

LSC # 102Action 4-9-92

COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

- (x) Professor Dr. Gail S. Sechrist Phone 357-2250
 (x) Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when? _____)
 (x) Proposal for one W-course (see instructions below)
 (x) Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses?

TYPE II. DEPARTMENTAL COURSE

- () Department Contact Person _____ Phone _____
 () Course Number/Title _____
 () Statement concerning departmental responsibility _____
 () Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

- () Professor(s) _____ Phone _____
 () Course Number/Title _____
 () Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

SIGNATURES:

Professor(s) Gail S. SechristDepartment Chairperson B. BeggsCollege Dean [Signature] 3/29/92Director of Liberal Studies [Signature]

COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

I. "Writing Summary"--one or two pages explaining how writing is used in the course. First, explain any distinctive characteristics of the content or students which would help the Liberal Studies Committee understand your summary. Second, list and explain the types of writing activities; be especially careful to explain (1) what each writing activity is intended to accomplish as well as the (2) amount of writing, (3) frequency and number of assignments, and (4) whether there are opportunities for revision. If the activity is to be graded, indicate (5) evaluation standards and (6) percentage contribution to the student's final grade.

II. Copy of the course syllabus.

III. Samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students.

Provide 12 copies to the Liberal Studies Committee.
 Please number all pages.

WRITING SUMMARY -- GE 230 Cultural Geography

GE 230 Cultural Geography is proposed for identification as a "W" course. The course is generally taught every semester, and most semesters there will be one writing intensive section and one non-writing intensive section. This Liberal Studies Elective course mainly attracts sophomores and juniors, although there are some seniors and a few freshmen. The majority of the class has had at least one other college geography course, but there are others for whom this is their first geography class ever. The students come from a variety of colleges, primarily those from education, human ecology, and humanities and social sciences (especially international studies). The class size is limited to 25. The course counts towards majors in geography and regional planning.

There are five types of writing used in this class:

1. **WRITING TO STIMULATE THOUGHT OR TO SUMMARIZE A POINT.** After listening to a lecture, reading an article, or viewing a video, students may be asked to summarize the main points or express an opinion about the material. These are usually collected and graded, although some are simply marked with checks that the student participated in the activity and recorded as a way to keep track of attendance. Some of these activities are done as group projects with the group handing in one written report. 50 points of 200 points devoted to essays, exercises, and papers.

2. **WRITING FOR EVALUATION.** There are two semester exams and a final exam. These contain a mixture of short identification, matching, and longer interpretive questions dealing with the major concepts. Students are given a study guide listing the items on the test about a week before the exam. In evaluating the answers, the writing is corrected but does not adversely affect the number of points awarded unless it is unclear what is meant. 325 points of a class total of 525 points.

3. **WRITING TO ENHANCE READING.** Students read a paperback, a set of articles from The New York Times and major geographical journals, and their textbook. The paperback is the basis for a five page essay that integrates the five themes of the textbook to the material discussed in the paperback. Students can also relate their own personal experience to the paperback. Instructions for the essay are attached. After the essay is evaluated, the students will be asked to reduce their essay to three pages. This will force them to evaluate which sections of their essay are most important and give them an opportunity to rewrite their paper. The articles relate to the various themes discussed in the course and are the basis for short one page essays. These are returned for rewriting if there are serious deficiencies; they are worth 5-10 points each. The text contains numerous maps and diagrams that include captions with questions that can be the basis for class discussion or short writing assignments. 100 points of 200 devoted to essays and papers.

4. **WRITING TO INTEGRATE LEARNING.** Students are asked to do additional research and reading on an area of the world where there is or has been ethnic fighting. This assignment reinforces one of the basic themes of the course and the textbook--cultural integration: How one aspect of culture influences other aspects of culture. The students are also asked to trace their own family's migration history and describe how the movement patterns

reflect the general migration patterns of immigrants to the U.S. and movements within the United States. These assignments are used as a basis for class discussions on ethnic diversity in the U.S. and in other cultural areas. 40 points of 200 devoted to essays and papers.

5. NOTE-TAKING. Outlines of the lectures are passed out to facilitate note taking and to indicate the important terms discussed in class. Note outlines are only examined if a student is having difficulty.

Evaluation: I am keeping a sheet for each student on which I record some of the general problems in their writing. The students are expected to improve these problems during the semester.

GE 230 Cultural Geography (Writing Intensive)
Course Syllabus Spring 1992

Dr. Gail S. Sechrist
Section 03
Office Leonard 16B

Phone: 357-3768
Office Hours: 2:15-4:15 MWF 10-11 TTH
Other hours by appointment

Catalog Description: Introduction to cultural geography, including population, settlement, historical, urban, and political geography, human relationships with the natural environment, and the literature and methods of cultural geography.

Course Objectives:

1. To increase student awareness and appreciation of the diversity of cultures that exist in our world.
2. To discover the geographer's perspective in the interpretation of human behavior on the landscape.
3. To generate an interest in the discipline of geography that will foster a desire for further, in-depth study.
4. To improve your ability to express yourself in the written format.

Required Books and Readings:

Textbook: Jordan, Terry and Lester Rowntree. The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography. 5th ed. New York: Harper Collins, 1990.

Supplemental Book:

Fitchen, Janet M. Endangered Spaces, Enduring Places: Change, Identity, and Survival in Rural America. Boulder: Westview, 1991.

Evaluation Methods and Exam Policies

1. The final grade based on 530 points will be determined as follows:
 - a. Semester Exams (200 points total) 38%
There will be two 100 point exams with short identification, map identification, and essay questions.
 - b. Exercises, Essays, & a Paper on Endangered Spaces (200 pts) 38%
Essays are accepted late (with points deducted), but must be turned in by the last day of classes. Some exercises will be done in class and may not be made up.
 - c. (Cumulative) Final Exam (125 points) 24%
2. Make-up exams will given if you are absent on the day of the exam.
It is your responsibility to contact me if you miss an exam. Except for extraordinary excuses, each student is only allowed one make-up per semester.
3. The scale is 90-80-70-60. I record your point scores. If needed, I curve by adding points to everyone's score.

Course Outline:

- I. The Nature of Cultural Geography
 - A. What is Geography and Basic Geographic Concepts
 - B. Organization of Geographical Studies
 - C. Themes in Cultural Geography
READ: Chapter 1 and Preview pp. 1-35

- II. People on the Land
 - A. Population Distribution and Terms
 - B. Population Migration
 - C. Environmental Influence on Population Distribution
 - D. Settlement Patterns

READ: Chapter 2 pp. 36-79

- III. The Agricultural World
 - A. Agricultural Regions and Diffusion
 - B. Agricultural Landscapes

READ: Chapter 3 pp. 80-120

- IV. Political Patterns
 - A. The Nation-State Concept & Its Diffusion
 - B. Organization of Countries
 - C. Political Landscapes

READ: Chapter 4 pp. 121-56

- V. The Babel of Languages
 - A. Classification and Distribution of Languages
 - B. Linguistic Diffusion
 - C. Language Universals, Language Change and Variation
 - D. Linguistic Ecology and Cultural Integration

READ: Chapter 5 pp. 157-88

- VI. Religious Realms
 - A. Patterns of Religion
 - B. What Questions Should Be Asked About Religions?
 - C. Religious Ecology

READ: Chapter 6 pp. 189-226

- VII. Folk Geography
 - A. Folk Culture Regions and Diffusion
 - B. Folk Ecology
 - C. Folk Architecture

READ: Chapter 7 pp. 121-56

- VIII. Popular Culture
 - A. Diffusion
 - B. Organization of Countries
 - C. Political Landscapes

READ: Chapter 4 pp. 121-56

- IX. Ethnic Geography
 - A. Ethnic Regions in North America
 - B. Cultural Diffusion and Ethnic Groups
 - C. Cultural Integration and Ethnicity

READ: Chapter 9 pp. 293-327

- X. The City in Time and Space
 - A. Evolution of Urban Landscapes
 - B. The Ecology of Urban Location
 - C. Cultural Integration and Models of the City

READ: Chapters 10 and 11 pp. 328-417

Sample Assignments

Each group of students discussed and answered * questions.

D. Definition of Population Rates and Measures

1. Population Density
 - a. Crude or arithmetic density # of people per unit area
 - b. Physiological density--# of people per unit area of arable (agricultural) land
 - * c. Identify a country or a region where physiological density would be a better indicator and explain why.
2. Birth Rate--the ratio of the # of live births during a year to the total population. Expressed as # of births per 1000.
 - a. rates of < 20 per 1000 Low US/Canada/Europe/Japan
 - b. rates of > 30 per 1000 High Most Developing states
 - c. rates between 20 and 30 per 1000 Transitional some smaller developing countries and China
 - * d. What other factors besides development status might influence the birth rate?
3. Fertility Rate--the ave. # of children a women will bear, if current birth rates remain constant.
 - a. This figure is more useful because it minimizes the effects of fluctuation in the population structure.
 - b. A total fertility rate of 2.1 is necessary to replace the present population (about 2 children replace parents).
 - * c. Where would you expect the rates at replacement or lower? Where would you expect the rates to be over 4?
4. Death Rate--a mortality index usually calculated as the number of deaths per 1000 people.
 - a. In general there is also a correlation between death rates and levels of economic development.
 - b. Like birth rates they are reflective of the age structure.
 - * c. Which countries do you think had high death rates in 1991?
 - * d. Why do you think that Mexico's rate is lower than the U.S.?
 - * e. Dramatic reductions in death rates have occurred since WWII, what do you think caused this?
5. Infant Mortality Rate--is the ratio of deaths of infants aged 1 year or less per 1000 live births.
 - a. It is another more useful measure because it minimizes the effects of fluctuation in the population structure.
 - b. A couple of hundred years ago, it was not uncommon for 200-300 infants per 1000 to die in their first year.
 - * c. What factors might cause the infant mortality rate to rise?
6. Natural Rate of Increase--birth rate minus the death rate expressed as a %. Migration figures are not included.

U.S. birth rate 1987	15.5	Mexico birth rate	31
death rate	8.7	death rate	7
	.68%		2.4%

 - a. A rate of 1% means that it would take 70 years for the population to double, while a growth rate of 2% means that it would take 35 years to double.
 - * b. On the map in Jordan, p. 47 identify a country in each category in the map legend.
 - * c. What do you think happens in areas where countries with very slow increase border areas with extremely high growth?
 - * d. On page 50 as a map comparing the # of women/100 males. What cultural factors might explain this pattern?

Family Migration Geographies
Cultural Geography
Due week of March 16

For this project you will write a 1-2 page paper describing and explaining your own family migration history; you may also want to map the migration patterns. To simplify the project, trace only one side of your family back three generations. Identify the persons only by relationship, such as mother, grandmother, or great-grandmother. Begin with your oldest relative and then describe the movements of their children. The object of this project is to not only determine where your ancestors have lived, but why they may have decided to migrate. See if you can find out what were the push and pull factors involved in the various migration decisions. How was information about the intended destination gathered? Did your family members experience any problems adjusting to their new social and cultural surroundings? Finally, do your family's movement patterns represent any of the regional, national, or international movements that have occurred in the past century? Integrate the information about push and pull, motives, adjustments, and larger migration patterns with your description of the movements.

PART I

Essay on Endangered Spaces. Enduring Places

In Endangered Spaces. Enduring Places: Change. Identity. and Survival in Rural America, Janet Fitchen discusses the changes occurring in rural New York. She has sections on changes in farming, shifting non-farm economies, changing rural populations, worsening rural poverty, provision of community services, challenges for local governments, and new uses for rural land. In your essay, which must be at least five typed pages, describe how the five themes used in this course relate to the changes in the cultural landscape of rural America. How have people's perceptions of rural areas been changing? Will "rural America" survive or will it be absorbed in an ever expanding "urban America"? What are the negative impacts on the environment of these changes? Evaluate these changes in terms of your own background, and what you would like to see happen in the future.

Your essay is due March 27; it will be worth 50 points.

PART II

Endangered Spaces. Enduring Places Part II

Take your edited essay on Endangered Spaces and reduce it to three typed pages. You will have to determine which portions of your essay can be eliminated and still preserve your main ideas. This assignment is realistic because you will find editors, bosses, and colleagues who will ask you to reduce your writing because they have limited space available for your article or report.

This part of the assignment is worth 25 points and is due in two weeks.

Language Law Stirs Pride and Anger in Moldavia

COPY 18

By CELESTINE BOHLEN

Special to The New York Times

KISHINEV, U.S.S.R. Oct. 4 — Luda Gryaznopolsky has lived in Moldavia all her life and never learned to speak the local language, Romanian. She did not have to, because for the last half-century, since the Soviet Union annexed the territory in 1940, the way to get around and get ahead in this tiny republic tucked along the border of Romania was to speak Russian.

Now, Mrs. Gryaznopolsky and nine of her coworkers at a local building materials factory are enrolled in an intensive course in Romanian.

Six days a week, three hours a day, the group laboriously works its way through a three-month program of Romanian language drills and ditties. The bill is paid by the factory, in compliance with a year-old law which requires that by 1995 almost all work be conducted in Romanian.

Minorities Feel Pressure

Although the transition is supposed to be gradual, Russians, Ukrainians and other non-Moldavian nationalities who now make up about 35 percent of the Soviet republic's four million people say they are already feeling pressure. Where Moldavians used to say they were mocked for speaking their language, now it is the other way around.

"Before, there was no demand to learn it," said Mrs. Gryaznopolsky, an ethnic Russian. "Now, we have to be able to communicate. It is our obligation."

In the last year, the tables have turned in Soviet Moldavia. Its new flag is an upside-down version of the Romanian tricolor, and its new holiday is Aug. 30, the date last year when Romanian again became the state language. The main boulevard in the capital is no longer named after Lenin, but after Stefan the Great, a 15th-century Moldavian prince. Even the clocks have changed, slipping behind Moscow one hour to join Bucharest's time zone.

These changes have caused resentment among some non-Moldavians, prompting attempts by some groups to secede from the republic. Eugenia Duca, who heads a language instruction cooperative owned by the governing Popular Front, said these political trends had caused fluctuations in the demands for Romanian language courses, peaking with the first burst of optimism about a year ago and now sinking to a new low. (See page 30, section)



Romanian influences are helping to spur Moldavia's cultural and religious revival.

president of Soviet Moldavia and Boris N. Yeltsin, the president of the Russian republic.

"We don't want to get out of the union," said the republic's Premier, Mircha Druk. "We want to get in, because we need the market."

The switch from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet — the first step in the restoration of the Romanian language — is almost complete. Street names, road signs and bus routes are now given in two languages, and two alphabets. But Mrs. Duca said problems still remained in the schools and in offices, where the bureaucracy has not been able to keep up with the demand for new books and documents.

Reviving Moldavian Culture

Contacts with Romania, which had been crippled and warped by Soviet attempts to justify its hold on the territory, are back on track. Travel across the border has become easier, with new crossing points expected to open soon. Mr. Druk said Soviet Moldavia would have its own republic offices at Soviet consulates in Bucharest and in Iasi, the capital of old Moldavia. Direct commercial flights between Bucharest and Kishinev are expected to start by early November.

The most important aid from Romania has been in putting the local culture back on its feet. This year, almost 2,000

Some minorities would rather secede than learn Romanian.

Moldavian students will study in Romania, courtesy of the Bucharest Government. Trucks with Romanian textbooks keep coming across the border: this week, 7,500 volumes were donated by the Metropolitan of the Eastern Orthodox church in Sibiu, with the promise of another 15,000 to follow.

In Romania, the role of neighboring Hungary in reviving the culture of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania has been a volatile issue, prompting protests from Bucharest over the unjustified interference of a foreign government in education and other spheres. Here in Soviet Moldavia, the influx of Romanian textbooks has prompted no such outcry, even though some of the history books coming in still contain eulogies to Nicolae Ceau-

sescu, the Romanian dictator who was executed during last December's revolution.

These historical distortions pose a problem, but according to Mrs. Duca, Romanian textbooks — which are used in classrooms at the initiative of individual teachers — are better than none at all, and certainly better than the old Soviet versions, which virtually ignored the history of Moldavia until it came under the Russian Empire in the early 19th century.

"It was not until I was at university that I even learned that there was such a person as Stefan the Great," Mrs. Duca said. "We had to learn all of our history on our own."

Contributions from Romania have helped spur a cultural and religious revival in the republic. According to Archpriest Petru Buduruz of Trinity Church in Kishinev, the number of churches now open for services in Moldavia has jumped from 193 to almost 800 in the last two years.

"No village feels it is a village until it has its own church," he said, noting that now the problem was finding the priests to run the churches.

Revising Ties With Moscow

The republic's new leadership, elected on the nationalist wave that has swept through many of the Soviet Union's outlying republics, has repeatedly disclaimed any plan to become part of Romania, as it was before 1940, when this region was the Romanian province of Bessarabia. Instead, they say, they want to forge new ties within a looser, confederated Soviet Union, pointing as an example to a trade contract signed recently between the

How are language and other aspects of culture integrated in Moldavia? What problems do you foresee for the future because of these changes?

The New York Times

10-7-90

Lagos Journal

Nigerian's Plan: Adopt the (250) Mother Tongues

By KENNETH B. NOBLE
Special to The New York Times

LAGOS, Nigeria — "What a lot of people call me here," Prof. Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa said proudly, "is the father of mother tongue."

Mr. Fafunwa, a 67-year-old Nigerian teacher and college administrator, has become a one-man movement fighting for the idea that children, especially in their early school years, should be taught mostly in their native language.

But in this former British colony where English is the official language and much of the intellectual elite is determinedly Anglophile, Mr. Fafunwa has until recently led an often lonely and seemingly quixotic crusade.

That, however, changed abruptly early last year when Mr. Fafunwa was named Nigeria's Minister of Education, in charge of Africa's biggest school system. Nigerian has about 18 million students, more than the entire populations of all but a handful of countries in the sub-Saharan region.

At the Top of the Agenda

And almost immediately, Mr. Fafunwa's ascent has put the mother-tongue campaign at the top of the nation's education agenda, and has perhaps inevitably been the catalyst for a growing debate about whether English should indeed be the nation's lingua franca.

"In Europe, in America, in Japan, the average child goes to school in the language that he grows up with, from primary all the way up to the university," Mr. Fafunwa said in a conversation in his modest book-lined office here.

"It is only those of us who are products of colonialism, whether in Asia or Africa, who are forced to go to school in a language different from our own."

The substance of Mr. Fafunwa's work is that because most Nigerian



The New York Times

Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, whose crusade to have Nigeria's schoolchildren taught in their mother tongues got a boost when he was named Minister of Education.

Already nearly 100,000 primary school students in Oyo, one of Nigeria's 21 states, are being taught mostly in Yoruba, one of three major indigenous languages.

children enter primary school with a very limited understanding of English, throwing them into a primarily English-speaking environment is at best confusing and stressful, and often traumatizing.

Put another way, while most European and American children are acquiring new skills during the early stages of their education, African students are struggling to master a foreign language. And by the end of sixth grade, Mr. Fafunwa says, the stage when nearly half of Nigeria's students quit school, they not only have difficulty reading and writing in English, but ultimately also in their mother tongue.

Textbooks Are Translated

In his new position, he has moved quickly to change that situation. Already, nearly 100,000 primary school students in Oyo, one of Nigeria's 21 states, are being taught mostly in Yoruba, one of the country's three major indigenous languages. And nine other states, with about two million students, are in various stages of adopting the mother-tongue program.

At the same time, the Government has embarked on an intensive effort to translate school textbooks now written in English into Yoruba, Hausa, Ibo, Nupe and other Nigerian languages.

The Nigerian state conducts no language census, but Mr. Fafunwa estimates that only about 20 million of this country's 100 million to 120 million people have a firm command of English.



Kenneth B. Noble/The New York Times

The notion of educating young students in their mother tongue is hardly new. During the heady days of independence 30 years ago, some nationalist leaders argued that while the colonial languages — primarily French, English and Portuguese — enabled Africans to communicate with the outside world, they did little to develop a sense of national unity. Many, in fact, envisioned that indigenous languages would be taught alongside the colonial tongues and would eventually replace them.

Raising a Thorny Issue

But almost nowhere has it happened that way. For one thing, said Dwayne Woods, an American political scientist doing research in West Africa, leaders soon found that trying to pick a national language "raised the thorny issue of which local dialect one chooses."

In Zaire, for instance, President Mobutu Sese Seko has preached at length of the need for Africans to be "authentic," Mr. Woods said, but he has not dared tried to promote an indigenous language as the official language for fear that doing so would anger other ethnic groups. "It would be a powder keg," Mr. Woods said.

Much the same is true of Nigeria, said Ray Ekpu, editor of Newswatch, a Lagos weekly magazine. "It's not purely a linguistic issue," he said. "It's also a question of political domination because each of Nigeria's three main ethnic groups wants its own language adopted as the lingua franca."

Without English, would learning in Nigeria be without tears?

"It's an ongoing debate," he added, "and a debate that will be difficult to resolve."

Strictly as Educational Issue

Mr. Fafunwa insists that all those complex political and cultural concerns, while intriguing, are ultimately besides the point. Mother tongue, he says, should be seen strictly as an educational issue.

"According to psychologists," he said, "the first 12 years of a child's education are most critical, and all I'm saying is that within those early years, he must be himself. And once he has a good grounding in the mother tongue and developed self-confidence in himself, then it will be easier for us to teach him English, Latin, German, or whatever."

In conversation, Mr. Fafunwa conceded that Nigeria's school system is not about to adopt mother tongue wholeheartedly as its main instruction mode; he suspects the notion is far too radical to be accepted by Nigeria's elite. Nonetheless, many here say they admire his tenacity and find his theories riveting.

"It has already bothered me on looking at a map of the world that, of all lands, only black Africa starts the child's education in a language other than his mother's," Tai Solarin, an influential educator and newspaper columnist, recently wrote.

At the same time, the mother tongue crusade has outraged much of Nigeria's establishment, who, noting this country's 250 languages, fear Mr. Fafunwa is creating a bureaucratic nightmare.

Against the Colonial Mentality

"The least luxury we can afford in the last decade of the 20th century," The Daily Times, a Government-controlled newspaper, said in a recent editorial, "is an idealistic experiment in linguistic nationalism which could cut our children off from the main current of human development."

Given Nigeria's enormous ethnic and cultural diversity, critics say, the Government's time and money would be better spent on forging a strong national identity, with English as its centerpiece.

Mr. Fafunwa, however, rejects the idea that teaching the mother tongue is destabilizing. "What we're battling here is the colonial mentality," he said. "The point is, we must be allowed to be ourselves."

Write a paragraph about whether you would support the teaching of native languages or the teaching of English and why.

The Dream of Land Dies Hard in Mexico

By TIM GOLDEN

Special to The New York Times

TELPANCIÑO, Mexico — For 74 years, the Mexican Constitution has promised land to any citizen who would work it. But there were a few catches: the land could not be rented, mortgaged or sold.

So when a Government functionary began telling local farmers here the other day how President Carlos Salinas de Gortari was going to change all that, the men might have been expected to applaud. They did not.

"What?" an older man bellowed over the din that rose in the ruins of a once-vast estate here, not far from where the peasant revolutionary Emiliano Zapata was killed in 1919. "Was the revolution worth nothing? What did

all of those people die for? There is nobody, not even the President of the republic, who can take away our land!"

There were a few shouts of "Viva Zapata!" as the official tried to point out that the proposed law would merely

allow peasants to rent or sell their plots or join with outside investors; it would not compel them to do so. But the confusion and mistrust was by no means unusual. Officials in Mexico City said they expected such explaining to continue around the country for months.

The tumult underscored how Mr. Salinas's plan to transform Mexican agriculture has quickly become the stiffest challenge of his quest to modernize the economy.

"This is touching the very heart of Mexican history of the last 70 years," said Luis Téllez, the Under Secretary of Agriculture who was a principal architect of the proposed laws. "It is

Continued on Page A10, Column 1

The New York Times
Nov. 22, 1991

Continued From Page A1

the point of no return."

The "agrarian reform" that most Mexicans knew had been a seemingly endless process, the basic tool by which the Government redistributed wealth in the countryside and asserted political control over it. But early in November with 2.5 million peasants still waiting for their plots, Mr. Salinas told the country what its leaders had realized for years: that there was no more land to hand out.

A Role for Foreigners

In addition to legalizing the sale of redistributed land, he also moved to permit large-scale agribusiness ventures, with foreigners free to participate.

While there is little doubt that the Congress, dominated by Mr. Salinas's Institutional Revolutionary Party, will approve his plan, the debate reinvigorated the country's floundering political left to the point that the President took the unusual step of inviting opposition parties to propose amendments to the new laws.

"The only thing that will happen is that those who can buy will reconstitute the big estates," said Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, the leftist leader whose father, President Lázaro Cárdenas, gave land to nearly a million peasants in the late 1930's. "Now, instead of the haciendas, it is going to be the great transnational corporations."

Mexican officials say the capitalization and modernization of agriculture are essential if Mexico is to compete successfully with the United States and Canada under the free trade agreement now being negotiated. But they do not doubt that the adjustment will be a wrenching one.

While farmers and their families now make up nearly a third of the country's 82 million people, they produce less than one-tenth of the gross national product and have collected less than 1 percent of the billions of dollars in foreign investment flowing into Mexico. The great majority of the 17 million Mexicans who, by World

Bank standards, live in extreme poverty live in the countryside. And within a decade or two, Mr. Téllez said in an interview, about half of the rural population will most likely be forced to move.

Many of the migrants, officials say, will settle in towns in the interior. Others will swell the already overcrowded and underserved cities. But despite the new jobs that a booming economy should create, critics wonder whether a third destination is not most likely.

"Where is the support system for those people?" asked Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, a political scientist. "It is on the northern border and in the United States."

Even the most passionate of advocates for the Mexican family farmer does not dispute the need for change in the country's system of community farms.

The ejidos, as both the communities and their lands are called, hark back to the land tenure of the Maya. Reconceived under the revolutionary Constitution of 1917, they have been carved from expropriated holdings until, under Mr. Salinas, they came to cover about half of the country's arable land. They may be worked communally or, far more often, as individual parcels, but can be transferred only from one generation to the next.

Divided among heirs, farms that were mandated to be at least 25 acres have typically shrunk to half that. Most lack irrigation, and with outside investment barred by law, their mechanization is usually a day's tractor rental at best. Under the weight of Mexico's huge foreign debt, credits to the ejidos nearly evaporated during the 1980's, while many private landowners stopped investing out of fear that land-starved peasants might invade their parcels in order to force the Government's hand.

Almost as a rule, ejido farmers must take on additional work to sustain their families. Some sell knickknacks or cut wood from outlying forests, and some pick vegetables in California or pack fish in Alaska. Thousands return to harvest their crops; others simply sell or rent their land illegally.

The system would have collapsed of its own inefficiency long ago, economists say, had the Government not heavily subsidized farm loans and grain prices. And despite paying about double world market prices for its peasants' corn, for example, only in the last two years has Mexico not had to import corn and beans.

Higher Subsidies Asked

In selling the new plan, the Government has essentially argued that "land and liberty" — the slogan of Zapata's revolt and the chorus of Government oratory for half a century — do not necessarily go together anymore.

By granting farmers the power to vote themselves titles to their land, officials contend, the Government will end its paternalistic control over the ejidos, undercut the power of the corrupt bosses who dominate many farms and free the farmers from the demands of Government banks that often condition loans on the planting of certain crops.

But critics of the plan are demanding that the Government raise rather than cut its subsidies. "The Government is backing away from its responsibility," said Ramón Danzón Palomino, the 79-year-old former Communist leader who is a sort of grand old man of the peasant left.

Far as such arguments might diverge from the mainstream of contemporary economic logic, some officials acknowledged that they might still be persuasive to millions of poor Mexicans.

"The worry," said a senior official who spoke on condition he not be identified, "is that you could have political unrest in the countryside at this stage, when we are negotiating a free-trade agreement with the United States."

After an initial flurry of leftist opposition to his bill, Mr. Salinas promised to soften the repayment terms on outstanding ejido loans and spend about \$3 billion next year on new credits, technology and infrastructure to strengthen the farm system.

Different Reactions

Like Mexican agriculture itself, the longer-term reception given the new law will almost certainly vary by region. In the north, where landholdings are larger and production agriculture is more established, farmers are expected to turn more quickly to the many potential investors whom Government officials say have shown interest. In the south, where plots are smaller, poorer and still disputed by thousands of peasants, the evolution will likely be much slower.

In visits to ejidos in the state of Morelos, just south of the capital, it was difficult to find a farmer even thinking about cashing in under the proposed laws. "As long as I have faith in God, I think I would not sell my land," said Clemente Torres, 40, who stood on one of the rutted dirt streets of San José de Pala. "It has always given me something to eat."

But the appearance of new crops in

the fields belie the outward resistance to change.

On the ejido of Miacatlan, Valente Mastache, 61 years old, was still smarting from the loss of \$670 he suffered when a Canadian company backed out of the pilot project under which he had abandoned his corn to grow Chinese vegetables. But keeping to his diversification, Mr. Mastache had sown peanuts and watermelons this year. And he did not rule out the possibility of another effort to grow oriental squash.

"We just have to make the contract a little bit better next time," he said.



The New York Times

A new land policy met confusion and mistrust in Telpancingo.

Write a one page essay on how the patterns of land division will be changed by the president's plan. How will it alter the lives of the peasants? What are the possible negative effects on the United States?