



# MACLAS

*LATIN AMERICAN ESSAYS*

Volume XXI

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# **LATIN AMERICAN ESSAYS**

## **MACLAS**

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## **Managing Editor's Preface**

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**This volume of *Latin American Essays* is dedicated posthumously to Dr. Christina Bolke Turner, Associate Professor of Anthropology of Virginia Commonwealth University's School of World Studies and Fullbright Scholar, who passed away on January 13, 2008. Dr. Turner's many years of dedicated service to the Middle Atlantic Council of Latin American Studies include a recent term as Managing Editor of the journal from 2003-2006. Her professional work, which was marked by an abiding dedication to scholarship, a firm commitment to MACLAS, and a steadfast devotion to the journal, will continue to serve as a model for both colleagues and students.**

## **BOLIVIAN ECONOMIC POLICIES: AN ASSESSMENT**

**Eufrenio Carreño Román**  
**Kean University**

The Sánchez de Lozada administration's plan to export Bolivian natural gas using a Chilean port ignited a bloody social unrest which resulted in the resignations of two presidents, thus ending the neoliberal period that had begun in August 1985. Bolivians elected Evo Morales, the candidate of *Movimiento hacia el Socialismo* (MAS). Mr. Morales, an indigenous Aymara, won the election with 54% of the popular vote in December of 2005. This paper argues that the Morales administration's Decrees of nationalizations and land redistribution are indications of return to the interventionist statism. Part II presents a succinct narrative of the experience of some productive industries and land reform. Part III presents an assessment of the policies of the Morales administration during its first year in power followed by our Conclusions.

### **II**

This part presents a brief description of Bolivia's recurrent experience between the interventionist State and the free market neoliberal policies during the last 60 years. Bolivia is a country endowed with a diverse geography and abundant natural resources. This paper will restrict its focus to the Bolivian industries of hydrocarbons, mining, agriculture and manufacturing which use natural resources for production.<sup>1</sup>

Hydrocarbons are an industry that uses natural resources such as natural gas and oil. Oil was explored and found in the Southeast part of Bolivia in the mid-1920's. After a war with Paraguay in the 1930's, all concessions and rights granted by a liberal government to foreign firms were cancelled. The interventionist statism period started in 1952 under the aegis of the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR). Oil production was stimulated with the Oil Code of 1956, which allowed foreign private firms to enter the industry and search for new oil. By 1965, the search yielded several oil fields such as Caranda, Colpa and Santa Cruz, hence, oil production increased. Bolivian Gulf Oil, a foreign owned firm, became a major oil exporter and was nationalized in 1969. *Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos* (YPFB), an existing State Owned Enterprise (SOE), took over Gulf Oil and enlarged its scope of operations. YPFB operated as a vertically integrated monopoly. By the 1980's the production of hydrocarbons had decreased.

The neoliberal period started in August 1985. Government intended to stimulate production of hydrocarbons by relying in the market forces. YPFB was broken into Chaco, Andina, and privatized during 1996-1997. A Hydrocarbon Code was enacted by the Congress in 1995. This Code provided incentives to attract foreign firms to enter the industry to invest, explore, and exploit oil and natural gas; consequently, several firms such as Chevron, Texaco, Exxon, Petrobras, Repsol, British Petroleum, Total and Enron entered the industry. These firms found considerable amount of natural gas.<sup>2</sup> By 2003, the oil reserves were 859 million barrels and natural gas reserves in the Bolivian Southeast stood at 48.7 trillion cubic feet (TCF), thus making Bolivian gas reserves the second largest in Latin America.<sup>3</sup>

This is the natural gas that the Sánchez de Lozada government intended to export via a Chilean port (Platillos). The plan was to build a pipeline to the Pacific coast where the Bolivian natural gas would be processed and liquefied for shipment to Mexico and The United States.<sup>4</sup> This attempted policy ignited a bloody social unrest that caused the resignation of Sánchez de Lozada who presided an Administration that had come to power with 22% of the popular vote.<sup>5</sup> When Sánchez de Lozada resigned, his Vice President, Carlos Mesa, became the President and faced a popular demand of nationalization of the natural gas industry. Mesa put the issue of nationalization to a referendum in 2004.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, Congress passed a bill that increased taxes on the profits earned by foreign firms in the extraction of hydrocarbons from 18% to 32%. Because Mesa had failed to sign or veto the bill during the legal period allowed by the Constitution, the president of the Senate, Hormando Vaca Díez, signed it and became a law on May 17, 2005. The new law 3058 alongside the Supreme Decree 28701 of May 1st, 2006, returned the legal ownership of all hydrocarbons and natural resources back to the State.<sup>7</sup> The Decree also restored YPFB as a vertical monopoly. The foreign firms were instructed to renegotiate their contracts with YPFB if they were to decide to stay in the country and operate as minority. YPFB, on behalf of the State, would acquire 51% of the stake of the foreign firms.<sup>8</sup> The Morales administration's plan calls for the development of petrochemical industry to use domestic inputs and maximize the value added.<sup>9</sup>

Mining is another industry that uses natural resources. The mining industry has been extracting minerals since the colonial times, which gave rise to spurts of economic growth. When silver was found and mined in Potosí, it became the engine that gave rise to an economic expansion in that region. When the silver boom declined, the economy went into recession. Tin was found in the late 1800's, and became the main export until the second half of the 20th century. Tin mines attracted foreign investors such as Aramayo and Hochschild and domestic Simon I. Patiño. These three firms were the largest employers and producers of most of the country's tin exports. These were the mines that the MNR government nationalized in 1952. It also created Compañía Minera Boliviana (COMIBOL) as a SOE to run the mines on behalf of the State. The

nationalization decree allowed private ownership as well as operation of medium and small size firms. The decline of COMIBOL was result of exogenous events and domestic government's policies. When the price of tin plummeted in the market, the company suffered losses.<sup>10</sup> The liberal government enactment of free market approach via the Decree 21060 in August 1985, followed by Decree 21377, closed COMIBOL's mining operations. By 1997, the privatization was an ongoing process; hence, the government removed the State from mining industry.

Banco Minero, which provided financial assistance to the mining industry, was closed.<sup>11</sup> The Vinto Smelting plant was privatized. COMIBOL's production operations were transferred to private firms, cooperatives and small producers. Foreign owned firms, such as Grace, and domestic ones, such as RTZ and Comsur, were profitable. They operated several mines that produced gold, antimony, lead and zinc.<sup>12</sup>

Morales' mining policy has been aimed at reorganizing COMIBOL as well as regaining State control of the mining industry<sup>13</sup> and metallurgic complexes. COMIBOL will act on behalf of the State to intervene and operate as an integrated monopoly. In February 2007, Morales' administration nationalized the smelting that processed domestic tin.<sup>14</sup>

Another resource based industry is agriculture. Since pre-Columbian times the indigenous population has been concentrated in the highlands and valleys of the Bolivian West. The relative abundance of native labor gave rise to the Spanish *encomienda* that evolved into large *haciendas*. *Haciendas (latifundia)* supplied the mining industry with traditional food stuff such as the potato, maize etc. The MNR government's Land Reform Law of 1953<sup>15</sup> affected the *haciendas* located in the highlands and valleys. The government expropriated these lands without any compensation and gave it to the *campesinos* for free. This act was a gross violation of the basic principle of respect for private property. Also, it set the conditions for future recurrent expectations of receiving land for free.

*Campesinos* used the land to seek self-sufficiency, not to supply the market. The land reform that divided the land into small plots of five hectares (*minifundia*), or about 12.5 acres, by the 1990's, resulted in even smaller plots of two acres or less for the heirs of the third generation of *campesinos*. These small plots are inefficient and bereft of innovation. They use traditional techniques of production, such as oxen and pre-Columbian labor-intensive methods. They continue the production of output that had traditionally been cultivated by their ancestors for their subsistence. If their crops produced more than enough to feed their families then they sell the surplus. Their production has not been market driven, hence, their output has not satisfied the domestic demand. There was another attempt to provide land to landless *campesinos* in the 1960's. New lands were colonized, such as in the case of Chapare, however, these *campesinos*, rather than producing food stuff for the domestic market, produced coca for the illicit market.<sup>16</sup> In the early 1980's, *campesinos* invaded the lands



that they considered the owners to be unable to defend. While this was happening in the high lands, the agriculture in the eastern lowlands progressed because the 1953 land reform did not affect them. *Latifundia* ownership continued and expanded. Agriculture in the tropical lowlands of the east has been more efficient than the *minifundia* of the high lands and valleys. They produce goods for the market and use modern techniques of production. Some entrepreneurs have innovated, introducing non traditional output such as cebu cattle for meat, while others introduced the non traditional cultivation of produce such as cotton, sugarcane, rice and soya. Their output supplies both the domestic and foreign markets. These are the lands that Morales' administration has threatened to take over and give to the landless.

The economic success of Santa Cruz and the opening of highways that connect the east to the rest of country, attracted emigrants from the highlands and valleys, these emigrants are mostly Aymara and Kechua speaking *campesinos*. They migrated in search of land because they had outgrown the plots that their ancestors had received under the land reform of 1953. Even though most of the land in the east was already owned, the new-comers sought to own land for free by invading lands that the owner could not defend, thus exerting political pressure which forces the government to give them the land title ownership for free. *Campesinos* mainly belong to the indigenous population. Their main aspiration is to own land for free, and their expectation of land for free has been stimulated by their recurrent success.<sup>17</sup> They take advantage of the weak legal system that has failed to protect the private property and the government's failure to defend the property rights of the land owners.

Manufacturing is one industry that has not been developed. Firms in manufacturing have been concentrated mainly in the production of non-durable consumer goods such as beverages, tobacco and textiles. Some of the firms began in the liberal period, for example, the textile industry, which started its operations in the 1920's. The interventionist statism under MNR attempted to stimulate import substitution, by providing protection to the domestic entrepreneurs. This resulted in the development and operation of inefficient firms that depended on imported inputs.

Starting in 1985, the neoliberal governments embraced a free market approach. The outcomes were predictable because many firms went out of business as the protection was dismantled. The manufacturing industry's output was not competitive neither in price nor in quality, hence, as production decreased, unemployment increased. The Bolivian manufacturing industry continues to be heterogeneous, composed of capital intensive firms and small labor intensive firms all of which operate alongside handicrafts. The industry's share out of the GDP had decreased from 15.0% in 1978 to less than 10% by 1986.<sup>18</sup>

Morales' plan calls for fostering and protecting the domestic production. Protection will be selective in order to attain import substitution. Also, protection

will include firms of all sizes with emphasis on stimulating the development of industries that will use domestic inputs such as Andean grain, tropical fruit, medicinal herbs etc. It is aimed at maximizing domestic added value into which the State itself will enter the industry and play an active role.<sup>19</sup>

### III

This part evaluates the policies of Morales administration. Evo Morales has been in power for just over a year, and in this short time his administration has issued Decrees of nationalization and land distribution. These policies are aimed at obtaining resources that would implement sets of projects that will produce a socioeconomic paradigm in which Bolivians will "live well" (*Vivir Bien*). This living well paradigm, according to the administration's development strategy, is composed of four parts: economic, communitarian (*sociocomunitario*), international, and social aspects.<sup>20</sup> Here, the attempt is to assess the economic part, which intends to make Bolivia productive.<sup>21</sup> The development strategy mainly calls for the state control of natural resources as means to acquire revenues to finance its development projects.

Morales inherited an economy that had been stagnant for some time. The neoliberal governments that had aimed at decreasing the scope of the government on economic matters had privatized the SOEs in the mid 1990's. Some people in some segments of the country's population did not like this policy, they called these political leaders "*vende patria*,"<sup>22</sup> (seller of the motherland). When Sánchez de Lozada took over the government again in 2002, the Bolivian economy was stagnated. It had been growing at an average rate of 1.5% per year between 1999 and 2002, given that the Bolivian population's rate of growth was higher, there was a drop in the per capita income.<sup>23</sup> Also, the coca eradication program had contracted the informal economy, consequently, the increase in unemployment and decrease in incomes set up the conditions for a social unrest that ended the twenty year period of neoliberal governments.

Morales was an unsuccessful presidential candidate in previous elections; however, after the bloody uprising in El Alto, Morales was victorious in 2005. The MAS is an umbrella of left leaning parties, whose purpose is to create a sort of socialist society in Bolivia. The society that Morales administration intends to build is described in the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo*<sup>24</sup> (National Development Plan).

The government's strategy is to build and attain a society where Bolivians will "live well". This concept is based on the original cultures of the indigenous populations and it seeks to build an egalitarian distribution of income and resources in order to have access to goods and services and to live in harmony with nature. This paradigm seems to be an attempt at reviving the pre Columbian society where land belonged to the community and members had access to the goods that the community had produced.<sup>25</sup> In order to attain this paradigm, the government issued a comprehensive plan of development that

envisions a highly interventionist centralized state that controls a major portion of the economic activity and natural resources in 2006. The control of natural resources, production and commercialization is fundamental in obtaining the surplus needed to build the society in which Bolivians will "live well amongst themselves" (*Vivir Bien entre nosotros*).<sup>26</sup> In order to control the natural resources that will yield surplus, the government has nationalized the hydrocarbons industry and the tin smelting complex, and intends to control the mining industry.

When the hydrocarbons nationalization Decree was issued on May 1, 2006, the gas reserves stood at 54 TCF with a theoretical value of about \$70 billion.<sup>27</sup> Obviously, the value depends on the prices that are used to assess it. The same amount of natural gas reserves without buyers is not worth much. In a free market, the highest price at which the natural gas can be sold determines the best value of the reserves, hence, the maximum revenue.

Bolivia is not maximizing its revenues from natural gas sales. Bolivia, as a regional monopoly, has only two buyers into which countries pipelines had been built to carry hydrocarbons. Brazil and Argentina form a duopsony. This situation can be seen in a simplified model where a monopoly faces a monopsony. The equilibrium price depends on the strength of the firms and the negotiating skills of the participants. If the monopoly is strong and negotiators are skillful, then the price dictated by the monopoly will be high, thus extracting surplus from the buyers. If the monopsony is strong and negotiators are skillful then the price will be low, thus extracting surplus from the monopoly. If the monopoly and monopsony are of equal strength and negotiators equally skillful then the price would be comparable to a competitive market price. Bolivia sells gas under two negotiated contracts. One is a long term contract with Brazil and it expires in 2019. The other is an annual contract with Argentina. The price that these buyers pay per thousand cubic meter has been about \$4.00 while the price in California,<sup>28</sup> which was close to the competitive market equilibrium, ranged between \$12.00 and \$15.00 in 2006. Brazil depends on Bolivia's natural gas for about 50% of its consumption, hence, Brazil has become Bolivia's main natural gas buyer.<sup>29</sup> It was able to impose its monopsony power on the weak monopoly. Morales' effort to renegotiate the gas price last February was largely of marginal success. Bolivia will be allowed to charge more for individual components of gas,<sup>30</sup> and can expect to receive an additional revenue of about \$120 million.<sup>31</sup> However, the base price that Brazil pays to Bolivia remains constant.

Morales was more successful at implementing the land reform program at home. During his political campaign, Morales promised a land reform that would provide land to the landless *campesinos*. In June 2006, under the land reform program, Morales' administration began giving State owned lands to landless *campesinos*. He has promised that by the end of his term in 2011, he will redistribute 200,000 square kilometers of land, which is about 20% of the country's total land surface.<sup>32</sup> In order to meet this goal, the administration has

announced that it will expropriate privately owned lands that are considered "unproductive, are not performing social or economic function."<sup>33</sup> They will be distributed to "those most in need," thereby placing the principle of private property in a perilous condition.<sup>34</sup> This policy has encouraged landless squatters to invade the lands that are productively used, as it has been happening periodically since the early 1950's. It seems to be an inconsistent policy that constructs an egalitarian society in which it guarantees the right to private property for some, and denies the right to private property to others.

Many successful *haciendas* of the high lands and valleys that the 1950's land reform affected, reduced, or stopped their production. The production decrease of the previous *latifundia* was not compensated by the production of *campesino* owned *minifundia*, resulting in a decrease of the supply of food stuff; this market outcome is bound to repeat again. Squatters invaded some successful farmers who were producing cotton, soya among other crops. The landless were trying to force the government to confiscate private land for redistribution. This created an environment of uncertainty, which in turn, decreased private planned investment. As in the case of Santa Cruz, where some farmers complained that they could not invest because banks were not willing to accept land as collateral to make loans.<sup>35</sup> When there is no respect for the private ownership of resources, one of the basic foundations of the capitalistic mixed economy is weakened, and the conditions are set for another mode of production through the leading role of the state.

The administration's intention to intervene in the mining industry became clear when Morales said, "2007 is the year of recuperation of the mines". The process started with a Decree of nationalization of the Vinto Smelter complex on February 9, 2007. Vinto Smelting had been privatized, and the control of Vinto Smelting has returned to the State. Vinto Metallurgic Company will operate as an SOE and will administer Vinto Smelting on behalf of the State.<sup>36</sup>

Private ownership of mines is also in peril for it has been announced that the State will regain ownership of the mines that have not invested or have not operated. In recent years, the mining industry has increased production in response to higher prices in the international market. The administration is trying to increase taxes on mineral exports that will increase the government's tax revenues, which were \$45.5 million out of \$1 billion mineral exports in 2006.<sup>37</sup>

Morales' policies and the social events that started in 2003 have created an uncertain environment in the economy. The uncertainty is reflected in the decreasing rate of private investment from 10.1% of the GDP in 2002 to 5.6% in 2004 and finally an estimate of 7.1% in 2005. Likewise, foreign direct investment decreased from 8.5% of the GDP in 2002 to (negative) -3.0% in 2005. In order to counter this decrease in private investment, the Morales administration's plan is to increase public investment from \$500 million in 2004 to \$783 million in 2006, which accounts for 7.5% of the GDP. This investment is expected to reach \$1.68 billion in 2010, that will account for 11.9% of the estimated GDP.<sup>38</sup> The

planned public investment will be allocated into roughly three sectors: 17% in industries such as hydrocarbons, mining, manufacturing and agriculture; 44% in industries such as transportation, energy and communications; and finally, about 29% in health, education and housing. The domestic sources of funds are expected to come from the nationalized industries and foreign sources such as loans from international lending institutions and grants.

#### IV

This paper has presented the experience of basic productive industries to illustrate a recurrent pattern of the Bolivian government's role of interventionist statism and market oriented neoliberalism. It has argued that the Morales administration is a return to interventionist statism, even though the administration has only been in power for just over a year. This administration has issued Decrees of Nationalization and has distributed land. These policies are aimed at controlling resources in order to produce a socioeconomic egalitarian paradigm in which Bolivians will "live well" with the government playing an active role. However, in doing so, it has undermined the principle of private ownership, which is one of the foundations of the capitalist mixed economy. One result of these policy actions is the creation of uncertain environment that discourages private investment, which the State intends to replace. The new constitution, which has been discussed and written at the present (March 2007), should set the limits of the government intervention on economic matters.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>This part uses extensively material from my "Private Entrepreneurship in Bolivia's Economic Development," in *Proceedings 2000 Annual Conference, Global Awareness Society International*, 2000. pp. 219 - 225.

<sup>2</sup>Barbara C. Pando, "Bolivian Gas Pipeline Construction," TED Case Study. May 3, 2007

<<http://www.american.edu/TED/bolpipe.htm>>.

<sup>3</sup>Ministerio de Planificacion y Desarrollo, "*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo: Bolivia digna, soberana y productiva y democracia para Vivir Bien*," Bolivia, p. 100. June 2006

<<http://www.bolivia.gov.bo/plan.htm>>.

<sup>4</sup>Amazon Watch, "The Expansion of Bolivia's Gas Pipeline Network." <[http://www.amazonwatch.org/amazon/BO/gep/index.php?page\\_number=99.htm](http://www.amazonwatch.org/amazon/BO/gep/index.php?page_number=99.htm)>.

<sup>5</sup>BBC NEWS, "Q&A: Bolivian gas protests." October 10, 2003 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/hi/americas/3196926.htm>>.

<sup>6</sup>Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. "Bolivian Gas War." March 10, 2006

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<sup>7</sup>"*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo*," p. 99.

- <sup>8</sup>Jane Monahan, "Bolivia's nationalisation plans in trouble." August 17, 2006 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/business/4801233.htm>>.
- <sup>9</sup> "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo," p. 102.
- <sup>10</sup> Country Profile: Bolivia 1993 -1994. The Economist Intelligence Unit, 40 Duke St. London, UK.
- <sup>11</sup> "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo," pp.104-105.
- <sup>12</sup> Country Profile: Bolivia 1995-1996. The Economist Intelligence Unit, 15 Regent St. London, UK.
- <sup>13</sup>Alvaro Zuazo, "Opposition walk out of Morales' speech." January 23, 2007 <<http://www.quepasa.com/english/news/latinoamerica/568093.html>>.
- <sup>14</sup> Dan Keane, "Bolivia nationalizes lone tin smelter." February 17, 2007 <<http://www.quepasa.com/english/news/latinoamerica/587522.html>>.
- <sup>15</sup> Decreto Ley No 03464, August 2, 1953.
- <sup>16</sup>James Painter, *Bolivia & Coca; A Study in Dependency*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 1994.
- <sup>17</sup>BBC NEWS, "Struggle for land in Bolivia." September 14, 2006. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/uk/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/5303280.htm>>.
- <sup>18</sup> Muller & Asociados, *Estadísticas Económicas 1988*, ILDIS, Edit. Torre de las Americas, La Paz, Bolivia.
- <sup>19</sup> "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo," pp. 144-149
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid. pp. 21-22.
- <sup>21</sup> Profound changes in the government's economic policy fractures the traditional trend of key economic variables such as private investment. The effects of the government's action in the quantitative trend of an economic variable are best observed close to the government's change in policy, because in the long run the trend of the variable might be affected by exogenous factors.
- <sup>22</sup> "Vende patria" as it is used is a negative expression that implies disloyalty.
- <sup>23</sup>International Monetary Fund, "Bolivia - Letter of Intent, Memorandum of Economic Policies, and Technical Memorandum of Understanding," Country's Policy Intentions Documents. La Paz, Bolivia. March 21, 2003 <<http://www.imf.org/external/np/loi/2003/bol/01/index.htm>>.
- <sup>24</sup> "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo." <<http://www.bolivia.gov.bo/plan.htm>>.
- <sup>25</sup>This paradigm used to be taught in Bolivian Economic History, an undergraduate sophomore course. One can find references in "*Imperio Socialista de los Incas*."
- <sup>26</sup>"Plan Nacional de Desarrollo," pp.10 -15.
- <sup>27</sup>Robert Plummer, "Bolivia takeover alarms powerful allies." May 2, 2006 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/business/4964432.htm>>.
- <sup>28</sup> Walter Sotomayor, "Brazil, Bolivia reach natural gas deal." February 15, 2007 <<http://www.quepasa.com/english/news/latinamerica/585623/html>> and <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/fr/-/2/hi/business/6363715.htm>>.
- <sup>29</sup>BBC NEWS, "Crisis talks on Bolivia gas move." May 3, 2006 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/americas/4964300.htm>>.

- <sup>30</sup>BBC NEWS, "Bolivia and Brazil agree gas deal." February 15, 2007  
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- <sup>31</sup>BBC NEWS, "Bolivia signs oil and gas deals." October 28, 2006  
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- <sup>32</sup>BBC NEWS. "Bolivia `risks revolt over land'." November 17, 2006  
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- <sup>38</sup> "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo." pp. 217-223.

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## **THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE MAPUCHE OF CHILE**

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### **Introduction**

The original inhabitants of today's nation-state of Chile were a conglomeration of indigenous tribes currently called the Mapuche. The word Mapuche is derived from "mapu" meaning "land" and "che" meaning "people." Literally, Mapuche means "people of the land"<sup>1</sup> or "people of the earth."<sup>2</sup> Ironically, the history of the Mapuche since the Spanish invasion is intrinsically tied to possession of their ancestral lands. The Mapuche way of life was dependent on the spiritual and economic importance of land ownership and stewardship. In rural areas, it still is. Today, the Mapuche are fighting to preserve what little land they have left in their possession. More importantly, their current abysmal economic status has been a direct result of many of them becoming landless and migrating to the cities in the hopes of fitting into a market economy. Centuries of large scale social discrimination and little political power have made them the poorest Chileans. They are also struggling to organize as a small political force with the goal of regaining some of the land the non-Mapuche have taken from them over the last 450 years. Their struggle is of the grandest scale. They are continually fighting political battles, overcoming violations of their human rights, and facing aging demographics that threaten the continuity of their cultural history and ethnic identity—all in the face of protecting their land titles from transnational corporations, logging companies, and even the Chilean government.

### **Land History**

Labeled the "Araucanians" by the Spanish invaders, the Mapuche of today originally consisted of the Huilliche, Lafquenche, Mapuche, Pehuenche, Picunche, and Promaucae. These indigenous peoples inhabited the region between the Río Choapa and Chiloé Island. The Huilliche were from the south, the Pehuenche were people of the mountains, the Lafquenche were people of the coast, and Picunche were people of the north. Promaucae was the name the Incas used to refer to them meaning "rebellious people" because they successfully stopped Incan invaders at the Río Maule.<sup>3</sup>

At the time of the Spanish conquest beginning in 1546, the Araucanians were estimated to number between 500,000 and 1,500,000.<sup>4</sup> European illnesses, the introduction of alcohol consumption, and warfare against the conquistadores had devastating effects on their population numbers. More importantly, the Mapuche have the distinction of being the only Hispano-American indigenous people to never have been successfully conquered by the Spanish. Forced to convert their way of life from a hunting and agrarian society to a war society,

they resorted to guerilla warfare to preserve their land holdings for over two hundred years. In the sixteenth century they adopted using horses in hunting and warfare. In the search for more horses, they migrated to Argentina in the 1700's, beginning a cultural and geographical expansion that lasted for 150 years.<sup>5</sup> According to Cariqueo Colpihueque, "under the Spaniards, the Mapuche people never lost autonomy, maintaining our territory and independence in 10 million hectares of land south of the Biobio."<sup>6</sup> In fact, based on the treaty of Killin signed in 1641, Spain formally recognized territorial autonomy of the Mapuche.

However, all that changed in the early 1800s. From 1803 to 1818, civil war broke out against the Spanish. The Mapuche sided with the Spanish and were thus viewed as savages and hated symbols of the anti-Spanish resistance movement. When Spain granted Chile independence in 1818, the new Chilean state drove the Mapuche southward in what was called the "Pacification of Araucania." From 1860-1885, around 100,000 Mapuche were massacred.<sup>7</sup> Cariqueo Colpihueque contrasts the Mapuche autonomy and territorial independence during the Spanish rule with the Mapuche experience under the new Chilean government:

This was not the case, however, with the Chileans. After 30 years of constant war (1850s to 1880s), the Chilean army dominated Mapuche territory and the government declared it state land. In 1883, Chile began deposing Mapuche of land, eventually ceding 428,000 hectares to us, or less than 5 percent of our original territory. The seeds of modern Mapuche poverty were sown back then.<sup>8</sup>

From the period of 1884-1919, the Mapuche were forced onto reservations with 3,078 titles of property given to 77,751 Mapuche for 475,423 hectares (1,174,770 acres) of land. An estimated 40,000 Mapuche (37 percent of the total Mapuche population) were left landless. Mapuche received an average of 17 acres (6 hectares) per person. White colonizers received 1,235 acres (500 hectares) per person on average. The Mapuche people lost 9.5 million hectares of land to the non-Mapuche settlers.<sup>9</sup> The land settlement was based on a law passed in 1866 called the *Ley de Radicación de Indígenas*.

According to Sznajder, the economic effects of the land settlement were manifold. First, the territory the Mapuche received consisted of less fertile land in the Andean valleys and peripheral areas. They lost their best grazing land. Therefore, their greatest economic assets—herds of cattle and horses—were lost too. In the process of land subdivision, large families disintegrated as poverty permeated the communities. Treated as "a marginal and discriminated-against minority," the Mapuche became land laborers or *campesinos*.<sup>10</sup> They formulated economic practices that relied on sharing resources. Increased discrimination led

to them maintaining their traditional culture and identity while the forces to abandon their traditions abounded. Sznajder also reports that from 1910-1930, additional land usurpations and anti-Mapuche violence escalated. Mapuche were branded with firebrands like cattle and had their ears severed. In protest, the Mapuche began to engage in political life by forming a political society called the *Sociedad Caupolicán Defensora de la Araucanía* founded in Temuco. Ever since, the Mapuche have been torn between accepting total integration in Chilean society versus rejecting it in opposition to the Chilean government.<sup>11</sup>

### **1970 to 1990**

From 1970-1973, Salvador Allende's Marxist government began reforms that were beneficial to the Mapuche. Of great symbolic importance, 70,000 hectares were returned to the Mapuche because they were viewed as part of the proletariat. Allende's government began the Institute of Indian Development with the goal to improve the economic status of the Mapuche, even giving them special status as indigenous people. It was evident that as the Mapuche continued to integrate into modern Chilean society, their poverty was not alleviated. Unfortunately, these initiatives came to an untimely halt when Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship began with a military coup against Allende in 1973.

Pinochet reversed all the strides made during the Allende years. The Mapuche lost more land and experienced deep repression based on their alliance with the previous overthrown government. Pinochet abolished the law that gave special status to Mapuche reservations. Land ownership of the Mapuche was based on common, not individual ownership. Now the Mapuche had to compete for ownership of their lands with more powerful and richer Chileans. Moreover, the Pinochet government allowed corporations into the Mapuche territories. Soon timber companies were scrambling to obtain the very old forests on the Mapuche lands--forests of the araucaria, the sacred tree of the Mapuche.

The economic effects were very negative for the Mapuche. By 1983, the number of Indian reservations declined to less than 300.<sup>12</sup> The primary reasons were based on free-market policies that led to greater loss of land through a vicious cycle. First, the Mapuche land was now subject to taxation, but did not give the Mapuche free social and health services. Modern accounting practices were required, but Mapuche farmers did not have the knowledge or financial resources to implement them. Mapuche farmers became victims of bureaucratic redtape that propagated fraud and false acquisition of land from the Mapuche. The Chilean legal system was never friendly to the Mapuche, so they had no sound legal mechanisms at their disposal. Sznajder sums up their plight succinctly by stating that "in this situation, the Mapuche, deprived of government sympathy or support, were left to survive in a free-market society in which they lacked the main ingredients for success: economic power, high levels of education, and a mentality favorable to individual entrepreneurship."<sup>13</sup>

### **The Mapuche and Democracy**

Pinochet's leadership of Chile came to an end in 1990 when Patricio Aylwin Azocar was elected President. A representative democracy was established. Since then, Chile has had three Presidents. After Aylwin, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle served from 1994 to 2000. The current President, Ricardo Lagos Escobar, will have his term end in 2006. In the past 15 years, the Mapuche have seen their pauperization continue, but are beginning to use the political process to make their plight a public political issue within the framework of a democratic system. Small victories have been accompanied with new battles and issues.

Some of the most notable advances have included the following:

- December 1989 – Aylwin signed the agreement of Nueva Imperial in which he agreed to include Mapuche demands in his presidential campaign.
- May 1990 – Aylwin created the *Comisión Especial de Pueblos Indígenas* (CEPI), a public agency to handle and defend issues of indigenous peoples.
- May 1991 – The Quinquén area was declared a National Forest Reserve, saving it from logging by the Galletué timber company.
- March 1992 – The Chilean government paid 6,150,000 dollars to the owners of 30,000 hectares (74,130 acres) and gave the land to the Pehuenches.
- October 1994 – Law 19.253 was approved by the Chilean Parliament. It established the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONADI) and asserted the rights of the indigenous peoples to bilingual education and protecting their archeological and cultural traditions. It provides anti-discrimination statutes.

Certainly, the Mapuche made great strides under Aylwin's emerging democratic government. The Aylwin government spent \$3 million on 500 small development projects and gave 4,500 educational scholarships to indigenous youth.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, one of the major points of contention that the law did not address was that the Mapuche are still not recognized under the Chilean constitution as indigenous peoples. In contrast, Brazil, Colombia, and Nicaragua have constitutionally recognized the rights of their indigenous peoples. In Chile, the political debate is between integration versus assimilation of the Mapuche. Former Pinochet supporters still active in today's Chilean government are pro-integration, but anti-constitutional reform. They seek a unified Chile under the constitution enacted in 1980 under Pinochet and amended in 1989 which defines the nation as a limited democracy and includes provisions that make any constitutional reform very difficult. Therefore, Sznajder concludes that the partial democracy that evolved from the military government under Pinochet currently makes constitutional recognition of the Mapuche impossible.<sup>15</sup>

Under President Eduardo Frei, Mapuche unrest was rekindled. Police raids and detention of Mapuche during peaceful demonstrations against logging associations and a public dam project on their land have led to clashes with the government such that it resorted to claiming the Mapuche threaten national security in the same manner terrorists do. In 1998, Marhikewun, a British-based journalist writing for the Mapuche International Link reports that "abuses of power, racist slurs, and torture perpetrated by the Chilean Police against the Mapuche are never investigated, nor are the perpetrators reprimanded."<sup>16</sup> The outrage about the dam on the River Biobio displacing the Pehuenche from their ancestral lands to mountainous territory which is covered by snow most of the year has been compounded by the fact that President Frei is one of the project's shareholders.<sup>17</sup> The project is symbolic of the conflict between national economic development versus indigenous peoples' rights to hold onto land necessary for their survival.

Under Escobar's term and now under Bachelet's presidency, the Mapuche continue to protest their violations of human rights. In 2005, the International Committee for the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas (Incomindios) presented a document to the Commission on Human Rights about "the human rights situation and fundamental freedoms of the Mapuche people."<sup>18</sup> They cite various examples of the Chilean government's inappropriate use of anti-terrorist laws against Mapuche leaders and protesters under "even their simple gatherings." In March of 2007, José Huenchunao Mariñán, an activist leader of the Mapuche, was arrested under the anti-terrorism law. He was charged with setting fire to a farm belonging to Forestal Mininco, the largest lumber company in Chile. He and his grass-roots organization continue to protest the property rights of the multinational logging companies.<sup>19</sup>

### **Mapuche Poverty and Demographics**

Today the Mapuche live in the provinces of Bio-Bio, Arauco, Malleco, Cautín, Valdivia, Osorno, Llanquihue and Chiloé. Approximately one million people labeled themselves to be Mapuche on the Chilean 1992 population census survey.<sup>20</sup> In a country with a total population of 15 million, they constitute 6.5% of the population.<sup>21</sup> The majority of the Mapuche have emigrated from the reservations because the territories became overcrowded. Therefore, most Mapuche live in large urban centers of Santiago, Concepción, Valparaíso, Temuco and Valdivia.

A study described by the ACJR that was undertaken by MIDEPLAN in 2000 classified three different economic levels of the indigenous versus non-indigenous populations in Chile.<sup>22</sup> The economic levels were labeled as "not poor," "poor not indigent," and "indigent." "Indigent" was the label given to the most destitute of the poor with no means of subsistence. The percentages were as follows:



Category	Indigenous Population		Non-Indigenous Population	
	Number	%	Number	%
Indigent	72,647	<b>10.95</b>	776,522	<b>5.44</b>
Poor not indigent	141,211	<b>21.29</b>	2,090,672	<b>14.65</b>
Not Poor	449,391	67.76	11,403,110	79.91
TOTAL	663,249	100.00	14,270,304	100.00

The numbers reveal that one third of the indigenous population is either poor or indigent, compared with one fifth of the non-indigenous people categorized as such. What is startling is that the indigenous population has twice the percentage of the non-indigenous in the most destitute category, or what the study referred to as indigent.

Another study by Huenchuán Navarro published in 2003 analyzes the demographics of the Mapuche in terms of their age and rural versus urban living in Nueva Imperial, a city of over 41,000 people in Araucania. Huenchuán's study provides interesting insights into the economic situation of older Mapuche living in both urban and rural areas. The results are representative of the entire aging population of Chile. Since the 1950s, Chile has experienced an increase in the number of older citizens. In the 1992 census, the population greater than 65 years old represented 6.57% of the national total. This percentage is projected to rise progressively to 10% in 2010. At the same time, The Old Age Index, which represents the number of people older than 65 years of age for every 100 that are less than 15 years of age, was 22.32 in 1992 and is estimated to rise to 34.71 in 2010.<sup>23</sup>

Huenchuán's analysis uses the Old Age Index to analyze different regions of the country. In the case of Nueva Imperial, the total population older than 60 years old in 1992 totaled 4,546 people of which 55.1% were Mapuche and 65% lived in rural areas. At that time, Nueva Imperial's Old Age Index was similar to the national average. In 1998, the Old Age Index of Nueva Imperial was 25.2, three points higher than the national average of 22.2. This puts Nueva Imperial in the same category as 36 communities in Chile that have "moderately high" Old Age Indices. However, that is not the whole story. The gender composition is different. Mapuche women have a higher Old Age Index than Mapuche men, with the indices as 28.3 and 22.3 respectively. For the Mapuche over 60 years of age, women comprise 53% and men comprise 47% of the total. For the non-Mapuche, the numbers are similar; old women total 54.5% and old men total 45.4%. When both groups are combined, Mapuche women constitute 30% of the total population of 60 years of age, Mapuche men follow with 26%, then non-Mapuche women total 24% and non-Mapuche men total 20%. Consequently, 56% of the aged in Nueva Imperial are of Mapuche origin.<sup>24</sup>

The numbers have implications for the social security system in Chile. Privatized social security began in 1981. However, in conjunction with this system, an alternative system coexists for cases of extreme poverty. Called the

*Programa de Pensiones Asistenciales de Vejez (PASIS)*, the system is a welfare program of pension relief for the aged started in 1975 to guarantee a minimum level of subsistence. In 1998, 67% of the individuals receiving this assistance in Nueva Imperial were Mapuche of which 56% were women and 44% were men. Also, 45% of them were receiving this relief for five years and 55% for 21 to 23 years. Once poor, the aged never improve their economic situation.<sup>25</sup>

Huenchuán also concludes that the economic situation of old male Mapuche in rural areas is much better than all old urban Mapuche and also of old female rural Mapuche. The basic reason is because rural male Mapuche have title to land which provides them with the basis of other sources of income, both monetary and in-kind. They have income from their own subsistence farming, some income from commercial sale of their farm products, some from rent of their land to others, and some collect income from their children who have migrated to urban areas. In addition, old rural Mapuche are also part of a community with networks that also include bartering of animals and other products. While these individuals do not have a high standard of living, their economic situation is far superior to all the others.<sup>26</sup>

In the cities, Huenchuán reports that the living conditions of the poor, aged Mapuche are deplorable. Their living quarters are deteriorating and poorly constructed from inferior materials. Most have only a bedroom and a kitchen. Some do not have running water. Their only source of income is from the pension assistance program. Old rural Mapuche women, on the other hand, face different challenges that lead them to fall into poverty. They do not eventually obtain title to their land. Their land is divided to others and even if it is not, they do not continue to obtain income from subsistence or commercial farming.

### **The Mapuche and Free Markets**

In short, Huenchuán's study about Nueva Imperial is representative of the conclusions of the ACJR report of the proceedings of the workshop on the "*Mujeres Mapuche en el Contexto de los Acuerdos Comerciales en Territorio Mapuche*" held in July of 2004.<sup>27</sup> Mapuche women from various regions attended this conference to analyze and understand the context of the diverse agreements for free trade between Chile and global economic entities. They feel the economic development arising from these agreements are leading to a second invasion with ethnic characteristics that will ultimately result in a model of capitalistic development that is predatory, asymmetric, and excluding to the Mapuche. Continued pauperization of the Mapuche is inevitable in this context. They are interested in establishing economic institutions and practices that will use national resources more wisely and in a sustainable fashion, recognizing the intrinsic value of them materially and spiritually.

The Chilean focus on exports, especially of timber, has been the major concern of many Mapuche. Their report explains how ensnaring the forest economy has had many unintended effects on the Mapuche—highway

construction, urban growth and creep, introduction of cellulose plants, dumping of toxic refuse, and the disappearance of native medicinal plants. The growth in tourism has threatened their fishing arteries. They feel victimized by modern economic development as free market forces have led to standardized and homogeneous products that make them harder to compete with world prices of unequal economies.<sup>28</sup>

Their economic way of life changed from communal farming techniques to those that now require large amounts of financial capital to buy machinery. They lament that farm machines have replaced work done in the community, where money was not very important because members traded goods in a pseudo-bartering economy. Large commercial farming techniques have led to poorer seed quality and more intensively farmed land, leading to less soil productivity. To compete, they must use laboratory grown seeds, pesticides, fungicides and other costly technologies that leave them poorer, rather than richer.<sup>29</sup>

The role of women has also changed. Previously, women educated their children, a task the rest of the community appreciated. Women were valued for doing so as well as for having knowledge of medicinal plants and for knowing how to weave. Today, women leave the community to work as domestics or in other jobs paying minimum wages, while at the same time they face greater discrimination and fewer opportunities for continuing education. Knowledge of how to use medicinal plants and herbs is disappearing.<sup>30</sup>

The tourist industry has also led them to become more disenchanting with capitalism. Their territories have been attractive to eco-tourists because the Mapuche people have preserved the environment. However, the tourist industry is in the hands of non-Mapuche and is viewed as having a negative impact on the Mapuche. The report states that tourists come to see the Mapuche as people to study as objects of folklore, but in reality, they do not know anything about the Mapuche and don't care about them as a community.<sup>31</sup>

### **Land Stewardship**

Land has always been the essential ingredient of the Mapuche culture and way of life. Throughout their history, it was the foundation of their economic well-being and their spiritual life. In spite of enduring centuries of missionaries, Degarrod notes that the Mapuche have resisted conversion to Christianity and western religions. The Mapuche religion is polytheistic with various gods. Some gods are tied to their environment, such as a god of the morning star, a god of the cardinal points, and a god of meteorological forces. They still have shamans that use native herbs in medicines. They conduct ceremonies focused on agricultural success. Cariqueo Colpihueque explains how his people view the environment with the statement "Indigenous thought does not distinguish the environment from the self."<sup>32</sup> He laments the environmental destruction that modern economic development has initiated. Biodiversity has

been destroyed as native forests are logged, and then replaced with non-native trees. Salmon farmers poison crabs and contaminate the sea from salmon fecal pollution. Huilliches no longer have access to the sea, but their animals eat poisoned crabs and die. The Endesa electric company's hydroelectric plant will displace 4000 Pehuenches.<sup>33</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The future of the Mapuche is clouded. In May of 2005, Gustavo Gonzalez wrote that "there is little evidence of progress toward a solution to the Mapuche land conflict."<sup>34</sup> Anti-terrorism laws have been invoked against the Mapuche who are resorting to civil disobedience as their protests have escalated from demonstrating peacefully to burning tree farms or destroying forestry equipment.<sup>35</sup> According to Langer, the equation of power may be changing as the internet has made it possible for indigenous peoples to deliver their message to the rest of the world. Nongovernment organizations (NGOs) have also become more involved with the Mapuche struggle. Organizations that deal with human rights, cultural issues, and environmental concerns have aided indigenous populations throughout the world in raising funds, providing expertise, and delivering publicity.<sup>36</sup> However, as the Mapuche population continues to age and the younger cohorts flee the overcrowded conditions of the reservations to urban areas, the Mapuche culture and identity will be threatened. Until the Mapuche have better access to political and economic power, their primary economic asset—land—will remain hard to retain and may be impossible to win back.

### Brief History of the Mapuche Since the Spanish Invasion

<b>Year(s)</b>	<b>Government<sup>37</sup></b>	<b>Mapuche Interaction</b>	<b>Effect on Mapuche</b>
1546-1636	Spanish invasion and colonization	War with Spain began, lasted 90 years	Converted from a hunting and agrarian society to a war society. European illnesses and alcohol consumption led to Mapuche decline
1636-1803	Spanish colonization and domination	War and negotiations, Mapuche survived independently in their own territory	Mapuche evolved into cattle-raising and agricultural society
1803-1818	Conflict for Chilean Independence	Mapuche sided against the Spanish	Mapuche viewed as symbols of anti-Spanish resistance movement
1818-1869	New Chilean State: General Bernardo O'Higgins (1818-23)	Mapuche sided with the Spanish in "the war to the death"	The new state drove the Mapuche southward. Mapuche viewed as savages.
1866	New Chilean State under various presidents	Land Law called Ley de Radicacion de Indigenas	Regulated all Indian land settlement in an allocation scheme.
1869	José Joaquín Pérez (President 1861-1871)	Violent military conquest of the Mapuche	Took over and colonized ancestral Mapuche land in the south
1881-1883	Domingo Santa María Gonzalez (Pres 1881-1886)	Mapuche uprising against the Chilean State	Lost additional control of ancestral land in the south. Lost political autonomy and military power.

1884-1919	Various Presidents starting with Santa María	Mapuche forced onto reservations with 3078 titles of property given to 77,751 Mapuche for 475,423 hectares of land.	40,000 Mapuche left landless. Mapuche received an average of 17 acres per person. White colonizers received 1,235 acres per person on average.
1911	President Ramón Barros Luco	Sociedad Caupolicán Defensora de la Araucanía founded	First Mapuche organization in Chilean civil society
1970-1973	Salvador Allende's Marxist government	Reforms to transition to democracy	Returned 70,000 hectares.
1973-1990	Military coup begins the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet	Mapuche integration with no special status	Negative – Lost more land. Repressive regime
1980	Chile's Constitution approved in a national plebiscite	No interaction.	Not given status as recognized indigenous people
1990-1994	Patricio Aylwin Azocar elected President. Representative democracy established	Aylwin campaigned with a pro-Mapuche political platform.	Regained some land. CEPI and CONADI established
1994-2000	Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle elected President	Some Mapuche now in legislative branch	Negative – promotes building a dam on Puenche land
2000-2006	Ricardo Lagos Escobar Presidency	Some Mapuche now in legislative branch	Mapuche continue to protest land encroachment and land loss
2006-	Michelle Bachelet elected	Some Mapuche now in legislative branch	Mapuche continue to protest human rights violations

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Alianza para un Comercio Justo y Responsable (ACJR). "Mujeres Mapuche en el Contexto de los Acuerdos Comerciales en Territorio Mapuche." Proceedings from a workshop held July 21, 2004. May 24, 2005  
<<http://www.comerciojusto.cl.htm>>.

<sup>2</sup>Multinational Monitor, "Mapuche Put Earth First: An Interview with Floriano Cariqueo Colpihueque." November 1995, Volume 15, number 11. June 24, 2005  
<<http://multinationalmonitor.org/hyper/mm1195.09.html>>.

<sup>3</sup>Lydia Nakashima Degarrod, "Araucanians." In *Encyclopedia of World Cultures*, Volume VII on South America. Editor Johannes Wilbert, Boston, Massachusetts: G. K. Hall & Co., 1994, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>6</sup>Multinational Monitor.

<sup>7</sup>Reynaldo Mariqueo and Jorge Calbucura, "Mapuche-Nation Introduction." June 24, 2005

<[http://www.mapuche-nation.org/english/html/m\\_nation/print/introduction.htm](http://www.mapuche-nation.org/english/html/m_nation/print/introduction.htm)>.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Mario Sznajder, "Ethnodevelopment and Democratic Consolidation in Chile: The Mapuche Question," in *Contemporary Indigenous Movements in Latin America*, ed. Erick D. Langer with Elena Muñoz, Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2003, p.21.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>14</sup>Sznajder, p. 31.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>16</sup>R. Marhikewun, "Indigenous Leaders Speak Out: R. Marhikewun of Chile." In *Contemporary Indigenous Movements in Latin America*, ed. Erick D. Langer with Elena Muñoz, Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2003, p. 213.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>18</sup>Mapuche International Link, "Document presented to the Sub-commission of the situation of the Mapuche people," July 25 2005, <<http://www.mapuche-nation.org/english/html/documents/doc-13.htm> (accessed March 29, 2007).

<sup>19</sup>*The Santiago Times*, "Mapuche: Activist Leader Arrested." March 29, 2007  
<<http://www.monpo.org/article.php?id=6469.htm>>.

<sup>20</sup>Mariqueo and Calbucura.

<sup>21</sup>U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Chile" by the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, May 4, 2005

<<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1981.htm>>.

<sup>22</sup>Alianza para un Comercio Justo y Responsable (ACJR), p. 3.

<sup>23</sup>Huenchuán Navarro, Sandra. "Condiciones económicas de la vejez mapuche en Chile." *Revista trabajo social*, pp. 112-121, Nov. 2003.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>ACJR., p. 1.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>32</sup>Multinational Monitor.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Gustavo González, "Rights-Chile: No Solution in Sight to Mapuche Land Dispute," *Tierramerica Newspress*, Inter Press Service/Global Information Network, May 6, 2005. Accessed May 24, 2005 in Lexis-Nexis online database.

<sup>35</sup>Larry Rother, "Mapuche Indians in Chile Struggle to Take Back Forests." August 11, 2004 *New York Times*. June 24, 2005

<<http://www.mapuche-nation.org/english/html/articles/art-15.htm>>.

<sup>36</sup> Erick D. Langer, "Introduction." In *Contemporary Indigenous Movements in Latin America*, ed. Erick D. Langer with Elena Muñoz, Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2003, p. xxiv and xxvi.

<sup>37</sup> "Presidents before Bachelet." June 28 2005

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## **LA "DESHUMANIZACIÓN" Y "LA BÚSQUEDA" EN *LOS PASOS PERDIDOS* DE ALEJO CARPENTIER**

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La novela de Alejo Carpentier, *Los pasos perdidos*, es un texto que configura a través del motivo del viaje la necesidad del ser humano de profundizar en su razón de ser. El objetivo de este trabajo es mostrar la deshumanización del hombre a través de esta obra de Carpentier. El hombre se cansa de la monotonía de su rutina diaria y busca la razón de su existencia. Mocega-González, señala que para Carpentier esta búsqueda se transforma en algo mucho más profundo y enigmático, ya que se convierte en la necesidad de estudiar al hombre en el tiempo para buscar lo que es eternamente humano fuera del tiempo. (*El concepto del tiempo* 123)

El protagonista en la obra de Carpentier es un músico que se siente alienado por los valores falsos de la civilización moderna y emprende un viaje al interior del país, en este caso a la selva sudamericana, para buscar los verdaderos valores entre los aborígenes de aquella región. El protagonista llega así a conocer su verdadera identidad. La narrativa de lo real maravilloso empleada por Carpentier en esta obra tiene su origen en el surrealismo europeo. Esta escuela busca lo visionario dentro de la mente humana para explicar aquello que va más allá de la realidad objetiva. Según el crítico Orlando Gómez-Gil, Carpentier asimila "las corrientes neosimbolistas" (677) en *Los pasos perdidos*. Y en efecto, el simbolismo también trata de explicar por medio de imágenes aquello que se siente, pero que no se logra expresar lógicamente.

Para comprender mejor a Carpentier conviene mencionar aquí brevemente a Kafka y a Dragún, otros dos autores que se ocupan de la deshumanización y de la enajenación del hombre frente al mundo moderno. Franz Kafka (1883-1924) natural de Praga, fue un autor judío alemán que vivía en lo que entonces era Bohemia, una región del Imperio Austro-Húngaro. De ahí viene que Kafka escribiera en alemán. El surrealismo europeo lo puso de moda, ya que Kafka expresa mejor que ningún otro autor los estados visionarios del hombre y su enajenación frente al mundo moderno. A su vez el surrealismo le debe mucho a Sigmund Freud, el médico que inventó el psicoanálisis y con ello dio a conocer que el subconsciente de la mente del hombre influye en la creatividad humana, ya sea de tipo literario, musical o artístico. El subconsciente es la fuerza motora capaz de sobreponerse a la realidad.

Por otro lado, el argentino Osvaldo Dragún (1929-1999) fue el fundador del llamado "teatro abierto." Este era un movimiento de la gente del teatro que luchaba contra la censura y las dictaduras militares. Dragún se vale de la técnica del teatro del absurdo que surgió en Europa durante los años cincuenta para satirizar la absurda vida burguesa con sus convicciones antiguadas. Dragún

también se ocupa del problema del hombre que se siente aislado en un mundo que no conoce la piedad. Tanto Carpentier como Kafka así como Dragún, se ocupan de la alineación del hombre moderno, pero cada uno presenta este problema de forma diferente. Kafka hace un estudio psicológico del alma humana en su novela *La metamorfosis* (1912). El protagonista es una persona que se siente enajenada de su familia debido a una enfermedad repulsiva. Eso da motivos a que se sienta como una cucaracha inmunda. Kafka deja a su protagonista convertido en insecto y no le da la oportunidad de salir de ese estado. Es una concepción pesimista de la existencia humana.

Por su parte Dragún expresa en su breve obra de teatro titulada *El hombre que se convirtió en perro* (1957) el aislamiento que siente una persona frente a una sociedad a la que no le importa el sufrimiento humano. El protagonista pide como último recurso para obtener empleo que le den el puesto de perro guardián atado a una perrera. Le dan el puesto y el hombre acaba creyendo que es un perro de verdad. La obra de Dragún es de tipo tendencioso, ya que su propósito es político. Se trata de una protesta social izquierdista, cosa que no se da en Kafka. Al autor alemán sólo le interesa el aspecto psicológico del ser humano.

Al igual que Kafka y Dragún, Carpentier hace ver como el protagonista queda deshumanizado en el mundo moderno, pero Carpentier es más positivo que los otros dos autores mencionados. El protagonista de la obra de Carpentier encuentra al final lo que buscaba. Como dice Mocega-González su viaje puede considerarse como una experiencia mística, que para él es la solución a su problema existencial (*Estudios sobre su narrativa* 37). Claro está que esa experiencia mística no es exactamente la clase de experiencia mística de los autores españoles del Siglo de Oro basada en la divina providencia. Mocega-González señala también que "Carpentier no puede desasirse de la historia en la obra. La trama descansa en una simbología histórica vertida en moldes estéticos" (*El concepto del tiempo* 126). Sin embargo, la idea central es mucho más compleja. El escape a través del tiempo y del espacio conduce a pensar en las razones que propician este intento de evasión, de búsqueda de la esencia de la vida, del origen de uno mismo, y finalmente se llega a la pregunta ¿qué es lo que consigue el narrador en esta fuga temporal y espacial?

Sin duda alguna, el hombre vive en lucha con el tiempo y esta idea, que es la base de la filosofía existencialista, aparece ampliamente expresada en la obra de Carpentier. El existencialismo se convierte a su vez en "esencialismo," es decir, en "necesidad." Se trata por lo tanto de la necesidad que siente el narrador de buscar su razón existencial, y eso se debe a que el narrador es incapaz de encontrar su identidad en una sociedad enajenante. Se siente aislado porque vive en una sociedad que lo convierte en un mero número. Esto se ve claramente en el hecho de que el narrador es el único personaje anónimo de la obra. Es por tanto un ser sin identidad propia convertido en un insecto. Carpentier dice, "Habíamos caído en la era del Hombre- Avispa, del Hombre-

Ninguno, en que las almas no se vendían al Diablo, sino al Contable o al Cómite" (11). Para Carpentier esto significa el proceso de animalización del ser humano, ya que el hombre acaba encerrado como un insecto en una colmena de hormigón, dentro de un forjado de cemento y hierro, en una "ciudad supertecnificada" (Loveluck 127).

Es evidente que ante nosotros tenemos una imagen poderosa del enajenamiento y del anonimato al que se ve sometido el hombre del presente. Cabe ahora la pregunta ¿Por qué elige Carpentier la imagen de "hombre-avispa" en vez de "hombre-abeja"? La respuesta es bien clara. En primer lugar la avispa, al igual que la abeja, vive en una colmena lo cual expresa la imagen de la aglomeración de los seres humanos en una gran ciudad. Pero la avispa al contrario de la abeja no produce miel para el mercado. El hombre al igual que la avispa entra y sale de su colmena urbana pero no produce nada útil.

En consecuencia, el hombre que vende su tiempo y sus brazos por un salario sacrifica el tiempo que tiene para vivir: así dice el narrador: "Mi alma diurna estaba vendida al Contable" (11). El hombre se encierra en una rutina diaria, y finalmente, cuando tiene la posibilidad de usar su tiempo para recrearse, no sabe "cómo aprovechar el ocio" (14). La falta de ocio afecta, por lo tanto, el ritmo vital del ser humano y su capacidad de divertirse y de disfrutar, una vez que se ha sometido al pesado yugo que le impone la civilización moderna. Esta idea de carga o peso se ve magníficamente representada en el narrador identificándose con el mito de Sísifo. Esta figura de la mitología griega está condenada por los dioses a cargar una gran roca colina arriba para, una vez en el tope, volver a dejarla caer y empezar otra vez la penitencia durante toda la eternidad. Esta identificación no sólo se refiere al narrador, sino al colectivo de la humanidad estancada en un círculo improductivo y absurdo, donde el tiempo de cada persona es lineal y finito pero donde el destino del ser humano es un castigo cíclico y eterno. El paso del tiempo crea un sentimiento de angustia vital especialmente en el contexto de la civilización de la ciudad que marca sus ritmos con relojes y horarios pre-establecidos. Esa angustia vital lleva al narrador a un profundo sentimiento de vacío. Y así lo exterioriza Carpentier, diciendo: "una ciudad donde la miseria es más dura de afrontar que en cualquier otra parte," y añade: "además, ¡estoy vacío! ¡Vacío! ¡Vacío!" (23).

El sentimiento que domina al narrador antes de emprender su viaje simbólico a través de la selva es el de la inutilidad de su vida y la pérdida de su identidad como hombre, y dice: "la inutilidad de mi vida, su aturdimiento durante el día, su inconsciencia durante la noche... me aterro, al oírme de lo difícil que es volver a ser hombre cuando se ha dejado de ser hombre" (23). En esta misma introspección narrativa, el protagonista hace una división totalmente existencialista "entre el Yo presente y el Yo que hubiera aspirado a ser algún día" (23). Jorge Rodrigo Ayora pone en duda el existencialismo atribuido a Carpentier, y en cambio le atribuye a su novela un "marxismo humanista" (886). A su vez el propio Ayora ve en el personaje Extieich una parodia de un filósofo

existencialista (888), y es por eso que Carpentier le hace decir: "que quien actuaba de modo automático era *esencia* sin *existencia*" (30). Se trata de una alusión al filósofo alemán Heidegger, el cual hizo en su obra *Sein und Zeit* la distinción entre *sein* "ser" y *dasein* "existir". Carpentier pinta a los refinados europeos como seres "que se entregan a doctrinas de gimnasia verbal que no tocan la médula del hombre" (Ayora 889). La razón existencial que busca el narrador la va a encontrar, por lo tanto, entre los aborígenes suramericanos, en una sociedad más primitiva y de hecho menos artificial que la de los europeos.

El viaje es el hilo de conexión entre los dos mundos que el narrador va a comparar en su búsqueda existencialista: el mundo moderno de la "ciudad supertecnificada" y "el mundo primitivo de Sta. Mónica de los Venados." La salida de la ciudad anónima será para él como la liberación de la roca de Sísifo, aunque esa liberación no será completa hasta que Mouche — último punto de conexión entre el hombre de la ciudad que es el "Yo presente" y el narrador explorador en busca del "Yo que hubiera aspirado a ser"—desaparezca de la escena. Admitir a Mouche en este nuevo mundo, hubiera sido como contaminar lo puro de este mundo primitivo que se irá abriendo poco a poco ante él. Cada una de las etapas del viaje cubre simbólicamente una etapa existencial o espiritual del protagonista-narrador, donde el personaje deja de ser un individuo para convertirse en testigo universal de los orígenes humanos. Mouche desaparece convenientemente de la escena cuando debe hacerlo. El seguir con ella negaría el sentido de su búsqueda, ya que eso sería continuar cargando parte de la roca urbana de la que está tratando de despojarse.

La aparición de Rosario como mujer atemporal está más en consonancia con la nueva etapa vital del narrador: es Eva, la mujer original, la mujer que es todas las mujeres y todas las razas porque es anterior al concepto de la raza y como señala el crítico Mark Millington: "Rosario has features which are supposed to precede social structures" (356). Para Millington el papel de Rosario en la búsqueda existencial del narrador es clave: "She is a focus of positive qualities which resuscitate forgotten areas in his inner life and which prompt him to take major steps out of superannuated social and cultural structures into the (re)discovery of something more vigorous and natural" (356).

Si toda la obra tiene un contenido simbólico, así también lo tienen las mujeres que aparecen en ella. Podría incluso decirse que el viaje del narrador es también un viaje por el tiempo que estudia las diferentes funciones sociales que ha ejercido la mujer a lo largo de la historia de la humanidad: Ruth representa la esposa moderna e independiente, Mouche es la amante, la hembra presente en todos los tiempos desde que el mundo es mundo y el hombre es hombre, y finalmente Rosario, la mujer ideal, la hembra primitiva que se somete a las reglas de un sistema patriarcal. Rosario es por lo tanto el personaje opuesto a Ruth, la esposa del narrador. Ruth es parte del mundo moderno que aborrece el narrador. Sin embargo, el narrador no acaba al lado de Rosario, al lado de la mujer que anhela, debido a que se ve ante el dilema de tener que elegir entre la

mujer ideal o el mundo moderno. El narrador elige el mundo moderno, el mundo que le ofrece "papel" y "tinta" (258) para poder seguir escribiendo sus partituras.

En resumen, ¿Qué es lo que ha conseguido el personaje / narrador en su búsqueda a través del tiempo y del espacio? La respuesta está en lo que dice al final de la novela: "hoy terminaron las vacaciones de Sísifo" (294). Con estas palabras logra el narrador la paz con el mundo y consigo mismo. Lo positivo en ese viaje del narrador es el hecho de que acepta la condición de "hombre-avispa" porque ha comprendido que el mundo en el que le ha tocado vivir es como es, y no como pudiera haber sido.

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## **LA MUERTE DEL HÉROE TRADICIONAL: JUGANDO CON LA HISTORIA NICARAGÜENSE EN *MARGARITA ESTÁ LINDA LA MAR* DE SERGIO RAMÍREZ**

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*Margarita, está linda la mar* (1998) recrea escenas de la historia nicaragüense enfocándose en la muerte del poeta Rubén Darío en 1916 y el asesinato del dictador Anastasio Somoza García en 1956. En esta versión de la historia predomina la influencia del azar y el inútil asesinato de Somoza se describe como una broma del destino. La insólita perspectiva de la historia presente en *Margarita* distorsiona a las grandes figuras, enfocándose en sus fracasos y momentos de humillación. En vez de retratar momentos gloriosos de héroes tradicionales, *Margarita, está linda la mar* sigue la corriente de la nueva novela histórica, distorsionando a las grandes figuras, describiéndolas de manera grotesca, y revelando su lado oscuro. Este trabajo analizará la ausencia de héroes tradicionales y la inesperada presencia de cualidades heroicas en los personajes poetas.

*Margarita* se desarrolla alrededor de un grupo de amigos (los amigos de "la mesa maldita") que conspira contra el dictador Anastasio Somoza García y logra asesinarlo el 21 de septiembre del año 1956, a pesar de su sorprendente falta de experiencia y organización. El texto consiste en un complejo pastiche de escenas, con frecuentes cortes y saltos temporales, que describe las actividades de los conspiradores, los últimos años del poeta Rubén Darío y los últimos días del dictador Somoza. En el transcurso de la novela se observan los preparativos del asesinato, y la sección final sigue los pasos de Rigoberto López Pérez cuando ejecuta el asesinato de Somoza. Para entender la desmitificación y distorsión de las grandes figuras de Darío y Somoza, es necesario considerar la fuerte influencia de la nueva novela histórica.

### **El héroe en la nueva novela histórica**

El florecimiento de la nueva novela histórica en la literatura latinoamericana en los últimos veinte años ha sido dramático, dejando su huella en las obras de escritores célebres como Alejo Carpentier, Carlos Fuentes, Fernando del Paso, Gabriel García Márquez y Mario Vargas Llosa. En los últimos años, novelas como *La fiesta del chivo* (2000) de Mario Vargas Llosa, *Respiración artificial* (1980) de Ricardo Piglia, y *La novela de Perón* (1985)<sup>1</sup> de Tomas Eloy Martínez han tomado libertades irreverentes con la historia al inventar diálogos, documentos, eventos y personajes - técnicas que estiman más la creatividad que la realidad histórica. La nueva novela histórica vuelve su mirada al pasado al igual que la novela histórica tradicional, pero con un acercamiento contemporáneo que cuestiona la historia oficial y los métodos historiográficos,



suele criticar a los héroes y favorece una combinación creativa de ficción y hechos históricos.

La novela histórica tradicional tiene la función didáctica de transmitir la verdad y no cuestiona la existencia de una verdad absoluta fuera del texto. La nueva novela histórica en cambio, suele atacar directamente la historia oficial, cuestiona el proceso de escribir la historia, y establece dudas sobre la existencia de una verdad absoluta, así como del poder de la palabra para transmitir un mensaje. Conserva algunos rasgos de la novela tradicional, pero, "la nueva novela histórica ignora, transgrede, recupera, y refuncionaliza las convenciones de la novela histórica tradicional, estableciendo nuevas prácticas y relaciones de sentido" (Pons 376). De esta manera la nueva novela histórica establece un diálogo con la novela histórica tradicional, criticando y evolucionando el concepto fundamental de la novela histórica.

El concepto del héroe sufre también cambios dramáticos en manos de los escritores de la nueva novela histórica. En vez de ver al héroe en su momento de gloria, lo vemos en momentos de derrota o fracaso, en textos que tienden a buscar su lado oscuro o desconocido. Es decir, la nueva novela histórica establece un tono irreverente que desmitifica las grandes figuras de la historia o "se los hace bajar de su 'pedestal'" (Ainsa 19). En *El arpa y la sombra* de Alejandro Carpentier, por ejemplo, se revela un Cristóbal Colón embustero y mentiroso que se encuentra a punto de morir, reflexionando sobre los fracasos de su vida y ocultando la verdad mientras se confiesa con un cura. En la nueva novela histórica, técnicas como la ironía, la parodia, la exageración, o lo grotesco deforman radicalmente la cara del héroe y resultan en la deconstrucción de mitos y creencias del pasado (Ainsa 14).

### **Dos caras antiheroicas: Somoza y Darío**

Anastasio Somoza García y Rubén Darío son las dos figuras más conocidas de la historia nicaragüense y representan, como señala Carlos Fuentes, las dos caras de América Latina: el poeta y el tirano (*Los Angeles Times* 6). Para establecer las conexiones entre las vidas de estos dos personajes históricos, Ramírez utiliza una estructura paralela que relaciona las escenas de los últimos años de la vida de Darío en 1907-1916 con las escenas del día del asesinato de Somoza en 1956. En esta novela se ve claramente la desmitificación de estas figuras importantes de la historia nicaragüense. El retrato de Somoza subraya sus defectos físicos y morales. En vez de un tirano formidable que inspira terror, se describe a una persona con muchas fallas. Los amigos de "la mesa maldita" (los conspiradores que asesinan a Somoza) se burlan constantemente de las debilidades físicas de Somoza, se divierten con chistes sobre su colestectomía (36-7) y comentan que "sin tener culo se ha cagado en todo Nicaragua" (36). La burla de su condición médica forma parte de una metáfora del mal olor relacionada con su presencia. Ramírez nos recuerda

también que de joven Somoza trabajó por un tiempo como inspector de excusados.

Se destaca el desprecio de la gente por Somoza en los apodos que le dan. Se refiere a Somoza como "el ruiseñor bien cebado" (17), un "ruiseñor que canta antes de morir" (140), "el gángster" (264, 326), "el gran falsificador" (217), "la bestia" (217, 220), "el anticristo" (217), y "un reptil con una cola enhiesta" (57). Los amigos de "la mesa maldita" componen un irreverente currículum vitae de Somoza (165-77) que resume sus peores actos de corrupción, engaño y violencia y subraya las debilidades morales del dictador nicaragüense. Este documento invierte la función tradicional de un currículum vitae al criticar a Somoza e intensificar la degradación de su imagen en vez de señalar sus mejores cualidades.

No queda duda que en la vida del poeta Rubén Darío el genio literario se encuentra a la par de graves problemas personales. Las biografías más conocidas mencionan abiertamente su alcoholismo, sus relaciones amorosas problemáticas, su timidez y sus problemas financieros.<sup>2</sup> *Margarita* examina los últimos años de su vida cuando el alcoholismo es obvio y la decadencia personal domina su vida, obscureciendo los elementos positivos. La dramática escena cuando Darío llega borracho a su despedida en el Teatro Municipal y se cae en las gradas, golpeándose un ojo (95) demuestra claramente a un hombre en crisis. Las biografías darianas, al igual que *Margarita*, señalan una relación tormentosa con su segunda esposa Rosario Murillo.<sup>3</sup> Su amistad idealizada con el médico Debayle<sup>4</sup> se revela como una relación basada en amenazas y ambición que se describe en *Margarita* (65) tanto como en las biografías (Belmás 426). De la misma manera, la operación del hígado que acelera su muerte (245) y la pelea por su cerebro (272-9) que destacan la degradación física del cuerpo de Darío están documentadas en las biografías.<sup>5</sup> A los datos biográficos, Ramírez añade detalles ficticios que aumentan el ambiente de mala fortuna y degradación. Divulga las tristes condiciones del retorno triunfal de Darío a su tierra natal: llega en un corriente barco de correo, en un viaje que es un "tormento infernal" (21). La opinión de la gente común también degrada la imagen del héroe. Un personaje insiste en que Darío era español y nació en Sevilla, cuestionando su identidad nicaragüense (45). Y hablando con los amigos de "la mesa maldita", Rigoberto opina que muchos nicaragüenses no conocían la poesía de Darío, ni tenían acceso a ella (280). Para colmo, los amigos de "la mesa maldita" están convencidos de que Darío era impotente (73).

Queda claro que *Margarita* degrada a Darío tanto como a Somoza, mostrando los elementos oscuros de sus vidas y bajándolos de sus pedestales en la historia. En el transcurso de la obra se describe a Darío y a Somoza en momentos de gloria frente al público (18, 16) y en momentos privados cuando están desnudos o son ridiculizados (99, 350). A los amigos de "la mesa maldita" no les interesa presentar una visión completa que incluye los momentos positivos y los triunfos literarios de Darío, sino que prefieren concentrarse en los fracasos

de los años antes de su muerte. La versión presentada en *Margarita* sigue en muchos aspectos los datos históricos pero al enfocarse en la época final de su vida crea un retrato distorsionado.

Aparte de las dos figuras famosas, la novela también baja a varios otros personajes de sus pedestales. La Primera Dama, Salvadora Debayle de Somoza, es descrita como exagerada y falsa; se viste como "una muñeca vieja" (311) y se comporta "de hecho y palabra, como una mercadera" (125). Como se ha visto en las novelas *Un baile de máscaras* y *Castigo divino*, las autoridades de la iglesia constituyen el blanco de burla en *Margarita* también. El sacerdote Mardoqueo, vicario mayor, es descubierto en relaciones con una planchadora y como castigo recibe el apodo sarcástico "El Santo Mardoqueo" y lo mandan a trabajar en un hospicio de niños huérfanos (194). De la misma manera el padre Olimpo Lozano tiene vicios inconsistentes con su vocación religiosa: cría gallos de pelea y tiene numerosos hijos ilegítimos (113).

### **Intrigante mezcla de historia y ficción**

A pesar de la distorsión, la vida de Darío presentada en *Margarita* no se aparta mucho de la realidad documentada en sus biografías. Seymour Menton apoya este punto de vista cuando dice que "queda por discutir hasta que punto se podría considerar una novela histórica a secas" (2). A diferencia con Menton, planteo que existen algunas excepciones importantes que distorsionan la historia y comprueban que *Margarita* no es una versión estrictamente histórica. Erwin, uno de los amigos que investiga la vida de Darío, se queja repetidamente de que los otros amigos inventan diálogos o añaden detalles dramáticos que distorsionan la información biográfica sobre Darío. Estas quejas sirven como una advertencia constante que esta versión de la vida de Darío no es puramente basada en hechos: es una combinación de ficción e historia. Otra advertencia que estamos en un mundo ficticio es la presencia en *Margarita* de figuras del mundo poético creado por Darío. Representa una inversión de la realidad y una salida dramática de la documentación histórica, demostrando claramente que esto no se trata de una recreación histórica. Los personajes Quirón (de "Coloquio de los centauros") y Eulalia (de "Era un aire suave"), mencionados en la poesía dariana, cobran vida en *Margarita*, figurando como personajes reales en su vida personal. La aparición de estos personajes en la vida de Darío señala que el narrador de *Margarita* toma libertades con la verdad al dejar que el mundo literario invada la historia. De la misma manera, Erwin reconoce que los amigos toman libertades con la historia de Darío y observa que "Rigoberto sabe hasta lo que Darío estaba pensando" (101). Las escenas que recrean la vida de Darío exploran sus pensamientos, inventando diálogos que no dependen de la historia sino del mundo de la ficción y de lo teatral. La Rosa Niña, única hija de Darío y su amante Eulalia en *Margarita*, representa otro ejemplo de salir de una versión estrictamente histórica. Las biografías de Darío mencionan a cinco hijos,

de los cuales, trágicamente, tres mueren.<sup>6</sup> Los dos sobrevivientes son Rubén Darío Contreras y Rubén Darío Sánchez; no hay ninguna hija que sobreviva.

### **Poetas como héroes**

Propongo que aunque no existan héroes tradicionales o gloriosos en *Margarita, está linda la mar* los poetas demuestran cualidades heroicas. Los personajes poetas en *Margarita* exhiben una identidad particular: tienen la valentía de cuestionar la historia escrita, romper barreras políticas y literarias y restaurar los valores. Sólo los poetas entienden la necesidad de examinar el pasado para mejorar el futuro. Aquí examinaremos las cualidades heroicas de tres poetas: Rigoberto, Quirón, y Darío. Rigoberto López Pérez, el mártir quien logra asesinar al dictador Somoza, es conocido por muchos como el "Poeta" y después del asesinato le gritan "¡Poeta! ¿Qué está haciendo allí?" (341). La poesía conecta las vidas de Rubén Darío, el personaje Quirón y Rigoberto. Darío transfiere el numen poético a su hijo literario Quirón (29) y le enseña a leer. Quirón a su vez le enseña literatura a Rigoberto, estableciendo un linaje poético directo y una transferencia de valores entre ellos. Así como el centauro mitológico Quirón era el tutor de héroes como Jasón y Aquiles, el personaje Quirón en *Margarita* es el tutor del mártir Rigoberto. Igual que su antecedente mitológico, Quirón en *Margarita* aparece como un ser inmortal y sufrido.<sup>7</sup> Después de la muerte de Darío, hay una pelea entre su médico y su ex-suegro para la posesión de su cerebro. Durante la caótica pelea Quirón, la única persona que realmente respeta a Darío y lamenta su muerte, aparece sigilosamente y roba el frasco que contiene el cerebro dariano. Al robar el cerebro de Darío (278) y años después el frasco con los testículos del mártir Rigoberto (368), Quirón rescata estos tesoros de un mundo de corrupción y avaricia para restaurar su verdadero valor. Nicasio Urbina comenta la importancia de Quirón: "De esta forma la novela propone a Quirón como el salvador de los símbolos claves en esta representación de la historia de Nicaragua: el cerebro de Darío y los testículos de Rigoberto López Pérez. La inteligencia y el valor, la suave armonía de la palabra de Darío y la valentía del sacrificio ulterior de López Pérez" (367). De igual manera, Rigoberto intenta restaurar la imagen positiva de Darío como héroe de Nicaragua y, al sacrificar su propia vida en el asesinato de Somoza, intenta restaurar la independencia y la libertad a su patria.

La obra poética de Darío es revolucionaria e innovadora: hace una contribución sin igual al movimiento modernista. José Olivio Jiménez afirma que Darío "es el responsable mayor de la renovación profunda que el modernismo cumplió sobre la métrica y el lenguaje de la poesía castellana" (168) y en la introducción de *Este otro Rubén Darío*, Belmás se refiere a "la poética hazaña revolucionaria" de Darío (x). La poesía de Darío experimentó con nuevas formas, abrió nuevos espacios y, según Jiménez, "flexibilizó y diversificó de manera asombrosa los esquemas métrico-rítmicos y estróficos" (168). Darío también entiende la necesidad de examinar el pasado y restaurar sus elementos

de valor; un aspecto importante de su obra es la revitalización de formas consideradas arcaicas (Jiménez 168). Como Darío, Rigoberto y Quirón piensan de manera independiente: cuestionan, critican y se atreven a abrir nuevos espacios.

### **Ciclos de violencia y restauración**

Los cuerpos de Darío y Rigoberto son sometidos a un proceso de mutilación seguida por una restauración. Darío sufre una cruel operación innecesaria a manos del Dr. Debayle que acelera su muerte (245). Entonces el Dr. Debayle degrada el cuerpo del poeta cuando le saca el cerebro para satisfacer sus ambiciones profesionales (273). Después de morir Rigoberto fusilado por la guardia de Somoza, su cuerpo se degrada también cuando Somoza ordena que le corten los testículos (348). Quirón actúa en contra de esta violencia y repara la degradación, rescatando el cerebro de Darío y paralelamente cuarenta años más tarde los testículos de Rigoberto. Para los amigos que conspiran contra Somoza, el complot es parte de este ciclo de muerte y resurrección: ofrece una manera de matar al dictador y renovar los valores de Sandino. Cuando los amigos de "la mesa maldita" hablan de la necesidad de asesinar a Somoza mencionan de un "ave fénix" que resurgirá "de las cenizas" (219). Aunque el valor de Rigoberto al sacrificar su vida es admirable, no se retrata como un héroe en *Margarita* porque sus intentos fracasan y no producen el resultado deseado. La ejecución de su plan es desorganizada y a veces ridícula. A fin de cuentas su sacrificio es inútil y realmente no cambia la historia dado que Luis Somoza Debayle, el hijo mayor de Anastasio Somoza García, asume el poder inmediatamente después del asesinato.

Las numerosas descripciones grotescas del cuerpo humano en *Margarita* forman un motivo carnavalesco y revelan las ideas más profundas en la novela. En el mundo bajtiniano se encuentra el verdadero mensaje a través de las profundidades del cuerpo humano y no al nivel de explicaciones intelectuales (*Rabelais and His World* 369). El ambiente carnavalesco y la exageración de lo físico desarrolla una polémica entre lo bajo y lo alto, lo corpóreo y lo intelectual, el caos y la autoridad establecida. Planteo que las descripciones grotescas de los cuerpos en *Margarita*, entonces, contienen la clave para entender su mensaje central sobre la violencia y la restauración.

Propongo que "la mesa maldita" es otro lugar saturado por el ambiente carnavalesco. A través de las bromas grotescas sobre el cuerpo de Somoza y la risa carnavalesca, los amigos ridiculizan a Somoza, cuestionan su autoridad y se rebelan contra el orden establecido. Por medio de la risa los amigos pueden expresar lo prohibido y encuentran una manera de comunicar "the people's unofficial truth" (*Rabelais and His World* 90). Oficialmente hay que mostrar respeto para Somoza como un líder poderoso, pero la risa de los amigos revela que ellos cuestionan su poder. La verdadera situación está revelada físicamente en el cuerpo de Somoza; los amigos saben que su cuerpo es débil y no funciona.

La descripción grotesca del cuerpo de Somoza en el hospital da la misma perspectiva exagerada: Somoza es reducido a un cuerpo enorme, distorsionado e inútil (351). La descripción de su cuerpo es una manera física de descartar su autoridad y abrir un espacio para cambiar el orden.

De la misma manera, algunas escenas con Darío y Rigoberto exageran el aspecto corpóreo. En su lecho de muerte, Darío es reducido a un cuerpo grotesco, mutilado y deformado por su alcoholismo, por la operación innecesaria y por el proceso de sacarle el cerebro. Durante sus últimas horas acuden un pintor, un fotógrafo y un dibujante para sacar imágenes grotescas de su agonía (270).<sup>8</sup>

El cuerpo del mártir Rigoberto sufre un tratamiento grotesco también. La orden de Somoza de cortarles los testículos al cadáver de su asesino, Rigoberto, es humillante, degrada a su memoria, y demuestra su desprecio de manera concreta (367). Ramírez toma una decisión importante en su tratamiento de la historia con respecto a Darío y Rigoberto. Después de mostrar la mutilación física de ellos, se incluyen escenas ficticias que demuestran la recuperación física de las partes robadas y la resistencia contra el orden establecido. Bajtín nos recuerda que las historias sobre la parte inferior del cuerpo muchas veces se tratan de restauración (311). La creación del personaje Quirón, quien rescata y restaura el cerebro de Darío y los testículos de Rigoberto, cambia dramáticamente esta versión de la historia que presenta Ramírez. La imagen del centauro Quirón galopando por las calles con un frasco sangriento parece rara pero imparte el mensaje central al convertir los actos de degradación en actos de restauración y respeto. Al inventar estas acciones de Quirón se va más allá de los hechos históricos; al añadir estas escenas ficticias se cambia el significado de este episodio y la perspectiva histórica. En *Margarita* se ve claramente cómo Ramírez introduce lo carnavalesco para crear una perspectiva nueva de la historia.

### **Degradación y restauración con la estatua dariana**

En el segundo capítulo, la historia de una pequeña estatua del poeta Darío subraya de manera cómica la desmitificación dariana. Esta estatua de mármol, en vez de un destino más noble, fue rematada y ocupada para adornar una sorbetería en El Salvador (43-5). El Doctor Cisne y Rigoberto deciden rescatar la estatua del olvido, deshonra y exilio con el fin de restaurar la reputación de Darío como un tesoro nacional. Las últimas palabras que Rigoberto intercambia con El Capitán Prío antes de morir tratan de este proyecto importante: "Ya cumplí con lo que me tocaba, Capitán. Rubén va a quedar en su pedestal" (331). Sus palabras se refieren a la vez a la restauración de la estatua y a su propio papel en el asesinato de Somoza. En *Margarita*, la restauración de Darío y del orgullo nacional, y la necesidad de actuar de acuerdo con valores morales están vinculadas con la necesidad de asesinar a Somoza. La novela relata el retorno y la despedida de Darío, y paralelamente la pérdida y luego el

retorno triunfal de la estatua. La estatua sugiere un ciclo de degradación y restauración que sirve otra vez como metáfora para la condición de Nicaragua.

Después del triunfo de la Revolución Sandinista en 1979, se puede decir que la meta principal de los revolucionarios fue restaurar valores, reestablecer un gobierno justo y reparar el daño de años de represión sufrida durante la dictadura de Somoza. Irónicamente, el partido Sandinista eventualmente cayó en corrupción<sup>9</sup> lo cual añade otra capa histórica al ciclo de degradación y restauración.

Al reflexionar sobre la historia nicaragüense, Ramírez encuentra que no hay respuestas fáciles ni héroes tradicionales. Como los amigos de "la mesa maldita" señalan en sus tertulias irreverentes, en la crítica histórica lo que más vale es cuestionar y ser creativo. Aunque *Margarita* cuestiona los eventos constantemente, la mayoría de los datos y personajes siguen la realidad histórica y sólo acude a la imaginación literaria para crear diálogos dramáticos y añadir detalles. La presencia de Quirón (centauro mítico, tutor, y poeta), en cambio, transforma radicalmente el mensaje de *Margarita*. Al crear el linaje poético entre Darío-Quirón-Rigoberto, Ramírez introduce esperanza en este mundo de fracaso y abre nuevas posibilidades en la historia. En medio de interminables fracasos y violencia, Quirón es capaz de grandes sacrificios, resiste la represión, inicia un proceso de restauración, desea mejorar el mundo y funciona como protector de los tesoros nacionales. La historia provee numerosos momentos de fracaso, pero Ramírez inventa los momentos de restauración. En esta nueva relación con la historia, el autor toma las riendas de la historia para sugerir nuevas posibilidades. Las cualidades que han sido importantes para Nicaragua en el pasado- la inteligencia, la expresión artística y el valor- son las fuentes de su identidad nacional y serán las herramientas para un mejor futuro.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> *La novela de Perón* hace uso de documentos ficticios igual que *Margarita* y la mayoría de las novelas de Ramírez. A veces el lenguaje y la forma de los documentos ficticios es tan convincente que los lectores los aceptan como históricos. El lector perspicaz percibe la ironía, la distorsión o el humor en romper las barreras entre la historiografía y la ficción. Es un tema muy pertinente para la nueva novela histórica pero el presente trabajo con su enfoque en el héroe, no comenta en detalle el uso de los documentos.

<sup>2</sup> Entre las biografías que detallan los problemas que atormentaron a Darío están: *Genio y figura de Rubén Darío* por Roberto Ledesma, *Este otro Rubén Darío* por Antonio Oliver Belmás, y *La dramática vida de Rubén Darío* por Edelberto Torres.

<sup>3</sup> En cuanto a Rosario Murillo, Ledesma cuenta que ella emborracha a Darío y pasa una noche con él, forzando un casamiento que resulta "una página dolorosa

de violencia y engaño" (29) y Belmás se refiere a su relación con "la garza morena" como "un terremoto trágico" (73).

<sup>4</sup> Aparecen dos poemas en honor a Debayle dentro de la obra poética de Darío: "En casa del Doctor Luis H. Debayle-Toast" y "Respuesta al Doctor Debayle."

<sup>5</sup> La descripción en *Margarita* de la muerte de Darío, la extracción de su cerebro y la disputa entre Debayle y Andrés Murillo por su posesión sigue la versión de Belmás (89) mientras la versión de Ledesma sólo lo menciona de paso (50).

<sup>6</sup> Con su primera esposa, Rafaela Contreras, Darío tiene un hijo, Rubén Darío Contreras. Después de la muerte de Rafaela, Darío se casa con Rosario Murillo pero no tienen hijos. Su amante madrileña, Francisca Sánchez, le da tres hijos pero dos mueren, sólo Rubén Darío Sánchez sobrevive (Ledesma 6-7).

<sup>7</sup> El libro *Classical Myth* de Barry Powell informa que el centauro Quirón fue conocido por su sabiduría, conocimiento de medicina, inmortalidad, y era tutela de varios héroes (Jasón y Aquiles entre otros). Fue herido por una flecha envenenada y sufría pero no podía morir. Eventualmente Prometeo cambió de lugar con él y así pudo morirse Quirón (167, 359, 521).

<sup>8</sup> El libro *Este otro Rubén Darío* de Antonio Belmás comprueba que la familia de Darío autorizó la entrada de un fotógrafo para retratarlo en su lecho de muerte y la fotografía aparece en el libro *Genio y figura de Rubén Darío* por Roberto Ledesma (162).

<sup>9</sup> La posición política de Ramírez ha cambiado dramáticamente con el tiempo. En 1979 cuando triunfó la Revolución Sandinista, Ramírez era un sandinista ferviente, formó parte del Grupo de los Doce y fue vicepresidente durante el régimen sandinista. Después de la derrota electoral de los sandinistas en 1990 y las acusaciones de corrupción, Ramírez y otros denunciaron al FSLN y formaron el Movimiento Reformador Sandinista. Para los comentarios del propio Ramírez sobre su posición política, véase su entrevista con Silvia Cherem en *La Reforma*.

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## **VECTORS OF CONTESTATION: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND PARTY SYSTEMS IN ECUADOR AND COLOMBIA**

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In a developed democratic party system, the party is perceived as a channel for popular contestation of policies. If an individual or group is unsatisfied with the performance or policies of those in power, they can seek a change in these policies or of the governing regime itself by supporting opposing parties who seek to block the regime's policies through legislative action or to replace the regime through electoral competition. The linkages between parties and society, which seek to aggregate and channel the interests of the citizenry, and which bind the government so that it is responsive to its constituency, create a symbiotic relationship of representation and electoral support between policymakers and electors. V.O. Key refers to linkages as "the interconnections between mass opinion and public decision,"<sup>2</sup> indicating the importance of having an institutional arrangement in which public participation is perceived to have some discernable effect on political decisions. What happens, however, when the existing party system in a particular country is not living up to its role as an institutional arrangement that adequately channels public participation and demands into responsive governance? This paper attempts to answer that question by proposing and exploring a framework for understanding the links between party system weakness and the rise of political contestation outside the party system, particularly protests and social movements. I argue that countries in which party systems are poorly institutionalized, with low levels of trust in parties and limited popular access to political space, but in which the climate of repression toward citizen action is fairly low, are more likely to be characterized by high levels of protest and social movement activity. I explore this argument empirically through a preliminary plausibility probe, applying the framework to the cases of Colombia and Ecuador.

Other scholars have noted that linkages can take many forms, including those that go beyond traditional conceptions of political representation through electoral selection. According to Kay Lawson, "Participation in protest demonstrations has sometimes been added to the list of acts of aggregated citizenship (i.e., in addition to voting and replying to pollsters), but the units of analysis remain the same: citizens, intermediate groups, governments."<sup>3</sup> In weakly institutionalized party systems, the role of parties as channels for contestation and as the champions of various interests linked to the broader society is eroded. Parties are seen as self-interested groupings of elites protecting only their own interests, which are significantly divorced from the interests of society at large.

The strength of the institutional channels available for public participation has a very direct effect on the type of linkages that emerge between society and government, as well as on the mechanisms employed to achieve policy goals and affect the political decision-making process.<sup>4</sup> In situations in which the representative function of the party system does not work effectively and does not create the reasonable expectation that the system can produce governments and policy outcomes that are acceptably in line with what a significant proportion of people want, alternative channels for contestation will emerge, and may seek to overturn the party system as it exists in order to create a system that is responsive in these ways. Dissatisfaction with the government is often not expressed through party competition to defeat the incumbent government, but through mass movements and protests that dismantle the government in an ad hoc manner.

One of the questions that arise is whether this contestation outside the party system indicates a different approach for understanding parties and political participation altogether, in which the locus of political contestation shifts from a narrow party focus to a broader social infrastructure that includes parties as one of several (and not necessarily the dominant) vectors of contestation. In some cases, parties and elements of civil society share real and rhetorical interests, and the population is presented with several options of channels through which to engage in political participation and contestation. The linkages between civil society, parties, and social movements create a much bigger infrastructure of contestation, and in weakly institutionalized systems, a more prominent alternative extraparty channel for opposition may exist than is typically found in Western European party democracies.

Such a system of 'fluid linkages' leads to concerted political action not just among parties, but also including indigenous movements, the military, labor unions, students, and others as key wielders of political power over the government. This may represent a new way of looking at vectors of contestation as the operative unit in inchoate systems like Ecuador, and perhaps even in other weakly institutionalized party systems in Latin America. It seems reasonable to ask not just what makes parties more or less effective and what makes social movements successful in achieving goals, but also what factors contribute to the relative prominence of each of these two vectors of contestation in any given polity. Peter Houtzager argues that traditional notions of contestation, political parties, and social movements "are based on the experience of relatively stable Western democracies....Such theories may not travel well to regions where key background conditions, such as the stability of institutional arrangements that link state and society, do not hold."<sup>5</sup> Although there are growing bodies of literature that separately explore Latin American democratic party systems and Latin American social movements, more work must be done to examine the intersections between these two fields in this region.

This paper addresses these questions in the context of Latin America, focusing particularly on comparisons between an inchoate party system (Ecuador) and a historically durable two-party system (Colombia)<sup>6</sup>. Building on the work of Scott Mainwaring, who argues that high electoral volatility and weak linkages between party and society are the key dimensions impeding the institutionalization of party systems in Latin American and other developing democratic states,<sup>7</sup> this paper examines the nexus between party system institutionalization and the rise of non-party modes of political and social contestation, such as social movements and violent uprisings.

Mainwaring and Scully construct an index to measure and describe the level of institutionalization of democratic party systems in Latin America, using this as a basis to argue that institutionalization is one of the primary factors in the likely success of a party system in achieving sustainable democratic governance within a particular state. The institutionalization concept that Mainwaring and Scully propose includes four main dimensions or components: stability of interparty competition patterns; the degree to which major parties are rooted in and meaningfully linked to broad elements of society; the legitimacy given by political actors to the electoral and party process and the expectation that this is the primary mechanism for achieving the power to govern; and the strength and autonomy of party organizations. According to these authors, "Democratic consolidation occurs when actors bet on electoral politics as the chief currency for achieving power and shaping the policy agenda. And they place their bets through parties."<sup>8</sup>

Taking a somewhat different angle, Lorenzo Meyer seeks to conceptualize political contestation within the context of post-authoritarian democratization as a unique phenomenon in which "more attention should be paid to the role of parties. In many cases, such parties will have few or no roots in the past. The task of creating and organizing such parties has to have a high priority on the agenda of the democratic leadership in the transition period. Parties have to be the institutions created to channel the energies of social movements, labor unions, and other anti-authoritarian forces present at the beginning of the reemergence of civil society. Without parties it would be very difficult to negotiate the necessary compromises among the main political actors and to neutralize the understandable but dangerous tendencies let loose by the 'maximalists' (mentioned by Guillermo O'Donnell) who can undermine the transition to a stable democracy."<sup>9</sup> This rather normative argument reflects the assumptions of many scholars, and even more nongovernmental organization practitioners engaged in democratic consolidation assistance in the developing world. It is not clear, however, why parties are in a better position to channel interests and energies than other competing vectors of contestation. This argument also seems to make a more developed normative argument about what *should* be than an analytical argument explaining what *is*. While this sort of argument is valuable and has an important role in scholarship, I will focus in

this paper more on an analytical argument to try to explain what happens and why it happens within different systems of political contestation.

According to Samuel Huntington, social and economic changes, such as urbanization, expanding political consciousness and participation, and increasing political demands, "undermine traditional sources of political authority and traditional political institutions; they enormously complicate the problems of creating new bases of political association and new political institutions combining legitimacy and effectiveness. The rates of social mobilization and the expansion of political participation are high; the rates of political organization and institutionalization are low. The result is political instability and disorder."<sup>10</sup> Huntington was an early leader in studying the relationship between political institutions such as parties and the larger social forces that provide the context in which political contestation takes place. Huntington argues, "All men who engage in political activity may be assumed to be members of a variety of social groupings. The level of political development of a society in large part depends upon the extent to which these political activists belong to and identify with a variety of political institutions."<sup>11</sup> Mainwaring and Scully drew on such previous work by Samuel Huntington and Charles Anderson, among others, and I in turn use Mainwaring & Scully's work as a point of departure for this paper. Despite their exclusive focus on institutionalization, they acknowledge that there are still large questions remaining to be answered: "Much more comparative work remains to be done on social bases of the parties, on party organization and the internal life of parties, on why some party systems become institutionalized and others do not, and on why some party systems deinstitutionalize."<sup>12</sup>

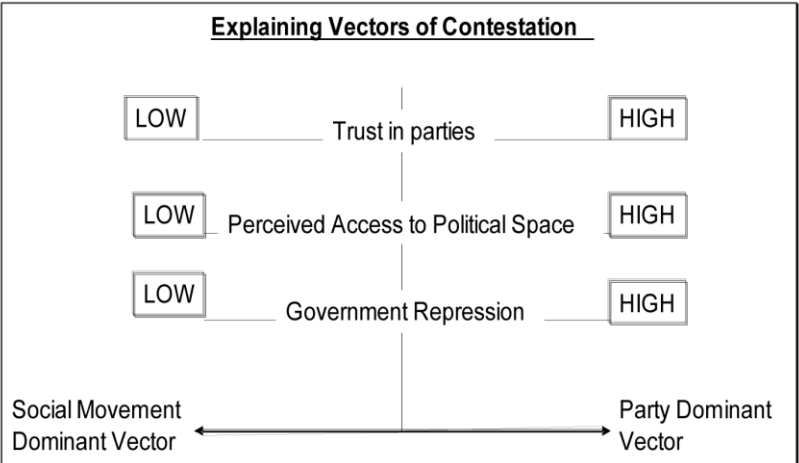
Mainwaring and Scully's concept of party institutionalization is a useful framework for understanding and analyzing party systems, especially in the developing world, but it contains some important limitations. First, the approach does not recognize explicitly the role that social movements and protest play as the primary alternative vectors of contestation outside the party system. The authors measure the strength and legitimacy of the party system, but they do not develop a detailed explanation of what happens when the party system is characterized by low institutionalization beyond arguing that this makes effective governance difficult. More attention is needed to elaborate the links between conventional political participation through the party system and unconventional protest and social movement activity outside of this system. When party legitimacy, organization, and links to society are low, and access to political decision-making space through parties is perceived to be very limited, institutionalization presumably will be low.

Latin America, however, is a region in which many of these conditions are true in a number of different states. On average, only 11% of Latin Americans said that they trusted political parties.<sup>13</sup> So, what explains the variance across countries in the occurrence of protest and social movement activity outside of the party system? Why do some states with low institutionalization simply

devolve into a fragile system of poor governance, while in others, societal actors mobilize and engage in organized contestation through direct protest rather than through party activity? Why do some polities take this a step further with violence and internal war, rather than parties or social movements, being the mechanism for contestation of policies?

I argue that repression of popular mobilization represents a key variable in explaining these differences. Low trust in political parties and limited access to political space create incentives for social actors to reject parties and look elsewhere for contestation of policies. The level of repression from government and other actors with violence capacity toward popular mobilization, however, affects the cost of acting on this incentive and engaging in protest and social movement activity (See Figure 1). Where repression is higher, the costs of political participation outside the party system are higher, and it is more likely that people will accept the party system despite its flaws (or, as I argue in the Colombia case study, higher levels of repression may also push political contestation into the realm of violent conflict).

**Figure I**



In brief comparative case studies of Ecuador and Colombia, I identify the key factors in each country that have contributed to the evolution or perpetuation of their particular type of party system, the impact that this has had on the institutionalization of the system, and I compare the varying importance of social movement behavior as a channel of contestation. The hypothesis that this paper tests is that polities in which the party system is characterized by lower levels of trust in parties and unfavorable perceptions of the potential for accessing institutional structures for political expression and which are characterized by lower levels of government repression of popular dissent are

more likely to see extensive social movement activity rising in importance as a competing alternative channel of political contestation at the national level.

### **Ecuador**

Like Colombia, Ecuador was dominated for decades by two dominant parties formed by landowning oligarchic elites, the Liberal Radical party and the Conservatives. Unlike Colombia, however, which was able to some extent to overcome bitter competition between these parties and the fierce infighting within them by forging a power-alternating arrangement known as the National Front, Ecuador followed a different trajectory in its democratic political development. With the urbanization and modernization that took place in the latter half of the twentieth century, a growing middle class began to demand a political voice, creating demand for new political parties offering alternatives to the traditional oligarchic dyad. Intense rivalry and regionalism, as well as traditions of clientelism and paternalistic authority structures, pitted factions and families from the coast against those from the mountainous Sierra and encouraged the rise of individualistic, relatively non-ideological, parties that mostly functioned as electoral vehicles for particular politicians.<sup>14</sup>

In the two decades since the post-authoritarian reinstatement of democratic elections in Ecuador, this South American country's political system has been riddled with some of the highest electoral volatility and the lowest voter confidence in parties in Latin America. According to Mainwaring & Scully, the Ecuadorian electorate fluctuated dramatically from one election to the next in the vote share it awarded various parties, and consequently, they assigned an institutionalization index of 5 (out of 12), one of the lowest scores in Latin America. When compared with twelve Latin American countries, Ecuador with an index of 37.9 had the highest mean electoral volatility for the period of 1971-1990 except for Peru and Brazil.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the Latinobarometer, a large-scale public opinion survey that measures key indicators throughout Latin America, reflects that Ecuadorians generally do not identify strongly with or have much trust in political parties, and that there has been a marked decrease in the satisfaction with democracy over the past decade. Specifically, only 26% of respondents mentioned a political party when asked which party they would vote for if an election were held right then (compared to a regional average of 43%), indicating a low degree of affiliation and identification with established parties. On the issue of whether their interests are being represented by political parties, 77% of respondents agreed with the statement that the country is governed for the benefit of powerful interests rather than for the good of everyone, indicating that the linkages between the political elite and the major groupings of constituent interests within civil society are quite weak.<sup>16</sup>

In order to better understand the relationship between the strength and institutionalization of the party system and the relative prevalence of protest and social movement activity outside of this system, I focus on institutional access to political space, trust in political parties, and repression of protest as independent variables. Only 45% of Ecuadorian voters agreed that "the way you vote can

change the way things will be in the future,” compared to a mean agreement rate of 56.4% for all 18 Latin American countries surveyed. The POLITY IV political participation index, which measures the extent to which non-elites are able to access institutional structures for political expression, reflects a score of 3 (out of 5). I have combined these two measures—the POLITY political participation index and the Latinobarometer perception that the way one votes makes a difference—to form an indicator of the availability of institutionalized access to political space. Lower numbers on this index indicate greater limitations on the population’s access to political space. Ecuador’s composite index score of 1.35 (out of a possible 5), compared to the Latin American average of 2.14 and a high score in Uruguay of 4, indicates a widespread perception in this country that ordinary people have very limited institutional options for accessing and influencing the political decision-making process.

The second indicator, that of trust or confidence in political parties, is measured by an average of Latinobarometer responses to three questions: a question asking whether elections are clean and not rigged, a question asking if democracy cannot function without political parties, and a question asking whether or not the person has confidence in political parties. Ecuador’s composite score for trust in parties according to this measure is quite low, with a score of 19, compared to a Latin American average of 34 (out of 100). Combined with the perception that there are significant limitations on the ability to access and influence political decisions through institutional channels, the low trust in parties provides some indication that there are significant incentives for people to look outside the party system for mechanisms of political contestation.

**Table I: Ecuadorian Indicators**

Institutionalized access to political space <sup>17</sup>	Trust/confidence in parties <sup>18</sup>	Climate of repression <sup>19</sup>	Aggregate non-electoral political participation <sup>20</sup>	Extent of Protest Activity <sup>21</sup>
1.35	19	3	25	2.42

Anita Isaacs gives a typical overview of the common view of Ecuadorian parties: “Political parties in Ecuador have been described as opportunistic, personalistic, or elitist. Being used by their leaders chiefly as an electoral vehicle, parties have generally lacked ideological or programmatic coherence, have had weak internal structure and organization, and have demonstrated a marked propensity for fragmentation.”<sup>22</sup> Since the mobility of politicians among parties has been high, party identification on the part of the electorate has generally been low, and the frequency of new parties emerging and collapsing has been high, it is unsurprising that Ecuador’s inchoate party system has not developed a coherent program for mature political and democratic development.

Former President of Ecuador Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea explained in an interview, “There cannot be high-quality democracy without a high-quality



system of political parties and without qualified leaders. The party system has been of poor quality principally, although not exclusively, because of its fragmentation. Throughout these past 17 years we have had more than a dozen political parties."<sup>23</sup>

Andrés Mejía details some of the factors that have contributed to the weakness of the party system in Ecuador:

In accordance with its colonial heritage, much of the political activity was developed in the image of the *caudillo*, and the political parties, when they existed, were not successful in identifying themselves with determinate groups within civil society, nor were they able to establish solid bases of electoral support. The electorate, for its part, has not had time to develop political party loyalties since the political regime has been in a constant state of flux since 1830...The charismatic and personalistic character of the political leaders, the profound socio-economic divide among Ecuadorians, the traditional antagonism between the Coastal and Sierra regions, and the absence of a unified agenda for the country, were in some sense the characteristics of the society that have made the stable development of Ecuadorian political activity difficult.<sup>24</sup>

The clientelistic focus of Ecuadorian politics, which has revolved around regional patron-client relationships and an exchange of patronage and favors for the mobilization of voting networks by regional power brokers, has retarded the development and institutionalization of the democratic party system and in particular, its ability to represent effectively and transparently the interests and political will of large segments of society. The criterion of Mainwaring and Scully that Ecuador seems to miss most thoroughly is the strength of linkages between political parties and the broader civil society. Because political parties are perceived to be personal instruments for ambitious politicians to increase their own power, rather than effective mechanisms for channeling popular interests and will through elections, there is a dramatic disconnect between the 'political class' and the constituency that they ostensibly represent. This rupture seems to be linked to the consistent use of modes of contestation that go outside the partisan electoral process. Ecuador has a relatively high level of protest and social movement activity as indicated by a composite index of Latinobarometer-reported participation in unconventional political participation and the Minorities at Risk Protest Index (see Table I). When widespread dissatisfaction arises with the performance of the existing regime, the response more often than not has tended to be widespread support for changing the political system rather than an upswing of support for an opposition party within the existing system.

During the 1970s, military coups served the function of mollifying popular dissent with poorly performing governments, while in the 1990s and the past few years, massive demonstrations and protests involving indigenous groups, labor unions, students, elements within the military, and others have unseated three presidents in a coercive manner and have been instrumental in gaining important policy changes desired by the protesting groups. Obviously, the democratic political party system has remained fragile and inchoate in this environment of uncertainty, political exclusion, and frequent inability to transfer power peacefully or normally.

One of the major reasons for the continued instability of the political system in Ecuador is that a broad segment of society perceives that the system is constructed in a way that ignores their interests and excludes them from having a viable opportunity to gain access to governing roles that would give them a voice in the political process. Based on this perception that meaningful change and greater political inclusion is unlikely within the framework of the existing political institutions, these actors continue to undermine the party system in order to try to produce a more just and inclusive set of institutions. Antonio Vargas, former president of CONAIE, the national indigenous federation, explained, "Those who have managed the country are the rich and powerful. They have the press and economic resources which the people do not possess. The participation of the people is restricted. Almost all of the laws benefit only a certain group. It is necessary to democratize the system to have a larger participation of all sectors."<sup>25</sup>

The emergence of the indigenous movement as a powerful national actor has had a significant impact on the Ecuadorian political system, both the formal party system and the broader arena of civil society and popular contestation. Ecuadorian indigenous people have learned to assert themselves politically and demand inclusion in political decision-making, a fact which has resulted in very real gains in the form of favorable constitutional provisions and a strong indigenous party—Pachakutik—which has successfully promoted Congressional deputies, cabinet ministers, and in a coalition with other parties, a president. The mechanisms that indigenous actors use to try to gain access to power, however, are varied, and the Pachakutik party, while important, is not necessarily the dominant institution. Because of the public distrust toward politicians, parties (even the indigenous party), and the existing political institutions, many indigenous actors choose to engage in political contestation through alternative channels that are less tainted (such as the indigenous organization CONAIE) in order to try to mobilize support directly and achieve power without going through the formal party system. Donna Lee Van Cott asserts that, "Whereas CONAIE's organizational strength and popular support were assets for the formation of a successful political party, once the party was formed the greater strength of the social movement organization inhibited somewhat the development of the party...CONAIE's increasing political

prominence actually weakened Pachakutik. As it painted all parties and political institutions with the brush of illegitimacy, CONAIE rose in public esteem as a valid interlocutor for all excluded and disadvantaged sectors, as well as a broader sector of Ecuadorians disgusted with the corruption and self-interestedness of the political class.<sup>26</sup> By becoming part of a party system that is widely viewed with suspicion, and by making the political compromises that come with governing, Pachakutik politicians have frequently been accused of 'selling out' the indigenous movement in favor of their own interests. Because of this, it is likely that the political party will continue to be only one (and not the dominant one) of many vectors of contestation that the indigenous population and other marginalized groups use in order to try to gain access to political decision-making power.

Although discrimination and disenfranchisement of indigenous, poor, and other marginalized groups in society has been a long-standing feature of the Ecuadorian reality, there has not been the type of active repression by the government, at least in the past two decades, that has characterized other Latin American countries. Ecuador's score on the combined Freedom House civil liberties and political rights indices is a 3, compared with Colombia's 4, which reflects a higher level of government repression.

Some scholars have argued that the presence of a large indigenous population and the existence of a relatively strong indigenous-focused political party can and do often result in greater democratic participation, less political fragmentation, and greater acceptance of the political system.<sup>27</sup> This may be true, but based on the Ecuadorian experience, it is necessary to add the caveat that there seems to be some level of diminished returns. The indigenous movement must have enough strength to mobilize, contest, and engage politically, but little enough influence that they still feel excluded from the political process and therefore have a strong incentive to mobilize social protest. The internal divisions and growing factionalism within the indigenous movement in recent years indicates that, while remaining a strong and relevant political actor, the social movement is beginning to experience the downside of success. In any case, Ecuador is a clear example of a polity which combines a fragmented and distrusted party system with a strong social movement presence and frequent use of protest as a mechanism for political contestation.

### **Colombia**

In Colombia, the Liberals and Conservatives formed a bipolar party system which historically alternated in power, but this elite arrangement excluded many popular voices from any institutional policy channel. Nonetheless, the confidence in and support for the party system, and the perception that the people had the means to access and influence political decision-making, is higher in Colombia than in Ecuador. For those who, unsatisfied by the party system, choose contestation outside of that system,

participation in social movement activity has come at a higher cost than in Ecuador because of a higher level of repression. As a result, the alternative vector of policy opposition and popular contestation in Colombia was to support organized movements outside the system, such as the FARC, ELN, and other guerrilla movements, which used violence to oppose policies. As explained more fully later in this paper, the addition of violence to extra-party contestation was in part a direct result of government repression of protest, since those being repressed had an incentive to develop their own violence capacity to respond to that of the state.

Beginning with the rivalry between Colombia's key liberators, Simón Bolívar and Francisco de Paula Santander, the Colombian elite have historically been divided into Conservative and Liberal camps, with Conservatives tending to support a greater role for the church and for a strong, hierarchical central government, while Liberals tend to be more anti-clerical, supporting a more decentralized, federalist model of government in which individual states have significant autonomy. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both parties sought to attain control of the national government, and once in power, to use this control to exclude the other party and to try to ensure their own long-term hegemonic dominance. As a result, the party not in power was faced either with political obsolescence or the necessity of attempting to regain power through mass popular protests or violence. Despite the durability of the Liberal and Conservative parties, this tradition of extra-systemic contestation through protest or violence represents clear symptomatic evidence of weak institutionalization of the Colombian party system, which historically has been unable to channel political opposition and facilitate peaceful transfers of power in a way that is linked to the needs and interests of the citizenry as a whole.

The 1940s and 1950s represented a particularly violent period of Colombia's history, known as *la Violencia*, as the Liberal and Conservative parties vied for power and control of land. Once in power, each party would take violent revenge on the other, sealing it off from any effective governing role, and attacking partisan activists in the countryside. The 1948 assassination of populist, Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliecer Gaitán in particular launched an intense wave of violent Liberal resistance in rural areas of Colombia. The insurgents in this episode of violence laid the foundation for the ongoing leftist insurgency which continues to this day, led by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC).

Although the two major parties were able at the elite level to forge a power-sharing agreement known as the National Front, which provided for strict alternation of the presidency and quotas for other national office, these measures were not linked successfully to the rank-and-file members of the parties, and faced with political exclusion and a party system that was unresponsive to their needs and interests, many peasants joined the armed insurgency as a mechanism of political contestation outside of the party system.

Since the period of *la Violencia*, outside political actors have been unable to access political power because of a monopoly on control by Colombia's two traditional parties, so these outsiders have frequently resorted to violence as a means to gain attention for their political agenda. The rigid boundaries of the system for accessing power, including patronage and massive voting machines controlled by the Liberals and Conservatives, and occasional violent retribution (especially prior to the National Front period) against opponents upon coming to power, have had the result of pushing the opposition out of the political arena and into the military arena.<sup>28</sup> The durability both of the strong two-party system and of the significant extra-party contestation in the form of political violence indicates that even a system with strong party durability can be weakly institutionalized in terms of the hegemony of the party system as a mechanism for engaging in political contestation. The fact that Mainwaring's framework lists Colombia as one of the most highly institutionalized systems indicates a potential weakness in his measure, which does not take into account political contestation through violence, nor the climate of repression toward social movement activity which may push non-party contestation toward the protection of violent organizations.

Diana Hoyos Gómos argues that the hegemony of Colombia's two predominant parties has created a system of political exclusion and shaky democratic institutionalization. "The two-party system has been perceived as a partially closed, unrepresentative system that was a source of exclusion." She points out that the reasons for this disillusionment with political parties is due to "the incapacity of the parties to represent the interests of broad sectors of Colombian society, the predominance of corrupt and clientelistic practices with the consequent diminished levels of legitimacy for the system, and the incapacity of the traditional parties to channel social conflicts, among others."<sup>29</sup> Compared with Ecuador, however, the Colombian party system is more highly institutionalized, and consistently with the approach advanced in this paper, the level of protest and social movement activity is lower than in Ecuador.

**Table II: Colombian Indicators<sup>30</sup>**

Institutionalized access to political space	Trust/confidence in parties	Climate of repression	Aggregate non-electoral political participation	Extent of Protest Activity
1.8	31	4	20	1.6

Like a number of Latin American countries in recent decades, Colombia has suffered from a widespread lack of public confidence in its parties and other political institutions, which are widely perceived to be exclusive and self-serving. According to the Latinobarometer public opinion survey<sup>31</sup>, 50% of respondents identified with a particular party, while 59% believed that parties were only

interested in protecting the interests of a narrow political elite, agreeing to the statement that “Colombia is governed for the benefit of a few powerful interests.” Overall, 30% reported that they were satisfied with the way democracy works in Colombia. In addition, the percentage of survey respondents who reported that they would not mind a non-democratic form of government if it could solve economic problems was 64%, while a rather lukewarm 71% believed that democracy is the best system of government. This indicates that democratic governance and the integral component of party structure are often seen as ineffective mechanisms for channeling and representing the interests and will of the society at large.

Intuitively, it might seem that Colombia, like Ecuador, should also be characterized by high levels of protest and social movement activity since it also features fairly low levels of trust in parties, which should make forms of contestation that occur outside of the party system more attractive. The framework advanced in this paper (data summarized in Tables I & II), however, helps to explain the difference in the two cases of Ecuador and Colombia. Although it suffers from a lack of confidence in the party system, Colombia does have a significantly higher level of confidence than Ecuador (31 instead of 19), which has one of the lowest levels in Latin America. Furthermore, the Colombian population has a greater perception that non-elites can access political space and that their participation will have some effect on what happens in the future (1.8 instead of 1.35). These two measures taken together shed some light on why Colombia, compared with Ecuador, might be more willing to engage in political contestation through conventional means, specifically through the party system, which is stable and enduring. More than in Ecuador, Colombians perceive that their interests can be effectively channeled through parties because opportunities exist to access political space and parties are more likely to take their interests into account and push for policies that will meet the needs of the represented portions of the population. This creates less of an incentive to go outside the party system and create alternative networks and organizations from scratch in order to affect policy decisions.

The third part of the framework, political repression, helps to illuminate the question of why Colombia has relatively low levels of protest and social movement activity despite the fact that there are below-average levels of trust for parties compared with Latin America (albeit higher levels than are present in Ecuador). The level of repression is higher in Colombia than in Ecuador, as measured by the Freedom House civil liberties and political rights indices, which give Colombia a combined score of 4 rather than Ecuador's 3.<sup>32</sup> Because of this, there are higher costs to protest and forms of contestation that occur outside of the party system, because the government will likely respond with a stronger response than is likely in Ecuador. The repression variable, combined with relatively low levels of confidence in parties when compared with global averages, may explain in part why contestation in Colombia seems to be divided

between a very durable two party system on the one hand and unconventional organizations that engage in violence as a form of contestation on the other, while skipping over the middle ground of social movements and protests that are more common in Ecuador. Because of the costs imposed by the repression of protest activity, the majority of individuals who are unwilling to incur these costs are willing to rely on the party system to aggregate and channel their interests and engage in political contestation on their behalf, accepting the lesser of two evils, that is, an imperfect representation instead of repression from direct mobilization and contestation. The remaining portion of the polity, which distrusts the party system's ability and willingness to aggregate and channel their interests enough to incur the costs of government repression, has an incentive to join together and develop their own 'repressive' capabilities through organized violence.<sup>33</sup>

### **Conclusions**

Based on the cases examined here, it seems apparent that weak institutionalization and democratic underdevelopment is not the exclusive province of any one party system type. Electoral volatility varies significantly across the two cases, with Ecuador's inchoate party system having one of the most volatile electoral track records in Latin America, while Colombia has one of the least volatile. Although both countries are characterized by low levels of public confidence in political parties and a widespread perception that access to and influence over political space and decision-making by non-elites is severely limited, Ecuador has comparatively lower scores on both measures. This helps to explain the motivation behind civil society actors seeking and employing vectors of contestation that fall outside the conventional political party system. In doing so, they seek to gain a voice and influence in decision-making by going around what is perceived as an illegitimate, inefficient institution that is unlikely to represent their interests. Because of higher levels of trust in parties and a more favorable perception that access to political space exists, Colombians have comparatively less motivation to undermine, ignore, or overturn the party system. At the same time, greater repression of social movements and protest activity in Colombia provides some explanation for why less public contestation occurs outside the party system and why the strongest alternative vector of contestation seems to be organized violence, rather than social movements and protests. This is due to the fact that those choosing not to accept the party system and to incur the costs of repression have an incentive to form their own violence capacity.

All of these results affirm and are consistent with the hypothesis that lower trust in the party system, less favorable perceptions of the possibility for access to political space, and lower levels of repression will likely lead to greater use of alternative vectors of contestation in the form of protest and social movements, rather than conventional electoral contestation through the party

system. In Ecuador, the indigenous movement has allied with labor unions, the military, and other segments of society to achieve policy changes and regime changes through mass protest and social movements. The traditional hegemony of Colombia's two dominant oligarchical parties has resulted in a rejection of the political and party system by guerrillas who employ violence to achieve their ends, which is more like hierarchically organized violence than a decentralized social movement. Hopefully, the framework advanced in this paper helps to explain why.

### **Limitations and Future Directions for Research**

This paper represents a preliminary exploration into the links between elements of party system strength and institutionalization on the one hand and variations in the level of contestation that occurs outside the party system, especially through protest and social movements, on the other hand. By employing two comparative case studies of countries with many geographical, cultural, and demographic similarities, I have attempted to develop a detailed qualitative explanation for the links between party system institutionalization and levels of social protest in Ecuador and Colombia. In order to provide some degree of quantitative evidence, indicators of party system institutionalization and strength have been identified and measured for both cases, and this data has been compared with the dependent variable data on social movement and protest activity in both countries. This illustrative comparison shows results that are consistent with the hypothesized model, but much more rigorous and more systematic comparative data is needed in order to have confidence that the model proposed here is useful and valid across other countries.

Specifically, the model should be tested across all Latin American countries (or perhaps a sample of other states in the developing world) over the course of several years in order to reduce the likelihood that specific events in a particular year or a particular country are clouding the analysis. Also, the indicators used in the analysis are not without flaws. Public opinion polls are very useful for capturing popular perceptions, but these are often 'snapshots' that change quickly across time and space. The indicators for the climate of repression, which are an aggregation of two Freedom House indices for civil liberties and political rights, are an imperfect measure of repression as it applies to social movement activities and mobilization. It would be useful to find data that more directly measures government repression of social movement and protest mobilization. The Minorities at Risk database contains data on government repression, but it is only available for specific minority groups, and it is not readily available for the years that are used for the current comparisons. The two cases analyzed in this paper were selected both for their geographical and cultural similarities and for their differing party systems (inchoate multi-party system in Ecuador vs. historically durable two-party system in Colombia). This provides some variation in party system, which is useful for a fuller analysis, but



it would be helpful to have multiple cases for each system type, as well as a third type, such as a dominant one-party system, for comparison. Overall, much more work needs to be done to identify and understand the fluid and dynamic links between parties and social movements; the Ecuadorian case shows that it is often less a question of choosing one vector of contestation over the other, and more an issue of employing several vectors simultaneously. This question represents a fascinating challenge for future research.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Department of Political Science—Johns Hopkins University, and the Center for Mediation, Peace, and Resolution of Conflict - International (CEMPROC). Thanks to Richard Katz, Michael McCarthy, the participants in the JHU Graduate Colloquium and the 2007 MACLAS Annual Conference, and to the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper. Thanks also to Jessica Smith for her data assistance. All shortcomings, of course, are my own.

<sup>2</sup> V.O. Key, *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (New York: Kropf, 1963), pp. 409-558.

<sup>3</sup> Kay Lawson, Introduction in *Political Parties and Linkage: A Comparative Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Roberts has also argued persuasively that the 'crisis of representation' that is so commonly pointed out in analyses of Latin American politics is not so much an overall decline in political representation and of party-society linkages, but rather can be understood as a shift from particular types of ideological and group-based linkages and forms of representation to other, more contingent, individualized types. See Kenneth Roberts, "Party-Society Linkages and Democratic Representation in Latin America," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, vol. 27, no. 53 (2002), pp. 9-34.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Houtzager, "Collective Action and Political Authority: Rural Workers, Church, and State in Brazil," *Theory and Society* 30 (2001), pp. 1-45.

<sup>6</sup> There is some speculation that with the election of Alvaro Uribe as a splinter faction of the Liberal Party and with the personalistic politics which facilitated a change in the constitution and the reelection of Uribe, the centrality and durability of the entrenched two-party system in Colombia is eroding. It is, however, too early to know the long-term effects of Uribe's popularity on the institutions of the political party system.

<sup>7</sup> Scott Mainwaring, "Party Systems in the Third Wave," *Journal of Democracy*. Vol 9, No. 3 (1998), pp. 67-81.

<sup>8</sup> Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, introduction, *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 27.

<sup>9</sup> Lorenzo Meyer, "Democracy from Three Latin American Perspectives," in Robert Pastor, ed. *Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1989), p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1968), p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>12</sup> Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, *op cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Latinobarometer, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Catherine M. Conaghan, "Politicians Against Parties: Discord and Disconnection in Ecuador's Party System," in Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, eds. *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 434-458.

<sup>15</sup> Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, "Introduction," In Mainwaring & Scully, eds., *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. The mean volatility index is calculated by measuring the net change in the percentage of seats/votes that are either gained or lost from one election to the next, adding these percentages together for all the parties, and dividing by two.

<sup>16</sup> *2004 Executive Summary*. Latinobarometer. Corporación Latinobarometro (Santiago, Chile, 2004); December 28, 2005 <<http://www.latinobarometro.org>>.

<sup>17</sup> Latinobarometer public opinion data was used to construct this index on a scale between 0 and 5: the percentage agreeing with the statement, "How you vote will affect whether things get better in the future", was multiplied by the 5-point POLITY IV political participation index (which measures the extent to which non-elites are able to access institutional structures for political expression; 5 is the most favorable perception of access). Latinobarometer 2005. Monty Marshall, Keith Jagers, and Ted Robert Gurr, Polity IV Project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2003, September 18, 2006

<<http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/polity/index.htm>>, accessed September 18, 2006

<sup>18</sup> Latinobarometer public opinion data was used to construct this index: the percentage saying that elections are clean (as opposed to rigged) was averaged with the percentage saying that democracy cannot function without political parties and the percentage having confidence in political parties. Latinobarometer 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Average of Freedom House civil liberties and political rights indices on a scale of 0-5 (higher score=more repressive); Freedom in the World Project, Freedom House (Washington, D.C.) September 18, 2006 <<http://www.freedomhouse.org>>.

<sup>20</sup> Aggregate of Latinobarometer percentages for those reporting having engaged in 'unconventional' or nonelectoral political participation, including authorized and unauthorized demonstrations, looting, occupying buildings, and blocking traffic. Latinobarometer 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Source: Minorities at Risk Project, mean Protest Index score (1-5, with 5 being the most extensive protest activity) for 2000-2003. Minorities at Risk Project

(2005) College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management. September 20, 2006  
<<http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/.htm>>.

<sup>22</sup> Anita Isaacs, "Los problemas de consolidación democrática en Ecuador," In Felipe Burbano de Lara, ed. *Antología: Democracia, Gobernabilidad, y Cultura Política* (Quito: FLACSO, 2003), p. 266 (My translation).

<sup>23</sup> Milagros Aguirre, *Controversia—Ecuador Hoy: Cien Miradas* (Quito: Ediecuatorial, 2000), p.150 (My translation).

<sup>24</sup> Andrés Mejía, "Partidos Políticos: El Eslabón Perdido de la Representación," In Felipe Burbano de Lara, ed. *Antología: Democracia, Gobernabilidad, y Cultura Política* (Quito: FLACSO, 2003), p. 292 (My translation).

<sup>25</sup> Cited in Allen Gerlach, *Indians, Oil, and Politics* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2003), p. 77.

<sup>26</sup> Donna Lee Van Cott, *From Movements to Parties in Latin America*. (Cambridge University Press: 2005), p. 130.

<sup>27</sup> Raul Madrid, "Critical Debates: Indigenous Parties and Democracy in Latin America," *Latin American Politics and Society* 47:4 (2005). pp. 161-179.

<sup>28</sup> Jeff Pugh, *Changing Gears in Colombia: A Shift in U.S. Policy Under George W. Bush*, University of Georgia Honors Thesis (May, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> Diana Hoyos Gómez, "Evolución del Sistema de Partidos en Colombia 1972-2000: Una Mirada a Nivel Local y Regional," *Revista Análisis Política*. No. 55 (August/December 2005), p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> See footnotes to Table I for sources of data.

<sup>31</sup> *Summary-Report Latinobarómetro 2004: A Decade of Measurements*, (Santiago, Chile: Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2004).

<sup>32</sup> I am using repression to mean the strength of forces, policies, and norms, governmental or otherwise, that reduce citizens' freedom to assemble, criticize the government, or engage in other forms of independent civic participation. I am most concerned with repression that originates from the government, but in some cases, citizens might feel threats from organized non-state actors that would prevent them from participating meaningfully in protest and social movement activity.

<sup>33</sup> There are potential alternative explanations to this narrative, of course. In Colombia, for example, there has been something of a generalized historical suspicion on the part of the population toward civil society organizations seeking to represent the interests of the people (as opposed to engaging in advocacy, human rights monitoring, etc.), since these activities in the form of protests and social movements have been linked in the past with subsequent guerrilla activity. It is possible that this social construction of civil society and social movement activity, has acted to discourage this vector of contestation in favor of the party system (thanks to Michael McCarthy for pointing this out). Even if true, however, this does not fundamentally challenge my thesis, since this suspicion is largely a function of the population's dissatisfaction with violence by illegal armed

groups acting as elements of civil society, and as such, this violence can be considered a form of repression according to my framework.

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**LA CIUDAD SITIADA, de Alejandra Jaramillo Morales.  
Editorial El Fuego Azul: Bogotá, 2006**

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*La ciudad sitiada*, la primera novela publicada por la escritora, profesora e investigadora Alejandra Jaramillo Morales, es un texto que se propone la difícil tarea de aproximarse a la convulsionada y esquiva realidad de la Bogotá de finales de los años noventa y a partir de allí, abrirse a una reflexión más amplia sobre la situación política y social colombiana. Simultáneamente novela de amor, novela de la ciudad y novela de la guerrilla, *La ciudad sitiada* narra la historia de Flora, una joven cineasta y fotógrafa bogotana perteneciente a la clase media alta, quien, al igual que una heroína de novela picaresca, se ve envuelta en una serie de episodios que la llevan paulatinamente a descubrirse a sí misma y su lugar dentro del país. Sin embargo, a pesar de ciertos guiños humorísticos, en especial en lo que se refiere a las peripecias amorosas de la heroína y al tono coloquial y despreocupado que en ocasiones utiliza la voz narrativa, no es ésta una novela ligera que busque únicamente divertir al lector. Por el contrario, la autora encara la realidad colombiana con una actitud de seriedad y de compromiso que se manifiesta en las reflexiones tanto de la protagonista como de la narradora, reflexiones que adquieren en ocasiones un tono pedagógico, y una de las metas de la autora parece ser la de invitar al público a cuestionarse e incluso a educarlo sobre la situación del país. Se trata, en todo caso, de una novela conciente de la tradición literaria en la cual se enmarca el acto de escritura, que describe con lirismo las situaciones íntimas entre los personajes, y que retrata con gracia e ingenio la sociedad bogotana de finales del siglo XX.

Podría describirse esta novela como un tortuoso romance con la ciudad de Bogotá, un lugar que suscita sentimientos encontrados y que se representa simultáneamente como objeto de amor y de aprehensión, de deseo y de temor, como un lugar pleno tanto de belleza como de fealdad. La primera parte de la novela, donde se vislumbra la influencia de textos como *Nadia* de André Breton o *Rayuela* de Julio Cortázar, consiste en un deambular por una ciudad que adquiere características casi fantásticas. En esta sección, se narra un recorrido motivado tanto por los recuerdos de Flora, quien ha regresado de Europa con el propósito de filmar una película sobre Bogotá, como por su deseo por Fermín, un español a quien ella espía y filma en sus caminatas y quien, de manera inesperada, se convierte en una especie de Ariadna que le permite a Flora, si no salir, ubicarse en el laberinto. La autora aprovecha este tema para hacer una caracterización de la ciudad en los años noventa, así como para describir algunos de los grupos sociales que la integran, especialmente los jóvenes universitarios y los intelectuales. La segunda parte del texto narra cómo su idealismo y sus

deseos de mejorar la situación de los habitantes de la ciudad y del país llevan a Flora a involucrarse con la guerrilla, a enamorarse de Sebastián, un comandante guerrillero, e incluso a planear ataques y atentados dentro de la ciudad misma. Este amor la llevará a la paradójica situación de tener que atacar y destruir por amor aquello que ama, es decir, la ciudad y sus habitantes. En la resolución de la trama la protagonista confronta dichas contradicciones y se propone a sí misma, así como a los lectores, una alternativa, una reconciliación con el país y con su futuro.

Alejandra Jaramillo comparte con otras escritoras latinoamericanas actuales el interés por crear personajes femeninos autónomos e independientes, que reflexionan sobre su entorno y se ven movidas a actuar, si bien todo ello ocurre dentro del marco de convenciones de la novela romántica. Aunque la irreverencia, el humor y el uso del lenguaje coloquial la acerque a muchos autores latinoamericanos contemporáneos de la llamada "novela posmoderna", *La ciudad sitiada* se distancia de las tendencias actuales al evadir el gesto irónico y escéptico, y pisar en cambio el terreno del compromiso político, con todos los riesgos que ello implica.

**Arthur P. Whitaker Prize 2007  
DEMOCRACY IN CHILE. THE LEGACY OF SEPTEMBER 11,  
1973. Edited by Sylvia Nagy-Zemki and Fernando Leiva,  
Sussex Academic Press, 2005**

**Ana Moraña  
Shippensburg University**

El Premio Whitaker es otorgado anualmente por MACLAS al mejor libro publicado sobre temas latinoamericanos, tanto en el área de los estudios literarios como las ciencias sociales, historia u otra disciplina en el ámbito de las humanidades. En 2007 dicho premio fue adjudicado al libro editado por Sylvia Nagy-Zemki y Fernando Leiva.<sup>1</sup> El volumen surgió como una forma de dejar asentada la discusión y conclusiones a las que llegaron un grupo de investigadores en ocasión de realizarse una conferencia internacional en SUNY Albany en 2003. El libro recoge una interesante variedad de estudios, documentos y análisis que vinculan las ciencias sociales, la economía y la historia con el análisis literario, cinematográfico y la cultura popular chilena de la pos dictadura, aunque tomando como punto de referencia "el otro septiembre 11".

La elección del título pretende recordarle al lector que una tragedia tan devastadora como lo sería décadas después la caída de las Torres Gemelas de Nueva York a causa de un atentado terrorista en el año 2001 no pone en segundo lugar historias no hegemónicas como las latinoamericanas, sino más bien invita a revisar y reconstruir memorias y sacudir la más mínima intencionalidad de olvido. Por tanto, desde el principio, el libro reclama el espacio que los estudios latinoamericanos deben tener en el imaginario nacional y global, y lo hace a través de la puesta al día y revisión de los discursos que respaldaron la dictadura chilena de Pinochet; reconsidera y presenta la variadas fuentes de la diversas formas de apoyo logístico recibido por los ejecutores del golpe de estado y reabre el análisis de la base ideológica que produjo la catástrofe política que redundaría en numerosos muertos y desaparecidos. A diferencia del 9/11 estadounidense, el chileno además implicó la puesta en práctica de la Operación Cóndor, que comunicaría y fortalecería el poder militar en el Cono Sur y muchos otros países latinoamericanos, traduciéndose en una de las más infames infraestructuras del terrorismo de estado de los últimos tiempos. Desde las iniciales relaciones entre Estados Unidos y Chile, pasando por el golpe de estado del 73 y la caída y muerte de Salvador Allende, hasta el proceso de transición, que incluyó las sucesivas aprehensiones de Augusto Pinochet en Londres y Chile, el libro transita diversos aspectos de la historia y la cultura chilena de los últimos treinta años.

La primera parte analiza los archivos que la CIA dio a luz, rebelando la estrecha conexión con los acontecimientos entorno a la caída de Allende en un



trabajo exhaustivo a cargo de Peter Kornbluh. Steven S. Volk y Kevin Foster echan una mirada a la historia de las relaciones de Chile con poderes hegemónicos y rebelan cómo los procesos políticos tienen un lento abanico de motivaciones que lentamente maduran en las complejas relaciones norte-sur, tal como las diseñó la modernidad periférica.

Los aspectos ideológicos de la transición, fundamentalmente, son analizados por diversos investigadores en la segunda parte del libro, centrándose en los diversos actores sociales en el Chile de los noventa y después, estudiando el papel de las organizaciones de trabajadores, los partidos políticos y los sucesivos presidentes, hasta ubicar al lector en las puertas (o las fauces) de la globalización (ver artículos de Volker Frank y Fernando Leiva). La influencia de poderosos organismos como el Fondo Monetario Internacional afectó a muchos países latinoamericanos cuando le llegó el turno a la reorganización de la educación. Esto es analizado en la Segunda parte por Patricia Tomer y Ricardo Trumper, como una parte del mapa de la educación universitaria en Chile. El choque del *establishment* con las comunidades minoritarias se analiza en un par de ocasiones en el libro, una de ellas es en el trabajo de Diane Haughney, centrándose en el papel de los grupos mapuche en las políticas de transición.

En la tercera y cuarta parte los estudios interdisciplinarios reinan cuando se combinan el análisis literario, político, histórico, en consonancia con el análisis de las diversas políticas administrativas y el papel y desenvolvimiento de los derechos humanos. Es de destacar el seguimiento de la "negra odisea" (si se me permite la metáfora) de Augusto Pinochet y su situación legal en sus diversas instancias, a cargo de Mark Ensalaco. A continuación, diversos artículos vinculan la literatura, con la historia, u otras formas artísticas como es el caso de los artículos de Ornella Lepri Mazzuca, Amy A. Oliver y el de Gregory J. Lobo, así como Andrea Bachner. Varios autores literarios son estudiados por sus aportes que sondan el vínculo entre la memoria, el imaginario nacional cambiante y trastocado por la violencia y los traumas sociales que afectan a sociedades que vivirán con los fantasmas de la persecución y el miedo para siempre. Entre los nombres de esos autores están los de Isabel Allende, José Miguel Varas y Diamela Eltit. El tema de los desaparecidos se hace presente varias veces pero también es abordado por Kristin Sorensen en el análisis del lenguaje cinematográfico, en especial, el documental. El mismo género cinematográfico es el centro del trabajo de Jeffrey R. Middents a propósito del estudio de un clásico como *Chile, memoria obstinada* (1997) por Patricio Guzmán. El lenguaje visual popular es el campo de Camilo Trumper al estudiar el mural popular y el *graffiti* político. Los estudios culturales se hacen con honores en el estudio sobre el servicio doméstico, en relación con textos literarios y la realidad social chilena del presente, un área que y que tiene mucho que aportar y que queda a cargo de la investigadora Julia Carroll.

Finalmente, es emblemática e imprescindible la presencia de Fabiola Letelier, hermana del asesinado ministro del gobierno de Salvador Allende,

Orlando Letelier, a través de la transcripción de su discurso de cierre publicado en el epílogo del libro. Allí ella clarifica la necesidad de profundizar los cimientos de la democracia en Chile, además de clarificar las responsabilidades políticas de los mayores productores de abusos cometidos durante el golpe del 73 en su país y en los años sucesivos: la DINA, la policía de Pinochet, responsables del atentado que mató a su hermano, entre otros hechos; la Operación Cóndor, y la acción de los conocidos en América Latina como los "Chicago Boys": aquellos economistas neoliberales que fortalecieron las bases políticas autoritarias generando un aparato ideológico-financiero que comprometió las economías de numerosos países latinoamericanos por décadas. Fabiola Letelier sintetiza en su discurso lo que claramente fue el ideal de quienes elaboraron este libro: promover el respeto inalienable de los derechos humanos, profundizar la verdad sobre lo acontecido durante 17 años de una de las más crueles dictaduras de la historia latinoamericana, y mantener viva la memoria de aquellos que en la reclusión o en la gran cárcel de la nación cotidiana, en la muerte notoria o la secreta, en la tortura, en el exilio, en la desintegración de la familia o en la pérdida de objetos, proyectos y sueños exigen cada día que no olvidemos que el once de septiembre, pero en el 73, es también el duelo de muchos, muy al sur del Río Bravo.

<sup>1</sup> Fuimos miembros del Comité que adjudicó este premio los Drs. Luis Roniger, Alvaro Kaempfer y una servidora, quien fue además directora del mismo.

**Helferich, Gerard (2004) HUMBOLDT'S COSMOS: ALEXANDER  
VON HUMBOLDT AND THE LATIN AMERICAN JOURNEY THAT  
CHANGED THE WAY WE SEE THE WORLD, Gotham Books,  
New York**

**Ivani Vassoler  
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Considering Alexander von Humboldt's invaluable contribution to an in-depth understanding of the New World, it is somewhat a puzzle why the modern scholarly literature on the Americas pays little attention to the tenacious and talented Prussian scholar, who was among the top 19<sup>th</sup> century intellectuals. His inquisitive mind, adventurous spirit, and prolific writing expanded in unparalleled ways our knowledge of the New World. But even if his feat is regarded as the second discovery of the Americas, Humboldt's contributions, as time went by, have largely fallen into oblivion, in a case of an almost inexplicable neglect, considering his gigantic effort to teach Europeans the culture and wealth of an incredible mass of land that they conquered but knew very little about it. In this sense *Humboldt's Cosmos*, by Gerard Helferich, is a welcome volume that not only brings to light a fresh perspective of Humboldt's personality, but more importantly the book rescues forever the significance of his five-year scientific journey through the American continent.

With living and working experience both in Latin America and the United States, Helferich conducted extensive fieldwork, following step by step Humboldt's expedition throughout the American continent, starting at his arrival in 1799 in Cumaná, Venezuela, and ending in Washington DC in 1804. The book focuses initially on Humboldt's life in Tegel, today a residential suburb of Berlin, where he was born in 1769. His older brother, Wilhelm von Humboldt, born in 1767, would later become one of the most prominent European intellectuals, as a writer, linguist, diplomat and founder of the Humboldt University of Berlin, which became a model of higher education in Europe. With the death of their father when they were in their early teens, the two brothers were raised by a wealthy mother who relied on tutors to assure her sons' education. But going very much against his mother's determination to prepare him for a career in government, Alexander, at the age of 22, gained admission to the Mining Academy of Freiberg (Saxony), under the direction of Abraham Werner, Europe's most renowned geologist at that time. In the end, Humboldt's program of studies at the academy changed his life, and moreover, changed dramatically the Old Continent's views about the New World.

Before Humboldt, hundreds of adventurous European men came to the Americas to conquer and exploit, with the financial support of powerful monarchies. In this sense, Humboldt's 6,000-mile journey in the continent stands out as unique for at least two reasons: he paid the costs of his travels and

fieldwork with his own money, and came to the New World as a scholar seeking knowledge and not lucrative deals. Moments before his departure from the port of La Coruña, Spain, Humboldt, as cited by Helferich (p. 23) stated, "I shall try to find out how the forces of nature interact upon one another and how the geographic environment influences plant and animal life. In other words, I must find out about the unity of nature."

Helferich's narrative is rich in details about that momentous expedition, which Humboldt conducted always in the company of his close friend, Aimé Bonpland, a French physician and botanist. They arrived in the American continent with an arsenal of scientific instruments – thermometers, telescopes, microscopes and compasses, to name a few. Reflecting the times they were living in, and thus as children of the Enlightenment, both believed in the method of scientific inquiry to understand the world. But the so-called "Age of Reason" influenced them beyond science, as they also embraced liberal and progressive political views.

Starting in Cumaná, Helferich narrates in detail the efforts of Humboldt to document the flora and the fauna of South America; additionally he recounts Humboldt's deep sorrow when he established contact with the New World's native people. The German scholar observed the collapse of ancient cultures which were brutalized by the Europeans and extended his harsh judgment to the Roman Catholic missions and the methods employed by the priests to evangelize the indigenous populations during colonial times. Humboldt traveled extensively in Venezuela, with fieldwork in Caracas y Los Llanos and later in the heart of the Amazon rain forest – the latter marked by tales of conspiracy, which may explain why Humboldt never set foot in Brazil, at that time a colony of Portugal. Helferich (p. 159) reproduces excerpts of an article published by a Brazilian newspaper reporting that: "A certain Baron von Humboldt, a native of Berlin, has been traveling in the interior of America making geographic observations...a foreigner who, under the pretext of this kind, might possibly conceal plans wherewith to spread new ideas and dangerous principles among the faithful subjects of this realm." Suspected of being a spy, Humboldt could have ended up in a Portuguese jail. But fate took him to other realms of the vast Amazon rain forest. "None of his predecessors had examined the rain forest with such an eclectic, penetrating eye," Helferich states, observing that in 75 days, Humboldt and Bonpland proved the existence of the Casiquiare Canal (connecting the Orinoco and the Amazon Rivers) and fixed the latitude and longitude of more than 50 places – particularly mountains, rivers and streams. As a result, the world maps became more detailed, and the science of cartography much more sophisticated.

Although the expedition in South America left both men exhausted and sick, due to high temperatures, mosquitoes and other unhealthy conditions, they traveled to Cuba and there produced "the most extensive, systematic study ever made of the island" (p. 197). The availability of water, the topography, the state

of agriculture, the composition of the population, the distribution of plants are just some of Humboldt's innumerable observations, which he compiled and published in 1828 under the title of *Political Essay of the Island of Cuba*. From the Caribbean, Humboldt and Bonpland returned to South America where in 1801 they embarked on a new journey in the Andes, one that would give Humboldt a great international recognition. There, he not only explored the Chimborazo, Ecuador's highest summit, as he also studied in depth the geology of the area, making an important contribution to the understanding of volcanic processes. The research in the Andean region, including stays in Cajamarca and Guayaquil, also produced an incredible amount of knowledge about meteorological conditions and the impact of climate change on marine life in the Pacific Ocean.

As the most important Spanish possession in the Americas, Mexico became a fertile ground for Humboldt's learning ambitions. With extensive deposits of silver, the country was the perfect location for someone who had studied geology under the direction of a top expert in the field. In Mexico City, Humboldt reconnected with one of his classmates from Freiberg, Andres del Rio, who was the director of a school of mining in New Spain (as Mexico was called by the Spanish Crown). The friendship allowed Humboldt to study the Mexican mines in details, which appeared in his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, a firsthand description of the Mexican mining industry. Published in 1811, his work, as a compilation of research and vivid descriptions of working conditions, has never been supplanted. Past and present, those studying Mexico's political economy in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in one way or another rely on Humboldt's findings.

But, despite his dedication to the study of Mexican mines, Humboldt found time and energy to explore the country's mountains, rivers and volcanoes, and the ruins of ancient civilizations; he also observed the traits and attitudes of the native population, and took notes of Mexico's geography and natural environs. But he once more went beyond the natural world, and studied the human condition in Mexico, lamenting the way that the native population was treated by the Europeans. The Humboldt's year-long fieldwork in Mexico was so significant that the colonial authorities offered him a governmental position. Yet, in 1804 he left Mexico for Washington, DC, where he had meetings with President Thomas Jefferson — one at the White House, and another in Monticello, the site of Jefferson's residence in Virginia. Humboldt shared his findings with Jefferson, and maybe unwittingly contributed to the later territorial expansion of the United States. As Hefnerich remarks, (p. 298) "Humboldt's maps would prove an invaluable resource for explorers, generals and engineers for decades to come." The short stay in Washington generated, however, a long friendship between Jefferson and Humboldt. He left the Americas in July 1804, returning to Europe where he died in Berlin, in 1859, soon after completing the

fifth and final volume of *Cosmos*, his attempt to unify the several disciplines involved in the knowledge of the world.

Famous and almost a celebrity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for his incredible feat and for his insightful writings, Humboldt is little known nowadays and his accomplishments are certainly understudied. New generations are not aware that enduring a great deal of discomfort, earthquakes, disease and facing a variety of risks, he in company of Bonpland, made fundamental discoveries, and not only about the natural resources of the Americas. In fact his meticulous fieldwork in the New World made him a critic of the Europeans and thus, through his writings, he debunked the myth of European racial superiority. In a letter to President Jefferson, for instance, Humboldt, referring to the Americas, made clear his disdain for the Europeans when he wrote that "...people of this continent march with great strides toward the perfection of a social state, while Europe presents an immoral and melancholy spectacle." He also made an effort to convince Latin Americans – at that time under European control – that the independence that was in the making should bring advantage to all citizens, including the indigenous populations.

An enemy of absolutism, Humboldt believed that science should be employed to improve living conditions of all citizens, and this was his objective when he embarked on the journey of scientific inquiry in the Americas. He hoped that painstaking data collection, maps, compilation of indicators, the discovery of watercourses, and the rigorous study of plants, precious metals and stones would make Latin-Americans cognizant of the enormous potential of their lands, which should be tapped for their own benefit. By bringing to light the talent, goals and the humanity of Humboldt, and above all the significance of his explorations in the New World, Helferich's book should appeal to large audiences of historians, anthropologists, geographers, political scientists and environmentalists interested in broadening their knowledge about the natural environs, societies and cultures of the Americas.

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**Street Prize** for best article published in Latin American Essays: Isabel Valiela, "Constructing Memory Through Technology: Brand New Memory by Elías Miguel Muñoz."

**John D. Martz III Prize** for best graduate paper presented at the 2007 MACLAS XXVIII Conference: Jeffrey Puch (The Johns Hopkins University) for "Social Movements and Party Systems: Vectors of Contestation in Latin America".

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