

Smith's introduction. Overall, *Mexican Soundings* is an important work and a much-deserved tribute to a worthy scholar.

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ALBERTO ULLOA BORNEMANN: *Surviving Mexico's Dirty War: A Political Prisoner's Memoir*. Edited and translated by Arthur Schmidt and Aurora Camacho de Schmidt. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007.

Ulloa Bornemann has given us a gift in his memoir documenting how he survived Mexico's dirty war in the 1960s and 1970s. His gift is a sensitive, personal, profoundly moving account that opens the doors on the brutality and violence of the Mexican state, the goals of left wing civil movements and the role that one man plays. Ulloa Bornemann's book follows the model of a testimonial or *testimonio* — a rich traditional literary trope in Latin America — but at the same time it is much more. The author has opened an important window to a painful period in Mexico's history, one that some would argue continues to the present given the persistence of civil unrest as well as the sustained and heavy handed response of the state.

Ulloa Bornemann's book comprises four chapters that follow his life as an adult, experiences in left wing movements, his imprisonment (that includes four years in various prisons) and finally, his freedom. The editor-translators Aurora Camacho de Schmidt and Arthur Schmidt contribute an important and useful introduction—*Translating Fear: A Mexican Narrative of Militancy, Horror, and Redemption*.

The introduction by Camacho de Schmidt and Schmidt is critical, particularly for the new student of Mexican history, Mexican politics, the politics of protest in Latin America and the testimonial as a literary trope. The authors use the introduction to review key events in Mexico's history, describe the dirty war and the use of terror, but also, and perhaps most importantly, to introduce Alberto Ulloa Bornemann.

Ulloa Bornemann's story fills the four chapters of the book. He begins not with his youth, nor with joining left wing movements, but with his capture and imprisonment. There is a quality in Ulloa Bornemann's description of these events that is profound. He is able to combine an absurd kind of humor with a sense of terror that truly communicates just how horrific the situation was. Writing about his capture on that first page of chapter one, Ulloa Bornemann states, "The car engine faltered, but I didn't want it to fail. That was the greatest absurdity of all, as if I were in a hurry to arrive at our destination [Campo Militar Número

Uno]!” and he continues, “The emptiness of the highway in the middle of the night made me shiver as I imagined the most terrible scenarios awaiting me at the hands of these unknown men transporting me in complete silence” (p. 19).

As Ulloa Bornemann continues, describing his experiences as a prisoner of the state, there are moments when I, as a reader, had to put the book down. I could not go on. The terror and pain, the torture and absurdity of the situation were almost too much to read. Yet, even in the darkest of passages, Ulloa Bornemann finds compassion; sometimes it is the voice of another prisoner sharing the terror of a future unknown, other times it is a radio broadcast and music overheard in the night.

The second chapter, “The Long March,” takes us out of the prison. Ulloa Bornemann uses the chapter to accomplish two goals, to describe left wing, often communist, movements in Mexico, and to give an account of his role in these movements. We meet many different individuals, leaders of various groups, friends and associates and we meet them in a way that is profoundly personal. While many in the movement including Che and Castro are celebrated, particularly early in the chapter, the author also tells us of the vanity and failure of movement leaders as well as his own disappointments as he travels to Cuba seeking answers, only to return to Mexico confused and in turmoil.

The third chapter, perhaps the most painful to read “The Kingdom of Necessity” continues the story of Ulloa Bornemann’s imprisonment in the 1970s. We read the author’s intensely emotional accounts of torture (his and others) and his movement into the country’s judicial system. The author’s description of life in Lecumberri prison is important for anyone with an interest in the criminal justice systems of Mexico and Latin America. Lecumberri, a Foucaultian nightmare of a place, becomes a home of sorts, one that Ulloa Bornemann survives yet one that claims friends and companions with madness, depression, torture and death.

The last chapter, “The Roads of Freedom,” documents Ulloa Bornemann’s journey from prison to life with his family. The shift to life after prison was not immediate, nor free of contradictions. Rather, Ulloa Bornemann writes eloquently about balancing family, friendships, pressures of leftwing movement leaders and his wife’s kidnapping, which all lead the author to describe this time as one that filled him with “pessimistic omens and crazy hopes” (p. 174). Yet, in the end, the family is reunited and even if freedom is “conditional” and the threat of re-internment looms, Ulloa Bornemann does begin again.

In the final pages of his book, Ulloa Bornemann writes:

The dictatorships of the left have socialized poverty, while their leaders amassed power and its privileges, suppressing—often brutally—the civil and human rights of millions of people. The

dictators of the right have done the same, but they have also brought death and destruction to other nations, or death, humiliation, and shame to their own people (p. 192).

Perhaps the most important gift is this: Ulloa Bornemann has used the story of his adult life and his experiences as a part of the movement and then a prisoner of the state, to capture the complexity of resistance as well as its cultural, personal and social costs.

For the student of Mexican history, those interested in civil unrest, state terror and testimonial literature, this is a critical addition. It is an important book and should find a large audience.

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JACINTO RODRÍGUEZ MURGUÍA: *La otra guerra secreta. Los archivos prohibidos de la prensa y el poder*. México: Debate, 2007.

Este libro es una historia de los mecanismos de propaganda y control informativo en México, sobre todo en los gobiernos de Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) y Luis Echeverría Álvarez (1970-1976). Entre las virtudes que lo hacen altamente recomendable está el uso exhaustivo de fuentes primarias del Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), especialmente los fondos de los órganos de inteligencia de la Secretaría de Gobernación en los momentos más álgidos del régimen autoritario mexicano: la Dirección Federal de Seguridad y la Dirección de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales. Los miles de documentos repasados dan nuevos elementos para entender mejor momentos de culto historiográfico en México como el cierre del periódico *Excélsior*, la expulsión de Arnaldo Orfila del Fondo de Cultura Económica, la cobertura mediática de la matanza de 1968 y el jueves de Corpus, las operaciones de la Liga 23 de Septiembre, etc.

Los documentos también dan luz sobre momentos de censura, autocensura y colusión con el gobierno autoritario de empresarios de la comunicación, distribuidores de cine, periodistas y editores. Sólo por mencionar algunos casos vale la pena subrayar los esfuerzos fallidos de Juan Grijalbo para publicar *Los diarios de la CIA*, la existencia de una nómina de periodistas y medios de comunicación “amigos” de Gobernación (que se transcribe en su totalidad), las tirantes relaciones de la presidencia con el dueño de Televisa Emilio Azcárraga o con las familias que controlaban diarios como *Novedades* o *El Heraldo*, las cruzadas gubernamentales contra la pornografía, la ridícula censura de películas que no promovían “la buenas costumbres”, etc. Pero no se queda ahí, porque