Mexico's most important ruins. Since these positions were unpaid, many of the early caretakers seem to have been men who possessed wealth or local prominence, and who mixed patriotic pride in Mexico's indigenous past with the desire to bolster their connections to the Díaz regime. For the first several years of the Inspección's existence, much of Batres' time was taken up with making preliminary inspection visits to pre-Hispanic sites, arranging for the appointment of caretakers, and collecting basic information about the nature and condition of the country's archaeological patrimony.

This work took on additional importance as Mexico's cultural leaders put together displays for international expositions and World's Fairs, where the nation's pre-Hispanic past was a central component of the narratives composed to present the Porfirian state before the global community. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, the author of the definitive work on these international presentations, has written that "Porfirians used and abused their pre-Hispanic past, and this reinforced a Porfirian indigenism…Porfirian indigenism was fundamental in the construction of the national image not only because there is no way to understand the culture of Mexico's fin-de-siècle without it, but also because it was not a domestic but a cosmopolitan component of nationalism as a whole…Never before was the national epic so much a part of Western civilization."[121] In an 1894 letter to Instrucción Pública, a Mexican citizen encapsulated this view in a typically Porfirian manner: "For vulgar people, works undertaken to find Mexican antiquities are worthless, but for the civilized people of a cultured nation such as ours, they are of

[118] For contemporary accounts of the Museo Nacional and Mexican archaeology, see W. E. Gates, "El Museo Nacional de México y sus publicaciones," *Boletín del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología*, 3a. Época, Vol. 1, No. 5 (1911): 81-3; Ramón Mena, *La ciencia arqueológica en México desde la proclamación de la independencia hasta nuestros días* (Mexico City: Tipografía Viuda de F. Díaz de León, 1911); Jesús Galindo y Villa, "El Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnologia: Breve Reseña," *Memorias de la Sociedad Científica Antonio Alzate*, Vol. 40 (August, 1921): 301-41, and Luis Castillo Ledón, *El museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía, 1825-1925, Reseña histórica escrita para la celebración de su primer centenario* (Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos del Museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía, 1924).

[119] "Carta Arqueológica de la República Mexicana, formada por Leopoldo Batres, Ynspector y Conservador de Monumentos Arqueológicos, Año de 1886." AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 6, f. 14. The map was drawn by Luis Becerril, and printed by H. Iriarte.

[120] Raymond Craib, *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 8. See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 170-8.

[121] Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 250.

paramount importance."[122] The Paris Exposition of 1889 and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago both consumed a great deal of attention from members of the federal cultural establishment, many of whom traveled abroad to represent their country and its numerous scientific achievements. Besides providing the federal government with motivation to gather archaeological data, and to clear pre-Hispanic sites of vegetation so that respectable photographs of them could be taken, international expositions also put Mexican scholars into contact with their foreign counterparts. Personal connections made in Paris and Chicago helped to fuel the active interchange of artifacts, publications, and ideas between Mexico and the countries of the North Atlantic.[123]

By the mid-1890s, federal ambitions to control and manage the material remains of the past had again exceeded the capacities of existing legal and administrative structures. The difficulties of supervising or placing demands on unpaid employees caused the Inspección to assign salaries to its caretakers, changing the nature of the agency's workforce. As shall be discussed in the next chapter, the Inspección increasingly came to employ lower-status men, selected from communities close to the ruins where they would be required to reside. In addition, questions of excavation permits and exportation rights continued to arise. As in the 1880s, the federal government responded to these outside pressures by further codifying the status and acceptable usage of the material past. In 1896 and 1897, Mexico's Congress passed two major laws that greatly strengthened federal authority over pre-Hispanic sites and objects.

The 1896 legislation appears to have been spurred by a flurry of requests to Instrucción Pública in late 1894 and early 1895. One of those who applied to federal authorities was the U.S.

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[122] "*Para la gente vulgar los trabajos enprendidos para encontrar las antiguedades mexicanas no valen nada pero para un pueblo civilizado de una nación culta como la nuestra, son de suma importancia.*" Letter from Diego Álvarez de los [Grados?] to Joaquín Baranda at SJIP, June 18, 1897. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 21, f. 2. This letter did not relate specifically to international exhibitions, but does express the importance of archaeology to Porfirian concepts of civilization and progress.

[123] Such exchanges, of course, had a long history. An examination of the books and journals that entered the library of the Museo Nacional in 1880 shows that the institution was alert to foreign developments in natural history, linguistics, geography and ethnology, especially those taking place in France, the United States, and England. Of 89 volumes, 77 were in French, one was in English, one was in German and 10 were in Spanish. Archivo del Museo Nacional de Antropología (AMNA), vol. 5, exp. 6, f. 19. In November and December of the same year, the Museo Nacional acquired works published in Cuba, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Wisconsin, Missouri, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. as well as Mexico. AMNA, vol. 5, exp. 12, f. 36. An 1880 budget proposal for the Museo Nacional noted that "*La plaza de Secretario en este Museo es de tanta importancia por las diversas atribuciones q.e tiene señaladas entre otras la correspondencia en varios idiomas con las sociedades y estab.os del pais y extrangeros cuyas relaciones crecen y aumentan dia á dia*…" "Proyecto de Presupuesto para el año de 1880 á 1881." AMNA, vol. 5, exp. 17, f. 69. Exchanges could also provide clues to the relative vitality of Mexico's archaeological establishment. At the conclusion of the New Orleans Exposition in 1885, for example, the Museo Nacional agreed to trade Mexican natural history specimens to the U.S. Smithsonian Institution. Rather than receiving foreign biological or mineral samples in return, the Museo Nacional would obtain plaster molds from the Smithsonian's collection, taken from monuments at the Mexican ruins of Palenque and Mitla. This exchange thus underscored the limitations of the National Museum's collections in the 1880s. Letter from Museo Nacional director Jesús Sánchez to SJIP, August 18, 1885. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 12, f. 1. In contrast, by the end of the Porfiriato the Museo Nacional was regularly sending all sorts of publications, molds, and visual materials abroad in order to promote the country and its heritage. In 1909, for instance, the Museo gathered together photographs of "*monumentos y otros objetos arqueológicos*" to give to the French artist Auguste Rodin, sent classic works of Mexican history to the "América" library in Compostela, Spain, and photographs of the Museum's archaeological collections to "*algunas escuelas de la ciudad de Nueva York, que las han solicitado*." SIPBA memo, December 16, 1909, AGN-IPBA, caja 155, exp. 23, f. 1; SIPBA memo, May 21, 1909, AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 64, f. 1, and SIPBA memo, May 7, 1908, AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 23, f. 1.

citizen Edward H. Thompson, who would go on to become a prominent and controversial figure in the history of Maya archaeology. In November of 1894, Thompson wrote to the Secretaría de Hacienda (Treasury), which oversaw customs enforcement, asking for the right to send 50 boxes of pre-Hispanic pottery fragments and examples of modern Maya pottery to Harvard University. In his letter to Hacienda officials, Thompson argued that the shards he had collected in the Yucatán had no "artistic value," and were of interest only to "people who are competent in the subject, and capable of shedding greater light on the prehistoric period in America."[124] Shortly thereafter the U.S. government would appoint Thompson as its consul in Mérida, a position that he held until 1909. Thompson received the appointment at the behest of scholars at the American Antiquarian Society and Harvard's Peabody Museum, including the same Stephen Salisbury who had once supported the Le Plongeons.[125] Salisbury and his associates believed that Thompson could establish a beachhead for U.S. archaeology in the Yucatán, by conducting research in his free time while acting as a liaison and host for fellow investigators. As we will see below, Thompson's archaeological activities and continued efforts to send artifacts abroad would eventually produce a major blot on Porfirian management of the pre-Hispanic material past.

Around the same time that Thompson sent his letter, several other people wrote to federal authorities proposing schemes for conducting excavations and for dividing any artifacts that might be uncovered. Morris K. Jesup, the director of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, suggested a 50-50 split between his institution and the National Museum of Mexico.[126] The Mexican citizens Carlos Vázquez and José Landero, who sought concessions to excavate in the states of Oaxaca and Guerrero respectively, also proposed equal splits with the Museum.[127] (Although Landero's initial request did not mention any other excavators, his later correspondence indicates that he was acting as an agent for the Scottish-American archaeologist William Niven, who photographed Guerrero ruins in 1896.)[128] Fifteen years after the Charnay debates, the default assumptions of excavators had shifted somewhat, but still did not grant primacy to federal interests.

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[124] Letter from Edward H. Thompson to the Secretaría de Hacienda, November 28, 1894, copied in letter from Hacienda to SJIP, January 25, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 10, f. 1.

[125] Robert L. Brunhouse, *In Search of the Maya: The First Archaeologists* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1974), 164.

[126] Letter from Morris K. Jesup to the Mexican ambassador in Washington, D.C., translated and quoted in letter from the ambassador to the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, January 3, 1895, copied in letter from Relaciones Exteriores to the Secretaría de Fomento, January 15, 1895, copied in letter from Fomento to SJIP, January 23, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 74, f. 1.

[127] See AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 13 and AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 15.

[128] Niven sent "*veinte fotógrafos de vistas y ruinas, que tomó…en diversos puntos del Estado de Guererro*" to Porfirio Díaz in late 1896. Letter from Manuel Urbina at the Museo Nacional to SJIP, December 10, 1896. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 25, f. 1. Landero wrote in a June 25, 1896 letter to SJIP that "*José de Landero y Cos, Ciudadano Mexicano, á nombre de Guillermo Niven, súbdito de S. M. B., y vecino de Nueva York…ante esa Secretaria atentamente digo…desde 1894 promoví en esa Secretaría la concesion á mi representado de un permiso para hacer exploraciones arqueológicos en el Estado de Guerrero…mi representado desea que se le otorgue la concesion por el término de diez años, á contar de la fecha del acuerdo de esa Secretaria para exploraciones arqueológicas en el Estado de Guerrero*…" AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 64, f. 7.

National administrators sought to change this state of affairs, denying Thompson's request outright, and using the other letters as a platform to consider how the federal government should approve and manage archaeological excavations. In March of 1895, ministry official Jesús Acevedo wrote a memo to Minister of Public Instruction Joaquín Baranda, discussing the Charnay case, and the difficulties of negotiating a new contract and securing congressional permissions each time a new excavator presented him or herself. Acevedo therefore recommended that Mexico's Congress establish generally applicable conditions for archaeological exportation. He suggested that only duplicate or triplicate objects be permitted to leave the national territory, and only in exchange for items from foreign museums that might enrich the collections of the Museo Nacional. Acevedo argued that far from being "anti-patriotic," exportation on such terms "involves a tendency towards progress, which will surely win the approval of Congress." He also made the pragmatic point that "an absolute prohibition such as that which currently exists, cannot be effective because there are a thousand manners of carrying out clandestine exportations…and these exportations represent a simple loss for national archaeology, while exchanges would drive forward both national and foreign studies."[129] While Acevedo's suggestion that exports be balanced by exchanges was ultimately discarded, his braoder suggestions were carried out. On June 3, 1896, a law to regulate the terms under which archaeological explorations might be conducted went into effect.

According to the law's provisions, archaeological concessions granted by the federal government could last for no more than ten years, while all fieldwork would be supervised by a federal appointee. Those who held concessions were responsible for all the expenses of their investigations, for securing permission from landowners if they wished to excavate on private property, and, if the federal government deemed such a safeguard necessary, for providing a "deposit or bond to serve as a guarantee of the obligations contracted by the concession holder."[130] The law stated that "the material which is found in the explorations will be the property of the National Government," although excavators could "make molds of all the objects discovered" and were permitted to retain an example of artifacts for which duplicates existed.[131] Molds and duplicate objects were free of duties if exported, but subject to government inspection

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[129] "*Esto no obstante me aventuro á creer que podría obtenerse del Congreso no solo un permiso para un caso especial, sino un permiso general para exportar antigüedades limitándose al caso de duplicados ó triplicados, y poniendo por condición que la exportación sea siempre á cambio de antigüedades de los Museos extrangeros…La exportación considerada bajo este aspecto no tiene nada de anti-patriótica, y si envuelve una tendencia de adelanto, que seguramente contaría con la aprobación del Congreso.*

Una prohibición tan absoluta como la que ahora existe, no se puede hacer efectiva pues hay mil maneras de hacer exportaciones clandestinas de todo lo que los particulares descubren y estas exportaciones representan una simple pérdida para la arqueología nacional, mientras que los canges impulsan á un mismo tiempo los estudios nacionales y los extrangeros." Memo from J. Acevedo to the Ministro de Justicia e Instrucción Pública, March 28, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 15, fs. 3-4.

[130] "*7a. El Ejecutivo podrá exigir, si lo estimare conveniente, un depósito o fianza que sirva de garantía para el cumplimiento de las obligaciones contraídas por el concesionario, los que en caso de caducidad serán perdidos por éste.*" "Ley sobre exploraciones arqueológicas." Government decree promulgated by Secretario de Justicia e Instrucción Pública Joaquín Baranda, June 3, 1896. Reprinted in *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, ed. Negrete and Cottom, 238.

[131] "*4a. El material que se encuentre en las exploraciones será de la propiedad del Gobierno Nacional, permitiéndose al concesionario sacar moldes de todos los objetos descubiertos y únicamente en el caso de que se encontraren dos o más originales iguales, se entregará un ejemplar de éstos al concesionario por el delegado del Gobierno, quien dará desde luego el correspondiente aviso a la Secretaría de Justicia.*" Ibid., 237.

before they could leave the country. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, this law was insufficient to settle many disputes over the nature and ownership of archaeological property. In particular, the 1896 law was targeted towards professional researchers, and made no provisions for individuals who wished to excavate or otherwise dispose of artifacts or pre-Hispanic constructions on their own land. This law also failed to define the objects to which it applied, except for the vaguely worded reference to "the material that is found in the explorations." Nevertheless, this legislation represented a significant federal effort to regulate the practice of archaeological excavation.

Later the same year, national leaders took further steps to place archaeological sites under the unambiguous control of the federal government. Minister of Public Instruction Joaquín Baranda proposed a new law before Mexico's Congress, an organization which by then was essentially subservient to the wishes of Porfirio Díaz.[132] Baranda argued for legislation that would declare all pre-Hispanic sites, whether these existed on public or privately owned land, to be the property of the nation. This proposal attracted some criticism, in Congress and in the press, as an unconstitutional attack on the rights of private property. A writer for *El Monitor Republicano* pointed out that Baranda had justified the law on the basis of a provision in the Constitution of 1857 which established federal authority over "forts, barracks, storehouses, and *other structures* necessary to the Government of the Union." Since the dictionaries of the Real Academia Española defined "structure (*edificio*)" as a "work, temple, factory, palace, *monument*, statue, or some other type of work," the federal government might claim pre-Hispanic sites on this basis. While the writer argued that such logic would allow federal authorities to claim ownership of any building in the Republic, the administration carried the day.[133] With some modifications, the law proposed by Baranda went into effect on May 11, 1897.

The May 11 law will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, which will examine the law's ambiguities, and its failure to provide clear or mutually satisfactory resolutions to disputes between the federal government and Mexican landowners. However, like the earlier law of June 3, the law of May 11 signified a real advance in federal authority over the pre-Hispanic past, and a landmark event in the histories of Mexican archaeology and cultural management. Once the federal government became the legal owner of pre-Hispanic sites, national officials could take more active steps to restrict the activities of the sites' other users, and plan more ambitious projects of investigation and display. As we will see below and in Chapter 5, Batres in particular

[132] "Opposition groups in Congress – still vocal in the 1880s – were gradually silenced, as their members were harassed and as rigged elections guaranteed an increasingly loyal legislature." Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. 1, 21.

[133] "*El art. 125 de ésta [the Constitution of 1857] – siguió diciendo el Sr. Baranda – dice que estarán bajo la inmediata inspeccion de los Poderes federales, los fuertes, cuarteles, almacenes de depósito y* demás edificios *necesarios al Gobierno de la Union…En seguida el Sr. Baranda leyó las definiciones que respecto de la palabra edificio dan los diccionarios de la Real Academia Española…que definen* edificio *como obra, templo, fábrica, casa, palacio,* monumento*, estátua ú obra de cualquiera especie…el Sr. Baranda no se fija en que toma de modo absoluto la palabra* necesarios*, y en tal virtud va á dar derechamente á un absurdo monstruoso. Segun el criterio de Sr. Baranda, no hay edificio que no sea necesario al Gobierno de la Union, porque basta con que el edificio sea* necesario *– y naturalmente todos los edificios lo son – para que sea* necesario *al Gobierno de la Union*." Luis del Toro, "*RESUMEN.*, etc.," *El Monitor Republicano,* December 2, 1896. Reproduced in Lombardo de Ruiz, *El pasado prehispánico*, 305. This writer may have been something of an outlier, however, as he also argued against prohibitions on the export of antiquities, a staple of archaeological policy since the 1820s: "*No existe, en verdad, fundamento alguno para prohibir la exportación de nuestros monumentos arqueológicos, toda vez que aquí no se estudian ni, por lo mismo, se les saca utilidad de ninguna especie.*" Luis del Toro, "Boletín del 'Monitor.' – Resumen, etc.," *El Monitor Republicano,* December 5, 1896. Reproduced in Ibid., 308.

embraced the idea of enhanced federal control over pre-Hispanic sites, and made extensive use of it when dealing with recalcitrant landholders near the pyramids of Teotihuacán.

The expansion of legal authority was accompanied by the growth of administrative structures. Both the Museo Nacional and the Inspección added staff members in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, often in support positions such as specimen preparers or office copyists. In March of 1898 the Inspección also began to add regional subinspectors, who exercised authority in archaeologically rich areas distant from the nation's capital. Benito Lacroix was appointed Inspector of the Archaeological Monuments of Palenque, a position which gave him general responsibility for the state of Chiapas, while Santiago Bolio was named as Inspector of the Archaeological Ruins of Yucatán. (Bolio seems to have proposed himself for the job, as he sent Instrucción Pública a memorandum in February of 1898 detailing the ways that he planned to guard, restore, and study Yucatán's pre-Hispanic sites.)[134] Leopoldo Batres' son Salvador joined the agency as a secretary in 1903, and became an assistant to his father in 1905.[135] In this capacity, Salvador handled administrative duties, conducted site visits, and supervised excavations when his father was otherwise engaged. Moreover, the growth of archaeological institutions meant that cultural officials began to think about how to train the next generation of scholars and administrators. Around 1905, the Museo Nacional inaugurated classes in the social sciences, which students attended on a federal stipend.[136] A few years later, Instrucción Pública officials participated in an ambitious scheme to establish an International School of American Archaeology and Ethnology in Mexico, "a unique experiment of intellectual cooperation in research and funding" which would train participants in fieldwork and scientific methodologies.[137]

By the late Porfiriato, foreign observers had begun to comment on the tight control which Mexico's federal government exercised over the nation's pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts. John A. Rice, the Wisconsin politician who had once conducted unauthorized excavations at Teotihuacán, was sufficiently impressed to propose the adoption of similar measures in the United States. In 1905, Rice wrote of mounds in his state "I have long advocated their preservation through legislative action, and have held that authority should be given to the State Historical Society, or some other organization to take possession of and protect, at least, those of typical shapes. The government of Mexico has put this whole matter of the preservation of monuments into the hands of the Museo Nacional, so that one cannot even make excavations anywhere in that country without first obtaining the consent or permission of this society."[138]

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[134] SJIP memo, March 23, 1898, AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 37, f. 1; SJIP memo, March 5, 1898, AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 38, f. 3, and proposal from Bolio to SJIP, February 10, 1898, Ibid., f. 2.

[135] SJIP memo, May 12, 1903, AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 20, f. 1, and AGN-IPBA, caja 151, exps. 4 and 5.

[136] Mechthild Rutsch writes that "Existen distintos testimonios sobre el comienzo de las clases en el Museo," but that "Según fuentes primarias de la Secretaría de Educación, fue el 30 de enero de 1905" when the Museum's subdirectors and professors were ordered to put together "un plan general 'para los estudios que bajo la dirección de esos profesores deben hacerse en el mismo Museo por alumnos á quienes pensione esta Secretaría'…" Rutsch, *Entre el campo y el gabinete*, 132.

[137] Carmen Ruiz, "Insiders and Outsiders in Mexican Archaeology (1890-1930)," (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003), 151.

[138] John A. Rice, "The Totem Mounds of Wisconsin," *The American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (January-February, 1905): 56.

While Rice was mistaken about the lines of archaeological authority, he was correct that Mexican policies regarding the material past were far more stringent than those currently in place in the United States. The U.S. Congress did not pass a federal Antiquities Act and designate the pre-Columbian ruins of Mesa Verde as a national park until 1906, more than two decades after the creation of the Inspección y Conservación de Monumentos Arqueológicos.[139]

Federal control over antiquities also allowed Porfirian administrators to use pre-Hispanic sites as settings for pageants of national splendor.[140] For example, in 1907, Batres feted visiting American Secretary of State Elihu Root with a champagne lunch at the pyramids of Teotihuacán. The event cost 436.95 pesos in total, far more than the annual salary of a site caretaker. In a letter to his superiors, Batres listed expenses that included bouquets and boxes of sweets for Root's wife and daughter; gifts of books, plans and views of Teotihuacán compiled by the Inspección, a photographer to record the visit, and, of course, wines, cognac and champagne ($68). Thirty people attended the lunch; Batres noted that "besides those who were accompanying Mr. Root, there were also the federal and local authorities of the place, who could not have been excluded."[141] The lunch at Teotihuacán followed an earlier banquet for Root in Mexico City, for which the Museo Nacional had donated centerpieces from a set of tableware once used by Maximilian von Habsburg.[142] Lesser political or scientific figures from the United States also received the considerate attentions of federal officials. In 1910, for instance, the ruins of Uxmal were visited by a group of excursionists that included the governor, secretary of state, and bank commissioner of Michigan, as well as two U.S. archaeologists. Santiago Bolio's successor Andrés Solís Cámara carefully listed the excursion members in a letter to Batres, and emphasized that he had been particularly solicitous of an archaeologist who bore a letter of recommendation from Justo Sierra, then serving as Minister of Public Instruction.[143]

The most notable displays of pre-Hispanic monuments, however, were those connected to the centennial celebrations of 1910. To commemorate the anniversity of Miguel Hidalgo's 1810 call for independence, the Porfirian state embarked on massive projects which testified to the authority that the Díaz regime exercised over both past and present.[144] The Inspección and

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[139] Duane A. Smith, *Mesa Verde: Shadows of the Centuries*, Revised Edition (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002), 66.

[140] As we have already seen in the case of John Rice, such displays had also taken place in earlier decades. These, however, were carried out on a smaller scale than those of the late Porfiriato. For example, when the former American president Ulysses S. Grant visited Mexico in 1881, his wife was given a tour of the Museo Nacional and the "*objetos curiosos*" it contained. Letter from SJIP to the director of the Museo Nacional, April 26, 1881. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 32, f. 1.

[141] Letter from Batres to SIPBA, October 26, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 37, f. 4. Batres' description of the bouquets conveys the elegance of the affair: they were "*flores exquisitas, escojidas por el florista en los jardines de Orizaba y Córdova, montados los susodichos ramos en un portabouquet de filigrana de plata, atados con anchos listones de seda y cubiertos de finísimas gasas tamién de seda*…" Idem.

[142] Letter from SIPBA to the director of the Museo Nacional, September 28, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 23, f. 6.

[143] Undated letter from Andrés Solís Cámara to Batres, copied in letter from Batres to SIPBA, February 9, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 67, f. 1.

[144] See Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City: Space and Nation in the City of the Centenario," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (February, 1996): 75-104; Michael J. Gonzales, "Imagining

Museo Nacional were among the many beneficiaries of this federal largesse. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, in 1909 the unified Museo Nacional was split into two more specialized institutions, named the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural and the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología.[145] Federal authorities ordered that the latter establishment be remodeled and reorganized in the years before the centennial, ensuring that an impressive new Gallery of Monoliths would greet the many visitors sure to descend upon the capital. The Inspección, meanwhile, carried out a massive program of restoration and beautification at the pyramids of Teotihuacán. The federal government lavished vast sums of money and manpower on this project, and expropriated land from dozens of nearby owners. The proud spectacle created at Teotihuacán thus had political as well as financial costs, since most landholders resented the actions of the federal government, and a few engaged in extended struggles to keep possession of their land and agricultural investments. In this case, the "patrimony" claimed by the national government overlapped substantially with the smaller patrimonies of Mexican citizens.

Struggles at Teotihuacán serve as a reminder that the power of the federal government was subject to contestation, based on alternative understandings of pre-Hispanic antiquities and how they should be used. Federal control over the material past had developed slowly, and was always far from absolute. Besides disputes with local communities, the behavior of visitors to the ruins, especially visitors who were foreign, was a recurrent source of concern and embarassment to Mexico's archaeological establishment. In 1898, Santiago Bolio complained that at Chichén Itzá, buildings "upon being abandoned by their original (*primitivas*) inhabitants were left filled with idols, statues, objects made of clay, rosary beads made from stones of various colors, and many other curiosities that were removed by foreign tourists, and even some national ones, who found the opportunity to extract them in view of the abandonment in which those magnificent monumental remains of the powerful Maya empire are found."[146] A year later, Batres argued that if the caretaker of Mitla was regularly absent from the ruins, "the tourists as well as the inhabitants of the place will damage them, as the principal decoration of the palaces on the inside and outside is made up of extremely fine mosaics, and whether because of brute curiosity or tourists who want to take a souvenir, they pull out the stones making up the drawings."[147] Andrés

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Mexico in 1910: Visions of the *Patria* in the Centennial Celebrations in Mexico City," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (August, 2007): 495-533; Christina Bueno, "Teotihuacán: Showcase for the Centennial," in *Holiday in Mexico: Critical Reflections on Tourism and Tourist Encounters*, ed. Dina Berger and Andrew Grant Wood (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 54-76, and Agostoni, *Monuments of Progress*, 143-7.

[145] While 1909 marks the formal administrative separation of the two museums, the actual process of disentanglement took much longer. Planning for the separation had begun several years earlier, while the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural did not open to the public until 1913. Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*, 106-8.

[146] "*Los Edificios en pié que se conservan en buen estado, al ser abandonados por sus primitivos moradores quedaron abastecidos de idolos, estatuas, flechas, objetos de barro, cuentas de rosarios de todos tamaños formadas de piedras de varios colores, y otras muchas curiosidades que han extraido los turistas extrangeros y aun nacionales, que encontraron oportunidad de extraerlos en vista del abandono en que se encontraban aquellos grandiosos monumentos restos del poderoso imperio maya*." Report from Bolio to SJIP, December 20, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 43, f. 7.

[147] "*…tanto los turistas como los habitantes del lugar las deterioren, pues como la principal ornamentacion de los palacios por dentro y fuera está formada con finísimos mosaicos ya sea por la curiosidad salvaje ó los turistas por llevase un recuerdo arrancan las piedras con que están compuestos los dibujos*." Letter from Batres to SJIP, October 9, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 24.

Solís Cámara reported after a 1906 visit to the Yucatecan sites of Chichén Itzá and Acanceh, "I have found the inscriptions and paintings smashed, destroyed and stained, owing to two causes that I will explain: the first is the freedom of every individual to move freely about the ruins without the need for a permit nor the consent of any authority; the second is the detestable custom by which every visitor feels free to write their name on the walls, staining the inscriptions and pictures, and even to take fragments of these as a souvenir."[148] In response to tourist depredations, Solís suggested that all visitors be required to procure a pass before visiting archaeological sites, a policy that was eventually put into practice within Yucatán.[149]

More threatening than tourist depredations was the prospect of organized looting and smuggling. The presence of site caretakers and the adoption of more vigorous customs enforcement managed to deter some of these activities, but a great deal of material was still removed clandestinely from pre-Hispanic sites and from the national territory. In 1900, a reporter for the newspaper *El Mundo* complained that at Xochicalco, "there had been a group of foreigners who have extracted enough stones to build a house, and no one has taken notice of these extractions."[150] Suspicion extended to the representatives of foreign archaeological societies, who carried out "studies" which Santiago Bolio claimed were merely pretexts for extracting artifacts from the ruins.[151] In the eyes of federal administrators, visitors to pre-Hispanic sites could not be be relied upon to safeguard the best interests of the Mexican nation when considerations of profit or self-interest were at stake.

Even prominent figures in the international archaeological community blurred the line between research and looting (and in some cases, erased it altogether). U.S. researchers such as Alfred Tozzer treated Mexican customs laws as minor impediments, with no real moral weight

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[148] "*He encontrado las inscripciones y pinturas golpeadas, destruidas y manchadas debido á dos causas que me permito exponer: la primera es la libertad en que se encuentra todo individuo de pasear libremente las ruinas sin necesidad de permiso ni consentimiento de ninguna autoridad; la segunda es la detestable costumbre existente de que todo visitante se crea autorizado para escribir su nombre en las paredes manchando las inscripciones y pinturas y aun para llevarse como recuerdo fragmentos de ellos.*" Letter from Andrés Solís Cámara to SIPBA, October 15, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 4, f. 7.

[149] "*Only recently the authorities have awakened to realizing and appreciating the value of the antiquities that have been left to them, as it is to be regretted that foreign visitors, have in a barefaced manner, made a boast, that they had taken away everything that possessed any value or merit, but at the eleventh hour, custodians and caretakers have been appointed, who invariably exercise great vigilance allowing no person without a pass to visit the ruins…On arrival at the ruins, and on the pass being presented, the holder is personally conducted, and every action carefully observed bringing to our minds in a painfully impressive manner, the old saying, of locking the stable door after the horse had been stolen.*" Henry A. Case, *Views on and of Yucatan; Besides Notes Upon Parts of the State of Campeche and the Territory of Quintana Roo* (Mérida: Henry A. Case, 1911), 78.

[150] "*Ha habido grupo de extranjeros que haya extraído piedras que bastarían para formar una casa, y nadie se ha dado cuenta de esas extracciones, por más que se hagan á la luz del día.*" Article from *El Mundo*, reprinted in no. 4969 of *El Tiempo*, clipping included in a letter sent from SJIP to Batres, April 28, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 41, f. 3.

[151] "*Debo informar a U. que en cumplimiento de mi deber, y velando por la conservacion de las Ruinas, he prohibido á los Agentes de Sociedades Arqueológicas extranjeras hagan estudios en aquellos lugares, pues con este prestesto muchos de esos visitantes extraen los objetos; y solo consiento que se visite las Ruinas, sujetándose á las condiciones que les manifisto al otorgarles permisos para el acceso á los monumentos; permiso que solo les faculta á sacar vistas fotográficas. En los casos oportunos, no omito manifestar á los turistas que para hacer estudios es necesario presentarme una órden de ese Ministerio de su digno cargo.*" Letter from Bolio to SJIP, AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 43, f. 8.

behind them.[152] In 1908, Batres wrote a passionate denunciation of the British Museum and the English scientist Alfred Maudslay, who was attempting to send an archaeological collection of "the greatest importance" to London. Batres criticized Maudslay's "Vandalic character," and argued with some bitterness that permission to send the collection abroad would win Mexico no favor or gratitude, since "the foreign element always looks upon us as an inferior country, and as such we are always obligated to be pliable and bend to their wishes."[153] Perhaps the most significant incursion on federal prerogatives, however, was Edward Thompson's dredging of the Sacred Cenote at Chichén Itzá. As owner of the hacienda Chichén Itzá and a close associate of Santiago Bolio, Thompson had a relatively free hand to remove artifacts from a large water-filled sinkhole, which contained many sunken Maya artifacts and human remains. Thompson's disregard for Mexican law, and the collusion of Bolio in his activites, were shocking even to some archaeological contemporaries. In a denunciation of Thompson, the German photographer and archaeological explorer Teobert Maler wrote in disgust that "nothing has come from the pseudo-archaeologists of Yankeeland, except innumerable troubles and upsets."[154] Although Instrucción Pública officials would eventually force Thompson to halt his dredging, Harvard's Peabody Museum received most of the objects that Thompson found in the cenote, and would keep them until 1958.[155] The structures of Porfirian archaeological governance, although far more solid than anything which had come before, were still essentially limited in their reach and effectiveness.

IV. Conclusion

Numerous factors converged to create the Inspección y Conservación de Monumentos Arqueológicos. Even if cavalry captain Leopoldo Batres had never left the quiet shores of Bahía de la Magdalena, the pressures facing Mexico's federal government would still have demanded some sort of institutional response. The negotiations with Charnay and other investigators demonstrated the state's concern with monitoring excavations, while the vitriolic debates in the Chamber of Deputies revealed the entanglements between pre-Hispanic artifacts and nationalism. As government officials considered the questions of archaeological patrimony and cultural preservation, their thinking was informed by parallel discussions in many other

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[152] Mary F. McVicker quotes a letter from Tozzer concerning Edward Thompson's activities at Chichén Itzá: '"Mr. Thompson expects at any moment to be stopped in his work by the authorities as they will naturally resent such a success of a foreigner. Fortunately one trunk of these finds has left the country in safety so our minds more at ease.'" McVicker, *Adela Breton*, 119.

[153] "*…el súbdito inglés Alfred P. Maudslay que reviste un carácter bandálico y trascendentalísimo para nuestros intereses históricos arqueológicos…*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, January 3, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 8, f. 3. "*Por otra parte ni siquiera la gratitud de los agraciados, pues el elemento extrangero nos mira siempre con la preocupación de que somos países inferiores y que como tales estamos obligados á ser siempre dúctiles y á inclinarnos á sus pretensiones.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, January 2, 1908. Ibid., f. 4. Despite Batres' efforts, however, Instrucción Pública still permited the English minister in Mexico to export Maudslay's collections. Letter from SIPBA to Batres, January 17, 1908. Ibid., f. 5.

[154] "*Positivamente, de los pseudo-arqueólogos de Yanquilandia nunca habían sacado otra cosa, que inumerables molestias y disgustos.*" Teobert Maler, "Historia de las ruinas de Chichen Itza," 1916, in CAIHY, bound volume labelled Mérida Viejo 1831-1931, de Carlos P. Escoffié. Mérida, Yuc., Méx. 1932. See also Luis Ramírez Aznar, *El saqueo del cenote sagrado de Chichen Itza* (Mexico City: Producción Editorial Dante, 1990).

[155] Brunhouse, *In Search of the Maya*, 187.

countries. The Inspección was not sui generis, but modeled after existing institutions in Europe, especially France. Yet despite the complex genealogy of the Inspección, Leopoldo Batres was its most immediate parent. Legislators may have been roused to patriotic eloquence in the face of Charnay's excavations, but they displayed little urgency in turning words into actions. Likewise, local communities often had deep and complex relationships with nearby ruins, but their members rarely saw any need for the national government to mediate the uses of pre-Hispanic sites. It was the careerist ambitions, political connections, and indomitable will of Batres that initially created the job of Inspector General, and thereby allowed the natural logic of bureaucratic expansion to take effect. Batres served as the nucleus around which many swirling political and scientific currents could coalesce. However, these developments created a complex organization with its own internal dynamics, whose operations cannot simply be reduced to the decisions and idiosyncrasies of Batres. It is to the ground-level workings of this organization that we shall now turn.

Chapter Four

The Inspección and Its Discontents

"Now – the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossoms winks
Through the chinks –
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime"

-"Love Among the Ruins," Robert Browning[1]

The overpowering personality of Inspector General Leopoldo Batres often dominates discussions of the Inspección y Conservación de Monumentos Arqueológicos, obscuring the work, contributions and experiences of the men and women who reported to him. Aside from Christina Bueno, who has discussed the difficulties of serving as a caretaker and the disputes in which certain caretakers became embroiled, historians of Mexican archaeology have generally overlooked the activities of the Inspección staff.[2] This state of affairs owes much to Batres' own talent for self-promotion. Throughout his tenure as Inspector, Batres worked tirelessly to establish himself as the face of Porfirian archaeology to both the scholarly community and the public at large. Yet while Batres directed the Inspección and spearheaded its major initiatives, the agency could not have functioned as it did without the services of clerical staff, laborers (*peones* or *trabajadores*) and site caretakers (*conserjes* and *guardianes de monumentos*). Their efforts transformed laws and directives into accomplished fact; their choices reshaped official policy; their presence demonstrated the federal government's control over the national past and the national territory. This chapter will enlarge upon Bueno's work to examine how federal archaeological practices were implemented, literally, on the ground.

The Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos was never an especially large organization. Even during its late Porfirian heyday, when a rising tide of paperwork caused the

[1] Robert Browning, "Love Among the Ruins," in *The Complete Poetic and Dramatic Works of Robert Browning*, Cambridge Edition, ed. Horace E. Scudder (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1895), 172. The poem dates from the 1850s.

[2] Christina Bueno, "Excavating Identity: Archaeology and Nation in Mexico, 1876-1911" (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2004), 100-8. By way of contrast, see Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *Las piedras negadas: De la Coatlicue al Templo Mayor* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998) and Ignacio Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrua, 1992). The former devotes a chapter to Batres' career, without treating the workings of the agency that he directed. The latter work mentions Batres only briefly as an "autodidacta" who accomplished nothing of scientific importance, but whose "entusiasmo" can be credited with renewing state support for archaeological conservation and research. Bernal, *Historia de la arqueología*, 141.

agency to hire file clerks and copyists for its Mexico City offices, the Inspección seems to have maintained fewer than fifty full-time workers in all of its branches (not counting laborers on special projects such as the restoration of Teotihuacán). Consequently, a large majority of the individuals regularly employed by the Inspección were directly occupied with the protection and maintenance of archaeological sites, with only a scant handful of inspectors available to conduct oversight. The lopsided balance between administrative and field staff is a major reason why this chapter will focus on the site caretakers, the conserjes and guardianes de monumentos. [3] Much of the documentation that speaks directly to the experiences of Inspección staff concerns the caretakers. The information relating to the careers and lives of office workers is far sparser, and offers less insight on the Porfirian state's definition and management of archaeological resources. Meanwhile, the laborers employed by the Inspección were mostly hired on an intermittent basis, and left few traces in the documentary record. Of the staff below the rank of subdirector, it is the conserjes who are most visible to historical scrutiny.

The constraints of archival materials, however, are far from the only reason for emphasizing the experiences of the conserjes. The caretakers also merit special consideration because of the intermediary role that they filled between the Inspección and the public at large. It was they who unlocked gates for visitors, who represented the federal government's interests to local communities, and whose actions determined the condition of the sites and the uses to which pre-Hispanic monuments would be put. The conserjes' isolation and distance from central authority afforded them a great deal of autonomy in the performance of their duties, making them key figures in the Porfirian state's exercise of authority over archaeological sites. The actions of the caretakers as they guarded against theft or vandalism, fought unceasing campaigns against tropical vegetation, mediated with local communities, and guided visiting tourists and researchers constituted the national government's main interactions with archaeological sites and materials. Consequently, accounting for the experiences of these unprestigious yet essential figures is crucial to any balanced understanding of pre-Revolutionary archaeology.

The struggles and achievements of the conserjes also open an observation window on the grinding gears of Porfirian bureaucracy. The records of Instrucción Pública are replete with employment files, reimbursement orders and correspondence between the conserjes and their superiors in Mexico City, the prosaic detritus of everyday administration. Considerable material therefore exists to recreate a vertical slice of the Porfirian bureaucracy, a structure which stretched from frock-coated intellectuals in Mexico City down to villagers in white peasant garb, sweating in the sun as they hacked vines from ancient walls. If the *capitalino* man of letters and the rural caretaker were dissimilar in social standing, wealth, authority, culture and most likely race, they nevertheless shared a common status as employees of the federal government. Information, initiatives and demands descended the administrative ladder in the prescribed fashion, but could also clamber up from the lowest rungs, confounding pat explanations of the operation of state authority. On one level, an analysis of these processes will allow us to explore the mechanisms by which the Porfirian state realized its goals, while on another it will undermine the idea that a singular, reified Porfirian state existed. As we shall see, tension and discord were abundant between individuals who worked for the same institutions, and in theory towards the same ends. Yet before we can address the significance of the Inspección's internal workings, we must consider more basic questions about the individuals who served the agency as

[3] Despite the difference in titles, I have not been able to discover any systematic differences between the job functions or salaries of *conserjes* and *guardianes*. For ease of reading, this chapter refers to both conserjes and guardianes de monumentos simply as "conserjes" or "caretakers."

conserjes. Who were they, what characteristics defined them as a group, and how did they come to work for the Inspección?

I. The Employees

Bishops to Laborers

The profile of the average conserje changed dramatically over the quarter-century from the foundation of the Inspección to the outbreak of revolution in 1910. The first conserjes appointed by the federal government were granted the title on a purely honorary basis, receiving no regular compensation except the prestige of serving as agents of the nation.[4] These early appointees characteristically possessed wealth and social standing, assets which enabled them to undertake conservation and repair works at their own expense, and to influence the behavior of other local residents. However, the same economic and social qualities which recommended the early caretakers for their positions also entailed certain disadvantages. Powerful individuals found their time and attention tugged at from many different directions. As unsupervised volunteers, the caretakers could not be expected to make daily inspections of the ruins, or to reside in isolation among the mossy stones. Batres and the officials of Instrucción Pública made few demands on the early conserjes, perhaps recognizing that the archaeological bureaucracy possessed little in the way of either *pan* or *palo* to enforce compliance.

The steady professionalization of the Inspección, however, brought with it a number of changes. As both consequence and cause of this professionalization, the official responsibilities of conserjes increased. Batres and his superiors came to believe that the security of pre-Hispanic monuments and the dignity of the Inspección required the constant vigilance of dutiful employees.[5] Caretakers were expected to file regular reports with Batres, to respond obediently to orders, and to reside at the sites which they guarded. These requirements could prove quite burdensome, especially for those conserjes unlucky enough to work at sites located at an inconvenient distance from families, communities, and federal payment offices. Individuals of modest background, intent on retaining their federal salaries, were more likely to assume such challenging obligations. After 1895 or so, Batres preferred to fill caretaker positions with laborers, often of indigenous ancestry, who had few commitments outside the locale in which they worked. The Inspector General's wishes were not always respected by Instrucción Pública

[4] The unpaid nature of the position was specified in an 1885 communication from Instrucción Pública clarifying Batres' powers and responsibilities as Inspector General. "*El inspector cuidará de la conservacion de todos los monumentos y ruinas arqueológicas é históricas de la República. Al efecto, podrá nombrar á los vigilantes ó conserjes que en cada departamento fueren necesarios para que lo secunden en esa comision, pero bajo el concepto de que esos vigilantes no gozarán sueldo alguno, pues su encargo será puramente honorífico.*" Communication from Minister of Justice and Public Instruction Joaquín Baranda to Leopoldo Batres, October 17, 1885. Reprinted as "Atribuciones del Inspector de Monumentos Arqueológicos" in *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, ed. Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 236.

[5] Max Weber offers insightful comments on the difficulties of "honorific…forms of administration," writing that "Honorific arrangements make administrative work an avocation and, for this reason alone, honorific service normally functions more slowly; being less bound to schemata and being more formless." Max Weber, "Bureaucracy," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 214.

administrators, and some members of the first wave of conserjes managed to adapt successfully to the changing times. Nevertheless, the overall trend towards caretakers of humble origins is clear.

The dubious reliability of honorary appointees, and their eventual replacement by salaried employees, can be observed in several instances. In 1888 Batres named the Catholic reformer Eulogio Gillow as an officer of the Inspección, less than a year after Gillow had been consecrated "with [President] Díaz's help…as Bishop of Oaxaca."[6] The conferral of a position within the Inspección honored Gillow's "patriotism and enlightenment," as well as his prior efforts on behalf of Oaxacan antiquities. Gillow had "unofficially and spontaneously undertaken at his own expense" the project of constructing a wall around the "Palacios de Mitla," which Batres believed would prevent the monuments from being "destroyed by the coarse hands of ignorance." Gillow assumed most of the costs for constructing the wall, while the Federal Government only provided the "light help" of 200 pesos.[7] Batres also named the Mitla priest Yldefonso Morgan as caretaker of the ruins in the surrounding area, on the understanding that Morgan would be subject to Gillow's direction.[8] However, the priest lasted barely three years as conserje before the local jefe político reported in 1891 that Morgan was neglecting his charge, "with the result that the very important monuments of ancient civilization are meeting with notable destruction." Morgan's superior Eulogio Gillow could not exercise any effective oversight, "because he does not remain within the state, except for very brief periods."[9] A few months later, the governor of Oaxaca proposed an infantry captain named José Azatlán to take charge of guarding the ruins of Mitla. The nomination was approved by Instrucción Pública,

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[6] Edward Wright-Rios, *Revolutions in Mexican Catholicism: Reform and Revelation in Oaxaca, 1887-1934* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), 63.

[7] "*En Julio 4…nombré Agente de la Ynspección y conservación de monumentos arqueológicos en el Estado de Oaxaca al Sr. Dr. D. Eulogio Gillow quien, con todo el patriotismo é ilustración que lo caracterizan, aceptó dicho encargo y puso en él toda su actividad, procediendo desde luego á continuar la obra que tenía ya oficiosa y expontáneamente emprendida á su propia costa, de levantar un muro de circunvalación á las grandiosas ruinas toltecas conocidas con el nombre de "Palacios de Mitla," cuya obra viene á garantizar la conservación de esos magestuosos monumentos de la antigua civilización americana, modelos del arte mas avanzado de que se tienen muestras entre los de su clase, y tesoros por lo mismo que importa evitar se destruyen por las groseras manos de la ignorancia. Dicha obra ya cerca de terminarse, se ha llevado á cabo en gran parte á expensas del mencionado Sr. Gillow, con alguna ligera ayuda que el Gobierno Federal ha proporcionado por mi mediación, consistente dicha ayuda en haber mandado ministrar la cantidad de doscientos pesos, y con la eficaz cooperación del cura párroco de Mitla, Sr. Yldefonso Morgan*." Report from Batres to SJIP, June 11, 1889. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 6, f. 17.

[8] "*En Agosto 31…nombré conserge de los Palacios de Mitla y de todos los monumentos antiguos existentes en las municipalidades vecinas al Sr. D.r D. Yldefonso Morgán, expresándole que en todo lo relativo á su encargo quedaría sujeto al Agente de esta Ynspección en el Estado de Oaxaca.*" Ibid., f. 18.

[9] "*Por informes oficiales del Jefe Político de Tlacolula, tiene conocimiento este Gobierno de que el Ynspector de las antigüedades y ruinas en el Estado, Monseñor Eulogio Guillow, dejó encomendado el cuidado de los Palacios de Mitla al Cura de esa Villa, Señor Yldefonso Morgan, quien desaliendo su encargo, dando esto por resultado que tan importantes monumentos de la civilizacion antigua se vayan destruyendo notablemente; y como el Gobierno de mi cargo desea evitar ese mal, suplica á esa Secretaría se sirva, si á bien lo tiene, autorizarlo para que ejerza la vigilancia que reclama la conservación de los referidos Palacios, teniendo en consideración que no puedo ejercitarlo el citado Sr. Guillow porque no permanece en el Estado, sino muy cortos periodos*." September 22, 1891 letter from the governor of Oaxaca to the Secretaría de Fomento, Colonización, Industria, y Comercio, copied in a letter Fomento to SJIP, October 5, 1891. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 80, f. 1.

which assigned Azatlán a salary of 15 pesos per month.[10] Ironically, Azatlán spent even less time as caretaker of Mitla than Morgan, as the captain was not released from his military duties until May of 1892, and illness forced him from the position of caretaker in July of 1895.[11] Azatlán's hiring, however, established a precedent. All future caretakers of Mitla would receive a federal salary.

A similar transition occurred at the Morelos site of Xochicalco, albeit in a more gradual and painful manner. The first conserje of Xochicalco, Jesús Moreno Flores, was part of the Morelos contingent for the Paris Exposition of 1889. As a caretaker, he served the government for nine years without pay, and drew on his own funds to rent mounts for visitors, clear the site, and hire laborers.[12] He also demonstrated a personal interest in the monuments that he safeguarded. In 1895, Moreno Flores requested books and maps to study the "interesting science of Archaeology," so he might thereby lend more effective service to his country and government.[13] Moreno Flores had already carried out some research on the ruins, and proposed that the government grant him 4,000 pesos to restore Xochicalco to its pristine state, as portrayed by an illustration in Antonio Peñafiel's *Antigüedades Mexicanas*.[14] Although Moreno Flores may well have sought to benefit personally from the disbursement of these funds, the sincerity of his proposal should not be rejected out of hand. It is entirely possible to believe that some caretakers developed real intellectual or emotional attachments to a site, while recognizing that such bonds might have nestled alongside more conventional social or economic interests. Nevertheless, once the position of conserje metamorphosed from an honorary title to a line item in the annual federal budget, such personal attachments carried little weight.

In 1895, straitened financial circumstances finally impelled Moreno Flores to seek a government salary. He wrote that he was "beseeching that I be granted a bonus, not for my services, but only for the sums I spend and have spent during these nine years receiving the many

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[10] SJIP memos, December 2, 1891. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 47, fs. 1and 3.

[11] Discussion of Azatlán's posting to Mitla is given in a May 9, 1892 letter from the Secretaría de Guerra y Marina to SJIP. Ibid., f. 5. Azatlán initially resigned on June 6, 1895, but stayed in his position for an extra month and a half owing to the lack of any replacement. Before Azatlán departed to seek treatment at the end of July in the city of Oaxaca, he asked that the state government order Mitla's municipal president to take charge of the ruins. Letters from José Azatlán to SJIP, June 6, 1895, and July 31, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 17, fs. 1 and 7.

[12] "*He hecho algunos gastos entre ellos el alquiler de cabalgaduras, limpia del monte y trabajo de peones para barracas, cuando vienen extranjeros.*" Letter from Jesús Moreno Flores to SJIP, June 18, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 19, f. 11. Moreno Flores mentions his five-month service to the "*contingente de este Estado p.a la 'Exposición de París'*" in a May 21, 1895 report to Batres, copied by SJIP on June 18, 1895. Ibid., f. 7.

[13] "*El gran deseo que tengo de instruirme en la ciencia interesante de la Arqueología, me hace molestar las altas atenciones de U. suplicándole tenga la bondad de favorecerme dando órden para que se me beneficie con las obras y planos que se hayan publicado sobre arqueología mexicana…La satisfacción de ver realizado mi anhelo duplicará la gratitud que profeso á U. y servirá para que lo que yo obtenga por el estudio de esa ciencia dificil…pueda llegar á ser muy provechosa para que concienzúdamente preste mis servicios á mi pátria y al Superior Gobierno.*" Letter from Jesús Moreno Flores to SJIP, June 18, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja148, exp. 19, f. 1.

[14] "*Hoy que continúa la destrucción del ya repetido monumento, vuelvo á suplicar á esa superioridad se sirva aprobar el presupuesto adjunto, atreviéndome á inicia á V. que fuera del presupuesto que propongo, y ateniéndome á los importantes trabajos del Dr. Peñafiel en su obra "Antigüedades mexicanas," con cuatro mil pesos haré la restauración, en un año, del interestante monumento, sin que discrepé ni una sola piedra de la lámina en que el Sr. Peñafiel presenta á Xochicalco, restaurado como en sus primitivos tiempos.*" Letter from Jesús Moreno Flores to SJIP, June 18, 1895. Ibid., f. 2.

visitors to the ruins."[15] The federal government soon conceded Moreno Flores a monthly "bonus" of $15. [16] Once the position became salaried, however, the requirements of the federal government eventually became more stringent. Moreno Flores had always carried out his duties at Xochicalco while living in the town of Miacatlán, a distance of four leagues from the ruins. Batres was aware that Moreno Flores lived in Miacatlán, and took no action besides notifying his superiors of the situation.[17] Although Instrucción Pública officials apparently disregarded this initial notification, by 1899 the Ministry no longer found it acceptable for a conserje to reside so far from his site. After Moreno Flores was discovered to have been absent at Xochicalco, he received a letter stating that he was obliged to dwell in the ruins, and would be replaced if he failed to do so.[18] After making inquiries with the governor of Morelos, Batres then discovered that Moreno Flores had moved to Amecameca in the state of México, forty miles from Xochicalco as the crow flies and considerably farther along the region's winding, mountainous trails.[19] This was the last straw for Batres, who advised Instrucción Pública to treat Xochicalco as abandoned, and appoint a new conserje.

By contrast, Jesús Moreno Flores believed – or at least professed to believe – that he had conscientiously fulfilled his obligations. Despite living with his large family in Amecameca, "where life is less expensive," he continued to visit Xochicalco every fifteen or twenty days "so that I may fully earn the bonus that I receive." He also stated that a relative in Miacatlán informed him when visitors arrived at the ruins, so that he might travel to the site and receive them. In an emotional letter to the Minister of Justice and Public Instruction, he beseeched the official to consider "my former unpaid work…as well as my affection (*cariño*) for those Monuments," and concluded by saying that if it was economically feasible to do so, "I would

[15] "*Hace más de un mes me dirijí oficialmente á ese Secretaria de su digno cargo adjuntandole un paquete que contenia una vista fotográfica de las ruinas de Xochicalco, de que por bondad de U. soy conserje vigilante hace nueve años. Entre los communicaciones, iba una solicitud en debida forma, suplicando se me conceda una gratificacion, no por mis servicios, sino por los gastos que erogo y he erogado en estos nueve años recibiendo á los muchos visitantes á las ruinas. La suma pobreza en que me encuentro y con mucha familia, me han hecho hacer una solicitud.*" July 22 letter from Jesus Moreno Flores to SJIP (the year on the letter was illegible, but since Moreno Flores refers to having worked as a conserje for nine years, and he began his service as a conserje on February 4, 1886, the date should be 1895). AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 17, f. 8. For the date when Moreno Flores began to work at the ruins, see the report from Jesús Moreno Flores to Batres, sent May 21, 1895, and copied on June 18, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 19, f. 7.

[16] Letter from Joaquín Baranda at SJIP to the Secretario de Hacienda. September 2, 1895. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 19, f. 14. Notably, the payment of salaries does not appear to have been instituted at a uniform date for all Inspección appointees. José Azatlán's monthly salary of $15, for instance, was granted a full three and a half years before Jesús Moreno Flores was given similar compensation. (Although Azatlán does not appear to have been released from his military service until May of 1892, this does not change the government's earlier willingness to pay him in his position as caretaker.) AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 47.

[17] Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 25, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 19, f. 24. In a letter concerning a different matter, Batres estimated that four leagues was about half a day's journey. Letter from Batres to SJIP, October 9, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 24.

[18] Letter from SJIP to Jesús Moreno Flores, September 9, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 19, f. 25.

[19] Undated letter from Batres to SJIP. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 19, f. 28.

willingly live in one of the caves of the historic hill and prehistoric monument that I care for."[20] In his own eyes, Moreno Flores had not violated his commitment to the government or to the site. If he was telling the truth about his bimonthly visits then he must have spent extraordinary amounts of time and effort to maintain a connection with the monuments, when it would have been far simpler to abandon his responsibilities altogether.

Batres had no patience for any of these pleas. In his own heated letter to the head of Instrucción Pública, he wrote that the arguments presented by Moreno Flores "[were] not sufficiently grounded for the Government to authorize the abandonment of one of the most notable monuments of the Republic, even less so when the Nation pays for an employee to care for them." Batres stressed "the constant clamor of the national and foreign press denouncing…the abandonment in which Xochicalco is and has been found," drawing particular attention to the complaints of some Germans who had recently visited the site. He expressed bafflement at the idea that a caretaker could guard a site while living at any distance from it, and concluded with a blunt rejection of older patterns of conserje selection. Instead of choosing men of independent means and local stature, Batres advocated that conserjes be "individuals of humble origin, from the same area [as the ruins] so that they may live contentedly in the place to which they have been appointed."[21] Implicit in this recommendation was that "humble" men, whose purse-strings could be tightly gripped by the Inspector General, would of necessity be circumspect in the exercise of their independent judgment. Both Batres and the administrators of Instrucción Pública shared a vision of the Inspección as a professional, modern, centralized institution, incompatible with a workforce who considered themselves as much volunteers as employees.

Some of the early conserjes managed the transition from volunteer to salaried employee much more smoothly than did Moreno Flores. These individuals diligently performed their duties (or at least knew how to give the appearance of diligence), and invested their significant social or economic capital in the preservation of pre-Hispanic sites. In 1909, the conserje Agapito

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[20] "*Mi falta de empleo y de recursos para sobrevivir (subornar?) á las necesidades de familia, que es de ocho personas, me han obligado á trasladarla á Amecameca, donde es mas barata la vida, y sin embargo de ello, cada quince ó veinte dias se me encontrará sobre el Monumento que cuido, para ganar á conciencia la gratificación que persibo, teniendo en Miacatlán persona de mi familia que me avise cuando llega algun visitante á Xochicalco, para ir á recibirlo, abrigando la esperanza de que el entrante año fiscal, operando V. Señor, mis servicios, mi trabajo anterior gratuito y el presente, asi como mi cariño á ese Monumento, cuya informe general estoy escribiendo para dedicarlo á V., aumentandome la gratificación ó sueldo, viviré gustoso aunque sea en una de los grutos del histórico cerro y prehistorico monumento de que me ocupo.*" Letter from Jesús Moreno Flores to the Secretario de Justicia e Instrucción Pública, June 17, 1900. AGN-IPBA 149, exp. 3, f. 4.

[21] "*Me es honroso manifestar á V. que todos los argumentos empleados por el concerge de Xochicalco para justificar su no permanencia en el lugar á donde se la ha ordenado que resida no son suficientemente fundados para que el Gobierno autorize el abandono de uno de los monumentos mas notables de la República, y mas aun cuando la Nación expensa á un empleado para que lo cuide. Por otra parte no hay que perder de vista el clamoreo constante de la prensa nacional y extrangera denunciando, con sus correspondientes comentarios, el abandono en que se halla y se ha hallado siempre el monumento de Xochicalco. Ultimamente, varios alemanes fueron á visitarlo y lo encontraron abandonado, por lo que se dirijieron á mi haciéndome saber ésto y encareciéndome la necesidad de que permaneciese allí constantemente un guardian. ¿Como es posible que el portero de un edificio resida á cuatro leguas de distancia de él sin que el depósito confiado no esté expuesto á destruirse?...Alguna vez he manifestado á V. verbalmente la conveniencia que hay de que las concerges sean individuos de origen humilde y de la misma localidad para que vivan satisfechos en el lugar que se les designe, y por lo tanto esta Ynspeccion opinaria porque se acepte la renunica que ha hecho Moreno Flores de su empleo.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 1, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 3, fs. 6-7.

Fontecilla of Tajín was described by Batres as "a person who is completely attentive in the performance of his duties, since as as well as being an employee of the Government, he has great fondness for the archaeological monuments that are in his care…he is a son of the town with abundant wealth, and for many years he served in the position of caretaker, without receiving a single cent."[22] Fontecilla's grandfather was a Spanish immigrant who "establish[ed] himself as one of Papantla's foremost notables – businessman, investor, curing expert, promotor of culture and education, man of letters, and crafty politician," while the conserje's father, Agapito Fontecilla y Vidal, was a "prominent vanilla merchant" who acted at various points as a mayor, jefe político, "investor, and…moneylender."[23] If he desired to do so, the younger Fontecilla's family connections and wealth provided him with a strong basis to take action on behalf of the ruins of Tajín.

Similarly, when Batres proposed in 1907 to place Félix Quero in charge of the ruins of Mitla, a key argument in Quero's favor was that "[he is] a very well-known person in that place and for many years he cared for the buildings without any stipend," which Quero had done before the less effective tenure of Gillow and Morgan.[24] In an earlier letter, Batres underscored Quero's status by describing him as "a peaceable and honorable merchant residing in the area, a person whom the President of the Republic knows well."[25] Foreign visitors elaborated on this assessment of Quero, one referring to the "little gray Spaniard" as "the modern feudal lord, the polite 'Poohbah' and prevailing spirit of the antique and ancient city of Mitla."[26] Another observer agreed that Quero was "'a sort of feudal lord over the neighboring peons.'"[27] Quero's

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[22] "*Tengo la honra de informar á Vd. que el actual Conserje de las ruinas de Papantla, es una persona que toma todo interés en el cumplimiento de sus deberes, pues además de ser empleado del Gobierno, les tiene gran cariño á los monumentos arqueológicos que están á su guarda, porque el C. Agapito Fontecilla, es hijo de la localidad con recursos abundantes, y que por muchos años desempeñó el puesto de Conserje, sin percibir un solo centavo.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, September 11, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 7, f. 4.

[23] Emilio Kourí, *A Pueblo Divided: Business, Property, and Community in Papantla, Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 91 and 180.

[24] "*Me permito proponer á esa Superioridad se nombre para ese puesto al C. Felix Quero, persona muy conocida en ese lugar y que por muchos años cuidó los edificios sin estipendio.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, August 5, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 153, exp. 22, f. 4. Quero had cared for the ruins of Mitla since at least the early 1880s. Louis Aymé, a U.S. consul in Yucatán who visited Mitla in 1882, wrote that "The buildings are carefully looked after by the Government, and have an intelligent guardian in the person of Don Felix Quero, to whose hospitable courtesy and beautiful house I can heartily recommend all archaeologists who may visit Mitla." Louis Henri Aymé, *Notes on Mitla, Oaxaca, Mexico, With Plans and Measurements of the Ruins,* from *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, New Series, Vol. 2, Part 1, April 26, 1882 (Worcester, MA: Chas. Hamilton, 1882), 20.

[25] "*Yguales quejas me ha presentado el C. Felix Quero vecino pacífico y honrado comerciante de la localidad, persona á quien conoce bien el S. Presidente de la República.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 29, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 18.

[26] Thomas Rees, *Spain's Lost Jewels: Cuba and Mexico* (Springfield, Illinois: The Illinois State Register, 1906), 143-4.

[27] Charles Dudley Warner, quoted in G. F. Paul, "A Trip to the Famous Mitla Ruins, Mexico," *Overland Monthly*, vol. 42, no. 3 (September, 1903): 192. Rees remarked that "Don Felix's coat of arms embroidered with golden thread occupies a conspicuous place on the walls [of Quero's hacienda], and his pedigree tree is a work of art." Rees, *Spain's Lost Jewels*, 145. Quero also seems to have been something of a local grocer and bartender. According to Paul, "Quero and his burly son" sold two-cent glasses of mescal to "groups of Indians" who gathered

hacienda, which also provided food and lodging to travelers, appears to have been truly impressive. A comparatively restrained writer called it "an exceedingly good inn…it is well-named 'The Surprise'; has a garden-like 'patio,' clean, shady rooms, good cooking and service."[28] Others said that the hacienda contained "all that can delight the eye and comfort the inner man," or rhapsodized "It is more than an oasis in the desert. It is a walled fortress surrounding a flowered corner of heaven…If the garden of Eden was more beautiful than Don Felix's patio, it must have been a lovely place."[29] Quero remained at Mitla even after the fall of the Porfirian regime, an indication of his success in molding himself to changing federal requirements.

During the last fifteen years of the Porfiriato, however, figures like Quero and Fontecilla were more the exception than the rule. We will now turn to examine the social and economic characteristics of the conserjes in greater depth, focusing primarily on the post-1895 period for which sources are most abundant.

Conserjes in the Late Porfiriato

The sources dealing with conserjes after 1895 seldom take the form of extended commentaries about individual lives, or standardized personnel records. If the Inspección maintained employee files with data on the ages, marital status, education levels or ethnic origins of its staff, I have not yet been able to find such material. Much of the documentation concerning the caretakers is little more than the notation and transmission of appointments, salaries, renewals, and dismissals, eschewing specific biographical detail. The demographic account that follows is therefore impressionistic rather than comprehensive, and given with the caveat that general trends were sometimes defied by individual particularity. Yet within these limitations significant information may be gleaned from administrative paperwork, especially from correspondence between the conserjes and their bureaucratic superiors. The caretakers' letters to Batres or to Instrucción Pública were calculated attempts to influence an official audience, often composed by professional *escribientes* who used elaborately formal phrases of flattery and supplication.[30] These letters also contain invaluable glimpses into the lives behind them, little bursts of self-expression or revelation that puncture the conventional formulas of Porfirian prose to expose a perceived reality. Clues from the caretakers' correspondence allow us to form a

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about his door in the evenings, while "Now and then a woman creeps in, mutely obtains a handful of dried shrimps or a few long tapered candles and creeps out again." Paul, "A Visit to the Famous Mitla Ruins," 194.

[28] Hans Gadow, *Through Southern Mexico, Being an Account of the Travels of a Naturalist* (London: Witherby & Co. and New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), 254. Aside from Quero's inn, Gadow referred to the village of Mitla as "a wretched settlement." Idem.

[29] Rees, *Spain's Lost Jewels*, 144.

[30] Unfortunately, it is difficult to gauge the full extent to which caretakers relied on scribes to conduct correspondence with Instrucción Pública. The presence of a professional wordsmith is usually imperceptible, except when the signature is written in a noticeably different hand then the body of the letter, or when the scribe made some sort of error. In one such instance, a scribe composing a letter for José Azatlán, the conserje of Mitla, mistakenly spelled the caretaker's surname as "Azotla." This misspelling was then propagated in all of Instrucción Pública's further correspondence with Azatlán. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 17.

rough sketch of the functionaries responsible for guarding the nation's ruins, and trace the outlines of their characteristics and experiences.

Gender

Conserjes were almost invariably male. Although women began appearing as clerical and print shop employees of the Inspección and Museo Nacional during the late 1890s, the independent living arrangements and constant toil of a caretaker's job were evidently regarded as unsuitable for delicate females. In a similar vein, the presence of "alumnas" in the social science classes offered by the Museo Nacional after 1906 did nothing to increase gender balance among the conserjes. Batres jealously defended his hiring prerogatives against rivals at the museum, and in any case the women who studied in the Museo Nacional were preparing for professional careers as teachers or researchers, not for lives of rural isolation and physical hardship. [31] Women had no clear pathway to employment as conserjes, and field positions remained dominated by men even as the Mexico City offices of the federal archaeological establishment saw an increasing influx of *señoritas* and *señoras*.

In the few cases when women were employed by the Inspección as caretakers, they owed their positions to extraordinary circumstances, family connections, or both. One such figure was Concepción Pérez Morelos, who along with her brother Nicolás maintained the Morelia home of their distinguished ancestor, the insurgent general José María Morelos.[32] Another example is Carolina O. de Trilles Gil, who took over the management of the archaeological museum at San Juan Teotihuacán at the beginning of 1913. She assumed this role on a temporary basis after the previous curator, her husband Félix, was afflicted with "mental insanity" and placed in an asylum.[33] When requesting a permanent appointment to her husband's former position, Carolina chose her rhetoric strategically and depicted the work of museum custodianship in distinctly domestic terms. The essentials of the job, she wrote, were to open and close the museum at the regulated times, to oversee the servants, guarantee that the building and its contents were clean and orderly, and to receive visitors and record their signatures.[34] From this point of view the duties of a museum conservator were much like those

[31] "…creo que puede afirmarse que se cumplió el objetivo principal de las cátedras, es decir, formar a la primera generación de sucesores para la antropología y la arqueología, tanto estatal como museográfica. Es decir, aquí estamos ante un incipiente proceso de profesionalización, y el objetivo de formar especialistas en las disciplinas antropológicas en parte se cumplió…" Mechthild Rutsch, *Entre el campo y el gabinete: Nacionales y extranjeros en la profesionalización de la antropología mexicana (1877-1920)* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, 2007), 159. This process of professionalization meant that there was considerable overlap between Museum students and employees. "Tal parece que en muchos casos el ser alumno de los cursos del Museo podía llevar a ocupar una plaza en éste y que, a su vez, los empleados de 'este establecimiento' podían optar por complementar su sueldo con su inscripción como alumnos en uno de los cursos." Ibid., 158.

[32] Letter from Nicolás Pérez Morelos and Concepción Pérez Morelos to SIPBA, September 21, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 335, exp. 7, f. 1.

[33] Félix was placed in the "*Manicomio General, afectado de enagenación mental.*" Statement from Dr. Nicolás Martínez, Médico Cirujano de la Facultad de México, March 1, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 48, f. 2.

[34] "*Lo que subscribe…manifiesta: que durante los cuatro meses de licencia, ella ha atendido ese cargo a satisfacción del Señor Inspector de Monumentos Arqueológicos, y cree poder seguir desempeñándolo; pues consisté; en abrir y cerrar el Museo a las horas de Reglamento, vigilar y enseñar a los mozos a que hagan el aseo,*

of any well-off married woman, and Carolina was qualified to serve the state as she might once have served her husband. The letter was evidently persuasive. Carolina secured the position and occupied it until September of 1914, when she resigned to take another job within Instrucción Pública.[35] Still, her employment at the Teotihuacán museum likely owed a great deal to the revolutionary violence then seizing the country. In more tranquil times, the Inspección had little difficulty finding male replacements for its sick or insane caretakers.

Social and Economic Status

The archetypal conserje or guardián de monumentos in the late Porfiriato was a man of middle age or older, of respectable lower-class origins, chosen from a village adjoining the archaeological site. Letters reveal that these men were often married or widowed fathers, indicating that they possessed some degree of stability within the community. Their social status within the wider world, however, was relatively low. In correspondence with the Inspección, caretakers and laborers were typically referred to as "Ciudadano" (citizen), rather than the more prestigious "Don" that was generally accorded to Batres and his colleagues at Instrucción Pública. The use of scribes or the sometimes creative spelling and grammar in the conserjes' letters also suggest that many caretakers may have had limited literacy. In this period, the average caretaker's social rank was far closer to that of a farm hand than to an enlightened curator of historical artifacts.

The social and economic status of the conserjes was also reflected by the state of their health. Caretakers suffered from frequent illnesses and physical ailments, exacerbated by the rigors of their work in the isolated wilderness and the relative inaccessibility of medical care. Employment at the Inspección could be very physically demanding, even for upper-level staff. A letter certifying that Instrucción Pública was pleased with the job performance of Salvador Batres noted that he exposed himself to "serious dangers" in the fulfillment of his duties, "even suffering the mutilation of three fingers on his right hand."[36] Lower-level caretakers found themselves driven from their positions by illness, or forced to request lengthy leaves of absence.[37] Such resignations or requests for leaves usually came when conserjes planned to remove themselves from their sites for extended periods, usually six months or more. At the end of 1906, for example, a bout of malaria convinced the conserje of Uxmal to resign his

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como es debido, conservar en perfecto estado de limpieza las vitrinas, cristales, pedestales etc. etc., recibir a las personas y acompañarlas en su visita al Museo, recojer sus firmas en el Album, y cuidar del órden." Letter from Carolina O. de Trilles Gil to SIPBA, April 17, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 48, f. 8.

[35] Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Oficial Mayor, Encargado del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, September 23, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 2, f. 6.

[36] " *De conformidad con lo solicitado por el C. Salvador Batres, hágase constar por medio de un oficio y por ser así de justicia, que esta Secretaría siempre ha quedado satisfecha de su buena conducta y de los buenos servicios que prestó como auxiliar de la Inspección General de Monumentos Arqueológicos, no obstante que por algún tiempo prestó dichos servicios sin remuneración ninguna, exponiéndose en el desempeño de ellos á serios peligros y aún sufriendo la mutilación de la mano derecha en alguna ocasión.*" Letter from SIPBA to Salvador Batres, January 15, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 11, f.3.

[37] Towards the end of the Porfiriato, federal employees requesting medical leave were also required to submit signed statements from a doctor testifying to their condition, a small example of the increasing systematization and control demonstrated by the national administration.

position, so that he could recover in a healthier climate.[38] Seven months later, a conserje at Mitla requested a leave of six months without salary, also seeking a change of climate on account of illness.[39] Some conserjes may have submitted these documents out of conscientiousness, while others might not have been willing to run the risk that their lengthy absences would go unnoticed by officials who could bestow future federal employment. A few such petitions were followed by news of the caretaker's death. While Instrucción Pública offered funds to pay for the funeral expenses of deceased Museum staff and the Inspección subdirector Santiago Bolio, the families of conserjes do not appear to have received similar benefits.[40]

The broad strokes that make up this image of the typical conserje should not obscure existence of diversity within the ranks of Inspección employees, or the possibility that a caretaker's social position might change as a result of federal employment. Some conserjes acquired archaeological expertise, or skills that enhanced their career prospects. For example, Batres sought to replace Jesús Moreno Flores at Xochicalco with "one of the inhabitants of the village…at the foot of the hill on which the monuments rest, obliging him to make his dwelling near the same."[41] In August of 1900, Batres proposed a man named Bernardino Verazaluce for the caretaker position, and requested that Verazaluce be given permission and $50 to build a dwelling at the site.[42] Presumably, anyone who would agree to live on top of an isolated hill did not enjoy much wealth or social status. A year later, however, Batres commissioned Verazaluce to travel with him to Oaxaca, and copy images from the walls of Mitla.[43] Verazaluce, who was "one of the natives of Tepoztlan pueblo" and who later became caretaker of Tepozteco, was

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[38] Letter from Anastasio Flores, conserje of Uxmal, to SIPBA, December 31, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 153, exp. 1, f. 1.

[39] Letter from Manuel Díaz Piña, conserje of the ruins of Mitla, to SIPBA, August 2, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 153, exp. 22, f. 3.

[40] The funeral expenses paid to families were equivalent to a month of the deceased's salary. When Professor of Natural History and former Museum subdirector Manuel Urbina died in 1906, his family received $125. SIPBA memo, June 19, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 4, f. 3. A few months later, the widow of Subinspector of Monuments for the state of Yucatán Santiago Bolio also received the equivalent of a month of her former husband's salary. SIPBA memo, September 5, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 18, f. 9. In 1908, the widow of Museum Professor of Zoology Othón Krieger was granted a month's worth of Krieger's salary, in the sum of $100. SIPBA memo, August 11, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 154, exp. 51, f. 35. During the Revolution, the family of a lower-level Museum employee also received such a benefit. The survivors of Museum "*mozo*" Domingo Lara received $30, the equivalent of a month of Lara's salary, in June of 1915. SIPBA memo, June 26, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 69, f. 1.

[41] "*…esta Ynspeccion opinaria porque se acepte la renunica que ha hecho Moreno Flores de su empleo, y se nombre á uno de los habitantes del pueblo de Tetlama que se halla al pié de la colina á donde está el monumento, obligandole á que forme su habitación cerca del mismo.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 1, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 3, fs. 6-7. Despite the recommendation in this letter, Verazaluce was from Tepoztlán, not Tetlama.

[42] Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 16, 1900. Ibid., f. 11.

[43] Batres believed that these copies "*deben figurar en el Museo ó en los archivos de la Ynspeccion*," an indication of the trust placed in Verazaluce. Letter from Batres to SJIP, November 26, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 40, f. 1.

apparently a talented draftsman. During his employment with the Inspección, he made significant contributions to the study of pre-Hispanic cultures. According to one U.S. anthropologist, "The data most prized [on the ruins of Tepozteco] is a series of drawings…made by the Custodian, Sr. B. Verazaluce. On comparing these drawings with the original reliefs on the temple walls their fidelity in minute details was apparent, and later, when it was possible to consult existing descriptions and photographs of the ruins, it was recognized that this series is more complete than any that have yet been printed."[44] Unlike Verazaluce, most caretakers were not called upon to travel away from their sites, or to exercise their creative or scientific talents. As we shall see, though, other conserjes enjoyed political connections, served in local government, or took advantage of their status as federal employees to lord over the communities in which they served.

As with social status, the economic situations of the caretakers were also fluid and varied, sliding from relative prosperity to grinding poverty. Part of this uncertainty resulted from the slow and irregular payment of government salaries. In principle, the national government provided adequate but far from munificent wages to its caretakers, with annual salaries that ranged from around $145 to $1,000 depending on the site and the year.[45] (State subinspectors of monuments were at the highest end of this range, while Batres and a few other Inspección officials were well outside it. In 1908 Salvador and Leopoldo Batres enjoyed annual salaries of $2,409 and $6,004.25, respectively.)[46] These amounts placed the average conserje on par with high-earning laborers or agricultural workers.[47] The wages were attractive enough that Instrucción Pública sometimes received unsolicited applications from men seeking employment as conserjes (a ploy that was rarely successful). In 1908, an employee in the federal Stamp Office in Casas Grandes, Chihuahua clearly spelled out this reasoning: "I only receive an honorarium

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[44] Jesse Walter Fewkes, "Mural Relief Figures of el Casa del Tepozteco," in *Proceedings of the Davenport Academy of Sciences, Volume X, 1904-1906* (Davenport, Iowa: Davenport Academy of Sciences, 1907), 146-7.

[45] The sum of $12 a month, paid to the conserje Antonio Coria of Tepozteco, was regarded as insufficient by Coria and his superiors at Instrucción Pública alike. This salary increased to $25at the beginning of fiscal year 1900-1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 42.Mechthild Rutsch points out that conserjes at sites of "the first importance"at first received higher salaries, but that payment scales became standardized by 1911. "El sueldo de los conserjes (o guardianes) en 1900 es de $492.75 el año en sitios de primera importancia representados por el sueldo de los guardianes de Mitla, Papantla y Teotihuacán. En otros sitios se paga menos, pues el sueldo del conserje de Zempoallan por ejemplo es en ese año de $365 (es decir, algo por arriba del salario mínimo) y los sueldos que paga la Inspección en Xochicalco y el Tepozteco son de tan sólo $299.30 al año. En los años posteriores se mantiene esta diferencia, aunque no siempre entre los mismos sitios, hasta que en 1911 se igualan los sueldos de todos los guardianes de la república en esta cantidad, esto es, en $492.75 al año." *Entre el campo y el gabinete,* 91. The federal budget for 1908 shows that conserjes earned between $0.85 and $2.75 per day ($310.25 and 1,003.75 per year), with most earning daily wages of either $0.85 or $1.35 (492.75 per year). Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, *Ramo 7º del Presupuesto de Egresos del Erario Federal, para el año fiscal que comienza el 1º del julio de 1908 y termina el 30 de junio de 1909* (Palacio Nacional, Mexico City: Tipografía de la Oficina Impresora de Estampillas, 1908), 44.

[46] Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, *Ramo 7º del Presupuesto*..., 43-4.

[47] "[Dispossessed Morelos villagers who hired themselves out as field hands during the late Porfiriato] found wages very high, by the day up to 65 centavos in the dry winter season and a peso during harvest in the spring, and by the job even more, from 75 centavos to 1.25 or 1.50 pesos daily." John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York, Vintage Books, 1970), 46. Womack also notes that the "national average" was "25 centavos a day," although it is not clear whether this was the average for a specific year or over a longer period of time. Ibid., 47.

from the sale of stamps, this gives me a very small monthly salary….However, in this town there exists a caretaker charged with looking after the Ruins of the Moctezumas, who is assigned a fixed salary of $2 a day."[48] Another hopeful job seeker sent multiple letters attempting to secure employment as caretaker of the valley of Mitla, eagerly informing Instrucción Pública when the current occupant of the position was briefly incarcerated in Oaxaca's public jail.[49] Likewise, the reputation of Agapito Fontecilla at Tajín was assailed on several occasions by his political enemies, who sought to discredit him so that his position might go to another.[50] The bright hopes

[48] "*Con fecha 6 de Mayo de 1906, fui nombrado Subalterno del timbre en esta población, como Ud. sabe, solamente recibo honorario por la venta de estampillas, esto me produce una mensualidad muy insignificante, pero como estoy dispuesto por serbir al Supremo Gobierno, tengo que abenirme al sueldo que recibo. Ahora bien, en esta población existe un Conserje que se encarga de cuidar las Ruinas de las Moctezumas, el cual tiene asignado un sueldo fijo de $2.00 diarios; como este nombramiento pende directamente de esa Secretaría que tan acertadamente esta al cargo de Ud., por la presente solicito su valioza ayuda á fin de que si le es posible, se sirba nombrarme Conserje para encargarme de dichas Ruinas.*" Letter from Zacarías Hernández to Justo Sierra at SIPBA, May 22, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 155, exp. 32, fs. 1-2. Hérnandez did not receive the job.

[49] "*Que, hará unos seis meses me permití dirijirle una carta suplicatoria solicitando de Ud. el empleo en las ruinas de Mitla, lo que no fué posible por no haber quedado vacante; a hoy tambien me permito hacerlo con el mismo objeto, pues creo que con motivo del encarselamiento, y estar encommunicado hasta esta fecha en la Carcel Publica de ésta Ciudad, el Sr. Nicolas Gómes, empleado de aquel lugar, me supongo pueda ser la causa de su separacion y cesó de ser así, á Ud. ocurro Señor Ministro reiterandole mis suplicas muy atentamente …rogandole por lo que más quiera Ud. tenga á bien favoreserme con el empleo en las ruinas en Mitla de lo que le viviré eternamente agradesido.*" Letter from Juan Antonio Mendieta to Justo Sierra at SIPBA, February 4, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 15, f. 2. Unfortunately for the applicant, tales of scandal and lavish praise for Justo Sierra as "*una bella persona…de buen corazón y de sentimientos humanitarias*" failed to secure the desired post. Ibid., f. 3.

[50] In 1909, several complaints reached Instrucción Pública that the ruins of Tajín were covered with vegetation. The mayor of Papantla wrote of the "*gran cantidad de hierba*" surrounding the monument, while the jefe político of Papantla claimed that the ruins were found "*en completo estado de abandono*." Letter from alcalde muncipal of Papantla to the jefe político of Papantla, October 20, 1909, and letter from the jefe político of Papantla to Governor Teodoro Dehesa, October 21, 1901, both copied in letter from Dehesa to SIPBA, October 26, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 7, f. 6. Meanwhile, a Papantla resident named L. Decuir L. had levied even harsher complaints against the conserje Agapito G. Fontecilla y Fontecilla. (Like Fontecilla, Decuir was from a wealthy and influential local family. Kourí writes that in 1883 an Alcibiades Decuir of New Orleans purchased shares in land that "included milpas and vanilla fields" and later became one of the "principal proprietors" of land in El Cristo. Kourí, *A Pueblo Divided*, 208 and 212.) L. Decuir L. wrote that "*El Señor Fontecilla, sin embargo de la importancia histórica que tiene ese monumento para la Nación y de estar perciviendo mensualmente del gobierno Federal la suma de cuarenta y cinco pesos no se preocupa en manera alguna por cuidarlo y con ésta práctica consurable vemos con pena que se le está convirtiendo en verdaderas ruinas… Las cercanías de ese monumento, con motivo del abandono y descuido del Señor Fontecilla, estan convertidas en escombros y matorrales inaccesibles, como debes suponer; las han tomado por guarida.*" Decuir suggested that a man named Benjamín Cabrera be appointed to guard the ruins in place of Fontecilla. Letter from Decuir to Fernando Marin, August 17, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 7, fs. 10-12. In response, Batres quoted a letter from the conserje's father, Agapito Fontecilla y Vidal. The elder Fontecilla wrote that despite the best efforts of his son, "*la vegetación es tan exuberante que con frecuencia requiere ser limpiado.*" Fontecilla y Vidal also reminded Batres that although $500 had previously been authorized for the cleaning of the site, this money had not yet been distributed. Accordingly, Batres argued, the younger Fontecilla had neither abandoned his post nor had final responsibility for the cleanliness of the monument. Letter from Fontecilla y Vidal to Batres, October 29, 1909, and letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 18, 1909. Ibid., f. 8. Although another individual wrote to Instrucción Pública in the late fall of 1909 lamenting the "*la invasión de yerbas y árboles*" at Tajin and proposing himself for the position of conserje, Fontecilla y Fontecilla stayed at his post and arranged for the cleaning of the site. Letter from Isidoro O. Marié to SIPBA, November 19, 1909, AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 8, f. 1 and letter from Batres to SIPBA, March 16, 1910, AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 71, f. 1. The next year, Decuir tried again to wrest control of Tajín away from the Fontecilla family, claiming that the Fontecilla y

of a steady government salary, however, were often dimmed by the realities of administrative delays and inefficient payment systems. A caretaker's wages might look tempting from the vantage point of the Casas Grandes Stamp Office, but the actual guardian of the Casas Grandes ruins found himself living on loans for months after his appointment paperwork failed to arrive.[51] Conserjes buffered themselves against difficult circumstances with personal connections or alternative employment prospects, using a variety of strategies to supplement their irregular income.

As with so much else regarding the conserjes, our understanding of how they employed themselves away from the archaeological sites is partial at best, with suggestive references and tantalizing scraps far outweighing solid information. Some conserjes, like Félix Quero or Agapito Fontecilla, were men of independent means. Others undoubtedly depended on the support of family and community members until their elusive government salaries arrived, performed odd jobs in the area, or tended their own patches of land. In some cases, we know that caretakers abandoned their sites to seek work in other locations. One conserje left his post to sell haberdashery in surrounding villages, while another spent much of his time in the countryside scouting for mines.[52] Ángel Vázquez of Mitla simply solicited tips from visiting tourists, telling sightseers "that the Government was not paying him what he required for his subsistence."[53] Such buffers, though, could not absorb all of the shocks to which the caretakers were exposed. In

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Fontecilla had left the site to set up a puppet show dozens of miles from the ruins, and urging Instrucción Pública to begin an official investigation. Telegram from L. Decuir to SIPBA, April 16, 1910. Ibid., fs. 3-5. In telegrams to Batres, the younger Fontecilla pointed out that the boundaries of the archaeological monument of Tajín were considerably smaller than those of the "*congregación*" of Tajín, while his father excoriated Decuir. Fontecilla y Vidal claimed that he had personally assumed the obligations of caretaker during his son's absence, while stating that Decuir was a crony of the jefe político and had managed to escape punishment for murder because of his ties to authority. The elder Fontecilla concluded his telegram to Batres by stating "*No será de extrañar que sigan las maquinaciones para deturpar con chismes de los malquierientes, sintiendo más, que hasta Vd. alcancen las molestias.*" Telegram from Agapito G. Fontecilla to Batres, April 13, 1910 and telegram from Agapito Fontecilla y Vidal to Batres, April 18, 1910, both transcribed in letter from Batres to SIPBA, April 29, 1910. Ibid., fs. 7-9. Faced with these heated charges, Instrucción Pública apparently let the matter lapse, and Fontecilla y Fontecilla once more retained his position.

[51] "*Suplico á Vd. se digne hacerme favor de remitirme mi nombramiento, pues será cosa que le estimaré mucho, tengo dos meses que vá en tres, que no persibo sueldo, nada mas préstamos pequeños que me hace el Administrador del Timbre y me dice este mismo, que no me pagará mis sueldos vencidos hasta que le presente el nombramiento.*" Letter from Leopoldo González to Leopoldo Batres, September 3, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 16, f. 2. González was in an especially difficult position because he likely lacked connections in the town. When he was first appointed as conserje in 1904, he had requested 40 pesos to travel to Chihuahua from Mexico City. "*Que teniendo que emprender el viaje para ir á tomar pocesión del empleo que me acaba de conferir …y no teniendo recursos para trasladarme á dicho punto, á Ud. suplico se sirva concederme el que la Tesoreria General me ministre la suma de cuarenta pesos que importan mis gastos hasta llegar á mi final destino…*" Letter from Leopoldo González to SJIP, March 14, 1904. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 65, f. 3. Instrucción Pública did not grant González's request, but instead forwarded him two months' salary. Ibid., f. 4.

[52] "*…segun afirmaron las autoridades y los vecinos del pueblo en presencia del mismo C. Navalon, nunca estaba en Mitla, pues casi pasaba su vida en Oaxaca, Tlacolula y en los cerros buscando minas en lugar de estar cumpliendo con su deber…*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, February 7, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 10, f. 12.

[53] "*Por conducto de personas que han visitado los monumentos, ya extrangeros ó mexicanos he sabido que este empleado les pide dinero. Las personas que me han relatado estos hechos agregan que el C. Angel Vazquez manifestaba que el Gobierno no le pagaba lo necesario para su subsistencia.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 29, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 18.

making requests to their bureaucratic superiors, especially if the matter at hand related to the payment of salaries, many conserjes described impoverished circumstances and heavy financial responsibilities. As the guardian of the Casa de Morelos in San Cristóbal Ecatepec humbly commented after learning that the local treasury office had not received orders to pay him, "You will understand that here in this town I am very short of resources."[54] Most conserjes walked an economic tightrope, maintaining their balance only with constant effort and attention.

Ethnicity

Given that conserjes were usually recruited from communities close to the ruins that they guarded, what can we say about their ethnic origins? Did the men who supervised the sites of Mexican antiquity possess cultural ties to the monuments, and did their backgrounds give them a perspective on their work different from that possessed by Batres and other government officials? Unfortunately, the records of Instrucción Pública are largely silent on this score, and our knowledge of the conserjes' ethnic identifications is even hazier than our information about their social and economic positions. Conserjes at Yucatecan sites often bore traditionally Mayan surnames; in the most intriguing example, a Guadalupe Jul served at Dzulá, while men with the family names "Couch" and "Coyí" served at various locations within the peninsula. Farther north, members of the Verazaluce family assisted several anthropologists in gathering regional folklore. "Mr. Verazaluce, a native of Tepoztlan," provided Franz Boas with "two fragments of tales," while P. González Casanova credited "Genaro Verazaluce, an educated indigene from Tepoztlán, Morelos…[who] knows how to write in his native language" with recounting a Nahua story and ensuring "the exactitude of its phonetic transcription."[55] It is difficult, though, to determine whether caretakers in Yucatán or elsewhere believed that their ethnic affiliations gave them a hereditary connection to the objects of the pre-Hispanic past. Conserjes who were long-term residents of a particular area likely had some personal attachments to the sites, but these bonds may have been based more on local custom or lived experience than the conscious expression of a particular ethnic identity. Moreover, these sorts of personal associations and meanings seldom slipped into the official and officious phrases of bureaucratic correspondence. Caretakers who angered or offended local residents were the subjects of complaints, while those whose stewardship aligned with local values and practices left fewer and fainter traces in the historical record. While the following chapters will discuss interactions between the federal government and local communities, such encounters were seldom linked in a simple or straightforward way to questions of ethnic heritage. Instead, ethnic associations were intermeshed with questions of property rights, struggles for personal and

[54] "*Comprenderá Ud. que aquí en este pueblo estoy muy escaso de recursos.*…" Letter from Jesús García to the subdirector of the Museo Nacional, August 2, 1907, quoted in a letter from the subdirector of the Museo Nacional to SIPBA, August 10, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 153, exp. 24.

[55] Franz Boas, "Notes on Mexican Folk-Lore," *The Journal of American Folkore*, Vol. 25, No. 97 (July-September, 1912): 246. "*El cuento que sigue, me fué relatado por Genaro Verazaluce, instruído indígena oriundo de Tepoztlán, Morelos. La exactitud de la transcripción fonética me la facilitó en parte el hecho de que Verazaluce sabe escribir en su lengua nativa y me proporcionó escrito dicho cuento, de modo que, sin perjuicio de la ilación, podía pedirle que repitiese una frase o una palabra tantas veces cuantas lo creía necesario.*" P. González Casanova, "Un cuento en Mexicano," *El México Antiguo: Revista internacional de arqueología, etnología, folklore, prehistoria, historia antigua y lingüistica mexicanas, publicada por Hermann Beyer, Profesor de Arqueología Mexicana en la Universidad Nacional de México*, Vol. 1, No. 10-12 (November, 1922): 291.

local autonomy, practical and moral economies, Mexican nationalism, and emerging visions of modernity. Conserjes, too, negotiated the thickets of competing identities and responsibilities to the past and present.

II. Gaining employment after 1895

As with the personal characteristics of the conserjes, the practices by which the federal government selected its caretakers are often resistant to direct scrutiny. In particular, we know almost nothing about the initial interactions between the federal government and candidates for caretaker positions.[56] When notifying his superiors that a given man had been selected as a conserje or peón, Batres seldom included more information than a name and a formulaic statement that the chosen individual possessed the requisite qualifications and attributes for the job. If caretakers or laborers were not chosen by Batres but by administrators at Instrucción Pública, even those few lines of justification were omitted. We must examine the documents for dropped clues and telling patterns, while recognizing that the available records do not permit a quantitative analysis of hiring practices within the Inspección.

Geography

The story of Jesús Moreno Flores demonstrates the importance that geographical proximity to sites had assumed by the mid-1890s. The emphasis that Batres placed on finding individuals of "humble origin" from communities close to the ruins was echoed by other Inspección officials. According to Santiago Bolio, the subinspector of archaeological monuments in Yucatán, he wished to select as caretakers "poor laborers of good conduct who live close to the Ruins, and have told me that they will fulfill these duties, subjecting themselves to all the orders and responsibilities that I impose."[57] Inspección administrators believed that such figures, rooted in place by their life histories, families, and social

[56] Slightly more information is available about the hiring of staff in the Museo Nacional, as the director often made note of the specific background or credentials which qualified a candidate for a particular position. In a few cases, researchers were hired as the result of an explicit quid pro quo, as applicants offered to trade access to collections or writings in exchange for employment. The German entomologist Leopold Conradt was hired as an assistant in Natural History after an official at the German legation sent a letter promising, "*En caso de que el Señor Conradt consiga este empleo esta conforme de regalar al Museo Nacional su coleccion de insectos, que juntado durante su estancia en Africa.*" Letter from the Legación del Imperio Alemán to Justo Sierra at SJIP, May 11, 1903. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 24, f. 2. In 1904 the Museum purchased Conradt's collection of over 11,000 insects for a total of $768.05, after the head of the Natural History Department judged that it would be a "*magnífica adquisición para el Museo Nacional.*." Letter from Francisco Rodríguez to SJIP, containing transcript of report from Manuel Urbina, March 21, 1904. Ibid., fs. 11-2. A few years later, another entomologist named Othón Krieger hammered out a deal with the Museo Nacional in which he turned over a lavishly illustrated work on "*Biologia de los Lepidopteros mexicanos*" in exchange for a job as Collector and Preparor of Zoological Specimens for the Museum. AGN-IPBA, caja 151, exp. 14.

[57] "*En virtud de haber creado esa Secretaria de su digno cargo, las plazas de Guardianes para todas las Ruinas Arqueológicas de este Estado, me permito indicarle que si puedo proponer á las personas que pueden desempeñar estos cargos, pongo en su conocimiento que estas personas son labradores pobres de buena conducta que viven en lugares cercanos á las Ruinas, y que me han manifestado que desempeñarian estos cargos, sujetándose á todas las órdenes y responsabilidades que se les imponga.*" Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, August 5, 1903. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 32, f. 1.

connections, would be less likely to desert their posts or to disregard directives from their federal superiors. The selection of local caretakers may also have encouraged communities to accept the imposition of federal authority over nearby pre-Hispanic sites, or even to solicit the creation of a new caretaker position. Conversely, the conserjes who attracted the most vitriolic denunciations seem to have been figures drawn from outside the communities in which they served. The enforcement of federal law and the enactment of federal power were carried out through personal interactions, and smoothed over by local knowledge and ties. By choosing caretakers from towns or villages close to the ruins, Inspección officials could take advantage of such knowledge and networks.

Nepotism

The social and family networks of prospective conserjes were significant in other ways. Like most employers, Inspección administrators tried to select people with whom they felt comfortable, and who they trusted to meet the demands of the position. The importance of geographic proximity and personal connections with Inspección officials meant that nepotism was a persistent feature in the recruitment and selection of conserjes. It was routine for sons to step in for fathers, or for cousins or brothers to hold appointments within the same region. Bernardino, Eduardo, and Herculano Verazaluce all served as caretakers of the site of Xochicalco in Morelos, while Bernardino and his son Genaro Verazaluce were also appointed as conserjes of Tepozteco. Jacinto Arce and Isauro Arce were conserjes in México state.[58] In 1903 the Inspección employed Laureano Coyí at Labná, José Coyí at Kichmouc and Luciano Coyí at Kihuic in the Yucatán, while nine years later a revolutionary director of the Inspección would propose four people with the surname "Coyí" to care for various sites in the peninsula.[59] The family connection of at least two Coyís can be verified, as the caretakership of Kichmouc was given to José Inés Coyí after the 1911 death of his father, José C. Coyí (apparently in lieu of paying the deceased's outstanding salary).[60]

While geographic factors may have made nepotism more attractive in the selection of conserjes, such considerations were not necessary for the practice to flourish at the top of the Inspección hierarchy. Leopoldo Batres' son Salvador joined the agency as subinspector of monuments in 1903, and demonstrated his father's knack for remaining employed in the face of strong complaints against his behavior (in Salvador's case, carousing with friends in a small

[58] For the Verazaluces, see AGN-IPBA, Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, caja 150, exp. 12 amd AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 40. For the family relationship between Bernardino and Genaro Verazaluce, see Alfonso Caso, *Revista mexicana de estudios antropológicos*, Vol. 2 (Mexico City: Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología, 1928), 26. For the Arces, see AGN-IPBA, Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, caja 113, exp. 115.

[59] Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, September 14, 1903. Bolio wrote that he was proposing the men as guardians of the archaeological sites "*porque ha hablado con ellos y se comprometen á desempeñar á satisfacción sus empleos, son labradores que viven serca de estas Ruinas y son personas honradas.*" AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 32, f. 3. In 1912, Inspector General Francisco Rodríguez proposed Laureano Coyí for the site of Labná, Pastor Coyí for Kabah, Luciano Coyí for Kihuic and José Inés Coyí for Kichmouc. Letter from Francisco Rodríguez to SIPBA, July 2, 1912. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 115, f. 1.

[60] AGN, Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, caja 120, exp. 24.

village near Teotihuacán, firing pistols into the air, and generally causing "escándalo").[61] Preference given to the sons of powerful figures was also seen at Instrucción Pública and the Museo Nacional. At the end of 1902, acting director of the Museum Alfredo Chavero sent a personal note to Justo Sierra, who at the time was serving as undersecretary of Instrucción Pública. Chavero informed his friend of an open administrative post at the Museum and proposed that Sierra's son Santiago be appointed to the vacancy, "as it is not incompatible with that which he holds in [Instrucción Pública], and in this way we'll make him a good archaeologist."[62] Unsurprisingly, Santiago got the job.

As the case of Salvador Batres demonstrates, nepotism may have encouraged the selection of unqualified candidates, or allowed some individuals to remain employed in circumstances when they would otherwise have been let go. However, given the general weakness and limited administrative capacity of Porfirian federal governance, nepotism may also have had certain practical advantages. By favoring the relatives of current employees, federal administrators could locate and draw upon a pool of people who were familiar with the requirements and demands of particular positions, and who could fill the positions on short notice.[63] Nepotism may have also linked entire families into patronage networks, strengthening the connections of conserjes with the government and enhancing the likelihood that communal responsibility would be taken for the performance of job functions. For example, one applicant who sought employment as a conserje wrote that that he had "numerous family, and among

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[61] '"*El Juez Auxiliar del Pueblo de San Martín, en oficio fechado el 14 del corriente, que dirige á la Presidencia Municipal de la Cabecera del Distrito de Otumba, dice lo que sigue: - Tengo la honra de poner en el superior conocimiento de Ud. que el Martes próximo pasado, á las once de la noche se presentó en este pueblo, Salvador Batres, Director en la obra de las Pirámides, acompañado de dos rurales y llegando en la casa de Doña Delfina Ortiz, que está en el centro de este pueblo – reinó el silencio hasta las doce de la noche, y lo adelante hubo un enorme escándolo de balazos, alarmando al vecindario que está en su sueño á la una de la mañana se suspendieron de dicho escándolo y partieron esos individuos para su campamento blasfemando á boca abierta. No he dado cuenta por estar esperando el resultado de alguna desgracia y ninguna razón he tenido. Doy cuenta de lo ocurrido sin saber los motivos ó festividad de dicha Señora Ortiz, con más de cincuenta disparos que hubo enfrente de su casa.*'" Letter from the juez auxiliar del Pueblo de San Martín to the presidencia municipal de la Cabecera del Distrito de Otumba, June 14, 1906, copied in letter from the governor of the state of México to the Secretaría de Gobernación, June 24, 1906, copied in letter from Gobernación to SIPBA, July 30, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 11, f. 1

[62] "*El Museo no puede estar un solo día sin Secretario, porque éste tiene en él múltiples atribuciones… propongo á Ud. á Santiago, pues este puesto no es incompatible con el que tiene en la Secretaría de Justicia, y así lo haremos un buen arqueólogo.*" Letter on personal stationary from Alfredo Chavero to Justo Sierra, December 31, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 29, f. 2. Santiago Sierra's yearly salary as secretary of the Museo Nacional was $1200.85. SJIP memo, January 1, 1903. Ibid., f. 1.

[63] The potential advantages of nepotism – or more broadly, of using the family and social networks of current employees to find new hires – have been noticed by many employers. For example, the labor market for recent Mexican immigrants to the United States is heavily influenced by these sorts of personal connections. Wayne A. Cornelius writes, "Making new hires through immigrants' kinship and friendship networks has become the most common labor recruitment mechanism for immigrant-using firms in the San Diego area…From the employer's persepctive, immigrants' social networks provide an ideal mechanism for labor recruitment. No costly advertising is required; no employment agency fees need be paid. Job vacancies can be filled almost immediately…High-quality workers are virtually guaranteed, even without screening of job applicants, since the immigrant's social network vouches for his or her reliability, productivity, and good character." Wayne A. Cornelius, "The Structural Embeddedness of Demand for Mexican Immigrant Labor: New Evidence from California," in Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, Carola Suárez-Orozco, and Desirée Qin-Hilliard, eds., *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the New Immigration, Vol. 1: Theoretical Perspectives* (New York and London: Routledge, 2001), 149-50.

them four helpful sons who can assist me when it may be necessary."[64] When the Inspección carried out repairs on the monuments of Xochicalco in 1909, Batres requested the services of Bernardino Verazaluce, at the time serving as the conserje of Tepozteco. Batres then recommended that Bernardino's son Genaro Verazaluce fill in at Tepozteco for his father.[65] A similar case occurred at the National Museum, where Juan Nuñez replaced his father Jesús as servant during the latter's illness.[66] Such practices continued during the Revolution, as turmoil in the capital left positions vacant. When an Inspección assistant left for an unpaid leave in May of 1915, shortly before Constitutionalist troops retook the city, her duties were assumed by Manuel Gamio's younger brother Javier.[67] This substitution took place despite an earlier attempt at reform by the Madero government, which sought to prevent the employees of Instrucción Pública from exercising supervisory authority over relatives.[68] Like many

[64] "*Tengo numerosa familia y entre ellos cuatro hijos varones útiles que podrán ayudarme cuando así fuere necesario por lo que creo podré desempeñar el empleo en el caso en que se me confiera y cumplir las instrucciones ú órdenes que al efecto me libre esa Superioridad*." He did not receive the desired position, however, as it was already filled. Letter from Isidoro O. Marié to SIPBA, November 19, 1909. AGN-IPBA 111, exp. 8, f. 1.

[65] Telegram from Batres to Alfonso Pruneda at SIPBA, December 29, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 28, fs. 3-4.

[66] The director of the museum stated that Juan had replaced his father owing to the "*urgencia*" of filling the position. Letter from Gumesindo Mendoza to SJIP, October 9, 1882. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 38, f. 9. However, Mendoza soon decided that Juan "*no es útil para desempeñar esas funciones*," and named a new employee in his place. Letter from Gumersindo Mendoza to SJIP, October 19, 1882. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 39, f. 1.

[67] AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 27.

[68] The 1912 order allows for a fascinating glimpse at family relationships within a number of SIPBA offices. The directors of the National School of Dental Studies and the National Preparatory School said that they would investigate within their institutions, and report any necessary changes of personnel. The directors of the National University and the Inspección claimed that there were no relatives among their agencies' employees, an oversight or an outright misrepresentation on the part of the Inspección. The directors of the National School of Engineers, the National School of Jurisprudence, the National School of Fine Arts, and the Museo Nacional denied that any of their employees ran afoul of the restrictions, but did not specify whether other, permissible kinship relations occurred within their branches. The National Medical Institute and the Pathology Institute each had one pair of relatives (neither of whom exercised supervisory authority over the other), the National Institute of Bacteriology had a pair of first cousins employed in different areas as well as an uncle and nephew who worked closely together; the latter were granted an exception from the regulations because of the specialized knowledge needed in their field. The National Conservatory of Music and Declamation won the nepotism sweepstakes, with the director's son serving as assistant to the librarian, a pair of brothers working as teachers of music reading and trumpet playing, a husband and wife who taught harmony and Italian, a brother and sister-in-law who were instructors of singing and violin, and a father and son who respectively tuned pianos and acted as prefect of the establishment. While most of these relationships fell within the newly strict guidelines, the director of the Conservatory was told to propose a change in personnel so that his son would no longer report to him. AGN-IPBA, caja 284, exp. 5. Family connections within Instrucción Pública can also be traced in later years. Federico Tobler was a clerk in the National Library, and died in 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 343, exp. 1. In 1915 a Dolores G. Viuda de Tobler was working as a clerk in the Museo Nacional and a Srita. Rosa Tobler, presumably her daughter, was serving the museum as a *mozo*. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 41 and AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 35. Similarly, a directory of Museum of Natural History staff for the fiscal year 1913-1914 tells us that curator of museum collections Nicolás Rojano lived at the same address as taxidermist Sra. Clotilde R. (possibly Rojano?) de Cámara. "Directorio del Personal del Museo Nacional de Historia Natural," signed by director Jesús Díaz de Leon, July 9, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 374, exp. 1, f.1. By the spring of 1914, however, both parties had moved to separate domiciles. Letter from Jesús Díaz de Leon to SIPBA, March 6, 1914 and letter from Jesús Díaz de Leon to SIPBA, April 4, 1914. Ibid., fs. 14-15.

Maderista policies, the anti-nepotism ordinance failed to take root in the shadow of established social practice.

Political Patronage

Patronage was exercised through political as well as family networks. We have already seen that Batres himself owed his position not to any particular scientific or administrative expertise, but to the fact that he was a close associate of Porfirio Díaz. Some site caretakers also received their jobs by virtue of agile maneuvering through political mazes. In December of 1899, for example, the town council of San Carlos, Veracruz, wrote to the state governor requesting a guardian for the ruins of the "historic city of Zempoallan [Cempoala]…in order to avoid the total destruction of the site or the clandestine removal of the antiquities found there." Although the council had attempted to exercise oversight of the ruins, it lacked both the financial resources and the legal authority to "deter the destruction or extraction of objects." The council members warned that the proprietor of the estate on which the monuments were located was planning to sell the land to "some foreign company; and although it is true that according to the law any sale which includes the ruins of Zempoallan would be void, it is no less true that complications would arise in reclaiming the national property."[69] Veracruz governor Teodoro Dehesa in turn recommended that federal government name Felipe Figueroa, the mayor of San Carlos, as the caretaker of Cempoala. Instrucción Pública quickly granted his request. In this case federal, state and local interests dovetailed beautifully: the national government extended its authority over Mexico's archaeological patrimony, the governor bestowed patronage to a client, the town council of San Carlos reigned in a troublesome landowner, and Mayor Figueroa received an additional salary.[70]

The only party left unsatisfied by the arrangement was the hacendado Fermín Zárate, upon whose lands the monuments rested. Several months after Figueroa's appointment, Zárate complained to Instrucción Pública that the "sacred right" of private property was "not well understood by a subaltern employee who presented himself at my country estate (*finca de campo*) and did not wish to hear the many strong arguments I advanced in defense of my person and property." Zárate asked to be named caretaker of Cempoala in place of the current holder of that position, who displayed "excessive zeal in carrying out his duties;" otherwise, he hinted, the government should formally compensate him for the loss of access to his lands.

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[69] " *…existen varios monumentos que atestiguan el fundamento de la histórica ciudad de Zempoallan…constituyen para la arqueología como interés histórica, y para evitar su destrucción total ó que sean extraídas clandestinamente las antigüedades que encierra, parece indispensable tratar de su conservación. El Ayuntamiento ha velado en cuanto le ha sido posible por la conservación de esos monumentos, y aún entiende que tal vigilancia ha de ser incesante, pero no ha logrado recursos pecunarios con que espensar empleados especiales á quienes confiar el reguardo y que legalmente estén autorizados para impedir la destrucción ó extracción de objetos. Además, abriga ahora el temor de que el actual propietario de la finca del "Agostadero," enagene el prédio, pues se sabe que ya está estipulando condiciones de venta con alguna compañía extranjera de las que pretenden adquirir dichos terrenos; y si bien es verdad que según las leyes sería nulo todo pacto en que se comprendiesen las ruinas de la ciudad de Zempoallan, no es menos cierto que en ese caso sobrevendrían complicaciones para reivindicar dicha propiedad nacional.*" Letter from the Ayuntamiento of San Carlos, Veracruz, December 7, 1899, copied in letter from the jefe político of Veracruz to the Secretaría de Gobierno del Veracruz, Sección de Fomento y Estadística, December 8, 1899, copied in letter from Teodoro Dehesa to SJIP, December 12, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 2, fs. 2-3.

[70] AGN, Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, caja 149, exp. 2.

Batres vehemently rejected the suggestion to appoint Zárate as caretaker, which he believed would undermine federal control of archaeological monuments.[71] He wrote, "If the caretaker of the ruins of Zempoalla has transgressed his bounds in the conservation of the relics under his protection – may he be admonished, may he be removed from office, may he be castigated, but do not hand the custody of those interesting pages of our history over to a private citizen, however honorable he might be."[72] Figueroa's appointment as conserje both checked the private exploitation of a pre-Hispanic site, and expanded the administrative authority of the federal government.

The long-term consquences of Figueroa's service were more mixed. During a 1907 inspection visit, Batres discovered that Figueroa had not tended regularly to the ruins for the past three years, leaving the monuments "in a state of complete abandonment" with vegetation "destroying the temples and other platforms."[73] He recommended that Figueroa be replaced by another "son of the area," who could be required to live on site and remove the troublesome foliage. However, while in this case patronage did not produce a dutiful employee, the practice may have smoothed the way for the expansion of federal power. Figueroa's appointment aligned the mayor and town council of San Carlos, as well as the governor of Veracruz, against a local hacendado with private designs on the ruins of Cempoala. The national state established precedents for the conservation of the site, and the presence of a federal representative. When Batres replaced Figueroa with another caretaker – a man likely less well-connected than his predecessor, given the onerous job duties that Batres outlined – the Inspector General drew Cempoala further under federal control, and apparently did so without generating local protest.[74] Given the overall weakness of the federal government, patronage appointments provided a low-cost means of gradually expanding the role and power of the national state.

A more negative perspective on political patronage emerges from an examination of events at Mitla. The conserjes Ángel Vázquez and Ángel Navalon, appointed in 1895 and 1900, were not selected by Batres and appear instead to have been patronage appointments suggested

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[71] "*En el concepto de esta Ynspeccion no se debe acceder á la petición del C. Zárate porque seria esto tanto como que el Supremo Gobierno declinase en un particular el derecho y la obligacion que la impone la ley, los intereses de la historia y el decoro nacional de que él sea el único que intervenga en la conservación de sus monumentos.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, June 5, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 17, f. 2.

[72] "*Si el concerge de las ruinas de Zempoalla se ha translimitado en la conservacion de las reliquias que están á su guarda – que se le amoneste, que se le destituya, que se le castigue, pero no que se le entregue la custodia de esas interesantes páginas de nuestros archivos á la merced de un simple ciudadano por honorable que este sea.*" Idem.

[73] "*Los importantísimos monumentos arqueológicos de Zempoalla se encuentran en estado completo de abandono, y la vegetación está destruyendo los teocallis y demás plataformas, debido en gran parte á que el C. Figueroa, conserje de ellos no se ha parado en el sitio donde se hallan ubicados, desde hace tres años…En Zempoalla existe una persona apellidado Pedro Vazquez que podría cuidar de las ruinas, sin separarse, pues es hijo de la localidad y habita en el mismo sitio obligándose á construir una barraca en donde se hallan los monumentos y á desmontarlos personalmente.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, February 25, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 36, f. 5.

[74] Future conserjes of Cempoala may also have neglected their duties, as Instrucción Pública received complaints about abandonment of the site in 1913. However, at least one of these accusations was brought by a local resident who sought the conserje position for himself, and Inspector of Monuments Francisco Rodríguez judged both complaints unfounded. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exps. 8 and 54.

by the governor of Oaxaca.[75] Each caretaker antagonized travelers to the site, local authorities, village residents, and Batres, their nominal superior. The jefe político of Tlacolula claimed in late 1898 that Vázquez had left the site abandoned for three months, forcing town officials and police to take responsibility for the monuments until the federal government remedied the situation.[76] Batres informed Instrucción Pública that Vázquez was too old and slow-moving to serve effectively as conserje (in one letter, Batres referred to Vázquez as an "*octogenario*"), never answered the letters that were sent to him, left his post without authorization, asked visitors to the site for money, and abused his status as a federal employee to insult the local priest.[77] Although Batres wished to replace Vázquez with Félix Quero, the prosperous local innkeeper who had previously served as conserje, Vázquez remained at his post for more than a

[75] The file dealing with Vázquez's appointment does not contain correspondence from the Oaxacan governor's office, but there is ample evidence that Batres was dissatisfied with the choice of caretaker. Batres repeatedly complained about Vázquez, and suggested replacing him. Despite these complaints, Vázquez was named "Inspector of Monuments for the State of Oaxaca," a position for which he received an annual salary of $1,000.10 during the 1898-1899 fiscal year. SJIP memo, July 1, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 13. Patronage was applied more openly in the case of Navalon. Oaxaca governor Martín González recommended Navalon in a June 25, 1900 telegram to Instrucción Pública, describing Navalon as "*honrada, activa é inteligente*." AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 41, f. 7. Two days later, Instrucción Pública officially named Navalon as conserje of Mitla. SJIP memo, June 17, 1900. Ibid., f. 8. It may be noted that González himself owed his position as governor to his close relationship with Porfirio Díaz, and that he regularly used patronage to facilitate the expansion of federal power within Oaxaca. In making these selections, González likely prioritized loyalty to Díaz and himself above technical qualifications or a demonstrated work ethic. "In 1894 President Díaz began to intervene even more directly in Oaxacan state politics, installing his friend and ally General Martín González as Oaxacan governor. González proved to be an unpopular governor, both alienated from the Oaxacan ruling classes, who saw him as an outsider, and disconnected from the popular classes, who viewed him as an unsympathetic autocrat…President Díaz personally arranged González's first reelection in 1898 since few Oaxacans actively supported the governor. In exchange, González granted Díaz veto power over key appointments to state and federal offices. In practice, however, the list of names promoted by González would have been pruned even before reaching the president's desk. Not surprisingly, Díaz's usual response, as it was in June 1899, was that 'all of the friends whose names you mention are fine with me.'" Patrick J. McNamara, *Sons of the Sierra: Juárez, Díaz, and the People of Ixtlán, Oaxaca, 1855-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 150-1.

[76] "*…el Conserje C. Angel Vasquez, nombrado por el Supremo Gobierno de la Nación para que cuidara y vigilara de la conservación de estos Monumentos, se ha separado de su empleo hace tres meses, dejando como es natural abandonado la misión que tenía conferida y que por lo mismo, la Jefatura de mi cargo…ordenó al Presidente Municipal del pueblo de Mitla, nombrára uno de sus Regidores con dos policias Municipales, para que sirvieran de guia á los excursionistas ó visitantes de los Palacios indicados.*" Letter from the jefe político of Tlacolula to the governor of Oaxaca, October 27, 1898, transcribed in a letter from the governor of Oaxaca to SJIP, November 3, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 6.

[77] "*El C. Angel Vazquez…no contesta nunca á las comunicaciones que esta Ynspección le dirije para asuntos del servicio… Por conducto de personas que han visitado los monumentos, ya extrangeros ó mexicanos he sabido que este empleado les pide dinero… En otras ocasiones he recibido quejas de parte del párroco del lugar quien me dijo que no era motivo que el C. Vazquez desempeñara un empleo federal para que fuera á proferirle insultos á su casa.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 29, 1899. Ibid., f. 18. "*La aseveracion que ha hecho el C. Jefe Político respecto de que hace tres meses que el C. Angel Vazquez…haya abandonado su puesto es enteramente cierta… La ancianidad de este individuo y otras circunstancias han hecho que nunca haya podido cumplir con su cometido.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, December 27, 1898. Ibid., f. 9. "*Ya en otra occasion me he permitido llamar la atencion del Supremo Gobierno sobre la ineptitud del C. Angel Vazquez para el desempeño del delicadísimo cargo que tiene. En primer lugar este señor por ser octogenario y debido á sus achaques apenas y muy despacio vá de su casa á los Palacios y al centro del pueblo.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, June 4, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 41, f. 4.

year. The final straw did not come until the spring of 1900, when an article appeared in the Catholic newspaper *El Tiempo* alleging that Vázquez had given a recent visitor to Mitla a present of "fragments extracted from the palaces."[78] Faced with this evidence of misconduct, federal officials pointedly asked the governor of Oaxaca if Vázquez was not too advanced in years for his position, and if so, whether the governor might identify a suitable replacement. The governor dutifully replied that yes, Vázquez was indeed too elderly to carry out his job duties, but that another citizen named Ángel Navalon would be well-suited to the post.[79] Unfortunately for Batres and the residents of Mitla, Navalon proved an even more disastrous choice than his predecessor.

A year and a half after Navalon's appointment, the caretaker requested a paid leave to recover from dyspepsia, suggesting that his son be named interim conserje during his absence.[80] In response to this request, Batres informed Instrucción Pública administrators that Oaxaca's Minister of Government had received "very strong complaints from the town council and residents of the town of Mitla with respect to the conduct of Navalon...Among the charges that have been brought against the caretaker…is his constant drunkenness and abandonment of his post." With respect to Navalon's son, Batres commented "I have heard bad references regarding his conduct, and in any case he is no more than 13 or 14 years old."[81] The former conserje Félix Quero also wrote to Instrucción Pública at the beginning of 1902, complaining of Navalon's frequent absences from the site, and the ineffectiveness of the conserje's young son, who would rather play than care for the monuments.[82] Perhaps recognizing the hazards of following recommendations from Oaxaca's governor, Instrucción Pública finally told Batres to go to Mitla, and suggest a new caretaker for the site himself.[83]

When Batres arrived at Mitla, he saw that a pre-Hispanic wall abutting the church had been torn down. In the storm of recriminations and blame-shifting that followed the Inspector General's arrival, the one thing that all the residents of Mitla seemed to agree upon was that Ángel Navalon was a terrible site caretaker, and an even worse human being. More than 75 community members alleged that he had neglected his duties to the ruins, requisitioned horses

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[78] "*Recientemente un viajero venido de Oajaca y que visitó Mitla, mostrónos unos fragmentos extraídos de los palacios, y que le habían sido regalados por el mismo guardián de aquellos monumentos.*" Clipping from no. 4969 of *El Tiempo*, included in a letter from SJIP to Batres, April 28, 1900. Ibid., f. 3.

[79] Letter from SJIP to the governor of Oaxaca, June 21, 1900, and telegram from the governor of Oaxaca to SJIP, June 25, 1900. Ibid., fs. 6-7.

[80] Letter from Navalon to SJIP, December 6, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 10, f. 1.

[81] "*…al presentarme en Oaxaca en el Gobierno del Estado me informó el C. Secretario de dicho Gobierno que tenia quejas muy graves del Ayuntamiento y vecinos de la villa de Mitla respecto á la conducto de Navalon, que ponia en conocimiento de la Federacion estos hechos á fin de que se pusiere el remedio. Entre los cargos que se formulaban contra el concerje de los monumentos, uno de ellas era el de la embriaguez constante y abandono del puesto… En cuanto al joven Guillermo Navalon hijo del concerje he oido malas referencias respecto de su conducta y por otra parte no cuenta mas de 13 á 14 años de edad.*" Batres also mentioned that he had previously telegrammed Instrucción Pública about the accusations against Navalon, and had never received a response. Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 3, 1902. Ibid., f. 8.

[82] Letter from Quero to SJIP, January 11, 1902. Ibid., f. 10.

[83] Letter from SJIP to Batres and Quero, January 22, 1902. Ibid., f. 11.

for his own purposes, taken jewelry from female vendors in the plaza, gone to private houses seeking food and lodging without offering payment, and defied public opinion with the words "that no one dare offend him because he belonged to the federal government."[84] Navalon's remark indicated the paradoxical strength and weakness of the Porfirian state: while possession of a federal appointment might invest an individual with considerable local authority, the absence of effective administrative oversight meant that the actions and whims of the same individual could seriously jeopardize the national government's legitimacy.

Finding it difficult to determine the exact sequence of events that had led to the destruction of the wall, Batres assigned most of the fault to the conserje who had utterly failed to guard the monuments. Batres instituted judicial proceedings against Navalon, and appointed a man named Fernando López as interim caretaker. However, even after the ill-starred tenures of Vázquez and Navalon, Batres still did not have a free hand to direct archaeological affairs in Oaxaca. A few months after the removal of Navalon, state governor Martín González recommended another person, Miguel Castro, to serve as the conserje of Mitla. Merely tracking down Castro was a difficult matter that required Batres to make "many inquiries." Once located, Castro informed Batres that there had been a mistake – he wished to become caretaker of Monte Albán, but did not want to go to Mitla. Meanwhile, Fernando López was fulfilling his duties in an exemplary manner. He slept in the ruins "to take better care of them" and kept the monuments "in a state of perfect conservation and cleanliness." According to Batres, "the tourists who return from Mitla offer a thousand elegies to the state in which the monuments are kept, and it can be said that for the first time there is a caretaker in those lovely (*preciosos*) buildings." Apparently having reached his breaking point, Batres discussed the situation with Oaxaca's governor, and learned that González had recommended Castro in the belief that the caretaker position at Mitla was vacant. In light of all of these circumstances, both "practical" and "moral," Batres received the agreement of both González and Instrucción Pública that López might remain at his post. While a victory for Batres, the retention of López did little to ruffle the overall functioning of the patronage system, or the ability of the governor to favor his preferred clients. Miguel Castro soon became conserje of the Oaxacan ruins of Xoxo, a position that he kept at least through 1912.[85]

The discussion of nepotism and patronage leads, perhaps inevitably, to a discussion of how certain federal employees failed to perform the duties associated with their positions. Incompetence, unprofessionalism, apathy or unrestrained self-interest certainly recurred regularly among Inspección staff, limiting the Porfirian state's ability to effectively monitor and

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[84] "*…el Señor Angel Navalón, concerge de los monumentos arqueológicos de esta Villa permanesia mucho tiempo ausente de sus serbicios…y no solamente de su cumplimiento haber dejado abandonado sino tambien su conducta fue muy mala en todo el tiempo que halla estado en esta Villa, unas veses metiendose en las tiendas con el fin de embriagarse hir al campo á buscar minas, otras veses á la Cabesera del Distrito apasiarse pidiendo caballos ajenos despues de haber andado en dicho lugar ocho dias y al regreso dandole veinticinco centavos y cuando se le presenta los dueños de dichos animales empesaba á ofenderlos, diciendoles que á el ninguna persona puede ofenderlo por pertenecer al Gobierno Federal…el repetido concerje andaba en la plaza de este lugar pidiendo los aretes y anillos de las vendedoras y no bolver entregarlos é hir á las casas particulares á meterse pidiendo á su alimento sin pagar ni un solo centavo, ocupando cuartos para su bivienda y se quedala sin pagar por lo que suplicamos.*" Letter from José Justo Ruiz, et.al., to Batres, February 5, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 10, fs. 16-7.

[85] SJIP memo, August 14, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 17, f. 1. In 1909, Batres, listed Castro as one of the caretakers who was not punctual in the submission of his monthly reports. Letter from Batres to SIPBA, July 15, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 48, f. 2. In 1912, Inspector of Monuments Francisco M. Rodríguez recommended that Castro be re-appointed as conserje of Xoxo. Letter from Rodríguez to SIPBA, July 2, 1912. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 115, f. 1.

control the nation's archaeological monuments. The more thoroughly such negative tendencies were intertwined with patronage and political influence, the harder they were to eradicate. Yet the meticulous maintenance of pre-Hispanic sites was far from the most important goal that federal policy sought to achieve. Rather, the archaeological bureaucracy was a small-scale participant in broader Porfirian processes of centralization and co-optation, processes which left plenty of room on all levels for the pursuit of self-interest. Lacking financial and human resources, and operating under cultural norms which placed great importance on family, social, and political networks, federal administrators willingly cut deals with state and local powerbrokers when selecting new employees. The leaders of Instrucción Pública sought to work within existing structures, not to topple them.

The insertion of an Inspección employee in local communities, though, gradually changed the nature of those structures and increased the relative influence of the archaeological bureaucracy. Once employees were selected, by whatever means, their very presence manifested the federal government's claims to ownership over Mexico's pre-Hispanic sites. Caretakers could also be held to account for their performance, even if those reckonings were often a long time in coming. As Inspector General, Batres made steady if slow efforts to install his desired candidates, assert the authority of the Inspección, and establish minimum standards for acceptable job performance on the part of conserjes. The choices and actions of conserjes also created and reinforced federal control over the ruins that they guarded. Many caretakers were diligent and vigilant custodians of their sites, who grappled with a complex array of responsibilities and did their best to mediate among the conflicting demands of the national, state, and local governments, residents of nearby communities, and outside visitors. Now that we have examined who the conserjes were and how they came to hold their positions, we will turn to look more closely at their day-to-day duties and activities.

III. The Job

Surveillance

The most basic function of a conserje or guardián de monumentos was to provide consistent, ongoing supervision of a particular archaeological or historical site. As a representative of the national government, the conserjes were responsible for keeping the monuments undisturbed by grabby tourists, unauthorized excavators, or local residents in search of convenient building stone. Generally, caretakers accomplished this task by maintaining an active presence at the site and keeping a watchful eye on comings and goings, rather than any more forceful measures. Although police or *rurales* were sometimes assigned to guard a particularly prominent excavation, such as the works at Teotihuacán, most conserjes were unarmed and uninterested in direct confrontations. [86] If vigilance was not sufficient to prevent violations of archaeological law, conserjes simply reported the offenders to Batres or

[86] Four members of the *rurales*, the police force that patrolled Mexico's highways and countryside, were assigned at Batres' suggestion to guard the works at Teotihuacán. For their efforts they were granted a monthly bonus of 8 pesos, paid directly by Batres. Letter from SIPBA to Hacienda, July 1, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 81, f. 1. In his capacity as Mexico City's Chief of Police, Félix Díaz authorized six gendarmes to stand guard at ongoing excavations near the Zócalo, "*á fín de que se encarguen de la vigilancia necesaria para evitar la desaparición de los objetos arqueológicos que se encuentren en las excavaciones*." Letter from Díaz to SIPBA, December 3, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 29, f. 7.

the local authorities. While Batres took a few steps at the end of the Porfiriato to arm conserjes at selected sites with a pistol or German-made swords, these efforts were largely symbolic and had little practical effect on the functioning of the Inspección.

As the termination of Jesús Moreno Flores revealed, by the end of the nineteenth century many conserjes were required to reside close to or within the ruins. This obligation could place considerable strain on both conserjes and the families that supported them in their isolated existences. While Instrucción Pública and Batres insisted that residence was necessary in order to exercise proper vigilance over the ruins, the federal government provided few resources to conserjes who might live at a considerable distance from their villages, wives, and children. Many caretakers complained of the hardships of living on-site. The notorious Ángel Vázquez justified his reluctance to live at Mitla with the statement "that he was not an owl (*tecolote*) to live close to the ruins."[87] In 1899 Antonio Coria, the caretaker of Tepozteco, wrote to Batres that "my monthly salary of twelve pesos does not suffice to cover my needs, for the monument is so far from the village that I find myself obliged to go there in person to eat, because it would otherwise cost me a great deal to send for my food, and during the hours when I go to eat the temple is left unguarded." Coria asked that his salary be increased to twenty pesos per month so that "my family would not have to work in order to help me, and they might come to live with me at the monument, and then I would not have to remove myself from the place where I should be."[88] Although the initial federal appraisal of Coria's letter deemed his complaints "completely justified" and Batres concurred that Coria's current salary was not sufficient "for him to live alone in the wilderness," the exigencies or priorities of the federal budget meant that Coria's pay was not increased for another year.[89] A few years later, Coria was fired after Batres learned from

[87] "*Alguna ocacion en que le reconviene por que no vivia cerca de las ruinas á fin de vigilarlos me contestó que no era Tecolote para vivir cerca de las ruinas.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 29, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 20, f. 18. Vázquez also alluded to the difficulties of living on site when requesting that his salary be revalidated for fiscal year 1898-1899, mentioning that he was not "*contando con otros recursos para subsistir en este apartado lugar.*" Letter from Vázquez to SJIP, June 24, 1898. Ibid., f. 12.

[88] "*… el sueldo de doce pesos que percibo como concerje no me alcansa para cubrir mis necesidades pues el monum.to se alla tan distante de la poblacion que me beo obligado a ir en persona á comer porque si mando por mis alimentos me cuesta mucho el enbiado y esas aras que dejó solo el templo mientras boy a comer queda expuesto á alguna aberia mientras que si el Supremo Gobierno se dignara el sueldo hasta gústarme veinte pesos mi familia no tendria que trabajar para ayudarme y se iría vivir conmigo al lugar á donde se alla el Monumto y entonces (illegible) yá no tendria para que moverme del lugar á donde debo de estar.*" Letter from Antonio Coria to SJIP, July 21, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 42, f. 5.

[89] "*La Seccion estima en todo justificada las observaciones del C. Coria y se permite agregar en su apoyo que la cantidad de $12.00 mensuales asignada actualmente á su empleo corresponde á una cuota diaria fija de $0.40 es decir menos que lo que ganan muchos de los que son simples peones, de modo que ciertamente con ella es imposible que baste para que el interesado retribuya á alguna persona que le lleva su alimento y es seguro que tendrá que abandonar el monumento, de modo que para evitar esto sería conveniente acceder á su solicitud concediendo el sueldo de $20.00 mensuales que pide.*" Memo from E. A. Chávez to the Secretario de Instrucción Pública, August 3, 1899. Ibid., f. 6. Batres wrote, "*Con motivo de la visita que acabo de practicar en el monumento de Tepoxteco he podido apreciar que la vigilancia de él no puede ser efectiva si no se dota al conserge de un sueldo competente; hoy gana doce pesos al mes, sueldo que no le basta para vivir en la soledad de la montaña. Por lo que me permito proponer á V. el que se le aumente el referido sueldo, siquiera á la suma de treinta pesos, y entonces sí podrá habitar en el mismo lugar en que está el monumento.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, June 26, 1899. Ibid., f. 9. In August of 1900, Coria was renamed as conserje in August of 1900 with an annual salary of $299.30, or around $25 a month. SJIP memo, August 2, 1900. Ibid., f. 12.

a U.S. tourist that the caretaker had deserted his post.[90] Coria's case suggests that the stringent requirements placed on conserjes were indications not of the national government's power, but of its weakness. Unable to assume the financial or administrative burdens of properly monitoring a pre-Hispanic site, federal officials insisted that low-level employees assume these responsibilities instead. Inevitably, the transfer of responsibility was accompanied by a transfer of power. At a fundamental level, the individual who made the most crucial decisions and exercised the most authority at a given site was not Batres or any Instrucción Pública administrator, but the caretaker on the ground.

The Green Hell

Besides guarding sites against the depredations of humans, conserjes were also responsible for protecting or reclaiming pre-Hispanic monuments from the assaults of the natural world. It was an arduous and Sisyphean assignment. As in "Ozymandias," wilderness threatened to engulf the great monuments of antiquity, but the Mexican environment was far more forceful than Shelley's "lone and level sands."[91] Even after mold was scrubbed from friezes and trees uprooted from temple stairs, the war against tropical nature was unending. Keeping vegetation at bay required constant effort, and was often beyond the capabilities of a single individual. Official policy seems to have recognized the challenges involved, and did not blame conserjes for the condition of overgrown sites unless there had been a clear and persistent pattern of neglect.[92] Batres regularly applied for Instrucción Pública to authorize additional manpower and expenditures for site clearance, at one point making the innovative suggestion to fund the "cleaning" of Teotihuacán by selling the uprooted plants as firewood.[93] Five years later, Batres once again claimed vegetation growing on and about the monuments of Teotihuacán, including trees and magueys cultivated by local growers, as property of the nation. He then burned some of the greenery on site to power a rock crusher and a water pump.[94] Regional subinspectors of monuments, such as Benito Lacroix in Chiapas and Santiago

[90] Letter from Batres to SJIP, May 31, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 49, f. 1. It was Coria who had decided that selling haberdashery in the local villages was preferable to guarding pre-Hispanic ruins. Coria was replaced by the trusty Bernardino Verazaluce, the same person who had taken charge of Xochicalco after the dismissal of Jesús Moreno Flores. SJIP memo, June 5, 1902. Ibid., f. 2.

[91] I am indebted to R. Tripp Evans for the juxtaposition of "Ozymandias" with the monuments of Mexican antiquity. R. Tripp Evans, *Romancing the Maya: Mexican Antiquity in the Popular Imagination, 1820-1915* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 78.

[92] In 1910, for instance, Instrucción Pública authorized a special expenditure of $500 to clean the ruins of Uxmal and Chichén-Itzá even though both sites had duly appointed conserjes. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 72.

[93] "*Me permito proponer á V. el que autorize á esta Ynspeccion para que haga la limpia de los citados monumentos, cubriéndose los gastos necesarios con la venta de las plantas que se aranquen y que podrán utilizarse como leña.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 3, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 20, f. 1.

[94] "*…la Ley de Monumentos Arqueológicos de Mayo 11 de 1897 que dice á la letra: Art. 1.o Los monumentos arqueológicos existentes en territorios mexicanos, son propiedad de la Nación…la vegetación que los cubre es también propiedad de la misma y puede utilizarla en lo que mejor convenga á sus intereses y por esto es que en beneficio de la conservación de esos monumentos he quitado la vegetación que los cubría utilizándola como combustible en el motor que mueve la quebradora de piedra y la bomba que eleva el agua á la Pirámide, y digo que*

Bolio in the Yucatán, were not quite as brazen as Batres but did take active roles in monitoring sites and attempting to secure additional temporary labor. For example, in 1902 Lacroix drew up a plan to remove the lamentably "exuberant" vegetation of Palenque from 30 hectares of ground and 10 kilometers of walking paths, at total cost of $1,690. Instrucción Pública did not accede to the request at the time, but did later commit funds to clear parts of the site.[95] As the Inspección expanded, it also engaged the services of full-time manual laborers, or peones. Peones were employed to work at a specific site under the direction of the resident conserje, and typically assisted in the ongoing efforts to keep the monuments clear of vegetal obstruction.

There are abundant practical reasons why Batres and his superiors would have wished to remove foliage from pre-Hispanic buildings and their surrounding areas. Since the days of Guillermo Dupaix, to study the ruins was to remove the plant life that hindered approach and obscured edifices from view. Broad, open vistas became even more essential once visitors routinely expected to record their experiences on film. In clearing vegetation from Chichén Itzá in 1903, Santiago Bolio wrote that his purpose was to "leave [the ruins] in condition to take photographic views."[96] Removing trees and vines from the sites also permitted more effective control of the federal government's archaeological property. Six years prior to Bolio's efforts at Chichén Itzá, the state government of Yucatán ordered a judicial inquiry into reports that the site was being looted and destroyed. The witness statements gathered by the investigators contained no evidence of human activity at the site, but did include several mentions of the damage done by bush and tree roots. In a report submitted to the state governor, the jefe político of Valladolid commented that "although the ruins have not avoided destruction at the hands of man…along the walls of all the buildings and even on the roofs there are trees whose roots, breaking through the construction material, have dislodged various polished stones and scattered them in all directions. All of this could be avoided, in my opinion, by advising the general Government to order the ruins to be well-cleaned [and to place the polished stones in some secure place where they would not be subject to removal]."[97] Without the removal of

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en beneficio de los monumentos he quitado la vegetación por que es notorio que ésta es el agente más destructor de las construcciones." Letter from Batres to SIPBA, May 20, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 338, exp. 10, f. 3.

[95] "*Relativamente me permito manifestar que al presente los monumentos están cubiertos de exhuberante vegetación y como no cuento con fondos para proceder á su limpieza, suplico al Señor Secretario se digna librar sus órdenes y hase las gestiones consiguientes á efecto de destruir la vegetación que cubre dichos monumentos para su mejor vijilancia y conservación.*" Letter from Benito Lacroix to SJIP, October 22, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 24, f. 4. See also letter from Lacroix to SJIP, December 31, 1902, and letter from SJIP to Lacroix, February 17, 1903. Ibid., fs. 9-10.

[96] "*En el desmonte y aseo de las Ruinas de Chichen Ytzá, que hoy se está verificando con objeto de dejar estas en condiciones de tomar vistas fotográficas*…" Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, July 23, 1903. AGN-IPBA, caja 167b, exp. 52, f. 1.

[97] "*…aunque en las ruinas no se hubiese advertido destrucción hecha por la mano del hombre, según las mismas diligencias se nota que en todos los edificios en sus liensos de pared y aun sobre los techos hay árboles cuyas raices perforando el material de su construcción han hecho desprender varias piedras pulimentadas que se desparraman en distintas direcciones. Todo esto podría evitarse en mi concepto dirigiéndose al Gobierno general con el fin de que mande limpiar bien las expresadas ruinas y arreglar algunas de sus edificios para que se puedan cerrar en ellos todas las piedras pulimentadas que se encuentran desparramadas por ser éstas las más expuestas de ser extraidas de dichas ruinas por los transeuntes, sin que llegue á conocimiento de las autoridades del pueblo más inmediato que ejerce la vigilancia.*" Letter from the jefe político of Valladolid to the governor of Yucatán, September 3, 1897, copied in a letter from the governor of Yucatán to SJIP, September 6, 1897. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 1.

vegetation, it was difficult to even determine whether or not the national patrimony had been ransacked. The effective supervision of archaeological sites depended on making them legible to government administrators.

Finally, a focus on the "cleanliness" of the sites aligned neatly with the prized Porfirian virtues of order, progress and hygiene. As Nancy Stepan points out, late nineteenth-century elites perceived tropical environments as dark and threatening spaces, where the values of respectable society were inverted and mocked.[98] Porfirian administrators were also sensitive to the "pejorative remarks about Mexican cleanliness" made by foreign visitors, and associated unsanitary habits and living conditions with their country's indigenous lower classes.[99] Thus, to recreate the freshly mown, open lawns of an English parkland in the steamy heat of Palenque was to assert the triumph of civilization over chaos and entropy. Constructing an environment free of dirt, mold, and obstructions also allowed Porfirian administrators to interpose their own values between the indigenous past and present, remaking the structures of the dead in ways that they were unwilling or unable to change the dwellings of the living. For example, an engineer commissioned to visit Mitla in 1894 commented that although the layout of the interior rooms of the palace might have been "comfortable and adequate" taking into consideration "the customs of that time," in his opinion they were "unhygienic owing to the lack of light, low ceilings, and the poor ventilation." This statement was the final point made in a lengthy report urging Instrucción Pública to invest money in the repair and reconstruction of the site, a project which the ministry ultimately carried out.[100]

The emphasis on order and control can be seen in the language used to describe site clearance. Besides the term "desmonte" (removing the *monte*, or scrub, from an area), conserjes and Inspección administrators frequently employed the words "limpieza" (cleanliness) and "aseo" (tidiness, orderliness), almost domestic turns of phrase.[101] Ideally, if not actually, the archaeological monuments were to be kept as neat and uncluttered as a private dwelling. By

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[98] "The green tropics were increasingly represented as distasteful scenes of waste or lacking in proper vegetable order and responsibility…The language of thrift, efficiency and merit was applied to nature, and tropical nature was found wanting." Nancy Leys Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), 48-9.

[99] William H. Beezley, *Judas at the Jockey Club and Other Episodes of Porfirian Mexico* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 80. See also Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 154-6, and Claudia Agostoni, *Monuments of Progress: Modernization and Public Health in Mexico City, 1876-1910* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2003), 23.

[100] "*Dadas las costumbres de aquella época, puede como distribución haber sido cómoda y adecuada, siendo á mi modo de juzgar, anti-higiénica por tener poca luz, techos bajos y ventilación defectuosa. Notables por las razones enumeradas y de importancia en conservación no necesito encarecerla á la ilustrada opinión de esa Secretaría.*" Letter from Mayor de Yngenieros Rodolfo Franco to the Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, March 31, 1894, quoted in letter from Hinojosa at Guerra y Marina to SJIP, April 13, 1894. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 73, f. 14.

[101] For example, Mitla conserje José Azatlán wrote in 1893 that "*para la limpia y aseo propio de estas ruinas hay absoluta necesidad*." Communication from José Azatlán to Batres, August 1, 1893, transcribed in letter from Batres to SJIP, August 12, 1893. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 8, f. 1. In 1901, Benito Lacroix suggested that $250.09 was required for the "*desmonte y limpieza de los monumentos*" of Palenque. Letter from Lacroix to SJIP, September 4, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 23, f. 5. Santiago Bolio wrote in 1903, "*Los trabajos de desmonte y aseo que hoy tengo emprendidos en las Ruinas de Chichen Ytzá, los estoy haciendo bajo mi direccion personal…*" Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, August 24, 1903. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 14, f. 25.

assuming responsibility for the condition of the monuments the federal government took on the role of a paterfamilias, asserting both practical and symbolic dominion over its territory.[102]

Site clearance was supplemented by construction and restoration programs. Conserjes suggested and took charge of projects to repair collapsing edifices, or make improvements that would render the site more pleasant and accessible for visitors. Batres eventually grew concerned by the autonomy of conserjes and regional inspectors of monuments, especially when their doings might be interpreted as a form of *lèse-majesté*. In 1902 he requested that Instrucción Pública send a circular to the caretakers, forbidding them "to make repairs in the buildings, or to conduct excavations." Instead, conserjes should restrict themselves to monitoring subordinates and removing vegetation. This would prevent "mere administrative employees [from exercising] technical functions that are clearly beyond their competence, as instead of conserving the monuments, they destroy them under an official seal." The work of archaeological reconstruction was not taught in schools, "and only by the practical experience of many years in the field does one acquire knowledge of that chaos of mysteries." In support of his claim, Batres cited the damage wrought at Teotihuacán by the careless researches of geographer and historian Antonio García Cubas.[103] Restricting conserjes from carrying out their own repairs or excavations may have preserved important material aspects of the sites, but the policy also bolstered Batres' authority within and without the Inspección. At a time when the Inspector General was being attacked for archaeological ignorance and shoddy excavation practices, Batres asserted his own preeminence over elite rivals and agency employees alike.

Reception of visitors

Clearance and construction were typically carried out with the idea of making archaeological sites accessible and intelligible to visitors. The surveillance and maintenance of

[102] Ironically, exposing pre-Hispanic buildings to the elements may have threatened their structural integrity. Martha Demas writes that the practice of site reburial "has emerged as one of the most viable and flexible intervention strategies for preserving exposed archaeological remains. It is an attempt to re-instate the original, buried environment of an excavated site, and thereby re-establish a state approaching equilibrium…or to create anew a more stable environment for ruins that have always been exposed." Martha Demas, "'Site unseen': the case for reburial of archaeological sites," *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites*, Vol. 6, No. 3/4 (2004): 137. However, Demas also underscores the importance of carefully managing vegetation at archaeological sites, pointing out that "Unchecked growth of vegetation is the principal cause of loss and destruction of reburied sites." Ibid., 145-6.

[103] "*Me permito llamar la atencion de esa Superioridad acerca de la vital importancia que tiene para la conservacion de monumentos arqueológicos el que se ordene á los conservadores que se han nombrado en los Estados, se abstengan de hacer reparaciones en los edificios, lo mismo que practicar excavaciones, limitándose á cuidar de que sus subalternos se ocupen durante el año, ya sea solos ó con peones auxiliares, en mantener limpias las construcciones, evitando que crezca la vegetacion, principal agente destructor de los monumentos. Al proponer á V. esa medida es para prevenir el que los empleados de mera administracion ejerzan funciones técnicas de bien definida incompetencia para ellos, y que en lugar de conservar, destruyan oficialmente los monumento… Ymprovisar hombres es muy dificil, pero mucho mas dificil aún, cuando se trata de <u>especialidades</u> en que no hay colegios á donde aprenderlas, y solo la experiencia de muchos años en el terreno práctico se adquiere el saber en ese caos de misterios. En apoyo de lo que digo voy á citar un hecho: cuando los Señores Yngenieros D.n Antonio Garcia Cubas, Beltran y la oficialidad de la compañia de zapadores que ejecutaban los trabajos, tambien ingenieros, exploraban as ruinas de Teotihuacan me ví obligado á pedir á esa Superioridad suspendiesen á dichos ciudadanos en los trabajos de destruccion, pues ya habian tajado varios monumentos para ver lo que tenian dentro, el C. Presidente de la República mandó inmediatamente que se retirase la tropa y se dieran por terminadas esas obras.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 7, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 24, f. 1.

archaeological sites were naturally paired with another function, the reception of visitors. Félix Quero's successful negotiation of Revolutionary political currents owed something to his instincts as an innkeeper. Writing to Instrucción Pública in 1911, when he feared that the recent triumph of Madero would dislodge him from office, Quero summarized the services that he performed for visitors. He appealed to his superiors:

> "I beg that you do not dismiss me, for many and very powerful reasons; in the first place, if the caretaker is not from this town, the result will be that he will almost always be going to Oaxaca, and when visitors come, he will not be here to open and show the ruins as the past caretakers have done; and all the foreigners from various parts come to stop at [the caretaker's] house, and then they are duly attended and I show them everything of the monuments within my responsibility; leaving these people very pleased, and satisfied with their visit to these Ruins; as was not the case when my predecessor had this job."[104]

Like many other members of Mexico's archaeological bureaucracy, Quero was aware of the value of public image, especially when it came to the impressions left on foreigners. A punctilious and attentive conserje reflected credit on the government that retained him, while a slovenly or absent caretaker cast doubt on the state's ability to control either the national patrimony or its own employees. The conserjes mediated between the state and visitors to the ruins, taking on the sundry roles of gatekeeper, tour guide, security guard, host, and diplomatic representative.

Some conserjes, such as Quero, met these obligations in a manner that federal administrators found creditable. In 1906, Andrés Solis Cámara praised the work that interim conserje Pedro Horta had carried out at the ruins of Uxmal, which left the site in "perfect cleanliness" for a visit by the governor of Yucatán. Since "the good state of the ruins left the visitors satisfied," Solis Cámara recommended that Horta be named as caretaker on a permanent basis.[105] Other efforts were less satisfactory. Batres was regularly miffed by reports that conserjes had engaged in embarassing, inappropriate, or criminal behavior, especially when these activities came to public attention. For example, the article in *El Tiempo* that resulted in the dismissal of Ángel Vázquez from Mitla also criticized the management of Xochicalco, and the Zacatecan site of La Quemada. The piece concluded "And from this the question arises: what function is served by Sr. Batres, famous curator of the monuments of the Republic? Simply to draw his salary, puff himself up, and let the ruins run to ruin?"[106] Batres took the

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[104] "*… le suplico no me destituya del empleo por muchos y muy poderosos motivos; en primer, lugar no siendo el conserje de esta población, resulta que casi siempre se está llendo á Oaxaca, y cuando vienen los visitantes, nó está para abrir y enseñar las Ruinas como lo han echo los Conserjes pasados; ademas todas las personas extranjeras y de diversos puntos, vienen á parar á esta su casa, y luego se les atiende devidamente enseñandoles todo lo que me corresponde de monumentos; quedando estas personas muy contentas, y satisfechas de su visita á estas Ruinas; no habiendo sido asi, cuando mi antesesor tenia el empleo, por los motivos que antes espongo á Vd.*" Letter from Félix Quero to SIPBA, November 9, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 23, f. 1.

[105] "*Para corresponder á la visita de tan distinguido huesped, ordené la perfecta limpieza de estas ruinas, la que fué efectuada sin reportar ningun gasto al Erario Público. El buen estado de las mencionadas ruinas ha dejado satisfechos á los visitantes.*" Letter from Andres Solis Cámara to Batres, copied in letter from Batres to SJIP, March 12, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 3, f. 1.

[106] "*Y entre tanto ocurre preguntar ¿de qué sirve el Sr. Batres, famoso conservador de monumentos de la República? ¿Sencillamente para cobrar su sueldo, darse importancia y dejar que las ruinas se arruinen?*" Clipping

matter seriously enough to call upon the editor of *El Tiempo*, who "with all diligence and loyalty" informed the Inspector General of the identity of the offending author, which Batres passed on to Instrucción Pública so that the ministry might "resolve what it deems best."[107] In the same letter to his superiors, however, Batres acknowledged that there was a great deal of truth to the charges concerning Xochicalco and Mitla. The situation at the latter site in particular was a true "caricature" of what it ought to be, with a conserje that U.S. tourists treated as "less than a household servant because he does not command respect."[108] If a conserje lacked personal authority or industriousness, the federal government would lack institutional authority and control over the nation's archaeological sites.

The above-mentioned elements of a conserje's job were relatively straightforward in theory, but subject to considerable variation in practice. For all of his energy and zeal for control, Batres could not possibly have overseen the myriad decisions and tasks associated with the constellation of sites that stretched from Chihuahua to Chiapas. The conserjes therefore exercised their personal judgment in the performance of most duties, weighing factors such as the notability of the site, the orders of the federal government, the interests or complaints of local communities, and their own preferences and degree of professional enthusiasm. With relatively little direct supervision of their work, caretakers assumed significant responsibility and authority over their sites. Despite the difficulty and drudgery of their jobs, caretakers did more than anyone else to directly shape the uses of the material past. They were also some of the most visible representatives of the federal government to local communities and to travelers, and so played an outsized role in defining the Porfirian state to the people with whom they interacted. Using the conserjes and their experiences as a kind of lens, we will now look more broadly at the nature of Porfirian federal administration.

IV. The Archaeological Bureaucracy and Porfirian Administration

What sorts of insights into Porfirian governance can be garnered from the correspondence of the Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos? One of the most powerful impressions arising from these documents is that a swelling flood of red tape accompanied the formalization of government functions, submerging staff and administrators alike. Porfirian leaders used paperwork to impose order and enforce accountability on all kinds of state functions and activities, creating evidentiary trails that allowed for the review of past decisions and the verification of official orders. Problems arose not from the growth of bureaucratization per se,

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from no. 4969 of *El Tiempo*, included in a letter from SJIP to Batres, April 28, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 41, f. 3.

[107] *"El citado diario despues de reproducir un párrafo que publicó "El Mundo" en el que se denuncia el abandono en que se hallan las ruinas de Xochicalco lo comenta y pone de su cosecha algunas aseveraciones que en parte puedo informar y en parte que es la que á mi se refiere solo el Superior podrá juzgarlas… El señor Lic. Agüeros, director de "El Tiempo" procediendo con toda diligencia y lealtad me señaló como autor del párrafo en cuestion al Señor Lic. D.n Manuel G. Revilla profesor de la Academia de San Carlos, dándome al efecto una carta para que me entendiese con dicho señor, la cual tengo la honra de adjuntar á esta á fin de que la Superioridad resuelba lo que tenga á bien.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, June 4, 1900. Ibid., f. 4 (there are two pages labelled "4" in this folder; this is the second).

[108] *"Como esas ruinas son constantemente visitadas por americanos es una verdadera caricatura lo que allí se vé con el concerge á quien tratan menos que á un doméstico debido á que no se hace respetar*." Idem.

but from the mismatch of paperwork requirements to administrative resources. It could take weeks or months for forms to wend their way through various federal offices, or for the official resolution of errors and oversights. The conservation of monuments was far from the only sphere of activity encumbered with excessive paperwork during this period - Katherine Bliss points out that in 1907 one prospective madam decided not to open a brothel because the required paperwork and fees were too onerous – but formal bureaucratic requirements could pose particular challenges for the Inspección because its employees were widely dispersed, and often lived in remote rural areas.[109]

Several examples from the career of Benito Lacroix, the subinspector of monuments for the state of Chiapas, illustrate these difficulties. For instance, in the early fall of 1901, Instrucción Pública authorized the payment of $250 to shore up a Palenque monument that was on the verge of collapse. However, Lacroix only received the money in the spring of 1902, after making several fruitless inquiries at local treasury offices. By that point the money served little purpose, as an earthquake had already demolished the structure that Lacroix had meant to repair. Since Lacroix would now be unable to produce receipts demonstrating that he spent the $250 on the work for which it had originally been budgeted, he was forced to return the money to the stamp office from which it had been so recently and arduously extracted.[110]

The inefficiencies of federal administrative systems posed personal as well as professional challenges for Lacroix. Although Lacroix earned a relatively generous annual salary of $1000.10, the national government found it easier to earmark the money than to distribute it.[111] In 1901 Lacroix complained about "irregularities and shortfalls in the payment of my salary," which he could only be sure of receiving if he traveled to a federal payment office several days' journey away. Lacroix requested that he instead be permitted to receive his salary in Villa de Montecristo, a comparatively mild journey of a single day.[112] The hub-and-spoke structure of federal governance meant in order for Lacroix to receive his pay in a more convenient location, his request had to travel to Instrucción Pública, to Hacienda, to the district payment offices.

If there had been any errors or omissions in the forms that authorized the payment of salaries, caretakers might go for months without pay while attempting to resolve the problem through correspondence. In September of 1904, Hacienda refused to pay five individuals recently appointed as guardianes de monumentos for various sites in the Yucatán peninsula, until the caretakers had presented formal nominations and taken their official oaths at a Treasury office. Yucatecan inspector of monuments Santiago Bolio speculated that the nominations had not been received because of a "mistake or involuntary forgetfulness," and

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[109] Katherine Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 54-5.

[110] AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 2. Problems caused by delayed maintenance occurred at other monuments as well. In June 1909, Batres requested $800 to shore up walls at the site of Huexotla, in the state of México. SIPBA told him that such an expenditure would be impossible due to lack of funds. Batres reiterated his request two months later, after the new fiscal year had begun. Repairs at Huexotla were now budgeted at $1000, a sum the government paid. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 15 and exp. 13.

[111] SJIP memo, March 23, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 37, f. 1.

[112] "*…irregularidades y perjuicios en la percepción de mis sueldos…*" Letter from Benito Lacroix to SJIP, November 12, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 23, fs. 8-9.

urged that they be sent as quickly as possible.[113] Bolio knew from personal experience that minor factors, such as incidental alterations in the wording of the federal budget, could have major repercussions for Inspección personnel. After Bolio had served for some time as "Inspector" of Monuments for the State of Yucatán, the budget for fiscal year 1902-1903 apportioned funding for a Yucatecan "*Conservador*" [italics added] of Monuments.[114] Consequently, Bolio's salary was interrupted until the new title was officially bestowed upon him. Up through the early twentieth century, it was also necessary for caretakers to be formally reappointed to their position every year. If this annual obligation slipped the mind of a Mexico City bureaucrat, or if it simply took too long for the paperwork to migrate through the relevant offices, a caretaker might suddenly find himself without his expected salary.[115]

The numerous records of delayed salaries and missing paperwork underscore the strict procedures of the Porfirian Ministry of Treasury, or Secretaría de Hacienda. The ministry was exacting in its oversight of federal expenditures, but not proactive in bringing potential problems to the attention of other government branches (at least, not when such problems concerned lower-level employees.) The evidence suggests that Hacienda employees were unconcerned that they would face consequences for *not* spending the federal government's money. Failures to ensure that site caretakers were properly paid also signify the relatively low priority accorded to the activities of the Inspección. If a conserje went for months without his salary, Hacienda officials were unlikely to face any more pressure than a polite note from Instrucción Pública asking them to fix the problem. And if a caretaker decided to resign or abandon his post because he had not been paid, the worst that would happen is that the site would be abandoned, as it had already been for hundreds if not thousands of years. In a period of booming development and federal growth, entailing a multitude of complicated financial

[113] "*No recibí los nombramientos, y suponiendo que hubiese sido quixá equivocacion ú olvido involuntario, no se le comuniqué á U. esperando que en los correos siguientes vendrian, pero con esta fecha el C. Jefe de Hacienda me ha llamado, manifestándome haber recibido órden de la Tesoreria General de la Federacion para que les pague sus sueldos por cuyo motivo deben presentarse á esa oficina á hacer la protesta de ley para que tomen posesion de sus empleos.*" Letter from Bolio to SJIP, November 7, 1904. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 58, fs. 1-2.

[114] "*Manifiesto á U. que el C. Jefe de Hacienda de este Estado, se niega á pagar mi sueldo por motivo de que en el presupuesto del presente año fiscal viene cambiado el nombre de Ynspector de Ruinas, con el de Conservador de Ruinas con tal motivo suplico á U. si lo tiene á bien se sirva disponer que el C. Jefe de Hacienda me abone mi sueldo ó se me envie de esa Secretaria mi nombramiento.*" Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, July 19, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 14, f. 1.

[115] For example, in 1896 Jesús Moreno Flores at Xochicalco went for about a month and a half without payment because Hacienda had not processed the revalidation of his appointment. Letter from Jesús Moreno Flores to SJIP, October 1, 1896. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 23, f. 4. The caretaker of Tepozteco Antonio Coria did not initally receive his salary in July and August of 1900 because of delays in processing his reappointment to the position. Letter from Coria to SJIP, August 29, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 42, f. 13. In late June of 1902, Batres mentioned in a letter to his superiors that the Inspección staff would soon have to be renamed for the upcoming fiscal year. "*Debiendo comenzar á regir el 1.o de Julio próximo el nuevo presupuesto y teniendo que nombrarse los empleados que forman la planta de la Ynspección General de Monumentos arqueológicos…*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, June 26, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 15, f. 1. The requirement of annual nominations appears to have ceased by June of 1904, when Benito Lacroix wrote to remind the Instrucción Pública officials that the current fiscal year was ending, and asked to be renamed as Inspector de los Monumentos de Palenque. Justino Fernández at SJIP responded "*le manifiesto: que no es necesario dicha revalidación, para que continué Ud. desempeñando el empleo de que se trata.* " Letter from SJIP to Lacroix, July 19, 1904. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 54, f. 2.

transactions, Hacienda officials presumably had more pressing matters to worry about than the condition of pre-Hispanic stonework.

Hacienda officials might also have assumed that as a practical matter, caretakers were unlikely to resign in protest over their unpaid salaries. Indeed, conserjes often showed what seems like superhuman forbearance in tolerating the federal bureaucracy's delays. Andrés Horta was named the provisional conserje of Uxmal in November 1908, as a replacement for his deceased father; as of August of 1909 he had received neither his formal appointment to the position nor any salary. He humbly speculated that this was perhaps because of the great press of business at the ministry.[116] Conserjes might complain bitterly about the difficulties they faced and the poverty in which they found themselves, but they appear to have refrained at all costs from expressing any anger or recrimination towards the federal government (or at least, expressing such opinions in writing). Instead, they politely pleaded that their difficulties might be resolved. Huge gulfs of status, power and wealth separated the conserjes from the officials to whom they addressed their petitions, making righteous aggrievement a stance that was counterproductive at best, risky at worst.

Caretakers selected from communities close to the ruins, who possessed numerous local ties and who had maintained themselves in the area for decades without a federal salary, were especially unlikely to tender their resignations out of dissatisfaction with employment conditions. The few individuals who did resign over the nonpayment of salaries appear to have been outsiders to the communities in which they served. One such individual was the Mexico City resident Aurelio Montes de Oca, whom Batres selected in 1909 as conserje of the ruins of Pátzcuaro, Michoacán. (During the late nineteenth century several people with the surname Montes de Oca sold natural history specimens to the Museo Nacional, which may explain Batres' choice.) Unfortunately for the Inspección, this case served to further demonstrate the pitfalls of naming a non-local caretaker. Two and a half months after Montes de Oca received his appointment, he wrote "in the lengthy period of Seventy days I have made many efforts to have the indispensible and accustomed travel expenses turned over to me…having made no headway whatsoever in this undertaking, I today formally resign the aforementioned post."[117] Reasonably enough, Montes de Oca had no intention to make an outlay of his own money so that he might take up the position. A man from a nearby village, however, might well have kept the job in the hopes of eventually receiving the funds due to him.

It is worth considering, then, that the patience displayed by the conserjes may have reflected hardheaded economic calculation. The Inspección possessed few people in supervisory roles, and a relatively small annual budget. Given the wide dispersal of conserjes across the Mexican landscape, guarding an archaeological site could easily become a sinecure requiring

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[116] "*Desde entonces vengo desempeñando el puesto á que me refiero con puntualidad y a satisfacción de mi Jefe como puedo comprobarlo con su informe; pero hasta hoy y quezas por la multitud de asuntos que cursan en esa Secretaria no he recibido ni mi despacho ni la orden de pago de mis sueldos devengados desde el referido 20 de Noviembre de 1908 hasta la fecha.*" August 28, 1909 letter from Andrés Horta to SIPBA. AGN-IPBA 111, exp. 6, f.1.

[117] "*En el largo periodo de Setenta dias he hecho muchas gestiones para que se me ministraran los indispensables y acostumbrados viáticos…no logrando hasta esta fecha ni siquiera se resuelvan mis insistencias en cualquiera forma; vengo hoy á hacer formal renuncia del precitado empleo*." November 5, 1909 letter from Aurelio Montes de Oca to SIPBA. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 5, f. 12. In what may serve as an indictment of Porfirian bureaucratic efficiency, more than a month after Montes de Oca's resignation was formally accepted by SIPBA the ministry received a puzzled note from Hacienda, questioning why Montes de Oca had never presented himself in Uruapan to receive his salary. Letter from Hacienda to SIPBA, December 23, 1909. Ibid., f. 16.

almost no actual effort. If a caretaker decided to divert his energies away from the ruins, and towards farming or entrepreneurial activities, federal officials were unlikely to become aware of this fact for some time. In light of the lax supervision under which they operated, there was little reason for conserjes to proffer a formal resignation once their salaries failed to arrive. Instead, it was far more practical for them to earn their subsistence in other ways, while sending out letters to pursue delinquent payments through the bureaucratic mazes. If a caretaker notified his superiors that he was leaving his position, he could only claim his salary up until the date of his resignation. By contrast, if a caretaker was found to be absent from his site and dismissed, he could request payments up through the date that he was removed from the job. The overall looseness of federal administrative structures provided strong incentives for conserjes to keep an official claim to their positions, even during the lengthy periods when those positions went unpaid. To Inspección officials, this trade-off may have been worthwhile for the sake of maintaining the principle of federal authority over Mexico's pre-Hispanic monuments, and propping up Mexico's image as a cultured society which recognized the scientific and artistic importance of its ancient ruins.

V. Conclusion

The supervision of pre-Hispanic sites forced federal administrators to transform lofty rhetoric about the nation's heritage and the priceless splendors of the past into concrete actions and policies. Inevitably, the shift from theory to reality was jarring. Through their work, conserjes instantiated the principle of federal control over pre-Hispanic sites, and served as the local faces of an abstract and often incomprehensible centralizing power. Just as they represented the federal government, though, caretakers also represented their own values and priorities. The choices made by the conserjes did a great deal to determine the condition of pre-Hispanic monuments, and the extent of the Inspección's authority.

As we have seen, many conserjes used their autonomy to defy the strictures of Batres and Instrucción Pública officials. The experiences of Porfirian conserjes de monumentos demonstrate the gradual growth of centralized state power, but also reveal how contingent and fragile that power could be. The administrative structures of the cultural bureaucracy accomodated this delicate balance. If the federal government sometimes lacked money and made its provincial employees wait weeks or months for their salaries, it also exercised little supervision of job performance. Mexico's archaeological service was built in part on administrators' and employees' shared assumptions of laxness.

Yet over time, this loose framework took on a powerful significance. The slow accumulation of countless tiny decisions and actions, at all levels of the cultural bureaucracy, ultimately established a real and enduring principle of federal control over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past. This principle remained strong in the midst of political upheaval, thanks in considerable measure to the dedication of the conserjes. During the Revolution, many caretakers remained at their posts despite the changes in government and the danger to themselves. Batres and other members of the cultural bureaucracy had taken few steps to encourage attachments between conserjes and the sites that they guarded, beyond selecting caretakers from communities near the ruins. However, the experience of serving as a federal employee, mediating between the sites, the state, and the wider public, and facing pressure to adhere to a certain standard of performance, could sometimes transform a job into a profession or

even a calling. The gradual accretion of meaning around the work of the Inspección, cemented by the labor and sacrifices of many employees, granted considerable durability to the structures of Porfirian archaeological administration.

Chapter Five

Rights and Ruins

"God of strung hearts
and of throbbing lights
his eyes were suns of death
and his teeth obsidian knives

with a striped face
and blue thighs
they adored him day and night
in the highest tower
and in the center of the sky

now god of the museum
he is illuminated by a spotlight

-"Huitzilopochtli," Homero Aridjis[1]

In March of 1911, as Maderista forces battled federal troops in Chihuahua and rebellion erupted in Morelos, a potter in the Veracruz town of Tlalixcoyan waged his own, quieter struggle against the national government. José Hermida Pérez had built a workshop on land leased from a nearby hacienda, an arrangement which also gave him the right to extract clay from certain small mounds on the property. During a recent tour through the area, Inspector of Archaeological Monuments Leopoldo Batres had declared the mounds to be pre-Hispanic constructions, and forbidden Hermida to disturb them. This pronouncement placed the potter in an untenable position, responsible for rent but unable to conduct his business. Consequently, Hermida wrote to Instrucción Pública seeking official permission to resume his use of the mounds, offering to safeguard any artifacts he uncovered and sell them to the government at a reasonable price.[2] He claimed that none of the local residents, including "the owner of the estate, or many people of advanced age," had previously considered the mounds to be archaeological monuments, and that

[1] "*Dios de los corazones ensartados/ y de las luces palpitantes/ sus ojos fueron soles de la muerte/ y sus dientes cuchillos de obsidiana/ con la cara rayada/ y los muslos azules/ lo adoraron día y noche/ en la torre más alta/ y en el centro del cielo/ ahora dios de museo/ es alumbrado por un foco*." Homero Aridjis, "Huitzilopochtli," in *Un pasado visible: Antología de poemas sobre vestigios del México antiguo*, edited by Gustavo Jiménez Aguirre, with photographs by Javier Hinojosa (Mexico City: Artes de México, 2004), 75. The poem was also published in Aridjis' 1977 collection *Vivir para ver*.

[2] "*…me ofrezco á conservar sin destruirlos los objetos que por casualidad se encuentren alli sepultados, y á cederlos por su justo precio si la superioridad manifiesta deseos de adquirirlos.*" Letter from J. Hermida Pérez to SIPBA, March 10, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 29, f. 1.

the government had never previously classified them as such.[3] In his letter, the veracruzano potter also invoked a specifically personal rather than national conception of patrimony. He pleaded, "In good faith and with the best intentions, I rented those lands to work, and invested my patrimony in them, and if that amount is small, for me it still represents a sacrifice…I beg you to resolve this matter as you deem just, so as not to damage the assets which make up my patrimony, acquired with no small sacrifices, and which are the only ones I possess on which to subsist."[4] Deliberately or by chance, Hermida deployed the vocabulary of cultural preservation to challenge the legitimacy of the Inspección, pitting his private "patrimonio" against the more grandiose but less tangible claims of the federal agency.

Batres responded to this account of unfair treament and economic loss not with sympathy, but with ire. He argued that the Inspección had simply fulfilled its legal duty to prevent Hermida from "continuing to destroy archaeological monuments." To Batres, Hermida's attitude contravened both science and the law: "The case is most urgent, as the demolition of those monuments will cause great damage to science, and the example of disobedience to the law will cause the most valuable monuments that I have discovered in the extensive zone from Tierra Blanca to Tlalixcoyan to disappear."[5] Consequently, Batres suggested that the local jefe político be instructed to halt Hermida's "attack" on the mounds, draft charges against Hermida, and turn the potter over to a judge who would administer "the necessary punishment."[6] Challenged by a man of low status, who was ignorant not only of archaeology but of the dignity and power of the Inspección, Batres was not inclined to yield any ground. Officials at Instrucción Pública were somewhat cooler-headed, telegraphing the governor of Veracruz to ask that he prevent Hermida from removing any materials from the mounds, and warning the potter that future infractions of the law would incur penalties.[7] This more tempered response, less severe than what Batres had suggested, was still far from the resolution that Hermida had sought from the national authorities.

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[3] "*Respetuosamente debo hacer á U. presente que cuando ya arrendé al propietario de la hacienda "La Esperanza", el terreno en que establecí mi negociación alfarera, aprovechando precisamente los cerritos que hay en él, ignoraba, lo mismo que el dueño de la finca, y aun muchas personas de mayor edad, que esos montículos pudieran tener el origen que les atribuye el señor Batres, y aunque no me favorezca la ignorancia de la ley, hasta ahora desconozco ésta, y no sé hasta que punto alcance su acción sobre esos cerros, que nunca habian sido calificados de monumentos arqueológicos, para perjudicarme en mis pequeños intereses, ni qué autoridad deba tener la declaración hecha por el ya citado Inspector de Monumentos.*" Idem.

[4] "*Yo de buena fé y con la mejor intención, arrendé esos terrenos para trabajar, é invertí en ellos mi patrimonio, que no por ser corto, deja de significar para mi un sacrificio. Confiado en la benevolencia de U. C.o Ministro, á U. suplico se digne dictar la resolución que estime de justicia, para no lesionar mis intereses que en este caso forman mi patrimonio, adquirido con no pocos sacrificios, y que son los únicos que poseo para atender á mi subsistencia.*" Idem.

[5] "*Siendo el caso urgentísimo, pues la demolición de esos monumentos causará grave perjuicio á la ciencia, y por otra parte el ejemplo de esa desobediencia á la ley hará que desaparezcan los valiosísimos monumentos que he descubierto en la extensa zona de Tierra Blanca á Tlalixcoyan.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, March 18, 1911. Ibid., f. 6.

[6] "*Suplico á Vd. si lo tiene á bien se sirva acordar: 1.o Que se dirija esa Secretaría al C. Gobernador de Veracruz ordenándole que el Jefe Político del Cantón de Veracruz, mande suspender el atentado cometido por el C. J. Hermida Pérez. 2.o Que la autoridad local, levante una acta de estos hechos. 3.o Que se consigne el delincuente C. J. Hermida Pérez al Juez de Distrito del E. de Veracruz para que se le aplique el castigo necesario.*" Idem.

[7] "*He de merecer á Ud. se sirva ordenar Jefe Político del cantón de Veracruz suspenda las remociones que está haciendo J. Hermida Pérez en montículos arqueológicos de Tlalixcoyan é impida que se hagan otras, por estar*

At the base of this conflict between patrimonies large and small was the fundamental issue of where pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts fit within Porfirian understandings of property. What sorts of places or objects were considered "archaeological," and who had the authority to define them as such? If an officially designated "archaeological monument" was located on privately owned land, who possessed the right to make use of it, and how far did that right extend? How did archaeological sites come under federal control, and what if any compensation was owed when archaeological objects were transferred from the control of individuals or communities to the jurisdiction of the national state? What objections to federal archaeological management could be accommodated, and which were rejected out of hand? The various and sometimes contradictory answers to these questions were hammered out through trial and error, legislative fiat, negotiation, and force.

Although a clear tendency towards increased federal control over pre-Hispanic objects can be traced over the course of the Porfiriato, this general trend was expressed unevenly across space, time, and social strata. In some cases, such as that of the unfortunate Hermida, any disturbance of archaeological sites was strictly prohibited. In other situations, the government might decide to purchase items from private owners, work out a modus vivendi between the Inspección and local stakeholders, survey and expropriate land to create an archaeological park, or even ignore repeated local requests for the protection of pre-Hispanic sites. The erratic processes by which the cultural bureaucracy acquired (or sometimes refused) authority over pre-Hispanic items reveal the contingency and fragility of state-building efforts during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The state's uncoordinated resolution of archaeological questions reflected the internal fissures that separated the various layers and branches of government. Besides the long-standing rivalry between the Inspección and the Museo Nacional, federal ministries such as Fomento (Development) and Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas (Communications and Public Works) had missions and constituencies which might place those organizations at cross-purposes with Instrucción Pública. Officials outside of Instrucción Pública had no objections in principle to the commemoration of the pre-Hispanic past, but neither did they place much emphasis on the issue. When conflicts arose between archaeological preservation and other federal priorities, the demands of archaeology might easily lose out. A coherent archaeological agenda was also sometimes frustrated by state or local government opposition to federal projects. While most governors and jefes políticos were content to leave archaeological questions in the hands of federal administrators, some chose to contest the control of pre-Hispanic objects. These struggles might occur openly, as when the governor of Yucatán struggled to keep certain sculptures from being sent to the Museo Nacional, or more covertly, when state officials took sides with local community members against the Inspección. Federal administrators like Batres dreamt of making the state into a powerful leviathan; what they produced was more like a befuddled chimera.

Splintered state authority posed one set of obstacles to the creation of a coherent and effective archaeological policy; external challenges presented another. José Hermida Pérez was one of many Mexican citizens who offered vigorous opposition to federal conceptions of archaeological ownership. Faced with affronts to their interests, individuals and communities

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prohibidas por ley de monumentos arqueológicos." Telegram from Subsecretario of SIPBA to Governor Teodoro Dehesa of Veracruz, March 20, 1911. Ibid., f. 3. "*Conforme á la ley vigente de Monumentos Arqueológicos, no puede hacer remociones ni excavaciones en los Monumentos Arqueológicos ubicados en Tlalixcoyan, y que si infringe dicha ley, incurrirá en las penas que señale su artículo 3.o*." Letter from SIPBA to José Hermida Pérez, March 23, 1911. Ibid., f. 7.

engaged in vocal protest and sophisticated political maneuvering in order to secure their desired ends. Drawing from the correspondence of Instrucción Pública, this chapter will show that local people and communities raised considerable opposition to the centralizing agenda of the national government, and rejected many of the government's claims to define and control the country's archaeological sites. The Inspección exercised only patchy control over its own employees; still less could it dictate the beliefs and behavior of people who lived near the sites. To subdue local agitation required the application of time, effort, money and political capital, all of which drained a cultural bureaucracy already low on manpower and cash. By exploring the different meanings and models of archaeological property during the Porfiriato, this chapter will trace the extent of the national government's power over pre-Hispanic objects.

I. Archaeological Property in Porfirian Law

Conflicts over the ownership of pre-Hispanic objects arose in part because the federal government lacked a clear set of standards for resolving such disputes. In particular, the brevity and imprecision of national laws governing cultural patrimony did little to increase the fairness, consistency, or perceived legitimacy of state actions. The state issued customs regulations banning the export of "Mexican monuments and antiquities" as early as 1827, but it took far longer to define the state's rights over pre-Hispanic sites and objects within the nation's borders. During the colonial era the Spanish Crown had established its legal possession of "the ruins of pre-Hispanic buildings," but these rights were not explicitly claimed by post-independence governments.[8] The legislation which formally established the Museo Nacional in 1831 did not give the institution any powers to expropriate pre-Hispanic items, but did make an explicit reference to the purchase of objects for the museum's collections.[9] At various points during the nineteenth century the museum and the government requested that state and local authorities gather antiquities to enhance the national collections, but again do not seem to have advocated for a general principle of federal ownership.[10] The Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística offered proposals in 1859 and 1862 to reinstate the Spanish laws "relating to the ownership and conservation of 'national antiquities,'" and the restored Juárez government declared in 1868 that "antiquities found in Mexican territory belong to the Federal Government." [11] During the 1880s and 1890s, the state would greatly increase its theoretical and practical

[8] "*Por cuanto a la propiedad de dicho patrimonio, la Corona española, a través de sucesivas disposiciones de las Leyes de Indias, dejó claramente establecido que las ruinas de los edificios prehispánicos, como los santuarios, los adoratorios y las tumbas, así como los objetos que allí se encontraran, pertenecían a la Real Propiedad.*" Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom , eds., *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 1 (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 22.

[9] "*14. La compra de objetos se hará respectivamente por el conservador y por el director del Jardín, con intervención del presidente de la junta, a la cual presentarán anualmente sus cuentas*." "Ley. Formación de un establecimiento científico que comprenda los ramos de antigüedades, productos de industria, historia natural y jardín botánico," November 21, 1831. Reprinted in Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar: Objetos, colecciones y museos de la ciudad de México (1790-1910*) (Barcelona and Mexico City: Ediciones Pomares, 2004), 308.

[10] Christina Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*: The Making of Archaeological Patrimony in Porfirian Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (2010): 229.

authority over pre-Hispanic sites and artifacts. Nevertheless, Porfirian administrators never fully articulated an explicit, coherent theory of archaeological property.

The original 1885 decree outlining the duties of the Inspector of Archaeological Monuments contained less than 300 words, and did not define or itemize the objects within the agency's sphere of influence. The document, signed by Minister of Justice and Public Instruction Joaquín Baranda, simply stated that "The Inspector will attend to the conservation of all archaeological and historical monuments and ruins of the Republic…[and] will prevent excavations, movements of monuments, etc., without the proper authorization from [Instrucción Pública]."[12] The decree was completely silent on the issue of how the Inspector was to prevent excavations which might take place on private property, and offered no guidance on the boundaries of public and private interests with regard to pre-Hispanic objects. A great deal was left to the personal discretion of Batres, rather than being plainly spelled out.

Similarly, an 1894 decree on the Occupation and Transfer of Waste Lands (*terrenos baldíos*) reaffirmed the general principle of federal control over the pre-Hispanic past, but did so only in loose terms. The law stated that "The lands in which monumental ruins are encountered, [as well as] the surface area which is declared necessary for their care and conservation" could not be transferred to private owners and "will always remain under the control of the

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[11] "Así la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística… propuso al gobierno que para protegerlos se declararan vigentes las leyes españolas relativas a la propiedad y conservación de las 'antigüedades nacionales'; en respuesta, el presidente Benito Juárez encomendó a dicha sociedad que formulara un proyecto de ley especial para resolver el problema, el cual fue realizado en 1862, pero no llegó a convertirse en ley por los trastornos de la guerra civil y de la Intervención francesa… El gobierno de Juárez …en circular de 28 de agosto de 1868, a través del Ministerio de Justicia declaró que las antigüedades que se encontraban en territorio mexicano pertenecían al Gobierno Federal." Olivé Negrete and Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 1, 27.

[12] "*El inspector cuidará de la conservacion de todos los monumentos y ruinas arqueológicas é históricas de la República… Impedirá que se hagan excavaciones, traslaciones de monumentos, etc., sin la debida autorizacion de la secretaría de justicia*." "Atribuciones del Inspector de Monumentos Arqueológicos," comunicacion de la Secretaría de Justicia e Instrucción Pública, October 17, 1885. Reprinted in *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, ed. Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 236. Although this decree gave the Inspección authority over "historical" as well as archaeological monuments, the Inspector General's energies focused almost entirely on the latter. The preservation of sites and artifacts which postdated the Conquest was mainly carried out through the Museo Nacional and the Museo Nacional de Artillería, the latter of which housed memorabilia from various national conflicts. Towards the end of the Porfiriato, the federal government also appointed caretakers for several sites of national historical importance, such as buildings associated with the lives of the rebel priests Hidalgo and Morelos, and the Hill of the Bells, where the emperor Maximilian was executed. See Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*, 229-36. In 1914, a law passed during the administration of Victoriano Huerta ordered the creation of an Inspección de Monumentos Artísticos e Históricos, to be placed under the authority of Instrucción Pública, while in 1916 the Constitutionalist government of Venustiano Carranza passed its own laws for the conservation of historic and artistic objects. These laws are reprinted in Alejandro Gertz Manero, *La defensa jurídica y social del patrimonio cultural* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976), 65-71 and 73-8. Earlier measures to protect Mexico's post-Conquest sites and objects do not appear to have been very successful. In a June 26, 1916 letter to the Constitutionalist Director de las Bellas Artes, Dr. J. M. de la Fuente wrote, "*La esperiencia adquirida en mis viajes por las diversas entidades políticas de la República al ver las profanaciones que a diario se cometen en nuestros edificios históricos por lo general descuidados y abandonados, me inspiró la idea, desde años atras, de que se creara una Inspección de monumentos históricos así como se había creado la de monumentos arqueológicos pues no veo ninguna razón para que solo se procure la conservación y estudio de la historia y etnología pre-hispánica y se desatienda la moderna cuando una y otra se enlazan estrechamente para formar un solo cuerpo que viene a constituir la etnología, la etnografía y la historia de las naciones*." AGN-IPBA, caja 119bis, exp. 68, f. 5.

Federation." [13] The law provided federal officials with a judicial tool to carve out archaeological sites from the federal properties offered for sale in the later Porfiriato. The ambiguities of the law, however, meant that the tool was dull and sometimes difficult to deploy. What counted as a monumental ruin, and who determined the amount of land necessary for the ruins' conservation, was left undefined. Even in the absence of opposition from landowners, officials might dispute how much land was truly necessary to preserve the monuments, or how the survey and demarcation of protected land was to be carried out.

A subsequent law issued on June 3, 1896 provided more detail as to how excavations would be approved and supervised, and specified that "the material found in the explorations will be the property of the National Government," but again left vague the procedures for resolving third-party claims. The drafters of the 1896 legislation seem to have assumed that excavators would be scientific investigators, rather than treasure seekers or farmers wishing to clear their fields of obstructions. Consequently, while the law's fourth article stated that excavations on private property could only take place with the consent of the owner, it did not clarify whether landholders might claim affirmative rights over pre-Hispanic objects as well as bar access to them.[14] More than a decade after the foundation of the Inspección, the legal status of pre-Hispanic objects on private property remained undefined.

The law of May 11, 1897 was more specific than any previous archaeological legislation, but even so left some key issues unresolved.[15] The law's first article announced that "Archaeological monuments existing in Mexican territory are the property of the nation and no one may investigate them, remove them or restore them, without the express authorization of the Chief Executive of the Union," while the third and sixth articles established judicial penalties for damaging monuments or for attempting their illicit exportation.[16] The law offered no

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[13] "*…14. No podrán enajenarse por ningún título ni estarán sujetos a prescripción sino que permanecerán siempre del dominio de la Federación…IV. Los terrenos en que se encuentren ruinas monumentales, con la superficie que se declare necesaria para el cuidado y conservacion de éstas.*" "Ley sobre ocupación y enajenación de terrenos baldíos," March 26, 1894. Excerpted in Olivé Negrete and Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, 236.

[14] "*…si fuere de propiedad privada no se permitirá ninguna clase de exploración sino hasta después de obtenido el consentimiento del propietario…El material que se encuentre en las exploraciones será de la propiedad del Gobierno Nacional*." "Ley Sobre Exploraciones Arqueológicas," June 3, 1896. Reprinted in Ibid., 237.

[15] The 1977 court case *United States vs. McClain*, and its subsequent appeals, considered the question of whether pre-Hispanic artifacts exported from Mexico without government permission could be treated as "stolen property" in the U.S. "The original conviction in the 1977 case of *US v. McClain* found that the defendants had conspired 'to transport and receive…certain Pre-Columbian artifacts…knowing these artifacts to have been stolen' based on a 1897 patrimony law…On a second appeal in 1979, the court ruled 'that pre-1972 Mexican law was so ambiguous and unclear that "our basic standards of due process and notice preclude us from characterizing the artifacts as stolen" if they were in fact exported before 1972.'" James Cuno, "Museums, Antiquities, Cultural Property, and the US Legal Framework for Making Acquisitions," in *Who Owns the Past?: Cultural Policy, Cultural Property, and the Law*, ed. Kate Fitz Gibbon (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 149.

[16] "*Artículo 1o. Los monumentos arqueológicos existentes en territorios mexicanos, son propiedad de la nación y nadie podrá explorarlos, removerlos ni restaurarlos, sin autorización expresa del Ejecutivo de la Unión… Artículo 3o. La destrucción o deterioro de los monumentos arqueológicos constituye un delito y los responsables de él queden sujetos a las penas de arresto mayor y multa de segunda clase… Artículo 6o. Las antigüedades mexicanas…no podrán ser exportados sin autorización legal. Los infractores de esta prohibición quedarán sujetos al pago de una multa…sin perjuicio de la responsabilidad penal en que incurran. "* "Ley Relativo a Monumentos Arqueológicos," May 11, 1897. Reprinted in Olivé Negrete and Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, 238.

compensation to individuals or organizations that might otherwise claim rights to the monuments, implying by this silence that the federal government had always been the legitimate owner of the nation's archaeological sites. However, this implicit assumption of federal ownership notably did not apply to the *land* containing the sites.[17] The fifth article of the 1897 law stated,"In cases where the archaeological monuments…may be located on privately owned lands, as a matter of public interest the Executive may expropriate from the owners the surface area necessary for the conservation and study of those same monuments, in accordance with the law."[18] By separating land ownership from the ownership of archaeological monuments, the 1897 legislation gave the federal government the right but not the duty to purchase areas containing pre-Hispanic sites. The wide leeway granted the government meant that respect for the claims of private property varied a great deal depending on the agencies and individuals involved, and the eagerness of state officials to promote and display specific sites. With so much resting upon federal discretion, no clear template existed for interactions between local communities and the cultural bureaucracy. This provoked puzzlement and hostility from local landowners, who protested federal decisions which accorded with neither their economic interests nor their moral intuitions.

Landowners might have been even more confounded had they realized that the law of May 11, 1897 contained a major loophole which greatly limited the federal government's control

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[17] Here, it may be instructive to compare the law of May 11, 1897 with Porfirian codes regulating minerals and petroleum, other valuable materials found in the earth which possessed nationalistic significance and which were targets of foreign interest. Such analogies are inherently limited by the vastly different economic stakes involved, as well as the prohibitions on the export of pre-Hispanic artifacts. Nevertheless, the May 11 law was broadly aligned with other Porfirian legislation giving the interests of the federal government, and those people or businesses it favored, a decisive influence in the disposition of the nation's riches. In an attempt to promote exploration and investment, "Mexico's 1884 mining code granted ownership of subsurface coal, water, and oil to the surface owner, a dramatic departure from the preexisting law that had specified that all subsoil wealth was national patrimony. A further law in 1892 stipulated that the owners of the surface could freely exploit petroleum in the subsoil without any special concessions from the government." Stephen Haber, Armando Razo and Noel Maurer, *The Politics of Property Rights: Political Instability, Credible Commitments, and Economic Growth in Mexico, 1876-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 193. Mineral rights, however, were retained by the federal government throughout the Porfiriato. "The mining laws of Porfirian Mexico – contrary to the suggestions of the standard textbooks of Mexican history – did not award the miners fee simple ownership of the subsoil…[except for water, petroleum, and building materials, all] other wealth in the subsoil was either implicitly vested in the nation (in the 1884 and 1892 mining codes) or was explicitly vested in the nation (as spelled out in the 1909 mining code)." Ibid., 240-1. Haber, Razo and Maurer point out that "From the point of view of the mining companies and the Mexican federal government, this property rights system was actually superior to fee simple ownership of the subsoil by the surface owner," because it permitted companies to access mineral wealth while compensating property owners only for the surface value of the land, rather than the value of the mineral rights beneath it. Ibid., 241. (The authors do not explain why these considerations did not apply in the case of petroleum, but it may have been because petroleum exploration took place in Mexico's "lagoons, swamps, and coastal plains," with fewer pre-existing landowners who might demand payment in exchange for access. Ibid., 192-3.) In either case, as with archaeology, the legal playing field was systematically slanted to favor federal power and goals against more local interests.

[18] "*Artículo 5o. En el caso de que los monumentos arqueológicos comprendidos en la carta de que habla el artículo anterior, y los que en los sucesivo se descubran, estuvieren en tierras de propiedad particular, el Ejecutivo por tratarse de utilidad pública, podrá expropiarse con arreglo a las leyes, a los dueños de dichas tierras en la extensión superficial que fueren necesarias para la conservación y el estudio de los mismos monumentos.*" "Ley Relativo a Monumentos Arqueológicos," May 11, 1897. Reprinted in Olivé Negrete and Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 3, 238.

over pre-Hispanic items. While the legislation established state ownership of "archaeological monuments," defined in the law's second article as "the ruins of cities, the ruins at Casas Grandes, cave dwellings, fortifications, palaces, temples, pyramids, rocks with carvings or inscriptions and, in general, all the buildings which in whatever manner may be interesting for the study of the civilization or history of the ancient inhabitants of Mexico," no such state control was established over small, portable artifacts.[19] If vendors and enthusiasts did not attempt to transport objects beyond Mexico's national borders, or damage recognized "archaeological monuments" in the pursuit of desired items, they were free to amass and sell pre-Hispanic artifacts however they chose. As a consequence, the Inspección could forbid individuals like Hermida from disturbing pre-Hispanic sites without offer of compensation, at the same time as the Museo Nacional was paying large sums of money to acquire private archaeological collections. No federal official ever seems to have suggested that such collections were already property of the nation, or used the law of May 11 as a blade to cut through the complications of sale negotiations and drawn-out payment schedules.

Why were artifacts exempted from the rules which governed the treatment of archaeological sites? Partly, this was a matter of sheer practicality, as it would have been nearly impossible for the Porfirian state to enforce any regulation which transformed all pre-Hispanic objects into property of the nation. The exclusion of objects may also have reflected constitutional considerations. As discussed in Chapter 3, Minister of Public Instruction Joaquín Baranda argued that a provision in the 1857 Constitution which gave the federal government rights to claim authority over the "forts, barracks, storehouses, and *other structures* necessary to the Government of the Union" justified federal ownership of pre-Hispanic monuments. Applying this somewhat dubious principle to portable objects as well as to buildings might have provoked stronger legislative or public resistance to the law.[20] In addition, the exclusion of artifacts from the law of May 11, 1897 meant that members of the scientific and political elite who engaged in archaeological collecting would not suddenly find their hobby criminalized. Finally, legislators may have seen little need to assert direct state ownership over archaeological objects, given the existing prohibitions on their export, and the lack of attention then given to questions of provenience. In comparison with large monuments, which might be vandalized, looted, plowed over or dismantled for building stone, artifacts already in private hands were at less obvious risk of being lost to the national patrimony. Presumably, Mexican collectors would acquire and care for the objects – perhaps even sort and label them – and over the decades the economic resources of the Museo Nacional would act as a great gravity well, pulling these artifacts towards the national collections.

The exclusion of artifacts from the law of May 11, 1897 also reflected the internal culture of the Museo Nacional, the institution most involved in studying and safeguarding the portable

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[19] "*Se reputan monumentos arqueológicos para los efectos de esta Ley, las ruinas de ciudades, las Casas Grandes, las habitaciones trogloditas, las fortificaciones, los palacios, templos, pirámides, rocas esculpidas o con inscripciones y, en general, todos los edificios que bajo cualquier aspecto sean interesantes para el estudio de la civilización o historia de los antiguos pobladores de México.*" Idem.

[20] "*El art. 125 de ésta [the Constitution of 1857] – siguió diciendo el Sr. Baranda – dice que estarán bajo la inmediata inspeccion de los Poderes federales, los fuertes, cuarteles, almacenes de depósito y* demás edificios *necesarios al Gobierno de la Union…*" Luis del Toro, "*RESUMEN.*, etc.," *El Monitor Republicano,* December 2, 1896. Reproduced in Sonia Lombardo de Ruiz, *El pasado prehispánico en la cultura nacional (Memoria hemerográfica, 1877-1911),* Vol. 1, *El Monitor Republicano* (1877-1896) (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1994), 305.

objects of the pre-Hispanic past. Unlike Batres, who aggressively defended maximalist interpretations of the Inspección's power over archaeological sites, the directors of the Museo Nacional took a more constrained view of their institution's reach. Over time the museum had developed a well-defined policy for its acquisitions, albeit one based on customary practice rather than laws or official regulations.[21] In a 1901 memo to his superiors at Instrucción Pública, museum director Manuel Urbina enumerated the four ways that objects entered the institution's permanent collections: purchase, donation, exchange, or official consignment. Urbina also noted that the museum might acquire temporary holdings as a deposit from the government, from the loan of some particularly noteworthy piece, or at the request of an owner seeking to determine an object's authenticity and value, and that items in the last category would be treated as donations if the owner did not return for them within a specified length of time.[22] In the memo, Urbina addressed issues of ownership directly, commenting on conditional donations and the expectations of even those donors who did not attach terms to their gift. He wrote, "In general, donations are accepted without conditions, but it is presumed that they are not goods that the [museum] can simply dispose of as it pleases and chooses. Donations are made with the understood purpose that the objects will be exhibited and conserved, their loss or destruction prevented, etc., even when the donors have reserved no specific rights."[23] Where Batres fiercely warded off perceived challenges to the authority of the Inspección, even when these originated from elsewhere in the cultural bureaucracy, Urbina willingly conceded that certain natural rights persisted even after objects had passed into the museum's galleries. It is worth recalling here that donations to the Museo Nacional encompassed far more than pre-Hispanic artifacts and included the family heirlooms of contemporary political and military figures, a strong inducement for the museum to tread lightly in matters of property rights. However, even when dealing with people of low social status, none of the professors and administrators of the Museo Nacional ever appear to have interpreted the law of May 11, 1897 with anything close to the aggression of Batres. The institution might accept monuments which the Inspección had removed in the face of local opposition, but directors and staff had little interest in seizing items themselves.

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[21] "*Estas son las costumbres practicadas desde hace años en el Museo Nacional, pero no hay ningúna ley ni reglamento formalmente aprobado á que atenerse en el particular.*" Memorandum from Manuel Urbina to SJIP, November 4, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 17, f. 3. In response to Urbina's memo, Instrucción Pública ordered him to develop "*un proyecto de reglamento relativo á la conservacion y cuidado de los objetos existentes en el Museo*." Letter from SJIP to Manuel Urbina, November 20, 1901. Ibid., f. 5. However, the regulations eventually formulated by Urbina's successor Genaro García and approved by Justo Sierra focused almost entirely on the professional duties of the museum's employees, and did not detail the processes by which objects were to be acquired. See "Tercer reglamento del Museo Nacional, formulado por el subdirector del establecimiento, C. Genaro García y aprobado provisionalmente por la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública," January 28, 1909. Reprinted in Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar*, 314-9.

[22] "*Los ejemplares en <u>examen</u> son los que los particulares ofrecen en venta y que necesitan quedar algún tiempo en el Museo para ser estudiados ó valorados. Alguna vez el dueño no ha vuelto por ellos, y entonces quedan en el Museo con un carácter ambiguo; por lo cual la Secretaría del Establecimiento da ya en la actualidad recibos en que se hace constar que si pasado determinado plazo no se recogen los objetos, se considerarán como donados al Museo.*" Memorandum from Manuel Urbina to SJIP, November 4, 1901, AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 17, f. 3.

[23] "*En general, las donaciones se admiten sin condición, pero se supone que no son bienes de que el donatario puede disponer á su placer y voluntad, sino que tienen el fin subentendido de que se exhiban los objetos, de que se conserven, de que se evite su pérdida ó deterioro, &., aun cuando los donadores no se reserven derecho alguno.*" Ibid., f. 2.

The drastically different approaches taken by the Inspección and the Museo Nacional were microcosms of larger Porfirian schisms over the nature and inviolability of property rights. The rhetoric of nineteenth-century Liberals, in Mexico as elsewhere in the world, hailed private property as the foundation of prosperity and social stability. Individual ownership would unleash the dormant energies of the Mexican workforce, transform inert villagers into thrify, progress-minded smallholders, and heat up a tepid economy. These effusive tributes to the power of private property were matched by intense hostility towards alternate property regimes, especially those in which land was held by religious institutions or rural villages. The Liberal governments of the Reform era had stripped away most of the wealth of the Catholic Church, while during the Porfiriato villagers steadily lost communal lands and access to natural resources through pressures from private interests. The types of property likely to be held by wealthy, modern, urban-oriented elites were sanctioned and protected by official power, while the property of poorer, rural people without political connections was subject to diminishment or dispossession. Legislation governing archaeology, therefore, fit within a pattern of attempts to define property in terms favorable to the interests of the federal government and its chief supporters. These attempts, however, could be frustrated not only by the actions of individuals, but also by those of state and local governments.

II. Archaeological Property and the State

Cracks and fissures

The divergent policies of the Inspección and the Museo Nacional regarding archaeological property mirrored the Porfirian state's paradoxical roles as both defender and despoiler of property rights. In this broad sense the two main institutions of the archaeological bureaucracy could be said to act as complementary instruments of federal policy, or interwoven threads of the same fabric. At the more direct level of human interactions, however, the personnel of the Museo and the Inspección were frequently rivals and antagonists. Batres openly disparaged the organization of the museum, questioned the scientific attainments and judgments of its staff, denounced unauthorized excavations by the museum's students of archaeology, and in a public memorandum, named longtime museum director Francisco del Paso y Troncoso as his personal enemy.[24] In turn, various museum directors or employees complained of Batres to superiors at Instrucción Pública, and pointedly criticized the Inspector General's competence at carrying out archaeological excavations and classifications. The uneasy coexistence of the two institutions depended on the mediation of Instrucción Pública and official forbearance towards Batres, and was upended after the triumph of Madero's revolution. Even within two small institutions, both part of the federal government, both supervised by the same ministry, and both led by men committed to archaeological preservation and research, personal and professional conflicts might disrupt the state's management of the pre-Hispanic past.

The role of the state became even more muddled with the involvement of agencies or administrators from outside the cultural bureaucracy. The meaning and importance of Mayan artifacts, for example, might be very different to Batres than to state actors hoping to promote

[24] Leopoldo Batres, *Memorandum dirigido al Sr. Lic. D. Miguel Díaz Lombardo, Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes* (Barcelona: Imprenta litografía Viuda de J. Cunill, Calle de Aribau, 3, 1911), 22. This work will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

foreign investment, or to local politicians accustomed to using sites as they saw fit. Consequently, questions of ownership arose not just between the federal government and local residents, but among the various branches and levels of state power. While there was broad acceptance of federal authority over archaeological sites, recognizing the claims of the national government did not necessarily entail defending them to their furthest practicable limit. To many officials, archaeological preservation was a low-priority issue, a garnish to state power rather than its meat. Few authorities outside of Instrucción Pública took special pains to preserve the objects of the pre-Hispanic past, and when they did make such efforts the Inspección might well find the results uncongenial. The Mexican state was not a unified actor in archaeological matters, and its administrators did not share a common vision of how and how far federal authority should be exerted at pre-Hispanic sites. Instead, disputes between different ministries of the federal government, and between federal, state, and local officials, highlighted divergent perspectives on the meaning and extent of the national archaeological patrimony.

Conflicts between the Inspección and the federal Secretaría de Fomento erupted in several cases dealing with the reclamation of archaeological sites from private purchasers, and the subsequent delineation of the site boundaries. From the 1870s through the 1890s, Mexico's federal government encouraged private companies to survey and obtain vast amounts of national territory classified as *tierras baldías*, or waste lands. According to Robert Holden, "The historical literature of the period correctly emphasizes the most salient features of the surveys, namely, their explosive pace, the enormous areas of land the companies disposed of, and the government's method of compensating them [by granting the companies up to a third of the land that they surveyed]."[25] The haste with which public lands were transferred to private interests incurred a certain amount of imprecision, such that some of the tracts surrendered by the federal government included pre-Hispanic monuments. Both Batres and Santiago Bolio, the Inspector of Archaeological Monuments for the State of Yucatán, took measures to nullify such transfers, but their efforts met with only lukewarm support from other state officials. While the principle of state ownership of archaeological sites found general acceptance, the meaning and extent of federal control over the pre-Hispanic past was subject to varying interpretations.

A dispute between the Inspección and Fomento highlights the disjunction which might exist between federal agencies. The conflict arose over national lands purchased in 1900 by the Chiapas Rubber Plantation and Investment Company, a firm based in San Francisco, California. A December 16 article in the *San Francisco Call* noted that "The property is located in the department of Palenque, State of Chiapas, and it is unquestionably adapted to the production of rubber and the growth of hardwood timber trees of great variety."[26] What the article did not mention is that the property also overlapped portions of the archaeological site of Palenque. A Mexican engineer assigned with marking the boundaries of the purchase had written to Fomento in October to ask how he should demarcate the land around the "highly notable ruins."[27] The

[25] Robert H. Holden, "Priorities of the State in the Survey of Public Lands in Mexico, 1876-1911," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 70, No. 4 (November 1990): 579.

[26] "Rubber Plantation – Flattering Report Upon the Property of the Chiapas Plantation and Investment Company," *The San Francisco Call*, December 16, 1900, 26, accessed December 13, 2011, http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1900-12-16/ed-1/seq-26/.

[27] "*Comisionado por "The Chiapas Rubber Plantation and Ynvestment Company" para deslindar sus terrenos…y teniendo comprender parte de las tan notables ruinas del Palenque, con los terrenos que deslindo, ocurro con el mayor respeto á ese Ministerio del que es V. tan digno Secretario á fin de que se sirva indicarme las*

letter did not reach Batres until the end of January 1901, but once it did the Inspector General vigorously defended his agency's prerogatives. Batres insisted that the archaeological zone remain under federal control, and pointed out that the 1894 law "On the Occupation and Transfer of Waste Lands" explicitly prohibited private interests from claiming or purchasing national territory containing archaeological monuments. He recommended that the ruins be marked on the plan formed by the company's engineers, and a copy of the plan sent to Instrucción Pública; that the engineers leave the ruins untouched; that a hectare of land be reserved around each of the monuments to permit the construction of access roads with a width of 50 meters; and that nearby water sources be preserved "to cover the necessities of the monuments."[28]

Fomento's response, when it finally arrived in mid-March, interlaced hostility with incredulity. "The propositions of the Inspector of Archaeological Monuments are unclear and the majority of them are unfounded on legal precepts. The width of 50 meters that is proposed for the roads is very large and it would not be possible to oblige the purchasers (*denunciantes*) to mark them off, which they could not do in any case without knowing their position and direction; neither is there any basis for accepting the fourth proposition that nearby waters be declared as belonging to the Nation."[29] The letter ended with a request for more useful guidelines concerning archaeological monuments. When Batres replied three months later, his tone was equally antagonistic. He pointed out that the 1894 law on national lands preserved for the Federation, "'the lands in which monumental ruins are found as well as the surface area declared to be necessary for the care and conservation of the monuments,'" meaning that the national government possessed the right to determine how much land was necessary to safeguard the material past. Batres also quoted another section of the land law, which stated that a buffer zone of at least a kilometer must be left between barren territories subject to purchase, and other lands which fell outside of this category. Notably, the functionaries of Fomento did not dispute Batres' citation of the law when the ministry sent its last letter on the subject in August 1901. Instead, Fomento officials proposed a tacit compromise. The surveyors would be ordered to leave a zone of 100 meters around each of the monuments, with the understanding that "the owners of the neighboring parcels, with respect to the [proposed] easement, will remain subject to the laws which govern the matter."[30] As with so many other affairs, the chain of correspondence petered out as the laws of bureaucratic inertia took over. A settlement had been reached, and although it was only a small fraction of the territory which Batres had requested, the Inspector General raised no further protest (at least, not in writing).

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condiciones que debo considerar para trazar las lineas que deslinden á las citadas ruinas." Letter from Ing. Carlos D. Prieto to Fomento, October 10, 1900, quoted in letter from Fomento to Instrucción Pública, December 5, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 18, f. 1.

[28] Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 29, 1901. Ibid., fs. 4-5.

[29] "*…las proposiciones del Ynspector de Monumentos Arqueológicos, son poco precisas y la mayor parte de ellas, no puede fundarse en preceptos legales. La anchura de 50 m que se propone para los caminos es muy grande é innecesario y no se podría obligar á los denunciantes á trazarlos, no pudiendo hacerlo, por otra parte, sin conocer su posicion y direccion; tampoco habrá fundamento para aceptar la proposicion 4a relativa á que se declaren de la Nacion los arroyos y caidas de agua circumvecinas.*" Letter from Fomento to SJIP, March 19, 1901. Ibid., f. 8.

[30] "*…tengo la honra de manifestar á Ud. que deberá reservarse una Zona de 100 metros en derredor de cada monumento; bajo el concepto de que los dueños de los predios circunvecinos, respecto de la servidumbre de paso, quedarán sujetos á lo que las leyes disponen sobre el particular.*" Letter from Fomento to SJIP, August 31, 1901. Ibid., f. 19.

The dispute over Palenque in 1900-1901 was not simply between the interests of rubber planters and archaeological preservation, but between the branches of the federal government which represented those interests. To Batres, the law was clear. One provision established a kilometer as the minimum distance between land that was and was not *baldío;* another gave the federal government the authority to determine how much space should be maintained around pre-Hispanic sites. As the central authority responsible for the preservation of archaeological monuments, Batres acted on the principle that archaeological rights reserved to the federal government were, in practice, rights assigned to him. To the officials of Fomento, however, it appeared ridiculous that the federal government might retain extensive property rights over archaeological monuments to the detriment of business interests. The agency was willing to acknowledge a certain state interest in protecting the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past, but only to a limited degree, a tenth of what Batres desired. While the ministries of the federal government generally worked for the aggrandizement of federal power, they defined this mission in different ways. The existence of a federal law giving the national state authority over archaeological monuments did not mean that all parts of the federal government were committed to enforcing the text of the law as written.

Even when the Inspección faced no overt resistance to its mission, vigilance was required to ensure that pre-Hispanic sites were properly registered as federal property. The generally low priority of archaeological issues was also demonstrated through Santiago Bolio's efforts to use the Yucatecan courts to formally distinguish federal monuments from private landholdings. In 1900, following a series of land sales initially sponsored by Fomento, Bolio made a trip to mark off the boundaries of the ruins of Kiuic. Local authorities had previously assured him that the site had been preserved as federal property, but the surveyor did not have time to prepare a detailed plan, and Bolio had come to doubt that the archaeological site had actually been distinguished from the surrounding lands.[31] Bolio measured out the boundaries of the site with a local magistrate, two witnesses, and one of the two neighboring landowners (who were feuding between themselves about property lines); registered the appropriate paperwork with a local judge; and a little later drew up a formal topographical plan of the buildings, noting whether they were in perfect, bad, or good condition.[32] Despite the absence of direct opposition from landowners or state officials, the Inspección could not rely on other branches of government to ensure that archaeological sites remained the property of the national state.

State governments and local *jefaturas políticas* also issued occasional challenges to the cultural bureaucracy's conceptions of archaeological property. These conflicts took varied

[31] "*Con esta fecha es elevado á esa Secretaría de su digno cargo, el expediente que fórman las diligencias de mensura de las Ruinas de Kiuic, promovidas por mí, y en ellas verá U. que el C. Juez de Tekax y el C. Yngeniero Marcín dijeron en diligencias que les fueron notificadas, que dichas Ruinas habian sido excluidas del terreno de propiedad particular en que estan situadas, y no conforme, porque tenia la seguridad de que esto no era verdad, pedi á la Autoridad Federal, ordenara se me pusiera á la visa el expediente y habiendo examinado, resultó no ser cierto que habían sido excluidas, pues en las actas de mensura no se hace mencion de Ruinas ni su exclucion, pero como el objeto que me proponía no era entrar en discusion ni retardar el curso de mis trabajos, me limité á llebar adelante el deslinde, y pedir al C. Juez de Distrito diese su falto, declarando dicho terreno propiedad de la Nacion, para evitar con esto que nadie se crea con derecho á destruir dichas Ruins como antes sucedia, y poder pedir el castigo contra quien pretenda tocar los intereses de la Federacion que están á mi cuidado.*" Letter from Santiago Bolio to SJIP, February 11, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 16, f. 8.

[32] Letter from José Dolores Pérez to R. M. Juzgado Auxiliar de Xul, October 22, 1900, and "Plano Topografico de las Ruinas de Kiuic del Estado de Yucatan," prepared by Santiago Bolio, November 28, 1900. Ibid., fs. 22 and 24.

forms, depending on the significance accorded to particular sites and monuments. At some points the Inspección struggled against the disinterest of state and local administrations, while at other times the question of who controlled of a site or monument might become charged with political or cultural symbolism. In the latter instances, state or even local authorities might contest the legitimacy of the federal government's control over pre-Hispanic objects. Given the weakness of the Mexican state, in which the center exercised inconsistent control over an often resentful periphery, a region's cultural relics might become flashpoints for larger issues of local autonomy and pride.

One such case occurred in 1907, when villagers in the Yucatecan town of Acanceh dismantled a nearby mound for use in construction works. Upon doing so they discovered some pottery plates and other man-made items, which they turned over to the state government. News of the find soon came to the ear of Bolio's successor as the state Inspector of Monuments, Andrés Solís Cámara. Solís hurried to Acanceh to chastise the villagers and claim the objects for the Museo Nacional. He discovered, however, that the objects had already been placed in the Museo Yucateco, a regional institution opened in 1871 and located in the capital city of Mérida.[33] A struggle then ensued between the officials of Instrucción Pública and the state government of Yucatán. Both Batres and Justo Sierra claimed that the excavation of the mound was a clear violation the law of May 11, 1897, and Batres in particular was adamant that the objects discovered in Acanceh should be sent to the Museo Nacional. In a memorandum concerning the situation, Batres wrote that the Museo Nacional would display the objects to better advantage than would the Museo Yucateco, and argued that "it sets a dreadful precedent if objects found by the authorities of the states are diverted from their rightful place, and sent to local museums."[34]

Yucatán governor Enrique Muñoz Aristegui, however, defended a different reading of the statute. He argued that since the goal of the law was "to conserve [archaeological] monuments and to prevent them from being destroyed in the attempt to export them," the artifacts found at Acanceh should be "conserved in our Museum without ceasing to be, like all the others, property of the nation." In unusually personal language, the governor told Sierra "I have no other purpose than the aforesaid one of conserving here everything that contributes to the enrichment and prosperity of the Museo Yucateco…If you are not in agreement with this and despite this explanation insist that the objects be turned over to the Museo Nacional, I will do it with much regret (*con una gran pena*) that you would not permit them to remain here where they would continue to belong to the nation."[35] Perhaps recognizing the unusual tenacity with which the

[33] The Museo Yucateco was a longstanding source of regional pride, and a site of tensions between state and national interests. The state government of Yucatán created the institution in 1866, in a decree recognizing "*el deber en que está todo gobierno de conservar los monumentos que recuerden a las generaciones futuras la pasada existencia de antiguos pueblos civilizados*." Decreto de 1.o de Junio de 1866," from the *Diario Oficial de Mérida*, June 6, 1866. Reprinted in Luis Gerardo Morales Moreno, ed., *Orígenes de la museología mexicana: Fuentes para el estudio histórico del Museo Nacional, 1780-1940* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1994), 189. Morales reproduces the decree from Daniel Rubín de la Borbolla, ed., *México: monumentos históricos y arqueológicos*, vol. 1 (Mexico City: Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia, 1953), 95.

[34] "*Esta Oficina opina que los objetos arqueológicos que motivan la carta del C. Gobernador interino del Estado de Yucatán deben de pasar á enriquecer las colecciones del Museo Nacional por estar este establecimiento en mejores condiciones de propaganda que el del Estado de Yucatán…es un pésimo precedente el que los objetos arqueológicos encontrados por las autoridades de los Estados, desviándose de su legítimo paradero, se les destine á los museos locales.*" Memorandum composed by Batres, June 24, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 2, f. 11.

governor defended Yucatán's claims to the artifacts, the officials of Instrucción Pública reached a decorous bureaucratic solution. The ministry restated its authority over archaeological activities, requested detailed descriptions of the Acanceh objects in order to determine whether they properly belonged in the Museo Nacional, then quietly let the matter drop.[36]

Collaboration and Partnership

The cultural bureaucracy's general insistance on maintaining control over pre-Hispanic objects was sometimes superseded by the broader goals of the Porfirian state, or by realistic assessments of the political landscape. In 1906, for instance, the influential Chihuahua governor Enrique Creel expressed his desire to obtain items from the site of Casas Grandes, to display at a mining exposition in the state capital. Batres cautioned that doing so would be "very dangerous" and could damage the site, suggesting that molds of the monuments be made instead. Instrucción Pública brushed aside these warnings and allowed Creel to take the objects, on the sole condition that they be returned to their original locations once the exposition had concluded.[37] Ministry officials were willing to pick their battles. They also may also have wished to support events like the mining exposition, in which the objects of the pre-Hispanic past were linked to demonstrations of Mexican science and progress. Since the 1880s, Instrucción Pública had collaborated with Fomento to place pre-Hispanic artifacts at international expositions, allowing the indigenous past to become a key feature of the face Mexico that presented to the world.[38] Although expositions typically drew collections and personnel from the Museo Nacional, rather than directly from archaeological sites, they were moments in which federal ministries and state governments worked together to advance a shared (if still multivalent) national agenda. When

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[35] "*…además, que el decreto de 11 de Mayo de 1897 se refiere, en su artículo primero, á que todos los monumentos arqueológicos existentes en el territorio mexicano son propiedad de la nación y nadie podrá explorarlos, removerlos ni restaurarlos sin previa autorización del Ejecutivo de la Unión, y que esta ley, según entiendo, se dió con el objeto de conservar dichos monumentos y evitar que fuesen destruidos para ser exportados de la nación. En el caso presente no serán exportados, sino por el contrario, serán restaurados por hallarse en mal estado y se conservarán en nuestro Museo sin que por eso dejen de ser, como todos los demás, propiedad de la nación…no tengo más fin que el ya dicho de conservar aquí todo aquello que contribuya al enriquecimiento y prosperidad del Museo Yucateco, principalmente en lo que se refiere á objetos relativos á su historia. Suplícole, pues que no vea en esto más que un deseo muy natural. Si no está usted conforme con él y sin embargo de esta explicación insiste en que sean remitidos los objetos al Museo Nacional, lo haré con una gran pena que usted no tendría permitiendo que permaneciesen aquí en donde seguirá perteneciendo á la nación.*" Personal letter from Enrique Muñoz Aristegui to Justo Sierra, June 11, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 2, fs. 12-3.

[36] "*Recomiendo á usted además se sirva remitir á esta Secretaría una descripción circunstanciada de los objetos referidos, acompañada por un inventario fotográfico de los mismos, á fin de que se resuelva si dichos objetos deben quedarse en el Museo Yucateco ó ser remitidos al Museo Nacional*." Letter from SJIP to the Governor of Yucatán (no date). Ibid., f. 14. While Christina Bueno writes that "The federal government…denied [Muñoz Aristegui's] plea," I have not found evidence that the Acanceh objects were actually sent to the Museo Nacional at this time. Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*," 231.

[37]*" Esta Inspección juzga que es muy peligroso acceder á lo que pretende el C. Gobernador de Chihuahua porque cualquiera desprendimiento que se haga en los monumentos los deteriora, y bien pueden sacarse moldes de yeso, que para una exposición es lo bastante.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, June 15, 1906. AGN-IPBA 171, exp. 7, f. 1.

[38] For an account of Mexican archaeology at the 1889 Paris World's Fair, see Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 64-95.

strong national interests were at stake, it might become possible to align otherwise divergent attitudes towards archaeological policy. The willingness of Instrucción Pública officials to fulfill Creel's request demonstrates that practices of archaeological property emerged through cooperation as well as conflict among the different branches and levels of Mexican government.

If the officials of Instrucción Pública could sometimes restrain their centralizing urges, so too could other government officials accede to the ministry's agenda. Cooperation with Instrucción Pública's concepts of archaeological property was in fact more the norm than the exception among federal, state, and local agencies. In large part, this stemmed from the basic apathy of most officials towards archaeological questions. Governors served as conduits for correspondence to and from Instrucción Pública and dutifully carried out mundane administrative requests, but did not display much interest or initiative when it came to pre-Hispanic monuments. Likewise, few jefes políticos cared sufficiently about antiquities to warrant a spat with national authorities. Officials outside of Instrucción Pública also knew how to pick their battles. Enrique Muñoz Aristegui passionately protested against the removal of objects from the Museo Yucateco, but the state government did not try to retain pre-Hispanic objects as a matter of course. In 1906 Muñoz Aristegui's predecessor in office, Olegario Molina Solís, made no protest as Santiago Bolio prepared to ship 64 items from the sites of Mayapán, Uxmal, Chichén Itzá, and Campeche to the Museo Nacional, a process interrupted only by Bolio's untimely death.[39] In the same year the governor of Campeche went further and donated several antiquities to the Museo Nacional that had previously stood in the botanical garden of the Instituto Campechano. The objects do not appear to have been particularly impressive – two of them were broken – but the gesture demonstrates that state governors were not instinctively resistant to national claims of archaeological sovereignty.[40]

Some state governors even had longstanding cordial relationships with the cultural bureaucracy. The warmest was that of Teodoro Dehesa, a five-time governor of Veracruz who took a strong interest in the arts and sciences, was a "close" friend of Instrucción Pública minister Joaquín Baranda, and an early sponsor of Diego Rivera.[41] Dehesa was himself an archaeological collector, who in 1897 loaned four crates' worth of artifacts to the Museo Nacional, to exhibit during the 11th International Congress of Americanists. He also donated photographs of monoliths, a plan of the area around Coatepec, and a copy of Orizaba's city shield.[42] Dehesa additionally made the museum a gift of a large monolith which he believed would "figure advantageously in the Museo Nacional next to the 'Aztec Calendar,'" leaving the

[39] AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 1.

[40] Letter from the Museo Nacional to SIPBA, January 25, 1907, and response, February 28, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 3, fs. 29-30. The objects are described in the first letter as "*una estela dividida en tres fragmentos; una figura sedente de mujer; un tigre en igual postura, y un fragmento de estela*."

[41] For the friendship with Baranda, see Karl B. Koth, "Crisis Politician and Political Counterweight: Teodoro A. Dehesa in Mexican Federal Politics, 1900-1910," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Summer, 1995): 253. For the support of Rivera, see Jean Charlot, "Diego Rivera at the Academy of San Carlos," *College Art Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Autumn, 1950): 17.

[42] AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exps. 27 and 28. Dehesa's collecting may sometimes have been to the detriment of archaeological sites, as Batres mentioned in 1911 that "*De los monumentos de Tlalixcoyan se han sacado objetos de mucha importancia, y entre éstos citaré un ídolo de matita preciosamente labrado y pulido que posee hoy el Sr. Gobernador del Estado, D. Teodoro Dehesa, á quien se lo obsequió el Alcalde Muncipal de Tlalixcoyan.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, March 20, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 35, f. 5.

question of how to transport 700 kilograms of stone up to the somewhat puzzled federal bureaucrats.[43] When a giant whale washed up on the Veracruz coast on Christmas Day, 1900, Dehesa immediately telegraphed to learn whether the professors of the Museo Nacional desired the carcass.[44] More than nine years later Dehesa was still making donations to the Museo Nacional, sending three "archaeological monoliths" in April of 1910.[45] He also seems to have followed through quickly on requests from the Inspección, as when he secured protection for a large carved stone in an Orizaba cemetary, after Batres warned that the object was close to destruction.[46]

The connections between Dehesa and the federal government's archaeological institutions were apparently complementary. According to Karl Koth, Dehesa was "known throughout Mexico as an adamant enemy of the Científicos," a technocratic ruling faction "characterized by men like [Hacienda minister] José Yves Limantour…city boys, intellectuals, members of the liberal professions of the city of Mexico." Dehesa, on the other hand, was part of a faction of "provincials, drawn from the middle or lower classes, [and] knowledgeable about the countryside."[47] By cultivating ties with the scholars of Instrucción Pública, Dehesa could straddle the worlds of the capital and provinces, demonstrating that opposition towards Científicos did not equal hostility towards science. The Museo and Inspección likewise benefited by being able to count on a strong regional supporter, hand fitting neatly into glove.[48]

Finally, state and local officials might sometimes petition the federal government to take control of archaeological sites threatened with ruin, viewing the preservation of cultural patrimony as a natural duty of the nation. In 1897, for instance, the state government of Yucatán

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[43] "*Paseo un monolito labrado que pesa sobre setecientos kilogramas que podrá figurar ventajosamente en el museo n.al al lado del 'Calendario Azteca.' Hago donativo de él para los estudios arqueologicos en dicho establecimiento. Sírvase V. recabar acuerdo del Sr. Presidente para que un empleado del museo venga recibirlo.*" Telegram from Dehesa to SJIP, November 28, 1893. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 1, f. 1.

[44] Museum subdirector Manuel Urbina was indeed eager to obtain the whale's skeleton, as foreign sellers charged inflated prices for cetacean specimens, and Urbina had already been planning an expedition to obtain examples of marine life from the Gulf of Mexico. Unfortunately, the four days it took for Urbina to reply was longer than Dehesa wished to keep a rotting whale on his beaches, and a Veracruz preparatory school was able to claim the skeleton instead. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 10.

[45] "*Tengo la honra de poner en el superior conocimiento de U. que el señor Gobernador del Estado de Veracruz, D. Teodoro A. Dehesa, ha tenido la bondad de regalar á este Establecimiento tres monolitos arqueológicos, uno de los cuales llegó quebrado á consecuencia seguramente de no haber sido empacado.*" Letter from Museo Nacional to SIPBA, April 18, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 172, exp. 39, f. 1.

[46] AGN-IPBA, caja 167bis, exp. 59.

[47] Koth, "Crisis Politician and Political Counterweight," 244-5. In describing the main "factions" in Mexican politics, Koth is paraphrasing from François-Xavier Guerra, *México: Del Antiguo Régimen a la Revolución*, vol. 2, trans. Sergio Fernández Bravo (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), 85-7.

[48] A similar dynamic seems to have been at work for Guillermo Pous, a member of the Chamber of Deputies from Puebla. In 1896 the director of the Museo Nacional asked his Instrucción Pública superiors if it would be possible to take advantage of " *la buena voluntad que en favor de este Establecimiento ha manifestado el Sr. Dip.o D. Guillermo Pous*," by giving him a commission to have a "*cabeza colosal*" transported from the hacienda of Hueyapan to the museum. Pous arranged for the hacienda administrator to send the artifact, and expressed his thanks to President Díaz for honoring him with the commission. Letter from Museo Nacional to SJIP, December 18, 1896, and letter from Guillermo Pous to SJIP, April 6, 1897. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 26, fs. 2-3.

investigated reports of damage to Chichén Itzá. Upon learning that most of the destruction at the site was caused by plant roots and other natural factors, the jefe político of Valladolid suggested, "All of this would be avoided in my opinion by applying to the general Government to have the ruins well cleaned, and to arrange that all the polished stones scattered about be enclosed in some of the buildings, since these are most vulnerable to being removed from the ruins by passers-by, without the knowledge of responsible authorities in the town closest to the site."[49] From this perspective, safeguarding pre-Hispanic sites was an administrative burden, rather than a prize to be fought over. Local governments might shoulder some of this task, but ultimate responsibility rested with the agencies of the federal government.

III. Archaeological Property and Individuals

Archaeological Prospecting

Private citizens also sought to forge cooperative relationships with the federal government around issues of archaeological property, albeit from a more explicitly mercenary standpoint than members of state and local administrations. To some enterprising members of Porfirian society, the existence of federal archaeological property offered enticing opportunities to turn a lawful profit. While there was a longstanding history of individuals and communities making practical use of pre-Hispanic sites, which shall be explored in more detail in the following chapter, these uses were typically unsanctioned by the state. However, as the federal government gradually increased its control over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past, some enterprising figures believed they saw new possibilities for archaeological speculation and prospecting. Making the reasonable assumption that the federal government wished to exploit the nation's archaeological wealth as it would any natural resource, these "archaeological prospectors" proposed that the federal government license them to conduct excavations. Findings would then be split between the nation and the excavator, who might sell them as he saw fit. Other individuals spun stories of large, impressive monuments unknown to science, which could only be explored with the financial support of the federal government. In either case, ordinary citizens scented financial opportunity in the exploration of the pre-Hispanic past.[50]

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[49] "*Todo esto podría evitarse en mi concepto dirigiéndose al Gobierno general con el fin de que mande limpiar bien las expresadas ruinas y arreglar algunas de sus edificios para que se puedan cerrar en ellos todas las piedras pulimentadas que se encuentran desparramadas por ser éstas las más expuestas de ser extraidas de dichas ruinas por los transeúntes, sin que llegue á conocimiento de las autoridades del pueblo más inmediato que ejerce la vigilancia*." Letter from jefe politico of Valladolid to governor of Yucatán, September 3, 1897, copied in letter from the governor of Yucatán to SJIP, September 6, 1897. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 68, f. 1.

[50] Besides archaeological artifacts, some prospectors also took a keen interest in geology or paleontology. In 1903, Agustín Trejo Silis of Guadalajara wrote to the Museo Nacional about his recent discovery, "*enormes huesos, probablemente del esqueleto de un mastodonte ó de algún animal; solamente conocido por gente anti-Diluviana; y que por su antiguedad, y conservación, creo serán de algún valor*." Trejo asked whether any special permit was necessary to excavate the bones, and asked for some indication of the value of a whole or partial skeleton. He believed that his find would fetch a good price: "*Pues creo – que alguno de los Señores millionarios, en esta ciudad, podría comprarlos, para presentarlos á ese Museo.*" Trejo's letter was forwarded to Instrucción Pública, where it went unanswered. Letter from Francisco Rodríguez at the Museo Nacional to SJIP, November 18, 1903. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 37, f. 1.

Unlike representatives of scientific and academic institutions, whose focus was on the intellectual and reputational benefits to be gained through excavations, freelance prospectors were explicitly interested in obtaining money or saleable goods in exchange for their time and labor. While a number couched their petitions for excavation licenses in gauzy terms of patriotism and contributions to national history, the bottom line was the personal benefit which the excavator expected to obtain. Carlos Vázquez, a hopeful supplicant from Teotitlán del Camino in Oaxaca, made this position particularly clear. In 1895 Vázquez asked for permission to excavate "some little artificial mounds, which by appearances are aboriginal tombs of different sorts…" at his own cost, with the proviso that he be granted half of the "valuable objects" found. Vázquez understood that "the mounds belong to the Federation," but did not offer any sort of bond, because "there is nothing to destroy and to be repaired, clearly, since these are little mounds in the countryside."[51] This statement did not place Vázquez on a wholly different plane from professional archaeologists of the period; stratigraphic excavations were seldom practiced in Porfirian Mexico, and Batres himself committed his share of damage at sites like Teotihuacán and Monte Albán. [52] Nevertheless, an academic researcher would not have disregarded the provenience of pre-Hispanic objects quite so thoroughly. Common archaeological practice involved some effort to record site features through plans or photographs, and taking steps to minimize the changes effected by excavations. Vázquez's particularly blunt dismissal of the physical context in which artifacts were found was a strong reminder of the economic pragmatism which underlay his request for an excavation license.

As outsiders to the archaeological establishment, prospectors were also frequently unaware of the legal and institutional frameworks meant to govern investigations of the pre-Hispanic past. Tellingly, would-be prospectors sometimes sent their initial letters to Fomento or to Hacienda (Treasury) instead of to Instrucción Pública, the unspoken assumption being that archaeological excavation had more to do with economic development than with scholarly research. (In fairness, this confusion was sometimes shared by government officials.[53])

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[51] "*Que á inmediaciones de esta población hacía el Oriente, existen unos montecitos artificiales que, según parece, son sepulcros aborígenes de clases distinguidas. = Yo pretendo hacer una excavación en ellos, con el fin de ver si, contienen algunos objetos de valor; pero, como entiendo que esos montecitos pertenezcan á la Federación. = Á V. suplico sea muy servido elevar el presente asunto al Secretario de Hacienda, para que se sirva concederme el permiso de practican algunas excavaciones á mi costa, concediéndome también la mitad de los objetos valiosos que encontrare, y nombrándome, desde luego, la persona con cuya intervención practicaré los trabajos; no ofreciendo fianza, porque no hay nada que destruir y que volver á reponer, supuesto que son montecillos que están en el campo.*" Undated letter from Carlos Vázquez to the Jefatura Política del Teotitlán del Camino, copied in undated letter from the Jefatura Política del Teotitlán del Camino to Hacienda, copied in January 7, 1895 letter from Hacienda to Fomento, copied in January 15, 1895 letter from Fomento to SJIP. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 13, f. 1.

[52] Daniel Schávelzon notes multiple instances of "stratigraphic observation" and "stratigraphic excavations" in nineteenth-century Mexico, mostly conducted by foreign researchers. However, he also writes that "No doubt it was Gamio who institutionalized the method of artificial stratigraphic excavation in Mexico, but he never said a word to indicate that such ideas were not new. Only several years later he mentioned [William] Holmes in the footnote of an article…" Daniel Schávelzon, "The origins of stratigraphy in Latin America: the same question, again and again." *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (November, 1999): 1-10.

[53] For example, in 1888 a group of four men from Mazapil, Zacatecas wrote to Fomento, suggesting that the ministry support their exploration of *"un monumento de remota antigüedad que existe á sesenta leguas de esta poblacion, consistiendo en una gran piedra en cuya superficie en caracteres geroglificos quizá hayan consignado las razaz primitivas grandes acontecimientos de su tiempo, que pudieran arrojar una nueva luz en las páginas de la historia."* Letter from Adolfo Cortés, Antonio Ledesma, Gregorio Padilla y Gerónimo Ramirez to Fomento, November 6, 1888, copied in letter from Fomento to Instrucción Pública, January 11, 1889. AGN-IPBA, caja 147,

Individuals who applied for excavation permits after 1896 were typically unaware of the Law of June 3, which allowed excavators to keep only molds of the collection and duplicate objects, while those who applied after 1897 showed no knowledge of the May 11 law that declared all pre-Hispanic monuments to be property of the nation. One especially optimistic supplicant writing in 1900 simply requested permission to excavate a nearby mound and "extract what is useful from it," making no promise of any compensation to the federal government.[54] The workings of the archaeological bureaucracy were not especially transparent or well-publicized for much of the Porfiriato, leading to regular misalignments between the hopes and beliefs of prospectors, and the practices of government employees.

The most romantic – and least realistic – of the prospectors claimed that the ruins were repositories of hidden treasures. Throughout the Porfiriato, officials at Instrucción Pública received letters from individuals bearing reports of great riches, caches of precious objects secreted by indigenous kings or Catholic orders. Authorities generally took a skeptical eye to these missives, which were usually couched in high-flown rhetoric and spiced with allusions to dastardly goings-on. One correspondent, to whom Instrucción Pública never responded, promised in 1892 that all sorts of Mixtec, colonial and nineteenth-century treasures could be found in his small Oaxaca town of San Miguel Achiutla.[55] Antonio Escandón hoped to profit by co-sponsoring excavations with the government, but seemed to be motivated even more strongly by anger towards "the infamy of the town bosses and the venality and stupidity of the mayors and council presidents."[56] He excoriated the abuses of the town authorities, and suggested that

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exp. 37, f. 1.The letter was forwarded to Instrucción Pública and then on to Batres at the Inspección. The Inspector General dashed cold water on reports of a monument near Mazapil, and noted that the men had not even included a budget for their proposed expedition. His report was forwarded to the would-be excavators, who seem to have made no further proposals to Instrucción Pública. In an even more convoluted chain of letters, Carlos Vázquez, the resident of Teotitlán del Camino whose case is discussed above, initially submitted his proposal to his local jefatura política, and asked the jefe político to forward the letter to Hacienda. The minister of Hacienda then forwarded Vázquez's letter to Fomento, in the belief that Fomento was the primary agency responsible for dealing with archaeological issues, and the minister of Fomento finally forwarded the letter to Instrucción Pública. Undated letter from Carlos Vázquez to the Jefatura Política del Teotitlán del Camino, copied in undated letter from the Jefatura Política del Teotitlán del Camino to Hacienda, copied in January 7, 1895 letter from Hacienda to Fomento, copied in January 15, 1895 letter from Fomento to SJIP. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 13, f. 1. To muddy the waters even further, Hacienda responded to Vázquez and told him that the president of the republic had decided Vázquez should apply to Fomento for permission to excavate, since that agency dealt with scientific matters. Letter from Hacienda to Carlos Vázquez, January 7, 1895, copied in letter from the Jefatura Política del Teotitlán del Camino to Fomento, January 17, 1895, copied in letter from Fomento to SJIP, January 22, 1895. Ibid., f. 2.

[54] "*El C.o Doctor Refugio I. Gutierrez ha dirigido á esta Dirección la solicitud…en la cual manifiesta que denuncia un montículo ó tlatelli, para que se explore y se extraiga de él lo que sea útil*." Letter from Museo Nacional to SJIP, July 28, 1900. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 11, f. 1.

[55] Stories that the ruins of San Miguel Achiutla contained hidden treasures persisted well after the Porfiriato. Emma Reh, who visited the town in 1933, wrote that "When I tried to visit the ruins near Achiutla, I was allowed to see them only from a distance, though federal authorities had given permission. The 95-year-old 'boss' of the town and the town council apparently feared that I would spot the supposedly lost treasure of the King Yandushi." Emma Reh, "Blonde Girl Explorer Mystifies Natives of 'Forbidden City,'" *The Science News-Letter*, Vol. 23, No. 632 (May 20, 1933): 317. A more recent survey noted the presence of both Mixtec and colonial era constructions in Achiutla, but did not grant the site special importance in the archaeology of the Mixteca Alta. Andrew K. Balkansky et al., "Archaeological Survey in the Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca, Mexico," *Journal of Field Archaeology*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (2000): 380.

they pay off debts to their neighbors through physical labor in the ruins.[57] Mexico City resident Jorge M. Green, an acquaintance of the U.S. archaeologist Marshall Saville, asked for permission to conduct excavations in the capital, assuring Instrucción Pública that he knew a secret "by means of which I am sure to discover the location in which a treasure was hidden."[58] Upon learning that Green wished to excavate on another's property, Instrucción Pública advised him to first obtain permission from the owner of the site, then inform the ministry so that his excavations could be properly supervised. This time, it was the prospector who never wrote back. In early 1911 another correspondent, this time from Parras, offered a rambling tale of Jesuit treasure, secret underground passages, torture, murder, abduction and incest. Since 1888 he had formed several societies to search for the treasure, all of which had fallen apart owing to the "impatient spirit" of the other members.[59] Instrucción Pública flatly turned down his request for a license to excavate, on the grounds that the ministry lacked the authority to issue licenses for the purpose of treasure-hunting rather than archaeological excavation.[60] In all of these cases, would-be excavators without scientific training or institutional backing saw their hopes for archaeological profit founder.

The federal government was, however, sometimes willing to concede licenses to prospectors who presented a reasonable plan for carrying out excavations. Calixto Aguilar, a resident of Mazatlán, applied in 1888 to search for "archaeological curiosities or valuables" in the maritime zone around the port. He wrote initially to the local naval authorities who controlled the zone, who forwarded his message to the Secretaría del Estado de Despacho de Guerra y Marina (the War and Navy Department). Guerra y Marina passed the message on to Instrucción Pública, along with comments that the department would not object to excavations conducted in

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[56] "*El que suscribe cuenta con un capital de $18,000 distribuidos entre 460 individuos de 12 pueblos del Distrito; ese capital está asegurado con escrituras sobre casas y tierras de labor, lo que no ha podido realizar durante tres años de lucha, por causa de la infamia de los caciques y de la venalidad y torpeza de los Alcaldes y Presidentes, que viven abandonados por la mano superior á quien le han perdido el respeto*." Letter from Antonio Escandón to SJIP, October 21, 1892. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 46, f. 1.

[57] "*Sin que la Jefatura del Distrito se constituya en Tribunal expreso, puede llamar á esas autoridades, hacerles entender los males que cometen y prevernirles seriamente la obligacion de estrechar á sus vecinos, que paguen con la integridad posible y sin que se perjudiquen; ó de otra manera, que se presten á pagar con trabajo personal en las ruinas de esta población, hasta liquidar sus deúdas.*" Idem.

[58] "*JORGE M. Green, mayor de edad, vecino de esta capital, ante usted con el respeto debido expongo que: Tengo la convicción de encontrarme en posesión de un secreto por el cual estoy seguro de obtener el descubrimiento del lugar donde se haya oculto un tesoro, de gran importancia tanto para mí como para el Gobierno, por tratarse, entre otras cosas, de objetos de arte antiguo mexicano que enriqueceria nuestros museos; por lo tanto deseo se me conceda permiso y autorización para poder hacer algunas escabaciones…*" Letter from Jorge M. Green to SJIP, July 4, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 44, f. 1.

[59] "*Que implusado por las crónicas tradicionales, que se narran desde tiempos inmemoriales, relativas á los subterráneos subsistentes, así como á las cuantiosas tesoros que consisten su mayor parte, en objetos de iglesia, como cálices, custodias, copones…y todo lo relativo á su servicio especial para los regios templos en que oficiaban los antiguas jesuitas, ha formado en distintas épocas varias sociedades para la investigación de dichos subterráneos y tesoros, habiendo caducado dichas sociedades debido al espíritu impaciente de los socios. Esta tenacidad ha sido desde el año de 1888.*" Letter from Nicanor Castañeda to SIPBA, February 24, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 157, exp. 11, f. 1.

[60] Letter from SIPBA to Nicanor Castañeda, April 5, 1911. Ibid., f. 5.

the area, since it had no inhabitants or ship traffic.[61] Batres likewise was willing to concede permission for Aguilar to excavate, as long as Aguilar made careful records of the location and condition of the site, and agreed to send two-thirds of his discoveries to the Museo Nacional. A Mazatlán district judge would supervise the excavations, his expenses to be paid by Aguilar. There are no further pages in the file, so it is unclear whether Aguilar ever followed through on his intentions. Nevertheless, the case indicates that before the passage of the 1896 law on excavations, the federal government was not always averse to speculative archaeological ventures.

Batres and his superiors at Instrucción Pública also supported the attempt by a Mexican army officer to conduct excavations at Tenancingo, in the state of México. Colonel Pablo de Haro wrote to Instrucción Pública in 1891, to make a "formal report (*denuncia*)" of subterranean dwellings in the area, which he believed to contain both antiquities and treasures. Haro requested the assistance of 25 men to help with the excavations, and a share of the proceeds in accordance with the Civil Code of the Federal District.[62] Although Batres had never previously heard of the monuments, he was willing to support Haro's project, provided that the colonel took measures to avoid damaging the site, made photographic records of the monuments, turned portable antiquities over to the Museo Nacional, and agreed to work under supervision of the Inspección. Batres also agreed that the civil law concerning treasures would potentially apply in this case.[63] Instrucción Pública arranged to have 25 soldiers placed at Haro's disposition, but these men were almost immediately called away by a superior officer who had need of them, and the project was suspended.[64] Again, however, the cultural bureaucracy proved willing to back an archaeological prospector who possessed support from official sources. Prior to 1896, the authority of Instrucción Pública and the Inspección over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past was still tenuous enough so that even Batres, a devoted defender of his agency's privileges, was willing to cede certain property interests.

The limitations of federal coercion were also revealed after a 1908 earthquake in the state of México caused an irrigation channel in the town of San Jerónimo to collapse, exposing a small, smoke-smeared cave containing an assortment of pre-Hispanic objects. Word quickly spread to nearby residents, who assembled at the sinkhole and began to extract the artifacts.[65] A man named Pedro Rocha, who seems to have held several public offices during the Porfiriato, was particularly successful in this regard.[66] Rocha casually flouted federal law as he acquired

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[61] A Mazatlán naval authority commented that "*dicho lugar no está habitada ni tampoco tiene tráfico marítimo y que en mi opinion puede concederle dicho permiso*," while the head of Guerra y Marina wrote "*por parte de esta Secretaría no hay inconveniente en permitir las excavaciones en la zona marítima con las restricciones y obligaciones de costumbre*." Letter from Guerra y Marina to SJIP, January 15, 1889. The first quote is from a letter quoted within that document, written November 24, 1888. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 38, f. 1.

[62] Letter from Pablo de Haro to SJIP, September 30, 1891. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 46, f. 1.

[63] Letter from Batres to SJIP, October 10, 1891. Ibid., f. 3.

[64] Letter from Pablo de Haro to SJIP, November 15, 1891. Ibid., f. 7.

[65] Letter from the Jefe Político of Tlalnepantla, April 6, 1908, copied in a letter from Governor of México State Fernando González to SIPBA, April 9, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 12, f. 1.

[66] In 1885, a Pedro Rocha was listed as the treasurer of the Junta Auxiliar de Instrucción Pública for the district of Tlalnepantla. *Memoria presentada a la XI Legislatura del Estado de México por el gobernador constitucional del mismo, C. General Jesús Lalanne, correspondiente al periodo corrido de 20 de marzo a 31 de diciembre de 1885* (México: Imprenta de Ignacio Escalante, 1886), no page number. Rocha was still serving on this

various "idols and objects made of clay," activities possibly enabled by his local political connections.[67] Multiple sources documented Rocha's efforts to obtain pre-Hispanic artifacts, including Museo Nacional subdirector Genaro García, the newspaper *El Imparcial*, and fellow San Jerónimo resident Juan Jácome, who informed on Rocha in the hopes of receiving a share of the treasure for himself.[68] Nevertheless, neither García nor Batres seems to have made any attempt to dispossess Rocha of his loot, or to place any restrictions on his future activities. Whether this inaction resulted from the many demands on these individuals' time during the years leading up to the centennial celebrations, or from a justified reluctance to challenge Rocha on his home turf, is difficult to say.

The relative impunity accorded to Rocha did not signify an utter lack of government control over new archaeological finds. Both state and federal officials paid attention to the San Jerónimo site, although the coordination among the different levels was sometimes clumsy or lacking. In the aftermath of the irrigation channel's collapse, the local jefe político soon visited the area and was able to secure a number of the dispersed objects. He then wrote to the governor of México, informing him of the situation and pointedly asking "that I be enlightened as to what attitude this Jefatura should take, once the Federal Government takes action on this matter."[69] For his part, the governor was willing to allow Instrucción Pública officials to proceed as they saw fit, and ordered the jefe político to hold the objects found at the sinkhole "while the Federal Government determined what to do with them." However, the governor also asked Instrucción Pública for a copy of the current law of archaeological monuments, indicating that more than twenty years after the formation of the Inspección, and nine years after the passage of the 1897 law, even those who occupied important positions within the Porfirian regime might still be unclear as to what regulations controlled the use and ownership of archaeological materials.[70]

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committee in 1886. *Memoria presentada a la Legislatura del Estado de México, por el Gobernador Interino C. Lic. Jose Zubieta, correspondiente al periódo corrido del 16 de marzo de 1886 en que tomó posesión del gobierno, a igual mes de 1887, en cumplimiento de la fracción V, art. 71 de la constitución del estado* (Toluca: Pedro Martínez, 1887), 24. In 1899 and 1903-4, a Pedro Rocha was listed as the "Administrador de Rentas" for the town of Cuautitlán, México. Cuautitlán is less than 15 miles from San Jerónimo, making it plausible that this Pedro Rocha was the same man who acquired pre-Hispanic artifacts. J. Figueroa Doménech, *Guía general descriptiva de la República Mexicana; Historia, Geografía, Estadística, etc., etc.; con triple directorio del comercio y la industria, autoridades, oficinas públicas, abogados, médicos, hacendados, correos, telégrafos y ferrocariles, etc., etc., etc.* (México: Ramón de S. N. Araluce, 1899), 325, and Departamento de Estadística, State of México, *Concentración de los datos y estadísticos del estado de México en el año de 1903* (Toluca: Oficina Tipográfica del Gobierno en la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1905), 187 and 189.

[67] "*El Sr. Pedro Rocha me informé acerca de ídolos y objetos de barro que había recogido…*" Letter from Ramón Mena to Genaro García, April 6, 1908, copied in letter from García to SIPBA, April 6, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 12, f. 2.

[68] Jácome's letter references the article in *El Imparcial*. Letter from Jácome to SIPBA, May 6, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 40, f. 1.

[69] "*…me apresuro á comunicarlo á esa Superioridad para lo que ha bien tenga resolver, encareciéndole se sirva ilustrarme acerca de la actitud que esta Jefatura debe tomar, una vez que el Gobierno Federal tome intervención en dicho asunto.*" Letter from the Jefe Político of Tlalnepantla, April 6, 1908, copied in a letter from Governor of México State Fernando González to SIPBA, April 9, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 12, f. 1.

[70] "*Lo que tengo la honra de comunicar á Vd. para lo que á bien se sirva determinar esa Secretaría de su merecido cargo, manifestándole además que ya se previene al Jefe político, informante* [?] *conserve los objetos encontrados, entretanto resuelve sobre ellos el Gobierno Federal... A propósito del presente asunto, suplico á Vd. se*

Genaro García also heard of the discovery through private channels, and quickly traveled to San Jerónimo to investigate. There he spoke with Pedro Rocha, who showed García his collection of pottery and stone figures. García also inspected the objects retained by the jefe político, and wrote to Instrucción Pública urging that these items be sent to the Museum.[71] This occurred in due course, with Batres acting as a conduit, and without any apparent resistance on the part of local residents or the state government of México.[72] The matter concluded with the governor's office acknowledging receipt of ten copies of the current archaeological law, and García acknowledging receipt of the artifacts gathered by the jefe político.[73] In one light, therefore, it is possible to read this episode as an affirmation of the ultimate power of the Porfirian state, even as Rocha's activities and the jefe político's initial wariness of federal involvement point to that same state's cracks and structural weaknesses. The authority of the federal government over archaeological finds was real, but compromised in application.

The last challenge that Rocha faced came not from government officials, but from his neighbor Juan Jácome. More cautious than Rocha, Jácome sought to benefit from the newly discovered site by reporting on the illegal activities which took place there. In May of 1909, Jácome wrote to tell federal authorities that over the past year, Rocha had "removed many objects, which they say he keeps." Now, Rocha had filed a claim with the state agent for *terrenos baldíos*, seeking to legally possess the excavation site.[74] Jácome hopefully speculated that "some treasure" might exist in the site, and requested that if federal investigators found "valuable objects," he would receive "the portion that legally should belong to him."[75] The archaeological bureaucracy never disabused the informant of his mistaken notions concerning the law. Instrucción Pública asked Batres to send a report on the matter as soon as possible, but the Inspector General failed to respond. Rocha, presumably, was able to continue his excavations undisturbed. Given the federal government's limited resources and spotty authority over pre-Hispanic sites, the best strategy for archaeological entrepreneurs might be to ignore the state entirely. This course of action was only possible, however, if the state decided to ignore the prospectors as well.

Expropriations

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sirva disponer se proporcione á este Gobierno un ejemplar de la ley vigente de monumentos arqueológicos." Letter from Governor of México State Fernando González to SIPBA, April 9, 1908. Idem.

[71] Letter from Genaro García to SIPBA, Ibid., fs. 2-3.

[72] Letter from the México state governor's office to SIPBA, May 16, 1908. Ibid., f. 8.

[73] Letter from the México state governor's office to SIPBA, May 14, 1908 and letter from García to SIPBA, June 4, 1908. Ibid., fs. 11 and 13.

[74] "*Y el Señor Pedro Rocha vecino de San Jerónimo el año pasado sacó muchos objetos los que dicen los conserva. Últimamente dicho lugar á entrado en la denuncia que ha presentado ante el agente de Terrenos Baldios del Estado de Mexico, la cual esta tramitando. Y como quiera que dicho Señor Rocha sigue haciendo escavaciones en el lugar referido, y encontrando y sustrayendo diversos objetos.*" Letter from Juan Jácome to SIPBA, May 6, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 40, f. 1.

[75] "*…en dicha perforación del suelo hay varios departamentos en los cuales bien puede existir algun tesoro…Á usted suplica para los efectos que hay lugar le dirije el presente; deseando se tuve en consideración su dicho así, como, practicadas las investigaciones necesarias del caso, y encontrandose algunos objetos de valor, se le reservé la parte que legalmente le debe pertenecer.*" Idem.

One group of individuals unable to escape state scrutiny were the landholders residing near the site of Teotihuacán. In the years leading up to the great centennial celebrations of 1910, the federal government expropriated territory from dozens of individual smallholders in order to create an "Archaeological Zone" around the pyramids. A restored Teotihuacán was to serve as a showpiece during the centennial festivities, a testament to the authority that the Porfirian state exercised over both past and present. The expropriations did demonstrate the regime's coercive power and commitment to pre-Hispanic symbolism, but they also revealed the fragile foundations of its legitimacy. Local residents regarded the expropriation process as unnecessary, disruptive and unfair, and so provided forceful challenges to state actions. Communities near Teotihuacán drew on longstanding traditions of local protest to register displeasure with Batres and the Inspección, and to wring concessions from federal administrators. Landowners contested the state's definition of "archaeological monument," asserted their control over valuable natural resources, and fiercely pursued their grievances through the bureaucratic labyrinths.

That the federal government chose to expropriate land en masse, rather than make selected purchases while dispossessing other landholders, represented a triumph of community organizing. Batres had begun to buy territory around the site in 1905, seeking and receiving authorization from Instrucción Pública to purchase land in the name of the Federation, and making arrangements to buy a field south of the Pyramid of the Sun.[76] The purchase took most of a year to finalize, however, and in June of 1906 met with objections from Hacienda, which guarded its prerogatives as the only branch of the federal government empowered to buy land.[77] In that same month, a group of "vecinos" from the municipality of Teotihuacán wrote to Fomento to complain about a recent visit from Batres. A few weeks earlier, the Inspector General had arrived in town to distribute a circular, which stated that the Secretario de Fomento had forbidden locals to sow crops or plant maguey on their holdings near the ruins. Batres also told community members verbally that their mature maguey plants needed to be uprooted within fifteen days, or he would send a squad of workers to clean out the area. The letter writers were outraged, since they possessed full and legitimate ownership of the plots in question. Believing that they had the rights to use their lands in any way they chose, they sent Fomento land deeds dating back to 1856, and pointed out that the national Constitution itself prohibited depriving citizens of their property rights without formal expropriation proceedings.[78] The Teotihuacán residents also fumed over Batres' assertion that their properties contained "monuments." This classification was meant for grandiose structures like the Pyramids of the Sun and Moon; it certainly could not apply to the "little hills" which contained nothing more than the rubble of old dwellings, and which in any event postdated the Conquest.[79] A denial that small mounds

[76] AGN-IPBA, caja 338, exp. 1, fs. 1-2.

[77] "*Con referencia al oficio de Ud.…le manifiesto que no se le puede abonar dicha distribución porque conforme á la Ley no tiene Ud. personalidad para comprar inmuebles, pues sólo la Secretaria de Hacienda puede hacerlo.*" Letter from the Tesorería General de la Federación to Batres, quoted in letter from Batres to SIPBA, June 9, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 338, exp. 44, f. 12. See also letter from SIPBA to Hacienda, September 30, 1905, in AGN-IPBA, caja 338, exp. 1, f. 4.

[78] For the reference to land deeds, see letter from Batres to SJIP, August 28, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 2, f. 6.

[79] *"…y esto por que hay unos pequeños Oteros, que tal vez se califican de monumentos impropiamente según entendemos, por que en ninguna de las acepciones de la palabra monumentos se encuentran dichos Oteros que como pueden contener alguna antiguedad pueden no ser mas que escombros de casas no pertenecientes á los*

possessed archaeological interest was of course strategic, an attempt to block assertions that there was a legitimate national interest in the properties. However, the stress that the community members placed on this question indicates that they believed they had found a winning argument. To them, the issue at hand was not a conflict between state and individual rights, but the unfortunate consequences of a gross category error.

Instrucción Pública quickly passed the letter on to Batres, but he took several months to respond. According to the Teotihuacán residents, who sent a second letter in late August, this delay was a deliberate attempt attempt to draw out the matter so that Batres could arrange the situation to his liking. The landowners were infuriated by the wait for an official report as well as the various insults that Batres had levied against them, which were unbecoming "not just to a public man, but to anyone with the smallest grasp of courtesy." The letter writers were particulaly incensed by Batres' claim that they, along with their patron, constituted "a committee of stupid Indians…[he calls us] stupid because we are trying to work things out with him and not lose time in the Ministry."[80] Instrucción Pública never responded to these charges against Batres, since a few days earlier the Inspector General had finally submitted recommendations to his superiors. He wrote that the plots of land fell within the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán, and concealed the buildings and paintings of a buried city. Therefore, "it would be an attack against these Monuments if those who appear to be their owners (without actually being such) are authorized to plant magueys or plow fields, as this would be to permit the destruction of these venerable remains of our national prehistory." Batres recommended that Hacienda be asked to begin expropriation proceedings, in order that "the national property in that archaeological region may be entirely regularized."[81] Instrucción Pública, accordingly, informed the

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aborígenes, sino á personas muy posteriores á la Conquista como en varios casos se ha visto; y decimos esto, por que en la circular se asegura que el Ministerio del digno cargo de v. mandó que en los terrenos que tienen monumentos antiguos no siembran los dueños y como entendemos que la órden de ese Ministerio se refiere á monumentos declarados tales como son las Pirámides, á nuestros terrenos no les comprende esa orden, sea lo primero y lo segundo que nuestra propiedad es inviolable y no puede privársenos de ella, sin nuestra voluntad sino por causa de utilidad pública y prévia indemnización. Artículo 27 de la Constitución Federal." Letter from "los vecinos de la Municipalidad de Teotihuacan, del Estado de México," June 28, 1906, quoted in letter from Fomento to SIPBA, July 13, 1906. Ibid., f. 1.

[80] "*…como han pasado muchos dias y no se produce ese informe, y lo que es más hay maltrato de parte del Señor Batres, que pretende no acatar la orden de Ud. pues pretende arreglar todo él solo, cuando ya estamos ante Ud. de cuya respetable personalidad esperamos la justicia, y ademas ya se hace intolerable ese maltrato, pues nos nombra una Junta de indios tontos con nuestro patrono, pero en terminos menos puleros, que desdicen mucho, no digamos de un hombre publico, sino del menos educado conocedor de la urbanidad: que somos tontos porque debiamos arreglarnos con el y no perder tiempo en el Ministerio.*" Letter signed by Antonio A. y Celís, etc., to SIPBA, August 30, 1906. Ibid., f. 8.

[81] "*Como esos predios se hallan comprendidos dentro de la zona de los Monumentos Arqueológicos de Teotihuacán y todos ellos forman parte integrante de la gran ciuidad sepultada, y por consiguiente debajo de esas tierras se conservan edificios y pinturas, sería atentatorio contra esos Monumentos si se autorizase á los que aparecen como dueños de ellos sin serlos para que planten magueyes ó los surquen con su agricultura por que sería tanto permitir la destrucción de esos venerados restos de nuestra prehistoria nacional.*

En tal concepto esta oficina cree que á título de equidad se les puede indemnizar todos los terrenos á que ellos hacen alusión, mas otros que existen ahí, quedando así enteramente saneada la propiedad nacional en aquella región arqueológica. La suma que se podría invertir para este fín no pasará de cuatro mil pesos." Letter from Batres to SIPBA, August 28, 1906. Ibid., f. 6.

Teotihuacán vecinos that they were forbidden to sow their crops, and the federal government would be acquiring their fields.

Now, it was the farmers who chose to drag their feet. At the end of November 1906 Batres wrote to Instrucción Pública in frustration. Although he had marked off the archaeological zone with a wire fence, the owners of the enclosed plots had failed to keep appointments with Batres to settle the formal transfer of ownership. Batres therefore asked if the Ministry could enlist the help of state authorities to establish a firm timetable for landholders to present their titles, and name their preferred prices for the fields. The Inspector General then offered his own explanation for community frictions at Teotihuacán: the manipulations of "town bosses," "Hacendados," and "local authorities." Upset by having to compete for labor with the archaeological works at Teotihuacán, where employees were free from abuses like company stores and usurious loans, local powerbrokers had engineered false charges against the Inspección. The villains who preyed financially upon the "indigenous race," Batres argued, "were those who led those poor pariahs to unwittingly raise accusations against my Office."[82]

This claim, however, is difficult to reconcile with what we know about the complainants against Batres. They may have defined themselves as indigenous (in a separate letter, the landowner Antonio Aldana y Celis spoke of Batres as having taken land from the "indígenas" of Teotihuacán), but it does not follow that they were helpless pawns. Rather than being agricultural peons, the community members who protested against Batres were propertied individiuals who possessed full title to their fields. Some possessed multiple plots that were expropriated by the federal government. While it is probably true that archaeological projects at Teotihuacán introduced more competition into the local labor market, this explanation seems superfluous on top of the natural animosity that landowners would have felt towards anyone who swept into their communities, insulted them, and deprived them of the use of their property. Perhaps recognizing this, officials at Instrucción Pública made no response to Batres' sociological analysis and simply arranged, through the state government of México, for landowners to file their compensation claims by the middle of January 1907.

The beginning of the expropriation process, though, did not mark the end to conflict over property rights at Teotihuacán. The payment machinery moved slowly, opening intolerable gaps between legal theory and economic reality. Landowners found it nonsensical – and enraging – that Batres could dispose of their possessions before they had received any compensation. Of special interest to landowners was the question of who controlled the trees and maguey plants in the fields subject to expropriation. Magueys, which produced a sweet sap that was fermented to

[82] "*Aquí en la zona de Teotihuacán y San Martín como por desgracia en toda la República, la raza indígena es víctima de los caciques de los pueblos, de los Hacendados y de las Autoridades locales quienes los acedian con el agio, las gabelas y las multas, y estos caciques y estas Autoridades y estos Hacendados, son los que mueven á esos pobres parias para que inconscientemente eleven acusaciones contra mi Oficina que ha procurado arrancar de las garras y fécula de esas castas á los infelices jornaleros quienes reciben su raya íntegra para gastarla donde mejor les parezca sin hacerles préstamos onerosos que les resulte su venta personal por tiempo indefinido...En el Campamento que está á mi cargo no existe ni entre semana ni en los días de raya comercios y especulaciones para las cuadrillas y está prohibido el monopolio en la venta de pulque…*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 29, 1906. Ibid., f. 11. As William Sanders and Barbara Price point out, the Teotihuacán valley had a remarkably stable native aristocracy during the colonial era, which was carried over from the pre-Conquest period. After independence, however, this aristocracy lost ground to haciendas, seven of which eventually came to possess most of the land and water rights within the Teotihuacán valley. "By 1917 only 416 individuals living in villages (total population some 8,000) held any land rights," although only "675 *acasillados*, [or] permanent workers" lived on the haciendas. William T. Sanders and Barbara J. Price, "The Native Aristocracy and the Evolution of the Latifundio in the Teotihuacán Valley, 1521-1917," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Winter, 2003): 83.

produce the alcoholic beverage *pulque*, were long-term investments on the part of rural producers, and took "from seven to fifteen years to mature, depending on the soil, slope, and amount of rainfall."[83] The start of massive archaeological works at Teotihuacán disrupted maguey farmers' plans, and placed their economic futures in peril. Federal administrators did not resolve the question of whether to compensate landowners for their plantings until the spring of 1908, when Instrucción Pública decided that landowners would be allowed to remove vegetation unless this threatened the "integrity of the monuments," in which case the ministry would compensate farmers for the value of their crops.[84] Before this decision was reached, the issue of whether vegetation near archaeological monuments belonged to the original landowners or to the Inspección was a source of fierce conflict.

A particularly bitter struggle took place in 1907 between Batres and the Aldana family, who owned land along the Avenue of the Dead (and who Batres described as local bosses). The Aldanas were incensed when Batres had mature maguey plants uprooted, and chopped down *pirú* trees for firewood. The Inspector General, for his part, believed that the law of May 11, 1897 gave the federal government ownership of archaeological sites in their entirety, including any associated vegetation. He had chosen, however, to be charitable to "those who erroneously believed for many years that the archaeological monuments belonged to them," and warned landholders in advance of clearing the site. Only the Aldana family had failed to remove its magueys, leaving Batres no choice but to uproot them himself. He claimed that most of them were capable of being replanted, and those that were not were of little value. Batres then made his own series of allegations. He wrote, "Boss rule (*el cacicazgo*) in the villages is a terrible tyranny, and all sorts of abuses occur through the weakness of those who suffer it. Today, the bosses even dare to attack the interests of the Federal Government…Aldana, who believes his property should be respected, attacked the rights of the Nation by ordering his employees to assault laborers at the archaeological works along the open road, seizing the Government's firewood by force and rapidly fleeing."[85] Batres corroborated the charges with a letter from a local judge, who certified that Aldana's employees had "stolen" firewood from the archaeological works, "a crime that had been reported to me."[86]

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[83] Raymond E. Crist, "The Pulque Industry," *Economic Geography*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (April, 1939): 191.

[84] AGN-IPBA, caja 338, exp. 4. Like many actions of the archaeological bureaucracy, this decision was not well-publicized to local residents. In 1910, a worried farmer named Juan Martínez wrote to Instrucción Pública to request that he be given time to remove 800 maguey plants, the value of which he estimated at $600, from a field expropriated by the Inspección. Batres stated that he had no objection to this, and added rather ungenerously, "*Así es que si el C. Juan Martínez no lo ha sacado, es por que no ha querido.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, April 27, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 340, exp. 11, f. 10.

[85] "*No se le obscurece á Vd. Sr. Ministro que el cacicazgo en los pueblos es una terrible tiranía y que por debilidad de parte de los que la sufren le es permitido todo género de abusos y que hoy intenta invadir con ellos hasta el Supremo Gobierno atacando sus intereses…Aldana que invoca el respeto que se debe tener á su propiedad ataca los derechos de la Nación mandando asaltar, en pleno camino real, por sus empleados, á los operarios de estas obras, llevándose á fuerza y en precipitada fuga la leña del Gobierno…*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, May 20, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 338, exp. 10, f. 3.

[86] "*Certifico también que los leñeros del Campamento han cortado los árboles de pirú que se hallaban sobre el montículo adonde quitaron los magueyes y en la extensión de la tierra en que están los otros monumentos y que los leñeros estuvieron cortando también árboles de pirú sobre los otros monumentos de la Ciudadela formándose con todo esto las cuerdas de leña que robaron los dependientes de Aldana, delito que ante mí se denunció y hoy se gira en el Juzgado de Letras de Texcoco. La tierra en donde están los monumentos á que he*

Both Antonio Aldana and his daughter Carmen, the titled owner of the property, rejected the notion that they had stolen anything. The elder Aldana argued that because "some of my or my daughter's servants have taken firewood from the trees on her land…[Batres] has brought a criminal case and imprisoned the individuals who he says removed the wood. Searches have been conducted at my house, which has been labeled a house of thieves, and orders have been given to apprehend those that Sr. Batres believes to be guilty. Are these proceedings just, when the property still belongs to my daughter, and has not been expropriated?"[87] Carmen Aldana pled her case before Minister of Public Instruction Justo Sierra in person, and followed up with a letter a few days later. She remarked that she "did not know the basis" upon which Batres had marked off the land and brought criminal charges against those he called "thieves of the Federation's firewood," and protested that "there cannot have been a robbery, because no one robs himself." Like her father, she asked, "Are these proceedings just, which shamefully stain our reputation, place us in a precarious situation, and, if they are not soon remedied, will have grave consequences for an entire family?"[88] Instrucción Pública responded to father and daughter with almost identical letters, written in impeccable bureaucratese. Rather than attempting to argue with the Aldanas on the grounds of fairness, the letters simply cited the law of May 11, 1897, and Article 710 of the Federal Code. Batres could take immediate administrative control of land "if it is indispensable for the inspection and conservation of the monuments that exist there," with payment to follow at an undefined later date.[89] No reference was made to the criminal proceedings, or to the style in which Batres had carried out his duties. Bolstered by the ministry's support, Batres soon moved to have a wire fence placed around the Aldanas' fields.[90] Steps to formally purchase "El Pedregal," the field at the center of the dispute, were not taken until more than a year later.[91] In September of 1911, after Francisco Madero's revolution had

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hecho referencia se denomina el Pedregal y aparece como dueña de ese terreno la Sra. Carmen Aldana." Certificate signed by Antonio Martínez, Juez auxiliar del pueblo de San Francisco Mazapa. Ibid., f. 5.

[87] "*… que unos sirvientes mios ó de mi hija han sacado leña de los árboles de su terreno que el mismo Sr. Batres mandó destrozar, ha promovido una causa criminal apresando á las personas que dicee* [sic] *sacaron la leña, se han practicado cateos en mi casa, se califica mi casa de ladrones y se ha librado órden de aprehensión contra los que el Sr. Batres cree culpables. ¿Que es justo este prosedimiento, cuando mi hija conserva su propiedad, puesto que no ha sido expropiada?*" Letter from Antonio Aldana y Celis to SIPBA, May 17, 1907. Ibid., fs. 8-9.

[88] "*El Señor Batres, ignoramos con que fundamento, señalando de la base de la Piramide del Sol…una linea, comprendió varios terrenos de propiedad particular… por que nos quiere hacer complices de un delito, que es imaginario, pues á ser cierto que se ha tomado la leña de mi terreno y de arboles míos, no puede haber robo, pues nadie se roba a si mismo; y el Señor tiene á bien llamarnos ladrones de leña de la Federación!...Señor Ministro ¿es justo este proceder, que deja sobre nosotros una mancha vergonzosa, que nos coloca en una situación anormal, que indudablemente si no se pone un pronto remedio, será de trascendencia para toda una familia?*" Letter from Carmen Aldana, viuda de Salcedo, to SIPBA, May 21, 1907. Ibid., fs. 11-2.

[89] "*…de acuerdo con lo prescrito por la ley de monumentos arqueológicos y por el artículo 710 del Código de Procedimientos Federales, el Inspector General de Monumentos Arqueológicos puede retener administrativamente la posesión del terreno de que se trata, si esto es indispensable para la inspección y conservación de los monumentos que ahí existen.…*" Letter from SIPBA to Carmen Aldana, June 24, 1907. Ibid., f. 13.

[90] Letter from Batres to SIPBA, July 16, 1907. Ibid., f. 14.

[91] "El Pedregal" cost $80. Memo from Hacienda to SIPBA, July 27, 1908. Ibid., fs. 17-8.

sent Batres packing to Spain, Carmen Aldana was still trying to secure full payment for her lands, trees, and magueys.[92]

Property and the Right of Destruction

If landowners near Teotihuacán had good reasons to be dissatisfied with the archaeological bureaucracy's approach to property issues, they were still comparatively fortunate in receiving some compensation for their holdings. At other sites, individuals might lose access to a portion of their land without receiving any payment in return. As a general rule, the law's haziness on the question of compensation accorded poorly with the economic interests and moral intuitions of landholders whose properties contained pre-Hispanic sites. This disjunction was exacerbated by the fact that many landowners had never heard of the 1897 law, or even of the Inspección, before becoming embroiled in archaeological controversies. In the absence of formal expropriation proceedings, many property owners refused to believe that Batres possessed any legitimate authority over the monuments. Matters were seldom helped by Batres' combative instincts, which were automatically raised by any slights to his dignity as Inspector General of Monuments. Attempts by the Inspección to assert absolute national ownership of all pre-Hispanic sites therefore provoked considerable resistance.

Disputes between the Inspección and uncompensated landowners laid bare issues of federal power and private claims. As we shall see in the following chapter, many people who resided near pre-Hispanic monuments used the sites for their own purposes, at variance with official policy. Pre-Hispanic sites were sources of building stone, of agricultural land, of valuable objects, and of recreation. They were also features of the landscape, passed by or sometimes trod

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[92] "*…que soy dueña lejitima de tres fracciones de terreno…que me fueron tomados para formar la zona arqueológica de "Las Pirámides" cuyo valor no se me ha pagado no obstante las diversas gestiones que á ese respecto hice antes, y teniendo conocimiento que ese Ministerio como un acto de estricta justicia se ha servido dictar el acuerdo respectivo para el pago de dichas propiedades…se sirva ordenar el pago de los expresados predios incluso el valor de los árboles y maguelles que explotó el Sr. Leopoldo Batres, cerca de piedra construida por mi en dos de los terrenos, pues todas esas son mejoras que implicaron un sacrificio pecuniario que en mi concepto debe ser también renumerado.*" Letter from Carmen Aldana to Hacienda, September 23, 1911, copied in letter from Hacienda to SIPBA, September 28, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 339, exp. 37, f. 1. Aldana was not the only Teotihuacán landowner who experienced difficulties in receiving payment, as the budget line for the expropriations sometimes ran out earlier than expected. In the middle of 1910, for instance, landowners had to wait several months for payment after the budgeted funds ran dry. "*En respuesta al atento oficio de usted…le manifiesto que teniendo diversos gastos urgentes que erogar con cargo á la partida de exploración de las ruinas de Teotihuacán, es necesario aplazar hasta fines de octubre próximo el pago de los terrenos que se van adquiriendo para formar la zona arqueológica, pues en esa época se espera haber obtenido ya una ampliación de dicha partida…*" Letter from SIPBA to Hacienda, August 4, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 340, exp. 15, f. 11. In February of 1911, Instrucción Pública informed Hacienda that there was no money available to pay for the acquisition of two fields near Teotihuacán owned by a man named Leandro Aguilar. A month later, Hacienda told Instrucción Pública that if Aguilar could not be compensated for the properties, the fields should be returned to him. Instrucción Pública officials consulted with President Díaz, who agreed that the purchase could be put off until the next fiscal year or whenever more money was available, "*sin hacer la devolución de él al propietario, porque de hacerlo así quedaría incrustado en la zona arqueológica de Teotihuacán un terreno de propiedad particular y se perderían todos los resultados obtenidos en formar dicha zona…*" Memo from SIPBA to Hacienda, March 24, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 340, exp. 13, f. 9. Aguilar was eventually paid for the land in June of 1911. Letter from SIBPA to Hacienda, June 1, 1911. Ibid., f. 13.

upon daily without much thought.[93] State attempts to name the sites as part of the national patrimony, and to preserve them as such, cast a range of beliefs and practices towards the pre-Hispanic past into stark relief.

A pair of cases in Cholula, ten years apart, showcase the federal government's response to activities that damaged the archaeological properties of pre-Hispanic sites. Located in the state of Puebla, Cholula was a thriving city at the time of the conquest which contained a massive pyramid, the largest by volume in the Americas.[94] Instead of demolishing this pyramid, as they did with so many others, the Spanish colonial government built a church on its top platform. Over time, the pyramid was covered with dirt, grass and trees, coming to resemble a terraced hill. The base of such a large structure, however, extended for considerable distances, creating some confusion as to the boundaries of the archaeological site first registered by Batres in the Carta Arqueológica of 1886.[95] One part of the pyramid's base was even cut off from the rest of the construction by a road which led to Mexico City. This section was part of the "Cristo Vivo" ranch owed by Fernando Cid, a man who had little interest in the science of archaeology, but who possessed a canny grasp of bureaucratic stalling techniques.[96]

In May of 1899 the jefe político of Cholula informed Cid that federal law prohibited him from planting on the north side of the pyramid. Cid replied that this land was included in his original purchase of the ranch, and coolly insisted upon "a written order from a competent authority." The jefe político then put the matter before the town council of Cholula, a body which had apparently embraced the mission of caring for "that precious work that recalls the memory of the early inhabitants of these regions," and which had already formed a "Conservation of Monuments" commission. The council president noted that the muncipal authorities had repeatedly stepped in to prevent owners of the Cristo Vivo ranch from engulfing lands near the base of the pyramid. After much debate, the council resolved to submit the matter to the federal government, and allow the government's decision to stand as the written order that

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[93] In 1906, for instance, the conserje of Tetzcutzingo suggested that maguey harvesters be banned from the hill where the ruins stood, since their passage through an old canal was causing the structure to deteriorate. Rather surprisingly, Batres rejected this idea "*porque sería un atentado contra la propiedad, puesto que el cerro es muy grande y hay en éste terrenos en que no hay monumentos, y no tenemos ningun derecho para impedir que los dueños de esos predios raspen sus magueyes*." Letter from Batres to SIPBA, June 8, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 8, f. 1. He suggested that the harvesters instead be prohibited from using the canal, to which Instrucción Pública agreed. Letter from SIPBA to the Governor of México state, June 15, 1906. Ibid., f. 2.

[94] Joyce Kelly, *An Archaeological Guide to Central and Southern Mexico* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 159.

[95] Archaeological map of Mexico, created by Batres in 1886. AGN-IPBA, caja 147, exp. 6, f. 14 (but placed at the front of the expediente).

[96] The Cristo Vivo ranch would later be subject to agrarian expropriation during the Mexican revolution, along with a nearby hacienda co-owned by Cid. These land seizures, which began in 1915, suggest that Cid's neighbors may have held grudges against him which had little to do with his attitudes towards archaeological monuments. P. Velasco Santos, '"Por la buena o por la mala': El Estado y la lucha por la tierra en Santa María Tonantzintla, Puebla. Una historia ejidal." (Licenciatura thesis, Departamento de Antropología, Universidad de las Américas, Puebla, 2005), 38. For Cid's co-ownership of Santa Teresa, see "Lista de las fincas comprendidas en un radio de 7 kilómetros en torno al poblado Francisco Javier Mina, Municipio de San Gregorio Atzompa, ex Distrito de Cholula, Puebla," July 11, 1950, Registro Agrario Nacional en Puebla, Comisión Agraria Mixta, exp. 1640, f. 90, reproduced in A. C. Reyes Kipp, '"Un arroz negro entre los blancos': Etnicidad, tierra y poder en Chipilo, Puebla" (Licenciatura thesis, Universidad de las Américas, Puebla, 2005), 150-1.

Cid had sought.[97] Upon being informed of these events, Instrucción Pública alerted Cid and the governor of Puebla that since archaeological monuments were property of the nation, Cid would be subject to criminal penalties if he did not cease any actions that might damage the pyramid of Cholula. Cid, however, was unwilling to let the matter rest there.

In late June Cid wrote directly to Instrucción Pública and attacked its verdict on several grounds. The law of May 11, 1897 had not been published in the official state bulletin. All previous owners of the Cristo Vivo ranch had sown beans on its territory. Cid's titles to the ranch included a certificate in which the nation renounced all financial claims to the land. And he was unaware of what officials meant by the term "North Pyramid of Cholula," but speculated that it referred to a "a little mound" on his property. Consequently, Cid requested that Batres be sent to determine whether the site was actually an archaeological monument and to definitively settle the question of whether the land was owned by Cid or by the nation. If it was the latter, Cid expected to be paid for "the value of the pyramid."[98]

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[97] "*Habiendo notado el subscripto que una parte de la base de la Pirámide de esta Ciudad, que está al lado Norte y separada por un camino que hace muchos años se abrió conduce á esa Capital, la siembra el actual dueño del rancho "Cristovivo," C. Fernando Cid, le llamé la atención á este Señor acerca del mal que hacía en destruir un Monumento que está mandado por el Gobierno Federal se conserve y para lo cual está bajo la vigilancia de las respectivas autoridades. = A esta observación contestó el señor Cid diciendo: que estima de justicia la observación que se le hace, pero que se sembraba esa parte del cerro porque al comprar el rancho le habian hecho entrega de esa fracción como pertenencia de la finca; pero que esto no obstante si se le dá una orden por escrito y de autoridad competente para que no siga sus trabajos, los suspenderá y gestionará á su vez los derechos que cree tener, puesto que esa parte de cerro la tiene comprada como antes lo ha dicho. = En vista de estas razones, me dirigí al Ayuntamiento en momentos que celebraba sesión y expuse lo que antes he dicho, dando por resultado que esta Corporación acordara desde luego, entre otras cosas, lo que sigue: = "Tomando en consideración lo expuesto por el C. Jefe Político, el Presidente de la Corporación manifestó: que efectivamente por la suprema circular de 24 de Septiembre de 1877, y posteriormente por decreto de 11 de Mayo de 1897, se ha encomendado á las autoridades locales el cuidado y conservación de monumentos arqueológicos: que en acatamiento á estas disposiciones, el Ayuntamiento de esta Ciudad en la época de la circular referida creó una Comision denominada "Conservacion de Monumentos," y que desde entonces á la fecha, el Ayuntamiento siempre ha estado el cuidado de esa obra preciosa que recuerda la memoria de los primitivos pobladores de estas regiones; pero que los propietarios de la relacionada finca que han venido sucediéndose, siempre han tenido la mira de ensanchar sus propiedades cercenando la base de la Pirámide, tentativas que la Corporación municipal siempre ha impedido. En consecuencia, y para poner término á tales pretensiones, somete á la deliberación de la H. Asamblea las siguientes proposiciones, pidiendo que con dispensa de trámites sean discutidas, y si mereciere aprobación, sean elevadas al Gobierno General, esperando asi una suprema resolución. = 1a. Con inserción de lo hasta aquí manifestado sobre el particular, por el conducto respectivo dése á conocer al Gobierno General este acuerdo para lo que á bien tuviere disponer. = 2a. La resolución que se obtenga, sea la orden que por escrito deba comunicarse al propietario de la referida finca para impedir sus pretensiones." = Después de larga y detenida discusión, la Corporación tuvo á bien aprobar las proposiciones que anteceden, después de mandar á la Secretaría darles lectura á todas y cada una de ellas.*" Letter from the Jefe Político of Cholula to the Governor of Puebla, May 9, 1899, copied in letter from the Governor of Puebla to SJIP, May 15, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 48, f. 1.

[98] "*…que no habiendo sido promulgada dicha Ley en el Periódico Oficial del Estado, hasta esta fecha, ignoraba yo su contenido y no podía comprender el acuerdo que se me notificaba… No sé en realidad cual sea esa Pirámide Norte de Cholula, y en el supuesto de que sea un pequeño montecillo que se encuentra dentro de mis terrenos… me limitaré al que hasta ahora han hecho de ella los anteriores dueños del rancho de "Cristo Vivo," esto es sembrar de frijol la meseta principal como siempre se ha sembrado y lo está hoy… tengo certificado de renuncia de derechos fiscales de la Nación, en favor del dueño anterior en el dominio de dicha finca… [Batres should determine] si ese dominio no está aún en la Nación y es conveniente hacer la expropiación y pagar el valor de la pirámide, al dueño, para que realmente lo adquiera la Nación.*" Letter from Fernando Cid to SJIP, July 25, 1899. Ibid., fs. 7-8.

Batres was assigned funds to visit Cholula in late August and submitted his report in mid-October, delays which presumably gave Cid time to harvest the beans that he had planted in May. Accompanied on his visit to the site by the jefe político and various members of the town council, Batres affirmed that the site possessed archaeological value, and recommended that the area be fully surveyed and its boundaries marked off. Instrucción Pública officials agreed and provided Batres with funds to accomplish this project, but as of January 1900 only a preliminary plan of the site appears to have been drawn up.[99] In early July, when Cid was likely well into another planting season, the landowner wrote again to Instrucción Pública challenging its official resolutions. He once more asked for clarification as to whether "the so-called pyramid is an archaeological monument," complained that the plan which Batres had created was imprecise, and pressed the question of whether the government would actually expropriate the land that it wished to prevent him from using. Batres offered his rebuttal a little less than a month later, reiterating that his excavations had proven the existence of pre-Hispanic constructions at the site, defending the validity of his plan, and sniffing that "the Government does not need to expropriate what is its own, given that archaeological monuments belong to the Nation." He did, however, offer to place boundary marks around the disputed zone as soon as Instrucción Pública approved his initial plan, "in order to prevent individuals from continuing to encroach upon [the archaeological monuments] as has occurred until today."[100] There the matter seems to have rested, with no further moves made by Instrucción Pública, Batres or Cid.

Almost a decade later, Batres again dealt with local activities which he believed to threaten the archaeological integrity of the Cholula pyramid. In October of 1909, he informed Instrucción Pública of notices that part of the pyramid was being torn down in order to construct a mental hospital on the site, and requested funds to pay a visit of inspection. After traveling to Cholula and speaking with Faustino Calvo, the Spanish director of the works, Batres reported in a telegram to his superiors that construction had been halted, without the need of resorting to town authorities. At the time Calvo offered no resistance beyond saying that he had purchased the land from the local jefe político. In a letter sent to Instrucción Pública the same day as Batres' telegram, however, Calvo offered a more vigorous protest. The mental hospital, constructed as a work of private Catholic beneficence, was "the result of sentiments of national charity, to found a free medical asylum where the many poor folk who wander about suffering from the terrible illness of the loss of reason in all its forms, may find cure and consolation." Moreover, Calvo wrote, he possessed a legitimate title to the lands which said nothing about any archaeological monuments therein. The so-called monument was only "a simple heap of dirt whose demolition, far from injuring the study of history, would instead benefit public hygiene, as it has become a deposit for all the rubbish of the community."[101]

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[99] "*Tengo la honra de remitir á V. adjunto á esta el plano que levanté el cual represento los monumentos arqueológicos de Cholula y que servirá de base para que se lleve á cabo el apeo y deslinde de los monumentos, segun lo tiene ya acordado esa Superioridad.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 6, 1900. Ibid., f. 15.

[100] "*En segundo lugar el Gobierno no tiene que expropiar lo suyo puesto que los monumentos arqueológicos pertenecen á la Nacion…Esta Ynspeccion opinaría porque se levanta las mojoneras en los linderos de los monumentos arqueológicos á fin de evitar se sigan invadiendo por particulares como ha sucedido hasta hoy.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 2, 1900. Ibid., fs. 19 and 21 (mistake in pagination, as no page 20 exists).

[101] "*La obra que alli ejecuto y que ha sido objeto de la suspension oficial es el resultado del sentimiento de la caridad nacional para fundar un asilo médico y gratuito adonde encuentren curacion y consuelo tantos pobres que vagan con la terrible enfermedad de la pérdida de la razón en todas sus formas...el monumento que ha motivado el denuncio no es ya un monumento como he dicho antes sino un simple monton de tierra que lejos de que*

Addressing Calvo's letter, Batres offered little resistance to continuing construction at the site, and pointed out that he had already told Calvo that it would be acceptable to erect the hospital in a nearby field. To his superiors, Batres also admitted that the builders had already destroyed so much as to render attempts at preservation mostly pointless. Using the same phrase as Calvo, Batres described the site as being reduced to "a heap of dirt."[102] Therefore, Batres proposed, it would be sufficient for the mental hospital to set up a plaque, "of white marble," with an inscription commemmorating the pyramid platform that had once existed. Instrucción Pública agreed with this recommendation, and directed Calvo accordingly.

Both of these skirmishes reveal the ambiguous nature of federal power in the Porfiriato. While the Inspección could impede farming and construction activities around pre-Hispanic sites, it could not put a quick and definitive halt to what Batres regarded as clear-cut cases of archaeological destruction. The machinery of the federal cultural bureaucracy was slow, and its enforcement mechanisms were limited. Additionally, the efficiency of the Inspección was hindered by a lack of social consensus on the issue of archaeological preservation. Both Cid and Calvo raised similar issues – were visually unimpressive artifacts worth protecting? Could not a landowner with full legal title do as he wished with his property, in the absence of expropriation or compensation? Who had the authority to determine how sites were used, and why should archaeological preservation take precedence over other goals? Besides being unable to effect its will by force, the federal archaeological bureaucracy also proved incapable of providing convincing answers to these questions, and persuading its most persistent interlocutors to accept the Inspección's mission as fully legitimate. From this angle, the process of state-building was not a smoothly rolling juggernaut, but a tedious and often faltering slog through hostile territory.

Part of the Inspección's difficulty in establishing its legitimacy stemmed from the relative obscurity of the agency and of federal archaeological legislation. We have already seen that state actors themselves were sometimes unclear as to which branch of the government exercised authority over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past. This confusion was even deeper in disputes between the Inspección and private landowners, who were often wholly ignorant of the source and extent of the agency's legal authority. Although Batres had a talent for self-promotion and made sure that his exploits were regularly featured in Mexican newspapers, national archaeological policy was not of much concern to most of the country's citizens. In conflicts over the status of pre-Hispanic monuments, landowners might not only reject specific state claims, but the government's very right to dictate usage of the sites. The workings of the archaeological bureaucracy were opaque, or at least could credibly be made to seem so by individuals trying to forestall state action.

If the political structures controlling archaeology were obscure, so too were the field's scientific tenets. While landowners were often willing to pay lip service to the importance of preserving "archaeological monuments," they implicitly defined these as large, aesthetically

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se perjudíque la historia con su demolición, gano la higiene pública, puesto que aquello estaba convertido en depósito de los deshechos de la población." Letter from Fernando Calvo to SIPBA, November 9, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 24, f. 8.

[102] "*A juicio de esta Inspección, según el estado que guarda de destrucción la plataforma sobre que se levanta parte del edificio que motiva esta comunicación, su conservación no tiene ya objeto, puesto que á quedado convertida en un montón de tierra y se puede permitir á los constructores del manicomio, que lo continúen, con la obligación de poner una placa de mármol blanco en que por medio de una inscripción quede el recuerdo del sitio hasta donde llegaba la plataforma que circuía la gran pirámide.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 17, 1909. Ibid., f. 7.

impressive constructions. To men like Cid and Calvo, it was nonsensical that ancient earthworks and broken odds and ends could have any bearing on the national glory. Weighing this paltry cultural patrimony against financial needs or a humanitarian mission, it was clear to them which should take precedence. Yet the "little mounds" that landowners regarded as patently meaningless might have been quite significant to researchers attempting to establish sequences or typologies. For Batres, it was logical that such structures should be preserved intact until they could be examined by an expert eye (most likely, his). To muddle matters further, however, the Cholula cases also demonstrate that Cid's and Calvo's attitudes were far from ubiquitous. In 1899 the jefe político and town council of Cholula sided with the Inspección, while in the latter an anonymous person alerted Batres to the construction of the hospital. Even within communities, attitudes towards the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past were not easily generalized.

Perhaps because officials of the cultural bureaucracy recognized how tenuous their authority was, they resisted making concessions to their opponents and were unsympathetic towards most protestations of economic damage. Federal bureaucrats were also unwilling or unable to follow standardized procedures for expropriation and compensation. The mass expropriations at Teotihuacán were the exceptions, rather than the rule. More commonly, the Inspección took advantage of the distinction between monuments and the land that they rested upon to avoid paying compensation to landowners. That so few attempts were made to establish routine, systematic procedures for acquiring pre-Hispanic sites speaks to the financial constraints, management styles, and fundamental values of the cultural bureaucracy. The purchase of land at Teotihuacán cost a great deal of money; Batres may have sought to avoid such expenditures by denying the need to compensate landowners at other sites. Batres as an individual could also be dogged and vindictive once engaged in a struggle, loath to concede any ground or acknowledge error. Yet the tendencies of a single individual could not have had much weight without an entire administrative structure to support him. The lack of routine compensation to landowners whose interests were compromised by the Inspección indicates that within the cultural bureaucracy, the demands of national patrimony were presumed to supersede those of local proprietors.

IV. Conclusion

What was the fate of José Hermida Pérez, the veracruzano potter with whose story the chapter opened? Like other individuals cited above, Hermida's personal property interests were threatened by the state. Hermida, however, was fortunate in the timing of his run-in with Batres. Shortly after the potter's initial exchange of letters with Instrucción Pública, Porfirio Díaz departed Mexico on the *Ypiranga*, never to return. For José Hermida Pérez as for countless others, the triumph of Francisco Madero's revolution seemed to promise a redress of Porfirian grievances. In July of 1911, Hermida wrote again to Instrucción Pública, which was now led by Madero's 1910 running mate, Francisco Vázquez Gómez.

Freed from having to feign respect for the judgments of Batres and former Minister of Public Instruction Justo Sierra, Hermida unleashed a stream of bitterness against the previous regime. He wrote, "the odd declaration of Sr. Batres…significantly damaged this place, because the former Minister, who should be signally noted in history for his delusions of grandeur, his fictions, and his fantasies, ratified by official declaration the claims of the Inspector of

Archaeological Monuments, whose efforts seemed dedicated to call attention to his own importance." Hermida expressed anger against the callousness of Sierra and Batres, as well as his conviction that the "monuments" Batres sought to preserve possessed little value to the nation. He wrote, "All citizens are obliged to make the sacrifices that national history and science demand, but in this case, although the monuments that Sr. Batres observed may contain some sacred object of the tribes that created them, they should not be respected as relics in themselves but searched as they are demolished, as they are composed of clay and humus, very appropriate materials for pottery." Again, Hermida offered to preserve any significant object that he uncovered during his excavations, "without puffing myself up about it," while noting that so far he had only encountered "the fragments of some objects without any importance." Hopeful that the Revolution was a "savior" that "had brought to power people of correct principles, progressives who feel love for the people," Hermida requested that the government either allow him to resume his business, or compensate him for the money he had invested in the workshop.[103]

Unfortunately, the ultimate resolution of this case is unclear. Francisco Rodríguez, who replaced Batres as Inspector General, informed Instrucción Pública that a direct inspection of the site would be necessary to render a "fair and accurate" judgment on the matter. While open to the possibility that Hermida's appeal was justified, Rodríguez did not reflexively overturn the verdicts of his predecessor. An official at Instrucción Pública ordered Rodríguez to visit the site as soon as possible, but the matter seems to have rested there. There was no further correspondence between Hermida and the national government on the subject of archaeological preservation. Under Madero as under Díaz, the final resolution of archaeological property claims proved difficult to achieve.

[103] *"La declaración peregrina del señor Batres, dando á estos rumbos, que nunca fueron tenidos en cuenta en los programas ferrocarrileros, ni siquiera de caminos vecinales, condiciones admirables de "reino floreciente" de antiguas razas -, perjudicó notablemente este lugar, porque el Ministro anterior del Ramo, que debe ser marcadamente señalado en la historia por sus delirios de grandeza, por sus ficciones y fantasias, ratificó por medio de una declaración oficial, que se funda en el dicho de ese señor Inspector de Monumentos Arqueológicos, cuya labor más parece dedicada á llamar la atención sobre su personalidad, que estos terrenos de propiedad privada no deben ser tocados ni trabajados á fin de conservar esos "Monumentos…Todo ciudadano debe imponerse los sacrificios que exijan la historia patria y la ciencia, pero en esta caso, aunque los montículos que observó el señor Batres, fueran depositarios de algun objeto sagrado para las tribus que los formaren, no deben ser respetadas como reliquias en sí, sino registrado, demoliéndolos, pues su naturaleza es de barro con humus vegetal muy propio para la alfarería. Suelen encontrarse, al practicar las excavaciones algunos fragmentos de objetos sin importancia, pero si al avanzar mis trabajos hallara en alguno de esos montículos algun objeto importante, sería yo, sin pretender hacerme bombo quien le diera á conocer para cooperar al mayor conocimiento de la Arqueologia Nacional…Hoy que la salvadora revolución democrática ha traido al poder personas de principios rectos, progresistas, amantes del pueblo… A Ud. ruego, que se sirva derogar el acuerdo que respecto de mi expidió la Secretaria que hoy esta al digno cargo de Ud., el 23 de Marzo último, dejandome en entera libertad de proseguir mis trabajos de alfareria tal como los establecí, ofreciendo conservar con todo cuidado cualquier objeto que se encuentre enterrado en los montículos en que debe trabajar; ó que se me reintegre del corto capital invertido en ello, que constituye mi único patrimonio, reivindicando la autoridad pública el dominio que tenga sobre los cerros y quedando á su disposición el taller que fundé.*" Letter from José Hermida Pérez to SIPBA, July 5, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 29, f. 11.

Chapter 6

Wrenches in the Machinery

"Spoil of the unknown
A dry leaf looks for a throne
In the mutilated border
Of the battered ballcourt wall.
The stinging nettles conceal and shield
A toppled household god,
A rough hand has already tunneled
Through the everlasting wall…
Traveler: reflect and be silent…
The unfathomable greets us!"

-"In the Ruins of Mitla," Juan de Dios Peza[1]

Porfirian struggles over the behavior of wayward conserjes, or the definition and control of archaeological property, reveal the yawning cultural gulfs separating Mexico City officialdom from the mostly rural communities adjacent to pre-Hispanic sites. Local residents and federal administrators possessed disparate understandings of the material past, and acted to realize their preferred visions in ways that might infringe upon or exclude the visions of others. As the increasing reach of the state forced a reckoning between contradictory viewpoints, conflicts among federal and local stakeholders ensued. These encounters among diverse perspectives served to structure and complicate federal approaches to the pre-Hispanic past, as national adminstrators grappled with the desires and demands of their local interlocutors. Disputes also arose among community members themselves, who did not always form a united front in their interactions with federal archaeological administrators. Local residents might espouse a variety of positions concerning the cultural significance of pre-Hispanic monuments, or disagree with each other about the proper scope of federal activity and oversight. These clashes of ideas and assumptions in turn produced new cultural forms and hybrid practices, changes which further realigned community sentiments and blurred federal-local dichotomies. This chapter will examine the intersections between federal and local uses of the pre-Hispanic material past, in an attempt to tease out the meanings and consequences of these complex engagements.

Two theoretical assumptions undergird these investigations. The first of these is that pre-Hispanic objects do not possess any intrinsic value or meaning, but are assigned these traits by

[1] "*Despojo de lo ignorado/ busca un trono la hoja seca/ en la mutilada greca / del frontón desportillado. / Al penate derribado / la ortiga encubre y escuda, / ya socavó mano ruda / la perdurable muralla…/ Viajero: medita y calla…/ ¡Lo insondable nos saluda!*" Juan de Dios Peza, "En las ruinas de Mitla," in *Un pasado visible: Antología de poemas sobre vestigios del México antiguo*, edited by Gustavo Jiménez Aguirre, with photographs by Javier Hinojosa (Mexico City: Artes de México, 2004), 24. Peza was a Mexican poet and statesman of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

conscious actors. Accordingly, this chapter will describe and analyze the processes of cultural contestation and negotiation which delineated acceptable usages of the material past, rather than advance a moral position concerning the "proper" treatment of sites and artifacts. The chapter's other key assumption is that all human interactions with material objects involve some type of cultural commitment. Whether an individual spent decades studying ancient inscriptions, used a Mayan bas-relief for a door stop, dismantled sites in search of pre-cut stone, or simply gazed at a burial mound while walking to work in the fields, each choice contributed a strand to the web of social relations in which pre-Hispanic objects were situated. Such relationships did not necessarily require personal interest or emotional attachment towards the objects in question. Someone who approached pre-Hispanic artifacts from an economic or utilitarian perspective, or who regarded them as little more than obstacles to some endeavor, was still associating with those items, using them in ways that furthered his or her own goals, and transforming the "social life" of the objects themselves.[2] The totality of these cultural connections – disinterested as well as enthusiastic, destructive as well as protective – merit historical consideration.

This chapter will also analyze the concrete enactment of federal power at the local level, and the pathways by which federal employees and local community members pursued their diverse objectives in relation to each other. Collisions and entanglements over the pre-Hispanic material past were facets of broader Porfirian processes of political centralization, national development, and scientific modernization. Throughout Mexico, the expanding influence of the Díaz regime resulted in both resistance and accommodation at the local level. Local opposition was most intense when federal projects threatened to tear apart the basic fabric of community life – access to land and natural resources, the continuity of spiritual traditions and social norms, and the ability to claim political, legal, or economic justice. Here, it should be emphasized that debates over the uses of pre-Hispanic sites did not inspire the same levels of passion and animosity as other Porfirian struggles between federal and local actors. The history of Mexican archaeology contains no equivalent to the guerrilla warfare of the Yaquis and Mayos, the bloody last stand of the villagers of Tomochic, or even the endless lawsuits and petitions filed by the embattled peasants of Morelos.[3] Nevertheless, in both subtle and overt ways the archaeological

[2] This approach is informed by Arjun Appadurai's and Igor Kopytoff's essays in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986). While both Appadurai and Kopytoff stress the importance of studying the "social life" or "cultural biographies" of objects themselves, thereby centering the object as a focal point of analysis, their essays also highlight the various human networks in which objects participate and are socially embedded. Appadurai argues for a close examination of how objects move through these networks, writing "It is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things. Thus, even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a *methodological* pont of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context." Appadurai, "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value," 5. In a discussion of commoditization, Kopytoff suggests that "We can profitably ask the same range and kinds of cultural questions [as are asked when constructing biographies or "a typical biographical model" of people] to arrive at biographies of things." As he comments on the various types of object biographies that might be written, Kopytoff states that "A culturally informed economic biography of an object would look at it as a culturally constructed entity, endowed with culturally specific meanings, and classified and reclassified into culturally constituted categories." Igor Kopytoff, "The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process," in *The Social Life of Things*, 66 and 68.

[3] See Evelyn Hu-DeHart, *Yaqui Resistance and Survival: The Struggle for Land and Autonomy, 1821-1910* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984); Paul Vanderwood, *The Power of God Against the Guns of Government: Religious Upheaval in Mexico at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University

policies of the federal government trod on delicate issues of local autonomy, deeply rooted belief systems, and the civil rights of Mexican citizens. Conflicts over the meaning and usage of pre-Hispanic sites, therefore, were not simply clashes among contending cultural perspectives. They were also political battles, fought to determine the extent to which federal authorities might impose their will at the local level.

If local opposition to the archaeological projects of the federal administration should be seen in its wider Porfirian context, so too should local support for such projects. The modernizing initiatives and expanding reach of the state generated excitement and hope as well as dismay, even if these sentiments often intermingled to produce complex layers of ambivalence.[4] Economic development and the imperatives of global capitalism caused profound social dislocation and human suffering in Mexico, while also presenting significant opportunities for those positioned to take advantage of new technologies, markets, employment possibilities, transportation routes, goods, or services. The effects of modernization were felt most strongly in urban areas, but rural communities were not immune from "the winds from the outside world…the nation's troubles, the new machines designed for man's comfort and pleasure, the exotic ideas."[5] Even in the small, highly traditional Michoacán town of San José de Gracia, where "People who saw a locomotive for the first time found their legs trembling; some even took to their heels," residents eventually came to use and enjoy Singer sewing machines, phonographs, cameras, and the Catholic newspaper *El País*, delivered from Mexico City.[6]

The practical aspects of modernization and centralization were accompanied by ideological messages which some segments of the Mexican population also found attractive. Porfirian rhetoric exhorting and celebrating the nation's progress towards an orderly positivist future proved especially alluring to members of the middle and upper classes, who were buffered from the violence and exploitation that accompanied Mexico's modernization. These social groups were concentrated in the nation's capital, but well-off or well-read landowners, shopkeepers, priests, and professionals existed throughout the republic. Such figures often supported the preservation of pre-Hispanic sites and monuments on aesthetic, intellectual, or patriotic grounds. Rather than seeing the Inspección and its agents as intrusive forces, some local

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Press, 1998), and Arturo Warman, trans. Stephen K. Ault, *"We Come to Object": The Peasants of Morelos and the National State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

[4] Several of the broadsheets illustrated by José Guadalupe Posada, inexpensive works targeted at a popular urban audience, highlight the mixed benefits and drawbacks of Mexico City's modernization. Patrick Frank describe the contrast between the text and images of a 1900 broadsheet commemorating the introduction of an electric trolley; while "the text generally supports the atmosphere of festivity," Posada's drawing "pictur[es] the car running over three pedestrians and chasing a fourth." Patrick Frank, *Posada's Broadsheets: Mexican Popular Imagery, 1890-1910* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 189. Several years later, Posada illustrated a broadsheet speculating on the ways that electricity would transform Day of the Dead celebrations. "The poetic text points out that now all of the spirits of the dead will be brought to life through electricity…with the benefit of electricity, visitors will arrive to find the [cemetery] jumping with life, and the spirits full of fun. The party at the cemetery will be lit by electric lights, the musicians will play electric instruments, and the pulque will be stronger…The police will then come and haul everyone off to jail in the new electric cars. In the illustration, an electric car bearing skeletons has entered the cemetery where other skulls and skeletons are preparing to celebrate. This political defeat for traditional beliefs in the face of modernization is thus 'laughed off.'" Ibid., 190-1.

[5] Luis González y González, trans. John Upton, *San José de Gracia: Mexican Village in Transition* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974), 101.

[6] Ibid., 96 and 99-101.

culture-brokers urged the federal government to take a more active role in protecting the material remains of the past.

What protection, preservation, or curation meant in practice, however, might be a matter of considerable contention. Political and cultural stances did not always map neatly onto one another, and local residents might assign value or importance to pre-Hispanic objects without sharing the priorities of federal administrators, or agreeing with the policies of the Inspección. In Porfirian Mexico as in other times and places, the pristine preservation of artifacts was far from universally accepted as the most appropriate way to memorialize or come to know the past.[7] As Christina Bueno has described, individuals and communities near the sites of Teotihuacán, Tepoztlán, and Tetlama placed strong significance on specific pre-Hispanic monoliths, and raised up stormy resistance when Batres attempted to remove these items to the Museo Nacional. In the case of the so-called "Goddess of Water" statue at Teotihuacán, "locals gathered and shouted, 'You cannot take our goddess!' The women wept and threw bouquets of yellow flowers at [the statue's] feet." This display of emotion was all the more striking since "For centuries, the pre-Hispanic statue…had been half-buried in the ruins, her head quite often used by visitors as a picnic table."[8] Yet regardless of whether the statue was the subject of longstanding cultural attachments, or became a sudden flashpoint for dissatisfaction with the high-handed ways of federal administrators, community members came to invest "their goddess" with deep emotional meaning. The force of this emotional connection derived not from the statue's scientific or nationalist qualities, the factors which dominated official accounts of the object, but from the particular needs and understandings of local people.

It is especially important to recognize that modern western archaeology is not the sole conceptual framework which bestows intellectual and emotional meaning on the material remains of the past. Therefore, we must be careful not to assume that those who accepted the activities of the Inspección, or who petitioned the federal government to preserve or display pre-Hispanic objects, necessarily shared the value systems of scientists or cultural bureaucrats. As Byron Hamann reminds us, Mesoamerican peoples have found meaning in the relics of past societies long before the development of archaeology as a scientific discipline, or even the

[7] In a fascinating account of one Borneo institution, the Museum Balanga, Christina F. Kreps distinguishes between "traditional indigenous curatorial methods," which involve the "collection, care, and reverence for heirloom property" and the "Eurocentric museum model" in which "objects are made 'ethnographic' by the act of detaching them from their original cultural context and recontextualizing them into western scientific frames of reference." Christina F. Kreps, *Liberating Culture: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation, and Heritage Preservation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 36 and 30. Museum Balanga was a site of encounter and tension between these different traditions, as "the museum's approach to exhibiting objects was modeled after western-style ethnographic museum. Nevertheless…none of the museum workers were trained in anthropology or ethnographic methods…the practice of conceptually detaching objects from their larger sociocultural contexts and perceiving them in an abstract manner was incongruous to the way in which many of the staff members viewed the objects." Ibid., 31. Kreps describes her own discomfort at museum practices which risked damage to the physical integrity of collected objects, and her realization that the objects were not only ethnographic specimens, but participants in complex networks of expertise, exchange, meaning, and spiritual power. Ibid., 30-40. She argues that "non-western museum models and methods of curation…challenge not only Eurocentric museology, but also the assertion that non-western people are not concerned with the collection, care, and preservation of their cultural property." Ibid., 46.

[8] Christina Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*: The Making of Archaeological Patrimony in Porfirian Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (2010): 215.

arrival of Europeans in the New World.[9] Local inhabitants might ascribe aesthetic, spiritual, patriotic, political or social significance to artifacts and monuments, without possessing much interest in them as empirical historical documents, or as clues to human cultural development. In a few instances, archaeologists and federal administrators even found their own goals impeded by the importance that local communities placed on certain pre-Hispanic sites and objects. In the case of a venerated local statue, or pre-Hispanic stonework incorporated into church decorations, differing understandings of artifacts and their purposes led to discord between the Inspección and local residents.

The terrain becomes even more slippery when we consider uses of pre-Hispanic items that resulted in the objects' destruction, and what those uses indicated about the objects' cultural status. These relationships between humans and artifacts may have lacked sentimentality, but they did not necessarily arise out of a blanket disdain for pre-Hispanic handiworks, any more than collecting wood automatically indicates contempt for trees. To many Mexicans, pre-Hispanic constructions were integral parts of the landscape, with more meaningful connections to their immediate physical surroundings than to the distant past.[10] While an archaeologist or visiting tourist might consider it obvious that manmade objects existed in distinction to the soil or to plant life, a property owner might be equally clear that all of these were natural resources, fit to be exploited or cleared away as the title-holder saw fit. Finally, as we saw in the previous chapter, even those willing to concede some theoretical importance to archaeology might resist the idea that the commemoration of ancient cultures should take priority over the immediate needs of the living.[11] Many who dealt with the Inspección might have found terms like

[9] Byron Hamann, "The Social Life of Pre-Sunrise Things: Indigenous Mesoamerican Archaeology," *Current Anthropology* 43, no. 3 (June 2002): 351-82.

[10] Denise Fay Brown comments on the importance of landscape to the modern Maya people of Yucatán, "The physical and cultural features of the landscape in the Maya zone similarly provide the setting of the present-day cultures and everyday life of the Maya people, as well as comprising a part of their patrimony essential to the understanding of their past and in the construction of their future. The landscape constructs and at the same time reflects their self-conception…Loss of control over such spaces to another cultural or political entity is tantamount to loss of the spaces themselves and loss of the most fundamental resource necessary for cultural survival." Denise Fay Brown, "Mayas and Tourists in the Maya World," *Human Organization*, Vol. 58, No. 3 (Fall 1999): 296-7. Lisa Breglia offers a similar analysis of how community members in the small Yucatán village of Chunchucmil have historically interacted with the area's mostly unexcavated and unrestored ruins. "There exists an even more profound ambivalence as to whether the mounds are indeed monuments. For the generations of local people, the mounds that only relatively recently caught archaeologists' eyes were neither new nor discovered. For many (especially older) residents of the surrounding communities, the mounds are part of the natural landscape, having been the shape of the land since their grandfathers' times. Thus, a mound, impressive to the casual outsider's eye as mysteriously and unidentifiably 'ancient,' is for a local person a natural feature of the terrain." Lisa Breglia, *Monumental Ambivalence: The Politics of Heritage* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 174.

[11] Some modern archaeologists have also criticized their discipline from this standpoint. In an article discussing archaeology's role in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Yannis Hamilakis wrote of "the ethical crisis personified by archaeologists who publicly mourn the loss of artefacts but find no words for the loss of people…It is about time we dispensed with the notion of the stewardship of the record as our primary ethical responsibility. We should strive to protect all material traces of people in the past, not on the basis of our stewardship towards a selectively constructed 'record,' but on the basis of our responsibility towards the social memory of past people and societies. At the same time, we should be aware that the ethic of conservation is a context-specific principle, and that some social groups may choose to place value not on the conservation of the material past but on its reworking, recycling or even destruction." Yannis Hamilakis, "Iraq, stewardship and 'the record': An ethical crisis for archaeology," *Public Archaeology* 3 (2003): 107-8.

"ignorant" and "destructive" to be apt descriptions of federal administrators, who were too often unaware of local realities and needs, and unconcerned with damage to individual property or livelihoods.

To comprehend the full range of factors that mediated dealings between the federal government and local communities, it is therefore necessary to consider how people in those communities constructed and understood their varied relationships with the material past. We shall begin by considering overt conflicts between archaeological preservation and the utilitarian disposal of artifacts, disputes which reveal much about the ground-level reception of the Inspección's activities, and offer hints to the more general workings of Porfirian governance.

I. Destructive Uses of Ruins

Activities which damaged the physical integrity and historical value of pre-Hispanic objects were carried out by individuals from all strata of Porfirian society, and by foreign visitors as well. The rapid pace of development during Mexico's rush to modernity resulted in a number of archaeological discoveries, but also led to the quiet destruction of unknown or unguarded sites.[12] The destruction wrought by builders and developers was matched from other many sides. Tourists trawled sites for souvenirs and wrote their names on the walls of buildings, prospectors dug for treasure, and landowners enjoyed wide latitude to dispose of artifacts. Even professional excavators might obliterate parts of the archaeological record through haste, carelessness, participation in the illegal antiquities market, or dubious removal and recording practices. Batres in particular gained a reputation for destructiveness, even by the fairly loose standards of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century discipline. In an article accusing Batres of a number of professional and ethical misdeeds, the American Zelia Nuttall specifically commented upon his poor excavation techniques. She wrote, "I have been informed that, while he uncovered more of the wall I discovered, at the island of Sacrificios, he took no precautions to preserve the fresco, which is now almost entirely destroyed." Nuttall also translated an article from the Mexican newspaper *El Tiempo*, which said of Batres "it is well known…the damage he has done to the science of archeology by means of his proceedings, his ignorance, and his audacity which is that of an improvised savant (*un sabio improvisado*)."[13] While some of the charges levied against the

[12] Even Mexico's most famous sites were not necessarily safe from the imperatives of development. In 1910 the engineer Juan Reyna knocked down a subterranean wall at Xochicalco. The site conserje wrote, "*Y al llegar yo con el mozo me encuentro con el Sr. Ingeniero en la entrada de la gruta, preguntándome que si nó había yo oído el ruido de adentro. Yo le dije que nó; y le pregunto, que cosa hubo; y me dice, que había derrumbado un pedazo de los muros de adentro; y le digo, por órden de quién había derrumbado; y me dice por órden de ninguno. Ya entonces le dije, que me hiciere el favor de suspender me parece que llevó la comisión de ir á trazar el camino; pero no para ir á derrumbar; y me dice, quien quita que llegue á pasar el tren por allí; le dije, que yo no me chanceo con Vd.; vamos á ver que es lo que ha hecho Vd. Entramos, que voy mirando que ya había comenzado á descombrar una de las cobachas de la parte interior de la gruta grande. Ya entonces le volví á decir, que me hiciera el favor de no seguir descombrando, porque yo tengo que darle parte á mi Señor Jefe, y me dice, déle parte que yo también tendré que darle parte.*" Letter from the conserje of Xochicalco to Batres, January 15, 1910, copied in letter from Batres to SIPBA, January 21, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 68, f. 1. Batres urged that Reyna be punished for his activities and the engineer was duly investigated by the Cuernavaca judiciary, but it is unclear how the case was ultimately resolved.

[13] Zelia Nuttall, "The Island of Sacrificios," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 12, No. 2 (April – June, 1910): 281.

Inspector General may have been exaggerated or untrue, others are well-substantiated.[14] Perhaps the most ironic case occurred at Mitla, where Batres carved two notices into the "original stone" of a pre-Hispanic edifice. The first notice commemorated the repair works that Batres had carried out on the building, while the second warned that "It is forbidden to write notices on the walls of these buildings, or to scratch (*rayar*) or dirty these constructions, or to pull out stones from them. Infractors will be turned over to federal authorities so that the corresponding penalties may be applied."[15] Here as at other times, Batres seems to have allowed his official dignity to override his common sense.

If erasure of the archaeological record was carried out by all manner of people, condemnation was not so evenly distributed. State-sponsored development projects, or excavations carried out by Batres, were seldom the subject of official complaints to Instrucción Pública. (The complaints of private citizens were another matter, and Batres certainly attracted a number of those over the course of his career.) A conserje who allowed a site to be damaged through neglect of his duties or misuse of his authority might well be criticized by local, state, or federal authorities, but the opprobrium fell squarely on the individual employee rather than on the agency of which he was a part. The two classes of people censured most severely for their destructive uses of archaeological sites were local communities, especially those defined as indigenous, and foreigners. Each group existed outside the idealized Porfirian state, even as the federal administration selectively incorporated foreign or indigenous elements into its self-fashioning, and each was therefore was a target of suspicion. In the eyes of federal administrators, neither foreigners nor rural villagers could be relied upon to safeguard the best interests of the Mexican nation when considerations of profit or self-interest were at stake. Members of local communities, however, were often at a social and economic disadvantage to foreign visitors. Unlike the archaeologists who came stamped with the imprimatur of North American universities, or the tourists who were flush with cash and confident in their diplomatic representation, local residents generally had more tenuous grips on the levers of power. In order to use pre-Hispanic artifacts or sites as they wished, community members employed a variety of rhetorical and political maneuvers. While doing so, they offered clues to the range of cultural meanings that those artifacts and sites might acquire.

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[14] For a challenge to the story of Batres' use of dynamite at Teotihuacán, see Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *Las piedras negadas: De la Coatlicue al Templo Mayor* (Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2003), 56. Christina Bueno, however, notes that Batres "had used dynamite at sites before, and he did have it at Teotihuacán – it is listed among his supplies." Christina Bueno, "Teotihuacán: Showcase for the Centennial," in *Holiday in Mexico: Critical Reflections on Tourism and Tourist Encounters*, ed. Dina Berger and Andrew Grant Wood (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 66.

[15] "En el caso de Mitla, hoy en día todavía podemos leer los mensajes que grababa en los dinteles originales de los cerramientos principales del Salón de las Columnas; el principal, en ocasión de la conclusión de sus trabajos, debía presentarse ante el público en los siguientes términos: *Siendo presidente de la República el C. Porfirio Díaz, Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de Justicia e Instrucción Pública Lic. Joaquín Baranda, Jefe de la Sección del Ramo el C. Lic. Ezequiel Chávez, se reparó este edificio bajo la Dirección del Inspector General los Monumentos Arqueológicos C. Leopoldo Batres, Año de 1901*.

Otro letrero grabado igualmente sobre una piedra original fue encontrado recientemente sobre el nicho central del Salón de las Columnas, en el cual se lee:

Está prohibido escribir letreros en los muros de estos edificios, así como rayar o ensuciar las construcciones y arrancar piedras de ellas. El infractor de esta disposición será consignado a la autoridad federal para que se le aplique la pena correspondiente. El Inspector General y Conservador de los Monumentos Arqueológicos, LEOPOLDO BATRES." Nelly Robles García M. and Alberto Juárez Osnaya, *Historia de la Arqueología en Oaxaca* (Oaxaca: Instituto Oaxaqueño de las Culturas, 2004), 64-5.

Ruins as a Source of Construction Material

One of the most widespread means of interacting with local ruins, in Mexico and the world at large, was to use them as convenient sources of construction material. Over the last decade a number of regional studies in the history of archaeology have documented and discussed such practices, providing valuable context and insights for the Mexican case. While local understandings of ruins were grounded in particular landscapes, histories, and symbolic networks, certain themes and tendencies emerged in multiple times and places, produced by functionally similar incentives and dilemmas. Given situations of economic constraint and incomplete or nonexistent state supervision of monuments, many individuals and communities across the world chose to use the material remains of the past in similar ways. The particulars as well as the subjective meaning of those uses may have differed, but the basic patterns remained remarkably consistent.

The cultural acceptability of removing stones, bricks, or other building materials from the monuments of past civilizations was intimately linked to conditions of poverty and scarcity. Such economic factors were not always determinative, nor were they the sole motivation for activities which damaged the physical integrity and historical value of ancient monuments. The wealthy hacendado who owned the ruins of Uxmal, and who hosted John Lloyd Stephens there at his gracious estate, was not driven by dire financial need when he commented "that if he had Uxmal on the banks of the Mississippi, it would be an immense fortune, for there was stone enough to pave every street in New Orleans." (Stephens and his companions, "not to be outdone in sensible views of things…suggested that if he had it on the banks of the Mississippi, easy of access, preserved from the rank vegetation which is now hurrying it to destruction, it would stand like Herculaneum and Pompeii, a place of pilgrimage for the curious; and that it would be a much better operation to put a fence around it and charge for admission, than to sell the stone for paving streets.")[16] Nevertheless, the challenges of obtaining durable, affordable construction materials loomed large for countless individuals, influencing the choices that they made. A striking illustration of the dilemmas faced by local communities comes from the town of Mitla, where conflicts took place at the turn of the twentieth century over the right to inhabit or destroy pre-Hispanic structures. Around the same time as these struggles were occurring, the photographer C. B. Waite captured the image of a Mitla house. The picture shows a cactus fence bordering a small, square dwelling place, whose walls were "made of corn stalks, and the roof of reeds."[17] Waite's photograph is a reminder that residents of Mitla, and by extension other rural villagers, had to be creative and resourceful with the materials available to them.[18] In the absence

[16] The same hacendado also informed the visiting North Americans "that the ground about Uxmal was excellent for milpas or corn-fields. He had never had a better crop of maize than that of last year [when "the great field in front of the Casa del Gobernador was planted with corn"]." John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*, vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1969), 136.

[17] John Mraz, "Picturing Mexico's Past: Photography and 'Historia Gráfica,'" *South Central Review*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Fall, 2004): 31. The article gives the citation for the referenced photograph as "C.B. Waite (?)…c. 1900. Archivo General de la Nación, Fondo Propiedad Artístico y Literaria, C. B. Waite, Habitación."

[18] An engineer who visited Mitla in 1894, to evaluate the condition of the ruins and propose repairs, wrote of the nearby community "*Los habitantes están dedicados con especialidad á la agricultura. Son de buenas costumbres y casi no hay quien hable español, siendo su dialecto el zapoteco. No hay albañiles ni materiales de construcción los que sería necesario llevar con excepción de la piedra.*" Letter from Mayor de Yngenieros Rodolfo

of effective state oversight, it is unsurprising that this resourcefulness would frequently extend to pre-cut stone or buildings suitable for reuse.

The importance of economic factors in shaping cultural attitudes towards the material remains of the past is demonstrated by the vast number of settings in which the recycling of ruins has occurred. Such practices were endemic in Rome, where lime burners dwelt for centuries in the Forum, shoveling marble fragments into kilns.[19] An early nineteenth-century guidebook to Italy informed its readers "In reality, ancient Rome has been for twelve centuries a quarry ever open and never exhausted; and the stranger, as he wanders through the streets of the modern city, is astonished to see, sometimes thrown neglected into corners, and often collected round the shops, or in the yards of stone-cutters, shafts, capitals, parts of broken cornices, and in short, blocks of the finest marbles, all dug out of the ruins in the neighborhood."[20] The British traveler Gertrude Bell, "recounted how for centuries the remains at Babylon had been used for building material by the neighboring populations, 'No man building in its neighborhood was at the pains to construct brickkilns, but when he needed material he sought it in Nebuchadnezzar's city. Greek, Persian and Arab used it as a quarry.'"[21] In England, the Leicestershire village of Pickworth was "sacked and pillaged in the Wars of the Roses, and its ruins quarried for stone. The only survival was the pointed archway which had been the entrance to the parish church." [22] Less than a century later, Henry VIII's marital difficulties led to the dissassembly of many English monasteries. "Lead was a precious commodity, while quarries were few and far between and carting the stone long distances was far more expensive than its actual extraction."[23] In Egypt as in England, local economy could be reinforced by official state policy. During the 1830s, "Karnak's ninth pylon was dynamited for blocks for one of the [saltpeter] factories. American consul George R. Gliddon actually cheered [Egyptian ruler] Muhammad Ali's defeat in the "Eastern question" showdown of 1840-1841, because the ensuing halt in factory

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Franco to the Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, March 31, 1894, copied in letter from Guerra y Marina to SJIP, April 13, 1894. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 73, f. 14.

[19] "At the end of the nineteenth century the archaeologist Rodolfo Lanciani discovered a lime-kiln abandoned by lime-burners in a sudden hurry many centuries before. Inside stood eight marble Vestal Virgins ready to be burned, stashed 'like a cord of wood, leaving as few interstices as possible between them, and the spaces formed by the curves of the body filled in by marble chips'…From the fall of classical Rome until the eighteenth century the only houses in the Forum were the cottages of the lime-burners, and the hovels of beggars and thieves." Christopher Woodward, *In Ruins* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2001), 8-9. The quote from Lanciani comes from his book *The Destruction of Ancient Rome*. Woodward cites a 1906 edition which is not listed in WorldCat, but an 1899 edition of Lanciani's work contains essentially the same quote as that given by Woodward, albeit with slightly different phrasing. Rodolfo Lanciani, *The Destruction of Ancient Rome: A Sketch of the History of the Monuments* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1899), 197.

[20] John Chetwode Eustace, *A Classical Tour Through Italy: An. MDCCCII*, Vol. 1 (London: J. Mawman, 1815), 423.

[21] Magnus T. Bernhardsson, *Reclaiming a Plundered Past: Archaeology and Nation Building in Modern Iraq* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 64. The quote from Bell is taken from her book *Amurath to Amurath* (London: W. Heinemann, 1911), 169.

[22] Woodward, *In Ruins*, 100.

[23] Ibid., 108.

construction slowed the plundering of antiquities sites for building materials."[24] For builders around the world, simple calculations of economy and efficiency have led to the same solution: to take advantage of the quarrying, transportation and stonecutting labors performed by people of the past.

Mexico was no exception to this pattern. In the sixteenth century, stonework from demolished indigenous temples was used to construct Catholic churches and monasteries, a practice that will be discussed in more detail below. Other recycling of pre-Hispanic buildings appears to have carried less symbolic charge. For example, the American researcher Zelia Nuttall discovered a Spanish document from 1590 which spoke of obtaining large quantities of lime from the structures on the Isla de Sacrificios.[25] The savant José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez, who visited Xochicalco in the late eighteenth century, wrote that nearby sugar planters had once used stones from the ruins to "construct ovens," although technological advancements had ended this practice by 1784. In his description of the site, Alzate lamented "the indiscreet zeal of some, and the covetous ignorance of others."[26] The removal of stones from pre-Hispanic sites for use in construction continued to be a common practice throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. The archaeologist Jorge R. Acosta, who carried out excavations at the Toltec capital of Tula from 1940 to 1954, wrote that "The research has been difficult and slow, owing to the state of the monuments, which were continuously plundered since the arrival of the Nahua hordes up to the beginning of the present century, when the inhabitants of the village of Tula removed worked stones from the archaeological zones for their own constructions."[27] Despite the efforts of Batres and his colleagues, for much of the Porfiriato the federal government was unable to consistently enforce its archaeological legislation throughout Mexican territory, even at sites like Tula that were relatively close to the capital. As of 1912, Instrucción Pública had not even appointed a caretaker for the site, an indication of the Inspección's limited resources and reach.[28]

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[24] Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 56-7.

[25] Nuttall, "The Island of Sacrificios," 263-4.

[26] "*Si el zelo indiscreto de algunos, y la codiciosa ignorancia de otros, no hubiesen destruido los Monumentos Mexicanos, se podria colectar una grande porcion de antiguedades…En 4 de Enero de 1784 pasé a registrar á Xochicalco...con dolor vi que lo que ya no executaban los Dueños de Haciendas de Azucar destruyendo la Fábrica para construir hornillas, porque en virtud de haber adoptado los reververos no necesitan de piedras de Xochicalco, hacian los árboles conocidos por huages, (especie de Acasia): estos han vejetado demasiado en el sitio entre las junturas de las piedras de manera…*" José Antonio Alzate y Ramírez, *Suplemento a la Gazeta de Literature. Descripción de las antigüedades de Xochicalco, dedicada a los señores de la actual expedición maritima al rededor del orbe* (México: Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1791), 3 and 17- 8 (in note 6).

[27] "*Las investigaciones han sido difíciles y lentas, debido al estado en que se encontraban los monumentos, expuestos a un saqueo continuo desde la llegada de las hordas nahuas hasta el principio del presente siglo, cuando los habitantes del pueblo de Tula sacaban piedras labradas de las zonas arqueológicas para sus construcciones.*" Jorge R. Acosta, "Interpretación de algunos de los datos obtenidos en Tula relativos a la época tolteca," *Revista Mexicana de Estudios Antropológicos,* Vol. 14, Segunda Parte (1956-1957): 76.

[28] In a 1912 memo, the Maderista Inspector of Monuments Francisco Rodríguez nominated a number of individuals to fill various positions within the Inspección. This document makes no reference to the site of Tula. Letter from Francisco M. Rodríguez to SIPBA, July 2, 1912. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 115, f. 1.

Even modern Mexican authorities, however, have found it difficult to fully suppress the use of pre-Hispanic stonework as a source of convenient construction material.[29]

Broadly speaking, therefore, the pragmatic recycling of the material past is a phenomenon that transcends cultures and historical eras. Yet the specific dynamics of the issue varied considerably between local settings, offering windows into the particular meanings that a given society assigned to the past. In the case of Porfirian Mexico, a comparison of events at the sites of Teotihuacán, Mitla, and Toniná shows that while the use of pre-Hispanic sites as a source of construction material continued throughout the Porfiriato, such activities became more controversial and less sustainable over time. Batres and his superiors were unable to reliably impose federal ideologies of preservation and patrimony, but they did succeed in changing local calculi of risk and reward. Individuals who had once removed stones or occupied buildings as a matter of course became more wary of admitting such practices to federal officials, and more adept at deploying the rhetoric of nationalism and scientific progress. The regulatory efforts of the Inspección were also assisted, and in some cases outpaced, by the growing enthusiasm for archaeology among Mexico's citizens. Local residents who endorsed archaeological study might themselves challenge their neighbors' re-use of pre-Hispanic materials, as occurred at Toniná in 1909. The resolution of that case, in many ways an indictment of the federal government's weakness and inability to confront local powerbrokers, nevertheless indicates the symbolic importance that pre-Hispanic sites and objects had acquired by the end of the Porfiriato. By contrasting the events at Toniná with other struggles at Teotihuacán and Mitla, we can trace how both administrative and cultural changes inflected local uses of the material past.

Teotihuacán

When a party of scholars from the Museo Nacional decided to visit Teotihuacán in 1878, they first requested that Instrucción Pública intercede with the state government of México so that "obstacles are not placed in the way of the works being done," an indication that the researchers were well aware that local values concerning the use of the site diverged sharply from their own.[30] The fact of these differences was underscored in the aftermath of the Museum staff's visit, when Instrucción Pública requested that a detachment of rurales in the area of Teotihuacán take action to prevent "the neighboring towns from destroying the pyramids and

[29] Alexander Geurds, *Grounding the Past: The Praxis of Participatory Archaeology in the Mixteca Alta, Oaxaca, Mexico* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2007), 124.

[30] "*No ocultandoseme el deseo de progreso que anima á ese Ministerio me atrevo á proponerle que si lo tiene á bien se den las órdenes conducentes á las autoridades respectivas para que no se ponga obstacúlo á las obras que se hagan*…" Letter from Gumesindo Mendoza to SJIP, January 7, 1878. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 17, f. 1. Since the visit to Teotihuacán occurred little more than a year after Díaz had seized power, it is also possible that the Museum staff feared more generalized opposition as federal employees who had sworn loyalty oaths to the Díaz government. Since March of 1877, however, México state had been governed by Juan Nepomuceno Mirafuentes, who appears to have been an ally of Díaz and thus unlikely to sanction anti-federal activities. "Se hizo cargo del mando político y militar el 8 de diciembre de 1876. En virtud del mismo Plan de Tuxtepec y fue electo gobernador constitucional para el cuatrienio que debía iniciarse el 21 de marzo de 1877, según decreto número 1 expedido el 14 de marzo de 1877." "General Juan Nepomuceno," Portal del Gobierno del Estado de México, accessed January 16, 2011, http://qacontent.edomex.gob.mx/edomex/estado/historia/gobernadores/5a_epoca_constitucional/juan_nepomuceno/index.htm.

other antiquities which exist in that place."[31] Following this intervention, Jesús Sánchez of the Museo Nacional was commissioned to revisit Teotihuacán, report on the condition of the site, and recover as many artifacts as possible from local residents.[32] During his visit, Sánchez learned from several local informants, "whose good faith and truthfulness are notorious," that "the indigenous inhabitants of the pueblo of San Francisco, situated almost at the foot of the pyramids, have conducted excavations in various locations for the purpose of extracting large pieces of worked stone that they find hidden in the pyramids and in adjacent mounds known as Tlateles, using these to construct a bridge that will improve the routes of communication with Otumba and other neighboring villages." Sánchez noted that while some of these excavations took place on privately owned land, allowing the proprietors to plausibly claim "ignorance that the monuments of Indian antiquity have been declared national property," small digs had been made "at the base and in the middle of the Pyramid of the Sun, demonstrating that they searched wherever they thought convenient without caring for anything else." In the years before the Inspección, Sánchez had only limited means of enforcing his preferred use of Teotihuacán's pyramids. Still less could he instill his own understandings of the site's meaning and value in the minds of local residents. The cultural bearings of a scholar from the capital were far different from those of rural villagers, a gap that Sánchez did not even try to bridge.

Instead, Sánchez applied his own small-scale version of *pan o palo* to the situation, leaning heavily on the latter. Recognizing the economic incentives at stake for the residents of San Francisco, he commented "I did not have any difficulties in persuading the indigenes to show me the objects in question, because they were hoping to sell to a better custodian everything that was unnecessary for the construction of the bridge, and to use the products of this sale to help buy the materials that they lacked." Sánchez also enlisted the aid of the municipal president of Teotihuacán, "an enlightened person who knows the importance of our historical monuments [and] did not raise any objections to ordering the indigenes to hand over the idols to me, for which I provided the corresponding receipt." For all his efforts, however, Sánchez was only able to assemble three idols and an olivite mask. These had been "fractured by the workers who removed them," although Sánchez hoped that they might be restored and eventually become worthy additions to the Museum's collections.[33]

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[31] "*Dispone el Presid.te de la Repub.ca que por en Sria. del digno cargo de Ud., se libre la orn. que fuere apostura, previniendo á las fuerzas rurales que expedicionan por S. Juan Teotihuacan, impidan que las pueblos vecinos destruyan las pirámides y otras antigüedades les que existen en aquel lugar.*" Letter from SJIP to the Secretario de Gobernación, June 22, 1878. AGN-IPBA, caja 165, exp. 17, f. 11.

[32] "*Comisionado por ud para inquirir que clase de objetos se estaban extrayendo de las piramides de Sn. Juan Teotihuacan y recogerlos si no hubiere inconveniente…*" Report submitted by Jesús Sánchez to Gumesindo Mendoza, July 5, 1878, copied in letter from Mendoza to SJIP, July 6, 1878. Ibid., f. 14. Sánchez, who would later serve as the director of the Museo Nacional, was employed by the establishment in 1878 as a preparer of zoological specimens. Although Sánchez took part in a number of archaeological commissions, and Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard lists "Historia del México antiguo" among his "Intereses personales," Sánchez received his academic training in medicine and zoology rather than archaeology or anthropology. The fact that Sánchez was sent to investigate conditions at Teotihuacán is an indication of the fuzziness of disciplinary boundaries in the 1870s, and perhaps speaks as well to the limited staff resources of the Museo Nacional. For the details of Sánchez's career, see Luisa Fernanda Rico Mansard, *Exhibir para educar: Objetos, colecciones y museos de la ciudad de México (1790-1910)* (Barcelona and Mexico City: Ediciones Pomares, 2004), 335-6.

[33] "*Al llegar á la poblacion indicada busqué á las personas que en una exploracion anterior hecha en compañia de Ud. nos habian servido con sus conocimientos locales y cuya buena fé y veracidad eran notorias. Supe por ellas que los indígenas habitantes del pueblo de Sn. Francisco situado casi en la falda de las pirámides, habían*

The cultural values of local residents did not change much in the succeeding years, but federal agencies became far better equipped to combat the open expression of those values. Twenty years after Sánchez visited the pyramids, Batres complained that "The archaeological ruins of Teotihuacán are in the same condition as the other monuments of the Republic," and warned that "they are to be found in danger of disappearing, owing to the excavations which are daily practiced in them by the inhabitants of the villages surrounding the pyramids and other buildings."[34] By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the federal archaeological bureaucracy had additional resources at its disposal to halt undesireable practices, and enforce its standards of appropriate use. These resources also provided a strong incentive for some local residents to endorse the Inspección's agenda. When Batres renewed his complaints in April of 1899, writing "the inhabitants of the villages found near the pyramids of Teotihuacán continue destroying the archaeological monuments of that place, owing to the lack of a guardian," Instrucción Pública moved to appoint a conserje for the site.[35] A month later, Lucas Oliva took an oath of loyalty to the federal government and the Constitution of 1857, and assumed his duties as Teotihuacán's official caretaker. Oliva did not have far to travel; Batres recommended him in part because he resided "at the foot of the Pyramid of the Sun."[36] This appointment bound the

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hecho excavaciones en distintas partes con el fin de extraer las grandes piedras de cantería que se encuentran sepultadas en ellas y en los montículos adyacentes conocidos con el nombre de Tlateles aprovechandose de ellas para la construccion de un puente que les facilita sus vias de comunicacion con Otumba y otras poblaciones vecinas… Efectivamente muchos de los tlateles estan en terrenos de propiedad particular y podran sus dueños alegar por lo menos, ignorancia de que los monumentos de la antigüedad indiana han sido declarados propiedad nacional; pero no se limitaron á sus propiedades, excavaciones recientes superficiales y de poca extension hechas en la base y en la medianá de la gran pirámide del Sol manifiestan que buscaron donde lo creyeron conveniente sin cuidarse de lo demas. No tuve dificultad para que me enseñasen los indigenas los objetos en cuestion porque esperaban vender al mejor pastor todo lo que no fuese útil para la construccion del puente y con el producto ayudarse para la compra de los materiales que les faltan… Solo encontré tres ídolos de unos 60 centímetros de longitud y una máscara de esa roca verde llamada olovita, que aunque fracturados por los operarios que los sacaron, podran restaurarlos y figurar dignamente en las colecciones del Museo Nacional. El Presidente municipal de Teotihuacan es persona ilustrada que conoce la importancia de nuestros monumentos históricos no puso dificultad para ordenar á los indígenas que me entregasen los ídolos dejando yo el recibo correspondiente." Report submitted by Jesús Sánchez to Gumesindo Mendoza, July 5, 1878, copied in letter from Mendoza to SJIP, July 6, 1878. Ibid., fs. 14-5.

[34] "*Estando las ruinas arqueológicas de Teotihuacan en las mismas condiciones que los demás monumentos de la República por su altísima importancia y por el peligro en que se hallan de desaparecer, debido á las excavaciones que diariamente practican en ellas los habitantes de los pueblos inmediatos á las pirámides y demas edificios, me permito encarecer á esa Superioridad la necesidad que hay de que se nombre un inspector para que los cuide é impida su destruccion.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, December 27, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 43, f. 14.

[35] "*Ha llegado á noticias de esta Ynspeccion que los vecinos de los pueblos que se hallan cerca de las pirámides de Teotihuacan siguen destruyendo los monumentos arqueológicos de ese lugar, por la falta de un guardian. Me permito repetir mi súplica á esa Secretaria para que se nombre un inspector que vigile esos monumentos.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 11, 1899. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 52, f. 1.

[36] According to Batres, Oliva was a "*persona capaz de desempeñar este cargo y con domicilio al pié de la Pirámide del Sol*." Oliva was given an annual salary of $500.05, or half of the amount given to the inspectors of Chiapas and Yucatán. Letter from Batres to SJIP, May 7, 1899 and SJIP memo, May 17, 1899. Ibid., fs. 3-4. In an earlier memorandum, Batres also mentioned that Oliva's deceased father had served for six years as an unpaid guardian of the ruins, although the dates of this service are not specified. Undated memorandum from Batres to SJIP (placed between other documents from early 1898). AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 18, f. 35.

interests of an indigenous local resident, and his friends and kin, to the interests of the archaeological bureaucracy. While Sánchez depended on the uncompensated goodwill of San Francisco's municipal president, Batres had the ability to cultivate a sustained federal presence at the local level.

Mitla

The appointment of a caretaker represented a turning point for the federal influence over a particular site, but not an end to the ongoing process of creating a national archaeological patrimony. Events at the Zapotec site of Mitla demonstrated that the presence of a caretaker was a necessary but not sufficient foundation for the assertion of federal authority. As we saw in Chapter 4, the laxity of Mitla conserje Ángel Navalon resulted in the 1901 destruction of a pre-Hispanic wall, "demolished in part to make use of its materials for church repairs."[37] This action, undertaken by town authorities, was far from an aberration. Rather, it was an example of the pragmatic uses that Mitla residents were accustomed to making of the nearby ruins, practices which implicitly rejected federal distinctions between the material remains of the past and the material culture of the present. According to the English traveler Ethel Tweedie, who visited the site at the beginning of the twentieth century, "So little were the ruins of Mitla appreciated or cared for during the last two or three hundred years, that the stones were taken out to build the church, or to form any building or coping that was necessary in the village. Part of the place was turned into a stable, and the priest lived in a frescoed chamber, one of many now whitewashed!"[38] Yet even if individual conserjes proved unable or unwilling to enforce federal standards of appropriate behavior, the presence of a caretaker at Mitla established the Inspección's claims to the site. Since the ruins were under federal supervision, mechanisms existed for outside authorities to review activities at Mitla, and eventually tighten the reins of national control.

At the beginning of 1900 Batres traveled to Mitla to supervise the excavations of the U.S. archaeologist Marshall Saville, and took advantage of the trip to carry out repairs at the site.[39] Over the next few years, Batres and Mitla residents would engage in a messy struggle to define

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[37] "*C. Leopoldo Batres pasó visita á los monumentos arqueológicos ubicados en este lugar y encontró que el ala oriente de uno de los edificios del group del curato, el que se halla tras de la iglesia, ha sido demolida en parte para aprovechar su material en las reparaciones de la iglesia.*" Report from Batres to SJIP, February 4, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 10, f. 14.

[38] Ethel Tweedie, *Mexico as I Saw It* (London, Edinburgh and New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1911), 400. The U.S. consul Louis Aymé, who visited Mitla in 1882, offered a somewhat different perspective on the local community's interactions with the ruins. He wrote, "*As [Félix Quero] truly says, the big stones are too big, the small stones too small, to move with profit; hence they have suffered little ravage from men. An inhabitant of the village since 1849 assured me that the ruins are in exactly the condition they then were…I can see no reason why they should not last for centuries still.*" However, Aymé's assessment does not seem to have taken into account changes to the interior of pre-Hispanic buildings, or the excavation of local mounds. On the same page that he assured the reader of Mitla's permanence, Aymé also commented "*Further south and in and near the village, often occupied as houses, are other ruins,*" and "*The natives (Zapotecos) tell me that everywhere, but chiefly to the north and east, are large mounds, and during my stay I was continually pestered by women and children bringing me idols, etc., to buy.*" Louis Henri Aymé, *Notes on Mitla, Oaxaca, Mexico, With Plans and Measurements of the Ruins*, from *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, New Series, Vol. 2, Part 1, April 26, 1882 (Worcester, MA: Chas. Hamilton, 1882), 20.

[39] AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 55.

appropriate uses of the monuments, the extent of federal authority within the village, and the manner in which that authority would be expressed. Batres held most residents of Mitla in low regard, and used the language of criminality and racial inferiority when describing popular uses of the ruins. In a January 1901 letter to Instrucción Pública, he wrote that the site's exterior walls were "found stripped of their flesh by the pillaging hand of the *indígenas*, who are not content to steal the decorations and the blocks of worked stone, but even encroach upon the masonry at the base of the building."[40]

Batres also criticized the use of a pre-Hispanic building as a house for Mitla's parish priest. Although he stated that this building was one of the "best-preserved of the group of ruins at Mitla," Batres deplored how the edifice had been changed "to meet the necessities of modern life." These alterations including blocking up the building's doors, covering its murals, and, as Tweedie had mentioned, transforming a room with the "most truly interesting" frescos into a stable. In view of such activities, Batres urged "that the building return to the control of the Government, so that…things may be restored to their original (*primitivo*) condition, putting an end to clamorous criticisms that the Government leaves that monument in the power of ignorance and savagery."[41] Although Instrucción Pública authorized Batres to recommend another house which could be purchased on the priest's behalf, the building used for the parish stables would remain outside of Inspección control until 1907.[42] That this transfer only occurred at the end of the Porfiriato demonstrates the slowness and difficulty with which the Inspección overcame local resistance to federal archaeological initiatives.

Given his multiple frustrations with the activities of Mitla residents, it is not surprising that when Batres learned in 1902 that "the east wall of the building in which the church is incrusted [had] been almost totally destroyed," he quickly became intent on punishing those responsible. Batres believed that "the time has come for the Supreme Government to proceed in an energetic fashion against the guilty parties, as any other course renders futile all personal efforts and monetary expenditures that may be employed in the conservation of our historical wealth." His investigations into the wall's destruction resulted in a torrent of finger-pointing, accusations, and denials, the general import of which hinted strongly at the involvement of leading village authorities. However, Batres could not clearly establish the guilt of these official

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[40] "*Juzgué que esta construccion era la mas importante obra que se debia ejectuar para asegurar la estabilidad del edificio, evitándose asi que continuase el desplome de los muros exteriores y que se abriese mas el prisma de los cimientos, pues estos se hallaban ya descarnados por la mano de la rapiña de los indígenas quienes no conformes con robarse las guarniciones y sillares de canteria invadieron tambien el mamposteo del basamento sobre el que descansaban estos.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 30, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 149, exp. 55, f. 38.

[41] "*Uno de los edificios mas notables y mejor conservados del grupo de las ruinas de Mitla es sin duda alguna el que los españoles transformaron en casa cural. Cierto es que para adaptarlo á las necesidades de la vida actual han tapado puertas, levantado los pisos, cubierto las decoraciones murales, y á donde están mejor conservadas los únicos frescos que quedan, y por cierto interesantísimos, se hallan las caballerizas del curato. Juzgo de la mayor importancia el que ese edificio vuelva al dominio del Gobierno para que limpiando los muros, dejando á descubierto los pisos, y destapando las puertas tapiadas por los españoles, retomen las cosas á su primitivo estado y cese el clamoreo de críticas al Gobierno porque deja ese monumento en poder de la ignorancia y del salvajismo.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, August 16, 1901. AGN-IPBA, caja 167, exp. 16, f. 1.

[42] Letter from SJIP to Batres, October 29, 1901. Ibid., f. 2. "*Tengo el honor de comunicar á Ud que el edificio que ocupaba el cura de Mitla para caballeriza ha pasado al dominio de la Ynspeccion…El conserje tomó posesion y nadie puede entrar á ese lugar sin que le acompañe dicho empleado.*" Telegram from Batres to SIPBA, March 23, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 36, f. 12.

figures, who included the municipal president and the local priest. Frustrated again, he concluded that "all were guilty, but the guiltiest of all was the caretaker charged with the vigilance of those ruins."[43] Since the conserje Ángel Navalon was the one person in the affair over whom Batres exercised direct control, pinning blame on Navalon meant that at least *someone* would be held responsible for the wall's destruction. In that way, Batres likely hoped to salvage at least the appearance of effective federal management.

As we saw in Chapter 4, the decision to blame Navalon was also prompted by an extraordinary community mobilization against the caretaker. Over 75 local residents accused Navalon of a wide range of misdeeds, cataloguing his noxious statements and behavior. These complaints helped to open the political space necessary to discharge Navalon, an appointee suggested by Oaxaca's state governor. Whether the villagers knew it or not, their letter also substantiated previous criticisms that Batres had made of Navalon's performance, thereby tacitly aligning them with the Inspector against the caretaker. Through this triangulation, villagers obtained the removal of a despised, drunken bully, while Batres gained the opportunities to symbolically assert his authority over the site, and replace Navalon with a more effective representative of the national state. (Navalon, of course, gained nothing except the freedom to pursue other employment.) Unable to openly defy the Inspección, Mitla residents used more subtle forms of resistance to mediate the local expression of federal power, and adjust it to their preferences. Accordingly, Batres achieved some of his goals, but at the cost of negotiating rather than commanding obedience.

The story of local agency counteracting state centralization is a standard trope of modern history, and one that unquestionably applies to events at Mitla. At this point, however, it is worth stressing that another story can be told about the relationship between local elites and Mitla's ruins, a parallel narrative which complicates our understanding of community interactions with the site. The contrast between local pragmatism and federal preservationism was far from absolute; moreover, a pragmatic attitude towards the material past could incorporate many possibilities other than destruction. Under the right circumstances, local or regional authorities might actually be more insistent than Instrucción Pública officials about the need to repair and conserve pre-Hispanic buildings. During the 1890s the jefe político of Tlacolula, whose jurisdiction included the ruins of Mitla, led a campaign to secure federal money for the repair and clearing of the site. Writing about the damage done "as a result of large anthills," the jefe político plaintively stated that "a relic of antiquity with priceless historical importance is at risk of imminent destruction."[44] Oaxaca governor Gregorio Chávez backed up the jefe político,

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[43] "*Al recibir los monumentos, con gran sorpresa, ví que el muro oriente del edificio en que está incrustada la iglesia había sido destruido casí en su totalidad. Me informé de quien era el autor de la citada destruccion y ninguno aceptaba ser el culpable, desde el C. Vivas, párroco del lugar, inclusive el Concerge y la autoridad, hasta el último peon, todos, se echaban la culpa entre sí, y como veía yó la imposibilidad de averiguar la verdad, procedí á abrir una minuciosa averiguacion dando por resultado…que todos fueron culpables, pero mas culpable que todos fué el concerge encargado de la vigilancia de esas ruinas quien tenia la obligacion de haberlo impedido desde que comenzaron á arrancar el primer sillar, trabajo que duró mas de quince dias…En mi concepto ha llegado la hora de que el Supremo Gobierno proceda de una manera enérgica en contra de los culpables, de lo contrario es inutil todo esfuerzo personal y pecuniario que se emplee en la conservación de nuestra riqueza histórica.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, February 7, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 10, f. 12.

[44] "*Aunque antes de ahora he tenido el honor informar que á consecuencia de grandes hormigueros está en peligro de derribarse el único Palacio de las "Ruinas de Mitla" que queda en pié, hoy lo recuerda á Ud. manifestándole que estándo en riesgo inminente de destruirse una reliquia de la antigüedad que no tiene precio por su importancia histórica, cumplo con dar cuenta á ese Gobierno para que si lo tiene á bien, eleve ésta nota ádonde*

warning Instrucción Pública officials that if action was not taken soon, "only ruins will remain, testimony that will accuse the present generation of ignorance and carelessness with the monuments of their ancestors," and urging that "the last relic of the monuments of Mitla that remains standing not fall for want of reconstruction and care, leaving the Government to be blamed by men of science for this criminal abandonment."[45] Batres endorsed these positions full-throatedly, and the federal government went so far as to commission an army engineer to put together a plan of repairs for the site. The engineer's suggested budget was $9,369.41, a sum that did not include labor costs.[46] (Based on other estimates, labor expenses would likely have been in the neighborhood of $400-$450, sums sufficient to employ six workers for nine months, or a master builder and 24 workers for a month and a half.)[47] The expense of such a project, however, did not align well with federal budget priorities, and major work at the site does not seem to have

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lo estime conveniente." Letter from the jefe político of Tlacolula to the governor of Oaxaca, January 4, 1894, transcribed in letter from the governor of Oaxaca to SJIP, January 8, 1894. The jefe político who wrote this letter was most likely José González, who was the jefe político of Tlacolula in 1895 and who greeted members of the 11th Congress of Americanists on an excursion to Mitla with "*un vistoso arco de flores coronado por una inscripción que decía:* Tlacolula al Congreso de Americanistas, salud!" as well as a formal banquet. "Excursion a Mitla," in *Congreso Internacional de Americanistas. Actas de la undécima reunión. México. 1895* (Mexico City: Tipográfica de F. Díaz de León, 1897), 557. González also endorsed an 1895 letter written by the excursionists and the crusading journalist Filomeno Mata, which called for additional federal efforts to preserve the site. According to González, this sentiment was widely shared among local authorities. "*Con positiva satisfaccion hemos visto todos los empleados de este Distrito, las autoridades locales de esta Cabecera, algunas obras que han recibido su repetido periodico y muchos particulares que me lo han espresado asi, la exposicion que las escursionistas elevaron al Supremo Gobierno solisitando la conservacion de las ruinas de Mitla. Si, como lo esperamos de la ilustracion y patriotismo del Presidente de la República, obsequia tan recomendable solicitud, puede ud. asegurar, Sr. Mata, que el Gobierno no gastará un solo centavo en brasos hasta llevar á cavo la obra. El Sr. Presidente de la Republica, sabe como se condusen los habitantes de este Estado cuando se trata de alguna mejora y son invitados con prudencia.*" Letter from José González to Filomeno Mata, undated. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 34, f. 3. The letter to which González refers was dated November 11, 1895. Ibid., fs. 1-2.

[45] "*…el Gobierno de mi cargo suplica al C. Presidente de la Republica, por su digno conducto, se sirva acordar el gasto de reparación, advirtiendole que si esta no se hace en el presente año, quizá si en los siguientes, sólo queden ruinas informes que sirvan para inculpar á la actual generación de inculta y descuidada con los monumentos de sus antepasados.*" Letter from Oaxaca governor Gregorio Chávez to SJIP, September 21, 1893. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 73, f. 1. "*Y tengo la honra de insertarlo á Ud, para que si lo tiene á bién, se sirva dictar las providencias que crea convenientes á fin de evitar que la última reliquia de los monumentos de Mitla que queda en pié no se caiga por falta de reconstrucción y cuidado y se culpe al Gobierno, por los hombres de ciencia, de punible abandono.*" Letter from Oaxaca governor Gregorio Chávez to SJIP, January 8, 1894. Ibid., f. 7. Chávez was identified by the historian and antiquarian Antonio Peñafiel as "*mi sentido amigo,*" a sign that Chávez likely had an affinity for archaeological scholarship. Antonio Peñafiel, *Indumentaria antigua: vestidos guerreros y civiles de los mexicanos* (Mexico City: Editorial Innovación, 1985), 41.

[46] Letter from Mayor de Ingenieros Rodolfo Franco, March 31, 1894, copied in letter from Pedro Hinojosa, Secretario de Guerra y Marina, to SJIP, April 13, 1894. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 73, f. 16.

[47] The first estimate, of $405, comes from a budget submitted by a Tlacolula bricklayer in 1893. Copy of the budget made for the bricklayer Ysidro (Alvares?) by Antonio Colmenares, September 18, 1893. Ibid., f. 2. In 1900, Batres estimated labor costs for Mitla repairs at $453.85. Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 11, 1900. AGN-IBPA, caja 149, exp. 55, f. 7.

begun until the end of the decade.[48] Here, the national government was dragging its feet while state and local officials were urging an active approach. To federal officials the value of archaeological preservation was outweighed by other priorities, while at the state and regional levels there was no conflict between the lofty sentiments of archaeological patriotism, and the practical desire to see an infusion of cash and opportunities to distribute patronage.

Other local elites had their own reasons for endorsing the values of archaeological science. As we have already seen, the prominent local citizen Félix Quero provided food and lodging to travelers visiting the ruins, and also acted as a guide. Quero guarded Mitla even before the formation of the Inspección, complained to Batres about Navalon's dereliction of duty, and eventually secured a paid position as the site caretaker, an appointment which he maintained after the 1910 Revolution. His three-decade association with the ruins of Mitla may have led Quero to view the site as a kind of personal patrimony, in the sense that Lisa Breglia describes for post-Revolutionary caretakers of Chichén Itzá.[49] Local elites might also be susceptible to the charms of archaeological study. One who felt its attractions was Andrés Ruiz, who became jefe político of Tlacolula in the late 1890s. According to the naturalist Hans Gadow, Ruiz was "an exceedingly courteous gentleman" and "an antiquarian who took great interest in the customs of the Zapoteca, and he had brought together a lovely collection of old earthenware objects. He had much to say about his treasures, and was worth listening to, since he intimately knew the language and customs of his people."[50] Ruiz also signed the community petition against Navalon, "for those who do not know how to sign their names."[51] Figures such as Quero and Ruiz played an important role as mediators between local residents and the cultural bureaucracy, helping to structure the Inspección's presence at Mitla into a form that both Batres and community members could accept. Both federal and local figures therefore helped to draw under Mitla's ruins under the control of the national government, even if this process took place in a slow and crabwise fashion.

Toniná

Archaeological interest on the part of prominent local residents, and the involvement of the federal cultural bureaucracy, were not always sufficient to prevent the use of pre-Hispanic

[48] In 1898, Batres set down a memorable description of Mitla's underground tunnels, "*hoy son galerias enigmáticas habitadas por multitud de vampiros y profusamente tachonados sus muros y prismáticas bóvedas con los terribles tarantulas.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 28, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 18, f. 47.

[49] "The arguments work in the following manner: Chichén is theirs not by right of cultural affiliation to the ancient Maya but by their twentieth-century presence living and working in the archaeological zone…Custodianship of the archaeological site becomes a usufruct right as it is equated with agricultural cultivation." Breglia, 117.

[50] Hans Gadow, *Through Southern Mexico, Being an Account of the Travels of a Naturalist* (London: Witherby & Co. and New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), 246. Ethel Tweedie also thought highly of Ruiz, calling him "one of the most charming of the many Jefe Politicos I had the pleasure of meeting…one of the nicest and brightest of them all." Tweedie, 376. However, Ruiz was also a capable enforcer for the Díaz regime, who in 1902 arrested an elderly merchant in order to combat unrest over the re-election of Oaxaca governor Martín González. Héctor G. Martínez and Francie R. Chassen, "Elecciones y crisis política en Oaxaca: 1902," *Historia Mexicana*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (October-December, 1989): 544.

[51] "*Por los que no saben firmar Andres Ruiz.*" Letter from José Justo Ruiz et al. to Batres, February 5, 1902. AGN-IPBA, caja 150, exp. 10, f. 17. Seven people with the surname "Quero" were also listed as complainants. Ibid., f. 16.

structures as sources of construction material. A 1909 conflict over the site of Toniná demonstrated the Inspección's weakness in the face of determined opposition from shrewd, well-connected local opponents – and in a broader sense, displayed the federal government's reliance upon the cooperation of local strongmen. However, the struggles over Toniná also revealed the extent to which the values and rhetoric of archaeological science had permeated Mexican society by the end of the Porfiriato. Local authorities could no longer take stones from pre-Hispanic monuments as they pleased, but were now subject to criticism and scrutiny on both the local and national levels. In order to counter attacks made in the name of archaeological preservation, the individuals who removed stones from Toniná were forced to dissemble their activities, manufacture testimony, and deny the physical reality of the site itself. Such strategies succeeded only at the cost of a divided community, and what local officials must have found to be an uncomfortably public airing of accusations and grievances.

The Mayan ruins of Toniná, located in the state of Chiapas, came to the attention of federal authorities when two residents of the nearby town of Ocosingo wrote separate letters denouncing abuses at the site. Addressing themselves to the acting director of the Museo Nacional, German plantation manager Adolfo von Schmeling and town priest Eliseo A. Morales condemned the destructive practices of local leaders. Von Schmeling wrote that the area's former jefe político had damaged the site in a search for hidden treasures, while current office-holder Abraham Suárez was using stone from Toniná in construction works at the Casa Municipal, despite orders from the governor of Chiapas that the site be left undisturbed. Von Schmeling suggested that the federal government name an official caretaker for the site, and suggested himself and a local farmer named Porfirio Cruz, whose fields abutted the ruins of Toniná, as suitable candidates for the position.[52] A few months after von Schmeling made his hopeful bid for federal employment, Morales provided the National Museum with another bitter assessment of events at the site. He wrote, "You will be able to judge my disgust upon finding that walls [from Toniná] had been destroyed…for the stupid purpose of removing slate to tile the town hall and pave streets."[53] In his letter, Morales sought to impress the Museum's director with the cultural and historical significance of the ruins. The priest offered detailed descriptions and measurements of monuments at the site, and speculated on when the structures had been built, the purposes they had once served, and the nature of the society that had created them. Morales declared, "If, as I suppose, these ruins are more than 400 years old, what a beautiful discovery has remained abandoned and disdained until today!"[54] The priest's letter demonstrates that by the end of the Porfiriato, key archaeological methods and concepts were accessible to those at Mexico's geographical and political periphery. Even if Morales was motivated more by animosity at local authorities than by concern for archaeological preservation (and despite his use of the term "paleontological relics" to refer to the site), he was able to carry out an empirical,

[52] Letter from Adolfo von Schmeling to Museo Nacional subdirector Genaro García, April 8, 1909, copied in a letter from García to SIPBA, April 22, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 44, fs. 1-2.

[53] "*Ayer fuí á pasear á las ruinas de Toniná…y juzgue Ud. cuál no sería mi disgusto al encontrar que paredes de algunos edificios han sido derruídas por orden del Jefe político de este departamento de Chilón, D. Abraham Suárez, con el estúpido objeto de sacar pizarras para embaldosar el Cabildo y calles de esta cabecera departamental.*" Letter from Eliseo A. Morales to Museo Nacional subdirector Genaro García, July 26, 1909, copied in a letter from García to SIPBA, August 9, 1909. Ibid., f. 4.

[54] "*Si, como supongo, estas ruinas tienen más de 400 años, ¡qué bello descubrimiento ha estado hasta hoy en el abandono y en el más grande desprecio!*" Idem.

quantitative study of the material past, and draw plausible conclusions based on those investigations. In their broad strokes, these were the same methods used by the contemporary profession of archaeology.

If von Schmeling and Morales hewed closely to the standards of the archaeological community, they stood apart from the society in which they lived. Both men seem to have been outsiders to Ocosingo, or at least distant from the levers of power. In his initial letter to the Museo Nacional, von Schmeling placed the actions of officials in the context of a general disregard for cultural patrimony. He wrote that "the native inhabitants of this place are not lovers of ancient things" and used "small idols" found in the ruins as playthings for children.[55] In a subsequent letter, von Schmeling mentioned that he had only resided in Ocosingo for two years.[56] For his part, Morales explicitly requested that Instrucción Pública not forward his letter to the local authorities, "because they are arbitrary and could cause some harm to befall me."[57] By contrast, Abraham Suárez was both jefe político and a major regional landholder, making him a dangerous man to cross.[58] To von Schmeling and Morales, the federal government was not an unwelcome intruder, but the necessary counterweight to local despotism.

By the end of August, the Mexico City newspaper *El Imparcial* had caught wind of the allegations and published an anonymous article about the doings at Toniná, embarassing Suárez.[59] Yet the interests of archaeological preservation could not upend the rule of powerful

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[55] "*Que como los habitantes nativos de este lugar no son amantes de las cosas antiguas hacen poco caso de los pequeños ídolos que se han encontrado en las grutas de dichas ruinas, y de ahí que los entregan en manos de sus chicuelos y, por consiguiente, se pierden esas prendas ruinosas que debían existir en las naves del Museo.*" Letter from Adolfo von Schmeling to Museo Nacional subdirector Genaro García, April 8, 1909, copied in a letter from García to SIPBA, April 22, 1909. Ibid., f. 1.

[56] "*Yo soy testigo ocular de estos hechos; hace dos años que radico en esta población y la misma falta de respeto á las cosas antiguas sigue adelante*." Letter from Adolfo von Schmeling to Genaro García, September 30, 1909, copied in a letter from García to SIPBA, October 23, 1909. Ibid., f. 9. According to the anthropologist Jacques Soustelle, who visited Chiapas in the early 1930s, von Schmeling was a colorful character who hailed from an aristocratic Pomeranian family. Arriving in Mexico during the 1890s, von Schmeling was employed on several coffee haciendas during the years that followed, before becoming a self-made "doctor" to the surrounding regions. Soustelle wrote of von Schmeling that "*Su único defecto molesto era su manía de querer siempre tener razón, así fuera su error tan evidente como el sol a mediodía*," a personality trait that may explain the German immigrant's willingness to challenge powerful local figures. Jacques Soustelle, *México, tierra india* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1971), 227.

[57] "*Concluyo rogándole que, si le es posible, omita participar á estas autoridades este parte que le doy, porque son arbitrarias y podría sobrevenirme algún perjuicio.*" Letter from Eliseo A. Morales to Museo Nacional subdirector Genaro García, July 26, 1909, copied in a letter from García to SIPBA, August 9, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 44, f. 6.

[58] "Such regional *jefes políticos* (political bosses) as Abraham Suárez…also obtained large tracts of land in this way [by purchasing "land previously surveyed and claimed by land speculators"], taking over existing land claims and cobbling together the basic topography of ladino property that would dominate the region for more than a century." Aaron Bobrow-Strain, *Intimate Enemies: Landowners, Power, and Violence in Chiapas* (Durham, N.C. and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 56.

[59] "*En el periódico El Imparcial que vé la luz pública en la Ciudad de México, correspondiente al 29 del mes próximo pasado, aparece un artículo anónimo en el que se asegura que las ruinas de "Toniná" han sido destruidas por la autoridad política y vecinos de esta localidad.…*" Letter from Abraham Suárez to Aristeo López, September 14, 1909, copied in a letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 44, f. 15. Based on similarities between the wording of the quoted article and von Schmeling's initial letter to the acting

rural magistrates. In this instance, the Inspección proved too small, lethargic and limited in resources to enforce the nation's archaeological laws. Perhaps distracted by the centennial preparations at Teotihuacán, Batres took no action in response to the letter sent by von Schmeling in April, although he may have sent a telegram to Chiapas governor Ramón Rabasa in response to the message sent by Morales in late July. However, it was not until von Schmeling sent a second letter at the end of September, accusing Suárez of calling together area landowners and forcing them to falsely swear that no damage had been done to the ruins, that Instrucción Pública took more aggressive steps to resolve the situation. Ministry officials ordered Batres to telegraph Benito Lacroix, the subinspector of archaeological monuments in Chiapas, to investigate the situation at Toniná. Batres complied by early November, telling Lacroix to have Ocosingo residents give formal testimony before the local judge. This late attempt at intervention proved fruitless. As von Schmeling warned, the Inspección had already been outflanked.

In early September, Suárez and his local allies had embarked on a series of adroit manuevers. In response to an inquiry from Governor Rabasa, the jefe político sent a curt note to Aristeo López, the municipal president of Ocosingo, asking whether López had ordered that worked stone be removed from the ruins of Toniná. Predictably, López denied having done any such thing. On the contrary, López claimed that he had taken "energetic measures" to protect Toniná, even though "the ruins under discussion could never be conceived of as archaeological monuments, as they are no more than some sort of cave."[60] Why mere caves merited active protection was left unexplained. [61] According to López, any stones required for construction projects could be found scattered about the field of a local farmer, obviating any need to disturb the ruins. Modern archaeological practice would almost certainly treat these loose stones as part of the broader site complex, but López clearly did not believe that anyone, even the fussy bureaucrats of the capital, would place much importance on dissassembled materials located on private land.

A few weeks later, the article in *El Imparcial* spurred Suárez and López to seek sturdier legal cover. Suárez instructed López to conduct an expanded investigation of events at Toniná, and "to take appropriate steps against those found responsible for the destruction of the aforementioned archaeological monuments."[62] López accordingly took oaths from landowners

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director of the Museo Nacional, it is likely that von Schmeling was responsible for bringing media attention to events at Toniná.

[60] "*…esta Presidencia en ningún caso ha extraído piedra canteada de las ruinas de "Toniná", pues antes bien, ha dictado medidas enérgicas para evitar la destrucción de las cuevas que llevan ese nombre…No me parece demás manifestar á Ud. que, las ruinas de que se trata nunca pueden conceptuarse como monumentos arqueológicos toda vez que no son más que unas especies de cuevas como dejo dicho*." Letter from Aristeo López to Abraham Suárez, September 6, 1909, copied in letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. Ibid., f. 14.

[61] Unlike many of the claims and accusations made in correspondence to Instrucción Pública, the truth about Toniná can be verified. Many large Late Classic Maya buildings continue to exist at the site today, including temples, palaces and ball courts. After recent resorations, one writer has called Toniná "truly outstanding." Joyce Kelly, *An Archaeological Guide to Central & Southern Mexico* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 355.

[62] "*…espero se sirva ampliar su informe de fecha 6 del actual, abriendo una averiguación con los vecinos que radican en las inmediaciones de "Toniná", para esclarecer la verdad de los hechos denunciados por el periódico de referencia y proceder como halla lugar contra los que resulten responsables de la destrucción de los citados monumentos arqueológicos*…" Letter from Abraham Suárez to Aristeo López, September 14, 1909, copied in a letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 44, f. 15.

whose properties abutted the ruins, one of them the same Porfirio Cruz that von Schmeling had suggested as a possible caretaker for the site. All of the landowners recognized what was expected of them, and dutifully swore under oath that no construction materials had been taken from the site. Instead, several stated that they had willingly supplied the local government with loose stones from their own land, leaving the ruins untouched. Taken as a whole, however, the landholders' testimony tends to undermine rather than support the claims of local officials, as the various stories do not quite mesh together. Following López's lead, the farmer Fidelio Martínez stated that the ruins of Toniná had never been altered by the extraction of construction materials, and in any case "were nothing but some caves."[63] Áureo Cruz made the slightly different claim that "the disperfections demonstrated in the ruins have been occasioned by the passage of time," phrasing that was repeated verbatim by Porfirio Cruz and José Román Estrada.[64] Lisandro de Célis offered yet another variation on the theme composed by López, stating that the ruins were in "perfect condition."[65] The inconsistencies in these statements made by people who all lived within a few kilometers of Toniná – the site barely existed, that it had been damaged by natural forces, that it had not been damaged at all – strongly indicates that the witnesses were saying whatever they thought the authorities wanted to hear.

Besides these judicial declarations, meant for the consumption of state and federal authorities, López also pressed his offensive in the regional media. A September 14 letter to the newspaper *El Heraldo de Chiapas*, signed by twenty-five people residing in the area of Ocosingo, contested the truth of the allegations made in *El Imparcial*. According to the letter's signatories, who included López, several other municipal functionaries, and the farmers called to give judicial testimony, local authorities had undertaken "energetic measures for the conservation of the aforementioned ruins, which, with respect to the truth, do not deserve the pompous name of 'archaeological monuments,' being merely a few unimportant caves." Construction of town buildings was carried out either with ordinary bricks, or occasionally with the stones "found in abundance in the fields" of Áureo Cruz and Fidelio Martínez. The letter concluded with a remarkably brazen flourish, a request that Instrucción Pública send "a person competent to assess these monuments."[66] In effect, local authorities dared federal bureaucrats to

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[63] "*Interrogado conforme al tenor de la nota que motiva estas diligencias, contesta: que conoce dichas ruinas…aclarando para mayor inteligencia que tales ruinas no son más que unas cuevas.*" Testimony of Fidelio Martínez, given in Ocosingo on September 20, 1909, copied by Abraham Suárez, September 28, 1909, copied in a letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. Ibid., f. 16.

[64] "*Interrogado conforme el tenor de la nota que motiva estas diligencias contesta: que en ningún caso las autoridades y particulares de esta Cabecera han extraído lajas de las ruinas de "Toniná" para pavimento, que si bien es cierto que existen en esta población algunas piedras, és que él las ha facilitado gratuitamente pues hay algunas hasta ahora en la superficie de su terreno: que los desperfectos que demustran las mencionados ruinas han sido ocasionados por el tiempo.*" Testimony of Áureo Cruz, given in Ocosingo on September 20, 1909, copied by Abraham Suárez, September 28, 1909, copied in a letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. Ibid., fs. 16-7.

[65] "*Interrogado conforme al tenor de la nota que motiva estas diligencias, contesta: que conoce las ruinas de 'Tonina,' pues están á un kilómetro de distancia de su finca á dichas ruinas: que las referidas ruinas están en perfecto estado, sin haberse extraído material alguno*…" Testimony of Lisandro de Célis, given in Ocosingo on September 21, 1909, copied by Abraham Suárez, September 28, 1909, copied in a letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. Ibid., f. 18.

[66] "*Hemos tenido oportunidad de leer en el periódico "El Imparcial" que se edita en la ciudad de México, correspondiente al 29 del mes próximo pasado, un artículo en que se asegura que la autoridad política y vecinos de esta cabecera han extraído lajas de las ruinas de Toniná…declaramos solemne y honradamente que tal versión es*

challenge their word. As López and Suárez must have suspected would happen, federal officials chose to fold rather than call the bluff.

Faced with this well-coordinated local response, which masked disregard for archaeological preservation under protestations of strict respect for federal law, Instrucción Pública officials apparently decided not to inquire further into what had occurred at Toniná. Despite the ministry's previous request that Benito Lacroix investigate at the site and take statements from witnesses, no action was taken when Batres presented Instrucción Pública with a prospective budget for Lacroix's trip. Neither Batres nor Lacroix pressed the issue, and federal correspondence related to Toniná simply lapsed. In comparison to well-entrenched local bosses the national government proved to be an uncertain intercessor, unable either to resolve the tangle of contradictory statements or to forcibly impose its own authority over the site. Instrucción Pública officials settled for the appearance of local compliance with federal demands, unwilling to risk a protracted fight which they had no guarantee of winning.

From a broader perspective, however, the events at Toniná fit within the same arc as those at Teotihuacán and Mitla. In all three cases, traditional uses of pre-Hispanic ruins continued to some degree throughout the Porfiriato, but became subject to greater controversy and federal interference over time. The fact of the Inspección and the presence of its officials on the ground meant that sites and activities which had once passed almost unnoticed were now targets of federal scrutiny. Increased attention to the material remains of the past also stemmed from the popular dissemination of archaeological literature, images, and concepts, as some private citizens or local officials began to express concern for archaeological preservation. Regardless of whether these concerns were genuine or vehicles for some other agenda, their expression testifies to the growing prominence of archaeology within Mexican culture and politics.

In order to translate federal policies into meaningful change at the sites, however, it was necessary for the Inspección and local communities to act in concert. Without the assistance or acquiescence of local leaders, federal archaeological authorities lacked the ability to control day-to-day behavior at pre-Hispanic sites. Even Batres, with his strong authoritarian streak, recognized the practical value of co-optation, negotiation, and strategic retreat. Local communities therefore exercised considerable influence over the implementation of archaeological policy, even as the baseline slowly shifted over the years towards greater federal control. Perhaps the greatest asset the Inspección possessed, then, was the institutional longevity that allowed its gains to compound over time. No struggle was definitive, and many were unsuccessful. However, each interaction provided the Inspección with a toehold in local communities, making greater gains conceivable in the future.

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calumniosa, pues nos consta que la autoridad de referencia ha distado medidas enérgicas para la conservación de las citadas ruinas, que, en honor á la verdad, no merecen el pomposo nombre de "monumentos arqueológicos" siendo únicamente unas cuevas sin importancia. – Es cierto que el cabildo y algunas casas particulares están embanquetadas, pero éstas son de ladrillo común y las pocas lajas que se han empleado han sido obsequiadas por los señores Aureo Cruz y Fidelio Martinez por encontrarse en abundancia en los terrenos de dichos señores. – Ojalá que la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes mandara á una persona competente á calificar tales monumentos y así podría apreciar nuestros agradecimientos…" Letter from Raúl C. Aguilar, et al., to the director of the *Heraldo de Chiapas*, sent September 14, 1909, published September 23, 1909, copied in a letter from Batres to SIPBA, November 25, 1909. Ibid., fs. 19-20.

II. Symbolic and Spiritual Uses of the Past

Emblematic Re-Use of the Material Past

The dismantling and destruction of material objects was usually carried out in the pursuit of economic interests, but such activities can also possess symbolic or spiritual meaning.[67] In Mexico and elsewhere, local residents have chosen to draw selectively from the material remains of the past in order to form their own buildings and structures, and to express particular conceptions of the relationship between past and present. Some of these choices encoded contempt for the ideas and creations of the past, or pride in the triumph of one faction or civilization over another. Others expressed respect for the achievements of bygone peoples, honoring and cherishing their lives and values. Still other choices were made without a conscious evaluation of past societies, but rather in response to a sense of aesthetic appreciation, curiosity, or wonder. A kaleidoscopic range of local attitudes existed towards the artifacts of previous ages, shifting and rearranging according to personality and circumstance.

In a discussion of the selective reuse of ruins in the Near East, Wendy M. K. Shaw stresses the symbolic freight carried by ancient materials. She notes that in the Ottoman Empire, "The incorporation of Hellenistic sculptures and architectural fragments in buildings of many types probably served practical, aesthetic, and metaphysical functions." Besides "a shrewd act of recycling," the "collection of antiquities and their reuse suggested the power of ownership and sometimes even of conquest," as well as "[encouraging] aesthetic appreciation on the part of the public."[68] The emblematic inclusion of antique objects occurred in Mexican constructions as well, with the Templo Mayor of the Aztecs as perhaps the most famous example. The temple's "offertory caches" included items from the long-abandoned city of Teotihuacán, while in the aftermath of the Spanish conquest its stones and sculptures were used in several nearby buildings, such as the palace of the counts of Santiago Calimaya and the Metropolitan Cathedral.[69] Both the Aztecs and the Spanish metaphorically absorbed the productions of earlier

[67] Economic and symbolic uses of ruins can also coexist. For example, while the lime burners of Rome had obvious financial motivations for their activities, they may also have been expressing a sense of religious devotion. "In a 1416 letter, the Roman Cencio de'Rustici complained that "Every day you see citizens (if indeed a man should be called a citizen who is so degraded by abominable deeds) demolishing the Ampitheater or the Hippodrome or the Colosseum or statues or walls made with marvelous skill and marvelous stone and showing that old and almost divine power and diginity…But if anyone asks these men why they are led to destroy marble statues, they answer that they abominate the images of false gods. Oh voice of savages, who flee from one error to another! For it is not contrary to our religion if we contemplate a statue of Venus or of Hercules made with the greatest of skill and admire the almost divine art of the ancient sculptors. But mistakes of this kind are to be blamed not only on those we have just mentioned but on the former governors of the city and on the popes, who have continually consented to this destructive behavior which lowers the dignity of mankind." "Cincius Romanus to his most learned teacher Franciscus de Fiana," in *Two Renaissance Book Hunters: The Letters of Poggius Bracciolini to Nicolaus de Niccolis; translated from the Latin and annotated*, ed. and trans. Phyllis Walter Goodhart Gordan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 189-190.

[68] Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 43.

[69] For a discussion of pre-Aztec artifacts in the Templo Mayor, including "a small Olmec-style greenstone maskette," see Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, trans. Doris Heyden, *The Great Temple of the Aztecs: Treasures of Tenochtitlan* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), 113-5. The Aztecs also reabsorbed their own material past. Samuel Edgerton writes that "Archaeologists excavating preconquest ruins in Mexico have frequently found

civilizations in their own building works, although the Spanish approach was far more violent and absolute.[70]

Even John Lloyd Stephens and Desiré Charnay, who often deprecated local connections to the material remains of the past, sometimes recognized relationships between individuals, communities and pre-Hispanic monuments that were far more complicated than neglect or careless vandalism. Stephens felt "obliged to say that the Indians and people of Palenque really know nothing of the ruins personally," but also mentioned that a pair of carved stone tablets had "been removed from their place [in the ruins] to the village, and set up in the wall of a house as ornaments…The house belonged to two sisters, who [had] an exaggerated idea of the value of these tablets; and, though always pleased with our coming to see them, made objections to having them copied."[71] In an 1860s visit to the town of Piste, close to the site of Chichén Itzá, the French explorer Désiré Charnay noticed that the town church was constructed of stones taken from the ruins. He remarked on the "great beauty" of the building's bas-reliefs, which showed warriors with feathered headdresses, "bizarre hairstyles," and pierced noses.[72]

Charnay also took note of another case of architectural appropriation in Palenque, where the sisters who jealously defended their Mayan tablets had once lived. In 1881 the army engineer Lorenzo Pérez Castro, sent by the government to accompany and monitor Charnay's travels and excavations, recorded that the French explorer was making a mold of stones once used to decorate the ruined building known as the Temple of War, "which having been brought to a private residence in this town many years ago, is today found in the façade of the church, substituting for the statues of the saints that generally decorate that type of façade."[73] Seventeen years later, Batres reported that the pre-Hispanic tablets were still embedded on either side of the

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evidence of what they call 'termination rituals,' whereby debris from early temples about to be rebuilt or replaced was carefully preserved under the replacing structures. The old buildings were thus 'buried' just as reverentially as the remains of deceased ancestors. An example can be seen today in the several restored and now exposed building stages of the Aztec Templo Mahor in Mexico City, where the Indians ritually interred statues and other remnants from each prior temple as they rebuilt and enveloped it with a subsequent 'onion skin' enlargement." Samuel Y. Edgerton, *Theaters of Conversion: Religious Architecture and Indian Artisans in Colonial Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 47-9.

[70] For example, in the "convento at Izamal, Yucatán…a fragment of preconquest sculpture depicting the prominent fang-tooth features of the Maya rain god Chac was deliberately set as a stepping stone in the threshold of the entrance portal as a symbol of the old religion having been vanquished by the new…This, of course, echoed an ancient practice during the conversion of pagan Rome when *spolia* from the old classical temples were promiscuously used as building material for the first Christian churches." Ibid., 47.

[71] John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*, vol. 2 (New York: Dover, 1969), 304 and 352.

[72] "*J'examinai l'église, entièrement composée de pierres enlevées aux temples et aux palais dont j'allais étudier les ruines. Il y avait là de fort jolies choses: de petits bas-reliefs représentant des guerriers dans toutes les positions, la tête ornée de plumes et de coiffures bizarres, le nez percé d'une pierre ou d'un morceau de bois*." Désiré Charnay, *Le Mexique: souvenirs et impressions de voyage* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1863), 232.

[73] "*…y que habiendose traido á una casa particular de este pueblo, hace muchos años, hoy se encuentran en la fachada de la iglesia sustituyendo á las estatuas de los santos que generalmente adornan á esa clase de fachada*." Diary for December, sent by Lorenzo Pérez Castro to SIPBA, January 1, 1881. AGN-IPBA, caja 146, exp. 22, f. 86.

church's front door, "two most beautiful stones with bas-reliefs representing human figures. The stone on the left is shattered and that on the right side has been kept in good condition."[74]

The presence of pre-Hispanic decorations on Catholic churches was a fairly common sight, owing to the choices made by indigenous builders and the willingness of colonial missionaries "to take advantage of that mysterious but natural phenomenon whereby a new shrine founded upon an earlier holy site osmotically assumes the latter's hallowedness even when the old cult has been supplanted." Samuel Edgerton writes that

> Most of the convento edifices in Mexico were built directly on or near the foundations of preconquest temples from which building stones were often quarried and embedded in the fabric of the new building…From the native Indian mason's point of view, placing visible chunks of their old temples in the walls of the new churches was not necessarily a desecration but a preservation of sacred material, reinvesting the succeeding shrine with the primordial sanctity of the old, as in the seventeenth-century church at Teotitlán del Valle Oaxaca, where pieces of preconquest Zapotec sculpture with the figured sides conspicuously can be seen imbedded on the façade.[75]

The centuries-old presence of pre-Hispanic workmanship within Catholic buildings was disrupted, however, by the combination of archaeological nationalism and Liberal anticlericalism. To members of the Porfirian archaeological establishment, pre-Hispanic artifacts belonged in churches no more than would the Plan de Ayutla. Although the Palenque tablets appear to have remained in place on the church walls, members of the archaeological bureaucracy were more than willing to remove pre-Hispanic artifacts from other religious establishments.

The extraction of pre-Hispanic objects took place with little concern for the settings in which the artifacts were placed. In 1893, Batres noticed a "lovely monument" in the Mixcoac parish church, which he believed to be a *cuauhxicalli*, one of the ceremonial receptacles in which Nahua priests deposited human blood and hearts after sacrifice. Batres collected this object from the church, and arranged for its acquisition by the Museo Nacional. [76] Similarly, when Batres found a carved ring from a Mesoamerican ball court leaning against the tower of the Iztapalapa parish church in 1904, he requested $20 from Instrucción Pública to collect the artifact and transport it to the Museo Nacional.[77] The removal of these artifacts seems to have gone more smoothly than attempts to collect a carved block inserted in the corner of the Post Office building

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[74] "*A los lados de la puerta principal de la iglesia de Santo Domingo de Palenque se hallan empotrados en el muro, formando tableros, dos hermosísimas lápidas con bajo relieves representando figuras humanas. La lápida del lado izquierdo está estrellada y la del lado derecho se conserva en buen estado.*" Report from Batres to SIPBA, January 28, 1898. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 16, f. 45.

[75] Edgerton, *Theaters of Conversion*, 47.

[76] "*El año pasado recojí de la parroquia de Mixcoac un precioso monumento…Seguramente en éste receptáculo depositaban la sangre y corazones de las víctimas sacrificados en la fiesta cíclica y le llamaban cuauhxicalli.*…." Letter from Batres to SJIP, March 3, 1893. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 15, f. 1. Receipt of the object was acknowledged in a letter from Manuel Urbina at the Museo Nacional to SJIP, April 13, 1893. Ibid., f. 3.

[77] Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 19, 1904. AGN-IPBA, caja 167bis, exp. 71, f. 1. Instrucción Pública's response on April 22 asked Batres to send photographs of the object so that the agency might make a more informed decision. Idem., f. 2.

in Tula, Hidalgo. (Batres, realizing that the building was privately owned, discussed arrangements to indemnify the propietor for "the damage caused by the extraction of the stone.")[78] In this case, the fact of private ownership seems to have stalled the process of extraction, as it proved more burdensome to acquire the necessary permissions from Sra. Virginia Santillana than from members of the Catholic hierarchy.[79]

Members of the capital's archaeological establishment took a particular interest in the Corpus Christi church of Tlalnepantla, a short trip away in the state of México. Originally established as a monastery during the sixteenth century, the church contained a number of artifacts and decorative features that dated from before or soon after the Conquest. In December 1907 a party from the Museo Nacional visited the church to examine, measure, photograph, and take molds of "some monoliths of great archaeological importance."[80] The group included Lic. Ramón Mena, Professor of Archaeology in the National Museum, Assistant Professor of Archaeology Isabel Ramírez Castañeda, the students Porfirio Aguirre, Carlos Solórzano Morfín and Manuel Gamio, as well as a photographer, stenographer, and two assistants. Over the course of the day, the party took careful note of a stone embedded in an exterior pilaster and carved with indigenous symbols, a stele carved with a hieroglyphic symbol placed over the church door, and various pink granite blocks found "interesting for having used the Acatl or Xochitl hieroglypics among the Churrigueresque ornamentation."[81] They also engaged in an "animated discussion" on whether the church's baptismal font and another basin containing holy water had originally been cuauhxicallis, listened to Mena discourse on Nahua cosmogony, and took a group photo in front of the main entrance before returning to Mexico City.[82]

In a subsequent report, Ramírez Castañeda argued that while the fonts were likely designed for use in Catholic ceremonies by "converted Indians," rather than being repurposed cuauhxicallis, they were "of great value because they appear to have been contemporaneous with the first Augustinian friars."[83] She also discussed the stone incorporated into the pilaster, and

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[78] "*…en la esquina de una de las casas del pueblo se encontraba empotrada una gran piedra de forma rectangular con geroglíficos…se hacía indispensable desprenderla del lugar en que se halla, indemnizado al dueño de la casa del perjuicio que se le haga con la extracción de la piedra*." Letter from Batres to SIPBA, July 25, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 22, f. 1.

[79] "*La finca de que se trata es propiedad de la señora Virginia Santillana, lo que me permito poner en conocimiento de Ud. por si estimaré conveniente hacer las gestiones del caso con dicha señora*." Letter from Fernández at the Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas to SIPBA, September 14, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 31, f. 5. Museum subdirector Genaro García wrote to Santillana, but does not appear to have received a response. Letter from García to SIPBA, October 7, 1908. Ibid., f. 7.

[80] "*Existen ahí, en la Parroquia, algunos monolitos de gran importancia arqueológica*." From a report written by Professor of Archaeology Ramón Mena, December 11, 1907, forwarded in a letter sent by Genaro García to SIPBA, December 20, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 8, f. 4.

[81] "*Empotradas en diversos lugares y á guisa de ornato se encontraron estelas de granito rosa, interesantes por tener la aplicación del geroglífico de Acatl ó de Xochitl en la ornamentación churrigueresca.*…" Ibid., f. 6.

[82] "*…ante este monumento se suscitó animada discusión referente á si el vaso era precortesiano ó postcortesiano y si era ó no un Cuauhxicalli, conviniéndose al fín en que la palabra Cuauhxicalli era nombre común á este género de vasos y que en atención á la forma, á la greca y á los cordones se trataba de un monumento adaptado y que en caso de ser postcortesiano, la manufactura resultaba netamente indígena.*" Ibid., f. 5.

strongly urged that it be removed and taken to the Museo, so that the artifact could be exhibited and all of its faces could be examined by experts.[84] In making this recommendation, Ramírez Castañeda made no mention of how such actions might be received by the church officials or parishioners. Her report was focused on the stylistic and historical qualities of the artifacts, as filtered through the writings of Sahagún, Veytia, Troncoso, Orozco y Berra, and other scholars past and present. The question of how the artifacts were currently being used fell outside the realm of consideration.

Such matters could not, however, be ignored when it came time for the federal government to actually take possession of the objects. In the spring of 1908 Batres made a pair of visits to Tlalnepantla to collect two stones inlaid in the church tower. After Batres removed the first stone, the governor of México state sent a telegram to Instrucción Pública questioning whether this action had been authorized. In a response marked "Urgent," Instrucción Pública responded that Batres was empowered to "explore archaeological monuments and…to enrich the Museo Nacional with archaeological specimens that are not part of similar monuments," and added that Batres was operating "with the support of the local political authority…and without the opposition of the church's priest."[85] The telegram painted one picture, but the precautions that Batres took before collecting the second stone painted another. A few weeks after the exchange between Instrucción Pública and the governor of México, Batres informed his superiors that he planned to soon return to Tlalnepantla, and asked that they notify the governor. He also asked for six rurales, or federal policemen, to be stationed in Tlalnepantla and placed under his orders, "in order to establish respect during the time required to extract the monument and transport it to Mexico City."[86] This request was granted, without comment.[87] The federal

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[83] "*Las fotografías 1 y 2 representan dos pilas, la primera está en el templo con agua bendita y la otra junto á una gran pila en el bautisterio, todos son de gran mérito porque parecen haber sido contemporaneos de los primeros frailes Agustinos que se establecieron en ese lugar tal vez dirigieron su ejecución ó quizá fueron donadas por algún cacique de aquella época… En mi concepto estas pilas son postcortesianas y trabajadas por indios conversos consistiendo en esto su inmenso valor.*" Report titled "Apuntes acerca de los monumentos de la Parroquia de Tlalnepantla," written by Isabel Ramírez Castañeda, Auxiliar de la Clase de Arqueología in the Museo Nacional, January 8, 1908, forwarded in a letter from García to SIPBA, January 13, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 154, exp. 2, fs. 4-5.

[84] "*De todos modo, convendría, si es posible, trasladarla al Museo Nacional para ser descrita con más seguridad y exhibida convenientemente… Es indispensable como antes dije, conocer toda la piedra porque quizá las caras no visibles sean el principio ó el complemento de los que las visibles contienen.*" Ibid., f. 6.

[85] "*En cumplimiento del deber de explorar los monumentos arqueológicos y con recomendación de procurar enriquecer el Museo Nacional con ejemplares arqueológicos que no formen parte de monumentos de la misma índole, el Inspector Leopoldo Batres procedió, con el apoyo de la autoridad política local de Tlalnepantla y sin que se opusiera á ello el Cura de al Iglesia á desprender la piedra incrustada en el edificio de ésta*." Telegram from SIPBA to Fernando González, governor of the state of Mexico, May 15, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 23, f. 3.

[86] "*…suplico á Vd. se sirva si lo tiene á bien acordar que se dé aviso al C. Gobernador del Estado de México que el juéves próximo se trasladará esta Inspección á Tlalnepantla con el fín indicado y al mismo tiempo se solicita de la Secretaría de Gobernacion se sitúen en el mencionado Tlalnepantla seis rurales á las órdenes del Inspector General de Monumentos Arqueológicos á fín de que se sirvan de respeto durante el tiempo que se necesite para extraer el monumento y se traslade á México...*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, May 30, 1908. Ibid., f. 4.

[87] Letter from Ramón Corral at Gobernación to SIPBA, June 2, 1908. Ibid., f. 7.

archaeological establishment could enforce its will in Tlalnepantla for the time required to collect the stones, but it apparently could not do so with popular consent derived from recognized legitimacy. Even officials in México's state government were dubious that Batres actually possessed the powers which he claimed for himself.

Batres also valued the protection of archaeological monuments above the physical integrity of the church of the Virgén de los Remedios in Cholula, which stood on the summit of a large pyramid. In 1906 the church's priest wrote to Instrucción Pública, requesting permission to carry out repairs on the pyramid, in order to prevent a part of the church which stood above it from collapsing.[88] Upon visiting the site, however, Batres decided that the structure in danger of falling was "a terrace that does not form a substantial part of the church, nor is it necessary for the church's stability," and that "the church itself has no merit as a historical construction nor as art, as it is a modern church in bad taste." Therefore, "a monument of the importance of the Pyramid should not be mutilated to assure the stability of a corridor or small terrace."[89] If the government decided otherwise, Batres wished to exercise full oversight over any proposed alterations to the pyramid, and suggested that any expenses he occurred in carrying out these duties be paid by the Cholula chaplaincy. This did not prove necessary, however, as Instrucción Pública concurred with Batres and denied the priest permission to carry out the requested repairs.[90] While Batres may have used harsher language than that employed by his superiors, in this instance the values of the Inspector General and of the Ministry were well-aligned.

The presence of pre-Hispanic objects in buildings associated with Catholic worship was a reminder of the complex ongoing role of the past in the daily life of the Porfiriato. Through their long association with the Catholic faith – and even more importantly, their association with specific places of social and symbolic importance – the artifacts had become participants in the spiritual lives of local communities. Such participation, however, was generally outside the ken of the Porfirian archaeological establishment. Researchers, cultivated travelers and writers, and Instrucción Pública officials all took for granted that the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past should be accessible to the curious gaze of outsiders and the investigations of the scholarly community. Any restrictions to this access should come from archaeological officials, not disrespectful locals who threatened learned access to items of archaeological interest, or closed off possibilities for future study. Since the removal of artifacts from a church was generally short-term affair rather than a situation which called for ongoing maintenance of a site, and since it was easier to hold church authorities responsible for damage to pre-Hispanic sites than unknown peasants, this sort of encounter required less negotiation and compromise between federal and local factions. When dealing with the emblematic re-use of pre-Hispanic artifacts, therefore, members of the archaeological bureaucracy tended to assume that only the

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[88] "*…la pirámide sobre cuya cinta existe el templo, amenaza ruina inminente por el lado Oriental, á tal grado que el templo se encuentra en el mismo peligro… Pido: que Usted se digne concederme permiso ó autorizarme para que pueda dar principio á las obras de reparación del monumento arqueológico é histórico existente en esta Ciudad*…" Letter from Fr. Juan de la Cruz Bueno, Presbítero, to SIPBA, December 25, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 168, exp. 36, f. 1.

[89] "*Esta Inspección juzga que como se trata simplemente de impedir que se caiga una terraza que no forma parte sustancial del templo ni de su estabilidad, y que aún el mismo templo no tiene mérito alguno como construcción histórica ni como arte, pues es un templo moderno de mal gusto cree que no se debe mutilar un monumento de la importancia de la Pirámide para asegurar la estabilidad de un corredor ó pequeña terraza.*" Letter from Batres to SIPBA, February 25, 1907. Ibid., f. 5.

[90] Letter from SIPBA to Juan Cruz Bueno, March 7, 1907. Ibid., f. 7.

intervention of enlightened Liberal state power could redeem Mexico's cultural patrimony from the improper behaviors that threatened it.

Spirits, Veneration, and the Supernatural

The incorporation of pre-Hispanic stonework and artifacts into locations of Catholic worship naturally leads to the question of whether the objects' presence represented the fragmentary survival or continued secret practice of traditional Mesoamerican religions. This question has a lengthy pedigree, as concerns about sincerity, syncretism, and the spiritual power of pre-Hispanic objects arose during the initial missionary campaigns in New Spain, and continued to vex spiritual and political leaders well into the independence era.[91] We have already seen the unease provoked by indigenous interest in the excavated statue of Coatlicue, and the Creole fear that the struggle for independence would culminate in a "return to pagan antiquity." In the nineteenth century, however, fear of indigenous spirituality partly gave way to fascination. Travelers such as John Lloyd Stephens fostered a romantic hope of discovering "lost tribes" who still maintained the ancient rituals, although he was regularly disappointed with how little the Mayas he spoke with seemed to know or care about nearby ruins.[92] By the 1920s, a "former director of the National Museum" could offer a matter-of-fact (and literal) endorsement of the view that there were "idols behind altars." According to the U.S. writer Anita Brenner, the unnamed Museum director claimed '"Of course the Indians are not Christians. Certainly they worship idols, inside and outside the churches'…And then he tells one of his startling stories, with relish that of a miraculous Lord, served by many devotees all over the state of Michoacán. His altar was always covered with offerings…Until once, when the ancient altar-piece cracked. In the course of repairs an idol nearly a yard high was found…the idol was carted to a museum; whereupon promptly, devotion ceased."[93] Whether or not metropolitan observers regarded the endurance of pre-Hispanic religious practices as threatening, many found the phenomenon to be wholly plausible.

The confident identification of pre-Hispanic "survivals," however, tends to gloss over the intricacies and ambiguities of lived spiritual experience, and the ways that beliefs evolve or mutate over time. Three hundred years of colonial history, plus the upheavals and painful social realignments of the nineteenth century, transformed the spiritual landcapes that had existed

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[91] See Serge Gruzinski, trans. Heather MacLean, *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to* Blade Runner *(1492-2019)* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 30-60 and Terry Rugeley, *Of Wonders and Wise Men: Religion and Popular Cultures in Southeast Mexico, 1800-1876* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 112-133.

[92] Stephens believed that a "*mysterious city never reached by a white man, but still occupied by Indians precisely in the same state as before the discovery of America*" might exist in the wilderness "*beyond the Lake of Peten*," a view also held by many other "*intelligent persons*" in Mérida. John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*, Vol. II (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), 128. Stephens also wrote that "*It is my belief that within this region cities like those we have seen in ruins were kept up and occupied for a long time, perhaps one or two centuries, after the conquest, and that, down to a comparatively late period, Indians were living in them, the same as before the discovery of America. In fact, I conceive it to be not impossible that within this secluded region may exist at this day, unknown to white men, a living aboriginal city, occupied by relics of the ancient race, who still worship in the temples of their fathers.*" Ibid., 280.

[93] Anita Brenner, *Idols Behind Altars* (New York: Biblio and Tannen, 1928), 143-4.

before the Conquest and allowed distinctive new understandings to emerge. These beliefs and practices drew from both European and indigenous American traditions, but represented a straightforward continuation of neither. Instead, they expressed the needs, obligations, desires, idiosyncrasies, fears, and daily lives of local communities. Nineteenth and early twentieth-century beliefs concerning nearby pre-Hispanic monuments should therefore be addressed primarily in their own right, rather than as fossilized relics of a pre-colonial world.

Comparatively few cases exist of federal-local conflicts centering around the spiritual properties of pre-Hispanic objects. In her article "*Forjando Patrimonio*: The Making of Archaeological Patrimony in Porfirian Mexico," Christina Bueno identifies three "cases of resistance to Batres," involving monuments from the sites of Teotihuacán, Tepozteco, and Xochicalco.[94] Local opposition to the removal of the "Goddess of Water" statue from Teotihuacán was mentioned above. The second case involved the removal of artifacts from the community museum of Tepoztlán, objects that were important to residents of the town. At its core, though, the struggle stemmed more from archaeological rivalries and insults to local pride than from a sense of violated sanctity.[95] It was Tetlama, close to the ruins of Xochicalco, which offered the strongest example of a community that resisted the Inspección in order to sustain the spiritual use of a pre-Hispanic monument.

The town's attachment to the nearby ruins was strong. Ethel Tweedie recorded a speech made to her at Xochicalco, in which the "spokesman" of Tetlama pronounced, "Señora, you must remember that five thousand years ago, when England was unknown, our ancestors raised these ruins."[96] Pride in the area's heritage was combined with veneration of a pre-Hispanic goddess sculpture known locally as "La India," which was also identified at various times as the Aztec deities Tonantzín and Xochiquetzal.[97] When Batres attempted to transport this figure to the Museo Nacional in 1896, he encountered multiple levels of resistance from local, regional and state authorities. Morelos officials clearly understood, as the Inspector General did not, the deep offense and resentment that would be caused by the monolith's removal.

When Batres arrived in Tetlama with a crew of workers, he was soon met by a town official who requested that he halt his operations and leave immediately. The official presented Batres with a written order from the jefe político of Cuernavaca, which claimed that Instrucción Pública had not obtained proper authorization from the state government. Batres, in turn, did not believe that he was required to do more than politely inform the governor of his intentions, as the Inspección was "carrying out its legitimate functions in an exclusively federal sphere." The confrontation must have been tense, as Batres states that he left because "I did not have the

[94] Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*," 245.

[95] Ibid., 239.

[96] Tweedie, 332. A 1989 *Newsweek* article expresses similar contradictions. "Even some who have appropriated ancient stones have come to appreciate the need to preserve them. Vicente Us-Kach, a 50-year-old carpenter from Vicente Guerrero, pauses each morning to admire the way the rising sun illuminates the feathers and lance of an ancient hunter carved on a block moved to his backyard by his father. 'Someone once came and asked me to sell the blocks,' Us-Kach says…'But when my father died, that stone was still here for me to enjoy, and when I die I want it to be here for my boys to see.'" Tim Padgett, "Walking on Ancestral Gods; Using Mayan ruins for patios and pig troughs," *Newsweek*, October 9, 1989, 83.

[97] Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*," 244-5.

armed force to make my official character respected."[98] As Batres tried to resolve the matter with state officials, the community members of Tetlama took matters into their own hands. The conserje of Xochicalco telegramed Batres about a week after the standoff in Tetlama to inform him that a group of "sixty Indians" had removed the statue from its accustomed place and carried it towards the town, an action that the town council claimed was ordered by the state government.[99] For his part, Morelos governor Manuel Alarcón seems to have deployed the classic bureaucratic technique of strategic inaction. He first stalled by responding in "vague terms" to a telegram in which a furious Batres outlined the entire situation "in minute detail (*minuciosamente*)," then offered only a simple acknowledgement of receipt to a subsequent letter from Instrucción Pública.[100] As months passed, Batres remained ignorant of the monument's new location, and unable to secure assistance from either state authorities or from his own superiors at Instrucción Pública, who seemingly let the matter lapse.[101]

When Batres eventually tried to secure the statue again, in the spring of 1910, he was frustrated on that occasion as well. The new Morelos governor Pablo Escandón, generally remembered as a Díaz lackey whose incompetence helped to spur revolutionary uprisings, was sufficiently impressed with the gravity of Tetlama's complaint that he wrote to Instrucción Pública to ask that the statue be allowed to remain in place and to warn against provoking the residents of the town. Batres unconvincingly argued that the community was "completely indifferent to La India's removal," but again failed to carry the day.[102] In early 1911, Batres made yet another attempt to take the statue, this time resting his claims on a letter signed by local residents. This letter attested that the community did not oppose the object's removal, and would

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[98] "*Le pregunté que ¿Que autoridad tenia para atropellar asi á la Ynspeccion de Monumentos que ejercia sus legítimos funciones en dominios exclusivamente federales?... Como no tenia yo fuerza armada para hacer respetar mi caracter oficial, regresé á Cuernavaca con el fin de hablar con el C. Gobernador*…" Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 19, 1896. AGN-IPBA, caja 166, exp. 52, f. 3.

[99] "*Ayer sesenta indígenas llevaban estatua Xochicalco rumbo Tetlama; dijo Ayuntamiento Municipal que llevarian orden superior.*" Telegram from Jesús Moreno Flores to Batres, January 20, 1896, copied in letter from Batres to SJIP, January 20, 1896. Ibid., f. 5.

[100] "*…dirijí al C. Gobernador que se hallaba en Cuautla, atento telegrama explicándole minuciosamente los hechos, al cual contestó este funcionario, en términos vagos diciendome que no tenia ningun aviso de la Secretaria de Justicia.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, January 19, 1896. Ibid., f. 4. On February 15, 1896, Instrucción Pública sent the governor of Morelos a copy of the letter permitting Batres to remove the statue, receipt of which was acknowledged by the governor's office on February 26, 1896. Ibid., fs. 7-8.

[101] "*Como esta Ynspeccion ignora el paradero del monumento juzga muy dificil llevar adelante el acuerdo del C. Presidente si no se le ordena al C. Gobernador del Estado entregue á esta Ynspeccion la referida estatua y para evitar nuevas dificultades me permito indicar á V. la conveniencia que habría de comunicar al Gobierno del Estado el nombramiento de Ynspector y Conservador de Monumentos arqueológicos y sus atribuciones, lo mismo que el nombramiento del Conserge de las ruinas de Xochicalco.*" Letter from Batres to SJIP, April 8, 1896. Ibid., f. 9.

[102] Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*," 244. John Womack provides a damning summation of Escandón's tenure in office: "Escandón thought he governed Morelos well, but in the two years he held office, he snapped the few remaining threads of civic forbearance. Already by mid-1910 the result of his unjust and inept policies was clear: bitterness had not run so deep in Morelos since the War of Intervention…He had practically wrecked the state's political system, and in one district he even provoked an agrarian uprising. When Escandón fled in terror in March 1911, the particular crisis he escaped was months old and largely of his own making." John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 37.

even provide labor to help transport "La India" to Mexico City – in two months' time. Since this offer was made very shortly before Porfirio Díaz resigned from office, it is quite possible that community members were simply stalling in the hopes that their antagonists would soon be removed from power.[103] At any event, the proposed transfer did not occur. Instead, the town kept the monument until 1930, when it was given a prominent place in the state capital of Cuernavaca.[104] This result underscores the town's determination to maintain its traditional use of a pre-Hispanic monument. Faced with the fierce resistance of a community that successfully mobilized the support of state authorities, the archaeological bureaucracy found itself stymied.

While the open struggle that occurred at Tetlama was unique, other evidence exists to indicate that pre-Hispanic sites were often treated as places of spiritual power, and perhaps of spiritual danger.[105] In a discussion of twentieth-century rites carried out at pre-Hispanic sites in the Yucatán peninsula, the historian Nancy Farriss argues that such practices represent "the magical level of Maya religion, the domain not of the major deities to whom the temples…were originally dedicated but of the *aluxes*, the *chaacs*, the *balams*, and other local spirits."[106] In the nineteenth century, metropolitan observers such as Stephens and Charnay noted that local residents were sometimes wary around pre-Hispanic ruins, and categorized such behaviors as examples of native superstition (or, oddly enough, as evidence of apathy). After examination of the ruins of Zayí, Stephens wrote that "It was strange and almost incredible that, with these extraordinary monuments before their eyes, the Indians never bestowed upon them one passing thought. The question, who built them? Never by any accident crossed their minds…to all our questions we received the same dull answer which first met us at Copan, 'Quien sabe?' 'Who knows?'" However, Stephens claimed in the same paragraph that the Maya workers "believed

[103] AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 34.

[104] Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*," 245.

[105] This perspective is in keeping with descriptions of modern Maya attitudes towards pre-Hispanic sites. Based on interviews with residents of the Yucatecan city of Chemax, the geographer Denise Fay Brown describes three categories into which such sites might fall. "One includes those sites that are seen to be ruins of large cities which had kings. Stone and clay figures are found at these sites, representing the old inhabitants whose punishment was to be transformed into these materials. Local informants call these figures *aluxes* and attribute to them any mischief and misfortune that befalls the hunter and agriculturalist in the forest…A second category includes sites local people consider to have been cursed at one time but have now lost their powers. According to an elderly informant, these are sites from which the clay and stone figures have been removed (retrieved and collected or sold). These are usually minor sites that did not have their own kings. It is said that they will not reemerge as important settlements in the cycle of time. The third category of sites comprises those places that have no powers, are not cursed, and therefore represent no danger to the present-day inhabitants of the zone." Denise Fay Brown, "Mayas and Tourists in the Maya World," *Human Organization*, Vol. 58, No. 3 (1999): 298. The anthropologist Nora Haenn has written that similar beliefs exist in southeastern Campeche, where "Spirits, known as *duendes* or *aluxes*, may live anywhere, but farmers associate them most commonly with forests and Mayan ruins." Nora Haenn, "The Power of Environmental Knowledge: Ethnoecology and Environmental Conflicts in Mexican Conservation," *Human Ecology*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1999): 480-1.

[106] Nancy Farriss, *Maya Society Under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 317. Farriss also notes that "The major deities, the territorial and ancestral gods of the corporate level, have been transferred to a Christian framework," but stresses that "No sharp division need exist between the magical level and the Christianized corporate level. It is only from an external perspective that the Maya appear to shift between paganism and Christianity…The new system was a creative synthesis that drew mainly on the indigenous tradition for its ideational structure and combined Christianity with paganism in varying strengths to devise new forms." Ibid., 317-8.

that the ancient buildings were haunted, and, as in the remote region of Santa Cruz del Quiché, they said that on Good Friday of every year music was heard sounding among the ruins."[107] Désiré Charnay, for his part, commented that Indian workers at Uxmal had a "mortal terror" of spending the night in the ruins. Charnay might have benefited from their caution, as his makeshift sleeping quarters in Uxmal's Nunnery building were soon disrupted by "torrential rain" and a swarm of bloodsucking insects.[108]

Stories also circulated about the presence of mysterious caves which connected some pre-Hispanic sites to others located many miles away, or tunnels which ran directly from far-flung locations to the nation's capital. Caves and subterranean spaces feature prominently in the spiritual vocabulary of Mesoamerica, and many pre-Hispanic sites did in fact contain underground structures, or buildings which had subsided over time. In 1906, the governor of Oaxaca forwarded Instrucción Pública a letter written by Juan Hernández, who resided in the village of Eloxochitlán. Hernández stated that an earlier "Scientific Commission named by the Ministry of Public Instruction" which explored a local cave had not penetrated the caverns' full extent. He claimed that the tunnels ran for kilometers, and related a local tradition that there had once been a kingdom in the area, whose king took refuge in the cave "in times of revolution, in order to have communication with the monuments that exist in the area of the "Montezuma" hill, where a great City is believed to have existed."[109] Likewise, an 1894 report on the site of Mitla mentioned that "the historians relate implausible legends" concerning a subterranean area at the site.[110] The individuals who passed these stories on to state authorities may not have believed in them personally, but still testified to the importance of some pre-Hispanic sites within local spiritual landscapes.

Finally, it should be noted that some local communities demonstrated an essentially spiritual reverance for objects of much more recent historical provenance, and protested attempts to remove such objects as vehemently as the villagers of Tetlama defended "La India." In the Guerrero town of Tepecuacuilco, for example, a priest who attempted to sell Zelia Nuttall some

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[107] Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Yucatán*, Vol. 2, 14.

[108] "*Je dormais seul dans le palais; les Indiens se refusèrent constamment à passer la nuit dans les ruines; l'idée seule leur inspirait une frayeur mortelle…Le troisième jour, je perdis à jamais ce doux repos; il y avait eu, vers les quatre heures, un orage épouvantable, accompagné d'une pluie torrentielle…Un bruit d'ailes remplissait la chambre, et, portant les mains au hasard, je sentis une multitude d'insectes froid et plats de la taille d'un grand cafard…Une grande quantité, parmi ceux du hamac, étaient gras, rebondis et gonflés du sang qu'ils m'avaient tiré; les murailles étaient couvertes de compagnons de même espèce, qui paraissaient attendre que leurs amis, rassasiés, leur cédassent la place.*" Charnay, *Le Mexique*, 271-2.

[109] "*De manera que el "Cerro del Agua Crecida" se halla traspasado de lado á lado por la concavidad; lo que está acorde con las noticias ó tradiciones relativas á que en éstos lugares existió un reynardo* [sic] *y que la Gruta le servía al Rey de refugio en tiempo de revolución, por tener comunicación con los monumentos que existen en el lugar "Moctezuma" donde se cree que existió una gran Ciudad.*" Letter from Juan Hernández to the governor of Oaxaca, January 26, 1906, copied in letter from the governor of Oaxaca to SJIP, February 21, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 151, exp. 11, f. 68.

[110] "*Frente al claro central, en la fachada principal está marcado la entrada á un subterraneo, provable sepulcro de los prohombres de aquella época, sobre el que los historiadores refieren leyendas inverosímiles, no habiendo sido hasta la fecha suficientemente explorado y cuya exploración, por considerarla de sumo interes, haré prévia autorización de V, con los gastos imprevistos del presupuestos.*" Letter from Mayor de Yngenieros Rodolfo Franco to the Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, March 31, 1894, copied in letter from Hinojosa at Guerra y Marina to SJIP, April 13, 1894. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 73, f. 14.

religious items, originally donated to the parish by José María Morelos, found himself confronted with an angry mob calling for his death. The event provoked a local "escandalito," as "the jefe político of Iguala accompanied by a force of Rurales" and the bishop of Chilapa took steps to resolve the situation, eventually forcing the foolhardy priest to "hand those objects over to the authorities as they are historical relics and therefore belong to the Nation." [111] While it is hard to know whether non-religious objects associated with a prominent Independence leader would have inspired the same level of fervent devotion, the episode reminds us that spiritual significance might derive as much from connections to local history and pride as from offering a conduit to divine power.

III. Local Expertise and Archaeological Patriotism

Pride in local heritage was also manifested through participation in scholarship and preservationist activities. During the nineteenth century, amateur cultures of science grew up throughout western Europe and North America. As with the natural sciences, popular study of antiquities benefited from the growth of national scientific institutions, the increasing availability of published academic work, and cultural trends that encouraged the pursuit of learning as a respectable leisure activity for well-off men and women. In Porfirian Mexico, interest in the sites and artifacts of the pre-Hispanic past was also a means of expressing patriotism and pride in the nation's history.[112] The federal government's active identification with Mexico's indigenous past, and its glorification of that heritage in the National Museum, encouraged Mexican elites to pursue archaeological pastimes on their own. Outside the capital, however, archaeological studies might be used to promote specifically local or regional interests and aspirations. State and local elites formed bodies dedicated to the investigation and protection of regional treasures, using pre-Hispanic objects to establish or promote the special qualities of a particular area. By participating in the formation of a museum or archaeological society, local notables could both align themselves with the projects of the national state, and assert the particular worth and distinctive culture of their home regions.

The Porfiriato saw the formation of various local and regional museums containing "historical" collections, including institutions located in Michoacán and Oaxaca (the Museo Yucateco was slightly older, having been established in the 1860s).[113] Local elites also created

[111] "*El año de 1808* [sic – this is likely a typo for 1908] *el cura don José María Hernández vendió esas reliquias a la señora Celia Núttal* [sic], *pero el pueblo se opuso, y como el cura insistía en llevar adelante su compromiso con la señora Núttal, el pueblo se amotinó y pretendió materlo habiéndo sido necesario que el Jefe político de Iguala acompañado de una fuerza de Rurales hubiera ido a calmar el escandalito, pero ni con la presencia de la primera autoridad del Distrito y su tropa cedió el Cura alegando que Morelos había regalado esos objetos a la Parroquia y que él, como cura, estaba en su derecho para disponer de ellos como le conviniera y fué necesario que el señor Ibarra, obispo entonces de Chilapa, le ordenara por telégrafo que entregara aquellos objetos a las autoridades por ser reliquías históricas y por lo mismo pertenecientes a la Nación.*" Letter from J. M. de la Fuente to Bellas Artes, July 26, 1918. AGN-IPBA, caja 119bis, exp. 68, f. 6.

[112] "I have suggested that in many parts of nineteenth-century Spanish America the appreciation of preconquest artifacts by elites was prompted by both the development of archaeology as a scientific discipline and by the demands of the nationalist process itself. These forces combined to encourage an elite appreciation of pre-Columbian monuments and other preconquest antiquities." Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native: Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 158.

archaeological societies. In Nuevo León, which had few major pre-Hispanic sites but a burgeoning business class, a "Junta Arqueófila" was founded in 1907 "in order to procure the exploration of ancient monuments and their conservation, as well as the conservation where possible, of the natural beauties that exist in the State."[114] In 1909, the Junta Arqueófila gained permission from the federal government to conduct archaeological explorations, as long as its members operated within the framework of existing federal law.[115] In the same year, the Junta sponsored an exploratory visit to a newly discovered cave, accompanied by the mayor of the town where it had been discovered and "various neighbors."[116] The Junta's president proudly submitted a report of the excursion to the state government, lauding the cave's many beautiful features, and urging the governor to take measures to protect this natural wonder.[117] Governor Bernardo Reyes in turn forwarded the report to Instrucción Pública, which responded that the ministry considered "the conservation of the natural beauties of the country to be a matter of true importance," and stated that the ministry would study the matter in order to determine what steps to take.[118] While this endeavor on the part of the Junta Arqueófila did not involve the material past, the report demonstrated how local scholarship might be absorbed into federal administrative structures, to the general satisfaction of all parties.

Others chose to express archaeological interests in less structured ways, by forming personal collections. Pre-Hispanic objects given to the Museum were often discovered or excavated by the donors themselves. In the same manner as their contemporaries in western Europe and the United States, many Mexicans searched out artifacts, shards, and mounds in the countryside near their homes. Such activities allowed private citizens to form personal collections for enjoyment or display; to gain insight into the lives and cultures of pre-Hispanic peoples; to pick up some extra cash through sales to dealers, institutions, or other collectors, and to link themselves to the social and intellectual networks of a expanding academic discipline. Museum directors and Instrucción Pública officals gazed benignly upon the efforts of private collectors, and welcomed opportunities to acquire objects from them. In 1909, for example,

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[113] "Museos mexicanos creados entre 1850-1923," unnumbered pull-out chart in Miguel Ángel Fernández, *Historia de los museos de México* (Mexico City: Promotora de Comercialización Directa, 1987), between pages 174 and 175. Fernández notes that most of the museums founded during this period focused on the natural sciences.

[114] "*La Junta Arqueófila de Nuevo León que me honro de presidir, fundada en esta ciudad en veinte de junio de mil novecientos siete, con el objeto de procurar la exploración de monumentos antiguos y su conservación, así como también la conservación en los posible, de las bellezas naturales existentes en el Estado*…" Letter from Amado Fernández and Emilio Rodríguez to SIPBA, March 27, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 42, f. 1.

[115] Letter from Batres to SIPBA, June 24, 1909. Ibid., f. 3.

[116] "*Aprovechando su estancia en Bustamante algunos Miembros de la Junta Arqueófila, salieron el día 22 del actual, acompañados del Señor Alcalde primero de aquella Villa, y de varios vecinos á visitar una gruta descubierta hace poco tiempo, en la vertiente oriental de la Sierra de 'Gomas' y en el punto denominado 'Rincón del Palmito*.'" Report of the Junta Arqueófila de Nuevo León, submitted by Amado Fernández and Emilio Rodríguez, August 27, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 61, f. 2.

[117] Letter from Amado Fernández to governor of Nuevo León Bernardo Reyes, August 27, 1909, copied in letter from Reyes to SIPBA, September 12, 1909. Ibid., f. 1.

[118] "*…como esta Secretaría considera el asunto de la conservación de las bellezas naturales del país, de verdadera importancia, ya se estudia detenidamente el punto para resolver lo conveniente sobre el particular.*" Letter from SIPBA to Reyes, September 23, 1909. Ibid., f. 5.

Genaro García gave the Museum a stone "ídolo," which had been gifted to him by the man who discovered the object "in Tuxpan, Jalisco."[119] In the same year, Batres sent the Museum "a string of six bells found by the priest Ramón Ponce on the left bank of the Grijalva River."[120] As long as collectors did not remove materials from a recognized site guarded by the Inspección, cultural administrators do not appear to have worried overmuch about the assignment of provenience, or the disruption of the archaeological record.

Local archaeological advocacy also sometimes took the form of pressuring the government, in order to push its regulatory mechanisms into action and bring local sites or objects under the umbrella of Instrucción Pública.[121] Unlike the archaeological prospectors mentioned in the previous chapter, who sought economic rewards from the exploration of pre-Hispanic sites, these correspondents mentioned no desire for personal gain. Instead, they seem to have been motivated by pride in a local cultural heritage, and admiration of the great empires that once dominated the landscape. To these correspondants, it was only natural that the cultural mandarins of the capital would wish to inspect and honor artifacts which signified deep-rooted histories of ingenuity, craftsmanship, and endurance. One correspondent wrote, "By virtue of being Tlaxcalan, the author has the honor to inform the Ministry of Public Instruction, that in the direction of Cacaxtla there are various earthen mounds, which might contain archaeological monuments worthy of the truest admiration."[122] A resident of Malinalco told Instrucción Pública in December 1910 that "In this location there exist, ignored, archaeological ruins worthy of detailed examination…I believe that I am fulfilling my duty by placing this information before

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[119] "*…he donado á este Museo un ídolo de piedra…y que me fué obsequiado por el Sr. D. Primitivo Cárdenas, quien lo descubrió en Tuxpan, Jalisco.*" Letter from García to SIPBA, October 5, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 169, exp. 63, f. 1.

[120] "*Señor Don Leopoldo Batres, Inspector y Conservador General de Monumentos Arqueológicos, se ha servido remitir á esta Dirección con fecha 1.o de los corrientes, un sartal con seis cascabeles encontrados por el Señor Presbitero Ramón Ponce en la márgen izquierda del río Grijalva.*" Letter from García to SIPBA, June 7, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 41, f. 1.

[121] While the focus in this section is on local attempts to preserve the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past, it should be noted that some of those who wrote to Instrucción Pública advocated for the preservation of structures from the colonial or national periods. For instance, one letter-writer penned an eloquent plea for the protection of a colonial convent in his "*tierra natal*" of Tecali, Puebla, a building which he called "*suntuoso elegante y severo,*" with the potential to shed light on the spread of Iberian culture in New Spain. In shades of Mitla and Toniná, a local "*cacique*" was demolishing parts of the structure in order to put in a stable. The letter also mentioned pre-Hispanic constructions in the region, but the preservation of the convent was clearly the writer's greatest concern. Letter from Anselmo S. Nuñez to Justo Sierra, April 19, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 171, exp. 6, f. 3.

[122] "*El que suscrive por ciendo Tlaxcalteca, tiene la honra de participar a ese cecretaria de instruccion publica y bellas artes, que en el rumbo de Cacaxtla hay barios monticulos de tierra, que pueden contener monumentos arqueologicos de verdadera admiracion; y que seria para nuestro museo una notabilidad y por otro lado, e bisto dos mas de pequeña dimencion lo que espongo sera beneficio publico.*" Letter from Gregorio Contreras to SIPBA, April 3, 1908. AGN-IPBA, caja 155, exp. 34, f. 1. As it turns out, Contreras was entirely correct in his assertions. "Cacaxtla has attracted a great deal of attention since the discovery of murals there in 1975. It is clearly an exceptional site. Although known since the sixteenth century, its importance became evident only with the discovery of the murals…In 1975, looters tunneled into the mound now known as the Great Foundation searching for treasure. One morning their tunnel reached the wall with the painting of the Bird Man in Building A. The would-be looters realized it would be impossible to remove the mural intact and reported it to local authorities. Soon afterward, INAH learned of the discovery and archaeologists went to investigate." Kelly, *An Archaeological Guide*, 153 and 156.

your superior knowledge, since in my humble conception the aforementioned ruins are of much importance for the history and archaeology of the nation."[123] Far from resisting the impositions of the Inspección de Monumentos, these correspondents courted its attention.

In some cases, the decision to write to the federal government was triggered by a direct threat to local monuments. In early 1907, Rafael M. Ruiz of Xiutetelco, Puebla, urged Instrucción Pública to protect a cluster of pyramids, "which today are partly cultivated and partly covered with weeds (*montañosos*). This is a town believed to have been founded by the Toltecs, so it can therefore be inferred that they built these colossal works."[124] Although Batres failed to follow up on the matter, Ruiz proved persistent. In January of 1909 he wrote to Instrucción Pública again, warning that some of the monuments faced imminent destruction and prodding the federal government to fulfill its duty to investigate and safeguard the material remains of the past.[125] A month later Ruiz sent yet another letter, this time attaching a newspaper clipping from the February 2 edition of *El Imparcial* which described the damage done by recent excavations and the extraction of stone.[126] The prospect of public embarassment finally spurred Instrucción Pública officials to take action, and request that the governor of Puebla order local authorities to investigate the occurrences at Xiutetelco. The district's jefe político gave "the orders that [he] believed necessary to prevent the continuing destruction of the archaeological monuments," speculated that "these monuments probably enclose archaeological treasures," and stressed the "real importance" of the site in his letter to the governor.[127] Nevertheless, the federal government does not appear to have taken any further steps to assert control over the monuments. Although Instrucción Pública sent the jefe político's report to Batres, the Inspector General left this correspondence thread dangling as he did so many others. Preoccupied with the restoration of Teotihuacán for the upcoming centennial festivities, Batres apparently had little time or attention to spare for more obscure sites.

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[123] "*Existen en esta Localidad, ignoradas, unas ruinas arqueológicas dignas de una exploración minuciosa...Creo cumplir con mi deber al poner ésto en su superior conocimiento; siendo, en mi humilde concepto, las expresadas ruinas, de mucha importancia para la Historia y la Arqueología de la Nación.*" Letter from Alberto Fernández to SIPBA, December 5, 1910. AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 101, f. 1.

[124] "*Como U. imparte protección á monumentos antiguos sería de desearse diera algna disposicion á fin de conserbar dichas monumentos que hoy estan en parte cultivados y otros montañosos.Este es un Pueblo que se considere fundado por los Toltecas y por eso se infiere hicieron esas colosales trabajos.*" Letter from Rafael M. Ruiz to SIPBA, January 8, 1907. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 51, f. 1.

[125] Letter from Rafael R. Ruiz to SIPBA, January 28, 1909. AGN-IPBA, caja 155, exp. 6, f. 1.

[126] Letter from Rafael R. Ruiz to SIPBA, February 8, 1909, and newspaper clipping titled "Siguen Encontrándose las Hallas de Nuestros Antepasados," Correspondencia Especial, from Jalancingo, Ver., February 2. Ibid., f. 3 and unnumbered.

[127] "*…no se ha llegado hasta aquí al cuadro ó interior de estos monumentos que probablemente encierran tesoros arqueológicos, pues, por una parte se supone que esta zona sea una necrópolis antigua, y por otra, se han encontrado fuera de estos lugares y á distancias variables algunos idolitos de piedra y de barro cocido. La etimología del nombre primitivo de este pueblo, Xochitltelco, parece ser un indicio más acerca de la importancia real de estos monumentos. Terminada la inspección ocular de referencia, dicté las órdenes que estimé procedentes para evitar se continúe la destrucción de los monumentos arqueológicos de que se trata.*" Letter from the jefe político of Teziutlán, March 6, 1909, transcribed in a letter from the governor of Puebla to SIPBA, March 8, 1909. Ibid., f. 5.

Other requests by local preservationists met with scant interest from the archaeological bureaucracy, most likely for want of sufficient staff or financial resources.[128] The emergence of popular interest in archaeological preservation also coincided with the end of the Díaz regime and the beginning of the Revolution, when political turmoil placed additional stress on federal agencies. The letter sent by the patriotic resident of Malinalco in late 1910, for example, never received a reply from Batres. A few months later, a pair of men from Aporo, Michoacán directed a similar communication to Justo Sierra. The newspaper *El Imparcial* had recently published a telegram describing an archaeological find on the Isla de Sacrificios, an account that had sparked the men's interest. They informed the Minister that the find sounded very similar to a local construction, which they believed was erected by "the first inhabitants of our soil." Lacking "knowledge or even money" themselves, they suggested that the federal government send a representative to investigate.[129] Several months later, Batres requested more information on the site, especially on the routes that connected it to the capital. "Varios inconvenientes" kept the men from replying for the next year, but in March of 1912 they provided the Maderista Ministry of Public Instruction with a detailed account of the site and instructions on how to reach it by train. Again, no reply from the federal government was forthcoming. A June 1911 letter from Lorenzo Preciado in Ameca, sent only a few weeks after the revolutionary forces had entered Mexico City, met with similar disinterest. While searching out mountainside mineral deposits, Preciado had discovered a stone carved with "hieroglyphic inscriptions." He believed that the writing would shed light on "the history of these areas and would be of interest for the Museo Nacional," and estimated that it would only take five hours to transport the stone to a railway station.[130] The letter was forwarded to the Inspección, where the issue lapsed. For all of its considerable growth over the course of the Porfiriato, the archaeological bureaucracy ultimately remained limited in its effectiveness.

If the Inspección could not attend to local complaints, however, regional authorities might choose to step in and fulfill what they saw as state responsibilities for archaeological preservation. In 1906, for example, a jefe político in Campeche took measures to protect the ruins of Etzná, part of which stood on private property. After learning that "various stones

[128] When it was possible to investigate local reports as part of the ongoing projects of the Inspección, officials sometimes tried to do so. For example, in early 1911 a Don Juan Méndez informed Justo Sierra of "*muy importantes monumentos arqueológicos en Tuxpam*," Veracruz. Since Batres was then exploring that state's monuments, Sierra ordered him to inspect the monuments mentioned by Méndez. "*Don Juan Mendez me comunica existencia de muy importantes monumentos arqueológicos en Tuxpam, que convendría viera Ud.*" Copy of telegram from SIPBA to Batres, January 31, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 32, f. 1.

[129] "*En una de las columnas de "El Ymparcial" del día 11 del actual, vimos un telegrama donde comunicaba un descubrimiento arqueológico en la isla de Sacrificios, cuyo descubrimiento nos demuestra señas muy parecidas á cierta obra que en este lugar existe…no es difícil que la obra que se ve en la "Peña Redonda" sea de algunos de los primeros habitantes de nuestro suelo, pero como carecemos de conocimiento y aun de fondos para trabajar, mucho le agradeceríamos que Ud. pudiese venir á conocer el citado lugar, pues quiza hacerse pueda algun descubrimiento.*" Letter from Alejo Escutia and Juan Velasco to SIPBA, January 26, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 30, f. 1.

[130] "*Que hace algun tiempo al andar midiendo unos fundos mineros en una montaña de este Municipio, encontré una piedra de forma irregular no muy grande…que tiene unas inscripciones geroglíficas que entiendo datan de en tiempo de los aztecas. Creo que su escritura serviria para la Historia de estos contornos y seria de interes para el Museo Nacional…Anticipo que la piedra se pudiera traer hasta la Estación del F.C. estando retirada de este lugar como unas cinco horas.*" Letter from Lorenzo Preciado to SIPBA, June 25, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 31, f. 1.

belonging to the aforesaid ruins" had been removed, the jefe político "ordered that the political authorities in Tixmucuy should by no means tolerate the destruction of the ruins, which present an aspect of especial originality and industriousness." The governor of Campeche then supported the jefe político's actions, and gave orders of his own to protect the monuments.[131] While it is certainly possible that the jefe político was using archaeological preservation as a club to harass a local opponent, it is also plausible that the official genuinely valued the ruins for their connection to the past, and wished to protect them from disassembly. After more than two decades of the Inspección's existence, the values of archaeological study had permeated the ranks of local elites. The campechano jefe político might have had his own intellectual and emotional reasons for defending the ruins of Etzná, motivations not easily reducible to questions of politics, economics, or self-interest.

IV. Conclusion

Throughout the Porfiriato local interactions with the archaeological bureaucracy comprised a catalogue of diversity, ranging from hostility and antagonism to mutually beneficial arrangements. The resolution of widely varying ideas about the nature and significance of the material past likewise took many forms. Some were settled through administrative fiat or barefaced power plays, while others were handled through negotiation, compromise, collaboration, or the artful use of bureaucratic stonewalling techniques. The erratic policies of the national government were shaped not only by its internal divisions and inconsistent ideologies, but by the preferences and actions of Mexican citizens. Depending on their individual circumstances, local residents might choose to align themselves with the mission and methods of the Inspección, to resist the impositions of the national state, to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by archaeological activities, or quietly abstain from involvement in federal projects. The result was that national control over the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past grew slowly and patchily. Local communities were wrenches in the machinery of the archaeological bureaucracy, forcing Batres and his associates to act with a circumspection that undercut their expansive rhetoric.

Long-term trends in the federal government's interactions with local communities, however, point to an overall increase in the power of the archaeological bureaucracy during the last two decades of the Porfiriato. This tendency towards the centralization and increase of state authority mirrors the broader development of Porfirian administration, as the regime fought to exercise authority over a vast array of heterogeneous regions. As much as possible, national

[131] *"Para lo que corresponda tengo el honor de comunicar á esa Superioridad la existencia de las ruinas denominadas "Etzná," las cuales se hallan situadas en el Partido de mi cargo en la jurisdicción de Tixmucuy y en terrenos de propiedad del Sr. Agustin Soberanis, dueño de la finca Hontun. – Como en la visita que le verifiqué hubiese notado que se han dispuesto de algunas piedras pertenecientes á dichas ruinas, ordené á la autoridad política de Tixmucuy que en manera alguna tolerase la destrucción de las ruinas, las cuales presentan un aspecto de originalidad y laboriosidad especiales.*" Letter from the jefe político del Partido de Campeche to the governor of Campeche, February 28, 1906, copied in a letter from Tomás Aznar y Cano, governor of Campeche, to SIPBA, March 1, 1906. AGN-IPBA, caja 152, exp. 16, f. 4. Aznar y Cano added that *"ya se han dictado las medidas convenientes en el sentido de que se cuide la conservación de las ruinas á que se contrae el oficio inserto."* SIPBA thanked Aznar y Cano for his efforts on behalf of the ruins' conservation and forwarded his letter on to Batres at Teotihuacán. Letter from SIPBA to Batres, March 16, 1906. Ibid., f. 5. As in so many other cases, Batres never responded.

cultural administrators sought to smooth over local differences, impose standard legal regulations and administrative structures, and transfer authority into the hands of dependable appointees. In the specific case of the pre-Hispanic material past, increased federal control derived partly from legal and administrative mechanisms, and partly from gradual shifts in the attitudes of local residents and elites. Mexico's citizens became more willing to accept the legitimacy, and even the importance, of the Inspección's mission. The creation of a common cultural ground between local communities and the federal government, as small and shaky as that ground often seemed, was essential to establishing federal control over the pre-Hispanic material past. In turn, the people who lived near pre-Hispanic sites claimed authority of their own, to defend their preferences and assert their own meanings of the sites as determined by tradition, practice, and utility. The expanding role of the Inspección reflected the outcomes of thousands of negotiations, disputes, and compromises, all of which bound local communities and the archaeological bureaucracy together. The fall of the Díaz regime upended many aspects of federal administration and allowed the more open expression of local antagonism toward the Inspección, but did not undo the broader changes in popular opinion and lived daily experience which had gradually accumulated over the decades.

Chapter 7

When the War Came

This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

-T.S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men"[1]

The ambitions, preferences, neuroses, and obsessions of Leopoldo Batres molded the Inspección for more than a quarter of a century. Batres approached most challenges with bullheaded obstinacy and an implacable belief in his own righteousness, qualities that blunted his effectiveness as a researcher and administrator, and earned him numerous enemies. Those same characteristics of determination and unshakeable self-confidence allowed Batres to transform legal abstractions into robust realities, fashioning a single federal appointment into an agency that oversaw pre-Hispanic sites throughout the republic. Yet for all of the influence that Batres exercised as he selected employees, warred over bureaucratic turf, monitored excavations, removed artifacts, chastised landowners, and participated in academic debates, the coming of the Revolution demonstrated that he was not, after all, essential to the federal management of archaeology. By the time of his ouster in 1911, Batres had become an interchangeable element in the administrative machinery that he had done so much to develop and expand. The core elements of the Porfirian archaeological project survived intact throughout the violence and political turmoil of the Revolution, and re-emerged with new strength once the fighting subsided. In the aftermath of the armed struggle, caretakers continued to watch over sites, federal authorities continued to supervise archaeological excavations, the export of antiquities was still banned, and the federal government continued to claim all pre-Hispanic artifacts as national patrimony.

Survival required strategic adaptation and accommodation. Between the 1911 departure of Díaz and the 1915 triumph of Constitutionalist forces under the leadership of Venustiano Carranza, both the structure and the mission of the archaeological bureaucracy changed in significant ways. After 1917, a reshuffling of federal agencies created the new Dirección de Antropología, led by Manuel Gamio and housed within the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento. Meanwhile, the Porfirian Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes was reformed into the far more ambitious and wide-ranging Secretaría de Educación Pública, which took a leading role in Revolutionary efforts to remake Mexican culture.[2] For the most part, however, these changes

[1] T.S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men," in *The Wadsworth Anthology of Poetry*, ed. Jay Parini (Boston: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), 212.

served to enhance rather than diminish federal control over the material remains of the past. A strong elite consensus existed in favor of archaeological preservation, reflecting longstanding traditions of Mexican nationalism. Politicians and intellectuals drew clear distinctions between the widely reviled figure of Leopoldo Batres, and the noble cause that he had served. Indeed, many of the attacks on Batres focused on the ways that he had *failed* to carry out his duties, by damaging or diminishing the nation's archaeological patrimony.[3] Preservationist policies thus remained untainted by associations with the vanquished dictatorship. Moreover, the mobilization of peasant communities during the Revolution invested the study of Mexico's indigenous heritage with a fresh urgency. Archaeology took on a more instrumental role, as national leaders attempted to invigorate popular arts and crafts, and to incorporate (or subordinate) indigenous people within the modern nation.[4] Again, these developments expanded upon Porfirian practices of archaeological management, and did not reverse the decades-long trend towards increased federal control of the material past.

The intense Revolutionary engagement with Mexico's indigenous heritage has even led some historians to discount the significance of earlier state efforts to preserve and manage the pre-Hispanic material past. David Brading, for example, has written that "the achievement of Manuel Gamio was to reinstate Anáhuac [a Nahuatl term for the Aztec empire] as the glorious foundation of Mexican history and culture, thus reversing a century of Liberal scorn."[5] Similarly,

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[2] Julio César Olivé Negrete and Bolfy Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 1 (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, INAH, 1995), 29-30. For the role of the SEP in the 1920s and 1930s, see Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997); Alexander S. Dawson, *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2004), and Stephen E. Lewis, "The Nation, Education, and the 'Indian Problem' in Mexico, 1920-1940," in *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*, ed. Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephen E. Lewis (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 176-95.

[3] The Mexican case contrasts sharply with more recent events in Iraq, where the dictator Saddam Hussein "strove to find a neutral plane to unite the country's disparate elements. Therefore, the history of ancient Mesopotamia once agai n emerged as a useful political tool because it contained civilizations, figureheads, and myths of nonsectarian appeal. Furthermore, the general public was not too familiar with the basic facts of that history, as it was with Islamic history, and the Mesopotamian stories were not enmeshed in popular culture." Thus, in 1991 "the various futile uprisings…wrought havoc on the various museums, both in the north and the south. These museums were perceived as symbols of government power. One form of rebelling against that power, therefore, was to destroy the museums, resulting in loss and irreparable damage to numerous valuable artifacts." The sanctions which followed then created a "desperate economic situation," in which "the respect and protection of antiquities [was] easily disregarded" and "immense smuggling of antiquities out of the country took place in order to raise valuable currency, an enterprise often sanctioned and organized by members of the government." Magnus T. Bernhardsson, *Reclaiming a Plundered Past: Archaeology and Nation Building in Modern Iraq* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 215-6.

[4] The artist and activist Gerardo Murillo ("Dr. Atl"), who believed that Indians "created their art intuitively from their, and the nation's, collective subconscious," was dismissive of attempts to restore pre-Hispanic styles. "He mocked Luis Murillo's efforts in Tonalá to 'improve' pottery designs by trying to return them to a pre-Hispanic state through the introduction of ancient Aztec and Mayan designs." Rick A. López, "The Noche Mexicana and the Exhibition of Popular Arts: Two Ways of Exalting Indianness," in *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*, ed. Vaughan and Lewis, 36-7.

[5] David Brading, "Manuel Gamio and Official Indigenismo in Mexico," *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1988): 76. While Brading mentions Batres, he refers only to Batres' work on the pyramids at Teotihuacán: "a clumsy, unprofessional job which robbed these monuments of their symmetry and left the surrounding site filled with rubble." Ibid., 77.

Enrique Florescano has written that "The Mexico that emerged from the Revolution recognized the pre-Hispanic past in its historical and cultural development and in the traditions of indigenous and popular goups…as a result of this recognition, legislation was enacted to protect properties with the status of national patrimony. Institutions specifically dedicated to the recuperation, conservation, study, and dissemination of that patrimony were founded…They were a result and a culmination of the cultural and nationalistic movement that transformed the country and endowed it with an exceptional identity in the world panorama of new nations."[6] Although Florescano has also written extensively about the history of Mexican archaeology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Porfirian efforts at archaeological preservation, he identifies the Revolutionary "movement" as the chief driver of subsequent institutional developments and the true basis of Mexico's modern archaeological regime. Over the last decade or so, however, works by Mechthild Rutsch, Luis Vázquez León, Carmen Ruiz, and Christina Bueno have challenged or modified this perception of the Revolution as a watershed event which marked a new beginning for Mexican archaeological politics. Instead, these authors have emphasized the various ways that the archaeological endeavors of the Revolutionary state built on legal and institutional foundations laid down during the nineteenth century.[7] Through their work, these authors have contributed to an emerging recognition of the

[6] Enrique Florescano, "The creation of the Museo Nacional de Antropología of Mexico and its scientific, educational, and political purposes," in *Nationalism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*, vol. 4, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 1255. For the original Spanish version of this article, see Enrique Florescano, "La creación del Museo Nacional de Antropología y sus fines científicos, educativos y políticos," in *El Patrimonio Cultural de México*, ed. Enrique Florescano (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1993), 145-63.

[7] Vázquez León depicted these continuities in an essentially negative light, focusing on the "monarchic" approach to the material past that runs from the sixteenth-century Laws of the Indies, through the law of May 11, 1897 and the powers that it granted to Mexico's president, to the state-directed archaeology of the 1990s and early twenty-first century. Vázquez argues that as a result of this autocratic style of archaeological management, "sexenio tras sexenio se emprendan proyectos arqueológicos monumentales que tipifican su gobierno, hasta el punto de que toda la arqueología gubernamental semeja regirse no tanto por una lógica turística o por la necesidad de persuasión educativa masiva sobre la vigencia nacionalista de nuestro mito de origen, sino, además de todo ello, por un más arraigado estilo monárquico de gobernar y, correlativamente, de administrar de manera personalizada un patrimonio cultural pretendidamente público." Luis Vázquez León, *El Leviatán arqueológico: Antropología de una tradición científica en México*, Second edition (Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2003), 125. Rutsch examines how conflicts between branches of the Porfirian archaeological bureaucracy extended into the post-Revolutionary era in "Ramón Mena y Manuel Gamio. Una mirada oblicua sobre la antropología mexicana en los años veinte del siglo pasado," *Relaciones*, Vol. 22, No. 88 (Autumn, 2001): 81-118. Responding to Bruce Trigger's statement that "In Mexico, since the Revolution of 1910, it has been official policy to encourage archaeologists to increase knowledge and public awareness of the pre-Hispanic civilisations of that country. This is done to promote national unity by glorifying Mexico's past and honouring the achievements of the native people who constitute a large part of the population," Ruiz wrote that "the International School does not fit clearly this model. As an institution it was not only accepted but also completely supported by the pre-revolutionary state that also stimulated the study of the Mexico pre-Hispanic past to encourage national unity. In Mexico, the archaeological interest in the pre-Hispanic past was not an outcome of the 1910 Revolution." Bruce Trigger, "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist," *Man*, New Series, Vol. 19, No. 3 (September, 1984): 359 and Carmen Ruiz, "Insiders and Outsiders in Mexican Archaeology (1890-1930)" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003), 162. Christina Bueno writes that "the Porfiriato was clearly part of the long-standing tradition in Mexican history of using antiquity as an ideological resource…it was at this time that the link between the state and the science dedicated to recuperating the ancient past was forged. The Díaz government was the first to actively protect the Indian past because it was the first to actively use it for state purposes, a legacy that would carry on into the Revolution and only gain in momentum. Archaeology, therefore, has always been identified with

many administrative continuities between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an understanding that now helps to frame introductory histories of the Mexican Revolution.[8] My work is in keeping with these interpretations. I argue that although real changes in the scientific practice and ideological meanings of archaeology took place during the Revolution, no equivalent transformations occurred with regards to the *control* of pre-Hispanic sites and objects. In a sense, the leaders of Revolutionary archaeology poured new wine into old bottles. Manuel Gamio and his fellow indigenistas may have rejected the philosophies and scientific methodologies of the Porfiriato, but they embraced Porfirian conceptions of a strong state role in the preservation and management of the pre-Hispanic material past.[9]

This chapter will focus on the critical period between 1911 and 1915, to analyze how Porfirian archaeological institutions endured and evolved between the fall of the Díaz regime and the final installation of a Constitutionalist government in Mexico City. Although these years saw the repeated breakdown and reconstitution of state authority, it goes too far to say, as Mary Kay Vaughan does, that "the revolution destroyed the state between 1913 and 1915."[10] The state was severely shaken and deeply wounded, but, at least in the case of archaeological institutions, its deep roots endured and eventually sent up new shoots. Part of this resilience was due to simple inertia, as individuals continued to show up to work and perform their duties in the midst of danger and uncertainty. These continuities in personnel linked multiple federal administrations

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Mexico's official nationalism, a relationship that has passed from one dictatorship to another – from the Díaz dictatorship to that of the revolutionary regime." Christina Bueno, "Excavating Identity: Archaeology and Nation in Mexico, 1876-1911" (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2004), 174.

[8] "The continuity of the government's bureaucracy provided a stable political stratum that functioned beneath the level of chaos dominated by revolutionary generals and their armies… The federal legislature and the bureaucracy remained as institutional islands in a sea of violent uncertainty…Armies directed as personal political factions attempted to destroy each other, but not the constitutional framework of the republic. The traditional patriotic myths and rituals continued to receive attention… The bureaucratic activity juxtaposed revolutionary violence and provided continuity to the programs that had been implemented initially during the Porfiriato." William H. Beezley and Colin M. MacLachlan, *Mexicans in Revolution, 1910-1946* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 42-4.

[9] For a concise statement of Gamio's views on the purpose of archaeology, as he framed those views during the Revolutionary period, see Manuel Gamio, trans. Fernando Armstrong Fumero, *Forjando Patria: Pro-Nacionalismo (Forging a Nation)* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2010), 70-1. In these pages, Gamio writes, "*For some, archaeology is nothing more than a way of passing the time. Archaeological investigations are a way of determining if Moctezuma wore rope or leather sandals on his feet, or of knowing if Cuauhtémoc did his own 'manicure'…Other wags whisper that archaeologists hunt for a depository of Toltec 'unfalsifiables,' as they cannot believe that a serious man would find interest in unearthing a bunch of stones with 'monkeys' and hieroglyphics on them. There are also those who think that our antiquities should be preserved 'just because' or 'because they are pretty.' Unfortunately, that loss of public esteem is justified by the deeds of many frauds who call themselves archaeologists, with the same justification that they might call themselves pedicurists or astronomers. In archaeology as in good fortune, there have been many who are called but few who are chosen. We must therefore unmask that intellectual rabble that has been destroyingand discrediting the monuments of our past…Archaeology is an integral part of that conjunction of knowledge that is of most interest to all of humanity: anthropology, or the 'science of man'…The archaeological study of pre-Columbian civilization must focus on both its material and intellectual manifestations. …Knowledge of different aspects of pre-Columbian culture contributes to our understanding of the roots of the characteristics that distinguished the Mexican population during the Colonial period. Knowing these aspects of the past, we can authoritatively approach the study of the current population, a knowledge that should be the true gospel of good government.*"

[10] Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, 8.

together, maintaining institutional memory and limiting the scope of ideologically driven reaction. The maintenance of the archaeological bureaucracy also depended on the wilingness of national administrations (or administrations with national pretensions) to allocate money for the study and protection of the pre-Hispanic material past. Political factions that stood in virulent opposition to each other nevertheless agreed, for the most part, on the importance of Mexico's archaeological patrimony.[11] Finally, federal archaeological institutions benefited from their relative compactness and from the fact that many of their operations were based in Mexico City, which experienced less direct violence than many other regions of the country. The archaeological bureaucracy's limited national reach, which had once frustrated Batres and served as a reminder of the incomplete hegemony of the Porfirian state, also meant that archaeological institutions were less vulnerable to disruption during a period of national crisis.

At this point, it is perhaps worth emphasizing that the continuities described in this chapter are best seen and appreciated with the benefit of historical distance. During the armed stage of the Revolution, many employees of the federal archaeological bureaucracy experienced dislocations, dispossessions, and personal risk. The passage of contending armies through the countryside produced a welter of practical inconveniences and physical dangers for conserjes, especially when local peasant communities also took up arms. While the capital was far safer, federal employees in Mexico City nevertheless had to confront artillery shelling, soldiers in the streets, the demands of labor organizers, forcible requisitions, and the uncertainties of wartime budgets. In addition, continuities in federal staffing were far from absolute, as the administrations of Madero, Huerta, the Convention and Carranza each sought to favor sympathizers at the expense of federal employees affiliated with previous regimes. Turmoil at the upper levels of national politics cascaded downwards, falling disproportionately on the most and the least powerful members of the archaeological bureaucracy. Both leadership and unskilled positions were prized patronage plums to be doled out to loyal supporters. By contrast, the more secure jobs were those which required some level of specialization, but which did not confer great prestige. A print shop assistant, a specimen preparer, or a professor all had better odds of remaining employed than a director of the Museum or Inspección, a site caretaker, a janitor, or a copyist. Federal employment had long reflected the calculations of politics and patronage, but the abrupt changes of leadership which took place during the Revolution cracked open the smooth façades of Porfirian professionalism, allowing us to scrutinize these factors more closely.

Both chaos and continuity can be seen in the case of Teotihuacán, whose great pyramids were centerpieces of the celebrations that marked the centennial of Mexican independence in 1910. By the early spring of 1915, the site administrator was spending his nights in a machine shed or in nearby caves, fearful of the bandits that roamed the area and the troops that skirmished nearby. As he dolefully noted, it was necessary to endure "cold of the first magnitude" in order to "save [his] skin."[12] Other workers at the site warned that they would soon leave if the

[11] Intense divisions could also exist within the various Revolutionary factions, coloring the policies of their respective governments. Adolfo Gilly, for instance, has written about the split between the radical peasant base of the Convention movement, represented by the military leaders Francisco "Pancho" Villa and Emiliano Zapata, and the Convention's civilian government, headed by president Eulalio Gutiérrez. Gilly writes that while "the peasant leaders essentially retained the laws of war," the Gutíerrez administration "wanted to impose forms of bourgeois legality." Adolfo Gilly, trans. Patrick Camiller, *The Mexican Revolution* (New York and London: The New Press, 2005), 165. While Zapata and Villa likely had little interest in the issue of archaeological preservation, Gutiérrez and his associates belonged to a political class that placed greater value on Mexico's pre-Hispanic sites and objects.

government could not find a way to pay their salaries. Conditions grew even more difficult over the next few months, as two different Zapatista generals ordered local authorities to remove the wire fences that surrounded the archaeological zone.[13] These measures seem to have been popular among the neighboring communities, which had already begun to demolish the fences in some areas. After the generals made their announcements, farmers moved quickly to reclaim the site for agricultural rather than archaeological use.[14]

The example of Teotihuacán might therefore seem to illustrate only the upheaval and rupture attendant upon the Revolution. Yet even as control of Mexico City volleyed back and forth between rival governments, the archaeological bureaucracy demonstrated its resiliency. Site caretaker Lucas Oliva, who had watched over the monuments since 1899 and whose father had earlier done the same in an unpaid capacity, remained at his post in 1915 despite the interruptions in salary.[15] When the Zapatista General Cotero ordered the removal of the fences, Oliva immediately went to see him and lodged a protest.[16] Indignation was also registered in the ministries of the capital, where Manuel Gamio used his position as Inspector of Archaeological Monuments to advocate for the protection of pre-Hispanic sites. Gamio had spent part of the spring working without pay, in an office whose resources were subject to confiscation by armed troops, but his urgent letters to bureaucratic superiors still bore some results.[17] Generals in the field might decide to redistribute land from archaeological sites, but the Zapatista army headquarters issued orders to prevent "abuses" to the "archaeological collections" at Teotihuacán.[18] In July of 1915, three days before the Zapatista troops of the Convention ceded

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[12] "*Por tal motivo yo solamente en el dia estoy en el Campamento, y en las noches: unas en las cuevas y otras en la casa de Máquinas, con un frio de primer orden, pero se salva el pellejo.*" Letter from Ignacio Herrera, Encargado del Campamento Arqueológico de las Pirámides de San Juan Teotihuacán, to Manuel Gamio, Inspector de Monumentos, copied in letter from Gamio to SIPBA, March 18, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 25, f. 4.

[13] AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exps. 23 and 14.

[14] "*Por el lado de San Sebastian ya hay tres o cuatro individuos que quitaron el cercado y es de esperarse que otros los secunden.*" Letter from Ignacio Herrera to Manuel Gamio, June 10, 1915, copied in letter from Gamio to Jesús Galindo y Villa, June 14, 1915, copied in letter from Galindo y Villa to the Secretario del Estado y del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, June 14, 1915. AGN-IPBA 161, exp. 14, f. 1.

[15] "*Me permito proponer á V. para conserge de las ruinas de Teotihuacan, con el sueldo de $20.00 al mes, al indio Lucas Oliva hijo del finado Francisco de Sales Oliva que desempeño durante seis años ese cargo sin remuneracion alguna.*" Undated memorandum from Leopoldo Batres to SJIP, probably from 1898 given the other documents in the folder and the appointments mentioned within the letter. AGN-IPBA 148, exp. 18, f. 35. For Oliva's 1899 appointment, see AGN-IPBA 148, exp. 52.

[16] "*Tan pronto como Lúcas tuvo conocimiento de lo ocurrido fue a ver al Sr. Gral para enseñarle el salvo-conducto de la Comandancia Militar, el que me remitió Ud. dias pasados, y contestó dicho Sr. que no obstante de todo eso, el ya había dado la orden para que la gente procediera a sembrar todos los terrenos que están sin cultivo.*" Letter from Ignacio Herrera to Manuel Gamio, June 10, 1915, copied in letter from Gamio to Jesús Galindo y Villa, June 14, 1915, copied in letter from Galindo y Villa to the Secretario del Estado y del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, June 14, 1915. AGN-IPBA 161, exp. 14, f. 1.

[17] "*Al ser clausuradas las oficinas de esta capital se hizo igual cosa con la oficina urbana de la Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos / Sin embargo, el suscrito y el personal correspondiente, que tenian a su cuidado algunos monumentos verdaderamente interesantes, continuaron desempeñando sus funciones...*" Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Encargado del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, March 16, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 26, f. 1.

the capital to the Constitutionalist forces, a subsecretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Colonization asked the Ministry of Public Instruction to specify "which are the monuments that merit protection" at Teotihuacán, so that these could be "defended" from sowing.[19] The subsecretary's query speaks to how deeply the values of archaeological conservation had become embedded in Mexican national politics. Even as his government was disintegrating around him, an agrarian administrator felt professionally obliged to at least pay lip service to the cause of archaeological preservation. Porfirian policies and discourses around the monuments of the pre-Hispanic past had created a set of institutions and beliefs that could withstand political divisions, violent shifts in the social order, and repeated transfers of federal power.

I. The Triumph of Madero and the Departure of Batres

Despite the Díaz regime's long hold on power, its collapse came swiftly, surprising many observers. In 1910, the American journalist James Creelman could write that Díaz "sits the acknowledged master of progress and comparative plenty" and confidently state that "it is preposterous to talk about a reversion of the Mexican people to the old revolutionary habit…The Mexican people are too busy to fight each other now."[20] Creelman was proved spectacularly wrong by Francisco Madero, the wealthy son of a prominent Coahuilan family. Madero was in some ways an unlikely revolutionary, disparaged by the *New York Times* as a "little man who believes in spirits, who will not eat meat, and who, above all things else, has been described as an idealist."[21] Madero's idealism, however, allowed him to challenge Díaz with a boldness that more powerful politicians and generals had notably lacked. During the presidential campaign of 1910 Madero openly campaigned to replace Díaz, and drew large crowds until he was imprisoned by the regime in June. Díaz easily manipulated the political system to secure re-election, but Madero was not ready to give up. He escaped from his captors in October, issued a manifesto that called for nationwide revolt in November, saw his forces win a major victory over the federal army in May of 1911, and negotiated Díaz's removal from office in the same month. In early June of 1911, Madero and his followers entered the streets of Mexico City in triumph.

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[18] "'*Relativo a los atropellos cometidos por las fuerzas acampadas en San Juan Teotihuacán en las colecciones arqueológicas, le manifiesto que ya se habían dado las órdenes conducentes al Jefe de las Armas en aquel lugar a fín de que prestara las seguridades debidas.*'" Letter from the Cuartel General del Ejército del Sur to the Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, May 4, 1915, copied in letter from Guerra y Marina to the Secretaría de Gobernación, May 7, 1915, copied in letter from the Oficial Mayor en funciones de Subsecretario Encargado del Despacho de Gobernación to the Oficial Mayor Encargado del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, May 8, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 14, f. 6.

[19] "*…referente a las siembras que trata de hacer en el campamento arqueológico de San Juan Teotihuacan, he de agradecer a Ud. se sirva ordenar que sean detallados con toda precisión, cuales son los monumentos que merezcan ser conservados para que se procure defenderlos al hacer las siembras de las partes restantes*." Letter from Adalberto Hernández, subsecretario in the Secretaría de Agricultura y Colonización, to the Secretario de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, July 8, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 323, exp. 12, f. 4.

[20] James Creelman, *Diaz, Master of Mexico* (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1916), vi and 416-7.

[21] "Madero's Troubles Parallel His Rule. Little Spiritualist and Vegetarian Has Been in Constant Tumult as Mexico's President. Beset by Many Enemies. Zapata in Rebellion from Election Day – Orozco Heads Insurgent Amy – Reyes and Diaz Revolt," *The New York Times*, February 10, 1913.

Scrupulous about the forms of democracy, Madero did not immediately assume the office of the presidency. Instead, the agreement reached between Madero and Díaz called for the Porfirian statesman Francisco León de la Barra to serve as interim president while new elections were held. This appointment served as notice that while Madero wished to democratize Mexico's government, he did not intend to radically alter the systems of Porfirian governance. Winning office with an overwhelming majority of the vote, Madero entered the National Palace as president in November of 1911. He would leave it a little more than a year later as a prisoner bundled into a car, en route to a pre-arranged assassination. For all of the enthusiasm that his movement had generated, Madero ultimately proved unable to tame the political forces that he had unleashed.

To borrow a phrase from George W. Bush, the Maderista movement was the victim of its "catastrophic success." Madero's 1910 call to revolution was answered by a great many people, who brought an overwhelming number of grievances and aspirations to the struggle against Díaz. The quick defeat of the federal army did not provide sufficient time or incentive for these diverse agendas to coalesce into a unified platform for political and social change. Moreover, Madero himself was fundamentally a democrat in the classical mold of Mexican Liberalism, rather than a revolutionary firebrand. Consequently, he was unwilling to meet the demands of popular leaders such as Emiliano Zapata, who called for fundamental revisions to the Porfirian state. As William Beezley and Colin MacLachlan write, "Madero assumed control of the existing governmental apparatus that had served the republic under Díaz and that in his view did not need to be replaced. The Porfirian bureaucracy and the federal army remained intact."[22] In the case of the archaeological bureaucracy, this meant that the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, the Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos, and the recently founded Escuela Internacional de Arqueología y Etnología all continued to function. Likewise, pre-Hispanic sites remained for the most part accessible to visitors. With the exception of an ethnology student at the Museum, who abandoned his thesis in order to join the revolutionary forces, few individuals associated with the Museo, Inspección, and Escuela Internacional seem to have taken part in the initial armed struggle, or to have advocated immediate changes to institutional policies.[23] Like Madero, they apparently saw few reasons to toss aside structures with which they were familiar.

Batres in Exile

The transfer of power from Díaz to Madero was not so placid, however, that Leopoldo Batres could maintain his comfortable position of power and prestige. Less than two months after the departure of Díaz, Instrucción Pública officials ordered Batres to formally turn the archives and physical property of the Inspección over to Francisco Rodríguez, the newly appointed Inspector of Archaeological Monuments. Batres and Rodríguez had tangled with each other in the past, and Batres had come to consider Rodríguez a "personal mortal enemy."[24] When

[22] Beezley and MacLachlan, *Mexicans in Revolution*, 21.

[23] "*…el alumno pensionado de Etnología de este Museo Miguel O. de Mendizábal no cumplió en su oportunidad con el precepto reglamentario que exige la presentación de una tesis, y que además, según noticias fidedignas recibidas por esta Dirección, ha abandonado la Capital para ingresar en las filas revolucionarias.*" Letter from Museum subdirector Genaro García to SIPBA, May 16, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 193, exp. 7, f. 5.

the handover happened on July 19, Batres was represented by his son Salvador, who spared his father the pain and humiliation of cataloguing the Inspección's holdings to the "entire satisfaction" of Rodríguez.[25] By the end of 1911 Batres was living in Barcelona, where he nursed his grievances and sought to defend himself against the accusations now being flung against him. He termed these a "scandalous campaign against my private honor, my scientific probity and my patriotic loyalty that has been carried out by those jealous of me. Like the tiger crouched in the weeds, which lies in wait for the opportune moment to hurl itself against its victim, they have waited for the most propitious moment to fall upon me."[26] To respond, Batres published an extraordinary – yet wholly characteristic – work of self-justification.

In an open memorandum to Miguel Díaz Lombardo, then serving as Minister of Public Instrucion and Fine Arts, Batres unleashed a torrent of personal invective against those he blamed for hounding him from his job and native land. He presented himself as a great man of high accomplishment, whose brilliant successes had aroused the jealousy and hatred of lesser lights. Since he had gained glory by his work at Teotihuacán, "The rabble has been excited, and that explains why all the inferior ones have assembled against me, for it is very well known, as experience teaches us, that whenever a work of importance is realized, all the mediocrities and all the impotents conspire to prevent its completion, and even to drown it if possible, under the slogan 'Down with merit!'"[27] Batres complained that Rodríguez had coerced or manipulated the "simple Indians" of Teotihuacán and the staff of the Inspección to "make them accomplices to his machinations against me" (although he also claimed that the expropriation of land at Teotihuacán had filled local residents with "hate and rancor," to the extent that they had once plotted his assassination!)[28] Batres additionally defended his reorganizations of pre-Hispanic

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[24] "*…el Sr. Rodríguez, mi sucesor y mortal enemigo personal mío…*" Leopoldo Batres, *Memorandum dirigido al Sr. Lic. D. Miguel Díaz Lombardo, Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes* (Barcelona: Imprenta litografía Viuda de J. Cunill, 1911), 3.

[25] "*…habiéndose reunido y procedido conforme á los inventarios correspondientes formados de antemano por la Inspección General de Monumentos Arqueológicos á cargo del Sr. Dn. Leopoldo Batres, á examinar minuciosamente todos y cada uno de los objetos catalogados y conforme su leal saber y entender, convinieron que todos los objetos entregados y recibidos á entera satisafacción del Sr. Dn. Francisco M. Rodríguez, son los mismos que constan en los inventarios detalladamente especificados…*" Official document signed by Francisco Rodríguez, Salvador Batres, Rubén M. Campos, and Ricardo Olmedo, July 19, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 27, f. 7.

[26] "*…tengo el gusto de dirigirle á Vd. la presente, que puede considerarse como un Memorandum justificativo de mi proceder, para bosquejar, aunque sea á grandes rasgos, la verdad acerca de la escandalosa campaña que contra mi honradez privada, mi probidad científica y mi lealtad patriótica han emprendido mis envidiosos, quienes, como el tigre agazapado en la maleza acecha el momento oportuno para lanzarse sobre su víctima, han esperado también el instante más propicio para caer sobre mí.*" Batres, *Memorandum*, 3.

[27] "*La canalla se ha irritado, y esto explica porque se han congregado contra mí todos los inferiores, pues harto sabido es, por lo que la experiencia enseña, que en cuanto se realiza una obra de importancia se conjuran todas las mediocridades y todas las impotencias para impedir se lleve á término, y aún para ahogarla si es posible, bajo la consigna de <<Abajo el mérito>>*." Ibid., 5.

[28] "*Llenos de odios y rencores por habérseles privado de sus tierras, aquellos sencillos indios no se remontaron á buscar el origen de la medida de que eran objeto, sino que se levantaron contra el que tenían más cerca…el peligro que corrí llegó al extremo de haberse tramado un complot para asesinarme; complot que fué descubierto por la policía reservada del Distrito Federal…Naturalmente, tratándose de gentes de escasa inteligencia y mediana instrucción, han creído ciegamente lo que les ha dicho Rodríguez, ó sea que si firmaban declarando contra mí se les devolverían las tierras, aún á aquellos que habian recibido ya su importe…Y si*

collections at the Museo Nacional, and lamented that magnitude of his task at Teotihuacán meant that few contemporaries could judge the skill with which it was carried out. He insisted that "the works at Teotihuacán were executed with complete scientific rigor, and as much as those who wish to believe that I have profaned archaeological monuments might shout, it matters not; name an Areopagus of competent persons, however inflamed (*apasionadas*) they may be, and I will answer them, point by point."[29] After so many years of authority and influence, Batres was not prepared to find any fault in his archaeological methodology or practice.

When responding to allegations of financial and ethical transgressions, however, Batres seems to have been on firmer ground, and less reliant on bombast to make his case. While his distance from Mexico meant that Batres was not sure what specific charges had been brought against him, he was generally aware that he had been accused of mismanaging or embezzling the Inspección's resources and finances, of defrauding foreign museums by selling them falsified antiquities, and possibly of stealing from the Museo Nacional. In reply, Batres argued that if he had sold falsified objects to international museums, some record of these transactions must surely exist, which his accusers should produce as evidence. Batres also made the valid points that it was the federal treasury which oversaw the payment of salaries and the reimbursement of expenses, and which had assigned funds to the Teotihuacán landowners whose fields had been expropriated. He noted that a guard on site at Teotihuacán kept track of "all the tools and other materials that were being used in the works," and issued receipts to those who removed items from storage. The same system was followed at Xochicalco, leading Batres to assert that if tools were missing from the Morelos site, it was likely because they had been looted by the followers of "the *general (?)* Zapata."[30] Although it would not have been impossible for Batres to have manipulated the system for personal gain, he rightfully argued that administrative safeguards against such abuses existed, and that these should be considered when assessing the credibility of the charges against him.

Batres concluded the memo with a passionate defense of his own honesty and loyalty to Mexico. Far from robbing the Museo Nacional, he wrote, he had made personal donations of artifacts and money to enhance its collections and displays. Over the course of nearly thirty years, he had worked to benefit his homeland through his archaeological endeavors, earning honors from abroad and the "unlimited confidence" of his superiors at Instrucción Pública.[31]

Rodríguez se ha prevalido de la ignorancia de los indios expropiados para hacerles cómplices de sus maquinaciones contra mí, de igual manera ha ejercido presión sobre el personal subalterno, antes bajo mis órdenes, y ahora bajo las suyas." Ibid., 6.

[29] "*…como á medida que crece la importancia de la obra, las dificultades para apreciarla crecen más que la obra misma, y en consecuencia faltan jueces competentes que la juzguen, sin que aparezcan los imparciales y justos… Las obras de Teotihuacán han sido ejecutadas con todo rigor científico, y griten cuanto quieran suponiendo que he profanado los monumentos arqueológicos, tesoros preciosos de nuestra historia, nada importa; nómbrese un areópago de personas competentes, por apasionadas que sean, y yo contestaré, punto por punto.*" Ibid., 5. Here Batres implicitly compares himself to the Apostle Paul, who defended the tenets of Christianity against doubters on the Athenian Areopagus, or Hill of Ares.

[30]"*Ha llegado á mis noticias el cargo que se me hace de faltar herramientas en Xochicalco y en Teotihuacán. Igual ocurría en la primera que en la segunda localidad: Un encargado especial ponía el Recibi en las facturas de los materiales destinados á los trabajos de la reparación de ese importante monumento; así es que, en todo caso, él solo sería el responsible, siempre que la falta no fuera por causa de fuerza mayor, como sucedió cuando los incendarios, que seguían al* general (?) *Zapata, saquearon aquellas obras.*" Ibid., 7.

Batres therefore urged Díaz Lombardo to take his many services to Mexico into account, while discounting the testimony of those he described as "My enemies," "Those who are jealous of me," and "Newspapers that have defamed and calumniated me." Blunt to the last, Batres provided a helpful list specifying the individuals and publications that fell into each of these categories, along with lists of "My defenders" and "Newspapers that have defended me." Here, Batres did not dignify Rodríguez with the distinction of an enemy, choosing instead to list him along with Manuel Gamio in the category of the envious.[32]

The campaign of self-vindication launched by Batres was successful inasmuch as the ex-Inspector de Monumentos does not seem to have ever faced formal judicial charges. A few years later, during the administration of Victoriano Huerta, Batres returned to Mexico. In 1914, he once again hosted a banquet for foreign visitors to the pyramids of Teotihuacán, this time a party of Japanese sailors.[33] With Huerta's fall, however, Batres fell into eclipse once more. The staff at the Museo Nacional undid his classifications of pre-Hispanic artifacts and imposed new schemes on the Museum's collections, while Manuel Gamio continued his political and scientific ascendance. Nevertheless, Batres continued to campaign for the respect and influence that he believed was his due. In 1920, he published a work lavishing praise on Porfirio Díaz and his administration, writing that "the memory of the señor General don Porfirio Díaz sparkles more brightly with each day that passes, a luminous star in the morning twilight, transmitting a peaceful light infused with the purest perfumes, worked in glory and immortality."[34] In 1923, only three years before his death at the age of 74, Batres sent a letter to President Álvaro Obregón in which he criticized the "devastation" committed by Gamio's Dirección de Antropología at Teotihuacán, and, as ever, promoted his own abilities and expertise. In the letter, Batres identified his "moral axioms" as "loyalty and union, principles that until this moment I have fulfilled religiously and that I hope to continue fulfilling while I live." The comment was perhaps more telling than Batres intended. By invoking "loyalty" and "union," Batres pinpointed

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[31] "*Usted, señor ministro, conoce bien al señor general Díaz; conoce al señor licenciado Sierra y al señor licenciado Ezequiel A. Chávez, personas arch-probas y honradísimas. Estos tres hombres á quienes la patria debe mucho, me honraron con su ilimitada confianza y sabían muy á fondo cuales eran mis procedimientos en el cumplimiento de mi deber.*" Ibid., 10.

[32] Those that Batres named as "*Mis enemigos*" were Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, a long-serving director of the Museo Nacional; the deceased historian and archaeologist Alfredo Chavero, with whom Batres had feuded for decades, and the American archaeologists Marshall Saville and Zelia Nuttall, who had run-ins with Batres over various procedural and scientific matters. Besides Rodríguez and Gamio, the category "*Mis envidiosos*" included Francisco Mena and Francisco Belmar. Among the prominent figures that Batres labelled as "*Mis defensores*" were Ignacio Altamirano, Protasio Tagle, and Vicente Riva Palacio, while "*Periódicos que me han difamado y calumniado*" included *El Nacional* and both the English and Spanish editions of *El Heraldo Mejicano*. The newspapers that Batres identified as "*Periódicos que me defendieron*" were *El Monitor Republicano*, *El Heraldo*, and *El Imparcial*. Ibid., 22-3.

[33] Letter from Batres to Nemesio García Naranjo at SIPBA, January 30, 1914. Archivo Batres, exp. 90, f. 248.

[34] "*El recuerdo del señor General don Porfirio Díaz, surge cada día más resplandeciente a través del tiempo, cual astro luminoso en el crepúsculo matutino, dejando sentir su apacible luz impregnada de purísimos perfumes, elaborados en la gloria y en la inmortalidad.*" Leopoldo Batres, *Historia Administrativa del Sr. Gral. Porfirio Díaz: 1877 á 1880; 1884 á 1910; Homenaje al Sr. Presidente Benemerito General D. Porfirio Diaz en el V. Aniversario de Su Muerte*. Privately published, 1920.

the essence of his service to Díaz, while alluding to the personal inflexibility that had brought so much grief to others, and ultimately, to himself.[35]

Après Batres le Deluge

The departure of Batres was the most dramatic example of a wider exodus of staff from the Inspección and Museum in 1911 and 1912. Museum Director Genaro García, a good friend of Batres, was replaced by the Morelos philologist, writer, and statesman Cecilio Robelo. Robelo ran the institution until 1913, when the reactionary general Victoriano Huerta reinstalled García. At the lower levels of the archaeological bureaucracy, conserjes and secretarial staff were particularly hard-hit. Given the general laxity with which many caretakers carried out their functions, it was not difficult to find reasons to terminate a particular individual's employment, and name a more politically congenial replacement. (That same lack of direct oversight may have made caretaker positions particularly attractive to eager jobseekers.) Secretarial staff, meanwhile, were likely to have been hired directly by Batres, and may have lacked other patrons in the capital.

The first wave of terminations and resignations occurred shortly after Díaz's fall, as the Inspección and Museo Nacional passed to their new directors. Under these circumstances it was clearly untenable for Salvador Batres to remain at the agency his father had once directed, and he penned a stiff resignation note in August of 1911, saying that "it was no longer in [his] personal interests" to remain.[36] Other Batres appointees, such as the archivist Antonia Clos, the copyist Carmen Trillanes and the conserje of the Southeast Valley of Mexico Félix Acevedo, had already submitted resignations with almost identical language as that used by the younger Batres.[37] Rodríguez then began to clean house among the conserjes. In October of 1911, José Vargas García was dismissed from his position as conserje of Tetzcutzingo, allegedly for failing to comply with his job responsibilities. A year and a half later, immediately following Madero's

[35] "*Me es grato remitir a usted un ejemplar de las hojas que distribuí en la Camara de Diputados y una de las Monografías que publiqué con motivo de las desvastaciones* [sic] *que hizo el Departamento de Antropología de la Secretaría de Fomento, en las ruinas de la Ciudadela (Teotihuacán). Si usted señor se digna, leer atentamente dichas publicaciones, la Historia Patria ganará mucho y tal vez la salvación de nuestros archivos de piedra, únicos documentos originales que nos quedan de la época prehispánica, hoy entregados en manos impías y amenazadas a desaparecer…Siendo muy joven la suerte me llevó cerca del señor Juarez acampañandole* [sic] *hasta su muerte; después* [?] *años al lado del eminentisimo estadista Señor Lerdo y por último 30 años al del señor General Díaz. En esos largos períodos de experiencia aprendí á conocer el complicado mecanismo político de este anómalo pais y conociendo tambien a fondo a los hombres, a las coas y al arte de la política que es esencialmente efectista sobre todo en México. Los sectarios de la escuela juarista tuvimos el axioma moral lealtad y unión, principios que hasta este momento he podido cumplir religiosamente que espero cumpliré mientras viva*." Letter from Batres to President Álvaro Obregón, January 5, 1923. Archivo Batres, exp. 105, fs. 306-7.

[36] "*No conviniendo á mis intereses particulares continuar desempeñando el cargo de Auxiliar de la Inspección de los Monumentos Arqueológicos, que me confío la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, hago ante Ud. formal renuncia de dicho empleo, esperando se servirá aceptarla.*" AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 2, f. 1.

[37] Letter from Antonia Clos to SIPBA, June 30, 1911, AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 3, f. 1; letter from Carmen Trillanes to Francisco Rodríguez, July 24, 1911, AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 26, f. 2, and letter from Félix Acevedo to SIPBA, June 30, 1911, AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 14, f. 7. Trillanes was replaced by a "Luis Rodríguez," although whether he was related to the new Inspector of Archaeological Monuments, or whether the surname was simply a coincidence, is not specified in the documents. Letter from Francisco Rodríguez to SIPBA, August 7, 1911, and SIPBA memo, August 28, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 26, fs. 5-6.

fall, Vargas wrote a bitter letter to Jorge Vera Estañol, the new head of Instrucción Pública.[38] In this missive, Vargas claimed to have been fired without cause, "with the sole object of favoring some friend or relative of a Maderista chief," and concluded, "Today I have seen that the present government of which you are a worthy member is repairing the injustices commited by the previous administration, and so dare to send you this letter, pleading if it is possible to restore me to the position from which I was unjustly removed."[39] Whether or not these allegations were true, Vargas' letter illustrates how the politics of the capital could ripple outward to local communities.

In another case, local politics and personal animosities may have been expressed through the medium of the federal budget. Rodríguez fired Genaro Verazaluce as conserje of Tepozteco in the summer of 1911, after Verazaluce abandoned the Morelos site and thus failed to prevent the loss of "one of its best archaeological pieces."[40] (It is unclear whether Verazaluce was fleeing from the armed bands that were active in Morelos during this time, or whether he had other reasons for leaving. However, in November of 1911 the "peón auxiliar" of Tepozteco wrote that the "abnormal situation that the state is experiencing" had made it difficult for him to collect his salary, and that he feared "that obstacles and dangers will present themselves to me as a result of the insecurity on the roads." The Morelos site of Xochicalco also suffered damage and a robbery in June of 1911, actions later attributed to Zapatistas who harmed the ruins in order to attack the federal government which owned them.)[41] While it is possible that Verazaluce lost his job solely because he left the ruins unguarded, an examination of the broader context suggests that other factors may also have been in play. Genaro Verazaluce was part of a family that had benefited significantly from the favor of Batres. As we saw in Chapter 4, during the last decade of the

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[38] Vera Estañol's political orientation may be judged by his later authorship of a book titled *Carranza and His Bolshevik Regime*, which argued that the Constitution of 1917 "is spurious in orgin" and stressed older Liberal values of moderation, education and progress. Jorge Vera Estañol, *Carranza and His Bolshevik Regime* (Los Angeles: Wayside Press, 1920), i.

[39] "*…durante la Administración pasada se me separó del empleo que desempeñaba como Vigilante de las ruinas de Texcotzingo, en éste distrito, sin causa alguna que justificara mi separación, (como facilmente puede Ud. comprobar) y solo con objeto de favorecer a determinado individuo amigo ó pariente de un jefe maderista.*

Hoy que he visto que el actual gobierno del cual Ud. es digno miembro está reparando las injusticias cometidas por el anterior, me atrevo a dirigirle la presente, suplicandole si es posible se me devuelva el empleo que injustificadamente se me quitó." Appropriately, the street in Texcoco where Vargas resided was named for Porfirio Díaz. Unfortunately for the dispossessed caretaker, however, the Huerta regime does not seem to have taken any action in response to his complaint. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 22, f. 6.

[40] "*…le manifieste que por motivo de haber abandonado el puesto de Conserje del Monumento del Tepozteco, que desempeñaba el C. Genaro Berazaluce, dicho Monumento perdió una de sus mejores piezas arqueológicas…*" Letter from the Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos, copied in letter from the Tesorería de la Federación to the Secretaría de Hacienda, September 26, 1911, copied in letter from Hacienda to SIPBA, October 7, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 17, f. 9. See also July 1, 1911 letter from Rodríguez to SIPBA. Ibid., f. 2.

[41] "*…como por la situación anormal porque atraviesa el Estado, no es difícil que se me presenten obstáculos y peligros por la inseguridad en los caminos…*" Letter from Venancio García to Francisco Rodríguez, November 6, 1911, copied in letter from Rodríguez to SIPBA, November 21, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 8, f. 3. "*…hay que creer que con la destruccion y robo cometidos en el Monumento arqueologico de Xochicalco, que se averiguan en la presente causa, pretendicen las rebeldes zapatistas delincuentes causar daño al Gobierno General constituido contra el que se han rebelado, ya que del referido monumento perjudicado solo es dueño el mismo Gobierno, todo con el propósito de hacer triunfar la rebelion que cometian…*" Judicial resolution signed by Fernando Arce, June 28, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 19, f. 2.

Porfiriato at least four people with the surname Verazaluce held permanent or temporary positions as conserjes within the state of Morelos. Genaro's father Bernardino, a skilled draftsman, was even commissioned to accompany Batres while the Inspector General carried out works at Mitla and Xochicalco.[42] In a 1904 letter to Batres, Bernardino Verazaluce had also described Francisco Rodríguez's efforts to remove stone artifacts from the ruins of Tepozteco and place these in the local museum of Tepoztlán, Rodríguez's hometown. Batres then forwarded Verazaluce's letter to Instrucción Pública, as evidence to substantiate Batres' criticisms of Rodríguez.[43] Therefore, when Rodríguez finally gained control of the Inspección, he likely had little political or personal reason to show forbearance towards a member of the Verazaluce clan. While Bernardino was able to keep his job as conserje of Xochicalco, Genaro was replaced at Tepozteco by the Tepoztlán resident Valentín Conde. Unfortunately, Conde was not able to maintain a constant presence at the site either. By 1915, revolutionary violence had forced him to relocate to Mexico City.[44]

Vargas and Verazaluce were fired outright, but the new administration could also take an exquisitely passive-aggressive approach to personnel management. At the beginning of 1911, Leopoldo Batres named Teódulo Uscanga as the provisional guardian of the archaeological monuments in Tlalixcoyan, Veracruz, with a monthly salary of $30. This appointment was formalized by Instrucción Pública in May, allowing Uscanga to collect the back pay that he had accumulated since January. However, the coincident arrival of a new government and a new fiscal year placed Uscanga in limbo. At the beginning of September he wrote to Francisco Rodríguez in frustration, complaining that the Veracruz Treasury office had refused to pay his salary for July and August, on the grounds that he lacked an official appointment. Uscanga found this excuse "surprising" ("*lo cual me extraña*").[45] Rodríguez temporized, telling Uscanga that his reappointment as guardian was now working its way through the federal bureaucracy. To superiors at Instrucción Pública, however, Rodríguez suggested that the paperwork be delayed until Rodríguez could personally visit the site. After Rodríguez had a chance to assess Uscanga's performance, the guardian would either be renamed to his position or Rodrígez would propose "another person who would give us better guarantees in the fulfillment of his commission."[46]

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[42] See letter from Batres to SJIP, November 26, 1901, caja 149, exp. 40, f. 1, and telegram from Batres to Alfonso Pruneda at SIPBA, December 29, 1909, AGN-IPBA, caja 111, exp. 28, fs. 3-5.

[43] Letter from B. Verazaluce to Batres, May 18, 1904, and letter from Batres to SJIP, June 7, 1904. AGN-IPBA, caja 167bis, exp. 60, fs. 17 and 15-6. For a more detailed account of the fight over the Tepoztlán museum, see Christina Bueno, "*Forjando Patrimonio*: The Making of Archaeological Patrimony in Porfirian Mexico," Vol. 90, No. 2 (2010): 239-42.

[44] Inventory of the personnel of the Museo Nacional de Historia, Arqueología y Etnología, signed by Museum secretary Roberto Argüelles Bringas, March 18, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 323, exp. 24, f. 3.

[45] "*He mandado cobrar en la Jefatura de Hacienda de Veracruz, mi sueldo de $30.00 que se me asignó mensualmente al expedírseme el nombramiento que tengo en mi poder y no lo han pagado manifestando que no tienen orden de hacerlo, lo cual me extraña pues me pagaron los meses de Febrero á Junio y tomaron razón en su oportunidad de mi nombramiento. Me deben Julio y Agosto y le agradeceré á Ud. libre sus órdenes á fin de que mensualmente se me paguen los referidos $30.00 al presentar los recibos en la forma que lo hize en los meses que pagaron, forma que la misma Jefatura me indicó.*" Letter from Teódulo Uscanga to Francisco Rodríguez, September 1, 1911, copied in letter from Rodríguez to SIPBA, October 13, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 28, f. 6.

[46] "*Esta Inspección manifestó al Sr. Uscanga que ya se tramitaba su petición ante la Secretaría de su merecido cargo, á fin de que se revalidara el nombramiento de Conserje por no constar en el Presupuesto de*

Ministry officials appear to have adopted Rodríguez's recommended course of action. When Uscanga wrote to Instrucción Pública in October, again seeking the payment of his salary, he received no answer. However, if Uscanga was treated in a more underhanded fashion than were Vargas and Verazaluce, he also fared better over the long run. In 1912 and 1913, Uscanga was still serving as caretaker of the ruins of Tlalixcoyan.[47]

As Uscanga's example ultimately demonstrates, staff turnover at the Inspección during the summer and fall of 1911 was far from total. The benefits of institutional continuity and experienced, dependable employees might well offset the stigma of service under Batres. This point was perhaps expressed most forcefully by Félix Quero, the conserje of the Palaces of Mitla. As recounted in Chapter 4, Quero wrote to Instrucción Pública in November of 1911, after hearing rumors that "various people" were trying to seize his position. In his letter, Quero stressed that when visitors arrived at the site, "I show them everything of the monuments within my responsibility; leaving these people very pleased, and satisfied with their visit to these Ruins; as was not the case when my predecessor had this job." He added that the Government of Oaxaca could verify his statements.[48] In response, an Instrucción Pública administrator told Quero that "this Ministry, for now, has no reason to deprive itself of your services."[49] After years of confrontations and embarassment concerning the custodianship of Mitla, members of the archaeological bureaucracy had good reason to value the reliability of an employee like Quero, especially if that employee was also affiliated with the state's governor.

Leaders of the Maderista archaeological bureaucracy also valued continuity in a broader sense. Throughout 1911 and 1912, the Inspección and Museo Nacional continued to function much as they had done under Díaz, while the International School of American Archaeology and Ethnology successfully carried out studies and excavations. Some activities were disrupted, some sites were rendered unsafe by peasant guerrillas, and some positions changed hands, but federal officials made no major alterations to the administrative systems which governed the use of the pre-Hispanic material past. If a student in the Museum's Ethnology classes asked for leave to go to the north of the country, so that he could "lend assistance to the wounded of the present civil war" as part of a Red Cross brigade, the classes themselves continued.[50] In addition, there do not

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Egresos vigente…pido atentamente á esa Superioridad se sirva retardar el nombramiento indicado entretanto practico una visita á los Monumentos y adquiero mayor número de datos para ratificar la petición del referido Sr. Uscanga, ó en su defecto proponer á otra persona que nos dé mayores garantías en el cumplimiento de su cometido." Letter from Francisco Rodríguez to SIPBA, October 13, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 28, f. 6.

[47] Letter from Francisco Rodríguez to SIPBA, July 2, 1912, AGN-IPBA, caja 112, exp. 115, f. 1, and letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, July 28, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 78, f. 1.

[48] "*…he tenido conocimiento de que varias personas, estan solicitando el empleo que tengo de Conserje de las ruinas de este lugar. Por lo que muy atentamente le suplico no me destituya del empleo por muchos y muy poderosos motivos…todas las personas extranjeras y de diversos puntos, vienen á parar á esta su casa, y luego se les atiende devidamente enseñandoles todo lo que me corresponde de monumentos; quedando estas personas muy contentas, y satisfechas de su visita á estas Ruinas; no habiendo sido asi, cuando mi antesesor tenia el empleo, por los motivos que antes espongo á Vd.*

Puede Vd. tomar informes en el Govierno de Oaxaca, para que Vd. quede conbencido de todo lo que hoy tengo el honor de manifestarle." Letter from Félix Quero to SIPBA, November 9, 1911. AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 23, f. 1-2.

[49] "*…esta Secretaría, por ahora, no tiene motivos para privarse de los servicios de usted*." Letter from SIPBA to Félix Quero, November 14, 1911. Ibid., f. 3.

appear to have been any attempts to change the laws of June 3, 1896, or May 11, 1897, which had done so much to set forth Porfirian conceptions of archaeological patrimony. The fundamental structures of the Porfirian archaeological bureaucracy thus survived the first Revolutionary transfer of power largely unscathed. These structures, and the individuals who maintained them, would experience more difficult trials in the years to come.

II. Things Fall Apart

Throughout his brief presidency, Francisco Madero faced challenges from numerous factions, some of which were more ideologically distinct from each other than from Madero himself. Throughout 1912, Madero confronted coalitions of rebels in northern and southern Mexico, groups that were loosely led by Pascual Orozco and Emiliano Zapata respectively. He also faced conservative revolts led by Bernardo Reyes, a Porfirian general and former governor of Nuevo León, and Félix Díaz, nephew to the former dictator. However, the man who eventually succeeded in overthrowing Madero was slower to reveal his hand. Victoriano Huerta had been a general under Porfirio Díaz, and his natural sympathies lay with disgruntled ex-Porfiristas such as Reyes and Félix Díaz. Nevertheless, Huerta was canny enough to sense and follow the political winds. While Reyes and Díaz were imprisoned after their unsuccessful attempts to depose Madero, Huerta positioned himself as a loyal supporter of the president. He continued to enjoy positions of power and influence within the federal army, occupying himself by brutally suppressing peasant uprisings (and, not incidentially, sowing popular dissatisfaction with Madero's rule).[51] Although Madero was unhappy with Huerta's scorched-earth methods, he continued to place his faith in Huerta when it counted. This error would lead to the undoing of Madero and his administration.

The Decena Trágica

The Decena Trágica is one of the most dramatic and poignant episodes of the Mexican Revolution. These "tragic ten days" began on February 9, 1913, with the prison breakout of Reyes and Félix Díaz. With the help of military cadets and army artillery officers, Reyes and Díaz attempted to seize the National Palace. This attack was unsuccessful, as the rebels met with much stiffer resistance than they had expected. Reyes was killed as he entered the Palace, but Díaz escaped and took control of a fort on the outskirts of the city, known as the Ciudadela. There, Díaz and his forces enjoyed access to ample arms and ammunition, and were well-positioned against assault. At the National Palace, Madero appointed Huerta as the head of the army of the capital, after senior military leaders rebuffed the president's efforts to name a different general of slightly lower rank. Over the following days, a cruel farce played out in the streets. Huerta and Díaz entered into secret communications, even as federal troops exchanged

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[50] "*Teniendo necesidad de salir á la región Norte del Pais en la Brigada de la Cruz Roja Mexicana á prestar auxilio á los heridos de la presente guerra civil, A Ud. respetuosamente solicito, se sirva concederme licencia de dos meses con goce de sueldo como alumno pensionado de la clase de Etnología en el Establecimiento de su digno cargo, con lo que recibiré especial gracia y favor.*" Letter from José H. Romero to SIPBA, April 7, 1912. AGN-IPBA, caja 193, exp. 8, f. 8. Ethnology classes were briefly disrupted in October of 1912 by the death of Professor Pedro González, but a substitute for González was soon named. Ibid.

[51] John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 122.

artillery barrages with the nearby rebels.[52] These bombardments were deliberately ineffective from a military standpoint, but resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties, as well as the deaths of *rural* troops loyal to the administration.[53] On February 18, Madero and his vice president Jose María Pino Suárez were arrested and imprisoned by forces loyal to Huerta. With the assistance of U.S. ambassador Henry Lane Wilson, Huerta then hammered out a final agreement with Díaz, who in the so-called "Pact of the Embassy" agreed to support Huerta as provisional president. After forcing Madero and Pino Suárez to resign, and inserting himself in the constitutional chain of succession, Huerta took office on February 20. On the night of February 22, Madero and Pino Suárez were executed by Huertista forces. The new government offered the transparently false excuse that the men had been shot while attempting to escape.

The Decena Trágica has been considered from many angles – as the extinction of the hope for peaceful change, as an indictment of Madero's naivete, as a demonstration of U.S. perfidy, as the moment when real, revolutionary shifts in Mexican politics and society could begin in earnest. Less frequently asked is a question that was nevertheless of great concern to government employees of the period: if a military coup closes the workplace, does that count as paid time off?

In fact, it did. On February 22, the same day that Madero died, Museum director Cecilio Robelo forwarded a trio of letters to Instrucción Pública. Calling attention to "the abnormal and dangerous circumstances…experienced by the population of the capital," print shop manager Luis Corona asked that the print shop staff receive their salaries for the ten days when they could not report to work. Museum caretaker Epifanio Viramontes made a similar request on behalf of "the bricklayers and carpenters who work in the Museum," appealing to Robelo's "humanitarian sentiments," while the employees who bound printed materials requested their salaries as a "merciful favor (*gracia*) that will do much to alleviate our poverty." In sending these letters to Instrucción Pública, Robelo stated that he believed the petitions should be approved as a matter of "strict justice."[54] Ministry officials agreed, decreeing that Museum workers "whose work was halted by the abnormal circumstances in the capital" should be paid their regular wages for the ten days they had missed.[55]

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[52] Cole Blasier, "The United States and Madero," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (November, 1972): 217.

[53] Dennis R. Hidalgo, "The Evolution of History and the Informal Empire: La Decena Trágica in the British Press," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Summer, 2007): 327.

[54] "*Tengo la honra de transcribir á U. lo anterior, permitiéndome manifestarle respetuosamente que creo de estricta justicia acceder a la petición de los mencionados empleados.*" Letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, February 22, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 1, fs. 1-2. Viramontes and Corona were not named in the letter sent by Robelo, but their identities can be discovered from other documents. Corona is named as "*Regente de la Imprenta*" in a letter from the conserje of the Museo Nacional to Robelo, February 21, 1913, copied in a letter from Robelo to SIPBA, February 25, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 5, f. 2. Viramontes was appointed as conserje of the Museo Nacional in 1905, and was reappointed to the position in 1909 and 1912. In 1914, he was temporarily replaced by a loyal follower of the Constitutionalists, but once again held the position of Museum caretaker by 1916. See AGN-IPBA, caja 151, exp. 37; AGN-IPBA, caja 155bis, exp. 63; AGN-IPBA, caja 158, exp. 27, and AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 11.

[55] "*Esta Secretaría…acuerda que a los operarios que con anterioridad han estado trabajando en los diversos departamentos de ese Museo y que por las circunstancias anormales de la capital tuvieron que paralizar sus trabajos durante los diez días que duró la perturbación, se les paguen los salarios que respectivamente les corresponden.*" Letter from SIPBA to Robelo, March 3, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 1, f. 3.

The decision to pay Museum staff provides a telling indication of the continuities in cultural administration under Madero and Huerta, continuities that emerged from a combination of ideology, pragmatism, and the fortitude of the Museum employees themselves. Artfully vague references to "abnormal circumstances" could not entirely obscure the new president's responsibility for the havoc that had taken place within the capital. Given the fluid and volatile political circumstances, perceived criticisms or challenges to Huerta's legitimacy could be quite dangerous. The Chiapanecan senator Belisario Domínguez, who publicly condemned Huerta in October of 1913 and was murdered shortly thereafter, provides an example of the vengeance that Huerta and his supporters were willing to enact.[56] From their own perspective the Museum employees likely took a risk in pressing for their pay, as did Robelo in endorsing their petition. From another standpoint, however, the Huerta administration had good reasons to placate employees of the Museo Nacional, and few motives to disrupt the institution's essential functions. Given the Museum's longstanding associations with Mexican nationalism, and the favored position that the establishment had enjoyed under Porfirio Díaz, its activities could easily be folded into Huertista narratives about the re-establishment of order and the resumption of progress. Moreover, having assumed power by deception and force, Huerta had strong incentives to secure the support of the federal bureaucracy. The legitimacy of his rule depended, in part, on federal workers' willingness to remain at their posts and perform their assigned functions without protest. The few hundred pesos that it would cost to pay the Museum workers their salaries, money that in any case had already been assigned within the federal budget, was a small price for the new administration to pay in order to smooth over its relations with one group of federal employees.

Museum staff had good reason to be unsettled by recent events. Based within the National Palace complex, the staff of the Museo Nacional had directly experienced the terror and violence of the Decena Trágica. Museum caretaker Epifanio Viramontes offered a vivid account. On the morning of February 9, "a rebellious crowd passed through the street" outside the Museum, accompanied by "an armed force, some artillery pieces, automobiles, etc." When "a loud exchange of shots broke out," members of the crowd "sought refuge in the hallways of the houses that offered free access," as well as inside the Museum, which was then open to the public. The caretaker estimated that more than five hundred people burst into the building, who, "terrified, rushed into all the departments, to the extent that they forced open the padlocks on the doors of the lavatories which they found closed, believing that in such places they would find better shelter." To "establish order where possible, and to safeguard the departments with the utmost care so as to avoid any attack," the caretaker deployed the Museum's guards and servants to empty the institution of its frenzied visitors. In the process, they found "three artillerymen who remained hidden and a corporal of the same branch, gravely wounded," the latter of whom was eventually picked up by a Red Cross ambulance.

Severely shaken by the trauma of the morning, the nonacademic staff of the Museum then made clear their "small or nonexistent desire to remain in the building and fulfill their obligations." Mindful of the staff's "panicked terror," and concerned in any case that "disorderly elements might remain within the building," Viramontes announced that anyone wished to leave work and go home was free to do so. With the sole exception of the Museum's porter and Viramontes himself, the staff immediately departed for home. Soldiers soon surrounded the entire block, making it almost impossible for employees to return even had they wished to do so.

[56] Anna Macias, "Women and the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920," *The Americas*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (July, 1980): 69.

The caretaker and porter kept a lonely watch on the Museo over the next nine days, as destruction rained down around them.[57]

A few workers in the print shop, however, did manage to make their way back into the establishment. February 16 was named as a day of truce, so that both sides could collect their dead, and, secretly, so Huerta could plan his next move. On that day at around 3:30 in the morning, print shop manager Luis Corona appeared in the Museum. He told Viramontes that he required the use of certain equipment within the building, in order to carry out works that had been ordered by Instrucción Pública.[58] "At seven o'clock on the same day," Corona returned with Solón Argüello, Chief of the Museo Nacional's Publications Section, and several other print shop employees. They brought with them five boxes of paper which had been donated by the Secretaría de Fomento. Corona, Argüello and the others then proceeded to use the typographic resources of the Museo to print "a publication titled 'The Artisan,' and other leaflets."[59] While

[57] "*El día 9, y a la hora reglamentaria en que la servidumbre se presentaba al desempeño de sus obligaciones, pasó por la calle una multitud amotinada, a la que acompañaban fuerza armada y algunas piezas de artillería, automóviles etc., desatándose en tales momentos un nutrido tiroteo que obligó á la muchedumbre a buscar refugio en los zaguanes de las casas que ofrecían libre acceso, y como el de este Museo estaba en tales condiciones, por encontrarse en disposición del servicio público, penetraron al Establecimiento a guarecerse más de quinientas personas, que aterradas, se precipitaron en todos los departamentos, hasta el grado de forzar los candados de las puertas de los excusados que se encontraban cerrados, creyendo en tales lugares encontrar mejor abrigo. – Deseando establecer el orden hasta donde fuere posible, y cuidar con el mayor esmero los departamentos para evitar cualquier atentado, distribuí de manera conveniente á la servidumbre para que ejerciera una estricta vigilancia, lo que se logró, hasta que pudimos ver desalojado completamente el Edificio. – Entre la gente que penetró se encontraban tres artilleros que permanecieron escondidos y un cabo de la misma arma, herido gravemente, y a quien las ambulancias de la "Cruz Roja" recogió a las diez y media de la misma mañana en que se desarrollaron estos lamentables acontecimientos. – Como el nutrido tiroteo y el estado de excitación de los ánimos en general produjeran en la Servidumbre un terror pánico, me demostró el poco ó ningún deseo de continuar en el Edificio en el cumplimiento de sus obligaciones, y con el temor de conservar dentro del Edificio elementos de desorden, les manifesté que los que de una manera voluntaria quisieran acompañarme a cuidar el Edificio, podían hacerlo, y los que no, se retiraran a sus respectivos domicilios, lo efectuaron inmediatamente a excepción del Portero y del subscrito, quienes desde el día 9 hasta el 20 inclusive, quedaron solos, al cuidado del Establecimiento…Como la guarnición que circundaba al Palacio Nacional impidiera el libre tránsito en toda la manzana correspondiente al Palacio Nacional en los días subsecuentes, fué imposible a la Servidumbre el acceso al plantel siendo, como ya he dicho antes, el Portero y yo, quienes quedamos al cuidado del Edificio*… " Letter from Epifanio Viramontes to Cecilio Robelo, February 21, 1913, copied in letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, February 25, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 5, fs. 1-2.

[58] Corona had a lengthy career in the Museo Nacional, having worked there since at least 1890. Over the years, he had risen from the position of jefe de mozos, to conserje, to manager of the print shop. AGN-IPBA, caja 148, exp. 2. During his years of service, he apparently won great respect from those around him. References to Corona demonstrate the power of institutional loyalty and affiliations, as Museum directors under both Constitutionalist and Convention governments made efforts to secure Corona paid federal employment. In 1915, Luis Castillo Ledón described Corona as someone who "*siempre ha demostrado suma laborosidad para todos los trabajos que se le han encomendado, conoce perfectamente el ramo de imprenta*," while Jesús Galindo y Villa said that Corona "*como nadie conoce la Imprenta del Plantel*," and that his "*pericia, inteligencia, honradez y laborosidad han sido siempre muy estimadas*." Letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to SIPBA, January 12, 1915, AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 16, f. 2, and letter from Jesús Galindo y Villa to SIPBA, April 7, 1915, AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 26, f. 1.

[59] "*El 16 del actual a las tres y media de la mañana se presentó el Regente de la Imprenta, Sr. Luis G. Corona, manifestándome la necesidad que tenía de tomar dos componedores para desempeño de trabajos, que acatando disposición del Ministerio del Ramo, le había encomendado su jefe inmediato Sr. Solón Argüello, Jefe de la Sección de Publicaciones de este Museo. El propio día a las siete, regresaron dicho Sr. Argüello, acompañado*

Viramontes did not specify the content of these publications, the approval of government ministries and the secrecy with which the task was carried out strongly suggests that the men were printing Maderista propaganda to distribute to the citizens of the capital. In times of crisis, links between the resources of the Museo Nacional and the power of the national state might become even tighter than usual.

If Argüello and Corona were in fact producing official propaganda, their efforts did little to protect the establishment that employed them. In a dispassionate list of items in need of repair, Viramontes catalogued the havoc which had taken place within the Museum building. "The explosion of grenades and the firing of bullets" shattered "41 panes of glass in the Museo's balconies, windows, and skylights," and "destroyed….two wooden window frames and the crosspiece of an iron railing." A Mauser bullet pierced "a clay mold that was placed on exhibition," while a grenade set off on the roof over the Hall of Monoliths blasted away "part of the brickwork and parapet." A water tank "suffered a perforation in its lower section," and "the chimney of the stove in the Department of Anthropology was destroyed by the soldiers." The roofs had been occupied by "soldiers of the Federation," and "three of the departments on the upper floors, remaining unprotected, were sacked on the 18th and 19th" and robbed of unspecified objects.[60] Like the capital itself, the Museum was left in shambles by the Decena Trágica. Yet the very existence of Viramontes' report serves as a reminder that the basic functions of the Museo Nacional continued, despite the violent transfer of presidential power. The essentially symbiotic relationship between federal leaders and the employees of the cultural bureaucracy was too deeply entrenched, and offered too many benefits, to be easily discarded by figures on either side.

Reversals of fortune

Perhaps because of the suddenness with which Madero had been deposed, and the strong military backlash that Huerta soon confronted, the new administration did not make many immediate alterations to the staff or structure of the archaeological bureaucracy. Madero appointees Francisco Rodríguez and Cecilio Robelo continued to lead the Inspección and Museo Nacional throughout the spring of 1913. External and internal pressures on both institutions, however, were building steadily during this time. Shortages of funds and violence in the countryside restricted efforts at investigation and preservation, while Huerta's tightening grasp

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del Sr. Corona, cajistas y un prensista, quienes procedieron desde luego á ejecutar con los elementos del departamento tipográfico, la impresión y publicación de un periódico titulado "El Artesano" y otras hojas, a cuyo efecto introdujeron varias cajas de papel procedentes de la Secretaría de Fomento, de las que se recogieron por orden de la misma Secretaría cinco que no fueron utilizadas." Letter from Epifanio Viramontes to Cecilio Robelo, February 21, 1913, copied in letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, February 25, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 5, f. 2.

[60] *…tanto las azoteas del mismo ocupadas por soldados de la federación y algunos departamentos de los pisos altos, quedaron desamparados, siendo tres de ellos saqueados durante los días 18 y 19 y robados los objetos de que darán cuenta los señores jefes de dichos departamentos. – Los desperfectos ocasionados por la explosión de granadas y balas de fusil, fueron los siguientes: destrozo de 41 vidrios de los balcones, ventanas y tragaluz; 2 bastidores de madera y un barrote del baranda de hierro; una perforación por bala mausser en uno de los vaciados de yeso que están en exhibición; la explosión // Page 3 en la azotea del gran Salón de Monolitos de una granada, motivó que fuese destruido parte del enladrillado y pretil, y un tinaco que sufrió una perforación en su parte inferior así como la chimenea de la estufa del departamento de Antropología, que fué destruida por los soldados.*" Ibid., fs. 2-3.

over the capital highlighted questions of patronage and political allegiance. In this unsettled political climate, figures within the cultural bureaucracy also developed schemes for administrative reorganizations, proposals that sometimes met with intense resistance from other federal employees. The shake-ups that ensued affected the functioning as well as the personnel of the Inspección and Museo, while furthering the scientific and political standing of Manuel Gamio.

The most significant shift occurred with the beginning of the new fiscal year in July, when the long-simmering rivalry between the Inspección and the Museo Nacional ended with a temporary victory for the latter. The federal budget for 1913-1914 eliminated the Inspección as an agency with a single Inspector General, operating under the direct authority of Instrucción Pública. Instead there would be four separate Inspectors, each of whom would be responsible for a particular archaeological zone, and would report to the director of the Museo Nacional. The Museum director, rather than the Inspectors, would also nominate office staff, technical personnel, and site caretakers for the approval of Instrucción Pública. The composition of the four archaeological zones reflected the primacy given to sites in central and southern Mexico, with the zones divided along state lines as follows:

> **Zone 1:** Yucatán, Campeche, Tabasco, Chiapas and the territory of Quintana Roo
>
> **Zone 2:** Oaxaca, Veracruz, and Guerrero
>
> **Zone 3:** Michoacán, Colima, Jalisco, Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Guanajuato, and the territory of Tepic
>
> **Zone 4:** México, Hidalgo, Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala and the Federal District[61]

The positions were filled respectively by Juan Martínez Hernández, "a person competent in the field of archaeology" and a distinguished Maya philologist who had served the Inspección in Yucatán since 1911; Ramón Mena, the professor of archaeology in the Museo Nacional (when Mena resigned a few months later to attend to other professional concerns, he was replaced by Pablo Henning, the Museum's Collector of Ethnological Documents); Porfirio Aguirre, a former student of archaeology in the Museo Nacional, who had become an assistant in the Museum's archaeology classes, and Manuel Gamio, who had studied archaeology at the Museum and under Franz Boas at Columbia University, and occupied various positions within the Museo Nacional and Escuela Internacional de Arqueología y Etnología Americana.[62] Gamio, in fact, had

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[61] Letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, June 26, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 3, f. 1.

[62] "*Habiéndose creado en el Presupuesto del año fiscal próximo cuatro Inspectores de los Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República y quedando a la vez dependiendo esas cuatro Inspecciones de esta Dirección, me tomo la libertad de proponer que sea nombrado Inspector de la 1a. zona…el Sr. Juan Martínez Hernández, persona competente en el ramo de Arqueología.*" Letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, June 26, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 94, f. 1. See also letter from Robelo to SIPBA, June 26, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 40, f. 1; letter from Ramón Mena to SIPBA, September 1, 1913, and letter from Genaro García to SIPBA, September 2, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 40, fs. 5 and 7; letter from Robelo to SIPBA, June 25, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 37, f. 1, and letters from Robelo to SIPBA, June 26 and July 15, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 39, fs. 1 and 3. For information on Juan Martínez Hernández's previous employment with the Inspección, see SIPBA memo,

proposed this particular delineation of zones, although the decision to create four Inspector positions subject to the Museum director had emerged from more extensive consultations between Gamio, Robelo, professors of the Museo Nacional, and the Instrucción Pública official Alfonso Pruneda (who in private life was the son-in-law of Leopoldo Batres).[63]

Gamio was the chief beneficiary of these changes. Although in theory he was one of four Inspectors reporting to the Museum's director, in practice Gamio quickly emerged as the effective leader of a reconstituted Inspección. By the middle of 1914 he had received an official appointment as the agency's chief, and was able to operate largely independently of the Museum.[64] It is significant that when Francisco Rodríguez formally relinquished control over the agency, it was Gamio, rather than Robelo, who took charge of the Inspección's files, collections, and other resources.[65]

Robelo's fall from power came a few months later. According to Robelo himself, he was ordered to resign as director on August 15, 1913, because Minister of Public Instruction José M. Lozano "had to govern with his friends."[66] Earlier disputes between Robelo and the professors at the Museum may also have undermined his standing within the cultural bureaucracy. In June, Robelo had proposed a series of changes to the regulations of the Museo Nacional, meant to standardize coursework and expedite student progress. Professors protested against the proposed increase in their workload, and sought to clarify their role: was their primary function to be educators, or conservators of the Museum's collections? Relations between Robelo and the professors became so tense that when Robelo called meetings to discuss the changes, few professors were even willing to attend.[67] Although Alfonso Pruneda urged Robelo to smooth things over with the professors, the incident exposed the rifts between the mostly Porfirian establishment of the Museum and Robelo, who had been appointed by the defunct Madero administration.[68] When Robelo was replaced as director by Genaro García, the same person who

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November 27, 1911, AGN-IPBA, caja 120, exp. 4, f. 1, and SIPBA memo, May 7, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 36, f. 1.

[63] "Ensayo de Clasificación Cultural de los Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República Mexicana," sent by Manuel Gamio to SIPBA, June 26, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 3, fs. 4-6. See also AGN-IPBA, caja 151, exp. 36.

[64] Renato González Mello writes, "In January 1914, [Gamio] was appointed temporarily as chief of the *Inspección General*, an appointment made definitive six months later." Renato González Mello, "Manuel Gamio, Diego Rivera, and the politics of Mexican anthropology," *Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 45 (Spring, 2004): 162. González takes her information from José Roberto Gallegos Téllez Rojo, "Manuel Gamio y la formación de la nacionalidad: el problema de los indios y de los derechos de los pueblos" (Licenciatura thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1996), 86 and 96.

[65] Letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, July 28, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 39, f. 5.

[66] "*El 15 de agosto de 1913, el Secretario de Instrucción Pública, señor Lozano, me ordenó que renunciara la Dirección del Museo, porque él tenía que gobernar con sus amigos y que a ese título iba a nombrar Director al señor Lic. Genaro García, (el mismo que había destituído el señor Vázquez Gómez y al que yo había reemplazado).*" Report sent by Cecilio Robelo to the Jefe de la Sección de Administración de la SIPBA, April 24, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 323, exp. 8, f. 7.

[67] Letter from Cecilio Robelo to SIPBA, August 11, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 4, f. 13.

Robelo himself had replaced in 1911, some professors likely viewed this as a comforting return to normality after an unsettling two-year aberration.

Robelo's departure from the Museo Nacional was accompanied by a spate of dismissals of conserjes that he had proposed. During the fall of 1913 Genaro García directed frequent letters to Instrucción Pública, detailing the ways in which various caretakers were failing in their responsibilities. Julián Ortegón, the conserje at Kichmouc, lived too far from the ruins.[69] The conserje of Oxkintok, Julián Garma, was fired for living in Mérida; Pastor Silveira at Dzulá "did not even know…the ruins," and Alonso Espejo of Labná was released for reasons that were unfortunately left vague.[70] All of these conserjes had been renamed to their posts in late July of 1913, following a recommendation from Robelo. Perhaps reading the writing on the wall, Fermín Vázquez of Tzitzi submitted his resignation barely a month after being renamed as conserje, citing ill health. That this rationale was suspect is indicated by the Ministry twice asking García to comment on the resignation, and García's statement that he did not know the definitive reason why Vázquez chose to leave federal employment.[71]

Here, it is worth remembering that political considerations almost certainly overlapped with real failings on the part of the caretakers. As we saw in Chapter 4, it had always been difficult for federal administrators to provide effective supervision over Mexico's many and widely dispersed pre-Hispanic sites. The challenge of disentangling politics and performance arises in the case of Tajín caretaker Agapito Fontecilla, part of a prominent Papantla family that had guarded the ruins for decades. According to García, Fontecilla did not visit the ruins and lived at several leagues' distance from them.[72] Fontecilla had faced similar allegations of inattentiveness during the Porfiriato, but Batres had deemed these charges unjustified. Was Fontecilla finally receiving his comeuppance for longstanding negligence, or had the political events of the last few years altered his family's standing within the local community and severed patronage ties with federal authorities? With the distance of time, it is difficult to sort through these factors and determine whether any or all of them were at play.

The reorganization of the Inspección came at time when conserjes in certain regions of the country faced significant peril in the performance of their duties. Bernardino Verazaluce, the caretaker of Xochicalco, found as much to fear from the state government of Morelos and the troops of the federal army as from the Zapatista bands that patrolled the countryside.[73] In an

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[68] In Robelo's account, Madero himself journeyed to Cuernavaca and pressed Robelo to take charge of the Museum. Report sent by Robelo to the Jefe de la Sección de Administración de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, April 24, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 323, exp. 8, f. 6.

[69] Letter from Genaro García to SIPBA, October 16, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 70, f. 4.

[70] Letter from Genaro García to SIPBA, October 16, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 95, f. 3; letter from García to SIPBA, October 16, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 69, f. 3, and letter from García to SIPBA, September 25, 1913, AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 93, f. 3.

[71] AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 62. However, García noted approvingly that by submitting his resignation, Vázquez was obeying the dictates of a recent circular which had "*el objeto de evitar abusos y obligar a los encargados de cuidar Monumentos, a que no abandonen éstos y a que cumplan eficazmente con los deberes de su empleo.*" Letter from Genaro García to SIPBA, October 29, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 62, f. 9.

[72] AGN, Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, caja 113, exp. 76, f. 3.

[73] Jaime Litvak King writes that at Xochicalco, "La revolución de 1910 afectó la conservación de la zona, que para entonces ya tenía guardián. Constantes incursiones de zapatistas y federales pusieron en peligro la

angry letter directed to Cecilio Robelo at the Museo Nacional, Verazaluce wrote that state officials "do not respect any employee, and my misfortune is such that they have torn up the letter of appointment that I had. What is more, as my job is precisely to walk about in the hills, if any federal soldiers come across me carrying out my labors with my assistant (*peón*), I am sure that we should face a firing squad, because we who are peaceful are more persecuted by the Government, and the soldiers always go about drunk."[74] Robelo tactfully suggested to Instrucción Pública officials that Verazaluce be allowed to work for the Inspección in other capacities, retaining his regular title and salary as caretaker until it was safe to return to Xochicalco. This plan was approved, and Verazaluce soon began to assist Manuel Gamio with sorting and classifying the objects recovered from stratigraphic excavations at the site of Huexotla in México state.[75] Two years later, Verazaluce was still unable to return to his site. Along with the conserjes of Tezcutzingo, Teotihuacán, and Tepoztlán (the same Valentín Conde who had replaced Verazaluce's son, Genaro), he watched over excavations taking place in a street near the center of Mexico City.[76]

Bernardino Verazaluce's continued absence from Xochicalco underscores Victoriano Huerta's inability to firmly ensconce himself as president of Mexico. Indeed, Huerta faced fierce resistance almost as soon as he took office. The central nucleus of opposition formed around the senior statesman Venustiano Carranza, who had served as a federal senator under Díaz, and as governor of the state of Coahuila under Madero. Many individuals and groups, including forces led by Emiliano Zapata in the south and Francisco "Pancho" Villa in the North, tentatively aligned themselves with Carranza and his Constitutionalist forces in order to drive out Huerta. While Huerta maintained control of the capital for more than a year after seizing power, his forces gradually lost ground to the insurgents. Increasing the general turmoil was a U.S. military occupation of the port of Veracruz, which began in April of 1914 in retaliation for the arrest of U.S. sailors. Despite the anti-Huerta stance taken by Woodrow Wilson's administration, the occupation was generally condemned by all sides in the revolutionary struggle. According to Carmen Ruiz, the anti-U.S. sentiment of the period spelled the end of the Escuela Internacional

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seguridad de los vigilantes y de los instalaciones. Las quejas sobre los atropellos cometidos por ambas partes de la contienda fueron numerosas. Uno de los episodios terminó con el incendio y destrucción de la casa para visitantes en 1912." Jaime Litvak King, "Investigaciones en el Valle de Xochicalco, 1569-1970," *Anales de Antropología*, Vol. 8 (1971): 111.

[74] "*…he corrido mucho peligro en todo el tiempo de la revolución tanto por los Zapatistas como por parte del Gobierno, y estos últimos no respetan a ningún empleado, ha llegado mi desgracia al grado que el nombramiento que tenía me lo rompieran. Además como mi empleo es precisamente de andar en los cerros, si algunos federales me llegaran a encontrar desempeñando mis labores con mi peón, seguro que seriamos pasados por las armas, porque nos persigue más el Gobierno a los pacíficos, y como siempre andan ebrios es de temer, y para evitar un atentado preferí venir a esta, y poner a Ud. todo esto en conocimiento para que Ud. vea lo que dispone de mi persona.*" Letter from Bernardino Verazaluce to Cecilio Robelo, July 4, 1913, copied in letter from Robelo to SIPBA, July 8, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 60, f. 1.

[75] Letter from SIPBA to Cecilio Robelo, August 20, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 113, exp. 11, f. 4. In 1914, Verazaluce aided Manuel Gamio in works at Tula. According to Gamio, Verazaluce "*ha mostrado constantemente actividad, constancia y celo en el desempeño de sus labores.*" Letter from Manuel Gamio to substitute Museum director Roberto Esteva Ruiz, May 14, 1914, copied in letter from Esteva Ruiz to SIPBA, May 15, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 20, f. 1.

[76] Inventory of the personnel of the Museo Nacional de Historia, Arqueología y Etnología, signed by Museum secretary Roberto Argüelles Bringas, March 18, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 323, exp. 24, f. 3.

de Arqueología y Etnología Americana, an institution premised on international harmony and cooperation.[77] Even in the face of foreign aggression, however, Huerta was unable to rally much new support. By mid-August of 1914, Huerta was forced to flee Mexico City, which was then occupied by soldiers under the command of the Carrancista general Álvaro Obregón.[78] Unfortunately, Huerta's departure did not mark the cessation of revolutionary violence. Instead, the conflict that ensued, which Alan Knight has called the "war of the winners" resulted in some of the bloodiest fighting and most cutthroat politics of the Revolution.[79]

III. The Center Holds

After the defeat of Huerta, disputes arose among the loose coalition that had formed to displace him. While Carranza cast himself as Mexico's leading civilian authority, his relatively conservative positions on questions such as land reform rendered him unacceptable to many revolutionaries, especially to the followers of Francisco Villa and Emiliano Zapata. A 1914 convention among military and political leaders held in the city of Aguascalientes initially seemed to offer some faint hopes for reconciliation among the various factions. However, the Aguascalientes convention quickly became a mechanism for the supporters of Villa and Zapata to assign legitimacy to civilian leaders that they found more congenial than Carranza. Obregón, Carranza's most capable general, considered throwing in his lot with the Convention, but ultimately remained loyal to the "First Chief" of the Constitutionalist Army. Over the next several years, Constitutionalist and Convention forces engaged in fierce fighting to determine control of the country and to define the meaning of the Revolution.

Constitution and Convention

Between mid-1914 and mid-1916, Mexico City changed hands multiple times. After taking control of the capital from Huerta on August 15, 1914, Obregón's troops departed the city in November. Pushed out of the traditional seat of national authority, the Constitutionalists set up an independent government in Veracruz. Convention troops, meanwhile, took control of Mexico City, with Zapatistas arriving in November and Villistas in early December. The troops of the Convention, however, could not hold the city for long. On January 15, the Convention government moved to Cuernavaca, allowing Obregón's forces to re-enter Mexico City on January 28. Obregón and his troops evacuated the capital again on March 10, allowing the Convention government, backed by Zapatista soldiers, to return. On July 11, the Constitutionalist general Pablo González briefly took Mexico City away from the Convention, but held it less than a week. Zapatistas returned to occupy the city once more until August 2, 1915, when González returned and forced them out. The Constitutionalist government then returned to Mexico City, and continued to hold the capital for the rest of the conflict.[80]

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[77] Carmen Ruiz, "Insiders and Outsiders in Mexican Archaeology (1890-1930)," 151.

[78] John Lear, *Workers, Neighbors, and Citizens: The Revolution in Mexico City* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 246.

[79] Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2: Counter-revolution and Reconstruction* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 263.

As these armed tides ebbed and flowed over the capital, the normal routines of the archaeological bureaucracy suffered predictable erosion. From late 1914 to the early spring of 1915, many government agencies and functions shut down altogether. Between 1914 and 1916, politics – or perhaps more accurately, factionalism – also came to play an increasingly prominent role in the day-to-day functioning of the Museo and Inspección. Considerations of loyalty and partisanship were taken into account with a frankness unknown during the Díaz regime. In March of 1915, little more than a week after Convention forces had retaken the capital, all of the nominations made by the Constitutionalist leaders of Instrucción Pública were rendered invalid. Alfredo Serratos, the Convention's Minister of War and the Navy, explained the rationale for this decision in some detail. Serratos argued that "It is well known that when we abandoned this Capital, due to the advance of the Carrancistas, we invited all the employees of Government offices who wished to follow us to Cuernavaca to do so, and those who wished to stay were able to do so, as we left them in absolute liberty to act in the manner they wished…a small minority of those employees accepted our invitation and followed us disposed to share our fate, while the majority remained behind and perhaps many of them will have served Obregón and many others will have marched to Veracruz to lend their services directly to Carranza." Serratos thus believed that "now, without qualms of any sort…we can, as I have said before, select among the true revolutionary element, those loyal to the Convention, for the individuals suited to occupy the great quantity of posts and jobs in the Government, that are currently unfilled. Regarding the former employees of the Government that followed us to this City, I believe it useless to recommend them, because they have already given ample proof of their loyalty and adhesion." According to Serratos, these faithful adherents to the Convention's cause should not only resume their former jobs, but be given better ones if possible, "thus we will comply in a positive manner with the beautiful slogan of the Revolution: 'Reform, Liberty, Justice and Law.'"[81] While the abstract, impersonal principles of liberty, justice, and law might seem to be at odds with such favoritism, Serratos' ultimate concern was the survival of the Convention government. If the Convention leaders could not solidify their control over the federal administration, they would be in no position to advance the broader goals of their movement.

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[80] For the chronology of these events, see Lear, *Workers, Neighbors, and Citizens*, 262 and 268; Gilly, *The Mexican Revolution*, 185 and 193; William Weber Johnson, *Heroic Mexico: The violent emergence of a modern nation* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1968), 279, and Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*, 244.

[81] "*Es bien sabido que cuando abandonamos dicha Capital, con motivo del avance de los carrancistas, invitamos a todos los empleados de las oficinas de Gobierno para que, los que quisieran seguirnos a Cuernavaca lo hicieran y los que quisieran quedarse podían hacerlo, pues les dejábamos en absoluta libertad para obrar en el sentido que gustaran: desde luego se pudo ver qeu la gran minoría de esos empleados aceptó nuestra invitación y nos siguió dispuestos a correr nuestra suerte; en cambo la mayoría se quedó y quizá muchos de ellos habrán servido a Obregón y otros muchos se habrán marchado a Veracruz, para prestar sus servicios directamente a Carranza. – Así pues, ahora sin escrúpulo de ninguna especie, en mi concepto, al regresar a México, podemos, como antes dije, seleccionar de entre el verdadero elemento revolucionario, fiel a la Convención, a los individuos aptos para ocupar la gran cantidad de puestos y empleos en el Gobierno, que están vacantes. – Respecto a los empleados antiguos de Gobierno que nos siguieron a esta Ciudad, creo inútil recomendarlos, pues han dado una prueba plena de su lealtad y adhesión y por lo mismo opino que su conducta debe tomarse en consideración, no solamente para dejarlos que sigan ocupando los empleos que hasta aquí han ocupado, sino para mejorarlos lo mas posible en su empleo: así cumpliremos de una manera positiva con el hermoso lema de la Revolución que dice: 'Reforma, Libertad, Justicia y Ley'*." Letter from Alfredo Serratos to the Oficial Mayor Encargado de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, March 18, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 349, exp. 10, f. 4.

Factional considerations also played a major role in the Constitutionalist government's hiring practices. A job application submitted in 1916 by 33-year-old resident of Mexico City, who wished to obtain a position "within one of the offices, that are part of the National Museum of Archaeology," offers a particularly striking example of political factors at work. As part of the application process, Daniel Guzmán Arce had to fill out an official questionnaire which probed his allegiances to the various governments which had claimed authority over the last few years. The queries on the form make this intention explicit:

> Have you been an employee of the Government?
> What positions have you held, and during what dates?
> Have you served in an army? Under whose orders did you serve, during which time, and which rank did you achieve?
> During the dictatorship of Díaz, and the interim presidency of De la Barra, what positions did you hold?
> When the government of Sr. Francisco I. Madero was established, did you continue in the same position, or did you obtain another one?
> After the assassination of Sr. President Madero, did you serve the usurper Huerta, keeping the same position as previously, or did you obtain another one?
> During the occupation of this capital by the Constitutionalist Army, in August of 1914, did you apply for and obtain a position, or keep that which you had?
> Did you follow the Constitutionalist Government when it moved to Veracruz? If not, explain the reasons why.
> During the so-called Government of the Convention, did you continue in the position granted you by Sr. Carranza, or did you obtain another position?
> In what manner have you contributed to the triumph of the Constitutionalist Revolution?

Answers to these questions had to be verified by witnesses "of recognized adherence to the Constitutionalist cause."[82] However, despite providing recommendations from two

[82] In the selection that follows, Guzmán's answers to the questions on the form are given in bold. "*1. Nombre:* ***Daniel Guzmán Arce****. 2. Nacionalidad:* ***Méxicano.*** *3. Edad y lugar de nacimiento:* ***33 años. México. D.F.*** *…6. Ha sido Ud. empleado del Gobierno?:* ***No.*** *7. Qué puestos desempeñado y en qué fechas?:* ***Ninguno.*** *8. Ha sido Ud. militar? A las órdenes de quién ha servido, durante cuanto tiempo y qué grado alcanzó?:* ***No.*** *9. Durante la dictadura de Díaz y el interinato de De la Barra, qué empleos desempeñó?:* ***Ninguno.*** *10. Cuando se estableció el Gobierno del señor Francisco I. Madero, continuó en su mismo empleo, u obtuvo otro?:* ***Ninguno.*** *11. Después del asesinato del señor Presidente Madero, sirvió Ud. al usurpador Huerta, conservando el mismo puesto que desempeñaba, u obtuvo otro?* ***No.*** *12. A la ocupación de esta Capital por el Ejército Constitucionalista, en agosto de 1914, solicitó Ud. y obtuvo algún puesto, o conservo el que tenía?* ***No.*** *13. Siguió Ud. al Gobierno Constitucionalista al transladarse a Veracruz? En caso contrario, manifieste Ud. las causas.:* ***No, por haber sido empleado particular.*** *14. Durante el llamado Gobierno de la Convención siguió Ud. desempeñando el puesto que le confiara el señor Carranza, u obtuvo uno nuevo?:* ***Ninguno.*** *15. Cuantos años lleva Ud. de servir a la Instrucción Pública y en que empleos?* ***Nunca he servido.*** *16. Qué empleo solicita Ud.:* ***De empleado en el Museo Nacional.*** *17. En qué forma ha contribuído Ud. al triunfo de la Revolución Constitucionalista?:* ***En ninguna.***" The questionnaire was witnessed by Lieutenant Colonel Ignacio Martínez, and Lieutenant Colonel J. Villarosa. Questionnaire signed by Daniel Guzmán Arce, March 9, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 9. (The page numbering for this document is uncertain, since the folder containing Guzmán's application was mistakenly placed into expediente 9, which in the records of the Archivo General de la Nación is listed as containing only two pages, dealing with a different matter from 1916. I do not know if Guzmán's job application has been moved to another expediente or caja in the several years since I transcribed the file.)

Constitutionalist officers, Daniel Guzmán Arce was still denied the job that he sought. As someone who had never before held a government position, and who stated that he had contributed to Constitutionalist victory "in no way," the hapless applicant apparently could not make a convincing case that he deserved steady federal employment.[83]

He was not alone in this. The churn of national administrations and reorganizations within Instrucción Pública meant that multiple directors headed the Museo Nacional within a relatively short span of time. (Not all of these changes were the result of politically motivated firings; Genaro García, for instance, asked for indefinite leave from the Museum in December of 1913 in order to serve as the director of the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria.)[84] These directors included the Museum's longtime professor of History Jesús Galindo y Villa, who headed the Museum under the rule of the Convention; Elías Amador, who had been appointed as a collector of historical documents in 1907 and had served as an interim professor of History in 1912; Roberto Argüelles Bringas, a secretary of the Museum who carried out the functions of director on an interim basis, and Luis Castillo Ledón, who studied history at the Museum during the Porfiriato and had gone on to fill several positions within the institution.[85] Of these figures, Castillo Ledón ultimately proved the most tenacious. Thanks in part to his early and active support for the Constitutionalist movement, Castillo Ledón served, although not continuously, as director of the Museum through much of the 1920s and 1930s.

Acquisitions and Influence

Besides affecting employment, the turbulence of Revolutionary politics also disrupted the normal procedures of cultural administration, and allowed for unsubtle forms of influence peddling. In 1916, for instance, a widow named María Luisa de Puga attempted to sell the Museo Nacional some medals from the early nineteenth century. She claimed that although "un señor Americano" had offered to buy the medals for $5,000, she wished for the Museum to have first claim on "these relics of our Independence era" so that they would not "leave the country in the hands of a foreigner." A formal assessment of the medals revealed that the suggested price was "not only elevated, but extremely exaggerated," as the objects possessed neither intrinsic value nor indications of their supposed provenance. However, the widow could present one exceptionally compelling reason for the Museum to buy the items – a letter of recommendation from the general Pablo González, one of the highest-ranking figures in the entire Constitutionalist army. Given this circumstance, Luis Castillo Ledón suggested to Instrucción Pública that "the medals offered by the widow Puga could be acquired, although not for the price that she proposes."[86] The Museum thus offered the well-connected seller around $50 apiece for

[83] "Deserve," in this case, is meant to be a somewhat flexible term. In 1914, for example, the Constitutionalist government named a curator for the Museum at Teotihuacán , even though Gamio said that no replacement was necessary after the previous caretaker took another position within Instrucción Pública. The new appointee never showed up to work, resigned after less than a month, and later tried to bill the government for spurious expenses. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 2.

[84] AGN-IPBA, caja 158, exp. 51.

[85] See letter from Genaro García to SIPBA, June 2, 1908, AGN-IPBA, caja 154, exp. 41, f. 1; letter from Elías Amador to Cecilio Robelo, August 31, 1912, copied in letter from Robelo to SIPBA, September 2, 1912, AGN-IPBA, caja 157, exp. 40, f. 1; AGN-IPBA, caja 159, exp. 1; AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 4; AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 70, and AGN-IPBA, caja 323, exp. 24.

artifacts that were likely worthless. Similarly, in July of 1916 Minister of Development Pastor Rouaix wrote a personal note to an Instrucción Pública official, in order to recommend a "good friend" who wished to sell the Museo Nacional a watch that had supposedly belonged to a heroine of the independence struggle. Rouaix believed that this object would make a "good acquisition" for the institution's collections.[87] While it is unclear whether the item was actually purchased by the Museum, the meaning in Rouaix's letter was wholly apparent.

Others used the patronage of high-ranking officials to involve the Museum in more innovative schemes for making money. Perhaps the brashest proposal was that submitted by Rosas, Derba, y Compañía (also known as Azteca Film).[88] The company planned to produce a film titled *Chapultepec*, telling the story of the heroic military cadets who had held invading U.S. forces at bay during the Mexican-American War, then committed suicide as a final act of resistance. To this end, the company requested the loan of historical artifacts from the Museum's collections. The desired objects included "5 cannons that fire…40 rifles for Mexican soldiers and cadets; 50 rifles for American soldiers, 5 stretchers, 2 Mexican flags, 2 American flags, 1 cannon with a broken carriage and loose wheels, 6 hospital beds, 1 small crucifix" and "the Mexican and American swords that are available." The company also requested that the Museo provide "5 horses with harnesses."[89] In its initial request and in a subsequent follow-up, the film company alluded to enjoying the support and protection of Constitutionalist leader Venustiano Carranza,

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[86] "*Un señor Americano que colecciona estas curiosidades, me ofreció por ellas la cantidad de $5,000.00, pero naturalmente quiero ofrecerlas antes a ese Museo pues siendo unas reliquias del tiempo de nuestra Yndepencia no quiero que fueran a pais en manos de un extranjero, y además no teniendolas el Museo podrá adquirirlas y enriquecer con esto su colección.*" Letter from María Luisa M., viuda de Puga, April 15, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 18, f. 3. "*…el precio no solo es elevado, sino exageradísimo, tanto por el valor intrínseco de los objetos, que es nulo, como por el estimativo, según podrá verse por el simple examen de esas piezas. El interés que para el Museo puedan tener es también relativo, en virtud de que no se indica en las condecoraciones su procedencia.*" Letter from Jesús Galindo y Villa to Luis Castillo Ledón, April 19, 1916. Ibid., f. 1. "*…podrían adquirirse las medallas propuestas por la señora vda. de Puga, aunque no en el precio que ella propone.*" Letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to SIPBA, April 22, 1916. Ibid., f. 6.

[87] "*Esta carta será puesta en manos de usted por un buen amigo mio, el señor Don Angel Pérez Figueroa…El señor Pérez Figueroa, tiene un reloj históricamente verdaderamente notable, pues perteneció a la Corregidora de Querétaro, según constancias que obran en su poder, y pasa a hablar con usted sobre el particular, creyendo yo que será una buena adquisición para el Museo de Historia, el reloj mencionado.*" Letter from Pastor Rouaix to Alfonso Cravioto, subsecretario de SIPBA, July 5, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 28, f. 1.

[88] Enrique Rosas was one of Mexico's leading early filmmakers, while Mimí Derba was a stage and film actress. The two "cofounded Azteca Films...in 1917," and released several melodramas starring Derba within the same year. Carl J. Mora, *Mexican Cinema: Reflections of a Society, 1896-1980*, Revised Edition (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 20.

[89] The complete list of desired objects read: "*MESA GRANDE. TINTERO GRANDE. PLUMAS DE AVE. / 2. RETRATOS PINTADOS AL OLEO CON MARCO-GENERAL LEON Y CORONEL BALDERAS, CON CRESPON. / VARIOS PLENOS DEL CAMPO DE BATALLA. / VARIOS DIBUJOS DE FORTIFICACION. / 3. ANTEOJOS DE CAMPAÑA. / 5. CABALLOS CON ARNESES. / 3. CORNETAS. / 5. CAÑONES QUE DISPAREN. / 6. PISTOLAS. / 40. FUSILES PARA SOLDADOS Y CADETES MEXICANOS. / 50. FUSILES PARA SOLDADOS AMERICANOS. / 5. CAMILLAS. / 2. BANDERAS MEXICANAS. / 2. BANDERAS AMERICANAS. / 1. CAÑON ROTO POR LA CUREÑA Y SUELTAS LAS RUEDAS. / 6. CAMAS DE HOSPITAL. / 1. CRUCIFIJO PEQUEÑO. / ESPADAS MEXICANAS Y AMERICANAS, LAS QUE HUBIERE.*" List sent by Rosas, Derba, y Compañía to SIPBA, April 24, 1917. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 43, f. 3.

who wished to encourage the nascent Mexican film industry.[90] Although Museum director Luis Castillo Ledón and and officials at Instrucción Pública did not wish to grant the company's request, in light of legal prohibitions against removing artifacts from the Museo Nacional, Carranza's influence eventually carried the day. "By express agreement of the Citizen President of the Republic," Azteca Film was allowed to use "the rifles and cannons from the period of the North American Intervention" held by the Museum. The most that cultural officials could do was to remind the filmmakers of the "great historical value of each and every one of the pieces that will be provided to you," and appoint guards who would supervise the use of the firearms.[91] In this case, the political pull of a film company that employed more than sixty people outweighed concerns for the preservation of Mexico's historical patrimony.

Yet for all of the importance that politics assumed in federal hiring and in the pursuit of economic self-interest, the national government's stance towards the material remains of the pre-Hispanic past did not shift much during the Revolution. Lack of cash, difficulties in communication, and the casual violence of armed bands made guarding the ruins more difficult, while the scientific and rhetorical uses of such objects responded to intellectual developments occurring in both Mexico and the world at large. As we saw in the introduction to this chapter, military leaders in the field might also give little weight to the claims of archaeological preservation, preferring instead to emphasize the interests of local farmers. Nevertheless, both Convention and Constitutionalist leaders adhered closely to the principle of federal sovereignty over the pre-Hispanic material past. Hostility and contempt towards Porfirio Díaz and Victoriano Huerta did not entail rejection of the archaeological policies advanced under their administrations.

These broad continuities can be seen as the Museo Nacional continued to make purchases and receive donations throughout much of the revolutionary period. Some of these acquisitions, such as the spurious medals offered by the Widow Puga, may have been made under duress. In addition, the Museum did not add artifacts to its collections at a steady rate. The ingress of new objects appears to have slowed substantially during 1914 and 1915, then picked up once more as

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[90] "*…he de merecer de usted, que como parte de la protección liberal, que se ha servido ofrecernos el Ciudadano Primer Jefe, se sirva ordenar que aquél citado Establecimiento, nos proporcione los objetos referidos...*" Letter from Rosas, Derba y Compañía to SIPBA, April 24, 1917. Ibid., f. 2. "*Ademas, debemos agregar que si con tanto empeño hemos emprendido esta noble tarea, es porque nos hemos sentido alentados por el bondadoso ofrecimiento del Sr. Carranza, hoy Primer Magistrado de la Nación, el que nos ofreció su amplia ayuda con la cual hemos contado desde un principio como condicion indispensable para el feliz exito de un labor, de la que el resultado depende, en gran parte, de esta indirecta protección oficial.*" Letter from Rosas, Derba, y Compañía to SIPBA, May 9, 1917. Ibid., f. 6. According to Carl J. Mora, "by 1917 Mexican filmmaking was promising enough to come to the attention of President Carranza, who ordered that a cinematic school…be formed as part of the National School for Theatrical Music and Art." Mora, *Mexican Cinema*, 19. Ana M. López also points out Enrique Rosas' 1919 film *El automóvil gris*, a quasi-documentary "combining historical facts and legends" in its treatment of "the real-life story of a band of thieves who pretended to be *carrancista* troops and robbed and kidnapped wealthy families throughout 1915," recounted these events in a way that "vindicates and clears the image of the *carrancistas*." Ana M. López, "Early Cinema and Modernity in Latin America," *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Autumn, 2000): 71.

[91] "*Por acuerdo expreso del C. Presidente de la República se concede a ustedes hacer uso de los fusiles y cañones de la época de la invasión norteamericana que existen en el Museo Nacional de Arqueología Historia y Etnología…Dado el gran valor histórico que representan todas y cada una de las piezas que van a ser proporcionadas a ustedes y que creo les será reconocido, espero que procurarán evitar que sufran el menor deterioro posible.*" Letter from SIPBA to Rosas, Derba y Compañía, June 9, 1917. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 43, f. 11. See also letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to SIPBA, June 18, 1917. Ibid., f. 13.

the Constitutionalist government tightened its grip over the capital's institutions. Nevertheless, the variety of artifacts which entered the Museum between 1911 and 1913, and from 1916 onwards, demonstrates the institution's resilience and continued importance to a politically diverse group of national leaders.

Some acquisitions were of pre-Hispanic objects. In April of 1913, for example, Instrucción Pública officials authorized the National Museum to obtain Maya ceramics from El Salvador, as long as "it does not involve an excessive expense and they are acquired with the respective proofs of authenticity."[92] 1913 also saw the donation of artifacts from the Chihuahua site of Casas Grandes, and the Guerrero site of Coyuca.[93] By the fall of 1916, the Museo Nacional was once again able to spend $300 in order to purchase a collection of Mixtec objects found in the state of Oaxaca, offered for sale by the widow Josefa Bonequi.[94] In other cases, the Museum bought items for its historical collections, or accepted the donation of such items from Mexican citizens. Throughout 1916, Instrucción Pública authorized the Museo Nacional to make expenditures on objects such as a gold coin from the Independence era (this cost $1000, with estimations that its "intrinsic value" was $500), a gold Spanish coin from 1757, and an oil painting that related to Hernan Cortés.[95] Over the course of the same year, the Museum received donations of letters and personal effects associated with various prominent political and military figures of the mid-nineteenth century.[96] In the years that followed, donations and purchases to the Museum would continue to increase.

War Among the Ruins

Like the Museum with which it was temporarily associated, the Inspección also faced major challenges in 1914 and 1915. While factionalism and violence severely complicated the

[92] "*…esta Secretaría estima que la adquisición de objetos originales sería la que podría gestionarse siempre que no implicara un gasto excesivo y que se adquisieran con las auténticas respectivas*." Letter from SIPBA to Cecilio Robelo, April 1, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 19, f. 4. The focus on Maya ceramics is specified in a letter from Colector de Documentos Pablo Henning to Robelo, March 18, 1913, copied in letter from Robelo to SIPBA, March 27, 1913. Ibid., fs. 1-2.

[93] These donations were respectively made by the historian, engineer, and Huerta supporter Ricardo García Granados, and by Porfirio Aguirre, who was serving as one of the four Inspectors of Archaeological Monuments. See AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 15, and AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 16.

[94] After assessing the collection, Manuel Gamio wrote that "*En general la colección es digna de conservarse en el Museo, porque se tuvo especial cuidado en especificar minuciosamente el lugar de procedencia de cada objeto, dato de valor fundamental en todo objeto arqueológico, el cual sin embargo desdeñan frecuencia los vendedores.*" Letter from Gamio to SIPBA, October 13, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 35, f. 5.

[95] "*…dada la relación existente en la actualidad entre el oro y el papel moneda, no es excesivo estimar en $500.00 el valor intrínseco de la pieza y que, en cuanto al valor estimativo, corresponde fijarlo a la alta justificación de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, teniendo en cuenta, que en la Colección de monedas, no existe un ejemplar semejante…*" Report by Jesús Galindo y Villa, February 24, 1916, copied in letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to SIPBA, February 24, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 7. See also AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 34, and AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 36.

[96] AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 30, and AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 31. These donations were made respectively by D. Antonio Gil y Vélez of Morelia, Michoacán, whose grandfather had received letters from Nicolás Bravo and Mariano Paredes y Arriaga, and by D. Rafael Gómez Cabrera, who was then staying in Mexico City and who was the grandson of General Cirilo Gómez Anaya.

work of archaeological preservation, the greatest threat confronted by the Inspección was the reallocation of its funding and resources to more immediately urgent matters. This reallocation could occur with extreme abruptness. Shortly before departing from Mexico City in March of 1915, for example, a Constitutionalist captain requisitioned two mules, a horse, and various pieces of riding equipment from the Inspección, leaving only a receipt.[97] A week and a half later, after the Convention forces entered the capital, "two Zapatista officials" presented themselves at the Museum and "removed…various arms that were meant for the protection of archaeological encampments." The Zapatistas, too, left a receipt behind them. [98] Meanwhile, Manuel Gamio and the other staff of the Inspección were working without pay, due to a general government shutdown.[99] Innate professionalism and dedication to their work, combined with a distinct lack of better options, kept them at their posts while they waited for national affairs to reach some resolution.

As the *de facto* leader of the Inspección, Gamio actively advocated for his agency's staff and mission. Such advocacy was necessary to restore and maintain salary payments to site caretakers and other Inspección staff, in light of the general "economy" which prevailed in federal offices for much of the Revolution.[100] In October of 1914, Gamio warned that if conserjes went much longer without being paid, "they will abandon, or perhaps have already abandoned, the ruins that are under their care, which will entail grave responsibilities" for the

[97] "*Al márgen: Un sello que dice: República Mexicana – Ejército Constitucionalista. Brigada Martin Triana = (mulas) D. V. = (caballo alazán) NP (caballo prieto orejano) = Al centro: Recibí del Sr. Manuel Gamio Ynspector General de Monumentos Arqueológicos, los siguientes: Dos mulas grandes color mogino cabos negros con el fierro que al márgen se expresa. Un caballo colo alazán pata y mano blancas y otro (?) zaino – Dos sillas de montar con suaderos. – Dos frenos plateados con riendas, un par de espuelas plateadas. – Un tronco guarniciones y una guarnición de varas. = México 4 de 1915. = El Cap. 1.o Ayudante Enrique Vega.*" Receipt copy, produced March 16, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 26, f. 6.

[98] "*Debo agregar también, que ya estando en esta capital las fuerzas convencionistas, el conserje del museo me dio aviso telefónico de que dos oficiales zapatistas habian extraido del Departamento de Inspeccion de Monumentos varias armas que estaban dedicadas a la custodia de los campamentos arqueologicos dejando un recibo que consta en poder del citado conserje.*" Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Encargado del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, March 16, 1915. Ibid., f. 2.

[99] "*1.o Que la oficina urbana de la Inspección de Monumentos Arqueológicos fué clausurada al mismo tiempo que los demás departamentos oficiales y que se suspendieron el pago de sueldos al personal y el de gastos de conservación de los monumentos. 2.o Que como los Monumentos no pueden ser abandonados pues sería inminente su destrucción, el suscrito y el personal correspondiente se han dedicado a conservarlos y custodiarlos extraoficialmente.*" Letter from Gamio to the C. Presidente del Ayuntamiento of Mexico City, March 8, 1915. Ibid., f. 4.

[100] For example, in July of 1913 Cecilio Robelo suggested firing several workers in the Museum's print and binding workshops in order to save the cost of their salaries. Letter from Robelo to SIPBA, July 24, 1913. AGN-IPBA, caja 174, exp. 8, fs. 1-3. When an ethnology assistant in the Museo Nacional went on leave in 1915, Jesús Galindo y Villa suggested that "*de conformidad con el espíritu de economía que preside los actos de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, y de acuerdo con el C. Profesor del Departamento de Etnología, por ahora no se cubra la vacante motivada por la licencia del Sr. Martínez, si esta llega a concederse.*" Letter from Jesús Galindo y Villa to the Oficial Mayor Encargado del Despacho de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, March 26, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 54, f. 3. Instrucción Pública took this "spirit of economy" even further, and fired the assistant outright. AGN-IPBA, caja 320, exp. 30.

Inspección.[101] In March of 1915, Gamio continued to press for the importance of archaeological preservation, even urging members of the capital's city council to pay caretakers' salaries at the site of Teotihuacán and in Santa Teresa Street.[102] In the absence of a federal government that was willing or able to manage archaeological patrimony, Gamio feared that the monuments would be abandoned entirely. In his letter to the council, Gamio stressed that the Inspección had already made severe cuts in personnel and expenditures, and that "as the archaeological vestiges of any country are subjects of universal interest because they constitute a chapter in the history of human culture, the monuments of Mexico should be for us the objects of continual attention."[103] Fortunately for the Inspección's staff, this last-ditch request to the city council was mooted when leaders of the Convention government issued orders to the Treasury Department to pay the caretakers.[104] While guardianship of the nation's pre-Hispanic ruins suffered great setbacks during the Revolution, the Inspección remained intact at its core.

To a surprising extent, the Inspección also remained intact at the peripheries. In states such as Yucatán and Chiapas, distant from the main theaters of Revolutionary conflict but also far from the nation's capital, senior members of the agency continued to fulfill their responsibilities despite hardships, political interference, popular opposition, and constant

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[101] "*Me permito hacer a usted presente, señor Director, la urgencia con que debe pagarse a dichos conserjes y peones sus honorarios, pues de otra manera abandonarán o quizá ya lo hayan hecho, las ruinas que están a su cuidado, lo que acarrearía graves responsabilidades a esa Direcci'on y a esta Oficina.*" Letter from Gamio to Luis Castillo Ledón, October 22, 1914, copied in letter from Castillo Ledón to the Oficial Mayor Encargado del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, October 24, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 374, exp. 5, f. 4.

[102] In December of 1914, Gamio had even tried to obtain 20 sappers from the Secretaría de Guerra y Marina to assist in carrying out the excavations in Santa Teresa Street. He accompanied this request with a neatly printed booklet which described and illustrated the "Los vestigios prehispánicos de la 2a. Calle de Santa Teresa." However, these efforts proved unsuccessful, as the Convention official in charge of Guerra y Marina responded that "*por el momento no es posible acceder a su pedido*." Letter from Alfredo Serratos to SIPBA, December 18, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 51, f. 16. A further request from Gamio in March of 1915, for "*diez zapadores del Ejército Convencionista*" who could shore up sustaining walls on the verge of collapse "*sin necesidad de expensar gasto alguno*," was also rejected by Serratos. In this case, the minister stated that "*por ahora no es posible acceder a su petición en virtud de no haber las fuerzas que solicita.*" Letter from Gamio to the C. Encargado del Despacho de SIPBA, March 18, 1915, and letter from Alfredo Serratos to the C. Encargado del Despacho de SIPBA, March 23, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 13, fs. 1 and 4.

[103] "*3.o Que si los vestigios arqueológicos de cualquier pais presentan interés universal pues constituyen un capítulo en la historia de la cultura humana, los monumentos de México deben ser para nosotros objeto de continua atención…4.o Que el personal que custodia y conserva los monumentos de Teotihuacán y Santa Teresa (la falta de vias de comunicación imposibilita para atender los restantes) está próximo a abandonarlos para procurarse la subsistencia en otras labores pues hace tiempo no recibe salario. Considerando lo anteriormente expuesto, tengo el honor de suplicar a Ud. se sirva decirme si esa respetable corporación que dignamente preside, puede sufragar los gastos que origina la conservación de dichos monumentos, en la inteligencia de que el personal ha sido reducido en un 75% y los gastos de conservación en un 90%.*" Letter from Gamio to the C. Presidente del Ayuntamiento of Mexico City, March 8, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 26, f. 4.

[104] The City Council neither rejected nor denied Gamio's request, instead asking that Gamio "*se sirva precisar el monto de los gastos más indispensables y la distribución de ellos para resolver cuanto antes su solicitud.*" Copy of letter from A. Muñoz, El Jefe de la Sección Primera de Ramos Municipales, Encargado del Despacho de la Secretaría to Gamio, March 13, 1915. Ibid., f. 5. By March 19, the Convention government had agreed to pay the salaries of Inspección employees at Santa Teresa Street and Teotihuacán. Letter from the Oficial Mayor Encargado del Despacho de la Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, March 19, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 25, f. 6.

shortages of funds. Juan Martínez Hernández, the Maya language scholar who had been appointed as inspector for the southern regions of the country in 1913, faced particularly strong challenges as he attempted to root out caretakers who regarded their posts as sinecures, jobs which did not require their labor or even their regular presence.[105] (In one particularly extreme case of caretaker malfeasance, the conserje of Kabah colluded with a local jefe político to have the site's peón arrested, as an attempt to force the peón to leave his federal employment and instead work as a servant on the jefe político's hacienda.)[106] Martínez Hernández also brought charges against "the overseer of the owner of Uxmal and the deputy Fidencio G. Márquez, who, under the direction of a Spanish sorceress, conducted without permission an excavation in search of a buried treasure." According to Martínez, local landholders still refused to accept the validity of the law of May 11, 1897, since no formal process of expropriation had taken place, and they had never been formally indemnified for their losses. Threats to Yucatán's ruins might also come from the outside, as proposed Carnegie Institute researches at Chichén Itzá meant that vigilance would be necessary to "prevent the clandestine exportation of the objects which are found."[107]

Martínez's efforts to protect Yucatán's material past conflicted with cozy local relationships and the interests of prominent figures within the state. In 1914, Yucatán's governor Eleuterio Ávila attempted to remove him as Inspector of Archaeological Monuments, and replace him with the ex-conserje of Oxkintok, whom Martínez had fired for negligence.[108]

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[105] "*Cuando me hice cargo de la Zona del Sur, encontró que la mayor parte de los conserjes y peones que figuraban en la lista del presupuesto, eran nominales, constituyendo tales empleos verdaderas canongías*." Letter from Juan Martínez Hernández to Félix Palavicini, the Constitutionalist Secretario de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, September 22, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 27, f. 4. It was Martínez's recommendations which had caused Genaro García to fire a number of conserjes during the fall of 1913, as described above.

[106] The caretaker José E. Gutiérrez had fought in the Caste War, while the imprisoned peón had the Mayan surname "Uc." Martínez commented that "*la experiencia ha demostrado que en un conflicto surgido entre un Jefe Político y un infeliz indio, es el último el que pierde y paga con su libertad*." Letter from Juan Martínez Hernández to Roberto Esteva Ruiz, copied in letter from Esteva Ruiz to SIPBA, March 11, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 30, f. 6. In this case, however the conserje was removed from his position since, in addition to collaborating in the imprisonment of his subordinates, he had also neglected the ruins under his care.

[107] "*El Instituto Carnegie de Washington, acaba de publicar una obra acerca de Chichen-Itzá, por la que se propone esa corporación hacer estudios, exploraciones y restauraciones intensas en los referidos monumentos, durante un período no menor de veinte años, para lo cual será indispensable la presencia de una persona competente, que puede evitar la exportación clandestina de los objetos que se encuentren…está pendiente ante el C. Juez de Distrito, una denuncia que presenté contra el apoderado del propietario de Uxmal, y contra el diputado Fidencio G. Márquez quienes dirigidos por una hechicera española, practicaron sin permiso, una excavación en busca de tesoro. Se fundan estos propietarios y otros mas, en que no habiendo sido indemnizados al expropiarse dichas ruinas por la ley de 11 de mayo de 1897, son legalmente propietarios de ellas y nadie puede impedirles que las destruyan, lo que ha dado lugar a que las ruinas de Uxmal estén hoy abandonadas, sin que hubiese podido impedirlo, no obstante mis gestiones ante el Juez de Distrito…y antes el anterior Gobernador Prisciliano Cortés*." Letter from Juan Martínez Hernández to Félix Palavicini, the Constitutionalist Secretario de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, September 22, 1914. AGN-IPBA, caja 341, exp. 27, f. 6.

[108] Gilbert Joseph's discussion of Ávila's brief rule provides some context for the effort to dislodge Martínez. "The local rulers [of Yucatán] had not forgotten how to accommodate new national bosses. Shortly after Huerta fell in July 1914, they provided a warm welcome to Carranza's military governor, Major Eleuterio Ávila, who was, in fact, a native son. Ávila sent a momentary shock through the peninsular bourgeoisie by reading a proclamation abolishing forced labor on Yucatán's henequen plantations, but after a series of anguished meetings among themselves and consulations with the agents of International Harvester…the planters found ways to bring their *paisano* (countryman) to his senses, and the decree was never enforced…with Ávila safely under control, life

Martínez, however, had the last laugh. Ávila's maneuver was not successful, and Martínez kept his position as Inspector until 1915, when "he resigned that position in favor of his son, Eduardo, on being appointed chief of the Department of Industry and Commerce by the [new] Governor of Yucatán, General Salvador Alvarado."[109] In 1916, Gamio praised Eduardo Martínez Cantón's "enthusiasm and good will" in supervising the monuments under his care.[110] The Martínez family continued to exercise influence over archaeology in the peninsula for decades. A visitor to the peninsula in the 1930s commented that Juan Martínez Hernández "ranks as one of the greatest living authorities on Mayan archaeology…and his extensive knowledge is sought by the leading thinkers in the Maya research field. Eduardo Martínez, [his] second son, is one of the Mexican Government officials in charge of the ruin-area of all-Yucatan. He is imbued with Mayan learning and has accomplished remarkably accurate results in restoring some of the ruins at Chichen-Itza…The Martínez family has done more to further the interest in ancient Mayan culture than any other in Yucatan…If monuments are erected for such service, they should have one."[111] The turmoil of the Revolution and opportunism at the local level, then, could not permanently derail the preservation efforts of the federal government and its regional representatives.

In the state of Chiapas, the subinspector Benito Lacroix also experienced considerable strains as he attempted to carry out his duties. Although he was not paid from July of 1914 to at least March of 1915, Lacroix continued to oversee cleaning and repair works at the site of Palenque.[112] Lacroix and his subordinates also received visitors to Palenque (almost all Mexican nationals, although two Germans arrived in May of 1915), and removed vegetation from the site.[113] Lacroix's persistence in the post likely owed a great deal to his good relationship with

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in the peninsual returned to its normal rhythm, and the ruling elite began to believe it had weathered the revolutionary strom." Gilbert M. Joseph, *Revolution from Without: Yucatán, Mexico, and the United States, 1880-1924* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), 6.

[109] J. Eric S. Thompson, "Juan Martínez Hernández, 1866-1959," *American Antiquity*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (January, 1960): 398.

[110] "*Queda exceptuado de los anteriores el señor Eduardo Martínez Cantón, Inspector en Mérida, Yuc., quien por las facilidades de la Zona a que está adscrito, así como por su entusiasmo y buena voluntad ha podido vigilar continuamente los vestigios prehispánicos que tiene bajo su dependencia*." Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Director General de Bellas Artes, May 15, 1916, copied in letter from Gamio to the Director General de Bellas Artes, June 3, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 8, f. 12.

[111] Robert B. Stacy-Judd, *The Ancient Mayas: Adventures in the Jungles of Yucatan* (Los Angeles: Murray and Gee, 1934), 17.

[112] Letter from Benito Lacroix to Luis Castillo Ledón, Director General de Monumentos Arqueológicos Nacionales de la República, March 14, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, f. 5.

[113] For the German visitors, see letter from Manuel Álvarez López to the Director General del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, May 31, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, f. 17. Historical sites also continued to receive visitors, sometimes as a direct result of the revolutionary struggles. In April of 1915, the Hill of the Bells in Querétaro had "*más de quinientos*" visitors, "*todas ellas de nacionalidad mexicana y en su mayor parte miembros del Ejército Constitucionalista.*" Soldiers, however, did not always make the most docile tourists. On the night of April 22, "*algunos muchachos, ó bien soldados en estado de ebriedad atacaron la capilla*" at the top of the hill, firing bullets that damaged the interior of the building. Letter from José A. Bustamante to the Oficial Encargado del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, April 30, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, f. 11.

authorities in the town of Palenque, who provided him with both material and moral support. The Municipal President of Palenque assigned men to build a road to the monumental ruins, while Lacroix told Constitutionalist officials that the local town council could verify that he had consistently fulfilled his job responsibilities.[114] This official support was necessary as Lacroix faced challenges from individuals whose interests conflicted with the cause of archaeological preservation. According to Lacroix, a Belgian named Auguste van Steenberghe, who had received various natural resource concessions from the government of Victoriano Huerta, had suborned the conserje of Palenque. Lacroix was suspicious when the conserje sent a report saying that the peón Estanislao Cruz was not presenting himself for work, since the conserje "can only write his name with great effort, which leads me to believe that there is another hand at work." In a letter to the Constitutionalist government in Veracruz, Lacroix argued that the charges against Cruz had been raised in order to discredit Lacroix himself, so that van Steenberghe could gain access to the archaeological site without fear of federal interference.[115] These efforts at justification, however, seem to have done little good for either Lacroix or for Estanislao Cruz. Within a few months Cruz had resigned, while the Constitutionalist government had given the linguist and professor Manuel Becerra authority over the archaeological monuments of Tabasco and Chiapas.[116] It is unclear whether Lacroix maintained a position in the

[114] "*Los trabajos del mes, se terminaron haciendo la relimpia de Palacios y templos, los patios, alrededores y techos. Tambien el camino que conduce de los Monumentos á ésta Villa que son como diez kilómetros más ó ménos, para facilitar al visitante su trasporte á ellos; me puse de acuerdo con el Señor Presidente Municipal me facilitase gente para hacerlo, y obsequiando mis deseos, se hizo el Camino.*" Letter from Benito Lacroix to the Inspector General de Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República, February 28, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, f. 2. A month later, Lacroix wrote that "*Para darle un testimonio a mi conducta como Auxiliar del Jefe del Departamento de Ynspectores y Conservadores de Monumentos Arqueológicos, me es altamente honroso acompañarle copia certificada de una acta del H. Ayuntamiento de ésta Villa que á moción mia se levantó para demostrarle que siempre sé cumplir con sus apreciables órdenes y desvanecer ante Ud. cualquiera duda que tuviera de mí, en el ramo que desempeño.*" Letter from Lacroix to Luis Castillo Ledón, Director General de Monumentos Arqueológicos Nacionales de la República, March 14, 1915. Ibid., f. 5.

[115] "*Por supuesto Sor. Secretario, que me ha extrañado sobre manera el que el Conserje me hayá dirigido esa nota supuesto que carece de tales conocimientos pues con mucho exfuerzo puede poner su nombre, por lo que creo que hay una mano extraña que lo induce y tengo sospechas que sea un Extrangero Belga Auguste Van Steenberghe, quien en la Administración del Usurpador Huerta tenia una conseción en esta región de Palenque para hacer observaciones en minerales, plata, oro y petroleo y como éste Sr. asistiera muchas veses a las ruinas en el lugar de los monumentos le llamé la atención de que no fuera hacer escavaciones en aquellos lugares por estar prohibido y por que no se lo permitiria bajo ningún concepto, entonses este Sr. Steenberghe, con animo extaltado me dijo a mi no me importava nada ni valia nada supuesto de que no se me pagava sueldo en aquellos* [tiempos?] *y que si lo seguia mortificando que ocurriria a su consul por que por medio de este me sustituyeran del puesto como Auxiliar, entonses me ví presisado a recurrir al H. Ayuntamiento manifestandole lo que este Sr. pretendia hacer y el Ayuntamiento lo* [?] *para que no siguiera haciendo observaciones en aquellos lugares de las Ruinas. No hace muchos dias este mismo Sr. estando en la oficina de correos me dijo en voz alta y al público que iba a* [?] *el gusto de hacer porque me destituyeran del puesto como Auxiliar de estas Ruinas. En mi concepto este Sr. és quien instigando al Conserje y probocando el desorden entre los empleados de esta dependencia que és a mi cargo.*" Letter from Benito Lacroix to the Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, May 8, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, fs. 15-6.

[116]For Cruz's resignation, see letter from Benito Lacroix to Palenque conserje Manuel Álvarez López, June 2, 1915, copied in letter from Álvarez López to the Director General del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, June 6, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, f. 8. For Becerra's appointment, see memo from the Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, July 9, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 4, f. 1. In the 1920s, Becerra served as the state education director of Chiapas. Stephen E. Lewis, *The Ambivalent*

Inspección under Becerra, but at the very least he was demoted from the status he had previously enjoyed in the agency. Despite his long service and apparent dedication to his job, Lacroix found himself displaced by the tides of national politics.

In Chiapas as elsewhere, those who enjoyed the favor of the Constitutionalist government took control of the apparatus of archaeological administration. The essential workings of that Porfirian apparatus, however, did not experience any great changes. Under Díaz, Madero, Huerta, Convention president Eulalio Gutiérrez, or Venustiano Carranza, the basic tasks of guarding, cleaning, repair, and presentation remained more or less constant. At higher levels, the Constitutionalist government followed the example set by the Díaz regime and made its own bid to assert authority over the material remains of the past. Even during the Constitutionalist exile in Veracruz, while Carranza's supporters were battling the Convention forces that continued to hold Mexico City, Constitutionalist leaders took action to preserve archaeological and historical sites. Naturally enough, these efforts focused on the areas that were most subject to Constitutionalist control. In May of 1915, for instance, Antonio Salazar received an appointment as interim inspector of archaeological monuments for the state of Veracruz.[117] A few months later, Salazar presented a report dealing with a variety of artifacts and sites.[118] Similarly, when an employee of the Constitutionalist Ministry of Development named G. Vivar discovered "some archaeological objects and ruins" while working in the oil regions of Tabasco, he was given an ad hoc commission to collect any pre-Hispanic artifacts he happened to find.[119] (In this case, Vivar's self-professed lack of archaeological knowledge was supplemented by "affection and care for the history of our race," his desire to contribute "a grain of sand to the work of national reconstruction being undertaken today," and by three pages of official instructions explaining how to conduct archaeological investigations, which covered the basic principles of stratigraphic excavation.)[120] Appointments such as those given to Salazar and Vivar demonstrate the cash-strapped, contingent nature of Constitutionalist government as of 1915, but also reveal that even under extreme conditions, control over the material past was regarded as an essential element in

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Revolution: Forging State and Nation in Chiapas, 1910-1945 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 51.

[117] Dirección General de las Bellas Artes memo, May 24, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 3, f. 2.

[118] Report from Antonio Salazar to Félix Palavicini, Subsecretario de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, July 19, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 2, fs. 1-4.

[119] "*Una comunicación oficial me hace saber que la Secretaría de Estado en la que Usted desempeña elevado y delicado puesto ha tomado nota del oficio en que esta Inspección Técnica del Petróleo daba cuenta a la Secretaría de Fomento, de la que es dependencia, del hallazgo que me cupo en suerte de algunos objetos y ruinas arqueológicos en terrenos tan codiciados como son los terrenos petrolíferos, y que aquella misma Secretaría desea que se me comisione para recoger y enviar aquellos objetos*." Letter from G. Vivar to Alfonso Cravioto, May 12, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 6, f. 2.

[120] In one letter, Vivar wrote of "*mi ignorancia en arqueología, de la que solo conozco mi afición y cariño a la evolución y, por tanto, historia, de nuestra raza*," while in another he stated that he possessed "*el deseo de aportar, con mi ínfimo contingente, un grano de arena en la obra de reconstrucción nacional que hoy se emprende*." See letter from G. Vivar to Alfonso Cravioto, May 12, 1915, Idem., and letter from G. Vivar to J. M. Coéllar, Oficial Mayor encargado de la Dirección General de las Bellas Artes en la Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, May 27, 1915, AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 5, f. 19. For the instructions, see "Instrucciones generales para la exploración, investigación y conservación de ruinas u objetos arqueológicos," May 18, 1915. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 6, fs. 4-6.

establishing national sovereignty and legitimacy. The associations between the national state and cultural preservation that had developed during the Porfiriato thus continued to exist within new political contexts, as Constitutionalist authorities asserted their right to define and manage Mexico's historical and archaeological heritage.[121] The ideological meanings of these associations might change, as would the structures of archaeological governance, but federal authority over the material past would not be relinquished.

IV. Conclusion

In a 1915 essay reflecting on the literary repercussions of the First World War, the British writer Edmund Gosse commented, "I did not find our graver periodicals affected. The *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* continues to enlighten us, although bombs may any morning be dropped on Beersheba."[122] In Mexico as in Europe, many people in the midst of great devastation clung to what constancy they could find, getting up every morning, going into work, and performing their accustomed duties for as long as it was possible to do so. Their efforts kept the archaeological bureaucracy intact, ready to be incorporated into the Constitutionalist government and subsequent revolutionary administrations.

After the final Constitutionalist capture of Mexico City, federal management of the pre-Hispanic material past rapidly recovered from the blows it had suffered during the worst periods of the fighting. With a measure of stability returned to the central administration, the Museum and Inspección could once again count on funds to conduct their business and pay their employees.[123] Constitutionalist victory also opened the possibility of more extensive reorganization and reform. As political leaders debated the shape that the new revolutionary society should take, Luis Castillo Ledón and Manuel Gamio offered their own proposals for changes to the Museum and Inspección. In February of 1916, Castillo Ledón suggested that the Museo eliminate its classes in anthropology, archaeology, history, and ethnology, subjects that

[121] In 1916, Carranza decreed a new "Ley sobre conservación de monumentos, edificios, templos y objetos históricos o artísticos." The preamble to this decree set forth several principles concerning property and cultural heritage, which affirmed the legitimacy of a strong state role in the preservation of various kinds of patrimony. "*CONSIDERANDO: Que la propiedad es el derecho de gozar y disponer de una cosa, sin más limitaciones que las que fijan las leyes; Que esas limitaciones son el medio de que se sirve la Nación – para cumplir con determinados deberes que no podría llenar si no pudiera imponer a sus miembros ciertas obligaciones o restricciones; Que entre esos deberes se encuentra el de conservar todos aquellos monumentos, edificios, templos y objetos que por su interés artístico o histórico son factores de gran trascendenciapara apreciar el estado de civilización del pueblo mexicano en las diversas épocas de su evolución…*" "Ley sobre conservación de monumentos, edificios, templos y objetos históricos o artísticos." AGN-IPBA, caja 119bis, exp. 68, f. 28.

[122] Edmund Gosse, *Inter Arma: Being Essays Written in Time of War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 35.

[123] Discussing changes to the Inspección, Manuel Gamio mentioned recent difficulties, which he characterized as "*falta de comunicaciones, carencia de elementos para efectuar trabajos, etc. etc.*," but stated that these "*felizmente han desaparecido*." These conditions had produced "*el estado de ruina en que se encuentran casi todos los monumentos arqueológicos, exceptuados los del Distrito Federal, Teotihuacán y Yucatán*." However, Gamio believed that these "*deficiencias*" could be remedied with an investment of $100,000. Letter from Gamio to the Director General de Bellas Artes, June 3, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 8, f. 13. Letter from Gamio to the Director de Bellas Artes, June 3, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 8, f. 12.

could be better taught in the Escuela de Altos Estudios.[124] Instead, Museum staff would focus their efforts on "research and the acquisition of new specimens for the galleries."[125] Instrucción Pública officials approved of these ideas, returning the Museum to the mission which it had carried out for much of the nineteenth century.

In the same year, Gamio proposed new regulations to govern the activities of the Inspección, and discussed plans for the future of the agency. Gamio wished to place the scientific investigations of the Inspección on a firmer footing, with more attention to the natural environments in which sites were located, and greater efforts to avoid the fruitless duplication of research.[126] He also urged the passage of legislation forbidding the staff of the Inspección to traffic in pre-Hispanic artifacts, a measure which was "of capital importance for the morality of the personnel" as well as "the scientific interests" of the agency.[127] In terms of administration, however, Gamio's vision of the Inspección seems to have been well in keeping with past practices. Aside from dividing the nation's territory into six zones, each of which would be supervised by a regional inspector, Gamio set forth descriptions of functions and responsibilities that differed little from those seen in the days of Batres. This included the independence of the Inspección from the Museo Nacional, as the proposal emphasized that the Inspector General

[124] Discussing the broader context of educational politics during this period, Michael Burke writes "In 1916, however, a wider debate between *universitarios* and *normalistas* forced postponement of effective internal reform. The *universitarios* were advocates of the humanist ideas of Sierra and the Ateneo; the *normalistas* were former students of John Dewey who had returned to Mexico infatuated with American progressive education and intent on imposing it on their homeland. President Carranza placed *normalistas* in charge of public education…The School of Advanced Studies was most affected by this move. Miguel Schulz, its new director, established formal degree programs in history, anthropology, and primary and secondary education, thereby destroying its unique, unstructured character…Enrollment soared from less than ninety to over seven hundred . Most were women. Thus, the center for independent inquiry became a teachers' college designed to train 'professionals' in national culture." Michael E. Burke, "The University of Mexico and the Revolution, 1910-1940," *The Americas*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (October, 1977): 256.

[125] "*En la sección "Departamentos técnicos," se ha cambiado la denominación de los Jefes de los de Antropología, Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, llamándolos "conservadores" en lugar de "profesores"; ya que aquellas ciencias, según verbalmente he manifestado a Ud., deben pasar a la Escuela de Altos Estudios en lo que se refiere al orden didáctico, reservándose el Museo los estudios de mera investigación y la adquisición de nuevos ejemplares para las galerías.*" Letter from Luis Castillo Ledón to SIPBA, February 17, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 107, exp. 4, f. 1. In the same letter, Castillo Ledón also commented that he wished to eliminate staff "*que a mi juicio son inútiles y parasitarias, ya, por último, en el deseo de acentuar más los caracteres propios de este instituto que se halla a mi cargo.*" Idem. Other changes that took place at the Museum in 1916 included the transfer of printing, photoengraving, and binding workshops to the publications branch of Instrucción Pública. The space formerly occupied by these departments was then used to house the historical collections formerly kept in the army's Museo de Artillería. Memo from the Secretaría de Estado y Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, May 27, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 2, f. 4.

[126] Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Director General de las Bellas Artes, May 23, 1916. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 8, fs. 24-7.

[127] "*Conceptuando de capital importancia para la moralidad del personal que depende de esta Inspección General, y para los intereses científicos de la misma, la prohibición del tráfico de objetos de origen prehispánico, me permito suplicar á Ud. se sirva disponer con el carácter de artículo complementario al Reglamento de la Oficina a mi cargo que,: 'Queda prohibido terminantemente al personal de la Oficina, tanto urbano como foráneo, traficar con toda clase de objetos de origen prehispánico, bajo pena de destitución inmediata de empleo.'*" Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Director General de Bellas Artes, October 6, 1916. Ibid., f. 28.

would have full control over the agency, and report directly to Instrucción Pública.[128] As Gamio sketched out his vision for the future of the archaeological bureaucracy, he relied substantially on Porfirian models.

The Constitution of 1917 upended these plans. Along with the profound changes that the Constitution wrought in areas such as land, labor, and religion, its provisions also reconfigured Mexico's cultural and educational bureaucracies. John A. Britton writes that "The formal abolition of the Ministry of Public Instruction came on April 13, 1917," while noting that the educational responsibilities of the Ministry had already decreased substantially since 1914.[129] Many of the offices and personnel of the suppressed Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes were eventually incorporated into the new Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP). On April 13, 1917, Carranza also ordered the transfer of the Inspección to the Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas. However, Carranza soon decided, possibly at the prompting of Gamio, that the Inspección should instead be placed within the Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento. The official transfer took place on May 24, 1917.[130] By the late summer of 1917, Gamio was referring to the Inspección as "extinto" in official correspondance.[131] Within the next year, the Inspección was refashioned into the "Dirección de Antropología," a name change which indicated that the agency's work would henceforth include the study of modern indigenous cultures as well as the material remains of the past.

During the 1920s a variety of politicians, bureaucrats, artists, intellectuals, scientists, and teachers conducted metaphorical excavations of the pre-Hispanic past, searching for concepts and forms that might be used to construct a modern nation. Both the SEP and the Dirección de Antropología were institutions with strong revolutionary agendas, whose employees were at the forefront of campaigns to inculcate Revolutionary values in the Mexican population, and to "integrate" indigenous communities into the mainstream of national life. According to Mary Kay Vaughan, the SEP attempted to "transform superstitious, locally oriented pariahs into patriotic, scientifically informed commercial producers."[132] To accomplish this, SEP employees embarked on cultural campaigns which included the expansion and promotion of primary education, instruction in literacy and hygiene, the production of didactic murals, and the sponsorship of

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[128] "Proyecto de Reglamento de la Inspección General de Monumentos Arqueológicos de la República," sent by Manuel Gamio to the Director General de Bellas Artes, May 20, 1916. Ibid., fs. 3-9.

[129] John A. Britton, "Indian Education, Nationalism, and Federalism in Mexico, 1910-1921," *The Americas*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (January, 1976): 454.

[130] Memo from Luis Manuel Rojas, on stationary of the Dirección General de Bellas Artes, April 24, 1917, AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 16, f. 1; letter from the Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas to the Director General de las Bellas Artes, April 27, 1917, Ibid., f. 7, and official receipt signed by Manuel Gamio and representatives of the Dirección General de Bellas Artes and the Secretaría de Fomento, May 24, 1917, Ibid., f. 13. See also Olivé Negrete and Cottom, *INAH: Una historia*, vol. 1, 29. These reorganizations may also have had some connection to a major dispute that erupted in 1917 after Gamio publicly insulted the knowledge and professionalism of scholars at the Museo Nacional. See AGN-IPBA, caja 161, exp. 6.

[131] Letter from Manuel Gamio to the Director General de las Bellas Artes, August 3, 1917. A return letter, typed on the stationary of the Secretaría del Estado y del Despacho de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, referred to the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes as "*extinguida.*" Letter from the Director General to Gamio, who is given the title "*C. Director de Estudios Arqueológicos y Etnográficos*," August 6, 1917. AGN-IPBA, caja 116, exp. 15, fs. 1-2.

[132] Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, 4.

original research. The SEP was also a bastion of indigenismo, a loosely defined movement whose mostly non-indigenous participants asserted the centrality of indigenous communities to the nation's politics, culture and future prospects. Indigenista philosophies maintained older associations between archaeology and national identity, and even tightened those bonds by promoting indigenous cultures to a more central place within nationalist discourses. However, while some indigenista discourses emphasized the positive aspects of indigenous societies and their potential to serve as an "ideal model for the nation," the movement's adherents more commonly sought to understand indigenous peoples in order to change them.[133] As was the case prior to the Revolution, the governments of the 1920s and 1930s promoted the study of indigenous cultures to advance the goals of the state, not the goals of indigenous peoples themselves.[134] In this, the developments of the 1920s were more evolutionary than revolutionary.

In 1925 the Department of Anthropology was incorporated into the SEP, while Gamio himself became a SEP subdirector. Although he soon resigned as a result of institiutional corruption and the attacks of his enemies, Gamio eventually returned to fill various positions at the SEP in the 1930s.[135] During this decade, cultural administrators advocated for laws meant to consolidate the various institutions dedicated to the protection of Mexico's archaeological, historical and artistic resources, and to place the preservation of cultural patrimony on a firmer constitutional footing. The apogee of this process came in 1939, when the government of Lázaro Cárdenas founded the National Institute of Anthropology and History (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, or INAH). With the formation of INAH, the federal government had created its most powerful instrument yet to safeguard and administer the nation's cultural patrimony, further expanding and refining upon the systems that had been in place for more than half a century. To this day, Mexican cultural politics and nationalist discourses are animated by federal mandates for the protection and study of important archaeological sites, by federal control over the excavation and exportation of pre-Hispanic objects, and by the central government's promotion of pre-Hispanic ruins and artifacts as key aspects of the nation's cultural heritage. The Revolution and its aftermath greatly changed the context in which archaeology was carried out, as well as the internal methodologies and priorities of the discipline, but only solidified the central role of the state. Thus, policies once designed to glorify an authoritarian regime transcended these origins, to exalt the modern nation.

[133] Alexander S. Dawson, "From Models of the Nation to Model Citizens: Indigenismo and the 'Revindication' of the Mexican Indian, 1920-1940," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 30:2 (May 1998): 289. For a more negative perspective on indigenismo, see Earle, *Return of the Native*, 185.

[134] Michael J. Gonzales writes, "Needless to say, symbolically linking Indians with revolutionary change has not empowered Native Americans, turned them into mestizos or solved their poverty, as the recent Zapatista Movement reminds us." Michael J. Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico in 1910: Visions of the *Patria* in the Centennial Celebrations in Mexico City," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (August, 2007): 533.

[135] Beatriz Urías Horcasitas, "Las ciencias sociales en la encrucijada del poder: Manuel Gamio (1920-1940)," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July – September, 2002): 100.

Coda

Legacies

"Among the clay petals
is born, smiling,
the human flower."

-Octavio Paz, "God that emerges from a clay orchid"[1]

The political iconography of modern Mexico is studded with images of pre-Hispanic sites and objects. Some of these, such as the motifs from the Aztec Calendar Stone which decorate the backs of Mexican coins, are so pervasive that they are seen and touched daily, yet pass almost unnoticed. Other allusions to the pre-Hispanic past are more blatant. For example, during the celebrations of independence in 2008, Mexico City's central square was festooned with decorations depicting Teotihuacán-style pyramids, rendered in red, green, and silver tinsel, and flanked by sweeping tricolor banners (see Fig. 1). The display was a striking reminder that, to the modern Mexican state as to its precursors, the material constructions of pre-Hispanic cultures are strongly linked to official visions of the nation. Although the society of Teotihuacán flourished and declined more than a thousand years before Miguel Hidalgo rang the parish bell of Dolores, its monuments now signify a carefully cultivated *mexicanidad*.

The prominence of these images is matched by the cultural and economic significance accorded to many pre-Hispanic sites and physical artifacts. Major monuments such as Chichén Itzá and Teotihuacán draw millions of visitors each year, while the Museo Nacional de Antropología is one of the foremost attractions of the capital. On weekday mornings, crowds of uniformed schoolchildren on class trips line up outside the museum, preparing to receive a lesson in what it means to be Mexican. The children are joined by tourists, who chat in half a dozen different languages, clutch cameras, and scan *Lonely Planet* guidebooks as they wait to gaze upon pitted Olmec heads, Mayan stelae, the mask of a Zapotec bat god, the serpent goddess Coatlicue, and the famous Calendar Stone. As visitors walk through the Museum's main entrance, they pass under an inscription reading: "In the greatness of their past people find courage and confidence to face the future. Mexican, contemplate yourself in the mirror of that greatness. Foreigner, see proof here of the unity of human destiny. Civilizations pass, but humanity will always preserve the glory of others who struggled to build those civilizations."[2] The marble halls of the modern museum are far grander than the cramped university rooms

[1] "*Entre los pétalos de arcilla / nace, sonriente / la flor humana*." Octavio Paz, "Dios que surge de una orquídea de barro," in *Un pasado visible: Antología de poemas sobre vestigios del México antiguo*, edited by Gustavo Jiménez Aguirre, with photographs by Javier Hinojosa (Mexico City: Artes de México, 2004), 46. The poem was also published in Paz's 1960 collection *Libertad bajo palabra*.

[2] This translation is taken from Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, trans. Philip A. Dennis, *México Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 55.

described by Rosa Isidica in 1827, but the motto is one that would have resonated throughout the nineteenth century.

Figure 1. Pyramid decoration on the south side of the Zócalo, Mexico City's central square, in late August of 2008. Photo by Larissa Kelly.

Other echoes sound as well. Although Mexican archaeology has grown less centralized since the 1970s, owing to the establishment of regional centers of investigation, the federal government continues to exercise a dominant role in Mexican archaeology and archaeological management.[3] The Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) trains and employs many of the country's archaeologists, conducts and monitors excavations, and directs the daily operations of thousands of sites and museums.[4] INAH's authority rests in large part on laws which grant the federal government ownership of pre-Hispanic monuments. Despite a recent attempt to alter constitutional provisions for the preservation of archaeological sites, the basic

[3] See Lynne Sebastian, "Good Colleagues, Good Neighbors," *The SAA Archaeological Record*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (November, 2007): 11-3; Joaquín García-Bárcena, "Law and the Practice of Archaeology in Mexico," *The SAA Archaeological Record*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (November, 2007): 14-5, and Alejandro Martínez Muriel, "The State Control of Archaeology in Mexico," *The SAA Archaeological Record*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (November, 2007): 16-9. For a discussion of INAH regional centers, see Alfredo Barrera Rubio, "El patrimonio cultural desde la perspectiva de un centro INAH," *Revista de Arqueología Americana*, No. 21 (2002): 123-153.

[4] For discussions of modern interactions between INAH representatives and local community members, see Lisa Breglia, *Monumental Ambivalence: The Politics of Heritage* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 190-6, and Alexander Geurds, *Grounding the Past: The Praxis of Participatory Archaeology in the Mixteca Alta, Oaxaca, Mexico* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2007), 155-6. For more discussion of how local community members, INAH employees, and assorted others have used the site of Chichén Itzá, see Quetzil E. Castañeda, *In the Museum of Maya Culture: Touring Chichén Itzá* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), and Quetzil E. Castañeda, "The Aura of Ruins," in *Fragments of a Golden Age: The Politics of Culture in Mexico Since 1940*, ed. Gilbert M. Joseph, Anne Rubenstein, and Eric Zolov (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), 452-67.

principles encoded in the Porfirian laws of 1896 and 1897 still guide national policy. Moreover, the Museo Nacional de Antropología, like the Museo Nacional and the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología before it, serves as the main repository for the most beautiful and significant pieces of Mexico's pre-Hispanic cultural patrimony. In the words of a recent INAH director, "the National Museum of Anthropology attempted to be the final product of an extended revelation of the spirit of Mexican identity throughout the course of history."[5] Such attempts collapse time and space into a single field, by asserting that a consistent, unitary "spirit of Mexican identity" has always existed throughout the territory which happens to be part of the modern Mexican nation.[6] From this perspective it is only logical that the federal government, which has jurisdiction over the nation's territory, should also control the tangible evidence of the past.

If modern structures of archaeological administration bear a resemblance to those of the Porfiriato, similarities can also be seen in the federal government's interactions with local communities. In a 1989 *Newsweek* article, the reporter Tim Padgett described conflicts between INAH archaeologists and Mayan villagers, stemming from the same kinds of competing values and property claims which characterized Porfirian struggles over pre-Hispanic ruins. In the words of one archaeologist, "'Our biggest problem in preserving ancient sites is the Mayas living there now…Without the culture those ruins represent, those people practically lose their purpose in life.'" Padgett also described the travails of Pablo Canche, a "ruins custodian" who traveled "from village to village to inspect the sites and educate the *campesinos*. 'I try so hard to convince them that these are not bricks for building bathrooms, but irreplaceable stories about themselves,' [said] Canche. 'But I feel very lonely. Many hate me here.'"[7] More recently, the anthropologist Lisa Breglia's work on site caretakers and community residents in the Yucatán has explored the ambiguities in modern concepts of patrimony and heritage. Breglia writes, "At the local level, archaeological site workers and residents are ambivalent as to whether archaeological ruins represent national cultural patrimony rather than usufruct-based land inheritance. Maya residents of one small agricultural community are ambivalent as to whether the ancient mounds archaeologists have recently begun to excavate are indeed monuments at all…These indigenous agriculturalists and entrepreneurs find themselves – rather than rejecting univocal state ideologies of heritage – fashioning patrimonial claims based upon what is already

[5] Sergio Raúl Arroyo, "Flowing with History, Forty Years of the National Museum of Anthropology," in Felipe Solís, ed., *National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City* (New York: Harry N. Abrams in association with CONACULTA-INAH, 2004), 6.

[6] For a criticism of the ideology expressed in the National Museum of Anthropology, see Octavio Paz, "Crítica de la pirámide" in *Posdata* (Mexico City and Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 1970), 150-5. The anthropologist Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, who served as director of INAH during the 1970s and sought to decentralize its institutions, has also offered trenchant commentary on the messages encoded in the Museo Nacional de Antropología. In a work originally published in 1987, Bonfil wrote "Official discourse, translated into the language of the plastic arts or of museography, exalts that dead [Indian] world as the seed of origin that gave rise to today's Mexico. It is the glorious past of which we should feel proud, which assures us a lofty historical destiny as a nation, even though the logic of that assertion may not be entirely clear. The living Indian and all that is Indian are relegated to a second floor, when they are not ignored or denied…Through an adroit ideological alchemy, that past became our past, that of the Mexicans who are not Indians. However, it is an inert past, a simple reference to what existed as a kind of premonition of what Mexico is today and will be in the future. It has no real connection to our contemporary reality and our collective future." Bonfil, *México Profundo*, 54-5.

[7] Tim Padgett, "Walking on Ancestral Gods; Using Mayan ruins for patios and pig troughs," *Newsweek*, October 9, 1989, 83.

present in the multivocal ensemble of heritage objects, practices, and procedures as they are continually shaped and reproduced across time and space."[8] Breglia emphasizes the significance of "neoliberal privatization" in shaping contemporary debates over heritage, a factor which is closely related to the economics of modern tourism and antiquities markets, and which does not possess a clear Porfirian counterpart.[9] Local rights to *ejido* lands, also a product of post-Revolutionary developments, complicate these arguments as well. Nevertheless, the broad configurations of the struggles Breglia describes would surely be recognizable to Porfirian administrators, conserjes, and local community members.

Another point of comparison can be seen in modern community mobilizations to resist the removal of valued artifacts. Enrique Nalda writes that when INAH "tried to support *The Mayas* exhibition that opened at the Palazzo Grassi, Venice, by providing artefacts from the Palenque site museum…a large crowd assembled outside the museum to stop a possible case of theft, convinced that the pieces would never return to Palenque."[10] Such incidents reveal the continued tensions between federal and local claims on pre-Hispanic artifacts. However, the overall balance of power between the federal and local levels is somewhat more equitable than that which existed under Batres. In the wake of the 1994 uprising in Chiapas by the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, indigenous communities across Mexico mobilized to press claims for economic and cultural self-determination. One of the strategies that communities have used to achieve these goals has been the formation of community museums. Cuauhtémoc Camarena and Teresa Morales write that "the community museum can be understood as a dynamic tool communities use to create consensus and manage conflict from within, as well as a method to resist imposition from the outside. In general, it reinforces the group's capacity to be a community, to imagine its identity collectively, and to project its imagination in action."[11] Such institutions certainly have earlier antecedents; it may be recalled that the hostility between Batres and Francisco Rodríguez arose in part from disputes over an object housed in the community museum of Tepoztlán. The influence and respect enjoyed by many local museums, though, represents a substantial shift from Porfirian realities. Through these institutions, local residents may contest not only the physical control of artifacts, but also the narratives surrounding them.

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[8] Breglia, *Monumental Ambivalence*, 9.

[9] In 1999 a senator of the Partido Acción Nacional proposed amending the constitutional section dealing with archaeological and historical patrimony, a move which was "widely perceived as a profane intrusion of both party politics and free-market economics into the sacred sphere of national cultural heritage." This proposal caused considerable concern among the archaeological employees of the federal government. Protests arose at Chichén Itzá, where workers feared both the cultural consquences of the amendment, and the threat to the security of their jobs and benefits. Although the amendment was ultimately defeated, it is still too early to assess how broader government trends towards the privatization of state functions will ultimately affect archaeology and the management of pre-Hispanic sites. Breglia, *Monumental Ambivalence*, 5 and 97.

[10] Enrique Nalda, "Mexico's archaeological heritage: a convergence and confrontation of interests," in *Illicit Antiquities: The theft of culture and the extinction of archaeology*, ed. Neil Brodie and Kathryn Walker Tubb (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 212.

[11] Cuauhtémoc Camarena and Teresa Morales, "Community Museums and Global Connections: The Union of Community Museums of Oaxaca," in *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, ed. Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, with Gustavo Buntinx, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, and Ciraj Rassool (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 328. See also see Traci Ardren, "Conversations about the Production of Archaeological Knowledge and Community museums at Chunchucmil and Kochol, Yucatán, México," *World Archaeology*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (October, 2002): 379-400.

In recent decades, archaeological practitioners have increasingly sought to establish mutually beneficial relationships with local communities. While paternalism and authoritarianism are still evident in many interactions between archaeologists and those who reside near pre-Hispanic sites, some investigators have committed themselves to resolving disagreements through negotiation, and to seeking out accommodations where possible. A key example of this approach is the work done by Nelly Robles García, who became director of the Oaxacan site of Monte Albán in 2000. Faced with behaviors of local residents which threatened the archaeological integrity of the area, Robles "became responsible for an experiment in management, one that is remarkable for the decentalization it allowed in a highly centralized government." She pioneered an approach which returned a percentage of visitor revenues back to the site which generated the funds, and has used the additional resources to sponsor community education projects and promote more respectful dealings with the community by her staff. Although Selma Holo emphasizes that Robles' methods owe more to individual initiative than to official policy, it is still noteworthy that the institutional structures of Mexican archaeology now contain sufficient flexibility to allow such community-oriented approaches to take place.[12] Likewise, foreign archaeologists working in Mexico often take considerable pains to gain the approval and support of the communities in which they work. As investigators have reckoned with the often painful history of their discipline, and seen the practical and scholarly advantages to be gained by engaging with local communities, they have challenged top-down approaches to research in ways that would have been almost inconceivable during the Porfiriato.

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For almost 200 years, Mexico's federal government has made use of the pre-Hispanic material past in order to advance state interests. The nature of these interests has naturally varied over time, as members of the cultural bureaucracy have sought to raise Mexico's international profile, encourage national cohesion, consolidate state power, and burnish the reputation of the government as a patron of science and learning. Changes in national administrations, international affairs, political cultures, and disciplinary values have alternately strengthened and shaken this relationship, but never completely severed it. In one way or another, each era represents a continuation of what has come before. These legacies from the past are both burdens and gifts, imposing constraints while providing opportunities. As archaeologists, politicians, bureaucrats, and citizens continue to negotiate the future of the material past, they will have to decide which of these legacies they wish to discard, and which are worthy of preservation.

[12] Selma Holo, *Oaxaca at the Crossroads: Managing Memory, Negotiating Change* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 215 and 206.

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