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La ciudad y el campo en la historia de México. Memoria de la VII Reunión de Historiadores Mexicanos y Norteamericanos. Papers presented at the VII Conference of Mexican and the United States Historians

Gisela von Wobeser y Ricardo Sánchez (editores)

México

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas

1999

956 p.

ISBN 968-36-2348-4 (tomo II)

ISBN 968-36-1865-0 (Obra completa)

Formato: PDF

Publicado en línea: 30 de noviembre de 2023

Disponible en:
http://www.historicas.unam.mx/publicaciones/publicadigital/libros/276-02/ciudad-campo.html

Anna Macías*

Rural and Urban Women in Revolutionary Yucatán, 1915-1923

During the Mexican revolutionary era governors Salvador Alvarado (1915-18) and Felipe Carrillo Puerto (1922-23) of Yucatán were among the few state executives to express an interest in women's rights, and to seek to improve women's status and engage them in activities, including political activities, outside the home. Most other revolutionary leaders, whether on the national, state, or local level, viewed Mexican women as either a non-revolutionary or anti-revolutionary force, to be included in programs for economic and social justice but excluded from public life. This chapter will examine the socio-economic conditions in the largely rural state of Yucatán on the eve of the Revolution, with particular reference to the situation of Yucatecan women in 1910. The heart of the essay is devoted to a discussion and analysis of the measures Alvarado and Carrillo took on behalf of women and whether these measures were relevant to rural and urban Yucatecas. I will seek to show that the two governors shared an urban-oriented point of view which took little account of the culture and values of women living in rural Yucatán, and also that in the period between 1915 and 1923 the radicalism of Alvarado and Carrillo appealed only to a handful of urban working and middle-class women of advanced views.

In 1910 the state of Yucatán had some 339,613 inhabitants, or little more than two percent of Mexico's total population of 15,160,369.[1] However, because of the state's virtual monopoly of the henequen used by wheat farmers the world over for binder twine, Yucatán accounted for considerably more of the country's total export revenues.[2] Henequen, the primary source of wealth for Yucatán by 1900, was produced by about a quarter of the state's total population, some 76,896 agricultural workers, most of them males and most of them living in virtual slavery as *peones acasillados* on the large henequen plantations.[3] What is often ignored by writers on Yucatán is the fact that the 1910 census also reported 99,058 domestic servants in Yucatán,[4] most of them women, many of them the spouses of the *peones acasillados*. Like their husbands, these women lived in conditions approaching slavery, subject to sexual as well as economic exploitation by the plantation owners, their overseers, and the field hands brought in from other states.[5]

There were also a large but indeterminate number of women employed as domestic servants in the urban areas. The 1910 census shows that about 25 percent of Yucatán's population was urban, living in seven towns with more than 4,000 inhabitants each. Mérida, the capital, contained much of this urban population, with 62,447 inhabitants. In contrast, the important nearby port of Progreso, from which much of the henequen was

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[1]David A. Franz, "Bullets and Bolshevists: A History of the Mexican Revolution and Reform in Yucatán, 1910-1924" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1973), p. 18; Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Secretaría de Industria y Comercio, Dirección General de Estadística, *Censo general de población, 1960: Resumen general* (Mexico City, 1962), p. xxii.

[2]For a thorough study of the preponderant role of henequen in Yucatán's economy, see Gilbert Joseph, *Revolution From Without: Yucatán, Mexico and the United States, 1880-1924* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 33-69.

[3]Franz, "Bullets and Bolshevists", p. 13. However, Gilbert Joseph gives higer figures and states that the northwestern henequen plantations had 80,216 *peones acasillados* in 1900. Some sources give figures as high as 120,000 to 125,000 peones in 1910. See Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, p. 27.

[4]Franz, "Bullets and Bolshevists", p. 13

[5]For the sexual explotation of rural Yucatecas, see John Kenneth Turner, *Barbarous Mexico* (Austin, 1969), pp. 12-13.

shipped abroad, had 5,500 inhabitants.[6] In 1915 a reporter for the newspaper Alvarado founded on his arrival in Mérida, *La Voz de Revolución*, calculated that before Alvarado's arrival middle and upper-class households in Mérida had employed up to twelve maids each, and that these maids had few hours of rest and recreation and were permitted to leave the house only to attend mass.[7]

Literacy was relatively high in Yucatán by Porfirian standards, the 1910 census reporting that 74,063 persons out of a total population of 339,613 (for an overall literacy rate of 21.8 percent) could read and write Spanish. This compared very favorably to another Maya-speaking region in southern Mexico, Chiapas, where only 1.5 percent of the state's total population of 436,800 persons were attending in school 1910. Yucatán's literate population was concentrated in the capital, where literacy ran as high as 56 percent, and in the towns. On the other hand, at least 85 percent of rural Yucatecans were illiterate. The vast majority of them spoke Maya only; this was particularly true of rural women.[8] Abused and overworked, physically and culturally isolated from the modernizing sector, the rural folk of Yucatán, whether male or female, were without champions until the Mexican Revolution erupted in 1910.

Between 1910 and 1915, however, little was done by revolutionary leaders to address the social and economic injustices suffered by the majority of Yucatecos during the Porfirian era. Two of Alvarado's revolutionary predecessors, Pino Suárez and Eleuterio Avila, advocated the establishment of rural schools for the henequen workers' children, the termination of debt peonage, and the establishment of a minimum wage (of 75 centavos a day) for agricultural workers. Both backed down, however, when faced with opposition by the henequen barons and the rest of the privileged population, whose prosperity rested on henequen production underwritten by low wages.[9]

Salvador Alvarado, the bourgeois revolutionary from northern Mexico, was able to effect some radical changes during his three years as governor because he was backed by a large force of Federal troops, was committed to social and economic justice, was given a free hand by the national leadership in Mexico City, and was aided by the high prices henequen fetched during World War I.[10] He did what Pino Suárez and Avila had been unable to do: between April 6 and May 25, 1916, he passed edicts which outlawed debt peonage, established minimum wages and maximum hours for rural and urban workers, and set up an obligatory system of rural education.[11] Alvarado also went beyond anything his predecessors or most revolutionary leaders in other Mexican states had even considered, by decreeing on April 23, 1916 "ley concediendo libertad a la servidumbre doméstica", which benefitted a large number of domestic servants working in plantation houses and in urban homes.[12] In addition, on July 14, 1915, Alvarado issued Decree #167, which reformed the existing civil code by permitting single women to leave the parental home at age 21, the same age as men.[13] This decree had little immediate impact on either rural or urban women, but it did begin the process of achieving female juridical equality which

[6]Franz, "Bullets and Bolshevists", p. 18.

[7]Editorial, "Los males de la revolución?", *La Voz de la Revolución* , 14 November 1915, p. 3.

[8]Franz, "Bullets and Bolshevists", p. 18. Even as late as 1957, when Shirley Carré carried out her doctoral research at a henequen hacienda only ten miles from Mérida, she found that the workers spoke to each other in Maya. Carré noted that most of the men and women could also speak Spanish, but that the women had less facility then the men in the language. Shirley Kilborn Deshon Carré, "Women's Position on a Yucatecan Henequen Hacienda" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1959), pp. 22 and 61.

[9]Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán* (Stanford, 1964), p. 257.

[10]For a recent analysis of Salvador Alvarado's role in Yucatán from 1915 to 1918 see Part II of Gilbert Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, pp. 93-182. See also Fernando Benítez, *Ki:El drama de un pueblo y de una planta* (Mexico City, 1956), pp. 95-119.

[11]For his own summary of his reforms see [Salvador Alvarado], *Breves apuntes de la administración del General Salvador Alvarado, como gobernador de Yucatán, con simple expresión de hechos y sus consecuencias* (Mérida, 1916). See also Antonio Bustillos Carrillo, *Yucatán al servicio de la patria y de la revolución* (Mexico City, 1959), pp. 159 and 167.

[12]*Ibid*., p. 159.

[13]"Reforma a un artículo del código civil", Decreto Número 167, 14 July 1915, in *Diario oficial del Gobierno Constitucionalista del Estado de Yucatán* (Mérida), 5 January 1916, pp. 74-76.

Alvarado, virtually alone among most revolutionary generals, fervently advocated.[14] Alvarado also sought to end the exploitation of prostitutes in Yucatán, which shocked the "gente decente" (the respectable element) who preferred to ignore what was a very serious social and health problem in the urban areas and in the henequen zone.[15]

It is one thing to issue bold, innovative, and sweeping edicts, quite another to translate them into reality. While many of Alvarado's reforms were eventually cancelled out by the post-war slump in henequen prices, it is interesting to note that in the late 1950s the anthropologist Shirley Carré found that, when speaking of the past, both the workers and the owner of an henequen plantation ten miles from Mérida referred to "the time of slavery" and "the time of freedom".[16] Carré states that "the event which marked off the two eras was Alvarado's entry into Mérida in 1915", and "his enforcement of laws prohibiting debt slavery, which put an end to whippings and discipline (la ley), obligatory unpaid labor or fagina, and long hours of work".[17]

However, while winning the gratitude of many for his energetic pursuance of economic and social justice for Yucatán's oppressed workers and peasants, Alvarado at the same time alienated large numbers of devout Yucatecos, urban and rural, male and female, Indian and ladino, by his fiercely anti-clerical policies. He exiled most of Yucatán's Catholic clergy, converted the churches into public schools, housed the Rural Schools Directorate in the Archbishop's Palace, and did nothing to prevent a mob of anti-clerical workers from storming the cathedral, burning the high altar and organ, and destroying many santos (images) long revered by the faithful of Mérida.[18] Since Alvarado brooked no opposition and was backed by an army of occupation, few Yucatecans were brave enough to protest his attacks on the Church, on the clergy, and on Church property. Gilbert Joseph, who states that Alvarado's anti-clericalism "never caught on among the deeply religious campesinado and lost him the respect of large segments of the urban elite and middle sectors", provides some interesting evidence that the reaction to his attack on religion was particularly strong among rural women.

> Counter-demonstrations, often instigated by the elite but made up in large part of campesinos and their wives, began to challenge Alvarado's anticlerical offensive. On 30 January 1916, for example, in the country town of Telchac, a crowd of 300, mostly irate campesinas, violently protested the local military commander's seizure of relics from the community church. Brandishing sticks and hoes, they blocked the road and forcibly unloaded the artifacts from a government mule train.[19]

In Mérida it was also women who demonstrated against the attack on the cathedral, and it was a female educator, Consuelo Zavala y Castillo, who courageously responded, at a Pedagogical Congress, to Alvarado's attacks on the Church. Señorita Zavala, director of a highly regarded private, lay normal school told the Governor to his face that his rabid anti-Catholicism frightened parents into removing their children from the public schools, thus defeating his purpose in expanding education in the State.[20]

While Alvarado made a forthright effort to end the misery, degradation, and exploitation suffered by the masses of men and women in the countryside and in the city, he alienated the very people he wished to help by disregarding the depth of their religious feeling. In addition, although Alvarado sought to help rural women through his revolution from above, he made no more effort to mobilize them than he did rural men. In his insightful study of Yucatán in the revolutionary era, Gilbert Joseph points out that while urban

[14] Alvarado's "feminist law", as Decree no. 167 was called, anticipated by eleven years the reform of the federal civil code.
[15] Salvador Alvardo, *La reconstrucción de México*, 2 vols. (Mexico City, 1919), vol.2, pp. 250-254.
[16] Carré, "Women's Position on a Yucatecan Henequen Hacienda," p. 29.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, p. 260.
[19] Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, p. 106.
[20] [Salvador Alvarado], *Speech of General Alvarado, Governor of the State of Yucatán, at the Closing Session of the Second Pedagogical Congress, held at Mérida* (n.p., [1916]), pp. 11-14.

workers were immediately organized into syndicates upon Alvarado's entry into Yucatán in March 1915, up to mid-1917 the general was reluctant to encourage "systematic union organization and strong mobilization in the countryside" for fear that "excessive politicking in the *campo* might interrupt the steady flow of henequen revenues that lent harmony to his revolutionary coalition".[21] Joseph gives another crucial reason for Alvarado's bias in favor of urban workers:

> an atheist who had come from modest urban beginnings, the general had a cultural affinity for the anti-clerical obrero (urban worker) that he could not hope to share with the often devout Indian campesino.[22]

This bias in favor of urban over rural mobilization was very marked with respect to women. Alvarado ignored rural women entirely when he called for a feminist congress to meet in Mérida in January 1916. The congress was planned at Mérida and recruited mostly school teachers from the capital and the provincial towns. All delegates had to have at least a grade school education, which effectively excluded most rural women as well as urban women of the working class.[23] The agenda Alvarado drew up for that historic congress also reveals his bias, for it was directed primarily to urban women who shared Alvarado's progressive ideas. First, he asked the organizing committee, made up of city school teachers, to call for papers which would suggest the best means of freeing women from the "yoke of tradition", meaning their supposed control by the Church. Second, he asked the participants to study the role the primary school should play in preparing women for life, hoping for an endorsement of the anti-clerical "rationalist" education he was promoting in the public schools. Alvarado wanted the delegates to discuss the kinds of skills and occupations which the state should support to prepare women for an "intense life of progress". Lastly, Alvarado wanted the delegates to discuss what public offices women could and should hold.[24]

Alvarado's insistence on the clerical domination of women, and his attempt to get the delegates to endorse the anti-religious ideas of the Spanish anarchist and pedagogue Francisco Ferrer y Guardia, won him little support from the urban, literate, ladino women attending the First Feminist Congress. With a few notable exceptions, it appears that the urban women who attended the congress agreed with rural Yucatecas that the government had no right to intervene in matters of religion or to promote atheism in the schools.[25]

The third item on Alvarado's agenda, concerning the skills and occupations which the state should support to incorporate women into the work force, was clearly directed to unskilled and unemployed lower and middle-class urban women. It was certainly irrelevant to rural women, whose skills, industry, and productiveness have been commented on from the time of Bishop Landa to the present day. For example, in 1931 Thomas Gann and J. Eric Thompson noted that in Yucatán the women

> are very industrious, rising usually at three or four o'clock in the morning to grind the corn for the day's supply of corn cake. During the day they prepare tobacco, and make cigarettes, gather cotton, which they spin, weave, and embroider for garments. They weave mats of palm leaf and baskets of liana, net hammocks from henequen fibre, and make coarse, domestic pottery ware and incense burners. In addition to these tasks, they look after the children, and do the usual domestic chores.[26]

[21] Joseph, *Revolution From Without,* pp. 109 and 114
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 109.
[23] Primer Congreso Feminista de Yucatán, *Anales de esa memorable asamblea* (Mérida, 1916), p. 40.
[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 93, 95-96, and 97.
[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78
[26] Thomas Gann and J. Eric Thompson, *The History of the Maya* (New York, 1931), p.229.

Gann and Thompson were probably referring to women living in free villages outside the henequen zone, but the anthropologist Shirley Carré, writing in 1959 of women's position on a Yucatecan henequen plantation, observed that

> the women... were virtually continuously busy throughout the day.... Any time free from household chores was usually turned to productive ends: gathering waste fibre or tow, caring for tomatoes, watermelon, beans and squash cultivations in the waste field, sewing and embroidering, making hammocks, and assisting men in the bush plots.[27]

Writing in the 1970s of the women of Chan Kom, Mary Elmendorf adds that it is also the business of women to fetch both the water and the firewood needed each day.[28] Alvarado, who spent three years in Yucatán and toured the state from time to time, could not have been oblivious to the economic productivity of rural Yucatecas, but he seems to have shared the bias of statistically-minded, market-oriented urban writers who insist that women not in the paid labor force are to be classified as "economically inactive".[29] Had Alvarado spent more time in the rural areas he might have noticed that what women (and men) needed there were farm-to-market roads, rural cooperatives, state promotion of indigenous arts and crafts, and instruction in hygiene, sanitation, and nutrition. Martín Luis Guzmán rightly observed of Alvarado that "at one and the same time he was clearsighted and obtuse; in one bound he could reach the intuition of the deepest truths while being unable to penetrate the surface of the simplest problems".[30]

The last item on Alvarado's agenda, concerning the public offices women could and should hold, was also directed to urban women. Anxious to modernize Mexico overnight --Guzmán shrewdly comments that "with every twenty words [Alvarado] outlined a plan which, if put into effect, would have changed the face of the earth"[31]-- the impatient general wanted to see women vote and run for public office at a time when neither Britain nor the United States had yet mandated universal female suffrage. Leaving aside the reality of age-old political authoritarianism in Mexico, Alvarado's proposal that women become actively involved in politics had no appeal for rural women, overburdened as they were with reproductive, childrearing, and economic functions. In 1934 Redfield noted that at Chan Kom "in all secular offices, and in all ritual functions that are public rather than domestic, it is the men who figure, and not the women. Offices in the local government are held only by men".[32] In 1940 in Dzitas Redfield found that "no one would seriously propose a woman for a public office".[33] Ten years later Redfield found that "there is as yet no place for any woman in the public and governmental affairs of the community", and this was still the case when Mary Elmendorf did her study of a group of nine Mayan women of Chan Kom in the 1970s.[34]

Alvarado's effort to interest urban women in public life received so little support at the First Feminist Congress of January, 1916 that he called for a second congress in November of the same year to address the question again. At the latter congress the 236 delegates approved female suffrage in municipal elections by a vote of 147 to 80, but only 30 delegates approved the resolution on the election of women to public office. As I observed elsewhere:

[27]Carré, "Women's Position on a Yucatecan Henequen Hacienda," p. 68.

[28]For an interesting account of the many economic activities of contemporary women in Chan Kom see Mary Elmendorf, *Nine Maya Women* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. 100-106; references to carrying wood and drawing water are on p. 106.

[29]For a recent example of this view, see John Holian, "The Fertility of Maya and Ladino Women," *Latin American Research Review*, 20 (1985), p. 92.

[30]Martín Luis Guzmán, *The Eagle and the Serpent*, trans. Harriet de Onís (Garden City, N.Y., 1965), p. 73.

[31]*Ibid.*

[32]Robert Redfield, *Chan Kom: A Maya Village* (Chicago, 1934), p. 69.

[33]Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatán* (Chicago, 1941), p. 175.

[34]Robert Redfield, *A Village That Chose Progress: Chan Kom Revisted* (Chicago, 1950), p. 135. Elmendorf, *Nine Maya Women*, makes no mention of the participation of women in governmental affairs in her analysis of data, pp. 98-125.

> ...until 1910 politics in Yucatán had been the preserve of the henequen kings. Between 1910 and 1915, "politics" consisted of conflict, bribery, electoral fraud, assassination attempts, and finally, military government. It was unreasonable to expect that Yucatecan women, just beginning to claim their rights as full human beings, would want to participate in the dangerous and unsettling game of politics.[35]

That politics was a dangerous and unsettling game was confirmed during the electoral campaign of 1917, conducted after the country adopted a new constitution in February of that year. Alvarado pushed his candidacy for the governorship in early 1917 and encouraged the formation of feminist clubs all over Yucatán to support his candidacy. However, the effort to enlist the political support of women was abandoned when Alvarado was constitutionally barred from running for office.[36] His successors in the Socialist Party Alvarado founded in Yucatán did not enlist the support of women, nor was it forthcoming, as the electoral campaign was marked by violence. Twenty persons were assassinated in that election, most of them frightened campesinos who refused to join the *ligas de resistencia*[37] which Alvarado's more radical political organizers, led by Felipe Carrillo Puerto, had formed in the countryside prior to the November 1917 elections.

Some interesting comparisons and contrasts can be made between Felipe Carrillo Puerto, a native of Motul, Yucatán, who became governor of the state in 1922, and his predecessor Alvarado, with respect to rural and urban women in Yucatán. Both viewed themselves as champions of women's rights, both wished to destroy the supposed alliance between women and the Church, and both wanted to see women take an active part in the political process. Carrillo Puerto, however, was no bourgeois revolutionary, but a socialist much more committed to radical reform, especially land reform, than Alvarado had ever been. With respect to women, Carrillo adopted radical ideas on "free love" and birth control which Alvarado never advocated either as governor of Yucatán or in his writings on women.[38]

Paradoxically, while Carrillo Puerto advocated ideas which either alienated or could have little relevance to rural women at that time (for example, the birth control measures available in the early 1920's were beyond the reach of Third World women), he nevertheless made a strenuous effort to mobilize rural as well as urban women into *ligas feministas*. He was assisted in the effort by his sister Elvia Carrillo Puerto, who devoted her life to women's rights. One critic observes that Carrillo's network of ligas de resistencia "was not a massive grass-roots mobilization in spontaneous response to his charismatic leadership, but rather a skillful reaccomodation by Socialist Party government of existing cacique power bases".[39] Similarly, the 45 ligas feministas established by March, 1923, which enrolled some 55,000 women in cities, towns, and villages in Yucatán, were not spontaneous associations of peasant and working class women, but rather organizations under the direct control of the Liga Feminista Rita Cetina Gutiérrez led by Doña Elvia. Just how effective these ligas were in reaching rural women is difficult to determine. Beyond a good deal of speechifying by Doña Elvia and her associates, evidence is lacking that much was done of a practical nature to help rural women.[40] A study of the anthropological literature on Yucatán from 1931 to the present suggests that the impact of the ligas feministas was ephemeral at best.[41] Even in the cities Elvia Carrillo's demand that the government establish child care centers and raise the wages of working women

[35] Anna Macías, *Against All Odds: The Feminist Movement in Mexico to 1940* (Westport, Conn., 1982), p. 78.

[36] In 1917-18 Carranza also vetoed any chance of Alvarado's election as governor of Yucatán; Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, p. 114.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

[38] See [Salvador Alvarado], *Informe que de su gestión como gobernador provisional del estado de Yucatán, rinde ante el H. Congreso del mismo, el ciudadano General Salvador Alvarado* (Mérida,1918), and his *La reconstrucción de México*, vol. 2, pp. 292-318.

[39] Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, p. 212.

[40] "Propaganda Feminista", *Tierra* (Organo de la Liga Central de Resistencia, Mérida), 19 August 1923, p. 4.

[41] The *ligas feministas* are not mentioned in any of the studies of rural Yucatán from Gann (1931) to Elmendorf (1976).

was turned down by her brother on the grounds that funds were lacking to support such just demands.[42]

Carrillo's anti-clericalism, his support for "rationalist" education, advocacy of "socialist" marriage and easy divorce, pushing for birth control, support of political rights for women, and insistence on the class struggle had little meaning for rural Indian women who still believe, as Nash found, that "adhering to the ways of the ancestors is the means of surviving as a people".[43] The Marxist Vicente Lombardo Toledano's remark in 1934 that "everywhere in Yucatán I searched for the legacy of Felipe Carillo and nowhere have I found it"[44] applies as much to women as to men. And more than 20 years after Lombardo's vain search for Carrillo's legacy in Yucatán the anthropologist Shirley Carré found that while hacienda workers living near Mérida remembered Alvarado gratefully for abolishing debt slavery, Felipe Carrillo's name "was associated with what the workers called 'the time of thieves', when households in the annexes of the hacienda withdrew to the central community and both owner and workers lost their cattle".[45]

Carrillo's radical ideas with respect to women's liberation received considerable attention at the First Feminist Congress of the Pan American League, held in May, 1923 in Mexico City. That congress was the first national and international feminist congress to be held in the Republic, and was directed by Elena Torres, a socialist-feminist educator with close political ties with Felipe Carrillo.[46] The Yucatecan delegation, led by Elvia Carrillo, made the Congress a media event.[47] Elena Torres was appalled at the attempt by Doña Elvia and her associates from Yucatán to dominate the Congress and ram through proposals concerning free love, divorce by the consent of only one of the partners, birth control, and other measures in the face of opposition from most of the other delegates, who resented being characterized as "mochas" (hypocritical pro-Church adherents) and bourgeois reactionaries.[48] While the Yucatecan delegation kept the First Feminist Congress of the Pan American League in an uproar during most of its sessions, the Mexican delegates in attendance learned some valuable lessons for the future. For example, the three women's conferences held in Mexico City and Guadalajara between 1931 and 1934 addressed themselves not just to middle-class feminist issues, but grappled with the problems of peasant and working-class women as well.[49]

There was one point on which the delegates at the May, 1923 congress agreed, and that was that Mexican women should be given the vote and should run for office, a significant step in the development of feminist consciousness in Mexico, It will be remembered that at the First and Second Feminist Congresses held at Mérida seven years before only a handful of women voted in favor of women holding office. In the elections held in November, 1923 Yucatán became the first state in the Republic to elect women to public office. Rosa Torres, a teacher who participated in the First Feminist Congress of 1916, was elected to the City Council while Elvia Carrillo and two other women were elected to represent Mérida in the state legislature.[50] The innovation did not last long, however, and after the brutal assassination in early January, 1924 of Felipe Carrillo and several of his

[42]Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, p. 219.
[43]June Nash, *In the Eyes of the Ancestors: Belief and Behavior in a Maya Community* (New Haven, 1970), p. xv.
[44]Quoted in Joseph, *Revolution From Without*, p. 288.
[45]Carré, "Women's Position on a Yucatecan Henequen Hacienda," p. 29.
[46]For material on Elena Torres, see Macías, *Against All Odds*, pp. 95-96. For details of the May, 1923 Congress see *Sección Mexicana de la Liga Pan-Americana para la elevación de la mujer* (Mexico City, 1923), and *Primer Congreso Feminista de la Liga Pan-Americana de Mujeres* (Mexico City, 1923).
[47]See the Mexico City dailies *El Universal*, 17-30 May 1923, and *El Demócrata*, 21-30 May 1923, for extensive coverage of the Congress.
[48]*El Universal*, 25 May 1923, section 2, p. 8.
[49]For an account of the First, Second, and Third Congresses of Women Workers and Peasants, see Macías, *Against All Odds*, pp. 127-137.
[50]*Tierra*, 18 November 1923, p. 27, and 2 December 1923, p. 7.

brothers and closest associates by his political enemies, the experiment in female participation in urban public life came to an abrupt end.[51]

One can conclude that Felipe Carrillo Puerto's initiatives on behalf of women, like those of Alvarado before him, were addressed primarily to urban socialist-feminists who shared their desire to remake a largely rural, monocultural state into a modern socialist utopia overnight. In 1940 the anthropologist Robert Redfield remarked that in Yucatán while the "experiment in militant feminism failed, in less sensational ways women's activities are expanding. Teaching is becoming primarily a woman's occupation; there is an increase of those employed as clerks, as stenographers and even as executives; and one pioneer has established herself in medicine".[52] Clearly the improvement in the status of urban Yucatecas was measurable by 1940, for which Alvarado and Carrillo deserve some credit. However, the anthropological literature on Yucatán since 1940 reveals that, for rural women, change for the better comes slowly indeed.[53]

[51] Bartolomé García Correa, *Como se hizo su campaña política* (Mérida, 1930), pp. 46-48.
[52] Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatán*, p. 175.
[53] On the matter of change for rural women, see Elmendorf, *Nine Mayan Women*, and also the very interesting recent study of Maya-speaking Guatemalan women by Laurel H. Bossen, *The Redivision of Labor: Women and Economic Choice in Four Guatemalan Communities* (Albany, N.Y., 1984), especially Chapter seven: "Sexual Stratification and Economic Change", pp. 301-320. For changes in urban Yucatán, see Margaret Ann Goodman, "The Effectiveness of the Mexican Revolution as an Agent of Change in the State of Yucatán, Mexico" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1970). Interesting for comparative purposes is Margaret Randall, *Women in Cuba: Twenty Years Later* (New York, 1981), Chapter two: "Peasant Women in a Changing Society."