

Introduction

Where did they come from, the three hundred thousand students that came to the Zócalo the day for the Great Silent Demonstration? . . . What became of Lourdes? Who was behind the door of Preparatory 1 on the day of the bazookas? How does a generation manufacture myths? What was on the menu in the Political Sciences cafeteria? What was the '68 Movement protesting? Where did the Juárez-Loreto bus start its run every morning? . . . Where did they throw our dead? Where, for fuck's sake, did they throw our dead?

—PACO IGNACIO TAIBO II, '68 (1991)

Where were you? And you, where were you? And you were where? Where were you and? Where were you? . . . Where, where, damn, where did you die? Were you on the plaza? Were you in some corridor? Did you live in one of the apartments? Were you coming in from one of the streets?

—JORGE AGUILAR MORA, *Si muero lejos de ti* (1979)

At the intersection of Mexico City's Calle Filadelfia and Avenida de los Insurgentes Sur stands a tall and broad-shouldered office tower with a façade of blue reflective glass. It adjoins a complex that includes a shopping mall, a movie theater, and artist David Alfaro Siqueiros's last major mural. The World Trade Center Mexico City (WTC) is part of an international association that promotes free trade. The administrative offices for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) were once housed there. But in everyday speech and on the placards identifying the destinations of the *peseros* (microbuses) that crisscross the city the WTC is better known as Hotel de México, a widely publicized hotel project originating in the late 1960s that was never completed. Nonetheless, it left a mark on Mexico City residents' spatial imaginations, or the ways people dwell physically *in* cities but also dwell *on* them imaginatively and discursively. In doing so, residents blur affect, memory, movement, language, and other means of making sense of the urban, whether moving through the city or being moved by it. In the process they leave traces that may be fleeting or remarkably recalcitrant.

This book explores the multiple, overlapping, and often competing spatial imaginations of the Long Sixties in Mexico, which run from at least the

late 1950s until today. This periodization allows an investigation of Mexico's decades-long modernization, led by the state and its allies, the nation's eventual disillusion with this arrangement, and various transitions identified by scholars but also by citizens: the democratic, the neoliberal, and the narco, among others. Given the dispossession, disenfranchisement, and violence that often accompanies these transitions, space—material, discursive, and imaginative—is the volatile zone where citizens have dwelled at multiple scales: from the corporeal to the symbolic, individual to community, and local to global, in order to make themselves at home. More specifically, this book focuses on the street- and media-savvy prodemocracy movement known as the '68 Movement.¹ Led by mostly middle-class university and high-school students in Mexico City in 1968, the movement sought radical reforms to the country's authoritarian political system, ranging from freedom of assembly to disbanding the riot police, in order to find a home in—if not fundamentally transform—Mexico's putative democracy. Mexico City was their chosen medium of communication to fellow citizens and the wider world.

The '68 Movement emerged in response to a routine instance of police brutality against youth that was also, in their estimation, the regular violence of the city's modernization. Spectacular preparations to host the summer Olympic Games that year highlighted not only how much the physical form of the city had changed since the 1940s, when capitalist urbanization intensified, but also the underlying social relations and fissures. The state used the games as an opportunity to congratulate itself for supervising the country's swift economic growth since 1940. The so-called Mexican Miracle, however, was a still a leap of faith for most citizens, who did not profit from the expansion and chafed against its authoritarian core.² For all the government's claims of urban integration and national unity, Mexicans were governed as distinct populations with differing and delimited social, economic, and political mobility based on class, ethnicity, and gender. Indeed, the '68 Movement sought to counter systematic—if sometimes obscured or naturalized—estrangement of citizenship that attempted to render Mexicans guests of the state, which was held by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI, Institutional Revolutionary Party) and its predecessor parties since 1929. This book's title is a reference to this apparatus: Mexico as hotel in which hospitality is tendered, albeit conditionally and at considerable social cost. With its array of marches, street theater, roving propaganda brigades, and handheld movie cameras, the '68 Movement proposed alternative ways to experience and move through the city, rerouting how citizens encountered and potentially engaged one another, face to face and

virtually. Although the movement was no real threat to the state (for it possessed no military capacity or foreign backers), its spatial imagination—which corresponded with its political imagination—directly challenged the state’s increasingly unsteady claim of legitimacy, which depended on tightly managing flows of people, politics, and capital. For this, the movement was targeted in a massacre on October 2, 1968, ten days before the Olympic opening ceremonies were to announce to the world that Mexico was a thoroughly modern and liberal peer.

The massacre took place at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas (Plaza of the Three Cultures), in a part of Mexico City known as Tlatelolco. Settled in the fourteenth century by the Mexica (Aztecs), more recently the neighborhood was cleared of its proletarian and often-militant residents and redeveloped as a massive public-housing complex, Nonoalco-Tlatelolco (1964, architect Mario Pani), a headquarters for the foreign ministry (1966, architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez), and a national-heritage site that encompassed pre-Hispanic ruins and a colonial-era monastery. The ’68 Movement gathered there peacefully to map how it would proceed after the government occupied the city’s two major university campuses and escalated its use of force. Organized at the highest levels of the state, the massacre was carried out by presidential-guard snipers and plainclothes paramilitaries who fired on unsuspecting students and bystanders—and on the military called to monitor the meeting. A chain reaction of gunfire resulted in between thirty and three hundred deaths. No final toll is known, as the government denied culpability for decades and no credible official investigation has ever taken place.³ The massacre was not acknowledged by the state until the early 1990s, and the bulk of official documents relating to the events remained classified until 2001. A conventional historical reckoning was not possible until very recently. However, in March 2015 scholarly access to these documents was closed.

Nonetheless, the Tlatelolco Massacre, as it is known, remains one of the most public instances of political violence in Mexican history since the country’s Revolution (1910–20). Both champions and critics of Mexico’s democratic transition cite the massacre as a watershed in what has been a slow, uneven, and still-incomplete process.

What we know about the ’68 Movement is largely through its representation in literature, poetry, film, and visual art, all part of a collective-memory project piloted by survivors and Mexico’s leftist intelligentsia since the summer of 1968. These Tlatelolco Media, as they are known, have played a prominent role not only in citizens’ remembering the events but also in their seeking justice through official and, more often, unofficial channels

with regard to 1968 and subsequent cases of state terror. These media situated the students and their supporters as participants in a long struggle for participatory democracy and social justice that began well before 1968 and is ongoing. This struggle had a special resonance in Mexico City. In addition to the establishment of a corporatist political system after the Revolution that isolated groups of citizens, city residents were stripped of their municipal representation in favor of federal regency. Public space was one of the few venues available to residents for expressing their political will (although it was claimed by the state or capital as well). The '68 Movement and its narration are part of a rise in informal modes of citizenship after 1940, often rooted in the production and consumption of urban culture, to supplement and in some cases substitute for political citizenship in Mexico, which has atrophied in an environment of corrupt institutions and impunity.

If the '68 Movement's students took to the streets seeking solidarity with fellow citizens in streets, markets, and plazas, then its narrators employed urban space as a mnemonic for collective memory or the social construction and reconstruction of the past. As Jorge Aguilar Mora pleads (above, in the second epigraph to this introduction), "Where were you? And you, where were you?" on the night of the Tlatelolco Massacre, insisting that event and place are inextricably linked. Narrators sought to aid audiences in recalling the events of 1968 months, years, and decades later, so that a visit to or representation of Tlatelolco today may transport audiences to the events of that summer. Urban space also served narrators of the '68 Movement as an architectonic for collective memory. Mexico City, with its complex social relations and urban flows, offered a ready framework for organizing the multiple and sometimes contradictory fragments of memory that survivors and their supporters put forth in the massacre's aftermath in the shorter or longer term. Like Mexico City, the corpus that emerged was densely interconnected, constantly changing, and never complete, so as to resist total knowledge or management. The Tlatelolco Media emphasized the recurring nature of violence in Mexico City (and greater Mexico) over the seemingly exceptional violence of the Tlatelolco Massacre. The narrators' mnemonic and architectonic was aimed toward survivors and contemporaries but also at subsequent generations with few direct links to 1968 but who, they assumed, would still be in struggle given the PRI's instinct of self-preservation. The publics constituted by Aguilar Mora and other writers and filmmakers were centered on ethically bearing witness to past violence but also the injustices of their own here-and-now. These publics were hailed by phenomenological representation-constructions of the city that mobilized the senses and emotions in uncanny ways, revealing urban histories and political futures denied

or censored by the state (or capital). The narrators' call was simultaneously (and perhaps paradoxically) embodied, situated in a particular place and time, and cross-generational, exceeding such specificities. It was also a risky gambit. Circumstances change; interpretations shift; responses are unpredictable; but this call secured the '68 Movement's currency—if not its coherence or stability. Representations of the '68 Movement continue to circulate and influence public sentiment and even politics, yet they do not lead directly to dignity and liberation or to a definitive history of 1968. Rather, the movement's legacy is a portable and mutable mode of *dwelling* that approaches the city as a space available for citizens to remake in their own image and hopes, regardless of which party rules or of prevailing economic conditions.

Accordingly, this book focuses on the '68 Movement but also on Mexico City before and after the Tlatelolco Massacre. It argues that the movement's insurgent tactics as well as the memory work of its narrators cannot be understood without a corresponding analysis of Mexico City's capitalist urbanization and those actors who sought to claim, manage, and divert this process. Although the modern city was designed to appear overwhelmingly the domain of architects, politicians, real-estate speculators, and media moguls, and a function of planning, law, investment, and mass communications, it was reproduced and potentially transformed on a daily basis by the maneuvers, sentiments, words, and images—physical and figurative modifications major and minor—of its many users.⁴

Returning to the notion of spatial or spatiopolitical imagination: this book also argues that the memory work of the '68 Movement's narrators dovetailed with a wider reevaluation of Mexico's postrevolutionary condition and modernist techniques of social intervention.⁵ Several decades of PRI-rule had delivered neither the progressive ideals of the Revolution, which the party appropriated to institutionalize its legitimacy, nor the higher standard of living promised by industrialization and urbanization. Economic expansion continued while an increasing number of citizens expressed feelings of immobilization or, more accurately, of travelling the economy's circuits without advancing socially or politically. Dissatisfied with this state of affairs, several prominent midcentury writers, artists, filmmakers, architects, and designers worked often collaboratively to activate spaces and media that they perceived as formally static or passively received.⁶ Experimenting with new communications and visualization technologies and a lexicon of flows, energies, and ecologies, they dissolved traditional boundaries between media and built environment aspiring to redefine the relationship between author, object, and spectator in terms of

reciprocity and continual change. The motivations of these neo-avant-gardes were by no means congruent, including utopian politics, creative-professional renewal, and managing social unrest. At the same time the state's claim of monopoly on national culture was weakened by the (state-led) expansion of the market, mass media, and higher education, which multiplied opportunities for cultural production and consumption, especially for the urban middle classes.

Such developments both linked to and diverged from the international reevaluation of the modern after a devastating world war and concurrent rise of mass consumerism in the United States. During this time Mexico renegotiated its relationship to the emerging world order, at once increasingly connected to the global economy because of its political stability but a democracy only in outward appearance.

In a similar fashion, the '68 Movement was both connected with and distinct from the global unrest of the 1960s.⁷ Certainly, conflicts were mass-mediated as never before—especially via television. Given the self-censorship common among Mexico's mainstream newspapers and broadcast channels, news reports were more often attuned to foreign events than domestic ones. Mexican audiences were well aware of the general strike in Paris two months before the '68 Movement emerged and of tensions growing between the Soviet Union and its satellite Czechoslovakia. The Cuban Revolution (1959) reminded many Mexicans that the PRI's embrace of progressive ideals was merely rhetorical.⁸ The Vietnam War (1955–75) remained a topic of intense interest.⁹ As the writer José Emilio Pacheco noted in *La Cultura en México* months before the student mobilization, because of its mass-mediation "Vietnam has been converted into part of our personal experiences." Pacheco continued, "Each one of us is simultaneously a victim and part of the drama and horror."¹⁰ This internalization of Vietnam, facilitated by media as well as the rise of transnational consumer and protest cultures, meant that participants in the '68 Movement already saw themselves as active members in a worldwide network that linked Mexico City to Berkeley, Berlin, Belgrade, Bogotá, Chicago, Los Angeles, Prague, Paris, and São Paulo. The Mexico City Olympics, with their international pageantry, only reinforced this sensibility. John Carlos and Tommie Smith's Black Power salute during their medal ceremony injected the U.S. civil-rights struggle into Mexico's national university, site of the Olympic Stadium. The Chicano journalist Rubén Salazar covered the games for the *Los Angeles Times*, raising questions about economic inequality in Mexico through the lens of Mexican-American activism. Students in Mexico City deployed the vocabulary and iconography of foreign protest movements

and youth culture selectively, however. Ernesto “Che” Guevara, for example, was jettisoned when the general public perceived references to him as unpatriotic. Gaining the support of fellow citizens was a higher priority for the movement than demonstrating its cosmopolitan character.

More recent developments regarding the '68 Movement also straddle the national and the global. Between 2002 and 2006 a special prosecutor working under the attorney general and appointed by President Vicente Fox, whose election as an opposition candidate in 2000 was celebrated as an irrefutable sign of the country's democratic transition, failed to convict any of the officials responsible for the Tlatelolco Massacre or the subsequent dirty war waged against dissidents throughout the 1970s and '80s. Fox's gesture was largely motivated by a *politique* desire to establish his international legitimacy after breaking the PRI's seventy-one-year hold on power. Ongoing revelations of state abuse, especially as related to the transnational drug trade, signal that the de-facto truth and justice seeking modeled by the '68 Movement's memory project will continue to be renewed for the foreseeable future and in locales beyond Mexico City. Indeed, the recent anniversary of the 2014 disappearance of forty-three teachers-in-training in Guerrero on their way to the annual Tlatelolco Massacre commemoration in Mexico City led to public demonstrations throughout the country and references to the unfinished business of democratization.

MOBILIZATION

The Hotel de México was to be the largest and most technologically sophisticated hotel in Latin America, built for the influx of tourists anticipated for the 1968 Olympics. The hotel's architects and owner envisioned a high-tech architectural machine. It would take advantage of newly built or projected urban infrastructure—from sewage systems to the new subway—that proposed to manage the city's vast flows of goods, information, and money, linking Mexico City to the rest of the country and the world.¹¹ This infrastructure was also social, including projects like the Nonoalco-Tlatelolco housing complex, hospitals, and schools that endeavored to extend state control over everyday life, including the very definition of life, or what today is identified as biopolitics.¹² Contrary to the communitarian rhetoric that introduced these networks, they were not installed to facilitate an upsurge of social communication or on-the-ground mobility; rather, they were meant to reinforce the political and economic status quo from above. Similarly, the Olympic organizers circulated images of new buildings and other amenities through film, television, and photographs to create an

illusion of a modern, technologically sophisticated city for foreign and domestic audiences. In fact, the improvements were few and far between. This sleight of hand took place as doubts about the PRI's legitimacy and the future of the Mexican Miracle festered at home. Throughout the 1950s and '60s there were various strikes, the most prominent among them those of railroad workers in 1958–59 and of medical residents in 1964–65, suggesting that an ever-wider spectrum of society questioned both the single-party state and its modernization agenda. Students in 1968 drew inspiration and borrowed protest tactics from these recent labor movements, which also took to city streets, drafting an even more ambitious political roadmap.

The '68 Movement formed in response to police brutality after a disturbance July 22 among youth in Mexico City's Ciudadela District, including students from several secondary schools.¹³ The students retreated to their respective schools, where they were bombarded by the city's *granaderos* (riot police). They traded tear gas and gunfire for rocks and Molotov cocktails for over a week. On July 29 the army was called in and used a bazooka to burst through the doors of Preparatory School 1. Although the government reported no deaths, many neighborhood residents were not convinced, and activists circulated the names of students believed to be killed or injured. The schools were affiliated with Mexico City's two major universities, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and the Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN). Both institutions had long histories of campus activism and were quickly drawn into the conflict.¹⁴ Students from both institutions took part in two July 26 marches, one denouncing the state's escalation of violence in the Ciudadela, and the second protesting the Vietnam War. The latter also celebrated the anniversary of Fidel Castro's attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago, Cuba, in 1953. Testimonies from that day vary, but participants in both marches joined together and moved toward the nearby Zócalo, Mexico City's central plaza, normally reserved for official spectacle. Yet before the protesters reached their destination they were attacked by *granaderos* who appear to have been expecting such a move. Traffic had already been detoured and government buildings sealed. That evening intelligence-service agents ransacked the office of the Mexican Communist Party and its newspaper was shut down, signaling that the state was eager use the protests to justify a larger assault on Mexico's politically weak but still symbolically resonant Left. Throughout the events Police Chief Luis Cueto and Secretary of Defense Marcelino García Barragán denied the government's use of excessive force to the press and suggested that the students were attempting to discredit the government as it prepared to host the Olympics, embarrassing it before the world.

The students and their supporters moved quickly to organize. Both secondary and university classes were suspended after July 30, and by August 2 students from UNAM and IPN formed the Consejo Nacional de Huelga (CNH, National Strike Council) to coordinate their strike.¹⁵ Sympathetic faculty formed the parallel *Coalición de Profesores de Enseñanza Media y Superior Pro-Libertades Democráticas* (Coalition of Secondary and Higher-Education Teachers for Democratic Liberties), and members of Mexico's leftist intelligentsia lent support through groups like the *Asamblea de Escritores y Artistas* (Writers and Artists Assembly). Although most of the mainstream media covered the events cautiously, some publications like *La Cultura en México* and *¿Por qué?* were unrestrained in covering government violence. As word spread, solidarity strikes were held at universities in the provinces throughout Mexico.¹⁶

Marches were one of the '68 Movement's primary tactics. It traced the city's thoroughfares to highlight violence against secondary students but also long-standing social fissures that the ubiquitous Olympic publicity could not patch over. After the Mexican Revolution the PRI set up a corporatist political system that isolated the demands of the country's various constituencies into unions and other official groups. This system depended largely on backroom negotiations and co-option of opponents through patronage—and surveillance, infiltration, and violence when this hospitality was not accepted. Hospitality is a concept that will be used in several ways here, as will be discussed in more detail below, but for now it stands as a metaphor for the complex cultural rules and rituals associated with the encounter between a state and a nation when the former presumes the latter to be its docile guest rather than a full-fledged citizen. The '68 Movement would go on deliberately and repeatedly to overstep the boundary of accepted political action, making demands that reached well beyond campus and envisioned a more flexible and generous arrangement between host (state) and guests (citizens).

In early August the CNH put forward six demands to end confrontations between students and security forces, which by now held most of Mexico City's (if not the nation's) attention. In addition to obvious demands such as indemnification to the families of students hurt or killed and the determination of individual responsibility among government officials, they also made more strident ones. These included the resignation of Cueto and his lieutenants Raúl Mendiola and Armando Frías, the elimination of the *granaderos*, and the abolition of the social-dissolution articles of the federal penal code (145 and 145 *bis*), all tools used by the state for thwarting dissent.¹⁷ Although the '68 Movement's demands may not appear radical in

comparison with concurrent social movements around the world, the movement's demands were insurgent, given the state's claims to represent all Mexicans absolutely and its attempts to create a closed circuit of communication and association among citizens.¹⁸

Individuals who joined the '68 Movement did so for diverse reasons, but they collectively sought political mobility to match the Mexican Miracle's expansion.¹⁹ The '68 Movement's tactics echoed their ambition: marches through Mexico City's major streets and gathering places, buses hijacked and plastered with movement propaganda, 16-mm communiqués that circulated through private cineclubs and abroad. Although the degree of popular support for the movement is difficult to gauge given misinformation and censorship in the mainstream press, images from the period show tens of thousands and sometimes hundreds of thousands of people—not only students—participating in its largest marches. Movement-produced media touched just as many if not more residents. The movement demonstrated an intimate knowledge of Mexico City's infrastructural projects and of the city as both physical and mediated space. Not unlike the designers and patrons of the Hotel de México and other camera-ready Olympic venues, the '68 Movement understood the city as a dynamic medium of communication, intervening on how people made sense of their social reality rather than serving as an inert stage.

In just over two weeks it appeared that a loose alliance of established university groups with diverse ambitions had morphed into a democratization movement. Not all students or faculty participated in this movement, however, and the CNH was hardly monolithic.²⁰ Student leaders readily acknowledged that the council, which included representatives from each university and each school within a university, barely contained the ideological differences between its mostly leftist factions, who disagreed on the use of violence and whether to negotiate with the government. They described a CNH that was deliberative to the verge of paralysis. Nonetheless, this body was important because of its public performance of plurality and democratic procedure, which stood in contrast to the PRI's machinations. The council was not a political party and did not seek to seize the state, but its performances made clear that the state did not monopolize national culture or the practice of citizenship.

There were also economic interests at stake in the students' and their supporters' mobilization. For all the '68 Movement's (sometimes satirical) patriotism, the much-publicized Mexican Miracle was beginning to stagnate, with increased economic insecurity for the growing middle classes who attended UNAM and IPN.²¹ The promise of upward social mobility

through education looked compromised, an appearance that partly explains why students who seemed comfortable compared with other social sectors were willing to bite the hand that fed them.²¹

Over the course of the summer the Mexican government moved to delegitimize the '68 Movement. Although the state was hospitable to exiled revolutionaries and intellectuals throughout the twentieth century, granting visas to Leon Trotsky and Hannes Meyer, among others, it was much less hospitable to homegrown dissidents, refusing even to recognize them as such. Employing a strategy used against labor unions in the 1950s and '60s, government officials portrayed the '68 Movement as a cabal of malcontent children, so-called rebels without a cause. The state accused students of failing to recognize its generosity or the tradition of collective sacrifice for the nation as established by the Revolution. At the same time it also portrayed the students as unwitting agents of foreign provocateurs. (Maoists, the Soviet Union's KGB, and the United States' CIA were all cited.)²² President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, who brutally put down the railroad workers' and medical residents' strikes as interior minister, referred in his 1968 presidential State of the Republic address to "dark, strange forces that seek to sow disorder, anarchy, and chaos in the national order."²³ By refusing to name the '68 Movement and raising the specter of communism, Díaz Ordaz fueled Cold War panic encouraged by the PRI since the 1940s. Nevertheless, members of the leftist intelligentsia conjured the '68 Movement repeatedly and in a variety of popular media over the years, ensuring that the prodemocracy movement would haunt Mexico, although not without responding to contemporary circumstances.

PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE

After the Tlatelolco Massacre the state launched what Raúl Álvarez Garín called "operation amnesia." The student leader wrote: "First they hide the magnitude of the tragedy, then they minimize the numbers, propagate rumors, denigrate protagonists, and trivialize the events, and in the end there will be those who doubt that the events even took place."²⁴ Television and major newspapers parroted the government's claim that the army responded to initial student gunfire and that only a handful of demonstrators and bystanders were killed. And so, in the first two decades following the massacre, collective memory was sustained not by the mainstream press or historians but by novelists, poets, and filmmakers. The most widely circulated stories of the event include cultural critic Carlos Monsiváis's chronicle *Días de guardar* (1970), student leader Luis González de Alba's prison-centered memoir *Los días y los años* (1971), journalist Elena

Poniatowska's cacophonous archive of testimonies *La noche de Tlatelolco* (1971), and Jorge Fons's *Rojo amanecer* (1989), a film that alternates unsettlingly between melodrama and horror.²⁵ These memory makers represent the historical *Inferno* of the massacre but also aspire to the *Paradiso* of the '68 Movement's political project and its potential futures, even as Mexico's Left appeared decimated.²⁶

Many of the early narrators—Poniatowska, Monsiváis, González de Alba—published during the presidency of Luis Echeverría (1970–76), minister of the interior at the time of the massacre. Echeverría sought to win back the middle classes, especially the intelligentsia, with his so-called *apertura democrática* (democratic opening). He pursued a set of policies that increased funding for higher education and the culture industries while also appearing to relax censorship. He granted amnesty to '68's political prisoners in 1971, though some were forced into exile abroad. Frequently appearing in public wearing a *guayabera*, a garment closely associated with populism in Latin America, Echeverría positioned himself as a champion of the Third World. At the same time he initiated a dirty war responsible for torturing and disappearing thousands of dissidents well into the 1980s. At a march that celebrated in part the release of '68 Movement prisoners on June 10, 1971, several thousand students were attacked by security forces trained after the Tlatelolco Massacre to ensure that they would never organize again.

The PRI suppressed official acknowledgment of the '68 Movement until the early 1990s, when a textbook distributed in public schools nationally referred to the Tlatelolco Massacre for the first time.²⁷ In 1993, on the twentieth-fifth anniversary of the massacre, a memorial stela was erected at Nonoalco-Tlatelolco. Monsiváis and other intellectuals were invited by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari to serve on a truth committee. The president was eager to rally support after allegations of a fraudulent election in 1988 and a currency crisis related to the launch of NAFTA.²⁸ These gestures were part of a larger attempt begun by Miguel de la Madrid, one of Salinas de Gortari's predecessors, and continued by Madrid's successor, Ernesto Zedillo, to carefully release social pressure that had built up over decades with regard to government corruption, impunity, and a failure to deliver widespread prosperity.²⁹

In the last decade the '68 Movement has served as locus of intensive political and cultural activity: an annual march on October 2, academic conferences, documentary films, radio programs, exhibitions, countless monographs and articles, and, since 2007, a memorial museum. The currency of the movement in Mexico has risen and fallen over time, driven as much by the circulation of narratives and anniversaries as by more recent events.

Certainly some of the heroic and romantic story lines associated with the '68 Movement—as progenitor of Mexican civil society or democracy—have overestimated its significance, anachronistically claiming a direct connection to events that transpired much later. Describing the movement as a watershed moment in Mexican history limits recognition of other participants in democratization and the intermediate gains made before 1968 and in the 1970s and '80s, especially those made by indigenous communities, women, gays, and lesbians. At the same time, participants in the '68 Movement also took part in subsequent social movements. As Elaine Carey argues, several women in the movement rebelled specifically against gender norms and eventually contributed to the emergence of the Mexican feminist movement.³⁰ Both Monsiváis and González de Alba would go on to contribute to an emerging gay-rights discourse.³¹

Anachronistic understandings of the '68 Movement also fail to account for its contemporary currency and the crucial role of subsequent generations in remembering the events and, potentially, seeking recourse. In 2008 the Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco, located at Nonoalco-Tlatelolco, staged a Flavio González Mello play as part of the fortieth-anniversary commemoration of the Tlatelolco Massacre. *Olimpia '68* tells the story of both the Olympics and the October 2 massacre to highlight the authoritarian underbelly of the state amid the pageantry of the games. The intended audience for *Olimpia '68* was young people, not veterans of the Sixties. As Luis Mario Moncada wrote in the playbill, nearly 70 percent of the Mexican population was born after 1968. Moncada asked, Why should they remember 1968 over 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell, or 2001, the year Fox took office, breaking the PRI's hold on power?³² By insisting on the memory of the '68 Movement without also leaving room for dwelling on contemporary events, are we in some ways reiterating the PRI's monopolistic claim of national culture? This is a difficult question, whether from a political, an ethical, or a historiographical vantage point, and one that should not be answered without considering how collective memory is continually reconstructed.

Memory of the '68 Movement has assumed forms and trajectories that participants could never have anticipated. In 2003, Latin pop-music star Lucero starred in a musical-theater adaptation of Antonio Velasco Piña's *Regina: El 2 de octubre no se olvida* (1989, Regina: October 2 Cannot Be Forgotten), one of the most popular but also controversial representations of the massacre.³³ The Yo Soy 132 campaign in 2012 adopted some of the '68 Movement's visual aesthetic in its social media, inviting others to join them, not unlike '68 Movement's narrators' hailing of subsequent

generations. The campaign emerged during that year's presidential election, when Enrique Peña Nieto, the PRI's winning candidate, refused to address student protesters after a speech at Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. Peña Nieto hid in a campus bathroom until they were dispersed by his security team. Shortly thereafter, the PRI dismissed the critics—131 in attendance—by suggesting that they were paid provocateurs. Just as in 1968, his party refused to recognize a grassroots challenge to the party's claim of hegemony.

Much of the '68 Movement's currency has depended on narratives that refer to, borrow from, and repeat one another. Poniatowska borrowed from González de Alba erroneously.³⁴ Fons borrowed from Poniatowska without credit. Luis Spota was forced to revise the second edition of his revenge-fantasy novel *La plaza* (1971) after complaints that it borrowed too heavily (and without attribution) from other period sources. Rather than producing an echo chamber, this rhizomatic network of representation was quite successful in circumventing denial, censorship, and impunity.³⁵ No single text could be taken as an absolutely authoritative history of the movement, and this inability also created space for multiple forms of witnessing the events of 1968 not bound by intellectual property or authorial legacy. *Hotel Mexico* is organized in such a fashion in order to show that the '68 Movement and its narrators operated with an urban and historical vision that expanded beyond the parameters of the summer of 1968, linear notions of modernization and governance, and traditional definitions of evidence and testimony. In insisting on the role of subsequent generations in collective memory, they left room open for methods of seeking truth and justice not yet imagined and understandings of the '68 Movement not yet articulated. In order to begin to address this expansiveness in an intellectually generous fashion while still maintaining a critique of the PRI and capitalist modernity, this book adopts *dwelling* and also *hospitality* as its organizing and analytical concepts.

HOSPITALITY AND DWELLING

The Venezuelan playwright Ignacio Cabrujas, commenting on his country's oil boom and collapse in the 1970s and '80s, compared the national territory to an encampment that evolved into an oversized hotel. Within this hotel, citizens are treated as guests, and the state acts as manager, although "in permanent failure when it comes to guaranteeing [their] comfort." Cabrujas continues:³⁶

To live . . . is to pretend that my actions are translated into something . . . [though not] something that clashes with the rule of the hotel, given

that when I stay in a hotel, I do not try to transform its accommodations, or to improve them, or to adapt them to my wishes. I simply use them.

A hotel is a compelling metaphor for modernizing authoritarian states like Mexico: although featuring some alluring (if often elusive) amenities, it is never intended to become a home; and so the roles of host and guests are never supposed to be reversed. Hospitality, once offered as a sacred or constitutional obligation, becomes a cunning transaction.

As this book explores, the PRI's claim of self-sufficiency, its presumption to accommodate and represent all citizens with or without their consent, may be thought of as a specious variety of hospitality. Mexican citizens, disenfranchised by a political party with the ambition to be perpetually in power, were guests of the Hotel Mexico, so to speak. The Mexican poet and diplomat Octavio Paz famously called the PRI a "philanthropic ogre." Paz, writing in 1979 but invoking 1968, argued that "'Civil society' has almost completely disappeared: nothing and no one exists outside the state."³⁷ Paradoxically, the PRI's general failure to provide most citizen-guests with basic liberties and entitlements over the course of the twentieth century was understood not as a reason for regime change but as a justification for its ongoing sovereignty.

In the Hotel Mexico, citizen-guests were expected to exercise their political will on a small and carefully monitored stage. Members of Mexico's middle classes felt this constraint acutely. They were not given formal corporate representation until the 1940s, and when they were, it was as part of a sundry body that diffused their influence. Having supervised the Mexican Miracle, which sought to grow not only the number of factories but also the number consumers, the PRI saw itself as the middle classes' generous benefactor. In return, the party expected allegiance. Artists and intellectuals were generally granted some liberties of expression, so long as they did not repeatedly or too forcefully point out the PRI's inadequacies as host.³⁸ Hospitality, although ostensibly a magnanimous gesture, had its limits, as proved by the Tlatelolco Massacre and other violent (if less well-known) events.

This book draws on the work of Jacques Derrida, who theorized the politics of hospitality and also the radical possibilities of its more ethical practice. Derrida argues that most hospitality is conditional, hinging on populations and sovereignty, limits and borders, and calculations of risk and management of resources.³⁹ What Derrida calls "unconditional" hospitality, offering what one has to someone without even asking their name, is an impossible ideal but one that societies should strive toward in pursuit

of universal human rights. Derrida's work focused on the experience of foreign immigrants and refugees; but how does hospitality apply to citizens estranged in their own homeland? Projects like the Olympics and Nonoalco-Tlatelolco, which displaced thousands of neighborhood residents and did not reaccommodate them, were highly publicized and photogenic gestures of hospitality, but they did not provide concrete solutions to addressing major urban problems such as decaying housing stock, overcrowding, or worker exploitation. They also, in spite of rhetoric by designers and speculators to the contrary, reinforced capitalistic rather than revolutionary ideals. As Mireille Rosello argues: "A perfectly gracious and generous host may be capitalizing on dark shadows, on ghosts that haunt his land, his house, his social position."⁴⁰

If we employ the metaphor of hospitality, the Tlatelolco Massacre can be understood as what Gyanendra Pandey calls "routine violence." Pandey calls attention not to the stunning and ultimately fleeting violence of a massacre or war but to the everyday, recurring, and often invisible violence of exploitative economic and political structures.⁴¹ This routine violence is built into supposedly rational, democratic institutions, with states and economic elites depending on force and, moreover, its obfuscation to maintain the status quo. In other words, violence should be understood as order rather than institutional failure. The notion of conditional hospitality is useful in highlighting the biopolitical aspects of the PRI's governance, whereby the state and its welfare-security apparatus sought to define and administer human life. In biopolitics the state's interest in citizens is merely physiological and reproductive rather than political or contemplative. And in spite of biopolitics' interest in managing life, it privileges certain bodies over others.⁴²

This is not to argue that the encounter between citizen and state, however inequitable, was unilateral. As historians of postwar Mexico have recently emphasized, the PRI was neither a monolithic nor an omnipotent colossus.⁴³ The party negotiated with citizens at all social strata, who resisted the state's advances out of principle as much as they also cooperated with its policies and programs out of self-interest. Derrida's interlocutors in gender and postcolonial studies have argued that the relationship between host and guest is more fraught and unstable than it may seem at first.⁴⁴ The relationship may be asymmetrical, but it is also continually renegotiated as hospitable (and inhospitable) encounter by encounter through customs and rituals normally exercised to secure stability. The state assumed risks by seeking guests for Hotel Mexico. Living at Nonoalco-Tlatelolco, for example, residents remade these spaces according to their

own logic, challenging the state's notion of authority and property. After decades in which Mexico City's residents were stripped of their political representation at the municipal and national level, participants in the '68 Movement insisted on their right to the city or the ability to change their sociopolitical situation by changing their city. This was a right not granted by state fiat but claimed through a constellation of everyday actions and imaginaries that could exert considerable force.⁴⁵

The relationship between the built environment and violence, at the core of this reclamation, is not causal. Buildings can physically register violence; many of the apartment blocks at Nonoalco-Tlatelolco still exhibit damage from October 2. However, the housing complex was not the state's target, nor did its design facilitate the massacre. Architecture is not merely reflective of violence originating elsewhere in society, as Andrew Herscher argues.⁴⁶ Rather, the Tlatelolco Massacre revealed that architecture, which embodies social, economic, and political structures, stands on unsteady ground when it is built on routine violence. It continually wavers between displacement and construction even when appearing stable and solid.

This irresolution is a hallmark of the '68 Movement's narrators' understanding of the Tlatelolco Massacre as national-historical trauma and the challenges of stimulating collective memory. Knowing the totality of the Tlatelolco Massacre—"what really happened"—is impossible, just as Mexico City is unfathomable in all its complexity. Even for those who experienced the events firsthand, there are limits to human perception and memory, which is partial and prone to forgetting and embellishment. The fundamental lacuna of the massacre is this: How can we know death if we do not live to experience it?⁴⁷ At the same time, if calls for "Never again!" are to be heeded, the event must somehow be remembered. We are left with representation, based on fragments of memory that are in themselves belated.⁴⁸

The fields of trauma and affect studies have been helpful in rethinking the belated as a concept for understanding the collective construction of memory over time and the role of representation in this process.⁴⁹ Fundamentally, trauma is the recurrence of an event that cannot be controlled. This unruly repetition can be put to work to flesh out connections and consequences, especially social ones that could not be appreciated in the flash of violence. It also allows for the incorporation of responses to the event, including those beyond the survivor. The site-specificity of '68 Movement narrations resonates with theories of collective memory articulated by several scholars.⁵⁰ They stress how memory, normally understood as individual and hermetic, is developed and sustained as part of a community and in particular spaces. If we accept the fragmentary, belated, and

collective status of memory and its representation, then their purpose is not participation in historical reconstruction to a point that may be thought conclusive and then subject to neglect.⁵¹ The currency of the '68 Movement depends not on the testimony of survivors or the indifference of courts and archives but on its invocation by subsequent generations.⁵² The goal of this collective-memory project was never historical dogma or a memorial stela but addressing the unfinished business of democratization and social justice in Mexico. In this respect, memory of the '68 Movement must be malleable to suit the evolving needs of this greater project.

The '68 Movement's narrators' collective-memory project dwelled *in* Mexico City to dwell *on* the political and economic conditions of Mexican society. Dwelling suggests physical occupation of space and also lingering in thought.⁵³ Dwelling's duality allowed narrators to explore not only physical spaces where people protested or were killed but also the social structures, which are less easily observed. To dwell is not to occupy a particular Cartesian coordinate but to move through space and to be able to think about other places and times. A salient feature of several of the '68 narrations is how the deployment of urban space is not the abstract, exchangeable space of capital, or the grid of modernist architecture, but an embodied category, for author and audience, refusing the dispossession and estrangement characteristic of Mexico's postrevolutionary modernization.

The quotations from Taibo and Aguilar Mora shown as epigraphs at the beginning of this introduction are examples of impassioned narratives of the '68 Movement that invoke and activate space and place. Taibo asks big-picture questions about the scope of the movement and its objectives, and he interpolates seemingly banal queries, emphasizing the everyday rather than the exceptional quality of collective memory. Reading Aguilar Mora, on the other hand, one trips over the near-homonyms (where/were), which compel reading these short sentences more closely than usual, and changes their meaning on the basis of "you," a linguistic shifter that conflates survivor and reader, making witnesses out of the two. The Nonoalco-Tlatelolco apartment where almost all of *Rojo amanecer* takes place grows increasingly dark, dirty, and eventually bloody, visualizing the violence of the October 2 massacre but also the violence of Tlatelolco's urban redevelopment. The film's uncanny effects, driven as much by melodrama as by horror, invite viewers to reconsider the spaces that they presently inhabit and comfortably call home. As some feminist film theorists have provocatively argued, such reorientations have the potential for affective and political mobilization. The bodily response of viewers, whether love or disgust, can exceed expectations or controls even in media that appear complicit with

dominant structures of power.⁵⁴ These feelings, mediated and belated like fragments of memory in trauma, are crucial to constructing memory across generations. Narrators of the '68 Movement invited—if not insisted that—their publics dwell, in all senses of the word, to see themselves as survivors with an ethical obligation to remember and continue to seek justice as part of an unfinished sociopolitical project. They were not alone in deploying this tactic. From multiple points of enunciation in postwar Mexico—La Onda writers' counterculturalism, Alejandro Jodorowsky's "panic" theater, Juan José Gurrola's *S.nob* magazine—and abroad, traditional sensorial and emotional frameworks for spectatorship were hijacked by artists and writers and redirected in ways that did not lead to catharsis or resolution.

ARCHITECTURE OF THE BOOK

Hotel Mexico is organized thematically, each chapter serving as a vector in the spatial dimensions of the '68 Movement and its afterlives. This entails moving back and forth between 1968 and years before and after, and also among the histories of built environment, art, literature, and film as well as politics and law rhizomatically. This architecture highlights the multiple ways in which the '68 Movement and its narrators deployed novel ways of seeing and moving through the city, a medium of communication potentially as potent and transformative as government, mass media, and even global capital. It also points to the open-endedness of this project, leaving room for later social movements and also representations of the '68 Movement.

Chapter 1, "City of Palaces," is centered in the Palacio de Lecumberri, Mexico City's infamous penitentiary, which is the setting for Luis González de Alba's *Los días y los años* and José Revueltas's *El apando* (1969). Both were imprisoned in the Black Palace between 1968 and 1971 for their leadership of the '68 Movement. While González de Alba begins to consolidate the movement's own narrative and denounce the state for the Tlatelolco Massacre, Revueltas focuses on criticizing the PRI's phantasmagorical governance, at once demanding to manage the corporeal lives of its citizens while at the same time maintaining a political and legal system that was ungraspable, an optical illusion. González de Alba and Revueltas employ phenomenological and affective narration—emphasizing sight but also smell, touch, sound, and emotion—to dissolve the barriers between everyday life in Lecumberri and that outside. They draw attention to the role of the body in mediating urban experience and memory and also the virtual incarceration of a disenfranchised Mexican society. In the 1980s Lecumberri

was converted into the Archivo General de la Nación, the national archive. It would eventually house government documents declassified by Fox pertaining to the Tlatelolco Massacre; part of his administration's push for legitimacy by embracing the strategies of transitional justice and universal human rights. Despite the limitations and failures of these approaches, González de Alba's and Revueltas's embodied narrations and critical perspectives propose that justice need not be restricted to or dependent on official archives or juridical institutions. They also outline the ethical role of their readers. From these early narrations it is clear that the '68 Movement's collective memory project would engage its historical moment but also make space for future recourse.

Such an understanding of history—and a future yet to be articulated—demonstrated by González de Alba and Revueltas was fundamental to Tlatelolco, site of the massacre. It figured prominently in the national imaginary as the transit point for rural migrants displaced by the violence of the Mexican Revolution and modernization. Nonoalco-Tlatelolco was built on ancient Mexica ruins on site and also the remains of the country's rail hub, once home to encampments of workers and their families. Pani's modernist housing complex presumed to bring architectural transparency and social hygiene to the neighborhood. As chapter 2, "Revenge of Dust," demonstrates, the neighborhood's photographic, cinematic, and literary representations by Juan Rulfo, Carlos Fuentes, and Fernando del Paso lingered over its improvised housing, smoke, dust and shadowy overpasses. In producing such representations, these artists and writers explored the Mexican Miracle's uneven results, both plainly visible and unrecognizable to empirical modes of vision. As a result, by 1968 Tlatelolco was a well-established archive for sensorial and palimpsest modes of writing history, available to narrators of the '68 Movement who sought to elucidate the routine violence of modern Mexico.

The '68 Movement was not alone in its savvy use of street and new media culture. It adopted techniques from previous labor movements and from the PRI, which invested heavily in building up Mexico's transport and communications infrastructure. Chapter 3, "Urban Logistics and Kinetic Environments," turns to the preparations for the 1968 Olympics. An interdisciplinary creative team produced a series of urban environments that sought to sell to audiences worldwide, but especially those at home, a convincing image of a completely modernized and socially harmonious Mexico. These temporary and sometimes mobile environments adopted insights from cybernetics, ecology, and Gestalt psychology, as well as Optical and Kinetic Art, also on display at the games. When we compare the official

environments with concurrent art happenings, including an exhibition of room-scaled experiments by artists in creating active spectators, which were much more open-ended in their goals, the predictive and managerial impulse of Olympic designs comes into focus. At the same time, these official and neo-avant-garde experiments identified the dynamic perceptual and interpretive charges of built environments—space was not an inert stage but continually reproduced—that could be diverted by the '68 Movement and its narrators.

Before we turn to the '68 Movement's urban interventions, the dynamic between state and nation in Mexico at midcentury requires further theorization. Citizenship during the so-called Mexican Miracle was practiced not in terms of formal rights and responsibilities but as a conditional form of hospitality granted by the PRI. This hospitality vanished when citizens overstepped their boundaries as its guests. Chapter 4, "Gestures of Hospitality," returns to the Hotel de México, which tapped into the state's technological and social infrastructures and served as evidence of its apparent magnanimity. The hotel complex, which included Siqueiros's immersive mural *March of Humanity*, was promoted as a model for reconciling the interests of the state and capital as intellectuals increasingly questioned the PRI's revolutionary credentials. The collaboration between militant Siqueiros, a supporter of the '68 Movement, and the hotel's owner, a party loyalist, was narrated as a cosmic communion that should inspire (and placate) the nation. Completed in 1971, after the Tlatelolco Massacre, *March of Humanity* offered a very different narrative, articulating a critical yet accommodating notion of hospitality that echoed the '68 Movement's plural and open-ended vision of political life in Mexico.

The PRI may have approached its citizens as guests, with the Hotel de México as a monument to its hopes of managing Mexico City's flows, but the '68 Movement's praxis suggested that other routes and relations were possible, urban and sociopolitical. Chapter 5, "Satellites," considers the movement's spatial imagination, which was a function of its participants' vicarious social, political, and spatial positions in society. In the 1950s and '60s the state built new showplace campuses for UNAM and IPN at the edges of the city. These new campuses manifested a growing sense that youth's distinctiveness and vulnerability required official tutelage, treating them as satellites, at a distance but still tethered to the state. As current or future members of Mexico's middle classes, students were expected to passively consume culture and the city rather than attempt to shape it. The '68 Movement's marches and demonstrations point to a deep understanding of the city's new landscape as well as its participants' insurgent insistence to

hijack the city's new infrastructure as a form of visual, audio, and political self-representation, rejecting the PRI's corporatism.

Taking as a point of departure a car trip through Mexico City in the movie *Los caifanes* (1967, Juan Ibáñez), chapter 6, "Mobilization and Mediation," examines the media and representations mobilized by the '68 Movement, an extensive body that included innumerable graphics and several films, including four communiqués and the documentary *El grito* (1969). Printmaking, produced by art students in collaboration with faculty, served as an efficient means of counterinformation. Heterogeneous images and messages, borrowing from Mexico's historical Left as well as contemporary art currents, nimbly saturated the city using its bus system. Similarly, small film crews trained at the new UNAM film school and armed with lightweight cameras sought to disrupt Mexico City's Olympic representation while at the same time engaging the new cinemas of Europe and the Americas. Cineclubs and other unofficial, sometimes clandestine networks secured distribution. The '68 Movement created broad media fields that aimed to disrupt and disorient audiences and invite them to participate in their reimagining of the city and society.

Chapter 7, "Dwellings," returns to Tlatelolco. Nonoalco-Tlatelolco was the last in a cluster of housing projects designed by Pani for the state that materialized his patron's conditional hospitality, especially with regard to the controlled conviviality envisioned among its seventy thousand planned residents. Although built on ruins and promoted as a city apart from the city, Pani's design both wittingly and unwittingly drew from the informal housing he sought to displace, and residents would eventually restore traditional forms of everyday life as well as introduce new forms that challenged their host. Taking cues from the '68 Movement's spatial imagination and fellow narrators' phenomenological accounts, Poniatowska's *La noche de Tlatelolco* and Fons's *Rojos amanecer* reactivate Tlatelolco's palimpsest qualities established in the 1950s and '60s. The October 2 massacre revealed the violent and unjust structures that lay behind the complex's clean, modern surfaces. Their aim is not simply a defamiliarization of spectatorship but an ethical implication to bear witness regardless of geographic or temporal distance. However, these representations do not compel the audience to do anything else, as that space is for their own making.

HOTEL DE MÉXICO/HOTEL MEXICO

Construction delays prevented the Hotel de México from opening in time for the Olympics, and the owner eventually ran out of money. The fifty-

story concrete shell loomed over its low-slung neighborhood for three decades. It was a potent landmark in spite of—or, more likely, because of—its incomplete monumentality. Well into the mid-1970s, travel writers described the Hotel de México's fabulous amenities, expecting that they would be delivered at any time.⁵⁵ However, by the 1980s, a series of currency devaluations vanquished any belief in a so-called miraculous economy. Foreign journalists now visited the hotel to report on Mexico's not quite developed status. The architect hired to ensure that the shell did not collapse was interviewed for one article: "It's like watching a child grow up. One feels almost duty-bound. [But] this child should have left home by now."⁵⁶ Mexican writers were also drawn to the hotel. Adolescents in a Juan Villoro short story cruise by in their car and see a "monument to nothingness. . . . Maybe it was better that way, if the rooms came out looking like the lobby [then] the tackiness would have no limits."⁵⁷ More ambivalently Fabrizio Mejía Madrid saw "the tallest shell in the Americas, perpetually on the brink of collapsing or unveiling."⁵⁸

Rather than a monument to nothingness, the Hotel de México is a potent symbol, serving to orient citizens as they moved through a city that continued to be transformed by modernization schemes led by the state and business elites. In 1994 the hotel shell was finally retrofitted as the World Trade Center, heralding a new era: a post-NAFTA, neoliberal Mexico. Salinas de Gortari presided over the inauguration. However, by continuing to refer to the building as the Hotel de México rather than the WTC, residents of Mexico City invoke buried histories and also futures that did not come to pass. In doing so, they use spatial imaginations to judge Mexico's modernization and various transitions while also making a home within this uneven and uncertain terrain. They honor the memory of the '68 Movement and subsequent prodemocracy and social-justice movements in Mexico as recalcitrant yet contingent forces that continue to disrupt Hotel Mexico's conditional hospitality.

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