

## **MEXICO BY CAR. THE PANAMERICAN HIGHWAY AND ARCHITECTURE FOR TOURISM**

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### **Abstract:**

In 1936, the opening of the first section of the Pan American Highway –a project to connect American countries from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego in Argentina—marked a drastic change in tourism for Mexico. As tourists from the United States fell in love with car trips and began to venture beyond their Southern border, the Pan American Highway from Laredo to Mexico City and later to Acapulco became the preferred route for visitors from the North. In a brief period, tourist courts, service stations and restaurants popped up along the route to cater to the tastes and needs of the motorists.

Using postcards and guide books, this paper examines this architecture –which has largely disappeared due to changes in the route, the introduction of new toll roads that isolate the highway from its surroundings and the abandonment of car trips in favour of air travel--. The tourists of the forties and fifties –in contrast to the intellectuals, artists and writers who travelled in Mexico in the twenties and thirties—were interested in modern comforts, sightseeing, fishing, hunting and relaxing on beaches rather than in understanding local culture. The architecture that was produced to tend to these tourists concretized these conflicting desires using an imagery that was reminiscent of Hispanic California as well as of the rural architecture of Mexico. In the representation of Mexico through architecture for tourism –in particular, tourist courts and service stations—the desire to see Mexico as Hispanic (from without) and the cultural project of rescuing an image of local rural architecture (from within) coincided.

**Keywords:** hotel architecture, the architecture of service stations, postcards, travel guides

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Although highways are often considered infrastructure, and may be viewed simply as an efficient link between two different places, they are in essence much more complex and constitute places in their own right (Jackson, 1994:11). They create landscapes, reveal new perspectives and vistas and restructure territories as well as our perception of them. As they are used by motorists, the landscape is transformed with the introduction of new buildings

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that mark space and become recognizable landmarks, dividing the highway into distinct stretches between stopping places.

In the 1930s and 40s, motoring was more than just a means of transportation; it became a cultural phenomenon with wide-ranging impacts on culture and design from streamline deco to drive-in diners and movie theaters. The use of the automobile changed the way visitors experienced new places. The insulation of train travel with its fixed routes and rigid schedules ceded to the flexibility of car trips where travelers could freely explore places off the beaten track and enjoy a more direct experience of the places they visited.

The opening of the Pan American highway coincided with the height of the popularity of road trips in the United States. As automobiles became less expensive and more pervasive, the culture of car travel transformed the tourist landscape. Instead of staying in urban hotels with the traditional services, many automobile travelers were more interested in seeing how many miles they could travel a day and preferred to spend the night at lodgings on the highway that had amenities related to car travel, such as ample parking and services stations or garages for repairs. Restaurants offering American food appeared along the road and many tourist stops had shops offering Mexican handcrafts. The architecture engendered to respond to the needs of these new tourists melded the perspective of foreign visitors and proprietors of tourist courts and service stations with imagery promoted by the Mexican state as representative of the nation.

This paper reviews the architecture that appeared along the main tourist routes as testimony of a short period at the height of automobile tourism between the United States and Mexico with specific attention to the way the buildings catered to programmatic needs of visitors (particularly in relation to the automobile) and at the same time to the desire to experience the “real” Mexico.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Academic interest in modern highways and the architecture that populates them is relatively recent. Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Stephen Izenour's (1972) interest in the ordinary, specifically the landscape and buildings of Las Vegas, legitimated the topic for architects and was instrumental in sparking interest in the history of the everyday architecture of the highways in the United States. Margolies (1977) published a visually eloquent photo essay calling attention to the deterioration of roadside architecture and Belasco (1979) wrote a history of the architecture of highway lodging that traced its evolution from autocamps to motels documenting an architecture not traditionally studied by architectural historians.

A series of books by John Jakle in collaboration with Keith Sculle and Jefferson Rogers combined the perspective of geography and history in exploring the architecture of highways in the United States including gas stations (Jakle & Sculle, 1994), motels (Jakle, Sculle & Rogers, 1996) and fast food establishments (Jakle & Sculle, 1999). They also wrote a broad history of the culture of the automobile and highway travel (Jakle & Sculle, 2008). Liebs (1985) provides an overview of highway architecture, including not only hotels and gas

stations, but also drive-in movie theaters, supermarkets and other building types common to large thoroughfares. As a group, these texts have been instrumental not only in laying the foundation for the architectural history of little studied buildings, but also in the recognition of the value of the built heritage of highway tourism which has in turn led to conservation efforts.

The historiography of Mexican architecture during the decades after the Mexican Revolution has concentrated on the capital and other large cities (Ettinger, López & Mendoza 2013) as well as on the architecture of the state, primarily schools, hospitals and housing. Another topic prevalent in the literature for twentieth century Mexican architecture is related to style and the construction of national identity through architecture. Little work has been done on architecture for tourism; hotels appear in monographs on architects or in regional studies of the architecture, particularly of cities dedicated to tourism, such as Acapulco, however, the architectures of the highway have been largely overlooked.

### **3. SOURCES**

The sources used for the study of the roadside architecture of the late thirties and forties and fifties in Mexico include archival sources, specifically the collections of photographs of gas stations in the Archivo General de la Nación and the documentation in the Pemex historical archives. In the first repository, the collections of photographs by Enrique Díaz and the Mayo Brothers were particularly important since they allowed for an understanding of the evolution of gas stations in Mexico during the 1930s and 40s. The Pemex Historical Archives are only classified up to 1938; they contain documentation relevant for understanding the operation of gas stations and some plans for central Mexico. For understanding the highway service stations in particular, the *Pemex Travel Bulletin* was useful as were tourist guides and postcards, both novel sources for the historiography of architecture. These sources were also important in gathering information on lodging and other tourist amenities.

Postcards were often produced as advertisements; in the 1930s and 40s, through technical innovation and the appearance of the Real Photo postcard, images were easily reproduced by amateur photographers or the owners of the establishments. With postcard collecting in vogue, they became an ideal way of promoting businesses. In spite of the abundance of images produced through postcards, there are challenges to their use. First of all, they are rarely dated and the researcher has to use observation of the techniques and type of paper used or the postal seal as clues. Secondly, they are difficult to contextualize as one would a historical document. The intentions of the photographer are not always discernable, nor the immediate context of the images. At the same time, as images produced within the realm of tourist promotion, they may reveal a great deal about what was deemed representative by local photographers and what was of interest to foreigners. They served the purpose of presenting and representing Mexico and, when of architecture, they contain a dual discourse: one of the image and another of the architecture itself.

The production of guide books for Mexico took a turn in the late 30s in response to the growth in tourism by car. For example, Frances Toor who had previously published several

tourist guides wrote a new version for motorists. Terry's Guide, which had been published since the early twentieth century, included greater information about travel by automobile, and Tom Power, owner of Power's Café and Curio Shop, edited a highway guide. At the same time Pemex and the Mexican Automobile Association (AMA) also produced guides focused on motorists. The guidebooks not only give information about amenities in lodging, but also contain photographs that contribute to an understanding of their architecture. A review of these sources over time gives insight into the way the landscape of the highway changed over a few decades with the introduction of new buildings and services.

The study of images and descriptions provided the possibility of understanding typical schemes in the distribution of the building types studied, the usual architectural styles and embellishments used in facades and the decoration of interiors in a few instances.

#### **4. RESULTS**

The sources reviewed allowed for the identification of the main stops and tourist infrastructure along the highway, as well as changes over the first decades of its use. Although the information is patchy, there are two tendencies to be observed in the architecture studied: the adoption of the court model for lodgings and the promotion of a regional image on the part of Pemex for service stations.

The double role of the architecture for tourism to respond to programmatic needs related to travel by automobile and to respond to the conflicting desires of visitors who wished to enjoy the comforts of home (including American food) while at the same time having an "authentic" experience and seeing the "real" Mexico through traditional indigenous customs and communities (Berger & Wood, 2010: 10) became manifest in the architecture used which attempted to portray modernity and tradition simultaneously. The building types most represented in guidebooks, postcards and archives were those of services stations and lodging, with a limited amount of information on restaurants and shops with souvenirs and native crafts.

##### **4.1 Tourism and the highway**

The opening of the first stretch of the Pan-American Highway materialized ideas about continental unity. Although the idea of Pan Americanism dates from the early nineteenth century and the thinking of Simón Bolívar, it was revived in the early twentieth century with a distinct discourse of contrast between the Old and New Worlds and the richness of the indigenous past of Latin American countries. Pan Americanism was promoted through periodical meetings, professional organizations, international fairs and expositions and commercial associations. This transpired as there was a shift in the perception of the geographical nearness of Latin America to the United States associated with the project for the Pan American Highway (from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego) and the establishment of Pan-Am Airlines in 1927. The Good Neighbor Policy, announced by Franklin D. Roosevelt in his inaugural speech in 1933, strengthened relations between the United States and Latin America, in particular Mexico, through the establishment of the Office of Inter American Affairs which was active in promoting travel in the region.

From the late 1920s the Mexican government was interested in promoting a new image of Mexico abroad and in 1928 the first tourism commission was formed. A summer school opened at the UNAM in 1921 to promote knowledge of Mexican culture among foreigners with the participation of renowned Mexican intellectuals. Within the framework of Pan Americanism, Latin America and Mexico in particular, was promoted through films such as *Mexican Hayride* (a play turned into a movie in 1948 with Abbott and Costello) and *Holiday in Mexico* (1946)<sup>2</sup> which portrayed glamorous night life in Mexico City (Berger 2006:1-34). Mexico had the advantage of being close to the United States, and, at the same time, romantic and exotic and thus billed as "The Faraway Land Nearby".

In 1940 Franklin D. Roosevelt declared the Year of Inter American Travel and his Mexican counterpart, Lázaro Cárdenas declared the Biennial Turística; the expansion and consolidation of infrastructure for tourism became a national priority. The country invested in the construction of highways and service stations to attend the growing demands, as private entrepreneurs invested in other tourist services. These actions transformed the landscape of the highways

#### **4.2 Service stations**

In the early twentieth century, the provision of gasoline for automobiles in Mexico was under the control of several companies. Águila and Huasteca Petroleum were the two most important of these, the first a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell and the second of Standard Oil. In 1938, upon the expropriation of oil under the Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas, the control of gasoline and its sale came under the state oil company Pemex (Petróleos Mexicanos).

The evolution of the gas station from curbside pump (filling station) to a building and canopy over the pump area (gas station) and finally to a larger complex with mechanical and tourist amenities (service station) has been traced by Jakle and Sculle (1994) who also identified the role of oil companies in promoting brand recognition and territorial presence through design. For the case of Mexico both Águila and Huasteca were concerned with brand recognition through the use of color and logos on uniforms, vehicles and products, and the creation of an image of cleanliness and order. The design of gas stations followed general schemes common in other places. From the curbside pump it evolved into a small booth with a pump. Later solutions provided a roof from the office and supply area over the pumps. Soon lateral bays were added for service, since early automobiles required frequent lubrication and the adjustment of carburetors. A limited number of solutions appeared for corner lots or lots within a city block and, in urban areas, a great deal of attention was focused on architectural embellishments and landscaping. The individual design of stations appears to have been in the hands of architects who worked in private practice with franchisees as clients. Some of these architects have been identified; José Gómez Echevarría was particularly important in the design of early service stations in Mexico City, Jaime Sandoval in Michoacán.

The opening of the Pan American Highway coincided with a subtle shift in nationalistic architecture from the Neo-Colonial of the twenties that relied on Baroque motifs to an architecture that drew more on the imagery of small towns in Mexico. This change was

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<sup>2</sup> George Sidney (dir.), *Holiday in Mexico*, MGM, 1946. See discussion in D. Berger, 2006.

promoted by Lázaro Cárdenas del Río, governor of the state of Michoacán from 1928 to 1932 and President of Mexico from 1934 to 1940 and is evident in both public buildings and his private homes in Jiquilpan and Pátzcuaro, Michoacán (Jolly 2018). Images associated with the rural tradition in Mexican architecture such as whitewashed adobe, thick masonry walls, red tile roofs, iron grilles and rounded arches, appeared as the backdrop in Mexican cinema, circulated on postcards and were used in the promotion of tourism in the country. This imagery, although touted as essentially Mexican, was closely related to Hispanic regional themes and to the California Mission Revival Style, which in itself was ambiguous in its references to Mexico and to Spain.

Documentation on highway gas stations is sparse but an effort to use service station architecture as a representation of Mexico is clear in the 1940s; Cárdenas played a key role in the innovations as evidenced by the announcement of the opening of two “regional style” gas stations, one in Patzcuaro (on land owned by Cárdenas) and another in Jiquilpan (owned by his sister).<sup>3</sup> The announcement stated: “Beauty was the keyword in the design of these stations which reflect the architecture of the region” (Pemex 1940); the stations used “old designs native to Michoacán form the key to its unusual and attractive architecture” (Pemex 1941). The service station at Jiquilpan has been demolished, but the one in Pátzcuaro is still in use, although substantially changed. The architecture which was touted as regional relied on the trope of thick whitewashed walls, rounded arches, iron grilles and red tile on roofs and the same formula was applied along the Pan American Highway, making it more national than regional. (Fig. 1.)

In general, the layout of the stations included a central office with a roof that extended over the pumps. On one or both sides of the office bays extended to house a service area (lubrication) on one side and a restaurant or tourist services on the other. In some cases, the service stations were associated with established restaurants, curio stores or tourist courts. Such is the case of Power’s Café in Sabinas which existed before the service station attached to it was opened.

In Jacala the American businessman, Tom Simpson, ran a gas station, restaurant and “tropical hotel with its thatched roof and openwork walls” (Goolsby 1936:82). In the same town, in 1941 Pemex announced the opening of its first “resort service station” in Jacala, Hidalgo: “Pemex is soon to inaugurate what uniquely will be the first ‘resort service station’ in America now under construction at Jacala, an important point in the mountains on the Pan American Highway to Mexico City” (Pemex, 1941). Photographs of the station show the typical structure described for highway service stations with a central building and lateral bays in the “regional” style. To one side there is a sign alluding to the location of Pemex tourist courts; in the late 1940s they had only 4 rooms (AAA 1950:59). Thus, the stations went beyond the function of providing gasoline and lubricants to motorists and evolved into tourist stops that offered a variety of services. (Fig. 2.)

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<sup>3</sup> The service station in Pátzcuaro is located between Quinta Eréndira, Cárdenas’s residence) and other land owned by Cárdenas. The first announcement to appear in *Pemex Travel Club Bulletin* erroneously referred to Uruapan instead of Jiquilpan; the error was corrected in the description of the inauguration. See *Pemex Travel Club Bulletin*, Vol. II, No. 115-A (December 1940) and Vol. III No. 118-A (March-April 1941)

As tourist stops, the function of representing Mexico through architecture and artistic embellishments came to the forefront. Some stations included crafts shops and in at least two cases, murals. In Patzcuaro<sup>4</sup> a large mural that completely covers four walls of what presumably would have been either a restaurant or a store as part of the station refers to local history. On one wall, there is a representation of Lake Pátzcuaro and its islands; the other three are dedicated to Tarascan history. (Fig. 3.) Advertisements for Dobb's Service Station at Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo mentioned a "typical hand-painted Indian" mural in the dining room of the service station restaurant. Other common embellishments included the use of painted tiles and fountains.

The codification of the Mexico in the architecture of service stations was particularly prominent along the Pan American route; it was also present on the branches, such as the Mexico City-Guadalajara-Nogales route. It was applied not only to new gas stations, but also in the remodeling of modern gas stations in order to give them a "regional" makeover, such as in the case of Taxco, Guerrero where the well-known Mexican architect Augusto Pérez Palacios re-designed stations "in accordance with regional architecture." Once again, the regional was actually a codification of Mexican architecture as described above.

The highway service station was much more than a gas station. It was a recognized landmark on the highway that was advertised in tour guides. For example, Dobb's service station at Ixmiquilpan was "not to be missed". "With an excellent restaurant and a curio shop handling a well chosen line of the arts and handicraft of the region, [it is] an oasis in an otherwise somewhat drab section of road (Goolsby 1936:86). Service stations offered not only gasoline and mechanical services, but also tourist information. They were places where motorists convened and shared information, places where English was spoken and a good meal with American food could be had. It is surprising to see, in the early period of the Pan American Highway, an important presence of foreign owned or run businesses, even Pemex service stations. Proprietors and managers knew what their visitors were looking for, as did Pemex, and provided buildings that guaranteed modern services and cleanliness, but with a façade that alluded to Mexico.

### **4.3 Lodging**

The revision of tourist information provides a fairly clear picture of the prevalence of lodgings in the form of tourist courts for motorists along the Pan American route and their distribution. Additionally, guide books reveal that it was common for them to be run by foreigners, often Americans, and this was advertised as a guarantee of good, or at least, familiar service. One advertisement mentioned the name of its Mexican manager along with the information that he had studied in Texas.

The history of highway lodging (Belasco, Jakle, Lieb) shows a clear evolution in the United States from free auto-camps, to municipal auto-camps, to private enterprises that developed from the motor or tourist court popular in the thirties, to the motel and later chain motel. For Mexico, there was no such evolution, but rather the importation of the motor court model even though it was referred to in guide books under different names.

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<sup>4</sup> On a branch of the Pan American Highway between Mexico City and Guadalajara.

Notwithstanding the variations in name (tourist camp, tourist court, motor court), most lodgings on Mexican highways in the thirties and forties conformed to the typical layout of tourist courts in the United States. They were located on the outskirts of cities on large plots of land and generally enclosed. It was common for courts to be established in the environs of service stations or restaurants. They differed from urban hotels in that they did not usually offer full hotel services such as a restaurant, lobby, bellhops and concierge. What they did offer was inexpensive lodgings with facilities for motorists: a place to park and usually a nearby garage that offered mechanical services.

Rooms or small apartments were organized around a central garden or parking lot. Advertisements emphasized clean rooms, quality mattresses and American food as well as English speaking proprietors. This speaks to the type of tourist prevalent in the thirties and forties who did not speak Spanish and looked for comfort and American amenities and food during their stay in Mexico.

A comparison of the lodgings offered in guidebooks between 1933 and 1947 reveals the appearance of tourist courts after the opening of the Pan American Highway. Anita Brenner makes no mention of lodgings of this type in 1932, a few are listed by Frances Toor in 1936 and by 1947 they were prevalent in Terry's Guide to Mexico.

Monterrey was usually the first overnight stop for travelers planning a three day trip from Laredo to Mexico City and, on the outskirts of the city, there were two important tourist courts: Regina Courts and California Courts, sometimes referred to as California Apartments, as well as La Silla Courts and Monterrey Courts. Postcard images of California Courts complex show rows of apartments—each with a parking space—with arched entryways and bougainvillea plants set in an immense landscaped area. (Fig. 4.)

Going south from Monterrey, there was the option of Huizache Courts in Saltillo, and Victoria Courts in Ciudad Victoria, both in the state of Coahuila. A postcard image of Huizache Courts shows a building with a typical layout around a central carpark and garden. The architecture alludes to Mexico through the imagery of tile, arches and grilles. Goolsby stated: "The Huizache Courts, as uptodate as you will find in your travels, are adjacent to the new school building. These attractive courts are American-owned and operated and have in connection a dining room with unsurpassed cuisine" (Goolsby 1936:38). Victoria courts was described as "one of the most modern of the recently erected tourist courts that are now making travel on the Pan American Highway more pleasant and more economical" (Goolsby 1936:54). (Fig. 5.)

Around the halfway mark between Monterrey and Mexico City, the city of Valles was a popular stop for motorists; apparently its only attraction was the large number of options in hotels and courts. Two full service hotels—Hotel Valles (60 rooms) and Hotel Casa Grande (50 rooms)—were on the main highway and were designed in the fashion of tourist courts with a central parking lot and garden. Both had stone facades, tile roofs and arched entries. Additional often recommended options included Colonial Courts, Palma Courts and Erik's Courts. (Fig. 6.)



Another very popular place to spend the night (or a few days) was Tamazunchale, known by Americans as "Thomas and Charley". Located where the Moctezuma and Amajac Rivers converge, it offered the visitor the opportunity for fishing and hunting. In the rainy season it was common for motorists to be stranded on one side or the other of the river which undoubtedly was a factor in the emergence of lodging in the town. In many guide books it was recommended as the last stop before the ascent into Mexico City, a curvy and dangerous stretch of the highway with breathtaking vistas, but prone to fog. Goolsby wrote: "When you leave Tamazunchale you are about to shake hands with adventure (Goolsby 1936:76). Águila established an early rather rustic Auto Camp which later became the Pemex Auto Camp (Fig. 7.) and a large number of courts appeared in a short period time. These include El Patio Courts, (Fig. 8.) El Sol Courts, Texas Courts, Gandy Courts and D.Z. Courts (run by a German immigrant and his wife). There was also Hotel Rogers run by an American.

Two basic schemes are discernable in the tourist courts along the highway: rows of rooms or apartments with covered parking for automobiles in between them or rooms or apartments arranged around a large open space either landscaped or used for parking or both. (Fig. 9.)

Although in Mexico City large urban hotels continued to be the main accommodations, tourist courts were present as an option for those travelling by car or pulling a trailer. Shirley's Courts was probably the best known of the options with apartments set around a central landscaped area with parking and a restaurant and garage. Guidebooks mention Casa Rul Courts and trailer park, Los Angeles Courts in the Colonia del Valle, Aztec Tourist Camp and Trailer Park, L'Escargot Courts and Royal Courts, although images have not been located for these. (Fig. 10.) The Garden Apartments, were billed as a hotel, but advertised a locked private garage for each unit, illustrating the importance attached to serve those travelling by car.

#### **4.4. Restaurants and curio shops**

Other tourist services appeared along the highway in the years after its opening, among them restaurants and stores with Mexican crafts, then often referred to as "curios". The location of these businesses was related to typical itineraries for two or three-day trips to Mexico City. For example, Tom Power's Café, located in Sabinas, halfway between Laredo and Monterrey, was advertised as the perfect place for lunch since you would arrive at lunch time if you departed from Laredo in the morning. Turner's Restaurant in Ciudad Victoria was also at an ideal distance from Monterrey to make it a logical lunch stop for those who had left Monterrey early on their sojourn south.

There is little information about these places, but a few postcard images show Mexican themed interiors. Simple wooden chairs, tiled surfaces and the use of traditional construction, in several cases, such as wooden beams and thatched roofs, particularly in the tropical region of the Huasteca.

Garages offering mechanical services were common along the route since in the 30s and 40s automobiles required frequent lubrication and carburetors had to be adjusted for changes in altitude. Kelly's garage in Monterrey, run by an Irish proprietor in the environs of

central hotels, was recommended (Goolsby 1936:24); most garages were part of the service stations.

In contrast to the highway landscape of the United States, along the Pan American highway restaurants did not use fast-food thematic architecture to attract passersby, although in Monterrey, a place that served suppers –El Merendero del Charro—had a large sombrero as a roof. The sombrero and the sarape were frequently used to attract attention to curio shops, but the visual competition between restaurants and gas stations common on routes in the United States were not to be found in Mexico.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

The study of the architecture of the highway, in particular of gas stations and lodging, reveal the emergence in a short period of time of new building types in Mexico: the tourist court designed for motorists and the service station designed specifically for international tourism. Both types emerged in the intersecting between the needs and desires of international, generally American, visitors to Mexico and the intentions of the Mexican government in fomenting tourism, using architecture both to solve programmatic needs and as a representation of the country.

The number of foreigners involved in providing tourist services is surprising. Although there may be a bias in the information considering that the guide books used as sources were primarily written by and directed to an English-speaking population, the recurrence in advertisements of foreigners as proprietors or managers is surprising. In the same tone, the insistence on the availability of American food, “Simmons” beds and English-speaking attendants speaks to the type of tourist who travelled by car to the country in the late 30s and 40s. It was a tourist who wanted to see Mexico but with the assurance of American comforts and food. This was not to say there was no expressed interest in seeing the “real” Mexico; this desire was expressed and many opportunities for visiting towns “off the beaten track” were offered in the guidebooks.

Yet, it would appear most tourists were content with finding the Mexico they had imagined. Berger and Wood (2010:4) mentioned the “¿inconvenient’ presence of local residents who do not fit a preconceived semiotic frame.” The contradicting desires to travel with modern comforts and to see “the real Mexico” could be satisfied through modern buildings that somehow looked Mexican and through staging, a common recourse in advertisements for curio shops and tourist attractions.

In this intersection, architecture was able to play a role; the service stations were designed as part of state sponsored image of Mexico that relied on vague references to Hispanic architecture and to small towns in Mexico and at the same time, services developed by private entrepreneurs tended to rely on references to local architecture to convey a sense of place.

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## Figures

**Figure 1.** Dobb's Gas Station at Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo, Mexico.



Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 2.** "Resort" service station at Jacala, Hidalgo, Mexico.



Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 3.** Fragment of mural painting at Pemex station in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, México.



Source: Photography by author.

**Figure 4.** California Courts in Monterrey, Nuevo León, México.



Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 5.** Postcard image of Huizache Courts in Saltillo, Coahuila.



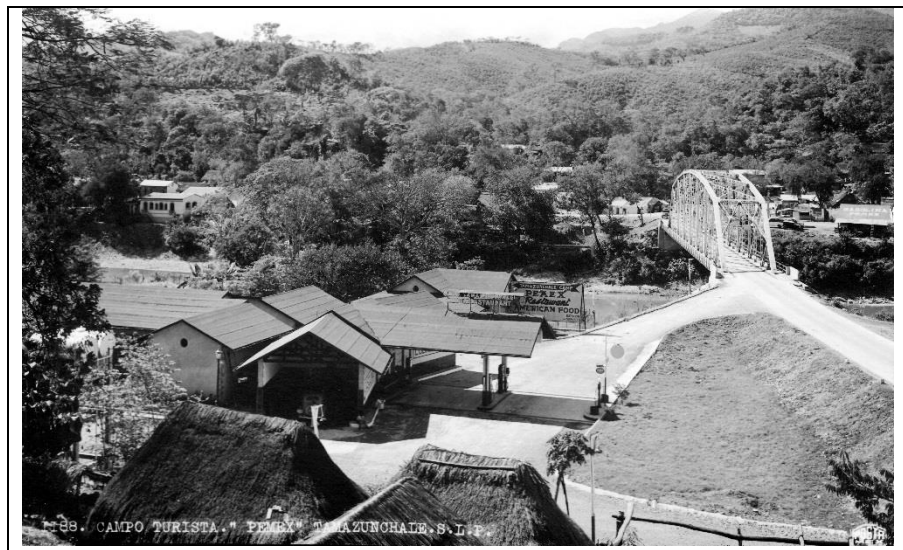
Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 6.** View of entrance into the central court of Hotel Casa Grande in Ciudad Valles, San Luis Potosí.



Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 7.** Pemex Tourist Camp at the river in Tamazunchale, San Luis Potosí.



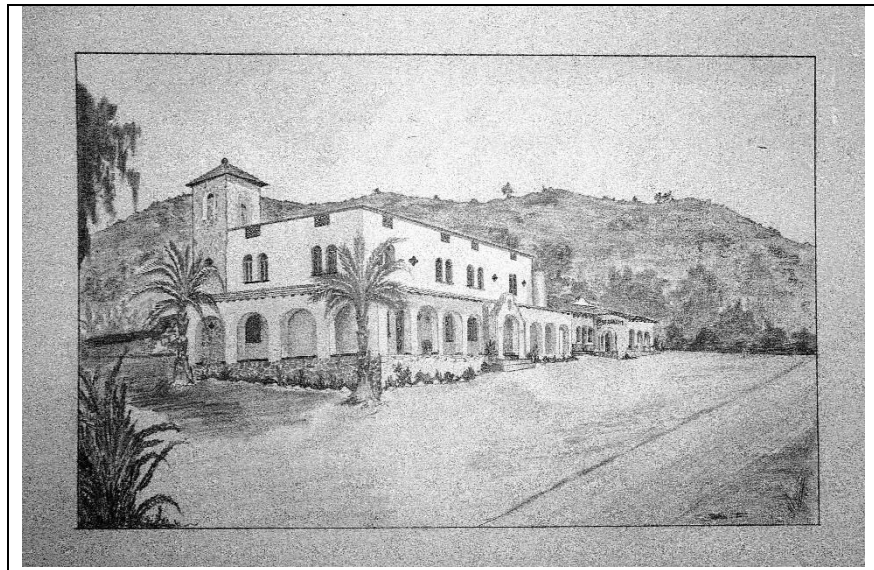
Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 8.** D. Z. Courts in Tamazunchale, San Luis Potosí.



Source: Author's postcard collection

**Figure 9.** Perspective drawing of Patio Courts in Tamazunchale, Mexico.



Source: Personal Archives. Jaime Sandoval. Morelia, Mexico