



MACLAS

LATIN AMERICAN ESSAYS

Volume XII

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MACLAS

LATIN AMERICAN ESSAYS

Volume XII

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of the Middle Atlantic Council of Latin American Studies

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Judy B. McInnis
University of Delaware
Managing Editor

Vera Reber
Shippensburg University
Associate Editor

Harold D. Sims
University of Pittsburgh
Associate Editor

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Editors' Preface

The twelfth volume in the series of *MACLAS: Latin American Essays* presents a selection of papers given at the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Middle Atlantic Council of Latin American Studies held at The College of New Jersey at Trenton on Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28, 1998. Five sessions were held with three panels in each session; the 48 papers were devoted to topics in economics, politics, history, literature, pedagogy, and film. Panels frequently offered multi-disciplinary treatments of topics, i.e. "Immigration" (literature and history) "Contemporary Colombia" (economics and politics), and "Contemporary Developments" (economics and politics). One of our papers in literature (Arvilla Payne Jackson and Juan Espadas) and another in sociology (Robert C. Williamson) were presented in the session on "Literature and Society." While Robert C. Williamson traces the development of feminism throughout Latin America, most authors devote their papers to specific countries, which range from Honduras (Clarence Zuvekas), to Bolivia (Robert O. Kirkland), to Argentina (Theron Corse and Luis Fleischman), to Brazil (Elizabeth Espadas), to Mexico (Ana Sánchez Catena), to the United States (Judy B. McInnis and Arvilla Payne-Jackson and Juan Espadas). Again, with the exception of Robert C. Williamson's paper which traces feminism from the colonial period, the papers in this issue all deal with the twentieth century. The diversity of the MACLAS membership is reflected in contributors to this volume—from a graduate student at the University of Delaware (Ana Sánchez-Catena), to an economist retired from government service (Clarence Zuvekas) with professors from large and small educational institutions in between.

We, the editors, invite submission of papers presented at Ursinus College in March, 1999 to Volume XIII of *MACLAS Essays*. Deadline for submission is August 15, 1999. Contributors should follow the MLA format outlined in *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, fourth edition. See especially Chapter Five, pages 183-205. If your discipline customarily employs a different note style, kindly make the *MACLAS* editors aware of the style format you are following. Follow these guidelines:

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Place titles of books and journals in italics.

To the degree possible, submit to us a camera-ready copy of your article.

However, do not put words in bold or use different font sizes. The managing editor will boldface appropriate type. If possible, type your article in 10 point Times Roman. If you have questions about format, consult previous issues of *MACLAS: Latin American Essays*.

Languages of submission include English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French.

If you provide translations of phrases or sentences, set them off within parentheses.

Indent quotations of more than ten lines of prose and three lines of verse.

Shorter quotations should be run into the text and placed within quotation marks.

Proofread before submission. THE EDITORS CUSTOMARILY REJECT ARTICLES WHICH ARE NOT SUBMITTED IN A PROFESSIONAL FORMAT WITH CORRECT GRAMMAR AND SPELLING. WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE YOUR FINAL COPY, NOT A "WORKING" PAPER.

Send three hard copies and one diskette preferably in WordPerfect 6.0 or later to Judy B. McInnis, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literature, University of Delaware, Newark DE 19716.

Judy B. McInnis, University of Delaware, Managing Editor
Vera Reber, Shippensburg University, Associate Editor
Harold D. Sims, University of Pittsburgh, Associate Editor

Acknowledgements

The Editorial Board wishes to thank the University of Delaware and its Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures for the financial and human resources support for the publication of Volume XII. Special thanks go to Diego Domínguez, 1998 graduate of the Department of Computer Science, for assisting the production process and to Thomas McCone and Rae Stabosz of the Foreign Language Media Center for their help with computer programming.

We unite with the MACLAS membership in extending our condolences to the families of two distinguished MACLAS members who died in 1998:

Juan Espadas of Ursinus College, Managing Editor of *MACLAS: Latin American Essays* from 1988 to 1997 and Vice-President of MACLAS from 1997 to 1998.

John D. Martz, III, Pennsylvania State University, President of MACLAS 1983-1984.

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Economics

Clarence Zuvekas, Jr.

*The Process of Policy Reform in
Honduras, 1990-1997*

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THE PROCESS OF POLICY REFORM IN HONDURAS, 1990-1997*

Clarence Zuvekas, Jr.
Consulting Economist
Annandale, Virginia

* This paper is based on public information collected by the author while conducting research on Honduras over the last two years, first as an employee of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and, since his retirement from USAID at the end of August 1996, as a consultant to USAID, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the Government of Honduras. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the policies and programs of the U.S. or Honduran governments, or of the IDB. Likewise, no responsibility is borne by Management Systems International, through which the author provided consulting services during part of this period.

Background: The “Lost Decade” in Honduras

Economic analysts and commentators often refer to the 1980s as Latin America’s “lost decade.” The region as a whole suffered a decline in per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of about 10% between 1980 and 1990 (IDB 1997:221), most of which occurred between 1980 and 1983.¹ Economic performance in Honduras, one of Latin America’s poorest countries,² closely mirrored the regional pattern. Per capita GDP fell by 11% between 1979 and 1983,³ then recovered at a modest average annual rate of 1.0% during 1984-89. Per capita GDP in 1989 was still 5% below its 1979 peak.

One of Honduras’s major problems during the 1980s was a persistently large fiscal imbalance. The deficit of the nonfinancial public sector averaged 10.3% of GDP during 1980-84, and the 1985-89 average of 6.4%, while representing a significant improvement, can also be regarded as high. Inflationary pressures were avoided only because the great bulk of the deficit was financed by loans and, especially, grants from foreign donors.⁴ Consumer prices rose by 11.4% annually during 1980-83 but only 3.7% during 1984-88.

Another serious problem in the 1980s was the progressive overvaluation of the *lempira*, whose official value remained at 2 to the dollar throughout the decade.⁵ The real effective exchange rate appreciated from an index of 100 in 1980 to 81 in 1989 (Morley 1995:16).⁶ This loss of international competitiveness partly explains the stagnation of exports during the 1980s, a situation that was affected also by unfa-

favorable price trends for primary exports. Honduran governments during the 1980s resisted an adjustment in the official exchange rate, which could be maintained only because of large (but unsustainable) official grants from the U.S. government.⁷

Other factors helping to sustain the exchange rate were foreign-exchange inflows from external loans contracted in the early 1980s, especially for the El Cajón hydroelectric project, and the accumulation of arrears on external-debt payments to both official and private creditors in the second half of the decade. By mid 1990, arrears to official creditors were nearly \$250 million, and Honduras had lost its ability to obtain resources from the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The external debt had risen to \$2,867 million, compared to \$974 million in 1980.⁸

Although a number of Latin American countries had implemented significant economic reforms before 1990, Honduras had made relatively few advances. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supported some reforms during the 1980s, but noneconomic obstacles in both Honduras and the United States limited their scope. John Williamson (1990:66) classified Honduras as being among the Latin American countries that through 1989 had not yet begun the economic reform process. Similarly, Sebastian Edwards (1995:2-3) maintains that the reform process in Honduras was postponed until 1990, and Andy Thorpe (1996) considers 1990 to be the starting point for the “New Economic Model” in Honduras.⁹

When Honduras finally decided to initiate a significant program of economic-policy reforms, macroeconomic disequilibria (imbalances in the fiscal and external accounts) had increased to such an extent that a strong adjustment—orderly or disorderly—could not be avoided, since the failure to resolve the debt-arrears problem had begun to release repressed inflationary forces and to curtail economic activity because of the scarcity of foreign exchange. Moreover, microeconomic distortions in relative prices—resulting from the overvalued exchange rate, high external tariffs, and price and interest-rate controls—had increased incentives for investment in low-productivity projects. The new government of Rafael Callejas, which took office in January 1990, had few viable policy options in the face of these problems. Its overriding need was to clear the external-payments arrears in a way that would achieve an orderly adjustment, avoid a significant decline in GDP, and allow the country to regain access to the resources of the international financial institutions (IFIs).

The Process of Policy Reform, 1990-1997

Introduction

Honduras’s major economic-policy reforms in the 1990s were concentrated in the first three years of the decade. The *Ley de Ordenamiento Estructural de la Economía (Decreto 18-90)*, approved in March 1990 and including both stabilization and structural-adjustment measures, was the first major package to be implemented. Among the more important measures were (1) the devaluation of the *lempira* from

2.00 to the dollar to 4.00; (2) an increase in the sales tax from 5% to 7%; (3) higher taxes on the consumption and production of petroleum products; (4) a temporary tax on exports, to capture some of the windfall gains of the devaluation,¹⁰ (5) an accelerated reduction of external tariff rates, with the objective of lowering them to a range of 5%-20% by 1992, as well as a reduction in tariff surcharges;¹¹ and (6) a package of measures, including food and urban-transport subsidies and the establishment of the *Fondo Hondureño de Inversión Social (FHIS)*, to mitigate the short-term effects of economic policy reforms on poor households.¹²

The implementation of these measures allowed Honduras to reach an agreement with international donors in June 1990 that provided resources permitting the country to clear its arrears with the IFIs and thus regain its eligibility to borrow.

In July 1992 Honduras signed an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) agreement with the IMF for SDR 40.48 million (\$58.5 million), in support of measures to consolidate the stabilization and structural-adjustment policies initiated in 1990.

Additional exchange-rate and tariff reforms were implemented through the end of 1992 to increase the openness of the economy. Interest-rate liberalization, which had begun in October 1990, was completed by November 1992, when virtually all remaining controls on interest rates were removed. An effort to modernize the operations of the public sector was begun as early as August 1990, but only in November 1992 did the government present a formal proposal.

In 1993 economic policy suffered a strong setback, especially in the fiscal accounts. This deterioration during an electoral year severely damaged the credibility of the government's capacity to manage the economy. The loss of fiscal discipline limited the advances in structural-adjustment programs during 1993, and the 3-year ESAF program initiated in 1992 was suspended after the first year.

The government of Carlos Roberto Reina, which took office in January 1994, undertook measures to stabilize the economy, although at a slower pace than in 1990. The ESAF was not reactivated until January 1995, but it did include additional resources of SDR 6.98 million (\$10.3 million). The package of reforms supported by the redesigned ESAF emphasized the modernization of the State (including the privatization of some public services) and the strengthening of the financial sector. Although Honduras received the delayed second year's disbursements under the ESAF, it lost the third year's disbursements because of problems in meeting the required conditions. The ESAF lapsed in March 1997 and was replaced by an IMF Staff-Monitored Program (SMP), under which the government sought to obtain the IMF's "seal of approval" even though the SMP did not involve any financial resources.

In 1995 the government initiated an ambitious Reform of the Public Sector Program, supported by loans from the IDB (\$155 million) and the WB (\$55 million).¹³ This program emphasized changes in the administrative structure of the Exec-

utive Branch, a revision of the public-sector employment and salary structures, and a restructuring (including partial privatization) of electric-power, communications, and airport services. Progress in implementing the reforms has been slow.

The most notable success of the Reina government (1994-98) was a reduction of the fiscal deficit from 9.8% of the GDP in 1993 to an average of 4.5% in 1995-96 and only 0.8% in the electoral year of 1997, much in contrast to the fiscal record of the previous government in its last year in office.

The process of policy reform at the sectoral level has varied a great deal. Among the productive sectors—agriculture, manufacturing, and mining—plus tourism, which is also becoming an important generator of foreign exchange, only agriculture has received a high priority. In March 1992 the Honduran Congress approved an important *Ley para la Modernización y el Desarrollo del Sector Agrícola (LMDSA)*, following a long process of negotiations, dating from the late 1980s, among the various interest groups affected by the law. This law, and complementary legislation, included measures to eliminate price controls, liberalize internal and external trade, privatize storage facilities, reform the agricultural-credit system, and modernize the forestry sector. The law also provided for significant changes affecting land tenure and agrarian reform, to give more options to agrarian-reform beneficiaries (including the right to sell or rent their lands), facilitate land titling, and liberalize land markets. Implementation of the law, however, has been mixed. Progress in liberalizing prices, marketing, and trade has been greater than successes in the other areas. Problems of land-tenure security continue to discourage investment.¹⁴

Manufacturing has received a medium priority in the 1990s. Further advances in this sector depend more on additional macroeconomic and other economy-wide reforms than on sector-specific actions. *Maquila* (assembly) operations have received greater attention. Apart from more favorable macroeconomic policies, however, government actions to stimulate investment in manufacturing and assembly operations have been less important than those of private-sector organizations.¹⁵ Mining and tourism have received relatively little attention, even though existing legislation is outdated and otherwise deficient.

Financial-sector reform has received a medium-to-high priority, but actual progress has been slow. Although several important pieces of legislation were approved in the last three years,¹⁶ supervisory and regulatory capacities remain limited.

The priority accorded to reform of public services has varied. The energy sector, and particularly the electric-power sub-sector, has received a high priority since the beginning of the decade. The hydrocarbons sub-sector has also received a good deal of attention. Telecommunications, where policy reforms were initiated in 1994, has received a medium level of priority, as has civil aviation. Implementation of the reforms has been faster in hydrocarbons and perhaps telecommunications than in

electric power or civil aviation. Privatization, even through operating concessions rather than asset sales, still is strongly opposed by key elements of the Honduran public.

Fundamental reforms of the social sectors—education, health, water and sanitation, and housing—have received a low to medium priority, and the provision of these services remains highly inefficient.

Areas of structural reform that have received even less attention include the pension system, whose inefficiencies have high costs, and labor-market policies.

Quantifying the Effects of the Policy Reforms

Two indicators of the quality of economic policy reforms in Latin American countries offer support for the viewpoint expressed above that economic policy reform in Honduras has been relatively slow, especially since the early 1990s. The first of these indicators is a Structural Policy Index calculated by the IDB. This index is an unweighted average of separate indices for (1) trade policy, (2) labor-market flexibility, (3) relative prices, (4) taxes, and (5) privatization. The higher the score, the better structural policies are judged to be. Table 1 presents the index for Honduras and the other Central American countries, as well as the Latin American average, for the years 1989-95.

TABLE 1
STRUCTURAL POLICY INDEX: CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES
AND LATIN AMERICAN AVERAGE, 1989-1995

Year	HONDURAS	Costa Rica	El Salvador	Guatemala	Nicaragua	LATIN AMERICA
1989	0.402	0.506	0.421	0.438	0.295	0.436
1990	0.450	0.500	0.532	0.438	0.391	0.476
1991	0.469	0.504	0.596	0.555	0.430	0.520
1992	0.532	0.506	0.621	0.587	0.502	0.568
1993	0.546	0.506	0.660	0.600	0.617	0.592
1994	0.547	0.513	0.653	0.601	0.630	0.605
1995	0.548	0.512	0.671	0.596	0.643	0.621

Source: IDB (1997:96). The average for Latin America covers 20 countries. For most countries, data are available since 1985, but in Honduras the series starts in 1989.

According to this index, Honduras had a score in 1989 of 0.402, or 8% below the Latin American average of 0.436. Within Central America, the quality of economic policies was lower only in Nicaragua. Between 1989 and 1992 the index for Honduras rose significantly to 0.532, higher than Costa Rica as well as Nicaragua, but still 6% below the Latin American average, as almost all other countries in the hemisphere also improved their economic policies. Over the next three years, the Latin American average rose from 0.568 to 0.621; but in Honduras the increase in the index was much slower, from 0.532 to 0.548, leaving the country 12% behind the Latin American average in 1995.

The other indicator is an Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation for countries all over the world, beginning in 1995. This index is an unweighted average of separate indices for (1) trade policy, (2) tax policy, (3) intervention of the State in the economy, (4) monetary policy, (5) capital flows and foreign investment, (6) banking policy, (7) wage and price controls, (8) property rights, (9) regulation, and (10) size of the public sector. In this case, a **lower** score on a scale from 1 to 5 indicates a better policy. Table 2 shows this index, for the years 1995-97, for the five Central American countries and all of Latin America.

TABLE 2
INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM: CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES
AND LATIN AMERICAN AVERAGE, 1995-1997

Year	HONDURAS	Costa Rica	El Salvador	Guatemala	Nicaragua	LATIN AMERICA
1995	3.2	2.9	2.7	3.1	3.9	3.1
1996	3.2	2.8	2.5	2.9	3.6	3.1
1997	3.2	2.8	2.6	2.8	3.6	3.1

Source: Heritage foundation, as reported in USAID (1997).

The Index of Economic Freedom for Honduras remained at 3.2 during the 1995-97 period, compared with 3.1 for all of Latin America. In other words, Honduran economic policies were slightly less free than the regional average. Within Central America, only Nicaragua has less economic freedom than Honduras. Moreover, Honduras was the only country in Central America where economic policies did not improve between 1995 and 1997.

Trends in Key Economic Indicators, 1990-1997, and their Relationship to Economic Policy Reforms

Honduras's **GDP** grew during the period 1990-97 at an average annual rate of 3.3% (or 3.8% excluding 1990, when the process of macroeconomic adjustment began). **Per capita GDP** grew by only 0.5% a year (or 0.9% excluding 1990). Average annual growth was faster in the first four years than in the second:

Period	GDP	Per Capita GDP
1990-93	3.8%	0.9%
1994-97	2.9%	0.0%

Per capita GDP in 1997 was virtually the same as that in 1993, as the 1.4% average growth in 1995-97 only made up for the decline of 4.1% in 1994, when fiscal discipline was restored after having collapsed in 1993, and when the country suffered from a drought-induced energy crisis.

It is possible that GDP growth during the 1990s has been underestimated. Real growth rates are calculated with 1978 as the base year, and both the structure of the economy and relative prices are quite different now. When El Salvador changed its base year from 1962 to 1990, the effect was to increase GDP growth rates by an average of 1.6 percentage points a year during 1990-93 (although in the 1980s the effect was to lower them slightly). The rapid expansion of Honduran exports since 1992, and the increase in the investment rate (see below), suggest that GDP might have grown more rapidly than what the national accounts show. Nevertheless, the underestimate is probably no more than half a percentage point.

At the sectoral level, **agricultural production** grew during 1990-97 at an average annual rate of 3.4%, slightly higher than overall GDP and 0.5 percentage points faster than the population. Although a higher rate of growth might have been expected as a result of the 1992 sectoral reform package, agriculture's average growth rate of 3.2% in 1993-97 was actually less than the 1990-92 average of 3.6%, as the 1992 reforms did not produce the expected improvements in the sector's performance, in part because of continuing concerns about land-tenure security.

The **manufacturing** sector grew during 1990-97 at a moderate average annual rate of 3.6%. **Construction** was a dynamic sector only in 1992-93, when public-sector investment was excessive. The **financial sector** was the most dynamic of all during the 1990s, with an average annual growth rate of 8.3%.

Despite weak incentives and frequently expressed opinions to the contrary, the ratio of **private investment** to GDP has grown during the 1990s and now can be considered moderately high—at least according to the national accounts:

Period	Current Prices	Constant Prices
1990-97	20.4%	17.1%
1990-93	17.6%	15.1%
1994-97	23.1%	19.1%

However, these figures may overstate Honduras's actual investment rate.¹⁷

Direct foreign investment, according to balance-of-payments data, was basically stagnant during 1988-94, at an annual average net inflow of \$48 million. In the last three years, however, it has grown rapidly, reaching \$122 million, or 2.6% of GDP, in 1997. This trend suggests that the barriers to private investment are lower than commonly believed. On the other hand, private-sector observers in Honduras point out that investment varies widely by sector (or sub-sector, as in the case of agriculture) because of different incentive structures. These differences are determined by the legal and regulatory framework, sectoral tax structures, and differential access to credit, among other factors, with the first of these possibly being the most important.

Public investment as a percentage of GDP has varied a great deal during the 1990s. Three periods may be distinguished:

Period	Current Prices	Constant Prices
1990-91	6.9%	6.0%
1992-95	11.2%	9.8%
1996-97	8.2%	7.1%

The highest figure (12.4% in current prices) occurred in 1993, when fiscal discipline broke down. The Reina government, which took office in January 1994, felt unable to lower public investment quickly because of the high costs it would have incurred for cancelling or modifying contracts signed in previous years. Much of the investment undertaken during 1992-95 was relatively inefficient.

Total investment, at least according to the national accounts, is surprisingly high:

Period	Current Prices	Constant Prices
1990-97	29.8%	25.2%
1990-93	26.8%	23.1%
1994-97	32.7%	27.4%

Total investment in current prices peaked at 37.6% of GDP in 1994, then fell to 30.1% in 1997. However, even the latter figure can be considered relatively high.

These figures indicate that **investment in Honduras is very inefficient**. Comparing the investment rate for 1990-97 with the rate of GDP growth during this period (without taking into account lags in the impact of the investment), one obtains a capital-output ratio of 7.6, or 6.3 excluding changes in inventories. These figures are disturbingly high, and they would remain so even after discounts to reflect the likely overestimation of the investment rate.

The **money supply** grew rapidly between the end of 1989 and August 1997 (the last available figure when this research was conducted). The average annual growth of M_2 , annualizing the growth for the first 8 months of 1997, was 26.7%, with quasi-money growing more rapidly than money (M_1).¹⁸ The average annual growth of M_2 was considerably higher in 1994-97 (35.5%) than in 1990-93 (17.9%), making control of inflation more difficult. The rapid growth in **credit to the private sector** in the last two years is especially notable: 34.7% in 1996 and 32.8% (annualized) in 1997. Nevertheless, part of this expansion was offset by a reduction in net credit to the public sector, which now is negative.

The annual growth of **consumer prices**, which had been repressed during the 1980s by price controls (including the exchange rate) and unsustainable levels of official transfers (grants), rose rapidly after the devaluation and liberalization of other prices in 1990. Consumer prices, which had increased by 9.8% in 1989, rose by 23.3% in 1990 and 34.0% in 1991. Nevertheless, this initial jump should be considered as a one-time adjustment of the price level rather than an increase in the true inflation rate.

Fiscal and monetary discipline slowed the growth of the consumer price index significantly to 8.7% in 1992. However, the loss of that discipline led to accelerating consumer-price increases that reached 29.5% in 1995. The reimposition of fiscal discipline brought the annual rate of increase down to 20.2% in 1997; even more encouraging was the 12.8% rate between December 1996 and December 1997. However, this improvement was due in part to an appreciation of the *lempira* during 1997 (by at least 8% in real effective terms).¹⁹ Moreover, the rapid monetary and credit expansion in 1998 could have lagged effects on the price level in 1998, unless these pressures are absorbed by increased imports.

The issue of **poverty** has not received much attention in the economic policy debate in Honduras, although its incidence remains high—66% in 1997—and has not declined as much as some would have expected after falling from 75% to 70% between 1991 and 1992.²⁰ The effects of economic-policy reforms on poverty are difficult to ascertain because of data problems (Thorpe 1996:233-244). Honduras lacks an overall strategy for reducing poverty, particularly through medium- and long-term measures as opposed to short-term, poverty-alleviation programs.

At the beginning of the decade, the **fiscal deficit** was reduced sharply—from 7.4% of GDP in 1989 to 5.9% in 1990 and 0.7% in 1991—as a result of the effective implementation of measures both to increase revenues and to reduce expenditures. In the next two years, however, sharply rising capital expenditures, many of them for projects of questionable economic viability, increased the fiscal deficit to 5.4% in 1992 and 9.8% in the election year of 1993. The Reina government managed to reduce the fiscal deficit to 6.0% in 1994 and to only 0.8% in 1997, its last full year in office, breaking the pattern of fiscal laxness that had characterized the last years of its recent predecessors.

A major objective of the economic reform process initiated in 1990 was a strong expansion of **exports**, which had been stagnant during the 1980s, and in fact through 1992. This situation changed significantly over the next five years, due largely to the effects of the 1990 devaluation and to other liberalization measures implemented then and in subsequent years. Merchandise exports rose from \$833 million in 1992 to \$1,547 million in 1997, an annual increase of 13.2%. Even after discounting for the effects of favorable coffee prices in 1997,²¹ export growth since 1992 has been impressive. Most of this growth occurred in nontraditional exports, which rose from \$132 million in 1990 to \$778 million in 1997.²²

The export figures above exclude **value added from maquila production**, which is considered an export of services. Although comparable data are not available for the years prior to 1993, the value added from this source was probably about \$20 million in 1990.²³ By 1993 the figure had risen to \$90 million, and in 1997 value added from *maquila* exports reached \$308 million. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) thus has not had the negative effect on Honduran *maquila* exports that many observers had expected.

Another increasingly important service export is **tourism**. Gross receipts from tourism to Honduras rose significantly from \$60 million in 1993 to \$146 million in 1997.²⁴ Still, they remain well below those in Costa Rica and Guatemala.²⁵ Investment in tourism has been increasing, despite an inadequate legal and regulatory framework, probably because investors are optimistic that this framework will soon be reformed.

The **real effective exchange rate** (REER) depreciated by 22.5% between 1990 and 1994. Part of this gain was lost over the next three years, although the REER in 1997 was still depreciated with respect to its 1990 average level. The recent

appreciation does not yet appear to have affected export performance, as the *lempira* was probably **undervalued** for part of the decade; but a further significant real appreciation could begin to depress export profit margins to unattractive levels.

Honduras's long-term **public external debt** roughly tripled between 1980 and 1989, to \$2,867 million. By the end of 1990 it had risen sharply to \$3,426 million, as interest arrears were capitalized and new debt was incurred after the arrears-clearing operation in June of that year. Debt forgiveness of more than \$500 million (the great bulk by the United States) helped bring the debt down to \$3,096 million at the end of 1991. But the external debt then began to rise once more, averaging \$3,868 million in 1993-96 before falling slightly in 1997. Although the structure of the debt has changed so that a larger share now consists of concessional debt, the servicing of the debt remains a significant burden on the public finances.

Concluding Observations and Lessons

Despite the economic reforms implemented since 1990, the capacity of the Honduran economy for sustained economic growth probably does not exceed 4.5% a year, or about 1.7% in per capita terms. The 1995-97 average GDP growth rate of 4.3% was facilitated by favorable prices for coffee. Significantly faster progress in reducing the incidence of poverty requires a sustained growth rate of 6% or more. Faster growth, in turn, depends to a large extent on a deepening of macroeconomic and microeconomic reforms.

The 1989 and 1993 electoral-year experiences demonstrate that the loss of fiscal discipline, especially in the fiscal dimension, has high costs. Fortunately, Honduras learned this lesson in 1997, and the outlook for the economy in 1998 is thus much better than it was in 1990 or 1994. Consistency of economic policies over a number of years is one of the major determinants of accelerated private investment. Clear legal and regulatory frameworks are also important.

Given the low productivity of Honduran investment, both public and private, efforts to reform economic policies should focus on improving the productivity of all factors of production.

The Asian economic crisis of 1997-98, as well as Chile's experience in 1982, illustrate the importance of a strong system of supervision and prudential regulation in the financial sector.

The public sector has very limited capacity to finance necessary large investments in energy, telecommunications, and other types of infrastructure, either with its own or with borrowed funds. It is difficult to see how major infrastructure shortages can be avoided without more of an opening to private investors.

Honduras's heavy debt burden demonstrates that it is better, and more sustainable, to finance the imports needed for economic growth primarily through export earnings, and to depend less on external borrowing. High debt-servicing requirements, as well as policy shortcomings, continue to restrict the country's capacity for economic growth.

Annex: Economic Indicators

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<u>POPULATION</u>									
Thousands of Persons	4608	4745	4885	5029	5170	5315	5463	5616	5773
Rate of Growth	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
<u>GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (mill. lempiras)</u>									
Current Prices	10344	12537	16314	18800	22689	28862	37532	47831	61445
1978 Prices	5161	5166	5334	5634	5985	5903	6157	6385	6696
<u>Rates of Growth (%)</u>									
Real GDP	4.3	0.1	3.3	5.6	6.2	-1.4	4.3	3.7	4.9
Real Per Capita GDP	1.3	-2.8	0.3	2.6	3.4	-4.1	1.4	0.9	2.0
Real GDP by Sector									
Agriculture	10.0	1.1	6.1	3.6	0.6	0.9	8.8	2.5	3.2
Mining	13.0	-7.7	4.2	10.7	3.6	-3.5	15.7	7.3	4.9
Manufacturing	3.8	0.7	1.7	6.1	6.3	-1.8	5.5	4.6	6.1
Construction	14.5	-9.9	-2.8	34.0	21.1	-18.0	0.7	-4.2	-7.4
Elect./Gas/Water	4.6	13.3	0.8	0.8	7.7	-7.1	14.6	15.4	7.0
Trans./Storage/Comuns.	6.5	3.8	2.9	4.3	3.4	-2.9	7.7	4.4	3.8
Trade/Rests./Hotels	-4.5	-0.8	2.2	2.9	8.1	0.0	5.6	4.5	3.5
Finance/Insurance/etc.	8.7	3.1	9.6	9.5	11.7	6.7	9.4	6.1	10.6
Housing	4.2	4.3	3.2	3.4	3.9	4.0	2.2	4.1	3.9
Pub. Admin./Defense	3.0	-14.7	-3.8	3.9	14.8	-16.5	-3.6	2.2	4.0
Other Services	1.0	-1.0	-6.4	6.8	11.1	-0.9	0.4	-0.7	4.9

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT									
(% of GDP; <u>current prices</u>)									
Total Investment	<u>19.1</u>	<u>23.0</u>	<u>24.7</u>	<u>26.0</u>	<u>33.6</u>	<u>37.6</u>	<u>31.8</u>	<u>31.2</u>	<u>30.1</u>
Private	13.4	16.4	17.5	15.6	21.1	26.5	21.1	22.4	22.5
<i>Fixed</i>	<i>12.5</i>	<i>13.6</i>	<i>11.8</i>	<i>12.0</i>	<i>16.3</i>	<i>17.0</i>	<i>13.5</i>	<i>15.3</i>	<i>16.2</i>
<i>Inventory Var.</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>5.7</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>9.5</i>	<i>7.6</i>	<i>7.1</i>	<i>6.3</i>
Public	5.7	6.6	7.2	10.4	12.4	11.1	10.7	8.8	7.6
Gross National Savings	<u>14.2</u>	<u>21.1</u>	<u>18.9</u>	<u>18.3</u>	<u>25.0</u>	<u>26.9</u>			
Private	14.6	19.6	12.2	11.9	21.1	22.6			
Public	-0.4	1.5	6.7	6.4	3.9	4.3			
External Savings	<u>4.9</u>	<u>1.9</u>	<u>5.8</u>	<u>7.7</u>	<u>8.6</u>	<u>10.7</u>			
INVESTMENT									
(% of GDP; <u>1978 prices</u>)									
Total Investment	<u>18.5</u>	<u>19.1</u>	<u>21.8</u>	<u>23.3</u>	<u>28.3</u>	<u>30.8</u>	<u>26.3</u>	<u>26.6</u>	<u>25.8</u>
Private	12.8	13.2	15.7	14.1	17.2	20.9	17.2	18.9	19.3
<i>Fixed</i>	<i>12.1</i>	<i>11.1</i>	<i>10.3</i>	<i>10.7</i>	<i>14.2</i>	<i>15.8</i>	<i>12.0</i>	<i>14.0</i>	<i>15.1</i>
<i>Inventory Var.</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>5.4</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>4.9</i>	<i>4.2</i>
Public	5.8	5.9	6.1	9.2	11.0	9.9	9.1	7.7	6.5

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
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MONETARY INDICATORS

Money Supply (M2)

(mill. lempiras,

31 December)*

	<u>3273</u>	<u>3973</u>	<u>4668</u>	<u>5713</u>	<u>6309</u>	<u>8219</u>	<u>10623</u>	<u>14994</u>	<u>18902</u>
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Money (M1)

	1501	1855	2060	2523	2825	3845	4678	6053	6560
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Quasi-money

	1773	2118	2609	3190	3485	4374	5945	8941	12342
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Domestic Credit of the
Banking System

(mill. lempiras,

31 December)*

	<u>5068</u>	<u>5131</u>	<u>5327</u>	<u>5954</u>	<u>7059</u>	<u>8884</u>	<u>9830</u>	<u>12195</u>	<u>13660</u>
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To the private sector

	3464	3897	4298	5364	6161	7683	9305	12530	15136
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To the public sector

	1604	1233	1029	590	898	1200	525	-335	-1476
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*1997: 31 August.

CONSUMER PRICES

Change (%)

Annual

	9.8	23.3	34.0	8.7	10.7	21.7	29.5	23.8	20.2
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December to December

	11.4	36.2	21.5	6.5	13.0	28.9	26.8	25.3	12.8
--	------	------	------	-----	------	------	------	------	------

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
POVERTY AND INDIGENCE									
<u>(% of the population)</u>									
<u>Poverty - National</u>			<u>74.8</u>	<u>69.9</u>	<u>67.5</u>	<u>67.2</u>	<u>67.8</u>	<u>68.7</u>	<u>65.8</u>
- Urban			68.4	61.6	55.4	62.6	62.8	61.0	59.0
- Rural			79.6	76.5	77.1	71.1	71.9	75.3	71.7
<u>Indigence - National</u>			<u>54.2</u>	<u>47.4</u>	<u>45.1</u>	<u>47.0</u>	<u>47.4</u>	<u>53.7</u>	<u>48.4</u>
- Urban			46.7	39.2	31.6	39.8	40.6	38.7	35.2
- Rural			59.9	53.9	55.8	52.9	53.1	66.4	60.0

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**FISCAL ACCOUNTS OF THE
NONFINANCIAL PUBLIC
SECTOR (% of GDP)**

Curr. Income & Transfers	24.6	27.3	29.9	28.8	27.6	26.7	30.2	30.3	29.4
Current Expenditures	25.1	25.8	23.2	22.4	23.7	22.6	23.2	24.2	22.6
Current Balance	-0.4	1.5	6.7	6.4	3.9	4.1	7.0	6.1	6.8
Capital Income	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.8	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.2
Capital Expenditures	5.9	7.6	7.4	12.2	14.0	11.0	11.5	10.4	6.6
Net Lending	1.3	-0.1	0.3	0.5	0.7	-0.3	0.2	0.5	1.2
Overall Balance	-7.4	-5.9	-0.7	-5.4	-9.8	-6.0	-4.3	-4.7	-0.8

**BALANCE OF PAYMENTS
(millions of dollars)**

Current Account—Balance	<u>-170</u>	<u>-51</u>	<u>-170</u>	<u>-258</u>	<u>-327</u>	<u>-368</u>	<u>-191</u>	<u>-175</u>	<u>-36</u>
(Adjusted Balance)*	<u>-338</u>	<u>-306</u>	<u>-339</u>	<u>-445</u>	<u>-477</u>	<u>-496</u>	<u>-351</u>	<u>-372</u>	<u>-174</u>
Exports, FOB	903	887	838	833	911	1017	1298	1422	1547

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS									
(cont.)									
Imports, CIF	-956	-907	-913	-990	-1233	-1399	-1571	-1759	-1928
Services (net)	-310	-311	-292	-317	-223	-197	-182	-115	33
Transfers (net)	193	280	197	216	218	211	264	277	312
<i>Private</i>	25	25	28	29	68	83	104	140	174
<i>Official</i>	168	255	169	187	150	128	160	137	138
Capital Account—Balance	<u>272</u>	<u>217</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>169</u>	<u>207</u>	<u>242</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>233</u>	<u>271</u>
Direct Investment	51	44	52	48	52	41	69	90	122
Private—Long-Term	-18	-22	-28	-30	4	52	9	18	35
Private—Short-Term	-10	-28	41	-37	-1	84	27	43	84
Official (net)	247	184	74	191	187	127	114	91	-13
Banking (net)	2	39	-6	-2	-13	-18	5	5	48
Compensatory Credits	#	#	#	#	-22	-44	-28	-14	-5
Errors and Omissions	<u>-104</u>	<u>-129</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>-72</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>30</u>
Overall Balance	<u>-2</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>-192</u>	<u>-20</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>265</u>

* Excludes official transfers.

Included in Official (net).

EXCHANGE RATE

(lempiras per dollar)

Annual Average*	2.00	4.11	5.32	5.50	6.47	8.41	9.47	11.71	13.09
31 December#	2.00	5.36	5.40	5.83	7.26	9.40	10.34	12.87	13.09

* 1997: Average, January-September.

1997: 30 September.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
<u>EXTERNAL DEBT</u>									
Long-Term Public									
Debt (US\$mill.)	2867	3426	3096	3232	3651	3900	3980	3940	
Debt/GDP (%)	88	118	103	110	123	127	126	118	
Debt Service/Exports (%)	18	49	30	36	29	32	34	23	

Data Sources

Population: USAID (1997). (Data for 1989-96; the 1997 figure is an estimate assuming that the rate of growth remained at 2.8%.)

Gross Domestic Product: Banco Central de Honduras.

Savings and Investment: Banco Central de Honduras.

Consumer Prices: International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics (1989-92); Banco Central de Honduras (1993-97).

Monetary Indicators: International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics.

Poverty and Indigence: Secretaría de Planificación (SECPLAN) (1991-94); ADAI (1995-97).

Fiscal Accounts: Banco Central de Honduras, Departamento de Estudios Económicos, Sección de Finanzas Públicas.

Balance of Payments: Banco Central de Honduras.

Exchange Rate: International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics.

External Debt: World Bank.

Endnotes

- ¹ In some countries, the economic decline began before 1980 because of noneconomic factors such as the civil wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In other countries, such as Panama, the decline occurred later in the decade. Few countries in the region—and only Colombia among the larger countries—escaped the decade relatively unscathed. All GDP and per capita GDP growth rates in this paper are in real (constant-price) terms, factoring out the effects of inflation.
- ² In 1996 Honduras's per capita GDP in 1990 prices was \$648, compared with an average for Latin America of \$2,801 (IDB 1997:221). The current-price figure for 1997, derived from the data in the Annex to this paper, is \$813.
- ³ The economic contractions in the rest of Central America were significantly more severe than the Latin American average: Costa Rica, -17% (1979-83); El Salvador, -28% (1978-83); Guatemala, -20% (1980-86); and Nicaragua, -62% (1977-93). (Source: USAID 1997 and USAID/LAC data bank.)
- ⁴ Data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) show that external donors provided Honduras an average of \$273 million annually in Official Development Assistance (ODA) during the 1980s. ODA is defined as disbursements of concessional loans and grants by bilateral and multilateral donors, less loan repayments. See USAID (1997).
- ⁵ Nevertheless, nontraditional exports received a more favorable rate beginning in 1987, under a complex mechanism known as *Certificados de Transferencia de Divisas* (CETRAS).
- ⁶ A decline in this index signifies an appreciation of the exchange rate. The index used by the IMF, on the other hand, denotes an appreciation by an increase in the index number.
- ⁷ U.S. economic assistance to Honduras during the years 1985-88 averaged \$175 million a year, equivalent to 4.3% of Honduras's GDP (USAID 1997). U.S. military assistance during this period also was significant.
- ⁸ World Bank figures, excluding interest arrears, reported in Zuvekas (1993:208), where the 1989 figure is an earlier estimate. Data for 1989-96 appear in the Annex to this paper.

- ⁹ Nevertheless, Williamson (1990:55) notes that Honduras did implement modest fiscal and exchange-rate reforms during the 1980s. Thorpe (1996) also discusses reforms prior to 1990.
- ¹⁰ This tax facilitated the stabilization effort in the short run, but it represented a backward step with respect to structural adjustment. Still, it was clearly designed as a temporary measure and was removed before the end of 1991. Later, other export taxes were eliminated. The only significant export tax still levied is on bananas. Nominally, this tax is \$0.50 per box of bananas exported; but since production from new, replanted, or rehabilitated areas is exempt, the effective average tax is about half the nominal amount.
- ¹¹ A 10% surcharge was retained, but not applied to raw materials, intermediate goods, and imports from Central America. The surcharge was eliminated in 1995.
- ¹² Although the FHIS in principle was established to target vulnerable groups, in practice it was difficult to pinpoint those who were most adversely affected in the short run by the reform process. As a result, the FHIS, like its counterparts in other Latin American countries, benefited poor households in general by financing small, community-level projects that provided temporary employment for the construction or repair of schools, health posts, water systems, and other infrastructure, as well as a miscellany of other activities.
- ¹³ These figures do not include technical assistance financed by the IDB (\$5.0 million) and the WB (\$9.6 million) to facilitate the implementation of the program, nor an additional \$26.4 million of “IDA reflow” assistance made available by the World Bank’s soft-loan window. The WB later added another \$15 million in IDA reflows.
- ¹⁴ For a critical analysis of the law by an observer who was concerned about its possible negative effects on small farmers, see Pino (1993). Other observers have maintained that the law should benefit small farmers because it eliminated price controls on basic grains and provided more flexibility in land-ownership and land-tenure arrangements.
- ¹⁵ Both the *Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada* (COHEP) and the *Fundación de Inversiones y Desarrollo de Exportaciones* (FIDE) played important roles in preparing, promoting, and securing approval of the *Ley de Inversiones* in May 1992. COHEP also facilitated the passage of other legislation favorable to private investment, while FIDE has had considerable success in promoting and attracting investment in manufacturing and assembly operations.

- ¹⁶ These include the *Ley General de Instituciones del Sector Financiero Privado* (1995), which provided greater transparency, protection, and flexibility to financial institutions; the *Ley de la Comisión Nacional de Banca y Seguros* (1995), which transferred supervisory functions from the Banco Central de Honduras (BCH) to an independent agency; and a new *Ley del Banco Central* (1996), which provided more flexibility to the BCH in the use of monetary policy and increased its autonomy and transparency. The government is now able to borrow from the BCH only under exceptional circumstances.
- ¹⁷ First, GDP (and specifically its consumption component) may be underestimated. Secondly, the figures reported here include the inventory-variation component of investment, which is significantly higher than what one would normally expect (an average of 6.0% of GDP in current prices and 4.3% in constant prices).
- ¹⁸ M₂ includes time deposits as well as currency in circulation and demand deposits (checking accounts).
- ¹⁹ The 8% figure is a preliminary estimate by UN-ECLAC (1997:53). Other estimates of the real effective exchange rate suggest that the appreciation may have been as high as 12%-15%.
- ²⁰ Although comparable data are not available before 1991, the 75% figure in this year probably represented a temporary increase since 1989 as a result of the stabilization and structural adjustment measures implemented in March 1990. The improvement between 1991 and 1992 can be explained by the robust economic recovery in 1992 (GDP growth of 5.6%) and a much slower rate of increase of consumer prices (8.7%, compared with 34.0% in 1991).
- ²¹ Prices received by Honduran exporters per 100-lb. (46-kg.) sack of coffee averaged \$143.78 in 1997, compared with an especially depressed price of \$56.01 in 1993.
- ²² Nontraditional exports are all those other than coffee, bananas, wood, beef, lead, zinc, silver, shrimp (non-cultivated), lobster, sugar, and tobacco.
- ²³ Before 1990, because of inappropriate policies, Honduras had taken much less advantage of *maquila* opportunities offered by U.S. legislation than had Costa Rica and Guatemala. Honduras now exports more assembled apparel than either of these other countries.

²⁴ Trends in tourism receipts between 1990 and 1993 are not clear. An older data set, which underestimated tourism receipts, showed an increase from \$29 million in 1990 to \$34 million in 1995. The new data set is available only for the years since 1993.

²⁵ In 1995 gross tourism receipts were \$671 million in Costa Rica and \$212 million in Guatemala, compared with \$107 million in Honduras.

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History

Major Robert O. Kirkland

*United States Assistance to the Bolivian
Military 1958-1964*

37

UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO THE BOLIVIAN MILITARY 1958-1964

Major Robert O. Kirkland
United States Military Academy, West Point¹

I

On November 4, 1964, a military junta led by General René Barrientos overthrew Bolivian President Víctor Paz Estenssoro, ending the 12 year governance of the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR). The coup surprised many foreign observers. Robert Alexander, an early academic observer of the MNR, had written in 1963 that the party seemed well on its way to setting up a one party state similar to Mexico's Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), which had ruled that country continuously since 1920. To Alexander, Paz's landslide electoral victory in early 1964 confirmed that the MNR would continue its domination of Bolivian politics well into the future. Equally surprising to Alexander and others was the armed forces' involvement in the coup. Their institution had Paz's unqualified support and had been rebuilt with the assistance of the United States over the previous half-decade, becoming a central pillar of the MNR regime. Yet, only eight months after the presidential election, the country had a military government and Paz was in exile.

Most Bolivian specialists attribute the MNR's demise primarily to fissures within its political structure and have seen the influence of the United States as a contributing factor in the coup, but not the cause.² Cole Blasier regards the coup as primarily a "domestic matter," but acknowledges that the U.S. played an important role in bringing the armed forces to power. He notes that "critics have . . . written so much against U.S. involvement (in the rebuilding of the military) and they have been so widely believed" that the U.S. is assumed to have a greater role than it did.³ So what was the U.S. role in the rebuilding of the Bolivian military?

This paper examines what Blasier rightly calls a "contributing factor" in the MNR's demise: the United States involvement in the reconstitution of the Bolivian military. By using sources previously unavailable to scholars: records of the State Department, Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), I hope to cast new light on the U.S. role in the military buildup and subsequent coup. The goal here is to move beyond Blasier's conclusions to provide a richer portrait of the unfolding of the policy. I will argue that United States officials, in the context of intruding Cold War conflicts into Latin America in the late 1950s and early 1960s, early on came to regard the MNR government as vulnerable to outside subversion and placed its bets—despite reservations from various quarters—on a rebuilt Bolivian military in order to forestall escalation of social and political tensions or "Communization" of the Bolivian Revolution. In Washington's judgment, the MNR's moderate elements, such as

Paz, had neither the will nor the capacity to undertake the creation and maintenance of a rule of law in which property and other rights necessary to advance economic growth would be protected. Nor would Paz and his supporters check the claims-making (the acquisition of power by formal or informal means) by various social and political groups, especially those aligned with the left. Over time, U.S. officials convinced themselves that reconstituting the military would help Bolivia achieve economic stability, the rule of law, and limit challenges to the political order.

On one level, then, the 1964 coup can be seen as a culmination of a military rebuilding process that began under U.S. supervision in 1958. While not directly sanctioning the coup, Washington's avid support of Bolivia's military most likely sent a message to its leaders that the U.S. would at least look away and possibly give full support to the military coup. Combined with other factors such as the MNR split and the loss of support of the middle classes and miners, Washington's avid support gave the military great confidence that the coup would succeed and the new military regime would be quickly recognized by the United States—which it was.

The essay has two sections. First, it examines the interpretations of U.S. officials on the ground and in Washington of the Bolivian political, social and economic environment, interpretations which led the U.S. to see a reconstituted military as the centerpiece of its Bolivian policy. And second, it focuses on the substantive points of the military buildup and the signals the U.S. gave to the military that it would at least look away and possibly give full support to a coup.

II

In April, 1952, the Bolivian middle-class National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) overthrew the regime of the landed class and tin barons with the support of Indian miners and peasants. Consequently, the new government had to confront a major problem: the disposition of the regular military establishment.⁴ Since the Chaco War with Paraguay in the 1930s, the armed forces had been an integral part of the political scene. Various governments, both leftist and centrist, had been led by military men or ruled with the approval of the officer corps. When the MNR won their first election in 1951, the military joined with the civilian leaders to prevent MNR accession to power. The ruling military junta's decision to void elections provided the context for a bloody countercoup by the MNR.

Once secure in power, Paz, Hernán Siles, Juan Lechín and other leaders sought to secure the new regime from a military-led intervention. The MNR hierarchy seriously considered the complete elimination of the army, a proposal advocated by the more radical members of the party. In an attempt to strike a balance, the President convinced party leaders that the officer corps could be tamed and integrated to serve the country. Ultimately, Paz chose to leave the military structure essentially intact and strictly control its leadership.⁵

In place of the Armed Forces, the MNR relied on a combination of militia, police forces and the armed forces to maintain civil order. The civilian militia, the strongest portion of this group, outnumbered the regular armed forces by over 10 to 1.⁶ A second para-military force, the *carabineros*, functioned as a government police force designed to quell internal disturbances and was about the same size as the depleted Armed Forces.⁷

U.S. officials feared that with power split between the three groups, Communist elements could take advantage of the fragile security situation to overthrow the MNR and come to power.⁸ In August, 1956, Henry Holland, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, met with the new Bolivian President, Siles, in La Paz to discuss these concerns. Holland told Siles that the Communist party itself seemingly had little impact politically. Nonetheless, he cautioned that the Communists' "clandestine organization and all other resources (designed to) prevent a stabilization program" were the true danger. Their primary objective, he noted, was to "drive a wedge between the government and the people . . . and overthrow the government." What better way to install a Communist government, Holland reasoned, then to subvert the strongest military force in Bolivia—the civilian militia?⁹

The MNR's failure to adequately deal with the internal military balance seemed to underscore Washington's doubts of the ability of Bolivia's ruling coalition to recognize the Communist threat. After 1956 Washington grew increasingly apprehensive with the MNR—and in particular its putatively more moderate elements, such as Paz and Siles—who could not or would not undertake the creation and maintenance of a rule of law in which property and other rights necessary to advance economic growth would be protected. "The present government may well lack the power necessary to implement reform," noted the embassy, because they lacked "deep experience in a political system under the rule of law and do not recognize the value of arriving at political stability." They concluded, "until political authorities administer laws and regulations impartially, they [the MNR] will not be able to lead the country out of its present anarchy."¹⁰

The seeming inability of the MNR to insure stability led U.S. policy makers, particularly in the State Department, to begin the search for alternatives to the ruling party. In a 1956 State Department memorandum on this subject, the authors maintained that the likelihood of political chaos and collapse was due to the weakness of the MNR. Importantly, the authors called for alternatives to the unstable system.¹¹ The most important immediate objective, they concluded, was to bring about a reduction in the size and influence of the militia while getting the government to increase its reliance on the formal armed forces. Agreeing with the authors, Acting Secretary of State Christian A. Herter would authorize one month later the Ambassador to Bolivia to open talks with Siles with the goal of "strengthening the Bolivian Army" and "helping [the military] regain the confidence of the government and the people [with the aim of] enhancing the prestige and effectiveness of the armed forces in their internal security role."¹²

Bolivia's military leaders made great efforts to convince U.S. Ambassadors in La Paz of their desire to provide stability and prevent purported Communist subversion. Their probable motivation to please the United States stemmed from the prospects of receiving military aid from Washington to rebuild their beleaguered institution. Two meetings between U.S. ambassadors and senior Army leaders between 1958 and 1960 underscore this trend. These conversations also point to the dynamics or logic of communication between the embassy and the military that had the Bolivian military acting early on to garner the trust and confidence (and resources) of the U.S. Beginning in 1958, senior generals lobbied the U.S. embassy to help strengthen the armed forces. The opening salvo took place in January, 1958, when General Clemente Inofuentes visited the embassy and spoke to the U.S. Ambassador, Philip Bonsal. The theme of the general's remarks centered upon the army's impotence. The frustrated general felt that the government was relying too much on the militia. Only the military, he noted, could ensure stability in the country, forecasting a total collapse if his superiors did not seek United States aid to strengthen the Bolivian army. Bonsal, impressed with Inofuentes, noted in the dispatch that most U.S. government officials in Bolivia had a high opinion of the general, describing him as an "energetic public-spirited person." Bonsal wrote that it was easy to be impatient with the Bolivian government, which had failed to come to grips with certain internal security problems.¹³

A confrontation between the Army and militia forces in mid-year seemed to confirm Inofuentes's prophecy and the concerns of the ambassador. President Siles sent the army to Cochabamba to force the release of several army officers who had been taken prisoner. Cochabamba, Bolivia's center of tin mining, was controlled by militias who received most of their arms and monetary support from the local miners' union. The U.S. perceived these local militias, particularly those controlled by the miners, as a primary cause of the area's instability. The American consul on the scene described a confrontation at the town airstrip between General Alfredo Ovando Candia, Chief of Staff of the Army, and militia leaders. The situation turned comical when the general and the military prefect of Cochabamba tried to negotiate with the militia leaders. Eventually tiring of Ovando, militia soldiers began hitting the Army Chief on the backside with their rifle butts. His initial dignified retreat, as described by the Consul, ended in a "frank run of some fifty feet." The militia hustled Ovando's men from the airfield and ordered them out of the area.¹⁴ The Army did not attempt to return in early 1960 when a similar incident occurred.¹⁵

After the incident in 1960, Ovando called on the new U.S. ambassador, Carl Strom, who had replaced Bonsal a few months earlier. The general stated emphatically that stability depended on disarming the militia and building up the military. Ovando continued: "anarchy held Bolivia in its grip. The militias could be disarmed by a combination of leadership and force. President Siles might well provide the leadership but the army would not be able to neutralize the militia." This led Ovando to

insist that the army obtain military assistance from the United States. He favored a pact or “some procedure whereby the army might receive special equipment needed to increase its internal security capabilities.”¹⁶

Ovando gave another, and perhaps for Strom, a more convincing reason for the United States to back the military. In response to questions from the Ambassador, the General reported that more than ninety percent of the personnel of the armed forces were anti-Communist. Communist infiltration of the army had been negligible. By projecting the military into unstable militia havens such as Cochabamba, he noted, the army could effectively root out Communist influence there and in other areas. Strom agreed with Ovando, thanking him for his frankness and stating that he would seek an appointment with Siles to discuss Ovando’s concerns. In personal comments attached to the memo for Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the Ambassador observed that the police and especially the army were “outnumbered and out-gunned by the civilian militia.” The first step towards internal stability would have to be “the subordination of the civilian militia to the uniformed forces. Otherwise, whoever assumed the presidency would be ineffective without a police force and an army capable of enforcing executive and judicial authority.” Should President Siles confirm the General’s statement, continued Strom, he believed that an “unusual opportunity will have been presented to the United States Government to advance its interests in Bolivia by responding in a positive manner to the Government of Bolivia’s desire for assistance in the highly significant project which the General described.”¹⁷

By 1960, it seemed that the Bolivian military had fully succeeded in convincing embassy officials that they would best address the U.S. concerns over internal security matters and stem the tide of purported Communist influence in the country. Washington’s dealings with military governments in both Brazil and Argentina in the mid-1950s had already inclined them to see the Bolivian military in this role. Inofuentes and Ovando’s actions simply confirmed the view already held by most U.S. policy makers.

Meanwhile, events in Latin America in 1958 and 1959 set in relief the region’s vulnerability to radical and social revolution and lent greater impetus to aid the Bolivian military. In mid-1958, angry South Americans hounded Vice President Richard Nixon during his tour of the continent. They protested U.S. support for dictators like Marcos Pérez Jiménez (1952-1958) of Venezuela and the lack of U.S. concern for Latin America’s pressing socioeconomic needs. The next year, violent anti-United States demonstrations erupted in Panama and leftist guerrillas began to operate in the mountains of Colombia and Venezuela. And, in what would prove to be the most momentous change, Fidel Castro overthrew the pro-American regime of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba and used bitter anti-Americanism to fuel a broad social revolution. Many foreign-policy analysts blamed this hemispheric turmoil on the machinations of the “international Communist conspiracy” directed by the Soviet Union.¹⁸

U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower reacted to these crises in two major ways. In July, 1960, he announced the Social Progress Trust Fund, which allocated 500 million dollars to help alleviate socioeconomic inequalities in Latin America.¹⁹ In the military sphere, the United States would now be fully committed to providing for the internal security of Latin American states. The new, primary duty of Latin American military units would be to attain “a reasonable military capability to maintain internal security against civil disturbance or insurrection.”²⁰

III

The Latin American crises in 1958 and 1959 put great pressure on Siles and the MNR to strengthen the regular armed forces. MNR leaders certainly felt that they would be more likely to get future economic aid they very much needed from the United States government if there were an established army, navy and air force. Holland, in his 1956 meeting with Siles in La Paz, for example, stressed that future economic aid was contingent on annual U.S. Congressional approval. Bolivia, Holland asserted, must show a willingness to carry out the economic stabilization plan and demonstrate commitment to combat Communist subversive activities. In response to conversations such as this and other bureaucratic consultations, Siles agreed in mid-1958 to begin the rearming on a tentative basis.

Siles’ desire to rebuild the armed forces slowly and cautiously gave way almost immediately to an accelerated rearming schedule preferred by both the Bolivian military and those in Washington. Pentagon military planners, in concert with military attachés in Bolivia, moved quickly to improve the mobility, firepower and training of the Bolivian military.²¹ Their plan centered on three areas: providing equipment, sponsoring the schooling of Bolivian officers and soldiers in the Canal Zone and inside Bolivia and working with military leaders to improve Bolivia’s military education infrastructure.

By mid 1961, U.S. officials on the scene judged that the Bolivian military had begun to round the corner, becoming a more competent military force.²² Two notable improvements in the Bolivian military were the discipline of the ordinary soldier and the ability of the military to conduct complex military training maneuvers. The renewed strength of the Bolivian military quickly translated into victories over their rivals in the countryside, the civilian militia. Violence in the Cliza Valley, near Cochabamba, broke out between rival *campesino* militias in November 1962. The government moved army units into the area to restore order and institute a *cordon sanitaire*. Compared to 1958 and 1960, when the Army was routed, they now quickly reestablished control. The ease with which the armed forces brought stability in this militia stronghold demonstrated their new mastery. Delighted with the turn of events, the U.S. embassy sent word immediately to the Department of Defense and Army.²³

Thus, by 1962 the military stabilized the internal security situation in Bolivia, controlling the militias. It seemed the United States had accomplished its intended mission in less than four years.

The United States and the Bolivian military had thus forged a very successful partnership: the Bolivian armed forces, with the help of the U.S., reassumed their predominance in military affairs and the United States now had a committed anti-Communist military that was successful in creating internal stability. However, the strong ties between the two groups had a consequence that U.S. policy makers failed to foresee: they gave senior Bolivian military leaders the impression that the U.S. would at least look away and possibly give full support for a coup. While clearly unintended, U.S. representatives tended to convey this message in three ways: by ignoring signals from many quarters warning of a possible coup, by the embassy's outright defense of the military in the face of criticism, and by maintaining close personal ties with the Bolivian military high command.

As the rearming quickened in the early sixties, the U.S. military began to tacitly acknowledge the prospect of a military junta. In a secret assessment published in September, 1960, Pentagon authors noted that the army along with the *carabineros*, should be capable of maintaining internal security. This positive assessment came with a caveat: "nevertheless, the government [MNR] has never proved able over a long period of time to keep the loyalty of all significant portions of the armed forces."

Bolivia's neighbors also expressed their concerns to the U.S. In late 1961, the Chileans provided the clearest hint of the likely consequences of a rearmed military, warning that a strengthened Bolivian military would be tempted to re-establish its prestige and that ultimately a "Frankenstein monster" would emerge to resume the traditional "king-maker" role. The new, powerful armed forces could well be responsible for overturning the present government.²⁴

In 1960 and 1961, the U.S. embassy defended the military from its critics. The United States embassy held firm to its conviction that the military had learned its lessons from the 1952 revolution. In effect, there would be no coup. This serves as yet another example of the signals that embassy officials sent to the Bolivian officer corps that seemed to indicate that the U.S. would not interfere if the armed forces launched a coup. In 1960, for example, Strom answered a formal inquiry on the coup subject from the Inter-American affairs desk at the State Department. He asserted that the military's past involvement in politics mattered little for they now constituted a non-Communist and moderating political influence in the country.²⁵

The U.S. embassy continued its friendly association with the military officers, signaling, in the most direct way, a tacit acceptance and sympathy for the armed forces' position. Between 1960 and 1962 the U.S. embassy continued to welcome high-ranking military officers who were eager to proffer their democratic credentials. In early 1962, for example, Air Force Chief of Staff Barrientos called on the new U.S. Ambassador Ben S. Stephansky. Throughout the conversation with the Ambassador, the general stressed that due to "tradition," the Armed Forces could never success-

fully govern Bolivia because they did not have “the proper support.” The military would continue to bolster the government and uphold the ideals of democracy and the goals of the revolution.²⁶ Such pronouncements helped reassure officials in the embassy and in Washington that the military did not desire political power.

IV

The complex political and military maneuvering that transpired between 1963 and the November 1964 coup cannot be given complete treatment in this paper. Nevertheless, it is important at least to provide a broad narrative because the United States had much to do with the re-emergence of the military onto the Bolivian political scene. This emergence, I argue, was an inevitable consequence of three factors: the history of the Army’s past involvement in politics, the MNR’s acquiescence to its reconstitution, and the military aid and training provided by the United States. The army’s renewed strength by 1962 was bound to upset the political balance in the country. I noted earlier that the MNR had purposely purged the military in 1952 in fear that a strong army would invite counter-revolution. The balance of forces—the military, police, and civilian militias—kept the army more or less in check through the last part of the decade. That system, if it can be called one, disintegrated in 1964 when the army again became dominant.

President Paz, beginning in 1962, became increasingly reliant on the military to bolster his own political power and to ensure his political survival. This factor, above all else, accounts for the MNR downfall and the 1964 coup. In effect, Paz found himself isolated from his party. After the March, 1964 elections, in which Paz put up a leading general, Barrientos, as his candidate for vice-president, the MNR, in effect, ceased to function as a cohesive body.²⁷ Increasingly emboldened, the military challenged Paz’s control. Paz, then, with little support from elements in his party, and the armed forces themselves a hesitant, and at times insubordinate ally, was extremely vulnerable to a military *golpe*. The predictable happened in November, 1964. A few short months after the presidential elections, the army ousted Paz in a relatively bloodless coup and placed the government in the hands of a junta headed by the vice president, General Barrientos. Thus the army was back in national politics, and would remain the dominant force in the national government for the next decade and beyond.²⁸

In conclusion, it has been argued here that Washington officials, in the context of the Cold War, saw the MNR government as vulnerable to subversion by Communist elements within the country. In response to this putative threat, the United States helped to rebuild the Bolivian military as a means of forestalling any escalation of tensions—both social and political—that might have led to a Communist takeover in Bolivia. With the heightened tensions engendered after the Nixon trip in 1958 and the rise of Castro in 1959, this line of thinking continued and led to the escalation of military aid which ultimately resulted in a military coup. The United States, by its

actions, sent a message to the Bolivian military that the U.S. would at the least be neutral in the event of a coup and might give its tacit approval to the venture. Washington conveyed this message by ignoring those who warned of a coup, actively defending the military from its critics, and maintaining friendly and close ties with senior military leaders right up to 1964.

Essentially, military leaders were emboldened to undertake the coup due to the signals they received from U.S. officials, especially those in the La Paz embassy. These communications between embassy officers and the military were oft times only tacit “nods and winks.” In other instances, the United States came out in open support of the military. All these signals had the cumulative effective of strengthening the political will of the military to go through with the coup.

Endnotes

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² See for example: James Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins* (London: Verso Editions, 1984), 70; Christopher Mitchell, *The Legacy of Populism in Bolivia: From the MNR to Military Rule* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), 84.

³ Cole Blasier, “The United States and the Revolution,” in *Beyond the Revolution: Bolivia Since 1952*, edited by James M. Malloy and Richard S. Thorn (Pittsburgh: U Pittsburgh P, 1971), 95-97.

⁴ Charles D. Corbett, *The Latin American Military as a Socio-Political Force: Case Studies of Bolivia and Argentina* (Miami, U of Miami, 1972), 29.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 32. Paz was considered to the right in the MNR hierarchy. The left, led by Lechín, was the strongest advocate for the elimination of the military. This is not surprising since the civilian militia was controlled to a certain extent by Lechín’s mine unions. Corbett estimates that the Bolivian army numbered about 18,000 to 20,000 at the time of the 1952 revolution. Probably some 1200-1300 of that number were officers. Between April 1952 and January 1953, the armed forces were reduced from 20,000 to a little over 5,000 total personnel.

- ⁶ Dennis Rempe, "An American Trojan Horse? Eisenhower, Latin America and the Development of U.S. Internal Security Policy 1954-1960" (Master's thesis, U of Miami, 1997), 12.
- ⁷ Department of the Air Force, *The Journal of Mutual Security* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Department of the Air Force, March 1961) 188.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, *The American Republics* (hereafter, *FRUS 55-57*), Memorandum of Conversation, La Paz, August 7, 1956.
- ¹⁰ Confidential Memorandum (hereafter Conf. Memo), Department of State (hereafter DOS), La Paz, "Anarchy and Arbitrary Government in Bolivia," September 29, 1962, 724.00/9-2962, Confidential State Department Files (hereafter CSDF), National Archives (hereafter NA).
- ¹¹ *FRUS 55-57*, Memorandum from the Officer in Charge of West Coast Affairs (Siracusa) to the Director of the Office of South American Affairs (Bernbaum), February 2, 1956.
- ¹² *FRUS 55-57*, Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Bolivia, March 15, 1956.
- ¹³ Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, "Views of General Clemente Inofuentes Regarding Bolivian Situation," January 9, 1958, 724.00/1-968, CSDF, NA.
- ¹⁴ Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, July 14, 1958, Box 1-3, Record Group (hereafter RG) 84, NA.
- ¹⁵ Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, March 4, 1960, Box 1-3, RG 84, NA.
- ¹⁶ Asked the sort of assistance the army required, the general made a laundry list. To facilitate mobility, both by road and air, truck and transport aircraft were needed as well as some facilities for moving troops by river. The army also required expanded communication facilities and improved engineering capability.
- ¹⁷ Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, "Bolivian Army Desires Military Pact with the United States Government," March 9, 1960, Box 1-3, RG 84, NA.

- ¹⁸ Stephen G. Rabe, "Controlling Revolutions: Latin America, the Alliance for Progress and Cold War Anti-Communism" in *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*, edited by Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Oxford U P, 1989), 107.
- ¹⁹ Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: The Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (New York: Oxford U P, 1996), 141.
- ²⁰ U.S. President's Committee to Study the United States Military Assistance Program, *Composite Report* (Washington D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1959), 145-159.
- ²¹ Charles M. Jones, "The Role of the Military in Latin American Government" (Student Paper, U.S. Army War College, 1961), 27.
- ²² Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, Week 32, August 8, 1961, 724.00/8-861, CSDF, NA.
- ²³ Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, "Disturbances in Cliza Valley," December 3, 1962, 724.00/12-362, CSDF, NA.
- ²⁴ Conf. Memo, Santiago, Secretary of State (hereafter SOS), Incoming Telegram, December 19, 1961, 724.00/12-1867, CSDF, NA.
- ²⁵ Conf. Memo, DOS, La Paz, Memorandum from Ambassador Strom to Wymberly Coerr, Department of State, April 26, 1960, Box 1-3, RG 84, NA.
- ²⁶ Secret Memorandum (hereafter Sec. Memo), DOS, La Paz, Memorandum of Conversation, "Bolivian Political Situation," April 23, 1962, Box 35, RG 84, NA.
- ²⁷ Herbert S. Klein, *Bolivia: The Evolution of a Multi-Ethnic Society* (New York: Oxford U P, 1992), 244.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 245.

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DESTINATION BRAZIL: IMMIGRATION IN WORKS OF NÉLIDA PIÑÓN AND KAREN TEI YAMASHITA

Elizabeth Espadas
Wesley College

In his study of nationalism, Konstantin Symmons-Symonolewicz describes the process of national awakening as a phase of nationalism as a social movement in which a new identity must be defined in terms of the country's cultural heritage and in which its respective groups are activated around new social values and principles of organization (21-22). He sees two concomitant activities as comprising this process: the work of scholars in "rediscovering" and reevaluating that nation's culture and the work of "men of letters," in giving creative expression to its distinctive individuality as a human collectivity. He suggests that the main responsibility falls on the scholars to demonstrate the antiquity and respectability of the nation by probing into its history and prehistory and by analyzing its literature and its language as a mirror of its culture. Here I would like to extend this analysis by examining the role, not of the **men** but of the **women** of letters in contributing to the probing of national consciousness, to the exposing of injustices at a national level, and to the development of viable new concepts of national identity that reaffirm a belief in the nation as moral community, in the specific context of the impact of immigration in the formation of Brazilian identity.

What made Brazil one of the three most important destinations of intercontinental immigration, receiving 36% of the 52 million immigrants to Latin America between 1824 and 1924 (Morner, 47, 50)? What particular characteristics did Brazilian immigration display? What are some of the "push" and "pull" factors at work? How does the creative artist or writer contribute to an understanding both of the phenomenon of immigration and of the process of nationbuilding that necessarily occurs as immigrants go through the various stages of assimilation? In this paper, I will explore these questions as they are addressed by two contemporary writers: Nélide Piñón and Karen Tei Yamashita, both of whom have had immediate personal and family experiences involving intercontinental immigration (Piñón's family emigrated to Brazil from Galicia and Yamashita is a Japanese-American married to a Japanese Brazilian).

Although it may be said that the political arena in Latin America has been largely the male purview historically, it must also be acknowledged that neither have political issues been totally foreign to feminine scrutiny in literature. Indeed, there are many political dimensions to the feminist manifesto outlined by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz dating back to the colonial period, while Clorinda Matto de Turner in *Aves sin nido* and Rosario Castellanos in *Balún-Canán* in the late nineteenth and mid-

twentieth centuries, respectively, sought to reexamine the precarious status of the indigenous populations of the Americas. Testimonial literature, such as Domitila Barrios de Chungara's *Si me permiten hablar* or Rigoberta Menchú's autobiography, and family chronicles with allegorical intent, such as Isabel Allende's *La casa de los espíritus* or Rosario Ferré's *La casa de la laguna* have also demonstrated women's interest in matters related to questions of national identity.

Nélida Piñón's monumental novel, *A República dos Sonhos* (1984), translated as *The Republic of Dreams* (1989), is both a family and a national chronicle, a record of individual lives that take on meaning in the historical process of nation-building. As recorded by his granddaughter Breta, Madruga's life spans the evolution of Brazil from an immediate post-colonial society still struggling with the legacy of slavery to the difficult political and economic times of the 1970s. As an industrious immigrant from a small village in Galicia, he "makes good" in the laid-back atmosphere of early twentieth-century Rio de Janeiro. His life and that of his family not only parallels the national history but is closely intertwined with it, as his social, business, and political dealings necessitate a close pulse on the national rhythm, just as his childhood in Spain is a permanent part of his makeup that provides a constant counterpoint to his unfolding present in his adopted land. The novel's ambitious scope makes it far too complex to do justice here. Rather, I will focus on only a few aspects most relevant to the concept of Brazilian identity, the novel's overarching theme.

While Madruga adapts linguistically quite quickly due to his Galician origins and general familiarity with Portuguese culture, there are also many differences which separate him, at least in his mind, from the Brazilian elites, no matter how prosperous he may have become. He never feels that he belongs totally to Brazil, and even his children—born in Brazil, but who spend time in Galicia and other parts of Spain—are sometimes regarded as alien in their own land.

[Madruga says] "I want winners in this house," he said in biting tones. "Always answer insults. Especially when they call us gringos or Galicians. Saying that we're not from here, that this land isn't ours. That's a bare-faced lie. This land belongs as much to us as to those who came with Cabral. Never forget that you're Brazilians, with every right in the world! . . . It's up to us to proclaim the failure of those families that go back four hundred years. Beyond question responsible for the disasters and the backwardness of this country" (424).

Madruga is, essentially, both an economic immigrant and an adventurer, and these two dimensions form a leit-motiv in the novel.

[Madruga talks to his uncle in Galicia] I did my best to tell him my dream, even at the risk of aggravating the situation. . . . I simply admitted that, as long as I lived, America would be the one land I wanted. Hence I was obliged to leave straightaway. Despite Grandfather Xan's trying to seduce me with his stories, to pin me down in Galicia.

"It isn't that I was born in the wrong place, uncle. It's just that my destiny is to set out for one land trailing the memory of another behind me. Without Galicia, . . . America would fall to my lot without my appreciating it, without the passion I'm possessed by. Can't you see, sir, that I even have a fever?" . . . For the first time I felt America close (24).

(Throughout the novel, Madruga most frequently refers to Brazil as "America.")

Because subsidized voyages had been prohibited by the Spanish government after 1911 (Morner, 64), the young Madruga convinced his uncle to loan him the money for the trip, leading to his departure in 1913. Madruga's choice of destination mirrors that of the majority of Portuguese and Galician immigrants that since the 1890s had been enticed to emigrate (Morner, 42) and who generally preferred the capital rather than the countryside (Morner, 60). Piñón's choice of date is also a significant one historically, in that 1912-13 was the pinnacle of Spanish emigration to Latin America (Morner, 38).

Despite his economic success and his outward adaptation, Madruga is plagued by not ever feeling that he has gained a full understanding of Brazil or acceptance by the people. In his study, Morner corroborates the suspicion and fear on the part of the political and economic elites toward economically successful immigrants, exacerbated in the case of the Portuguese by "nationalist hostility to the former colonial ruler" (74-75). One might imagine that some Brazilians may have taken the Galician for Portuguese if they did not recognize his accent or if they relied on his European appearance. Piñón notes that "his condition as an immigrant made him an object of general mistrust" (61) and he reminds himself that "mere physical existence on this continent does not necessarily make us citizens" (494), although he refers to his immigrant card as an "idiotic Type 19 card" (121). He does not feel that he has been singled out in this regard, however, and does empathize with other immigrants who have likewise suffered indignities.

These many changes would be bound to affect the life of immigrants, a people with no legal recourse, no forum to appeal to, in case of necessity or emergency. A corrupt and resentful internal revenue agent was quite enough to make their lives hell. Or a police official, entering their names on the list of immigrants to be ordered out of the country with no right of appeal.

He had not forgotten the iniquities perpetrated by the planters of the state of São Paulo against Italian immigrants. Arriving in the country with the illusion that they would make a fortune, the hapless Italians had become victims of an implacable system, a concerted plan to reduce them almost to the condition of slaves, as a substitute for black labor. Moreover, they lived like servants at the hands of the coffee growers (121).

Thus, when his last son, Tobias, was to be born, he says: "I want it to be a boy. Another Brazilian to figure out this country" (28). For the patriarch Madruga, who has a love/hate relationship with all of his children, his offspring must know the country well and claim it fully as their own.

Brazil's complex modern social, economic, and political history is recreated through the lives of Madruga's and Eulalia's children: Bento, the ambitious businessman like his father; Miguel, the hot-tempered, passionate but generous brother; Esperança, a beautiful, dynamic and talented woman whose gender kept her from attaining personal fulfillment; Antonia, the dutiful daughter who wed into the Brazilian elite (a loveless union with a husband who married her for her money), and Tobias, the idealistic youngest child, an attorney who specializes in political prisoners' cases. Madruga, the forceful, iron-willed and often despotic patriarch, may be seen to represent the Eurocentric colonizer, whose presence is mitigated by the contrapuntal qualities of his gentle, spiritual wife Eulalia and by his long-time friend and fellow-immigrant Venâncio, an amateur historian and dreamer who plays a quixotic role to his aggressively materialistic one. A final important character is Odete, originally from Africa and sold as a slave, the servant who cares for Eulalia as she slips toward death and who serves as a vivid reminder that Brazil is her country too:

Suddenly, all of us . . . realized that we were foreigners in Brazil. Our condition was precisely the same as Odete's. Slaves too of memories left behind. We formed, there in the kitchen round Odete, a contingent that had bested the storms and conquered the abysses of the Atlantic, with the aim of reaching Brazil and shaping it, of changing its profile, of enriching it with the blood, the culture, and the weakness inherent in all of us. . . . Brazil was all of us. Lost, melancholy souls. Together, we would be the failures and the aspirations of this nation (361).

Piñón's novel questions not only Brazilian sociocultural reality but Brazilian history itself, by stripping away its facade to explore its hidden realities: those who are mythical heroes to some, such as Chico Alves or Getúlio Vargas; populist rhetoric and its appeal to the masses, as well as military rhetoric designed to alleviate the anxieties of the elites. A particular focus of her criticism is the practice of torture under

the Medici regime, which is seen primarily through Tobias's passion that brings him to the brink of despair (538, 544-45). In this aspect, Piñón creates not only a work of fiction, but one that approaches testimonial literature in its vivid portrayal and denunciation of the human rights abuses that must be combatted by the individual.

Another important theme that emerges in the novel is the status of women, linked in many ways with questions of national identity. Esperança, in particular, lives out the dilemma of the modern Latin American woman bound in a patriarchal, antiquated social structure. Ambitious, talented, and headstrong, she always refused to accept the limitations of the expected female role. From early childhood she had demanded, for example, that her father take her to the factory to learn the business and to solve problems, but her requests were denied. Her frustration was further manifested in her teenage rebellion, which took on ever-increasing violence as she rejected Madruga's bourgeois values and domineering manner, until finally her pregnancy precipitated a rift that was to last until her mysterious death in an auto accident. Her character clearly lends itself to allegorical interpretation, not only in terms of Latin American womanhood but perhaps even the national situation with respect to its uneasy relationship with the colonizing culture in its post-colonial efforts to forge a new, independent identity.

Karen Tei Yamashita's novel *Brazil-Marú* (1992) is a product of her lengthy residence in Brazil (1975-1984), during which time she carried out research on and interviews with Japanese Brazilians, married a Japanese Brazilian, and wrote the early drafts of both this work and *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*. In a recent interview, she explains her reasons for her choice of subject in the latter work:

. . . because the story is that fascinating. But it was also a story which touched upon, I thought, all the particular and important aspects of immigration to Brazil. It touched upon the creation of agricultural cooperatives that the Japanese started in Brazil. It touched upon their leisure time—baseball. Very important. It touched upon the creation of a banking system, their relationship to immigration companies and so many things this story was able to weave through that I felt were critical.

At the same time, it talks about philosophical visions, about what immigration is or why we do it. Because this group of people purposely came to immigrate, they were constantly discussing this question of why they emigrated, what they were doing, what their purpose was. These questions were always in front of them (Murashige, 54-55).

Thus, Yamashita highlights the roles in nationbuilding that the one million Japanese immigrants and their descendants have played, especially in the first half of the twentieth century in Brazil. Her work delves into many of the dilemmas and achievements

of this distinct group of immigrants, studied recently by Thomas Sowell in “Japanese Around the World” (*Migrations and Cultures: A World View*): the ambivalence felt toward these industrious but racially-different newcomers, the diplomatic and assimilationist strategies adopted by the second generation, their avoidance of direct conflict or competition with native-born Brazilians, and the changes brought about within their own society, despite their proverbial cultural cohesiveness, as well as the fears aroused by their continued links to their mother country during World War II.

The case Yamashita develops in the novel both confirms many of the general patterns regarding the Japanese emigration experience and reveals some unique characteristics. Ichiro Terada, the lead narrative voice in the work, had arrived as a nine-year-old boy with his family at the port of Santos near São Paulo in 1925, one of the peak years of Brazilian immigration, in fact (Morner, 63), in a manner that had been typical of Japanese immigration in South America after 1899 (Morner, 74). Unlike the great majority up into the mid 1930s, however, they were not farmers. Rather, they were more educated (his father a licensed pharmacist and his mother a trained midwife), both originally from the town of Matsumoto in Nagano prefecture. Unsettled economic conditions following the Kanto earthquake of 1923 provided an immediate motive for the Terada family’s decision to emigrate, further induced by their condition as educated Christians with socialist sentiments, who could become vulnerable targets for government repression during such times of crisis. “Brazil would be a new beginning” (6), through a concession of land from the state of São Paulo to the Christian evangelist Momose-sensei that would grant each of 200 family units sixty acres of land and give the utopian commune, appropriately named Esperança, its start.

[Ichiro Terada says] My family was different from the other Japanese on the ship. We had paid for our passage and were destined to settle land we had bought, while the contract laborers were committed to several years of labor to pay for their passage. But we were all alike in our expectations of Brazil: the promised wealth of the coffee harvest, the vastness of the land, the adventure of a new life. And I think most of the immigrants were alike in thinking that they would return—after their contracts were up or in a few years, however long it might take—to Japan with certain wealth, stories of adventure and the pride of success. I believe my parents thought that surely they would see their homeland and their families in Nagano once again, at least to visit. As we watched the port of Kobe disappear on the ocean’s horizon, I thought I would return. But my father said to me, as I turned with the others on the deck, “Ichiro, we’re going to a new country, a new life. Everything begins from this moment. Don’t look back.” I think that my father knew I would never return. He did not believe, like so many did, that Japan was the only place in the world to live.

From that moment, my memories of Japan faded; visions of my birthplace became to me a blur (7-8).

An essential difference from the contract laborers' situation, then, was the Teradas' determination to become Brazilians.

In the commune run by the charismatic Kantaro, fields were cleared in back-breaking labor, but the results of their efforts were exceptionally large fruits and vegetables.

As soon as there were enough families congregated in Esperança and producing more than their personal needs, family heads gathered to pool resources for proper storage, seeds and tools, and to bargain for the best prices. And from the very beginning, all families in Esperança joined in association to make and get loans. The co-op became the economic and political heart of Esperança . . . As time went on and Esperança grew to some 250 families, the activities of the co-op grew, and the Esperança Cooperative itself became a very important and profitable entity in the area (20).

This enterprising nature of their endeavor contrasts with the tendency of most immigrants to "simply adopt rudimentary farming techniques of the area" (Morner, 84) and presages their outstanding commercial success as they began to branch out from strictly agriculture to the modern production of eggs and poultry. The organized, efficient cooperatives would become models to emulate (one of the contributions most associated with Japanese immigrants to Brazil).

As Yamashita traces the stories of her key characters [in addition to Ichiro Terada, there are first-person narratives by Haru (Kantaro's wife); Kantaro Uno, Genji Befu (Kantaro's nephew), and Guilherme Kasai, son of a São Paulo newspaperman], we see an ever-widening circle of activities (primarily economic) that will begin to break up the isolation of the commune's population, with ever-greater contacts with nearby communities and trips, especially to São Paulo itself, a pattern identified by Morner as generally true of most immigrants to rural areas (56), such as theirs in the northwest corner of the state.

The novel also paints a vivid portrait of the stages of adaptation that immigrants undergo. In studying such a phenomenon, Christopher A. Reichl, in "Stages in the Historical Process of Ethnicity: The Japanese in Brazil, 1908-1988," argues for an interactive analytical model that includes as components "not only the attitudes of the immigrants and policies of the host society but also the perceived conditions and relative international status of the host and donor societies" (36). Yamashita's novel focuses specifically on the early moment of the phase of the Ethnic Community stage, in which the immigrants no longer came as contract laborers but as *colonos* (40). The cooperatives served multiple purposes, primarily economic and social. Reichl's dis-

cussion of the *shokuminchi* (colonies started by purchasing frontier land in large tracts to be sold in lots to immigrants), such as Aliança and Bastos (both of which are mentioned as sources by Yamashita in her acknowledgements) are similar to her fictionalized Esperança in their utilization of techniques of village organization in Japan (20) and in the “mechanisms of internal social control that unified the colonia” (Reichl, 40). Both aspects were necessary in that the immigrants came from different areas, spoke different dialects, and often had significantly different occupational backgrounds from the roles they would carry out in the commune. Yamashita’s portrayal differs from Reichl’s observations primarily in her focus on Japanese Christians, who presumably would have different patterns in the trend toward replacement of ancestor worship by emperor worship as the “primary form of ethnic and religious expression” (Reichl, 42).

The second stage of adaptation, that of Individual Participation and Representational Organizations, is associated in Reichl’s model with Japan’s defeat in World War II, when the colonia was faced with the realization that they could not return to Japan. Yamashita’s characters, on the whole, suffered few illusions about the prospect of return due to their unique characteristics, but this stage is seen clearly in their observations of compatriots (see especially the descriptions by Haru in Chapter 9). And while the residents of Esperança were not directly affected by the ultranationalistic secret societies and acts of terrorism committed as a result of oppressive wartime conditions for Japanese Brazilians due to Brazil’s pro-Ally position, they were aware of them through their regular contacts with fellow Japanese in São Paulo and elsewhere and through the press coverage. They also had to deal with the “victory group,” described in detail by Reichl, that used extreme tactics, including assassinations, to promote and maintain the illusion of Japanese victory over the Allies and a “rigid self-identification of immigrants as Japanese,” only to act as “deliverers of divine punishment” (Reichl, 43) to those who seemed disloyal.

The eventual resolution of this crisis would be a step toward a new stage, as the ethnic community begins to break down. In *Brazil-Marú*, and again keeping in mind their unique situation as Christians, these pressures are expressed primarily by the splintering of the original *colonia* into two groups with quite different attitudes toward their relative position on all things Brazilian. Ichiro Terada is one of the voices most associated with the group that leaned to greater assimilation.

Unlike most other Japanese in Esperança—with the exception perhaps of Okumura—our family formed friendships and dealings with Brazilians outside our Japanese colony. Because of this, my father felt it important that I go to a Brazilian school and learn the Portuguese language. In those days in Santa Cruz d’Azedinha, you could get schooling up to what might now be the equivalent of the eighth grade. After that, only those that could afford it sent their children to São Paulo to get a private education.

Unlike other Japanese of my time, I was taught to read and write in Portuguese. This ability to deal comfortably in both languages has since been invaluable to me. I am grateful to my father for this. He urged me to get the tools to live in a new country, a country which he knew and I began to realize would be the only place I would ever call home. “Brazil is a rich, wonderful place to make a home,” he would say. “We are very fortunate to be welcome in such a country. It is our responsibility to give it something in return.” When I reflect upon these things now, I realize that my father saw beyond Esperança, which seemed to me to be the entire world (71).

Later, when his father died in an accident, Ichiro finds a confirmation of his father’s viewpoint in the outpouring of condolences from non-Japanese Brazilians: “It was only then that people realized how much my father had done, not only for Esperança but for the Brazilians in the surrounding areas” (72).

Some other individuals—notably members of the youngest generation—will embody the third stage and will leave Esperança for the city, to participate more widely in Brazilian society through the pursuit of higher education or commercial endeavors. At the novel’s conclusion, we find a now aged Ichiro Terada, who speaks of his grandchildren, both of whom have graduated from Brazilian universities, though with varying fortunes. His grandson has completed a degree in agronomy and will continue the Japanese contribution to the modernization of agriculture, but his granddaughter, though an honors graduate in architecture, has been “unable to find steady work in Brazil . . . [and] is one of over 150,000 Japanese-Brazilians who are currently in Japan working as menial labor” (248).

The final narrative voice is that of Guilherme, Shigeshi Kasai’s son, who married Jacira Raimundo, a Brazilian woman whose father had been a landowning neighbor of the Esperança commune and who had not only coexisted with them but had emulated many of their business practices. Significantly, at the point of the telling, Jacira and Guilherme, after living in Europe for more than twelve years as political exiles, had recently returned to Brazil following the granting of political amnesty.

I lived in the city and was raised a Brazilian. My friends were mixed, many of them non-Japanese. To me, the Japanese community, referred to as the *colônia*, was a confined world. It amazed me that there could be so many thousands of us all over Brazil involved in so many kinds of work, and yet we could seem so provincial, so small (245).

Guilherme's insight is corroborated by Reichl on a wider scale, labelling the Japanese community *colônia wa semai* (small and constricting in its narrowness) (Reichl, 45). Ichiro and Guilherme thus stand at two diverse stages of the assimilation process, which are represented in generational terms.

What can we say, finally, about the portrayal of immigration in these two literary works and about the writer's role in nationbuilding? Several conclusions seem warranted from the comments above. First, Brazil was clearly seen as a land of economic, social, and religious opportunity by the millions of immigrants that reached its shores in several peak years of the twentieth century, and such immigration was encouraged by the financial incentives, such as subsidized passages, the ability to pay back costs through labor, and so forth, though it was not always disinterested generosity. Morner suggests that "relatively stable political conditions, low population densities, temperate climate, and economic development achieved as a result of the immigration itself" (55-56) all played a part in the choice of Brazil as destination. At the same time, there was substantial return migration, in some cases up to 50% (Morner, 50), when expectations were not met, but utopian experiments in Brazil were a notable feature (Morner, 44).

As we review these points, it is clear that both Piñón and Yamashita have produced texts with a high level of historical accuracy that synthesize the immigrant experience in the urban and rural areas, respectively, and that they have developed individual portraits that help to capture and interpret the experiences of a large number of people. The writers' own peculiar status as simultaneously insiders and outsiders in Brazilian society is both a shaping force in their personal development and a condition that permits them to play both internal and external roles in interpreting that reality. They can be seen as contributors to Brazil's decolonization in the broadest senses—culturally, politically, socially, by creating new views from within of the national, cultural, and sexual realities; by portraying and/or demonstrating the need for new, more androgynous and socially just roles for men and for women, and by authenticating and valorizing all the ethnic components of the modern Brazilian identity. Simply put, as Venâncio says in *The Republic of Dreams*, "Brazil was all of us" (361).

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ROLANDO HINOJOSA-SMITH'S SENSE OF PLACE: SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS

Arvilla Payne-Jackson
Howard University

and Juan Espadas
Ursinus College

Introduction

In the short story "The Kid from the Alamo" by Beatriz de la Garza the narrator remembers his grade school years in Poggendorf (formerly Los Robles) in Southeast Texas. In particular, he focuses on Texan history, because even at that tender age, what they were studying seemed strange to him. The book started with a few pages about the native American pre-Columbian population, a few more on the Spanish explorers and some more on missions and missionaries. That was nothing but a prelude to the "real history of Texas" which started with the arrival of the English-speaking settlers.

That is what struck me as odd. I mean, all you had to do was look around, and you could see that there were a lot of us Mexicanos, in Texas. So where did we come in? We came in at the Alamo, where we killed David Crockett, and at San Jacinto, where we were whipped by Sam Houston. That was it. Santa Anna and the wicked Mexicans were taken care of in a couple of chapters, and then we went on to the Civil War and a lot of boring governors after that. And not another Spanish name mentioned again. (210)

One may be tempted to dismiss these words as those of a *mexicano/chicano* with an obvious ax to grind, but the American historian David J. Weber makes a similar comment:

The history of Mexico's far northern frontier . . . has been written almost entirely by United States historians, and one theme has dominated their writing: American expansion . . . The theme has dominated historical explanation to such a point, however, that the activities of Mexicans on their own frontier have been neglected and, in the process, ethocentricity has influenced scholarship (1988:94).

But the problem goes beyond mere neglect and it has also influenced the attitudes towards the Hispanic population of the Southwest in general and Southern Texas in particular. As Weber demonstrates, Anglo-American views of Hispanics were influenced first and foremost by stereotypes that were “in large part an extension of negative attitudes toward Catholic Spaniards which Anglo Americans had inherited from their Protestant English forbearers” (159). These stereotypes, which according to Weber are still in operation

[laid] behind the arrogant sense of cultural and political superiority, known in United States history as Manifest Destiny, . . . [and] led to the United States seizure of half of the Mexican Republic in 1846-47. The stereotype of the inferior Mexican has been used to the present to justify efforts to “Americanize” Mexicans in the Southwestern United States, replacing their “Folkways,” with “superior” Anglo-American culture (166).

One influential contribution that exemplifies the kind of Anglo-American scholarship criticized by Weber is Walter Prescott Webb’s *The Texas Rangers: A Century of Frontier Defense*. An example of his rhetoric will suffice here: “. . . there is a cruel streak in the Mexican native, or so the history would lead us to believe. This cruelty may be a heritage from the Spanish of the Inquisition; it may, and doubtless should, be attributed partly to the Indian blood” (14). It is against this blatantly racist and distorted history that Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, as well as Americo Paredes and others, have been writing their literary responses since the mid 50s (Saldivar 1991: 167-180).

With his *Klail City Death Trip Series (KCDT)* Rolando Hinojosa-Smith (henceforth, RHS)¹ has been writing/righting the history of his native Lower Rio Grande Valley, and he has accomplished this task.

a través de un proceso de escuchar al pueblo para escuchar las voces de la memoria comunitaria . . . de una búsqueda y encuentro de la comunidad chicana, primero en los recuerdos personales, y segundo, en la memoria comunal. Esta última puede parecer fragmentada, pero a través del acto de recordar por parte del narrador, estos fragmentos adquieren forma, unidad y coherencia, que la lectura luego confirma (Bruce-Novoa 1986: 70-71, 108-111).

Counting at the moment nine different titles (not taking into account the ones that have been rewritten in English) between 1973, *Estampas del valle y otras obras*, and 1998 *Ask a Policeman*, RHS’s work is, in fact, the history of a social, economic,

political, armed, and linguistic conflict. This is a conflict that is not limited to the Valley itself since it moves to the Orient when the chicanos served in Korea (*Korean Love Songs*, *The Useless Servants*, and especially *Rites and Witnesses*).

Despite the variety of written discourses employed by RHS—(1) letters, sociological interviews, depositions, newspaper reports; (2) genres: poetry, diaries; and (3) literary models: “cuadro de costumbres,” the picaresque, and the detective novel, —the *KCDT* is above all, an oral history of the lower Rio Grande Valley.

The jury of the Casa de las Americas Prize for fiction which awarded RHS its 1976 prize for *Klail City y sus alrededores* cited among other deserving qualities RHS’s “hábil manejo de los diálogos” and his “excelente dominio de formas dialectales (coloquiales) chicanas” (*Generaciones*, iv). These two qualities together with the multiplicity of voices used in the novels give the reader of *Estampas*, *Klail City*, and *Claros varones* the remarkable illusion of being present in the numerous conversations and even the monologues that are an essential part of the three titles.

The purpose of this article is to study the works of Rolando Hinojosa-Smith from a sociolinguistic perspective, with a focus on how he uses language to create a context by which the past as well as the current history of the Valley is told through the discourse of his speakers. We will examine how RHS has correctly used language to represent the linguistic patterns of the characters that populate his works and to make language issues (e.g., conflict, bilingualism), use (e.g., code-switching) and gossip an integral part of the historical process of the Lower Rio Grand Valley so well depicted in his novels.

We will limit our analysis to the first five novels, *Estampas del Valle* (*Estampas*), *Generaciones y Semblanzas* (*Generaciones*), *Claros varones de Belken/Fair Gentlemen of Belken County* (*Varones*), *Mi querido Rafa* (*Rafa*) and *Rites and Witnesses* (*Rites*).²

Estampas, *Klail City* and *Varones* are concerned with the history of the Valley up through the first half of this century and in them the older generation has a stronger protagonism. Espadas and Payne-Jackson (1995) demonstrated that these three works are constructed around vignettes that focus on conflicts. The nucleus of *Estampas* is a newspaper account of a killing in a bar. *Klail City*, and *Varones* are about the history of the conflict between the Texas Rangers and the Mexicanos and the open conflicts of the Valley between the Buenrostro and the Leguizamon families and how these conflicts were presented by different speakers and their distinct interpretations. All of these are contextualized in conversations in public places.

Rafa and *Rites* deal with contemporary issues but the voices of the speakers change with more English speakers appearing and more English being used to the point where *Rites* is entirely in English. These last two novels show how conflict continues to be a problem in the Valley, but on the other hand, they also show how subtle the conflict has become. We see both the Hispanic and Anglo point of views interacting but each one still in conflict with the other.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley is an area roughly two hundred miles long, from Laredo to Brownsville and fifty miles wide on both sides of the Rio Grande. It is an area where two languages have been in contact for more than 150 years, and thus bilingualism and language conflict have been the norm, especially on the northern side of the river and after Texas became part of the United States.

These works capture the nature of the conflict between languages in contact when the two languages come with a long history of tradition and power. The Spanish language was the first language dominant in this area beginning with the Spanish settlement of Nuevo Santander in the 1750s. English did not make a strong appearance until after the Mexican Independence in the early 1800s. The history of the Valley presented by the speakers in RHS's works is one of continuous conflict with the Anglo community, both in the basic social relations and in the economic ones. This conflict was born out of more than a century of close contact that, despite intermarriages, continue to be the driving force in the unequal interrelations between the two communities.

RHS himself, in "The Sense of Place," speaks to the issue of language usage in creating the literary world of Belken County in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

When the characters stayed in the Spanish-speaking milieu or society, the Spanish language worked well, and then it was in the natural order of things that English made its entrance when the characters strayed or found themselves in Anglo institutions; in cases where both cultures would come into contact, both languages were used, and I would employ both, and where one and only one would do, I would follow that as well; what dominated, then, was the place, at first. Later on I discovered that generational and class differences also dictated not only usage but which language as well. From this came the how they said what they said. As the census rolls filled up in the works, so did some distinguishing features, characteristics, viewpoints, values, decisions, and thus I used the Valley and the Border and the history and the people (23).

The sociolinguistic aspects of RHS's works that we address are: the larger linguistic history of the Valley and its subsequent problems (bilingualism, bilingualism versus diglossia, language assimilation, and code-switching, etc.) and how the language, and in particular Spanish, is used to tell the history of the Valley. As we will see, gossip is one of the main avenues by which this is achieved.

Language Contact and Linguistic Conflict

As there is a socio-cultural conflict in the Valley, so is there also a linguistic conflict, which as in all situations of languages in contact is inevitable (See Espadas and Payne-Jackson 1990). The Valley is frequently described as being bilingual. Weinreich's definition of "social bilingualism" (1963:89) best describes the situation, i.e., both groups have their own mother language. In the Valley both languages are "lenguas de cultura," with strong literary traditions. The linguistic situation in the Valley, however, appears to be more than just bilingualism, it is bilingualism with diglossia.

Fishman (1967:34) differentiates between bilingualism and diglossia: "bilingualism is essentially a characterization of individual linguistic behavior whereas diglossia is a characterization of a linguistic organization at the socio-cultural level." Of the three possible relationships between two languages in contact suggested by Fishman: (1) diglossia and bilingualism, (2) diglossia without bilingualism, and (3) bilingualism without diglossia, the first relationship best describes the situation in the Valley, i.e., bilingualism with diglossia.

Limon (1982) describes the relationship between English and Spanish in the old border communities from Brownsville to Laredo. English is the language of formal politics, school instruction and other highly formal legal settings. Spanish is the language of much of the border commerce, the church, a large part of the media, informal interaction, and of course, the home. Following Fishman, Limon states that the linguistic situation in the Rio Grande Valley is one of bilingualism with diglossia, which means that "although English is the official language (as Spanish is in Paraguay), folk [popular], or Standard Spanish has a socially 'official' status and is in constant use throughout all levels and sectors of these border societies (like Guarani in Paraguay)" (308-309).

Rafa perhaps best exemplifies the bilingual/diglossic relationship between the two languages. Divided in two parts, the first half is a collection of letters written by Jehu Malacara to his cousin Rafa Buenrostro who is convalescing from a recurring Korean war injury. The second half is a series of interviews by another character, an author/narrator who calls himself "the writer," who wants to know what are the reasons for Jehu's leaving his job at the bank and leaving the community itself. In the letters Jehu freely uses code-switching. Jehu Malacara, a fluent bilingual with a degree in English, uses English to conduct transactions with English speaking patrons. However, he was initially hired to assist with the Spanish speaking population who patronize the bank. One aspect of his linguistic repertoire is his ability to code-switch.

Code-switching is an aspect of bilingual behavior that has been thoroughly investigated.³ Sanchez (1983:140) defines it as:

shifting from one grammatical system to another. It is distinguished from borrowing in that the latter involves a term from another language and adapting it to one's own grammatical system, phonologically, morphologically, syntactically, or semantically. Whereas the two systems are maintained as distinct entities but juxtaposed within the same discourse, we have a case of code-switching . . . Maintenance of English phonological and morphological rules in shifts constitutes code-switching rather than borrowing.

Pfaff (1975) suggests that different social situations affect the choice of style of code-switching. Each style has its own syntactic characteristics. She describes three styles of code-switching: (1) casual conversation among peers, close friends, or associates centering around everyday topics, characterized by a high frequency of breaks at the ends of sentences, dependent or independent clauses, or prepositional or adverbial phrases, (2) casual or more formal speech mainly in Spanish and characterized by loan words and intrasentential switching, and (3) street talk (*vato loco* jargon), a basically Spanish conversation with frequent intersection of English words and set phrases.

In general terms, the themes of Jehu's letters to his cousin come under three main rubrics: (1) elections in the Valley, (2) Jehu's position in the bank, and (3) his relationships with some women and some Anglos. English phrases and words are used by Jehu to accentuate or give stylistic flavor to points in his discourse. When the subject is politics, as might be expected, English becomes the predominant means of communication, especially when dealing with slogans and political parties; for example, the opening paragraph of letter number seven.

The democratic primaries have come and gone, and the winner!!! is Ira Escobar. Everyone loves a good loser so Roger Terry announced he would run as an independent. An independent? In Belken? At any rate, de aquí a noviembre son cosas de tres meses y ahora en adelante, neither side is taking prisoners (*Rafa*: 21).

Another theme that the code-switching seems to revolve around is business transactions or concerns, which are usually negotiated within the framework of the dominant English-speaking business world. Subsequently, Jehu punctuates references to such transactions with English: "Una cosa no entendí de lo que dijiste sobre las tierras del Carmen. Por fin fui a la corte con Acosta y todo está en regla: contribuciones pagadas, propiedades bien demarcadas todavía, there've been no changes, etc."(21).

The linguistic organization at the socio-cultural level is best exemplified in the interviews which constitute the second part of *Rafa*. In this section, RHS presents a rather complete view of the linguistic behavior of the community. The anglos

express themselves in English and the Spanish in Spanish. This appears to be the norm, but in a few instances, P. Galindo (“el escritor/Hinojosa?) makes a linguistic commentary, thus, Martín San Esteban: “estudió en Austin con Rafa y Jehú . . . Como es natural dado a su edad y formación, Martín discurre mucho mejor en inglés” (60). This is a strange and contradictory statement if we consider his contemporary Jehu’s perfect control of both languages, until we note that Martín’s profession has elevated him above others, and English has become his dominant language. On the other hand, there is Sammie Jo Perkins, an Anglo English speaker who “habla bastante español aunque aquí se demuestre muy poco” (75). There is also Esther Lucille Bewley, another Anglo, who “aprendió español en los ranchos y en los campos, zurcos y praderas que rodean Klail City y sus alrededores: (105), but talks to Galindo in English.⁴

Olivia San Esteban, starts talking to the interviewer in Spanish, shifting to English, to change back to Spanish in the afternoon of the same day saying: “¿Le sorprendió a Ud. esta mañana que hablara en inglés así, de repente? Eso sucede aquí, en el trabajo [the pharmacy] . . .” (69). This is another example of the topic influencing the language used. Finally, it is interesting to note the comment of “Noddy” Perkins, about Jehu’s Spanish: “Jehu speaks Spanish very well, you know; none of your Tex-Mex either; I heard he’s been raised in part by a Mexican national and that might account for it. And there’s nothing wrong with his English either; he’s a Valley boy, and I guess the Army helped there too” (77).

What makes this comment interesting is that “Noddy” is a lower class white who married into the upper class Anglo clan. The comment reflects the linguistic sensitivity often acquired by people who have made a change in social class, and at the same time it demonstrates that the linguistic conflict is an expression of the deeper political and social class conflicts.

The negative or discriminatory aspect can be exemplified by Rebecca Ruth Verser, one of RHS’s characters, whose father arrived in the Valley in the 1920s at which time she was born:

And don’t tell me they don’t speak any English, because . . . Well, I am not going to learn any Spanish just to please them. . . . I didn’t need it as a girl, and I don’t need it now. You won’t hear me struggling with that kitchen Spanish . . . it isn’t even Spanish, is it? Not the real Spanish anyway. It’s one they made up. My Ellie was a Spanish minor at San Marcos, and she should know . . . she says they speak a dialect, and that doesn’t make it real Spanish, don’t you see. It’s a dialect. And they all speak it.

[. . .] Anyway, if they like Spanish so much, why don’t they go to Mexico? It’s right there, right on top of us, for crying out loud . . . (*Rites*: 97).

Rebecca reflects the attitude of most Anglos towards Mexicans, an attitude of unquestionable racial superiority, that was prevalent in American literature during the 19th century as indicated by Cecil Robinson (1973).

For most Mexican Americans, their language is a source of pride and solidarity, although some worry that it may disappear: “Si también nos quitan o si perdemos o vendemos el idioma, entonces no habrá remisión. El día que muera el español, esto dejará de ser el Valle” (*Varones*: 11). RHS himself, in an interview in *Quimera* (1986:114), notes that he is aware of the fact that English is becoming more and more the dominant language, but he still believes that “. . . va llegando gente [Mexicans] nueva. El español va a sobrevivir tal como se habla.”

In studying bilingual communities, Heinz Kloss (1967:46) discusses bilingual diglossia between closely related languages but in situations in which one language is assimilating or suppressing the other by whatever means. Kloss describes this as a process of patoisation of the assimilated language which fragments for an indefinite period of time the old language to a point that the inhabitants of that part lose consciousness of ever having had a united linguistic community. At the same time it compartmentalizes the two languages. The assimilating language becomes language A and the assimilated becomes B.

This specific process is reflected in the works of RHS. The dialect of the Valley may be considered to be a patois of Spanish. The concern about the loss of a united linguistic community is seen in the comments made by Echevarría and some of the older Spanish speakers of the community. The compartmentalized use of the two languages is clearly reflected in the works of RHS. The conflict continues.

Jehu Malacara who represents this hope for the continuation of Spanish, allays some of these fears about the disappearing Spanish in the following exchange with Harmon Gillette, who after thirty years in the Valley, does not speak Spanish.

“Well? the word, Ya hoo, is congratulations.”

“It most certainly is, and you have and deserve them, Mr. Gillette; Viola has an outstanding reputation.”

“Yes, and money into the bargain . . .”

“Yes, there is that . . . un doble bolazo . . .”

“What’s that? there you go again . . .”

“That’s a double, Mr. Gillette; a two-base hit, two bulls eyes; a bonus. Money and a woman of repute . . . what we call ‘una mujer que de repute es conocida,’ if you know what I mean.”

“Well yes; thank you, Ya hoo . . .”(Varones: 163).

Here we find Jehu in one of the most typical and common social situations in the novels of RHS. Jehu is with his friends in the tavern talking about the goings on in the town. As mentioned above, this is an important medium by which the community constructs and maintains its own history and represents the greatest part of the first three novels. Basically this is really nothing more than gossip.

The *Webster's Third World International Dictionary* (1966) defines gossip as: (2) a person who chatters or repeats idle talk and rumors about others; (3a.) such talk or rumors; (b) chatter *v.t.* to be gossip: indulge in idle talk or rumors about others.

In its 21st edition (1992) *The Diccionario de la lengua española* of the Spanish Royal Academy defines some of the different equivalents of English gossip as follows:

charlar: hablar mucho, sin substancia o fuera de propósito; (3) hablar, revelar lo que se debe callar; charlatán: hablador indiscreto; chisme: noticia verdadera o falsa, o comentario con que generalmente se pretende indisponer a unas personas con otras, o se murmura de alguna, \\ de vecindad, fig[urado] y fam[iliar]. El que versa sobre cosas de poca importancia; chismorrear - contarse chismes mutuamente varias personas; habladuría - rumor que corre entre muchos sin fundamento; hablilla - rumor, cuento, mentira que corre en el vulgo.

As we can see, the “academic” definitions of gossip carry a distinct negative slant. However, cross-cultural sociolinguistic studies, both in the past and present, reveal a more positive role for gossip in communities. In a 1993 article on gossip among Dominican women Joan Kelly Hall states:

In the many culture-specific studies of gossiping, the content is defined as talk concerning something that happened to or was instigated by a person who is not present at the time of the talk, or is acted toward as if she were absent (i.e., she is talked about in the third person). Such talk constitutes a group's socio-cultural history - both the characters and events are real. Participation in the practice provides needed opportunities for community members to develop and display that sense of social history and to learn about others, about those characteristics that constitute in-group membership, and about how best to deal with people and situations possessing various combinations of those characteristics (80-81).

Furthermore, Hall points out that the practice of gossip is not negative “as long as one is not *criticando* (criticizing).” The women in Hall’s study pointed out that “*chismeando* becomes *criticando* when the story told about an in-group member contains specific information about a particular incident considered to be of questionable social behavior” (82).

Goldsmith (1989-90) undertook a comparative analysis of gossip in different communities which included two earlier works on gossip in Hispanic communities: Gilmore’s (1978) *Varieties of Gossip in a Spanish Rural Community* (Southwest Andalusia) and Haviland’s (1977a;b) *Gossip as Competition in Zinacantan; Gossip, Reputation and Knowledge in Zinacantan* (Chiapas).

Gilmore found that *criticar* can occur in three social contexts: (1) women gossiping “in the street;” (2) men and women in groups in “the neighborhood,” e.g., men gossiping in bars and barbershops, and women in shops and beauty salons; and (3) at the “town level,” i.e., women at the central town market and men who participate in work gangs with other town folks (179).

Gilmore feels that the natives are ambivalent about gossip. On the one hand, they enjoy it, especially during carnival, and on the other hand, it is a source of anxiety and concern “since it can turn against them” (182).

Haviland points out that in Tzotzil (the language of the Zinacantecans), there is no single word for gossip, of the form A talks to B about an absent C. However, “a considerable body of native speculation and theory surrounds [this] sort of conversation” (182-3). Rather, Haviland describes Zinacanteco ‘gossip’ as evaluative talk about an absent individual which revolves around ten common themes (183):

1. Drunkenness, drinking, and drunken behavior
2. Divorce, child support
3. Illicit sexual relations, incest, fornication
4. Jail, other punishment
5. Wealth, poverty
6. Kin disputes
7. Courtship
8. Adultery
9. Fighting, beating
10. Stealing, embezzlement

In writing the history of the lower Rio Grande Valley and of its people, RHS relies heavily on the memories of the fictional characters who populate his novels. Thus, the essential “orality” of RHS’s works is a great source of gossip, both in its “positive” and “negative” aspects.

The first three novels in the *KCDT* are the most fertile in the sense of gossip. *Estampas*, *Generaciones* and *Varones* encompass more characters and have both the settings and the situations in which traditional gossip is exchanged. For example,

there are many neighborhood gossip scenes particularly in the taverns, and street gossip occurring among people in the park, etc. There are also interspersed throughout these three novels, comments on gossip and gossiping; for example, “dar parque” (*Klail City*: 34) which means you give people reason to talk about you.

These three novels together offer, in fact, a picture of gossip as a unifying force in a community and as a social force in a society. RHS, however, goes beyond a simple portrayal and makes the reader a party to the gossip. In all three novels, the reader feels as if s/he were the recipient of gossip from the several narrators as they give us vignettes of the different inhabitants of the Valley. For example, in the case of La Güera Fira in *Estampas* where Jehu starts:

Sin rodeos: la güera Fira es puta. No la hace de puta (como las criadas) ni putea (como las amas de las criadas); no. La güera Fira es puta y ya. Hay más. La güera Fira tiene los ojos azules, el pelo corto y no tiene que pintárselo y tiene unas formas que le quitarían el hipo al cura don Pedro Zamudio (56).

He continues on to say that she is from Jonesville-on-the-River, that she works in a cantina, but doesn't go from table to table. The people in Klail know who she is and even the women understand her situation.

The social status and relationship of the person being discussed often influences the attitude towards chismes and can function to actually block it. Thus, for example, Rafa in *Klail City* (75) is informed by his future wife that Jehu's parents have left a substantial debt with her family's business. Rafa's response is: “. . . si Jehú hubiera sabido del caso no sé que habría hecho de coraje o de vergüenza pero, como para eso son los amigos, no le dije nada y le dejé saber a la Guerrerito que si quería ser mi novia que no anduviera en chismes.”

The dual nature of a gossip is exemplified in another character, Epigmenio Salazar, who in one page is characterized as “sinvergüenzón, chismoso y gorrón” (*Klail City*: 82) and on the very next page as the best chronicler of the neighborhood (“como noticiero del barrio no tenía par” [83]). The importance of this type of character is seen in the clarification of a situation which had preoccupied the residents of the town. “Por Epigmenio se supo lo que por fin pasó entre el cocinero del Fénix y la chica de la farmacia, misterio que había ocupado a la chicanada de Klail City por corto tiempo” (*Klail City*: 83).

This example clearly shows the insider/outsider aspect of gossip as discussed by Hall. The insider does not see this as gossip but as essential information for the community, but an outsider would consider it to be gossip in the most commonly accepted English definition.

Rafa, Rites and *Los Amigos de Becky* (*Becky*), introduce a different and more formalized type of gossip that is disguised as an *encuesta sociológica*. In the first part of *Rafa* gossip takes a more traditional form, albeit in a written form. For example, in

the sixteenth letter in *Rafa* we find: “Acá entre nosotros: Llevo cinco-seis días de no ver a Oli; she’s not returning my calls . . . No tenemos compromiso fijo, of course, pero yo (al menos yo) creía que la cosa se pondría sería - a no ser que Becky blabbed. I take that back. Still where there’s smoke, there’s pedo. So . . .” (42). The phrase “aca entre nosotros” [just between you and me] is the most common introductory phrase in exchange of gossip.

In the second part RHS uses the interviewing technique of *encuesta sociológica* which is intended to elicit factual information, the responses, however, are more in terms of gossip than factual reporting in the sense that people give their own opinion of what may have happened to Jehu and in many cases why. For example, Sammy Joe Perkins speaking,

“But they’re wasting their time. *Gente pendeja*, they won’t believe what you tell them, but they’re ready to believe the worst about him. Call Rafe. That is, call Rafe if you can ever *get* him to answer the phone; he’s hell, you knowLa Sammie Joe tiene razón: la raza es suspicaz; quizá demasiado suspicaz. El esc., de su parte, piensa que la raza tiene razón de serlo por aquello de tantas veces que se lleva el cántaro al agua” (75-6).

From this it can be seen that P. Galindo is not a neutral third party reporter just as the interviewer in *Becky* characterizes or gives opinions about some of his subjects thus, Polin Tapia is described as “politicastro; correveidile; recaudador de todo lo bueno y lo malo del Valle” (*Becky*: 86).

In *Rites* and more recently in *Becky* we see the introduction of the Anglos as discussants and sources of gossip. In fact, *Rites* explains many things in the Valley but from the point of view of the Anglos. In *Becky* Anglos as well as Hispanics express their opinions about Becky’s divorce from Ira Escobar and her subsequent marriage to Jehu Malacara. Again, the total effect is one of gossip and the reader is left with just opinions but very little information about the true facts. Thus, gossip really has served its purpose.

In *Estampas*, *Klail City* and *Varones*, the reader is artfully drawn into the dialogue and becomes a participant in the gossip due to the almost exclusively dialogical nature of the text. Thus, the reader finds him/herself sitting in the tavern, or in the square, or in the park, listening for the next piece of information that will fill in missing pieces of a story.

In these three novels we see the people *chismeando* in the social settings described by Hall for the Dominican Republic. The men in the tavern(s) talk about other men, women, or about incidents in the life of the Valley. In this milieu, Jehu Malacara is a master teller as can be clearly seen in *Varones*. One example, seen in a

typical story told by Jehu about Epigmenio and his wife Candy, will suffice to show RHS's mastery in painting a vivid picture of the young folks of Klail exchanging general gossip, led by Jehu.

El recado era de don Plácido y era oral: una partida de dominó mientras escuchaban el programa de los zapatos G B H en la XEW. El chico llevaba también un papelito en la mano; otro recado pero no para Epigmenio, sino para su yerno, Arturo Leyva, aunque no había nombre en el papelito que rezaba: 'Son las nueve y estoy en el parque.' En vez de firma unos labios de lo mas rojo. El chico iba a hablar con don Epigmenio y de ahí a colarse aqueso Arturo . . .

No, casi nada. La Turca tomó el papel, lo lee y le dice al muchacho: 'Toma este nicle, galán; no, no, de veras . . . descuida: yo misma se lo llevo a Epigmenio.' El muchacho iba a contestar pero tomó el nicle y . . . '

¿El muchacho eras tú, Jehú?'

Chingao, otra vez la burra al maíz. Dale, Jehú.

Como les digo, casi nada . . . La Turca vino y deslomó al inocente de don Epigmenio. Este gritó como cuino escaldo y luego: 'Candelaria . . . ¿qué te pasa, mujeeeeeeeer? Soy yo, Epi. Turca, Turca, ¿qué tienes, h'mbre? Y a cada paso y palabra un golpe por donde fuera con el matamoscas.

¿El de hule?

Quita, h'mbre . . . el de alambre que para eso está . . . y de ahí, 'Cállate, bribón; cállate. ¡Ponerme cuernos a mí, je! ¡a tu edad! ¡Vergüenza te debiera dar y ya que no: moretones tehededar, Epigmenio Salazar!

¡Salió en rima! Yo pago este *round*. La sal, por favor (*Varones* 139).

This passage clearly represents what Fowler (1996:114) refers to as the intersection of the "context of utterance" and the "context of culture" when the use of insider jokes and proverbs reinforces the societal bonds. According to Fowler, the

. . . *context of utterance*, needs to be related to a second sense, *context of culture*: the whole network of social and economic conventions, all the institutions and the familiar settings and relationships, constituting the culture at large, especially in so far as these bear on particular utterance contexts, and influence the structure of discourse occurring within them . . . but all discourse has a

definite context of *culture*, which may . . . be studied as an influence on the linguistic structure of literary texts, and as a guide to their interpretation.

Anyone familiar with Spanish will recognize the northern Mexican dialect in the above passage which is in fact the language of the Valley. It is the language of interaction from the oldest to the youngest, the language of the entire community (Espadas and Payne-Jackson 1995:67-68).

In other contexts, RHS presents a realistic picture of the community through the use of language. In *Estampas*, Espadas and Payne-Jackson (1995) have already shown that RHS correctly uses the life story narrative in the deposition by Balde Cordero according to Linde (1993).

In a different context, Espadas and Payne-Jackson (1995:70-71) also showed that the narrator in “Voces del barrio” establishes the context for a multiplicity of exchanges among people of all ages. In *Klail City* we see the preparations for the annual migratory trip to the North (“Pa Indiana”) during which the speakers, among other things, use proverbs which accentuate the communal nature of the event (Broyles, 1985: 113).

¡Sale pa Indiana! ¡La Del Monte sale pa Indiana! Se paga la salida, se paga la ida, y se paga la vuelta. Estamos pagando a uno noventaicinco l’hora—y damos time and a half después de cincuenta horas. ¡Sale pa Indiana! . . .

¿Qué? ¿Salimos pa Indiana como anuncia el Güero Cáscara o nos quedamos a mondonguear hasta diciembre?

¡Chinches dijo Chencho y se fue pa Rocky Dell debiéndole dinero al Chino y cogidas a su mujer!

¡A Indiana se ha dicho!

¿Y ustedes cómo se van?

Pos de aquí a Texarkana después a Poplar Bluff, Misuri y de allí a Kankakee; ya saben, una vez en Kankakee o le tiramos rumbo a Mono, Indiana o a Reynolds o a Kentland que de jale, jale hay. ¿Y ustedes? . . .

Que no se te olvide bordear las ventanas, Niceto.

¡Sale pa’l norte! ¡Leocadio Gavira paga todo! ¡Se promete y se cumple! Prometemos volver para diciembre o poco antes pa estar aquí para la pizca de la naranja. ¡Sale!

¿Y con quién van a dejar las llaves este año?

Pos con don Manuel Guzmán, ¿Con quién más?

¿Y la escuela?

Pos todavía no empieza . . . los metemos allá en Indiana y al volver en diciembre pos los metemos acá otra vez.

Las muchachas ya deben estar haciendo gorras pa'l sol y
orejeras para el frío porque ya sabes como se pone pa lla . . .
Nosotros nos vamos con Gavira.
“El Rápido de Oklahoma.”
El mero . . .
El mismo . . .
Pos ya lo conocemos . . .
¡Necesito ayudante que sepa inglés! ¡Se paga al contado,
se da cuarto y comida! ¡Que sepa inglés y que ayude con el manejo
del mueble—¡tiene que tener licencia para manejar! ¡Se paga bien!
(*Klail City*: 89-90).

We hear, almost literally, men talking to men about the best way to make the trip, and the best driver, women reminding men of things to be done, the problems of children's schooling and the person announcing the jobs and the meager salaries. But above all we hear from the people in their own voices about the new reality of their new socio-economic situation, now as hired laborers that must be uprooted every year in order to survive. Finally, from a more somber perspective, but in a different context, Esteban Echevarría, the repository of the history of the Valley, in talking to Rafa Buenrostro shortly before Echevarría's death, expresses himself thus:

Casas sin corredores, calles sin faroles, amigos que mueren, jóvenes que ya no hablan español ni saben saludar . . . ¡Je! Desaparece el Valle, gentes . . . Los bolillos con sus propiedades, sus bancos y contratos. Sí. Gente que no reconoce un choque de mano como cosa legal . . . Farmacéuticos con títulos, pero sin experiencia en la materia, rancheros que no labran y pueblerinos con corbata . . . ¿Pa' qué le sirve a uno vivir ochenta y tres años si todo lo que uno vio nacer está enterrado? ¿Los Vilches? Muertos. ¿Los Tuero? ¡También!
Los Buenrostro se acaban y las familias fundadoras se secan como las hojas del mezquite doliente . . . (207)
. . . Tiempos malos fueron aquellos también con sus rinches, la ley aprovechada, los terratenientes, las sequías y el engruesamiento de la vida misma . . . pero . . . al fin y al cabo era mi tiempo, mi gente, mi Valle querido . . . antes de que hubiera tal cosa como el condado de Belken y Klail City y todo lo demás . . . había gente, Rafa, gente . . . Labores y rancherías, y ese Rio Grande que era para beber y no pa' detener los de un lado contra el otro . . . no . . . eso vino después: con la bolillada y sus ingenieros y el papelaje todo en inglés . . . ¡Je! No, no te lo niego, no, y ni pa' qué negarlo . . . pero también hubo raza traicionera . . . raza que jodía a la raza—y gratis—por el mero

gusto de jodernos los unos a los otros. ¡Lamiscones! ¡Coyotes chupasangre! Nuestra enfermedad nacional . . . Pero el sol nacía y el sol se ponía y todo el mundo sabía lo que hacían . . . bola de sinvergüenzas . . . gente tramposa que no tenía palabra ni cara con qué sostenerla . . . (208-209).

Echevarría here is really summarizing what he has been expressing all along in the novel. As it is appropriate for the theme, the language rises to the occasion and acquires an almost lyrical tone within its dialect that it had not had up to this moment. When he turns angry at his own people, language subsequently changes also.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper we have introduced different examples of RHS's use of language in his "Cronicón Chicano" (*Generaciones* 69; *Rafa* 8; *Varones* 15, 131). These passages represent a variety of discourses: dialogues, multiple conversations, letters, responses to questions, monologues, gossip, opinions on one's and other's language, and narratives.

A sociolinguistic approach to RHS's works demonstrates not only that the use of language is correct in grammatical terms, or at the competence level but also at the performance level, in generative terms.

José Saldívar in his study of *KCDT* (1985b:56) says:

If *Klail City Death Trip* series is in fact, a metahistory of the Rio Grande Valley, that is, a fictional text with a deep historical, structural, poetic and sociolinguistic content, then the author's use of language should necessarily register the transitory linguistic changes for the Texas Mexican and Texas Anglo communities. Hinojosa's project, I believe, succeeds admirably in representing the Rio Grande Valley's linguistic evolution by dramatizing the range of verbal contacts in South Texas.

Our analysis has shown that what Saldívar expected in 1985 is certainly the case. RHS's use of language, and more specifically discourse, goes beyond the quaint or the merely anecdotal. RHS is no "costumbrista" rather his works are to be placed firmly in the tradition of the best critical realism.

Endnotes

- ¹ Rolando Hinojosa-Smith was born in Mercedes, Hidalgo County, Texas.
- ² When referring to *Generaciones*, we will use, for the most part, the new version *El condado de Belken, Klail City (Klail City)*.
- ³ Fernando Penalosa (1980:63-72) summarizes the research on code-switching in the 70s citing among others Gringas, Barkin, Lance, Jacobson, Pfaff, McClure, Gumperz. See also Espadas and Payne (1990) for an overview of these studies and their own study of code-switching in RHS, parts of which are summarized below.
- ⁴ Hinojosa-Smith in an interview with Miguel Riera (*Quimera* 1986:70-71) relates his own experience with language use. “Yo prefiero escribir en español si el ambiente que estoy describiendo es de habla hispana, pero, así que entra el mundo norteamericano, el inglés es la lengua más natural. Fíjese, cuando nos reunimos tres or cuatro colegas mexico-americanos en un despacho charlamos en español, nos reímos, gastamos bromas . . . de repente se empieza a hablar de temas profesionales y automáticamente pasamos a hablar todos en inglés. Nos decimos, bueno, ahora vayamos al grano: y hablamos en inglés. El idioma profesional, el de los negocios, el de la docencia, es el inglés.”

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GLADYS M. ILARREGUI AND THE POST-MODERN POETICS OF TRANSPARENCY

Judy B. McInnis
University of Delaware

Born in Argentina in 1958, Gladys M. Ilarregui emigrated with her husband to the United States in 1983. She was educated both in Argentina where she studied German and primary education and in the United States where she received her M.A. from George Mason University in Contemporary Latin American Literature and her Ph.D. in 1995 from Catholic University with a major in Colonial Literature and Historiography. As a Post Modern poet Ilarregui draws on both European and American traditions in her poetics; she alludes most often to Hispanic and Anglo sources. Gertrude Stein and T.S. Eliot figure along with Gabriela Mistral, Juan Ramón Jiménez, and Pablo Neruda among Ilarregui's poetic ancestors. Well-versed in European literature, she also incorporates allusions to Heinrich Böll and such other European authors as René Char, Italo Calvino, and Tomas Tranströmer. English and German phrases sometimes appear in her poetry. The American landscape from Alaska to Argentina engages her imagination. She finds material as readily in a twelfth-century German monastery as in a New Mexican Indian reservation. To illustrate the Post Modern ethos of her poetry, I shall analyze two of her most important poems: both bear the title of "Transparencias." The first is from *Oficios y personas* and the second from *Guía para perplejos*; the two books were published in a single volume in 1996.¹ Both might be called "metapoems" for they treat the subject of writing poetry. In her description of this process Ilarregui occupies a position midway between Neruda and Jiménez. She is closer to Neruda in the description of the creative process, but closer to Jiménez in the tranquil assurance of its accomplishment. In the piercing intensity of her poetic epiphany, Ilarregui is the direct descendant, albeit a secular one, of Santa Teresa de Jesús and Gabriela Mistral. The texts of Ilarregui's two poems as well as Neruda's "Arte poética" and Jiménez's "Seré yo solo" are reproduced at the conclusion of this essay. Before I undertake analysis of the poems, I shall diverge to define the term Post Modernism as I use it in relation to Ilarregui's poetry.

Ihab Hassan identifies Post Modernism with indeterminacies and immanence versus the determinacy and transcendence of Modernism. He associates indeterminacies with "ambiguity, discontinuity, heterodoxy, pluralism, randomness, revolt, perversion, deformation . . . decreation, disintegration, deconstruction, decenterment," etc. (153). He then locates immanence in the textualization of all zones of knowledge "to designate the capacity of mind to generalize itself in symbols, intervene more and more into nature, act upon itself through its own abstractions and so become, increasingly, im-mediatly, its own environment" (153). In an article defin-

ing Post Modern Classicism in art and architecture, Charles Jencks identifies eleven characteristics: disharmonious harmony, pluralism, urbane urbanism, anthropomorphism, anamnesis (suggested recollection), radical eclecticism, double-coding (use of irony, ambiguity, and contradiction), multivalence (inclusive and resonant), tradition reinterpreted, new rhetorical figures (including eclectic quotation), and return to the absent center. Simon During characterizes “Post Modern thought . . . as that thought which refuses to turn the Other into the Same. Thus it provides a space for what post-modernity denies: otherness. Postmodern thought also recognizes, however, that the Other can never speak for itself as the Other” (449).

Nelly Richard points out that Latin Americans have traditionally defined themselves from the periphery as “other” in relation to the European tradition of Modernism with its dependence on rationalization and progress and the concomitant expansion of multinational capitalism and Western patriarchal culture. She quotes Craig Owens to the effect that the subject of representation in Modernism is “absolutely centered, unitary, masculine” (464). Richard continues by affirming that the Latin American elite has traditionally imitated Europe and worn its culture as a series of masks which do not always fit the native cultures.² Rejecting such imitation, some Latin American nationalists attempted to define their identity through their indigenous past, their mixed race, and their religious consciousness inhering in devotion to ritual (467). Richard further contends that the ensuing Latin American recognition of multiple origins was a kind of Post Modernism “avant la lettre” because of the concurrent recognition of fragmentation and dispersion. Post Modernism subverts univocal meaning to search for hidden assumptions in a text and to trace its own genealogy: “Post Modernism states that all privileged points of view have been annulled, along with the dominant position which allowed the establishment of hierarchies of interpretation” (Richard, 467). Yet Post Modernism, while seeming to validate Latin American experience, reduces it to the “indistinguishable and interchangeable in a new, sophisticated economy of ‘sameness’” (Richard, 468). When the center is vacant, all identities become equally meaningful or meaningless. Nevertheless, Richard affirms that the Latin American, having always existed on the periphery, need feel no loss for the destruction of the European center. Rather its loss provides the opportunity for the transformation of imported models and their melding with indigenous tradition in a Post Modernist collage. She endorses the participation of the Post Modern Latin American intellectual in creatively reusing the fragments of the Western tradition to define a new identity from the periphery.

As a Latin American woman poet Ibarregui is doubly other: by virtue of her sex and her national identity. Moreover, living and writing in the United States, she has become more acutely aware of her “otherness,” of her individuality, and of her own “strangeness.” She incorporates fragments of European thought in multiple, complex allusions to writers of the most diverse origin. Through these reconstructed fragments she defines herself as a woman, as an Argentine, as a Hispanic living in the United States, but most profoundly as a poet addressing the world. Ibarregui’s work

exemplifies several of the characteristics of Post-Modernism: the reinterpretation of the past and of herself through eclectic quotation reveals the fragmentation of her culture, refracted back upon her psyche, which recognizes itself as “other.” Ilarregui’s definition of the self from the periphery generates other Post-Modern attributes: indeterminacy, immanence, self-textualization, urbanism, pluralism, radical eclecticism, fragmentation, dispersion.

Ilarregui opens her first poem bearing the title “Transparencias” with a quotation from *Yo el supremo*, novel (1974) of the Paraguayan Augusto Roa Bastos, to the effect of inventing a language in which there is no distance between sign and signified, word and thing. Striving to restore language to a primal purity in which an innate relationship obtains between sign and signified defines the poet’s office. It motivated Dante and Virgil as much as Neruda and Gabriela Mistral. There are echoes of both these Chilean poets in Ilarregui’s poem. The water imagery especially recalls Neruda’s “Arte poética.” While the Chilean poet evokes the melancholy frustrations of a shoddy ambiance (the humiliated waiter who awaits the orders of imperious clients, the flophouse with its drunken inhabitants, the scent of dirty clothes thrown on the floor) and speaks of “cada agua invisible” and “sed ausente,” Ilarregui evokes a genteel atmosphere of the poet typing her poems as she looks through the window upon a rainy winter day filled with day-soaked birds and solitary pedestrians and bicyclists. Both poets perceive the poet as one who gathers together images and memories. Neruda speaks “*de todo sonido que acojo temblando*” (*Residencia en la tierra*, 39).; Ilarregui uses variations of the word “recoger” four times. The typewriter keys “recogen partes de ventanas antiguas.” The mirror (Neruda too used the image of “un espejo viejo” in his poem) possibly “recoge tu cara (en la ventana/ la superficie fresca de un día de invierno, recoja también/ esa forma de decir para adentro, secretamente”). Finally Ilarregui makes the act of gathering together an explicit element of the poetic office: texts emerge from the typewriter, “tecla por tecla, hora por hora,/ hagan un oficio transparente producir poesía, como si se/ fuera a recoger algo: agua en manos abiertas, el brillo/ de los deseos escondidos.” Ilarregui emphasizes the secrecy of the world and of desires, as well as of the words that briefly break the silence; Neruda emphasizes more the world of dream and night from which “un nombre confuso” finally emerges. Clarity, confidence, tranquillity, exactness characterize Ilarregui’s poem, though it emerges with the clarity of rain rather than of sun, while uncertainty, amorphousness, confused consciousness, and a sudden violent insight emerge from Neruda’s description of the poet’s struggle towards expression.

Ilarregui’s calm tone more closely approximates that of Jiménez in “Seré yo solo.” In his Modernist poem Jiménez underscores his own role in the creative process; he insists on “yo solo” both in the poem’s title and in its concluding line. Ilarregui puts the process itself into the center. Like Jiménez she emphasizes the secrecy of the creative process. She goes further than either Neruda or Jiménez in the return to silence. Unlike either of the male poets, who both speak in the first person, she speaks in the third person, from the periphery, describing herself from a distance.

Only in the third stanza does she slide into the first person, and then it is to only to address her reader, to whom she speaks in the intimate *tú* form. Thus, she seems to place her reader more than herself in the center. For all three poets the “collecting” of concrete images defines the poetic method. Jiménez identifies himself with Apollo, symbol of the light of reason and clear communication. Most surprising in Ilarregui’s poem is the assimilation of technology, the typewriter and the computer, into the intimate act of writing poetry; technology does not alienate, but rather enhances the creative process. Both Ilarregui’s emphasis on the means of recording her poetry as well as her confidence in an everpresent inspiration of which she is merely the vehicle of communication align her with the image of the poet as Cumaean Sibyl. Neruda’s images align him with the Baachic poet subject to emotions, thoughts and an inspiration visiting him intermittently from without and with which he struggles desperately. In contrast, Ilarregui, the Post Modern poet, locates herself in the office in her house where she looks out through windows and doors. As she types her poems on computer sheets, she becomes the contemporary reincarnation of the Cumaean Sibyl writing her messages on leaves.

Identifying with Christ, Gabriela Mistral carried the idea of the suffering poet further than Neruda as she wrote emotionally intense poems which leave little room between the poet and her subject, nor between the poet and her reader. Taylor has studied Mistral’s development of the Veronica motif in “Mis libros” and “Nocturno” where the poet declared: “Yo en mis versos el rostro con sangre/ como tú sobre el paño, le di.” As Taylor points out, Mistral perceived suffering, “the essence of life,” as suffering for Christ, and transformed “el drama de Cristo y el sacrificio en inspiración poética” (Taylor, 222). Ilarregui sometimes associates herself with Christ. As a critically ill child, she experienced the crucifixion of lying flat on the bed with her arms, connected to life-support systems, extended in the poem “La edad de las muñecas.” In adulthood she experiences the fear of breaking apart in “Si me rompo.” (Both poems are from *Guía para perplejos*.) More typically Ilarregui moves to the opposite end of this emotional trajectory; more often she echoes the cool distance of Jiménez as well as his pursuit of tranquillity and pristine clarity in her poetry.

Yet one line of “Transparencias” recalls a line from Mistral’s “Recado para la `Residencia de Pedralbes’ en Cataluña.” As she records poetry’s ability to evoke the residences of the past, people receding into the distance on a lonely street, Ilarregui observes: “un tocar puertas y ventanas que se despiden.” She attributes to the doors and windows the human characteristic of leave-taking, while it is actually the people who take leave of them. In her poem Mistral recorded her sensations upon visiting the orphanage for Basque orphans of the Spanish Civil War in Cataluña. She speaks of her journeys with their restless nights spent in houses that did not belong to her, nights that sharpened her body. However, she wishes to leave her imprint upon those houses as she continues on:

Pulpa de sombra de la casa
tome mi máscara en carne viva.
La pasión mía me recuerden,
la espalda mía me la sigan.

Then, emphasizing her assimilation to Christ, Mistral refers to herself as a “wounded deer,” traditional image of Christ, and declares her desire that her image be imprinted on the house as the image of Christ’s face was imprinted on Veronica’s veil:

Pene en los largos corredores
un caminar de cierva herida,
y la oración, que es la Verónica,
tenga mi faz cuando la digan.

In relation to these verses Taylor observed: “El sacrificio engendra el sacrificio, crea una relación dinámica entre los martirizados y los aspirantes al martirio, y a aquéllos, a su vez les inspira sacrificios cada vez más heroicos. Por estas razones, la poetisa expresa sin timidez su esperanza de que los jóvenes de la Residencia de Pedralbes modelen sus pensamientos y sentimientos según los de ella” (Taylor, 223). After these injunctions, Mistral leaves the house, touching the stairway and kissing the door as she confronts her solitary anguish:

¡Volteo el ámbito que dejo,
miento el techo que me tenía,
marco escalera, beso puerta
y doy la cara a mi agonía!

Both Ilarregui and Mistral evoke the reluctance of leavetaking and the sensuous stroking of that abode that at least briefly has provided refuge from the world. Both also record the projection of oneself into one’s surrounding, the becoming a part of the things that one touches daily. The caresses that women lavish not only on people but on beloved objects of the home will emerge again in Ilarregui’s poetry where she will speak of “touching” doors and windows.

Doors, windows and locks also appear in quotations from René Char and Thomas Tranströmer, which Ilarregui uses to preface other poems. Ilarregui opens “Mi tiempo, mi nostalgia” with the words of the Swedish Nobel Prize Winner Tomas Tranströmer: “Lejos, lejos hasta que la mañana deposite sus/ rayos en la cerradura,/ y las puertas de la oscuridad se abran de par en par.”³ In her poem Ilarregui describes her knitting and unraveling of words taken from her dreams and from her reality, from memory and from the present landscape, to create a blue scarf on the electric page of her computer—a scarf of “gorriones afligidos” which she wraps around her reader’s

neck (Gpp, 37). In “Estado de luz” Ilarregui declares that through her openness to nature, whose transformations she registers like a communications satellite, she made a mental structure of her house: “puertas y ventanas”(Gpp 86). In “Hemisferio blanco” the light entering through the window of her house also enters her ears and “la garganta, una avenida llena de luz”(Gpp 87). She also uses Tranströmer’s line “A veces mi vida abría los ojos en la oscuridad” to open “La fiesta / Metáfora privada”(Gpp 97). For Ilarregui the vehicle that opens the eyes is metaphor—and more generally poetry. Although she is unsure whether she is moving towards terminal doubt or towards the light, she is confident that she will find the metaphors to describe her own experience of life.

The title poem of the collection *Guía para perplejos* ends with Ilarregui’s transformation of her poetic sources—Mistral and Tranströmer—into a unique image. First she declares “alguna vez las llaves encontrarán sus puertas” which recalls Faust’s use of the Mephistopheles’s magic key to gain access to the knowledge held by the “terrible mothers.”⁴ Then, in the realization that it is not only the key to knowledge but the door itself that must be located, Ilarregui affirms: “sí, yo sé que un día, alguien,/ alguna vez encontrará las puertas”(Gpp 102). Ilarregui thus expresses the heightened uncertainty of the Post Modern ethos. In her discussion of Post Modernism Alice Jardine theorizes that its less dogmatic approach to truth through its “valorization of non-mastery” creates a more sympathetic atmosphere for the feminine: “as we know, a lack of mastery has, historically, always connoted the feminine” (439). Furthermore, Jardine points to Heidegger as a philosopher important in defining the ethic of non-mastery: “Man can no longer be the ‘opener of truth’ but must find a way to become the opening *for* it. Heidegger will eventually turn to the poets to find that ‘way’” (435). I believe that Ilarregui’s emphasis on the *door* itself rather than on the phallic key exemplifies this Post Modern insight.

With René Char, Ilarregui believes that one can find that door only by “cultivar la propia extrañeza” (Gpp 100). Ilarregui quotes from Char’s poem “La bibliothéque est en feu” where the French poet declares: “Semons les roseaux et cultivons la vigne sur les coteaux, au bord des plaies de notre esprit. Doigts cruels, mains précautionneuses, ce lieu facétieux est propice. [We plant reeds and cultivate the vine on the slopes, on the edge of the wounds of our spirit. Cruel fingers, precautionary hands, this facetious place is propitious.]”⁵ The house with its windows and doors is an ancient symbol both for the body and the mind. Santa Teresa de Jesús used it in *Las moradas*, San Juan de la Cruz in his famous lyric poems, “Noche oscura” and the “Cantico espiritual.” In the Christian tradition it can be traced back to Christ’s declaration “Yo soy la puerta: si uno entra por mí, estará a salvo; entrará y saldrá y encontrará pasto.” (St. John ch.10, v. 9) and his instruction “Mira que estoy a la puerta y llamo; si alguno oye mi voz y me abre la puerta, entraré en su casa y cenaré con él y él conmigo”(Apocalipsis [Revelations] ch. 3, v. 20). Ilarregui has moved farther than Mistral into a purely secular, philosophical rather than religious, use of this image. The realization that each of us exists on the periphery and hence has equal right to

place himself/herself at the center is characteristic of the Post Modern ethos. Finding only her own image rather than that of Christ (Santa Teresa) or of herself as Christ (Mistral) confirms Ilarregui's "anthropomorphic" Post Modern experience.

"Una mujer con la mano en la frente: Transparencias"

In her second poem bearing the title "Transparencias" Ilarregui joins two moments in time together. In the present moment she gazes out a window and is traversed by a ray of sunlight, which like an X-Ray reveals her vertebral column and part of her cranium. Within her brain she keeps "mariposas" or memories of the past summer. The strength of her memory yields a "momento de verdad" which leaves her weak and trembling, not because of the fall season nor because of the clarity of the moment itself, but rather because of her acute recollection of the beloved's particular way of speaking, a murmuring of words. Repeating the "nadie esperaba" in an anaphora which begins each stanza of this poem, Ilarregui declares that no one expected that the beloved would settle into her very bones nor that his image waving goodbye, "como si fuera a despedirse/ de la muerte" would appear before her eyes. In its emphasis on astonishment and in its recreation of the gestures of the beloved this poem evokes John Crowe Ransom's "Bells for John Whiteside's Daughter." Ransom memorializes a dead child by exactly recalling over five stanzas her play with farm animals; Ilarregui shows her beloved challenging death. Both poems demonstrate the power that images of beloved people wield in one's consciousness and how they become part of one's bone and marrow.

The poem is a secular counterpart to Santa Teresa's transfixation when the angel appeared to her and seemed to burn her entrails with his sword. The exact description of psychosomatic effects of the mystical experience, the solitude of its subject, the unexpectedness of the experience, the conviction of having been selected for the experience through no particular merit of one's own, and the joy the experience brings are present both in Ilarregui's poem and in Santa Teresa's description in her *Vida* (end of Chapter 29):

Veáale en las manos un dardo de oro largo, y al fin del hierro me parecía tener un poco de fuego. Éste me parecía meter con el corazón algunas veces, y que me llegaba a las entrañas: al sacarle me parecía las llevaba consigo, y me dejaba toda abrasada en amor grande de Dios. . . .

Antes en comiencando esta pena, de que ahora hablo, parece arrebatá el Señor el alma y la pone en éstasi, y ansí no hay lugar de tener pena, ni de padecer, porque viene luego el gozar. Sea bendito por siempre, que tantas mercedes hace a quien tan mal responde a tan grandes beneficios. (238)

The title of the poem, "Transparencias," repeats that of the fourth poem of *Oficios y personas* and fulfills that poem with a concrete example of the process described there. We find the poet caught in the same situation, gazing out a window. She commented there more generally on the people receding into the distance as they were viewed through the window. The window itself collected "esa forma de decir para adentro, secretamente" and said goodbye. There also Ilarregui spoke of "el brillo de deseos escondidos," a line which allows the reader to link her epiphany with those of Santa Teresa and of Gabriela Mistral. While Santa Teresa related her epiphany directly to Christ, and Mistral perceived herself filling the office of poet as a Christomites, Ilarregui here again remains on the secular plane where the beloved who triggers her keen insight into time and memory is another human being. Once again Ilarregui speaks about herself in the third person, while both Santa Teresa and Gabriela Mistral use the first person in describing their experiences.

Through a discussion of Ilarregui's two poems entitled "Transparencias" I have endeavored to show the depth of tradition and the multiplicity of sources she incorporates into her work. In her wide-ranging allusions she draws upon all the elements flowing into Latin American culture: Greco-Roman and Hebraic, European (from the medieval epoch to the contemporary period), North and South American with special emphasis on the Hispanic tradition. In her first volume of verse *Indian Journeys* she declared her debt to the indigenous cultures of North and South America. Ilarregui joins the archaic and the contemporary in her revision of traditional metaphors in the Post Modern idiom. The fragmentation of knowledge that appears to have occurred simultaneously with its discovery leads to the conclusion that we possess the necessary knowledge, the keys to opening the doors, to understand ourselves and the world if we could but properly order those fragments of knowledge which we possess. Modern physics with its discoveries of ever smaller particles of matter has increased our awareness that time/space and movement depend upon the perspective of the viewer, who in himself/herself constitutes the door. Ilarregui's poetry orders fragments of philosophy, science, personal experience, and literature to recreate the experience of the late twentieth century. As the scenes of her poetry move easily over the Western world from the Americas to Europe, her allusions range over the wide spectrum of ancient and modern art, science and literature. The ancient concepts of the microcosm/macrocosm and of the four elements are as crucial as the modern concepts of particles and perspectivism. The joining together of such diverse phenomena into a distinctly individual framework places Ilarregui in the forefront of Post Modern poets.

Endnotes

- ¹ The publisher is Los Signos del Tiempo: Editores (ISBN: 0-9656050-0-0); the work is being distributed by Exodus, Ltd. (227 Gentlebrook Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117-2457; EMAIL: ExodusLtd@aol.com).
- ² In her book on Latin American autobiography Sylvia Molloy discovered that after Sarmiento “the scene of reading will continue to mark Spanish American autobiographical writing, either through its obsessive presence, as in the constant references to the European text that double Victoria Ocampo’s autobiographical exercise (a sort of ‘I quote therefore I am’) or through its forceful omission, as in Neruda’s vehement protestations—‘Libro, déjame libre’—in his memoirs and in his poetry. A mirror for the autobiographer, the book will, like a mirror, reflect, comfort, augment, distort: what it exhibits will be, nonetheless, the spectator’s own image” (35).
- ³ The quotation comes from Tranströmer’s poem “Kyrie.” Robert Hass supplies this translation of the relevant verses:

Sometimes my life opened its eyes in the dark.
A feeling as if crowds drew through the streets
in blindness and anxiety on the way towards a miracle,
while I invisibly remain standing.

As the child falls asleep in terror
listening to the heart’s heavy tread.
Slowly, slowly until morning puts its rays in the locks
and the doors of darkness open.

- ⁴ Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, *Faust: Part II*, translated by David Luke, pp. 49-54, Part II, Act I, lines 6173-6306.
- ⁵ From *Commune présence*, 215-216.

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TRANSPARENCIAS

Gladys M. Ilarregui

*Podrás inventar un lenguaje en el que el signo sea idéntico al objeto?
Inclusive los más abstractos e indeterminados. El infinito. Un perfume. Un
sueño.*

Augusto Roa Bastos. (Yo el Supremo)

entre los vidrios mojados de lluvia (las teclas viajan
hacia adentro, recogen partes de ventanas antiguas, formas
de llaves, y se remontan hacia el universo)

Y afuera empapados de día corren los pájaros (y el mundo
secreto de las lámparas leyendo líneas de poemas antiguos
y las mantas, y las habitaciones en silencio)

Es posible que el espejo que recoge tu cara (en la ventana
la superficie fresca de un día de invierno) recoja también
esa forma de decir para adentro, secretamente

lo que las palabras dicen hasta apagarse calladamente
como las velas y los fósforos, en el silencio

Y textos que emergen, tecla por tecla, hora por hora,
hagan un oficio transparente producir poesía, como si se
fuera a recoger algo: agua en manos abiertas, el brillo
de los deseos escondidos,

un tocar puertas y ventanas que se despiden, personas que
se alejan por una calle sola, empedrados y bicicletas
un palpar de la lluvia, la cabellera de la lluvia,
la transparencia de la lluvia,

la línea de un poema.

ARTE POÉTICA

Pablo Neruda

*Entre sombra y espacio, entre guarniciones y doncellas,
dotado de corazón singular y sueños funestos,
precipitadamente pálido, marchito en la frente
y con luto de viudo furioso por cada día de vida,
ay, para cada agua invisible que bebo soñolientamente
y de todo sonido que acojo temblando,
tengo la misma sed ausente y la misma fiebre fría,
un oído que nace, una angustia indirecta,
como si llegaran ladrones o fantasmas,
y en una cáscara de extensión fija y profunda,
como un camarero humillado, como una campana un poco ronca,
como un espejo viejo, como un olor de casa sola
en la que los huéspedes entran de noche perdidamente ebrios,
y hay un olor de ropa tirada al suelo, y una ausencia de flores,
—posiblemente de otro modo aún menos melancólico—,
pero, la verdad, de pronto, el viento que azota mi pecho,
las noches de substancia infinita caídas en mi dormitorio,
el ruido de un día que arde con sacrificio
me piden lo profético que hay en mí, con melancolía,
y un golpe de objetos que llaman sin ser respondidos
hay, y un movimiento sin tregua, y un nombre confuso.*

SERÉ YO SOLO

Juan Ramón Jiménez

Una exacta palabra
es toda la palabra. Todo velo
cubre un secreto solo.

Si cojo todo el cielo,
aunque todos lo cojan, seré apolo
yo solo.

TRANSPARENCIAS

Gladys M. Ilarregui

nadie esperaba que cuando ella terminó su taza de café y se dirigía a la ventana, un rayo de sol la atravesara mostrando la columna vertebral y una parte del cráneo donde guardaba mariposas del verano pasado

nadie esperaba, por ejemplo, que en ese momento de verdad saliera de adentro suyo un gesto como de mujer desamparada no por el otoño o por la claridad, sino por esa manera que él tenía de decir las cosas, casi murmurándolas

nadie esperaba que él siguiera ocupando un lugar dentro de la estructura ósea, y asomara los ojos entre olas eléctricas del cerebro, saludando con la mano, como si fuera a despedirse de la muerte.

LA NARRACIÓN EN *CARTUCHO*. RELATOS DE LA LUCHA EN EL NORTE (NELLIE CAMPOBELLO).

Ana María Sánchez Catena
University of Delaware

Nellie Campobello es la única escritora de la primera etapa de la novela de la Revolución Mexicana. En una sociedad tan tradicional como la mexicana, ¿cuál sería la experiencia de una mujer en esta Revolución? Es muy importante tener en cuenta su visión porque ella la vivió de niña, y en su obra va a contar sus experiencias, pero desde una perspectiva diferente a los demás escritores que desarrollaron el conflicto. Muchas de las imágenes muestran sentimientos irreconciliables, como la crudeza y la ternura, que sólo la mente de una niña es capaz de mezclar.

Cartucho es una evocación de la guerra vista a través de los ojos de una niña. La autora al relatar sus vivencias de la Revolución nos va a asombrar por su crueldad. No se va a inventar nada; ella vio y vivió todo lo que nos muestra. A través de estos relatos desfilan personas de carne y hueso, que son protagonistas de la Revolución. Al lado de los 'simples' soldados, algunos con nombre y otros desconocidos, encontramos figuras famosas, como el coronel Bustillos, Antonio Silva, Gudelio Uribe, Maclovio Herrera, el general Rueda o Pancho Villa, entre otros muchos.

Cartucho consta de cincuenta y seis escenas, en su mayoría breves, repartidas en tres partes. El denominador común a todas ellas es la Revolución y la crueldad de ésta. Según De Beer "lo que une a los diversos episodios . . . es el tema de la brutalidad de una lucha que enfrenta a mexicano contra mexicano . . . Cada episodio expresa . . . cómo se convive con la guerra, sus víctimas, muertos y heridos" (215). Esto es algo que se ve muy claro desde el principio al fin de la obra; las víctimas de la Revolución abundan en toda la novela.

Antes de pasar a analizar la técnica y el estilo, me parece relevante señalar los temas de la violencia y la muerte como característicos de la literatura mexicana revolucionaria (teniendo en cuenta también, que éstas son realidades comunes a cualquier movimiento literario que esté inmerso en un acontecimiento bélico de este tipo). En esta novela, estos temas están tratados de una forma completamente diferente a otras novelas de la Revolución, en las que se mostraban las consecuencias de la lucha y se miraba a la muerte desde un punto de vista adulto.

En este caso, la perspectiva es diferente, porque la realidad se nos presenta desde el punto de vista de una niña, desde un punto de vista infantil. Abundan los ejemplos donde la protagonista se aproxima a la muerte de una forma inocente. "La muerte para Nellie es una presencia física" (Keller 144) y siente una irresistible atrac-

ción hacia ella como tal. La protagonista mira a la realidad de una forma limpia y transparente, sin velos de ningún tipo, y en realidad lo que se está perfilando es “un trastorno social” (143).¹

Lo primero que hay que decir de esta novela es que comparte las características generales de la novela de la Revolución Mexicana: el tono autobiográfico (la protagonista de esta novela es una niña de la Revolución); novela fundamentalmente realista y de orientación regional (en este caso, el norte de México) y una base histórica y real, ya que describe hechos reales y personajes que participaron en la Revolución en esa zona. En concreto, los acontecimientos suceden en Parral, donde vive Nellie, lugar en el que sería asesinado en 1923 el general Pancho Villa, al final de la Revolución.

En cada viñeta se muestra el enfrentamiento real entre villistas y carrancistas y los diferentes “desastres” que unos y otros cometieron. Se puede notar una cierta simpatía por los villistas, y un tono despectivo hacia las crueldades carrancistas. Por ejemplo cuando se afirma que los muertos carrancistas se conocían por las ropas mugrosas. Hay que decir que, aunque la madre de Nellie trata a Villa con respeto y admiración, y se ve como un justiciero, también se dibujan algunos de los desastres cometidos por los villistas.

Otras de las características de este tipo de novelas son: el reflejo de los deseos, aspiraciones e ideales sociales de la lucha revolucionaria; la técnica fotográfica, con episodios y cuadros independientes; la visión épica de la experiencia revolucionaria; el reflejo de una honda inquietud social. La novela muestra lo que está sucediendo y no podemos dejar atrás la preocupación que esa realidad nos causa.

Por último, y no menos importante, es una novela de orientación nacionalista en la que se está exaltando al pueblo mexicano, como verdadero protagonista de la Revolución. La aparición de múltiples personajes, y el hecho de que estos sean reales indica el protagonismo de todos los mexicanos en su conflicto. El pueblo mexicano, a través del desfile de personajes de toda condición, es por sí mismo el protagonista y el héroe de esta novela.

Sin embargo, a pesar de compartir todas estas características con el resto de las novelas de la Revolución, hay un rasgo muy particular que la hace completamente diferente al resto. Está considerada por muchos especialistas “both the most poetic and the most violent novel of the Revolution” (Parle 201).² Los rasgos fundamentales de esta narración son: realismo, brevedad y sencillez. El lenguaje de la narradora, como niña, es directo, sin adornos. Transmite todo lo que quiere de una forma sincera y directa.

Lo más llamativo al abrir el libro es la estructura episódica. Estos episodios son como pequeños cuadros o fotografías. Se tiene la impresión de estar mirando un álbum de fotos.³ En contra de lo que dicen algunos críticos,⁴ no me parece que cada viñeta sea completamente independiente, en el sentido de que los episodios no tengan

relación entre sí. La autora ha utilizado una técnica fotográfica (o cinematográfica), pero todos los cuadros tienen el mismo denominador (la Revolución) y ésta es la que los une de alguna forma.

Nellie Campobello ha tomado las fotografías y las ha ordenado a su parecer. Creo que si ella las ha colocado así es precisamente porque llevan ese orden. Así es como los recuerdos están guardados en su mente y hay que respetar ese orden. Algunos personajes aparecen varias veces y cuando los vemos por segunda vez, ya sabemos algo más de su historia y eso nos ayuda un poco más a comprender lo que puede estar pasando.

Tampoco creo que cada estampa carezca de argumento y protagonistas. Me parece que está muy claro, desde el mismo título del episodio, que precisamente en cada fotografía hay un personaje especial y una historia en la que este personaje está envuelto. El protagonista del libro es sin duda todo el pueblo de México, pero a través de cada retrato vamos conociendo una parte de este pueblo. Por esto no es de extrañar que la mayoría de los episodios lleven los títulos de sus protagonistas.

Lo que sí hay que reconocer, como apunta Dennis Parle, es que los pasajes que componen la narración “vary greatly in theme and mood from the ironic to the comical, from the melancholic to the tragic” (209). Ejemplos de este cambio de ‘humor’ son los episodios de “Las sandías”, “Las rayadas” o “El sombrero” (todos relacionados con Pancho Villa), que son bastante cómicos porque nadie espera el desenlace y además, porque aparecen junto a episodios especialmente trágicos como “El milagro de Julio” o “Las balas de José”.

Un rasgo fundamental es el uso de frases muy cortas y de un vocabulario sencillo, sin elaboración, como es el vocabulario utilizado por un niño, mostrando una gran naturalidad y curiosidad por todo. Nellie Campobello, según Huaco, utiliza “inhuman detachment and an almost delirious objectivity to describe endless cruelties and tortures inflicted by Carrancistas and Villistas” (68). Un ejemplo muy claro de este estilo es el episodio de las tripas del general Sobarzo. Los soldados pretenden asustar a los niños y en realidad, somos nosotros los que nos asustamos por el gran interés que unos intestinos despiertan en ellos. Sin embargo, es cierto que la narración se hace de una forma tan tierna, que nos impresiona.

También como a cualquier niño, le atrae lo prohibido y siente una gran curiosidad por todo lo que le rodea. Hay que tener en cuenta que esa curiosidad es algo natural en ella. Por ejemplo en “El muerto” su madre no las deja salir ni a ella ni a su hermana, y deja a alguien para que las vigile, pero su curiosidad puede más que ninguna otra cosa. Da la impresión de que la protagonista en su juventud entiende esta exposición a lo macabro como necesaria para su crecimiento.

Lo mismo sucede si hay una conversación entre personas mayores. Ella siempre está presente, a veces escondida: “Muchas veces me acercaba a sus conversaciones, sin que ella me sintiera” (914), intentando prestar la máxima atención. Aunque muchas veces reconoce que no entiende de lo que se está hablando, nos cuenta lo que oye de un modo tan natural como asombroso. A Nellie le encanta escu-

char esas historias que muestran por un lado, escenas habituales para ella, y por otro son escenas crueles de las que los mayores quieren alejarla para que no sufra tanto su mente infantil. Es por esto por lo que su imaginación funciona tan de prisa.

Otro rasgo muy importante dentro del estilo son las descripciones de los personajes. Éstas son analizadas desde la perspectiva de ella como niña. Se fija en lo que más le llama la atención de la persona y es por ahí por donde comienza el retrato. Todo el libro está lleno de caracterizaciones de este tipo y la escritora normalmente introduce a los personajes mediante una descripción física (Matthews 150). Estos son algunos ejemplos para ver como funcionan estas asociaciones en la mente de la niña: Elías es “alto, color de canela, pelo castaño, ojos verdes, dos colmillos de oro . . . ” (899), “José . . . tenía crenchas doradas untadas de sebo y lacias de frío. Los ojos exactos de un perro amarillo” (899), Julio Reyes “un joven del color del trigo. Sus ojos café eran amables” (928) o Elías Acosta “el de los ojos verdes y las cejas negras, hombre hermoso, con su color de durazno maduro” (938).

En su mente de niña sólo hay dos grupos de personas, las buenas y las malas. Hay rasgos de la caracterización física que claramente indican una actitud positiva o negativa hacia la persona. Sin embargo, al leer el libro y dentro de esa técnica, he descubierto como la autora utiliza la risa y el saber reír para caracterizar a los personajes. La protagonista, como todos los niños, puede ver más allá de lo que es visible para un adulto. Los niños tienen una sensibilidad especial porque son más naturales y tienen como un sexto sentido o intuición hacia la gente que los rodea. Para ellos la risa es algo fundamental y es difícil engañarlos.

En *Cartucho* se muestran las crudezas de la guerra, pero a un niño no le importa que haya o no haya guerra, porque en realidad no tiene conciencia de ello, como en este caso, en el que la protagonista se ha pasado su niñez inmersa en ella. Ellos no entienden de guerras porque lo natural en ellos es jugar, divertirse y reír. Es por esto por lo que cuando conocen a alguien se fijan intensamente en si esa persona sonríe o no, y si esta sonrisa es de verdad, o por lo contrario es algo artificial, que tiene el fin de engañar.

Si Nellie nos dice que una determinada persona no se sabe reír, ya sabemos que es una ‘mala persona’, que no se puede confiar en ella y que no va a actuar de un buen modo. Del mismo modo, si una persona se pone a jugar con ellos, va a ser una buena persona. Ella misma dice al principio de la novela “El dinero hace a veces que las gentes no sepan reír” (899). Hay numerosos ejemplos de esto a lo largo de toda la novela: desde sonrisas irónicas a simpatía de verdad, pasando por la risa exagerada llena de odio.⁵

Como ya comenté anteriormente, hay que tener en cuenta que estos niños nunca se asustan ni se ponen sentimentales. La fuerza de la costumbre los ha hecho fuertes. Nellie es una niña fuerte. Aquí los débiles somos nosotros, los que estamos participando de sus recuerdos. Es duro imaginar cómo esta niña ha podido llegar a tal grado de ‘insensibilidad’ y es difícil creer que esto haya sido posible. Pero es cierto,

ya que es un testimonio real. Esto es lo que la autora y protagonista de la historia recuerda y ha vivido. Por eso, ve las cosas de un modo tan natural y nosotros nos asustamos y nos preocupamos.

¿Cómo se puede entender que una niña tan pequeña piense de esta forma: “-Más de trescientos hombres fusilados en los mismos momentos, dentro de un cuartel, es mucho muy impresionante- decían las gentes; pero nuestros ojos infantiles lo encontraron bastante natural” (910-11)?

Nellie se siente orgullosa también de sus conocimientos en materia de muerte y cadáveres porque es algo normal y natural para ella. Está acostumbrada a vivir con ellos cerca. Incluso se considera una experta: “-Va blanco por el ansia de la muerte- dije yo convencida de mis conocimientos en asuntos de muertos” (908). Nellie es completamente consciente de lo que está pasando a su alrededor y nosotros no podemos hacer otra cosa que sorprendernos ante su modo de pensar y actuar, el cual, mirándolo fríamente, es bastante lógico.

En *Cartucho* se mezclan los sucesos más violentos y cotidianos de una revolución con los problemas de una niña que quiere comprender la realidad que la rodea (Keller 143). Nellie es testigo de un ‘espectáculo’ que no va a olvidar durante el resto de su vida, que siempre va a permanecer en su memoria.

La violencia, la brutalidad y la muerte se presentan en un tono de absoluta indiferencia emocional. Estoy completamente de acuerdo con la opinión de De Beer en cuanto a las consecuencias que esa indiferencia ante la crueldad pueden llegar a crear: “Campobello, como observadora y narradora, presencia la muerte y la destrucción como únicamente los muy jóvenes o los muy viejos pueden sentirlas -o demasiado inocentes para que comprendan o demasiado viejos para que les importe” (215).

Después de presenciar todas esas imágenes de muerte y destrucción, no puede sorprendernos demasiado que la autora dijera años más tarde recordando su infancia: “A los cuatro años se me notaba, impresa en el rostro, la tragedia de la Revolución. No me reía por nada del mundo” (Carballo 336). Al final la huella de la Revolución ha creado a una niña seria y triste. A pesar de que la risa en un primer momento era muy importante para ella, posteriormente, esa risa se le amarga, al descubrir la realidad de ese conflicto, que a ella como niña, sólo le parecía un juego.

El episodio “Desde una ventana” es el que más crudamente refleja hasta qué extremo la convivencia día a día de unas niñas, con la brutalidad y la guerra, no sólo las hace mirar con indiferencia a la crueldad, sino que les despierta una fuerte ‘atracción’ por lo que está pasando. Con una aparente falta de elaboración y con la sencillez con que un niño nos cuenta algo, se ha ido presentando la crueldad y la violencia de la lucha revolucionaria. Por eso, después de leer el pasaje mencionado, no es extraño sentir un escalofrío.

Creo que Nellie se siente orgullosa de haber conseguido sus objetivos. Cualquier guerra es así de simple y así de cruel, cualquier guerra es masacre y brutalidad, y es una niña la que de la forma más clara del mundo nos lo ha contado y nos ha hecho partícipes de la crueldad que ella misma ha sufrido.

Para concluir, me gustaría apuntar algunas de las ideas que se han ido desarrollando en estas páginas. La originalidad de la autora se fundamenta en su forma de presentar los temas de la violencia y la muerte, a través de la autobiografía de su niñez. Para esto utiliza la característica técnica fotográfica de la novela mexicana del periodo revolucionario. Cuando leemos la novela, tenemos la impresión de estar pasando las hojas de un álbum, en el que cada historia o apartado, es una fotografía de éste. Este álbum, no sólo es la niñez de la protagonista, sino también la vida de todo el pueblo mexicano en esta Revolución.

Utilizando un estilo realista, breve y sencillo, la escritora nos va introduciendo en ese mundo de crueldad que fue la Revolución, y que vemos aún más cruel porque lo percibimos a través de los ojos de una niña pequeña. Los episodios son muy crudos a veces, pero lo que más nos asombra es la aparente frialdad e insensibilidad de una niña que se ha acostumbrado a vivir con esa Revolución y que lo que siente es curiosidad por el mundo que le rodea. Un mundo del que los mayores intentan alejarla, pero que por eso mismo, a ella le atrae tanto. Nos sorprende descubrir cómo el ser humano es capaz de adaptarse a cualquier situación, por difícil que sea y cómo es capaz también de adoptar cualquier sentimiento externo, de un modo natural, como parte de sí mismo.

Notas

¹ Keller se refiere a la Revolución de 1910 como “un trauma histórico” y expresa claramente “la capacidad de una revolución de ahondar en las costumbres e instituciones de una nación más que cualquier otro evento” (142).

² Parle hace referencia a especialistas, como Castro Leal, Frand Morton, Dessau, Brushwood y Manuel Pedro González (p. 210).

³ Este estilo fotográfico me ha recordado al de la escritora chicana Sandra Cisneros en *The House on Mango Street*, que está escrito también en forma de viñetas. Es curioso ver como este estilo es muy utilizado por las mujeres. Además hay ciertos rasgos en esta escritora que podrían provenir de la posible influencia de lecturas como Nellie Campobello. Esto podría ser motivo de análisis en un futuro.

⁴ De Beer: “. . . son colecciones de cuentos o estampas que carecen de argumento y protagonistas . . . los relatos pueden leerse en cualquier orden pues cada estampa, por breve que sea, es completa . . .” (213).

⁵ Estos son algunos ejemplos: Elías Acosta “sabía llorar el recuerdo de su mamá, se reía cuando peleaba” (899), Kirilí tenía “una sonrisa fácil hecha ojal en su cara” (900), Agustín García “no se sabía reír” (901) y es un hombre peligroso, Rafael, el trompeta que “se hizo mi amigo porque un día nuestras sonrisas fueron iguales. Le enseñé mis muñecas, él sonreía” (903), Catarino Acosta “siempre hacía una sonrisita” (903), “Gerardo Ruiz, elegante, nervioso, con sonrisa estudiada” (906), Babis que “reía y se le cerraban los ojos. Era mi amigo” (907), o Julio Reyes que “siempre se reía” (928).

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Political Science

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BUILDING HEGEMONY: PERÓN, GRAMSCI AND POLITICAL STRATEGY IN THE AGE OF THE MASSES.

Theron Corse

Fayetteville State University

The signs and symbols of authority in Peronism were deeply ambiguous from the beginning. October 17, 1945, both in myth and historiography, presents a dual and contradictory notion of authority. On the one hand, the great rally of October 17 represents the power of the masses, dirty and ill-clothed, seizing the initiative, while on the other, it also represents the authority and centrality of a single man, the leader whose imprisonment spurred those masses to action—Juan Perón. In its deeply ambiguous message about power, the image of October 17 vividly crystallizes a key dynamic of Peronism. In many ways, Peronism can be viewed as the story of the tension between popular sovereignty and the authority of the leader. Born in an explosion of popular force, Peronism sees the ultimate decline of popular sovereignty, moving, sometimes steadily, sometimes more erratically, towards an increasingly authoritarian, leader-centered model of power.

Perón sought to control the ambiguity of the October 17 message and harness the popular energy it released by creating a system that included both popular consent and leader-centered authority, though Perón's own understanding of the nature of the popular will would help to insure that "popular consent" would not, in fact, be equivalent to "popular sovereignty." In 1951 Perón outlined how such a system would work in *Conducción política*, a collection of six lectures he gave as master classes on political leadership at the Escuela Superior Peronista. *Conducción política* represents an important and strongly authoritarian moment in the development of the relationship between popular sovereignty and the authority of the leader in Peronism. Tulio Halperín Donghi has characterized these lectures as "the science of making people obey," obey without reflection.¹ The principle focus of these lectures was indeed how to insure a tight bond between leader and led, in which the led would internalize the values of the leader and follow that leader, of their own will, though whether it can be thought of as a "free" will is debatable. The fundamental message of these six lectures was simple—it is much easier to lead people who agree with you than those who do not. The methods for gaining popular consent which Perón discusses in this work are authoritarian in many of their implications, but they also display the fundamental ambiguities of Peronism, with their recognition of the importance of public opinion. In asserting that the strongest governments base their power on consent, not coercion, Perón's ideas echo the model of consent-based government developed by the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci, the political theorist most closely

linked with the idea of hegemony, is not a thinker one would automatically associate with an authoritarian populist like Perón, but while they differ on key points, Gramsci's work on hegemony is useful for understanding what Perón sought to do and for illuminating the limitations of popular sovereignty in his thought.

There are, of course, some difficulties in approaching Gramsci, for our understanding of Gramsci's thought is complicated by the circumstances under which he worked. He did the bulk of his writing on hegemony in a Fascist jail, in which everything he wrote had to meet the approval of a prison censor. Further, since Gramsci died shortly after his release (he was, in fact, released for medical reasons), he never had the opportunity to edit or systematize his notes into a coherent work. At times he seems to contradict himself, and his jumbled notes make it impossible to pin down precisely what he meant by "hegemony," though for this essay, some working definitions will do. Robert Boccock, in his 1986 study of Gramsci entitled *Hegemony*, describes Gramsci's hegemony as a form of moral and philosophical leadership.²

Hegemony, in its most complete form, is defined as occurring when the intellectual, moral and philosophical leadership provided by the class or alliance of classes and class fractions which is ruling, successfully achieves its objective of providing the fundamental outlook for the whole society.³

Perón, although he certainly tried, was never able to achieve such a fully-formed level of hegemonic leadership over Argentina, where millions of anti-Peronists rejected his ideas and his political legitimacy. More appropriate for understanding Peronism, then, is Michèle Barret's suggestion that "[h]egemony is best understood as the organization of consent—the process through which subordinated forms of consciousness are constructed without recourse to violence or coercion."⁴ Two aspects of this definition are important for Peronism. First, Barret speaks of the active notion of *organizing* consent, as opposed to consent already fully formed. Peronism may not have attained universal consent, but Perón's efforts to do so were never ending. Hegemony for Peronism would always be an action, a process, but never a final result. Secondly, Barret manages to fold "subordinate" and "consent" into the same idea. In Gramsci's hegemony, as with Peronism, there is an ambiguous relationship between popular sovereignty and centralized authority. Gramsci's concept of hegemony can be viewed as democratic in some sense, because of the emphasis on consent. But, as Joseph Buttigieg has argued, such attempts must be tempered with certain caveats:

There has been a tendency to stress the nonviolent, noncoercive character of the hegemonic relations that obtain in civil society, and thus to underemphasize the extent to which these are *uneven rela-*

tions of power that strengthen and help perpetuate the grip of the dominant classes over the state as a whole. Hegemony is noncoercive power, but it is power nonetheless.⁵

Indeed, the relationship between consent and coercion in Gramsci's work is not entirely clear. While Gramsci believes that people should be able to freely, rationally, and autonomously understand and participate in the cultural, economic, political and social affairs of their society, and that true hegemony demands free rational consent and participation, he also holds that hegemonic consent is not spontaneous in the sense of being the product of a wholly independent "free choice." Rather, it is something manufactured through complex means within the structures of civil society.⁶ Gramsci sought to distinguish hegemony, rule by organized consent, from domination, or rule by coercion. In a key passage, he holds that dominant groups use both means of leadership, using the apparatus of the State for coercion and civil society to build hegemony.

What we can do, for the moment, is to fix two major superstructural "levels": the one that can be called "civil society," that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called "private," and that of "political society" or "the State." These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of "hegemony" which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of "direct domination" or command exercised through the State and "juridical" government. The functions in question are precisely organizational and connective. The intellectuals are the dominant group's "deputies" exercising the sub-altern functions of social hegemony and political government. These comprise:

1. The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.

2. The apparatus of state coercive power which "legally" enforces discipline on those groups who do not "consent" either actively or passively. This apparatus is, however, constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed.⁷

Or as Gramsci notes a bit later: "A social group *dominates* antagonistic groups, which it tends to liquidate, or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it *leads* kindred or allied groups" through their own consent.⁸ But whatever the distinction between con-

sent and coercion, Gramsci, a Communist Party leader, repeatedly emphasizes the importance of some leadership group actively working to create consent. Certainly, the notion of ‘organized consent’ implies something other than pure spontaneity.

Perón, for his part, fully understood the importance of consent, but nowhere in *Conducción política* does he imply that it can, or even should, appear naturally. Here he declares that without consent, leadership is impossible, but also makes clear that consent is something built from above:

I, when speaking of the elements of leadership, want to get across the idea that you can not lead the inorganic or the anarchical. The organized and the indoctrinated lead themselves, who have an obedience and an intelligent discipline and an initiative that allows each man to behave according to his own leadership. Without unity of understanding and without unity of action, not even the Devil can lead. The *conductor* is nothing if the elements of leadership are not prepared and capable of being led. *There is no leadership that can fail when the mass that is led has the same mindset as the leadership.* Therefore, leading is difficult, because *it is not just about leadership. It is a matter first, of organizing; second, of educating; third, of teaching; fourth, of making capable; and fifth, of leading.* This is what we must understand.⁹

Perón does distinguish between consent and coercion in his lectures, by distinguishing between military and political discipline. Military discipline, he holds, demands that soldiers accept the commands of their superiors without question, regardless of what the soldiers may think about those orders. While Perón largely avoids discussing where such discipline comes from, his students were no doubt aware that soldiers who disobey orders are disciplined by the repressive apparatus of the state, with punishments up to and including execution. In politics, Perón argues, one can not expect the automatic obedience of a soldier from either voters or party cadres. Voters and political functionaries who disagree with their leader are likely to behave completely contrary to the leader’s orders. If there is to be discipline in a political organization, it must come from a source distinct from a soldier’s sense of duty (and fear). Political discipline, Perón tells his students, is a comprehensive discipline born out of an understanding of the necessity of reaching higher objectives—that is, that leader and follower are in agreement on what must be achieved. When one has failed to achieve this agreement in the masses, an agreement we can also call hegemony, Perón argues that it is impossible to talk about discipline. Political discipline comes naturally if a citizen has internalized certain beliefs. When this happens, political followers become soldiers with a single cause, working from their own individual personal will and desire. Their discipline is born out of their comprehension and agreement with the

ideology of the leadership. “The individual will do nothing against the common cause because it is repugnant to his spirit, not because he is obliged by disciplinary methods that could be taken against him.”¹⁰ In other words, he will do so out of consent.

The process of achieving that consent, as understood both by Gramsci and Perón, rests on two mutually reinforcing projects. A group seeking to achieve hegemonic leadership must win the hearts and minds of the people, convincing them of the universal appeal of a particular set of beliefs. In order to do that, however, there must be a “people” to address. So the hegemonic project must not only *convince* the people, it must also *create* the people. These two prongs are by no means wholly distinct, for the moral and intellectual values that a hegemonic project seeks to impose inevitably include beliefs about the identities of social groups. Marxists must not only convince the proletariat that class struggle is important, they must also persuade them that the concept of “class” is valid and that they belong to the class category of “proletariat.” Gramsci holds that the people must be addressed, and emphasizes the creative, constitutive aspect of addressing “the people,” discussing in a number of places the “educative” function of leadership, how that educative function can shape the mindset and identity of the people as part of the leadership’s efforts to create a civilization.

Educative and formative role of the State. Its aim is always that of creating new and higher types of civilization; of adapting the “civilization” and the morality of the broadest popular masses to the necessities of the continuous development of the economic apparatus of production; hence of evolving even physically new types of humanity.¹¹

But the ideas that the State disseminates and the “new types of humanity” it creates are not formed out of whole cloth. Gramsci sees both the constituted *and* constitutive aspects of human agency, meaning that identity comes from below as well as from above. The leadership brought to communities by ethnic and religious leaders, the evolution of folk customs, the creation of literature, playing games, a passion for sports—all of these are examples of people constructing themselves. In Gramsci’s thinking, any hegemonic project must recognize and grasp the possibilities inherent in this humanistic aspect of identity formation. Thus the intellectual leaders of a new hegemony must be able to communicate to, relate to, and express the needs of the working class and of the masses. These intellectuals, in constructing a successful hegemonic project, must not simply spout populist themes. The progressive reorientation of politics, Gramsci argued, requires two things: an effective organizational machinery capable of coordinating political activity on a national scale and a truly “nationalist-popular” program of political education capable of generating enthusiasm for the reorientation. Such an educational program must include work on the highest intellectual level, education of all age groups, and emotional appeals by politi-

cians, all addressed to and carried out within all components of civil society. “In conceiving philosophy as political education, Gramsci sought to show that society is inherently educational, that philosophy is an intrinsic part of social activity, and that political change is most usefully depicted in terms of a dialectical interaction between organic intellectuals and ordinary people.” Only in this way can a “historical bloc” capable of leading a new hegemony be created.¹²

Perón, too, understood that the educative function was key, but his vision of the “dialectical interaction” was distinct from Gramsci’s, and it is here that we can see that while Perón’s vision was “hegemonic,” it did not constitute hegemony as Gramsci understood it. Perón’s ideas on the origin of the people and the nature of their will are fundamentally different from those in Gramscian hegemony, and Peronism’s failure to create a stable politics of consensus is, in part, tied to this. To understand Peronist thought on the origin of the people and the nature of their will, we must first look at how Perón and his party thought about history. Peronism often presented itself as a complete rupture with a discredited Argentine past. There are in fact a number of important continuities,¹³ but this is a key element of Peronist self-description nonetheless. In *Conducción política*, Perón distinguished his government from those that came before, arguing that previous governments had failed, in effect, to achieve hegemony, for they did not educate the masses and in fact lacked any ideology or doctrine to pass along. Revolutions, he declares, that lack a workable doctrine inevitably go wrong. Political parties that fail to attempt to build a hegemonic consensus are doomed, for otherwise they fall and rise on the fates of the men who lead them, on the strengths and weaknesses of the leaders alone, for there is no cause nor any evolving organization to bind a movement or a nation together. This has been, in Perón’s analysis, the fundamental problem with government in pre-Peronist Argentina.

In the old Argentina, Perón tells his students, leadership was characterized by *caudillismo*, in which people followed a man, but who on an intellectual level were merely spectators. Only the caudillo’s ideas mattered, for there was a profound lack of civic culture on the part of the masses. The caudillos did not indoctrinate their followers, they did not seek moral and intellectual leadership, and this failure prevented a centralization of power and long-term stability. Ultimately, such leadership was isolated from the masses. This distance meant that *caudillismo* was based on illusions about the superior personal qualities of the caudillo, and that when the masses inevitably learned that their leaders were subject to the same frailties as all other human beings, their disillusionment led to a rejection of these leaders. The lack of centralized leadership, by which Perón implies hegemony, deformed the history of the Argentine nation and society, as it would in any country. The failure to create hegemony, coupled with the intellectual distance between caudillo and follower, led to the Balkanization of the country and atomization of the people, as competing ideas and personalities broke apart the populace in anarchy. Only when a nation has a centralized leadership that governs society through a shared doctrine or ideology will that nation enjoy prosperity and peace. Peronism, Perón goes on to claim, provides that

kind of hegemonic leadership, whereas previous governments had not. Under Peronism, he claimed, the problem of *caudillismo* had been eliminated. With his government, an evolved people supported causes, not men, and fully participated in the political spectacle, having a thorough understanding of the cause and the ideas that underlie it.¹⁴

The failure of the caudillos to educate the people, Perón declared, had left Argentina with a population lacking cohesion and direction. “We have had caudillos; we have not had *conductores*. If we had had many *conductores*, the people would already be educated, organized, and it would be easy to lead them.”¹⁵ Indeed, Perón went so far as to claim that failures had also left the Argentine people without any real identity. Without a “hegemonic” leadership, he holds, the people are merely a mass, without form or real identity.

[W]e have spoken of masses until we gained control of the government; since then, we have spoken of *pueblo*, because we have aspirations of transforming the ‘*mutum ed unane pecus*’ mass, as the Roman would say, into an organization, with a social conscience and a social personality.¹⁶

Perón, in essence, is telling us that population groups are amorphous subjects without any real identity until they are unified by a leader. Such stands in contrast to the language Perón used in the early days of Peronism, but it was entirely in keeping with the more authoritarian turn that Peronism had taken by 1951. The principal function of leadership, Perón asserts, is to provide to the people identity through political, social, and cultural education. This it must do, for to create a consensus based government, a certain minimum level of education and culture is needed by the masses. Masses must have leadership to gain identity, and leadership must provide that identity, if it is to lead successfully.

It is his ideas about the education and identity of the people that distinguishes the political project Perón outlines in *Conducción política* from Gramscian hegemony. Like Perón, Gramsci believed that leadership was essential to establishing identity and shaping the public will. Without leadership to maintain the collective will, Gramsci believed it would disintegrate, particularly in the face of setbacks. But Gramsci also argued that the leadership group must avoid viewing the masses as an instrument of its ambition in order to avoid fetishizing the leadership itself, a danger readily apparent in Peronism.¹⁷

The key distinction between Gramsci and Perón is in how they understand the collective will of the people. Gramsci conceives the collective will as a horizon where real possibilities are thought about and acted upon, within the boundaries of historical necessity. It is a terrain, not a point, a terrain of change and discourse, entailing a kind of diversity or heterogeneity within the collective will, with individuals falling on a number of different points. Such a will has both boundaries and a

trajectory, changing and developing out of a dialectical interaction between leader, led, and historical contingency. Leaders seeking to bring forth permanent change would have to base their strategy on the common sense of the people, no matter how disparate or unsophisticated, and refine it into a principled, cohesive world-view, all within the context of an ever changing historical circumstance. While a unified will is essential for achieving concrete change, that unity is welded together, with many individual wills becoming a single collective will, by a fluid, ongoing process of hegemonic construction, not by dictatorial imposition. Without such a process, the State is not truly based upon a shared consensus. Leadership becomes disconnected from the masses, and its imposed consensus, unable to respond to change, is strong only so long as no viable alternative exists.

Gramsci avoids a totalitarian oneness, with its inherent weakness, by emphasizing the importance of change. As change is always with us, then the historical circumstances continually shift, and thus will is immanent,¹⁸ and not static. Perón, on the other hand, saw both the collective will and the identity of the people as singular, static and ahistorical. Nothing in *Conducción política* implies that the collective will is, or should be, in any way fluid or changing. Yes, leaders must understand the needs of the people, but the sense here and elsewhere in Peronism is that there is only one set of needs that only have to be understood once, an understanding that is appropriate for all time. Instead of a terrain of will, moving and adapting to historical contingency, Peronism imagines a people with a fixed identity sharing in a single, monist will. Work, in Peronist language, and in particular contribution to the nation, transforms the individual, potentially any individual, into the citizen. But since contribution to the nation was also routinely equated with participation in Peronist goals, realistically citizenship meant allegiance to Perón's personal vision. In equating the *descamisados* of October 17 with the soldiers who rode with San Martín or the people who participated in the *Cabildo Abierto* or any other of the great moments of Argentine history, Peronism also denied the unique position of the living, breathing individuals experiencing the contingency of the present moment, and with it their changing needs and experience. When Perón claimed to speak for the people, as he so often did, or when Evita, repeatedly, declared that only Perón could truly give voice to the will of the people, the implicit corollary was that there was only one will for Perón to embody. Without a sense of a changing, fluid collective will, dependent upon contingency, Peronism inevitably moves towards a totalitarian oneness.

The original October 17 was a supreme moment of Gramscian fluid will. Thousands upon thousands of individual Argentines, sparked by a combination of personal anxieties and the organizational efforts of unions and community leaders, came together in a single place where one leader, Juan Perón, had to find a way to weld together the will and energy of those individuals to forge a successful project for seizing control of the State and embarking on an ambitious program of change and reform. But instead of recognizing the fluid and complex nature of October 17, Perón instead sought to homogenize it, turning its annual celebration into "Loyalty Day," an

affirmation of Perón's position as single voice to a unified, homogenous will led and created from above. Perón's unitary notion of will is ultimately the undoing of his regime and the source of the failure of his own 'hegemonic' project, for it left Peronism unable to recognize fundamental change in the will of the people and mitigated against the development of a stable political system capable of surviving a legitimacy crisis.

Endnotes

- ¹ Tulio Halperín Donghi. "El lugar del peronismo en la tradición política argentina," in *Perón del exilio al poder*, edited by Samuel Amaral and Mariano Ben Plotkin (Buenos Aires: Cantaro Editores, 1993), 31.
- ² Robert Bocoock, *Hegemony* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1986), 11.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 63.
- ⁴ Michèle Barret, "Ideology, Politics, Hegemony: From Gramsci to Laclau and Mouffe," in *Mapping Ideology*, edited by Slavoj Žižek (New York: Verso, 1994), 238.
- ⁵ Buttigieg, "Gramsci on Civil Society," *Boundary 2*, 22, no. 3 (1995): 27.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁷ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 12.
- ⁸ Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 57.
- ⁹ Juan Perón. *Conducción política* (Buenos Aires: Escuela Superior Peronista, 1951), 25-26. All italics original.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 193.
- ¹¹ Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 242. See 242-259 for further treatment of this topic.

- ¹² Bocoock, *Hegemony*, 45-46, 59, 77, 98; Baret, "Ideology, Politics, Hegemony," 239; Walter L. Adamson. *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1980), 174, 195, quote 169.
- ¹³ See Halperín Donghi, "El lugar del peronismo," 17-44, for a discussion of some of the key continuities.
- ¹⁴ Perón, *Conducción*, 27, 32-36.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 154.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 91.
- ¹⁷ Anne Showstack Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics: Second Edition* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987), 178-80.
- ¹⁸ Sue Golding, *Gramsci's Democratic Theory: Contributions to a Post-Liberal Democracy* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1992), 76-78, 81, 110.

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THE CASE OF THE BOMBING OF THE JEWISH HEADQUARTERS IN BUENOS AIRES (AMIA): A STRUCTURAL APPROACH¹

Luis Fleischman
Jewish Federation of Central NJ
Kean University of NJ

“Argentina cannot afford a WATERGATE because in this country the cement is still wet and fragile (fresco) and therefore it might risk the integrity of its institutions.”

Mariano Grondona, T. V. political anchorman (quoted from Verbitsky, 1997: 69. My translation)

In March 1992, a terrorist attack completely destroyed the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, leaving 29 people dead and many others injured or handicapped. Two years later, in July 1994, a similar attack—this time even more devastating—took place in the headquarters of the Jewish community, known as AMIA (The Jewish-Argentine Mutual Association), leaving 86 people dead and many others injured.

The investigations of the bombings, widely attributed to Iranian-backed terrorist groups (though not supported by sufficient evidence), were unfruitful. The security forces were unable to apprehend the perpetrators, and in the case of the Israeli embassy, the Supreme Court of Justice failed to inquire properly, and the chief Supreme Court Justice later disentangled from his responsibility to investigate (*Clarín*, 08/15/96). In the case of the investigation of the AMIA bombing, serious evidence linking the attack to a local network of former and active members of the police has been found (*La Nación* 08/01/96) but the investigation has never been easy. The judge in charge of the investigation, Juan José Galeano, received little cooperation from the security services (*Página 12*, 05/09/96 and 07/14/96). Furthermore, key people have been intimidated, and the investigation itself has been systematically undermined (*Página 12*, 07/14/96). If the public viewed the first attack against the Israeli Embassy as an unfortunate instance of Middle Eastern politics imported to Argentina, the second attack raised questions and issues that challenged the question of legitimacy and the integrity of the Argentinean state.

Two weeks after the AMIA bombing, a former member of the Córdoba Police with a long criminal record, Carlos Telleldín, was arrested for his involvement in the falsification of the documents for the van used as a car bomb. Following the investigation, it was discovered that Mr. Telleldín delivered the van to members of the Buenos Aires police. Immediately thereafter, two members of the police, presumably

involved in that transaction, were expelled from the police department by order of the then Buenos Aires Police chief Pedro Klodczyk (*Clarín*, 07/15/96). This maneuver appeared far more an effort to cover up embarrassing evidence than a move to punish the officers involved. Meanwhile, the investigations of those police officers remained fruitless until, in July 1996, two years after the attack, the following was revealed: Chief Juan José Ribelli, a right hand man to Mr. Klodczyk and the officer in charge of the police car-theft department, was the man who covertly directed a network of policemen that received the van from Mr. Telleldín just eight days before the bombing of AMIA. Ribelli was arrested along with 13 other policemen.

A few months earlier, Judge Galeano had ordered the arrest of a former sergeant of the Army, Jorge Pacífico, and Emilio Morello, a Congressman from MODIN, the political party representing the “Carapintadas” (a group of former army officers who tried to overthrow the constitutional government on several occasions). These arrests were made because these two men were suspects of selling explosives from Army arsenals. Morello was also connected to the Iranian Embassy. (*Clarín*, 07/15/96). Despite the fact that the letter of indictment against Pacífico was ready, the federal judges—most of whom were appointed by, and loyal to President Menem—refused to sign it. One of them refused to embarrass Pacífico. Another did not show up to sign the letter, and when he was ordered to appear, he stated he had not read the document. The investigation of both suspects came to a virtual standstill and they were released without explanation (Salinas, p 335; *Memoria Activa*, 1996: 27-8).

In the case of the police, there is a pact of silence that members of the police are not willing to break. “Esprit-de-corps” and solidarity among members of the police encourage the arrested policemen to maintain their silence (Kalmanowiecki, 1997b). In fact, when some policemen agreed to provide information about the bombing, one disappeared under mysterious circumstances, and the attorney of a second one was intimidated by threats and her police protection was allegedly neglected (*Página 12*, September 1996). Also, the house of Judge Galeano, which was supposed to be protected by federal police, was burglarized several times (Joe Goldman, *Memoria Activa*, 1996: 83). In addition, national security intelligence officers (SIDE), some of whom had participated in the death squads of the last military regime, planted false evidence in an effort to deviate the course of the investigation (Carlos Juvenal, *Memoria Activa*, 1996: 76). Public suspicions also point to high ranking officers such as the Secretary of Internal Security of Buenos Aires province and a former Federal Judge, Alberto Piotti, sending agents to prison to persuade Telleldín to lie about the facts surrounding AMIA (Salinas, 1997: 255-257).

For its part, the Argentine Government invested more energies in public relations campaigns, particularly in the United States, aimed at upholding the good image of Argentina, instead of using its influence to apply pressure on the suspected policemen or press for indictment. Argentine President Carlos Menem became irritated, defensive and even manipulative when faced with local and international pressure; he concerned himself with his public image rather than redoubling his

efforts to solve the case, or expressing a genuine interest in solving it.² In this very complex show of general corruption, the whole legitimacy of the state comes under attack. The police, charged with protecting society, are its perpetrators; the legal system seems unable to prosecute a man like Ribelli, against whom there exists a pile of evidence; judges can be easily corrupted, and many of them rarely follow judicial logic.³ Everything points to the conclusion that the Argentinean state machine is in a decomposing state.

The aim of this article is to show, through the exposure of the AMIA bombing, the roots of a problem that I call structural. I will argue that Argentina is experiencing the structural and as a result (political) cultural legacy of a state historically built without and against civil society. What kind of state is Argentina? I will try to answer this question in order to make sense of the problematic case of the AMIA bombing.

WHAT IS THE STATE?

The modern state is the body that makes possible a legitimate relation between individuals in a society that can no longer sustain itself on traditional and religious grounds. The development of the ideas of the Enlightenment and the growth of a market economy free of traditional ties have generated a set of societies of highly diverse individuals who move from passive community life into individual creativity and freedom. This liberation of human forces generates a society of dissimilar individuals who can no longer sustain a social order based on consensus. Under these circumstances, how can a social order be legitimate?

Weber speaks of order in modern societies as being based on rational-legitimacy which he defines as “the belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority to issue commands” (Weber, 1978: 215). However, rational-legitimacy is not merely an imposition of legal norms to regulate social action. Civil society has to feel that the system is capable of empowering it and is permanently compatible with its freedom to choose and act within the necessary limits. At the same time, people must believe that the system provides the security and stability needed in order for them to interact with other members or groups of civil society. (Fleischman, 1997, chapter 2).

The concept of rational-legal legitimacy must be grounded on the ability of the state to allow the conditions of possibility of societal stability and unity in conditions of diversity (Rawls, 1996; Touraine, 1997). It is in this way that legality and legitimacy come to terms.

Following this line of thought, the process of juridification of social relations has to grow from the bottom up. Alongside a judicial system of courts with authority capable of protecting and guaranteeing the law, the legal system ought to be tied to a representative, deliberative and open parliament in order to allow the different inputs to take expression in the state. As Luhmann points out:

The stability of a social order secured by law must be ensured above all, by political processes, (since) . . . the foundation of law can no longer be located in a supreme natural law that exists objectively and through its objective truth is permanently binding. The stability and validity of the law (rests now upon) a principle of variation: it is the very alterability of law that is the foundation for its stability and validity. (Luhmann, 1982, p. 94).

Thus, the separation of powers is vital to the maintenance of such a system because, as Hannah Arendt said in her interpretation of Montesquieu, the separation of powers is not only a mechanism of checks and balances but primarily a mechanism designed to generate “new social power” and secure its legitimate distribution. In other words, a piece of paper called law cannot adequately secure the conditions mentioned above. For the law to be a real entity, it must be able to generate real social power without being able “to overgrow and expand to the detriment of other sources of social power” (Arendt, 1988: 151-2). Following the same logic, there must be a separation between the sources of power (civil society and its corporations); the mechanisms of mediation between civil society and the state or political society (parties); and the state administration (laws). This separation makes possible the organization of the political process by not allowing any party or other force to take over the administration or generate a situation where party and state, leader and state, one or few civilian groups, and the state overlap, or mass and state overlap. This is the fundamental principle that sets the grounds for a “fair” distribution of power, to paraphrase Rawls.

Thus, legal-rational legitimacy will be maintained “from the public confrontation of opinion in open-ended debate, law should be the product of ratio (reason) rather than of voluntas (will)” (Poggi, 1978: 107). The authority of the state relies on the production of positive legislation based on that account of civil society. This principle of social regulation embodies the backbone of governability. The state fulfills a function that societal components cannot perform by themselves (Neumann, 1963).

Thus, the state consists of an accumulation of outcomes whose source is the principle mentioned above. The state is the amalgam of every public bureaucracy, judicial decision and positive law. What these institutions have in common is that they incarnate outcomes of events, conflicts, debates, and other inputs that have taken place in civil society. These elements constitute the components of a modern social contract. Any further action, change or innovation will have to take into account the existing contract (Luhmann, 1982: 96). The state acts as the framework of (self) reference. Hence, the state incorporates, along with an element of openness to variability, a conservative dimension that channels inputs and puts boundaries to the scope of action. It is in this open-ended/conservative duality of the state, that its laws and institutions acquire their normative component, and by which they strengthen the structure of a system that makes a modern social order possible.

THE CONDITIONS OF POSSIBILITY OF A NORMATIVE/SELF-REFERENTIAL STATE

Following Ernst Fraenkel, we will define the normative state as an “administrative body endowed with elaborate powers for safeguarding the legal order as expressed in statutes, decisions of the courts, and activities of the administrative agencies.” By contrast, the prerogative state is “that governmental system which exercises unlimited arbitrariness and violence unchecked by any legal guarantees” (Fraenkel, 1969: 3). In order to establish the normative state, several conditions need to be met. First, there is a need for institutionalization of rights to protect the freedom of modern subjects or protecting the citizen against the state (Locke, 1980). Second, given the fact that rights may involve contradictory principles, it is crucial that a link to other rights be established through the codification of law (Hegel, 1967: 178-79). It is in this sense that the public sphere and parliamentary institutions turn out to be as important as the juridical powers embedded in the courts.

Against T.H. Marshall, who spoke about rights as an evolutionary process where civic-economic, political and social rights have a chronological logic (Marshall, 1964), I would say that rights can have different simultaneous origins that can conflict with each other. Political rights serve as a means to weigh the different claims to rights and is not just another competing right. Therefore, we will view the democratic states and democracy as the functional means for the maintenance of such procedures of rational-legitimacy. Democracy is the political regime that ensures an equitable and legitimate distribution of power in modern conditions by rationally organizing civil society’s components and conflicts.

We do not pretend to say that the model presented here always works in the social reality of everyday life. Yet, in the United States the separation of powers, the independence of Congress from the party apparatus in favor of a direct relation with constituents and organized groups of civil society, and the continuous deliberation among members of Congress and between them and the President have made the model mentioned above a real possibility. In France, for instance, a centralized state gave way to a higher degree of statism in comparison to the U.S. However, the existence of a long tradition of liberal democracy and political competition has allowed civil society to find expression in the state. Frequent political turmoil and public debate often forced reform. The non-authoritarian character of France (particularly since the Third Republic), made the state more responsive to civil society after all (Nord, 1998). The German model, on the other hand, with its strong authoritarian tradition, has historically moved far away from the model, making the state a juridically independent body whose commands and bureaucratic action were born out of (state) prerogatives (Craig, 1978; Muller, 1991). In Germany, the authoritarian tradition of Bismarck and the regimes that followed removed civil society from the state. Bis-

marck's "reducing of parliament to nothing" (Weber, 1978: 2, 1392) and his subordination of bureaucracy and courts to his prerogatives did not go without consequences.⁴

I propose that the Argentine model is closer to the German. Yet, it shows some particular characteristics. I will try to develop this argument in the next section.

THE CASE OF ARGENTINA

Since the nineteenth century, Argentina has been a modern society. The existence of a general secular culture, along with a market economy of free activity encouraged by a meteoric immigration from Europe (Germani, 1979), turned Argentina into an active civil society (Hilda Sabato, 1991; 1992). During the so-called oligarchical period, Argentina saw a massive civil society that the regime itself helped promote via its open immigration policy and a positivistic stance toward economic development. Citizens were given actionable rights against a sovereign, through civil and economic rights, but they did not democratically participate in the state "decisions" (Botana, 1977). Against this background, the first constitutional-democratic regime was established in 1916 following an electoral reform.

This constitutional regime, which brought the Radical Party to power, ended in a military coup d'état in 1930. This first democratic regime was unable to turn parliamentary politics into an arena of consensual deliberation; nor did it succeed in turning parliament into an arena of civil society-related legislation. Additionally, it failed to extend rights to workers and other disempowered groups. The coup d'état was not only a strike against the regime, but it also wiped out the possibility of rationalization of social relations in the state since the rules of the democratic game were broken (Fleischman, 1997, Part 1). As a result, from then onward social conflict took diverse forms which weakened the state and its legal institutions.

After 1930, the shut-down of the democratic process was followed by exclusion of major sectors of civil society, particularly those affiliated with the Radical Party. The period following the 1930 coup, despite allowing limited parliamentary activity, was basically characterized by prerogative, executive-oriented rule. The de-differentiation of the regime and the state was deepened. The authoritarian anti-civil society character of the regime made possible alliances between those who held the reins of the state, and groups with a nationalistic, philo-fascist, religious, or other fringe orientation, all of which had few roots in civil society (Halperin Donghi, 1961: 40-41). Legality and legitimacy then began a process of divorce.

This exclusion and repression of important sectors of civil society, particularly the workers, paved the way for the rise of a popular movement led by Juan Domingo Perón in the 1940s. Peronism was grounded on a mass of workers never previously included in the political process. This is why Peronism was a movement that rose not through the state institutions but against them.

However, once in power, Peronism did not promote democracy based on representation of diversity. It established an unmediated relation between the masses and a charismatic leader beyond the reach of institutions. The Argentine nation was embedded in the person of Perón. However, Perón used the political alienation of civil society to gain personal control over the very groups that supported him, notably the workers, at the expense of their genuine autonomy. Despite having conferred social rights and carried a strong welfare policy in favor of the workers, Perón ruled in a decisionistic manner, rather than in a representative fashion. His rule was an abstract rule over the people, over organized groups in civil society, above parliament, and beyond the reach of the courts.⁵ The legal system further deteriorated.

After Perón was ousted in 1955 and the military took over, a strange situation arose. The social forces liberated by Peronism were too strong. As in 1930, the military ruled by excluding the major political movement, Peronism. But this time, the excluded Peronists were strong enough to veto any political formula established by the authorities. The state apparatus and its mechanisms of integration, particularly Parliament, became more disenfranchised than ever before, as the political center shifted to an extra-parliamentary sphere. (De Ríz, 1986: 674-5). A dual political system began to take shape. On one side were the non-Peronist parties and Parliament, and on the other, the military and the Peronist unions, whose path of action took place outside the formal political system. Parliament became an instrument of extortion for concessions among the extra-parliamentary actors. Agreements and compromises took place but they were accepted as temporary and always under a threat of possible violations and institutional instability (Cavarozzi, 1983: 9-10). Even when civic governments were restored through elections, such as Frondizi in 1958 (deposed in 1962 under military auspices), and Illia in 1965 (deposed by the military in 1966), social actors addressed their demands to the military, ignoring the civilian rulers of the state (O'Donnell, 1972: 143).

The coup d'état that took place in 1966 and gave birth to the so-called Bureaucratic-Authoritarian regime, sought to end these "behind the scenes" politics, but, contrary to expectations, it further aggravated the problem. The policies of exclusion of large sectors of society from the political process and the government's attempt to impose a technocratic rule from above ended in popular uprisings that badly wounded the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State. To sum up, the weakening of Parliament and concurrent strengthening of the authoritarian executive, the failure to institutionalize and recognize subjective rights, the undermining of judicial independence and authority, and the elimination of the public sphere and pluralistic interaction brought about a devastating deterioration in the state's capacity to solve problems and perform as an important source of stability and reference (O'Donnell, 1972: 152). On the one hand the state lacked proper legitimate channels to absorb input. As a result it also lacked the proper legal-bureaucratic organization to respond to problems and to impose on the citizens a system of laws for the regulation of social life on the other hand. For instance, tax evasion, the flourishing of the black market,

systematic smuggling, and citizen corruption are all common practices that persisted even under the most rigid authoritarian regimes (Nino, 1997: 85). The absence of legal-bureaucratic rationality could not even guarantee the minimum security and calculability needed to allow safe capitalistic activity (which became rather piratic and speculative) (Sábato , 1991: 261).

In this scenario, the law became no more than an empty piece of embellished paper. The state institutions turned into reified forms of bureaucracy. The judges and lawyers lost their sense of justice. Given that the historic logic of state development in Argentina was alienating to civil society, the state was also unable to impose a legitimate social order. The normative, self-referential state was non-existent. This estrangement between state and society made the state become an obscure apparatus. Moreover, as in Imperial Germany, it increased the power of its repressive prerogatives with devastating consequences for Argentina. Not surprisingly, the deterioration of the normative state occurred simultaneously with the development of the prerogative state.

THE STRUCTURAL ORIGINS OF THE PREROGATIVE STATE

Against this background a repressive apparatus developed out of the need to resolve conflicts of legitimacy. As such, the state developed perverse forms of “autonomy”—an autonomy that expressed itself mainly in the unaccountability of the state apparatus to civil society. This situation virtually turned the state into an impune and ruthless body.

The police were one means through which authoritarian regimes established their rules. Political police began to develop after the coup d’etat in 1930 (Kalmanowiecki, 1997a). The population became an object of control and a systematic process of information collection developed (Kalmanowiecki, forthcoming, 17). Later under Perón, a police code was proclaimed giving police officers a special status where they were accountable only to the police, and no external forces, such as the judiciary, could interfere. Only police could punish police (Kalmanowiecki, forthcoming, 24). These developments continued after the ouster of Perón, particularly with the coming of the military to power. This opened the door to human rights violations which became increasingly severe after the 1966 coup d’etat (Brysk, 1996: 30-31). During the third Government of Perón in 1974, police began to ally with right-wing paramilitary groups and became instrumental in the formation of the Government-sponsored Triple A (Gonzales Jánzen). The Triple A (Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance) was a paramilitary group created by Perón’s Minister of Social Welfare. This group which was in charge of assassinating guerillas, left wing labor leaders, and political enemies of the right wing Peronist faction relied to a great extent on police officers.⁶ The Triple A was later adopted by the Military Junta which took the reins of the state in 1976 (Gonzales Jánzen, 1986: 20).

With this, the police have been subordinated to the whim of rulers setting themselves apart from the rule of objective law (Kalmanowiecki, forthcoming, 28). The politicization of the police and its estrangement from the rule of law began a process of corporate autonomization of the police institution.

Throughout the years, the police have been subject to imperatives other than to the rule of law. The successive authoritarian governments subjected the police to different loyalties. This logic reached its peak during the military regime (1976-1983), when the police were not only an integral part of the regime's murderous machine, but also acted autonomously and in an out-of-control manner, by taking several independent actions that included kidnapping, extortion, and other crimes. We can make sense of this situation if we understand that the nature of the "dirty war" was based upon the principle of total freedom of the repressive apparatus in the context of a total elimination of the normative state. In this sense, the case is comparable to Nazi Germany. Ernest Fraenkel describes the situation of the police under National Socialism:

When the restrictions on the police power were abolished, the question of "indispensability" fell into discard. The Police needed no longer show that any action undertaken by them is indispensable to the attainment of their purpose. (Fraenkel, 1969: 23)

Similarly, the peak of the Buenos Aires police's illegal activities took place under the administration of Ramón Camps, one of the key figures of the repressive apparatus of the last military regime. Camps "established impunity and lack of restriction for police officers as a means to [freely] fight the guerillas" (*Clarín*, 03/18/97). In Argentina, illegal activities of the police even continued under the restored constitutional governments that followed. The police have turned from enjoying lawful freedom in a tyrannical state to being an underground autonomous entity of criminals in a democratic state.

Thus, impunity of police officers is well institutionalized. Ribelli, the main suspect policemen in the AMIA case, belongs to this "born to kill" generation educated under Camps. He represents the vivid paradigm of this legacy of the police institution.

It is this legacy that Argentina confronts fifteen years after the restoration of democracy: a legacy of a decomposed state whose infected parts face a long recuperation. In Argentina, as in Germany, the normative state has derived from state prerogatives rather than from civil society. The result has been a weak legality and strong brutality.

We can now discuss the attitude of the government in the AMIA case from the standpoint of legitimacy.

THE STANDPOINT OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ON THE AMIA CASE AND CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

Following the analysis drawn in this presentation, the problem of legitimacy remains crucial. The trauma of Argentina's hyperinflation of the seventies and late eighties, and the ability of current President Carlos Menem to stop it, provides Argentines with a sense of security for which they were willing to overlook other aspects of Argentine political life. Menem's landslide reelection in 1995 dramatically highlights this reality. Despite the pardon Menem extended to the generals of the Junta, despite his lack of sensitivity to human rights concerns, despite having invaded the independence of the Judicial system, despite having promoted officials of the military and the police associated with the "dirty war," despite having tried to shut down the media on frequent occasions, and despite public scandals of corruption that involved members of his government and his family, people preferred to see their President stable and secure, because the strength of the state depended on his strength. He was the state. Structural weakness makes the figure of the President vital to the nation. "Hyperpresidentialism" is not merely, as Carlos Nino has argued, the historical result of constitutional laws or military coups per se (Nino, 1996). It is also a dialectical dynamic that results from the need to fill a vacuum of law and stability. This is why Mariano Grondona pointed out that "Argentina cannot afford a WATERGATE." Charismatic legitimacy seems to be the most natural way to replace rational legitimacy. Stability and legitimacy depend on a permanent sense of infallibility. Absence of criticism seems to be a condition for such survival. Menem's defensive attitude in the AMIA case, as well as his silence in the face of police complicity and corruption, are the result of this feeling of vulnerability, which is generally perceived as a threat to governability. To defend the indefensible has become the rule of this government.⁷ This is also why the President openly scorned public opinion, ignoring human rights concerns and acting cynically towards victims of police abuse including the victims of the bombings.

Moreover, the legal system seems to be unable to move the AMIA case forward. It is interesting that investigators have claimed that they have all the "pieces together and they believe they know how it happened." However, they claim, "we can not prove it" (*Página 12*, 7/20/98). This seems more than legal correctness, a proof of a paralysis typical of the Argentine system. The Argentine journalist Horacio Verbitsky has pointed out that in contemporary Argentina, "journalists can make their voice heard but there is no institutional response." In Argentina, "institutional feebleness and unrestricted freedom of the press co-exist" (Verbitsky, 1997: 16). In the case of AMIA, the continuous persistence of the press and social protest exposed the system as insane. The Government and the Judicial system react temporarily only to become dormant again with the expectation that the case might be forgotten.⁸

However this dynamic has its limits. This schizophrenic duality of institutional deficiency and freedom may not continue without consequences. Pressure and exposure of the case drove Menem to create a Congressional Commission (Comisión bi-cameral) to help the investigation. The commission concluded in early 1998 that the investigation was systematically undermined by the security system and some Government officials. Moreover, different scandals that exposed corruption had an impact on the presumed legitimacy of the Peronist party. If in May 1995 Menem was overwhelmingly elected, in October 1997 he received a major setback by losing the majority in the House of Representatives. Exposure of police criminality also prompted Buenos Aires Governor Eduardo Duhalde to institute major reforms in the Buenos Aires police.

While the state is institutionally broken down, civil society is very much alive in Argentina. In the context of a weakened military, this time, a coup d'état is not an option. Therefore, if a ruler is to rule, he will have to do so by including civil society.

Endnotes

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² To give an example of this attitude, in December 1996, half a year after the arrest of suspected policemen, President Menem visited the United States. At that time he published an ad in the *New York Times* with his signature, offering a monetary reward to anyone who could provide information that might lead to the perpetrators (*New York Times*, 12/20/96). Clearly, the ad was not expected to yield results. It was a public relations ploy designed to mollify the American Government and the American Jewish community.

³ Former Prosecutor Julio Cesar Strassera, "there is no one federal Judge who does not respond to the will of the Executive Power". (*Nueva Sion*, 9/4/95). More recently opposition forces in Argentina have requested the impeachment of five Supreme Court members for "bad performance and lack of independent judgement." A functionary of the Judiciary anonymously stated that "most of the twelve Federal Judges have not had a career in the Judiciary but were appointed by a 'political finger'" (*Banda Oriental*, Elizabeth NJ, June 1998, p 10).

⁴ Long before Nazism, Germany built a strong tradition as a prerogative state. The state, its civil servants and its judges were successfully purged by Bismarck in the 1880s. Civil service was denied to anyone known for holding liberal views. At the same time the number of Courts was reduced. Judges and prosecutors molded by the progressive tendencies of the 1860s were eliminated. Bismarck subordinated all branches of Government to his policies in an effort to discipline and intimidate their components so as to enforce conformity (Craig, 1978: 158). All this without counting the severe repression of parties and worker protests and his virtual elimination of parliamentary effectiveness. This prerogative state, in my opinion, cannot generate a rational bureaucracy, because its activities are subject not to the logic of its rationalization but to an arbitrary one. Bismarck's prerogatives were above the rules of bureaucracies. In this sense I disagree with Max Weber when he says that "in the modern state the monarch can never and nowhere be a counterforce against the pervasive power of bureaucrats" (Weber, 1978: 1406).

Bismarck "used the legal system unscrupulously as a weapon in internal disputes" (Muller, 1991: 4). This tendency continued under the German empire where the judiciary "reacted with loud antiparliamentary criticism to Reichstag initiatives" (Ibid., 8). During the Weimar Republic the judiciary often acted in total disregard of liberal principles of rights, remaining loyal to an abstract concept of the nation above principles of general applicability (Ibid., 10-24).

It is from here that I will argue that the state apparatus made it easier for a regime such as the Nazi one to take over the reins of the state. The Nazis did not invent the prerogative state but relied on its previous structure. I will return to this point later.

⁵ Perón stated upon his coming to power in 1946 something resembling a proto-totalitarian concept of the judiciary. In his own words: "I place the spirit of justice above the judiciary . . . Justice can not be effective if it does not come to terms with public feeling. Justice must be dynamic, not static. Otherwise it will damage the working classes" (Slodky, 1988: 71).

⁶ A key person in the development of Triple A is Alberto Villar, Chief of the Federal Police. Villar was appointed by J. López Rega, Minister of Social Welfare in the Peronist Government.

⁷ In June 1998 a Federal Judge Norberto Oyarbide was charged with conducting illegal businesses. Judge Oyarbide "protected" a bordello network. Also involved in these activities was a Deputy Police Officer (Sub-Comisario) Roberto Rosa. Rosa was supposed to testify in Congress but did not appear. His absence was supported

by Congressional members of the Peronist Party. One Peronist Congressman, Miguel Ángel Picheto, stated that such hearings damage the police institution. (*Página 12*, 6/20/98). This episode confirms the point mentioned above.

⁸ It is interesting that the announcement of progress in the investigation coincides either with an anniversary of the attack or with a visit of a high American official. Most recently the Argentine Government expelled Iranian diplomats after it accused them of necessary involvement in the AMIA attack. Many became skeptical of the announcement since the suspicion was that the Government tried to divert the attention from the local connection more than anything else (Fleischman, *New Jersey Jewish News*, 7/16/98).

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*Shifts in Feminism and Women's Rights
in Latin America: 1960-1990*

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SHIFTS IN FEMINISM AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA: 1960-1990

Robert C. Williamson
Lehigh University

Males have dominated societal institutions including the family in nearly all cultures throughout human history. For most of the world, women have a double work role with little economic reward. This gender stratification has both micro and macro effects in nearly all societies. The scene shifted slightly in Western society with the romanticism of the Victorian age as well as with urbanization, the franchise, and the spread of new psychological doctrines in the first half of the twentieth century. Along with other minorities, women began their search for liberation in the 1960s—a struggle that continues through the 1990s.

The purpose of this article is to place the change in women's status over the last generation in a broad theoretical and historical context. In Western society from the classical civilizations to the modern age the male has been dominant. Spain, which shaped Hispanic America, was steeped in Roman and Arabic traditions, even more than were its northern neighbors. From colonial times to the early twentieth century men regarded women as chattel; nonetheless, women were asking questions. For instance, in 1879 in *La mujer*, a women's periodical in Colombia, the editor asks: "Why cannot women enter industrial employment or the university as they do in Europe?" In the 1926 *El hogar* (a twentieth-century successor to *La mujer*) a significant question was whether a woman should request her husband's permission to have her hair bobbed!¹ Even in a liberal country like Chile in the early 1900s women could enter the professions but had only secondary rights in the custody of their children and until recently could sign no legal documents without the husband's approval. With exception of the Pinochet dictatorship, Chilean women—unlike their sisters in neighboring countries—probably have as open access to the professions as almost anywhere in the Western world.²

As the women's movement for identity and equality surfaced in the 1960s, it struggled against an enormous anti-feminist bias. Moreover, in the redefinition of gender statuses and roles in the 1960s and beyond, a number of theories emerged to clarify the underpinnings of gender inequality. These derive from biology, psychiatry, psychology to anthropology and sociology, with several theorists representing cross-disciplines. For example, according to some observers of preliterate societies the subordinate status of females stems from "menstrual defilement." Psychoanalysis, at least the Freudian version, places gender development within the parental relationship, notably the Oedipal and Electra complexes. These notions are under increasing criticism by behavioral scientists. Indeed, feminist revision of orthodox Freudianism

stresses the interplay of personality, particularly the asymmetry in parental and sibling relations. That is, the mother assumes a more passive relationship, and the son asserts the autonomy he acquires from his father.³

Beyond the discussion of biological and psychiatric approaches is a fundamental debate about the feminine role in society. Feminist theory is divided into various factions, ranging from “radical” to “liberal.” It is an oversimplification to refer to the radicals as seeing women as free agents, whereas liberals lean to the woman’s role as rooted in the family but would prefer a widening of her options. The distinction also hinges on differing stances on both methodology and ideology. These ideologies include Marxist, neo-Marxist, and anti-Marxist analyses by a host of other theorists. As one Brazilian Marxist puts it, capitalism turns to gender to limit the number of individuals who may enter the competitive labor market. Marginalization of women arises from the incapacity of capitalism to use all available workers.⁴ A number of feminists adhere to poststructuralism as it denotes a reversal of the stream of structuralist-functionalist positions stretching from Herbert Spencer in the nineteenth century to the more sophisticated theorist Talcott Parsons in the mid-twentieth century. In this context, debates revolve about issues of meaning and subjectivity: Or how can we deconstruct the past? Feminist poststructuralism becomes a means of “knowledge production,” or how one analyzes and restructures language in order to locate the specific meaning of gender in its historical setting.⁵ The search for a final theoretical structure has been less intense in Latin America than in Europe and North America, at least until the 1990s. Still, in several countries women now question the pressure points they find in social institutions—economy, government, church, and education—that structure their own self-definition, as noted by several eminent Chilean feminists.⁶

More critical to women, especially in Latin America, is the question of social meanings, as derived from socioeconomic institutions, including the family. These questions are both implicit and explicit. In this clarification of meaning, women operate as *change agents*. In most societies, change, of course, assumes many forms—the end of patriarchy, liberation from sexist stereotypes, and access to professions. This transition conveys involvement in various social movements. For the mothers of the disappeared in El Salvador, change signifies new identities, including a sense of human rights and entry into feminist ideologies and organizations.⁷ In a Maya community in Chiapas, Mexico, the “dynamics of gender” involve negotiation of power and status in the male-female relationship, or how to re-define boundaries in a society dominated by males from colonial times to the twilight of the twentieth century.⁸

In all societies women live in a condition of risk. In Latin America the pitfalls are especially severe: exploitation—whether in the work place, the home, or on the street—miserable pay, rape, abandonment are only the more grotesque hazards. The whole social fabric is tilted toward male prerogatives.

In other words, the advent of women's liberation in Latin America encouraged attention to the long-neglected area of women's statuses, roles, rights, and contributions to society. Until the 1960s women were forced to accept the destiny of a passive, dependent role.⁹ In both Latin and North America, the "feminine mystique," with the childbearing role, continues to remove women from the men's world, inhibiting orientation to social change, including family planning. We raise again the question of *marianismo*, or the sacred cult of the woman (based on the figure of the Virgin Mary), which draws on the classical civilizations as well as Near Eastern doctrines—a viewpoint often accepted by women themselves, who are dedicated to humility and self-sacrifice enacting the stereotype the male-dominated culture decrees. The church proclaims a cult of purity and a ritualized suffering when the husband philanders.¹⁰ Consequently, by placing themselves in a special category women implicitly support a sharp division of labor between the sexes and create a climate in which neither competitiveness nor equality are obtainable.

Participation of women in higher education and the professions is growing. The more Europeanized countries took the lead. Chile permitted women to attend the university as early as the 1870s. São Paulo was one of the first cities to grant women the right to work in white-collar occupations, hiring a woman for the post office in 1886 and allowing their matriculation to the law school in 1898. Since the 1950s Latin American women have entered the professions of law, medicine, and academics. They also distinguish themselves in the arts and election to public office. In several cities women are mayors; still others reach the rank of ambassador. But for the most part, their work roles are in the traditional occupations of servant, bench work in the *maquiladoras*, and clerical work. In several nations approximately ninety percent of the elementary school teachers are women, further feminizing the stimulus world of children—more than a third of the homes in Latin America are actually or functionally fatherless.¹¹

In several respects, Latin American women are at a disadvantage in the economy. As in nearly all cultures, because of supposed incapacity or the periodic interruption for childbearing, they are considered a poor risk. Ironically, in the 1970s Mexico entertained two contradictory policies, one, lowering the birthrate and two, discouraging women from entering the job market.¹² Also, modern capitalism places women at an even greater disadvantage than they knew in preindustrial times. In the period of craft industries they used the skills they learned at home—ceramics and weaving instead of routine technical tasks.¹³ Moreover, limited access of women to a career and to power is reflected in the educational attainment they are allowed. In most countries males are permitted lengthier schooling. The limited access to education has far-reaching effects. To take one statistic, for women with little or no schooling the infant mortality rate is at least three times higher than for women with secondary or university education.¹⁴

In other words, women experience severe frustration in their search for dignity and economic justice in the workplace. Exploitation appears to be even greater for single women, whether a young migrant to the city or one abandoned by a “husband” and burdened by children. For nations undergoing revolution, counterrevolution, or similar crisis women often fall victim to particular duress. In Nicaragua the 1980s contra war (largely supported by the United States) and defeat of the Sandinista movement in 1990 increased the suffering of women. As a result, it is estimated that 70 percent of women were without employment.¹⁵ Still, their situation is better than in the Somoza period.

Factors Underlying Gender Discrimination

A number of variables interplay with the entrapment of women. An inescapable determinant is *social class*. In colonial times classes operated as castes, but this barrier did not prevent the upper white’s sexual exploitation of a servant. A glacial degree of change has lifted woman’s status over the last two centuries, with a slight acceleration after the 1960s. Social class overrides the minority status of the woman, but only within limits. Middle- and upper-class women can give orders to a male underling, but she is seldom encouraged to enter into decision making in the political or economic world. Gender and class have their eccentricities—middle-class women move toward conservatism, while their daughters are exposed to liberal and radical ideology of faculty and fellow students at the university. They may join social movements, often violent ones, whether the Shining Path in Peru or the Tupamaros in Uruguay.

The class variable is well illustrated in domestic service, traditionally the largest outlet for urban single women. In 1979 prior to the Sandinista revolution a quarter of all Nicaraguan women working outside the home were servants, whether live-in or day-time, that is, women with children constitute the “dailies.”¹⁶ A similar scenario is found in most countries. Approximately three-quarters of Salvadoran domestics work 60 hours a week and are subjected to considerable verbal and physical abuse.¹⁷ I recall how North Americans’ treatment of servants (including that of my wife and myself) was resented by neighbors or acquaintances as we were “spoiling a servant for ever serving in a Salvadoran household.” The status and role of the domestic servant varies somewhat with the local culture. Significantly, in El Salvador the label for the domestic was *serviente* (servant), in Colombia a *muchacha* (girl), and in Chile an *empleada* (employee) indicating a marginal progression in line with the level of socioeconomic development. The low pay for domestic service permits both the lower and middle classes to enjoy this luxury—or “necessity.” Socialist governments attack the practice of domestic service—as well as of prostitution—but Cuba with nearly forty years of socialism is slightly more successful than was Nicaragua in this respect. Educational programs are offered in Havana and other cities in order to

qualify women for white-collar employment. Nonetheless, an officially-sanctioned organization for domestic help, United Family Service, is available with specified wages and benefits.¹⁸

Social class overlaps with ethnicity. For women belonging to an ethnic minority the projection of inferiority is even greater than simply being lower class. A poignant example is the case of Carolina María de Jesús, a resident of a São Paulo favela who wrote the 1958 best seller *Quarto de desejo* (translated as *A Child of the Dark*). Being an Afro-Brazilian, she was never fully accepted in her native city nor in southern Brazil.¹⁹

Urbanization and technological change possibly have a more negative than positive effect on women. In Brazil, for instance, women have even more meager pay than do men, as a study of the textile and garment industry shows.²⁰ Still, employment of women continues to grow; 20 percent of wives were working in 1980, but 37.6 percent by 1990. For all women the percentage rose from 34 to 40, and for female heads of family from 43 to 51 percent.²¹ Yet, increased employment hardly means better conditions. With a global economy, local capital is ever less able to provide sufficient industrial expansion in order to provide employment for the flood of immigrants from the countryside. Consequently, in the expanding informal economy women even more than men continue to be victims of sweatshop conditions. Another factor is the global economy with the stringent requirements mandated by the IMF (International Monetary Fund). Mexico's severe economic crisis of the 1980s deepened the depressive state of most families and forced many women to seek employment, however meager. In 1978, 25 percent of women aged 15 to 64 worked outside the home, but by 1989 the percentage had risen to 36. As compared to women entering employment during the oil boom of the 1970s, those entering the work force between 1982 and 1987 had fewer years in school, were older, and more likely to have the care of infants and small children.

However questionable the situation for women in the city, the *rural* scene can be even more agonizing for women. Rural labor remains the lowest in the occupational hierarchy, women suffering even more discrimination than men. The grossly unjust system of land tenure and the nature of work status are central factors. In countries involving agrarian reform, with the exception of Nicaragua, women are seldom allowed to receive title to land.²²

Both for urban and rural women a large segment of employment is in public markets. San Salvador, El Salvador has five main retail markets with no less than 8,000 stalls in addition to a wholesale market. Marketing facilities include a rich variety ranging from natural produce and processed foods to pharmaceuticals, textiles, clothing and household products—not to mention the ubiquitous bars and cafes. As sellers may outnumber buyers, competition among market women is intense. Even without a national economic crisis the financial return for these women is painfully

minimal. In Nicaragua as in other countries, political entities regulate and more than occasionally exploit market personnel. Once more, a socialist government can impose as many roadblocks as can a capitalist one.

Employment: Ever the Gender Factor

The work potential of women is rooted primarily in the dynamics of (1) the male-female relationship and (2) the class system. This generalization applies not only to a colonial setting but also to a rapidly industrializing society, as documented in a far-reaching study by Lourdes Benería and Marta Roldán of Mexico City. Of the 140 women interviewed, only 28 percent had schooling beyond the third year, most were migrants from rural areas. As subcontracting among multinational firms is the current practice, an increasing number of women work in what is known as the *maquila*, a form of subcontracting labor, more precisely a sweatshop, often in the basement of the boss's home or business. Along the United States border new factories attest to the growing NAFTA-induced economy employing both men and women with wage differentials. Employment of women accelerates with the growth of the global economy. However, the preference for women rests on wage discrimination, ability of women to work at routine tasks, greater productivity, and lower absenteeism as compared to men (Mondays being especially relevant because of weekend drinking). In view of these attributes, notably the low rate of pay and their labor in the home, women are viewed as a *subproletariat*, whereas their husbands belong to the *proletariat*. As women are even more involved in the informal economy than are men, they have lower status. Better educated women with relatively steady employment can aspire to enter the proletariat or even the *petty bourgeoisie*.²³

This interrelationship between gender and class is a complex one with a strong input from the nature of the marital relationship. Men have the advantage of having less drastic shifts during the life cycle—marriage and childrearing. For women beyond remunerative work lies an equally large domestic work load. A report on Nicaraguan women is hardly off target in finding that women may spend 9 to 12 hours in domestic duties; the chances of outside work depend on having an older daughter or other relative to assume care of the home. Women acquire strategies for negotiating with family members—elder daughters or other kin—for what portion of paid or unpaid work they elect. Strategies also include the husband/wife division of labor and pooling or separation of financial intake. Conjugal bonds are under relatively constant review, however much husbands resist attempts to weaken their traditional privileges.

Is there any final answer to the dilemma of women's role in the economy? One point is clear. Industry increasingly takes women from the home, with little or no reduction in home duties. In Colombia the female work force expanded during the 1970s—even in agriculture, in which it experienced a rise from 16.5 to 27 percent. It is worth noting that in most countries estimates of women's participation in agricul-

ture is at least two times higher than official reports.²⁴ In reality, the rural work force was declining in the 1970s as the city offered a less forbidding environment, if very marginal work. The decade also saw a growing commitment to labor organizations. A number of projects emerged in order to resolve the problem of women's limited horizons in rural areas, particularly in land reform programs.

Still, the total outlook is hardly benign. The economic crisis of the 1980s drove more Peruvian women into the workplace, where they found intense competition with men, who were also adversely affected by the economy. In spite of this impasse, the percentage of employed women rose from 39 to 48 percent, largely in the informal sector, between 1984 and 1986 in a Lima sample.²⁵ In Mexico women moved from being less than 4.6 percent of the work force in 1930 to over 24 percent in 1980, but they remained in a subservient role.²⁶ Three major areas of women's employment are service, 46 percent (especially domestic); commerce and sales, 22 percent; and industry, 21 percent. Interestingly, the most active employment period is between ages 15 to 24. At the same time, official records point to nearly twice the unemployment rate for women as compared to men. Further, a Mexico City study portrays the segregated role of women in industry, even though in at least a third of the families they provide more than half the income—despite depressed wages.²⁷

The status of women is constantly changing, not least the position of women in an urban versus a traditional rural milieu. In the city women have greater *entrée* to employment, if marginal, as reflected in their higher rate of cityward migration as compared to men. In Colombia, as in most of Latin America, not only do urban women have fewer children, but their employability depends on the number they have.²⁸ One dimension in the status and employment of women is the economic system. Corporate capitalism hardly favors the role of women. Nor do Marxist regimes, as they only add to the burdens of women, who are expected to follow traditional roles of homemaking and childrearing in addition to economic ones, for which they are as underpaid as under capitalism. Nicaragua under the Sandinistas was a possible exception, but the contra war complicated the advance of women. Cuba also presents a mixed profile. One goal of the FMC (Federation of Cuban Women) is to advance the education of women, equal rights in the workplace, access to maternity leave and child care centers. To an appreciable extent, these goals are met, with less success after Cuba's economic breakdown following the end of Soviet support in 1990 and the seemingly unending blockade by the United States. However, gender discrimination still exists. Fidel Castro may have praised the woman's movement as "a revolution within a revolution," but shows only half-hearted interest in the welfare of women.²⁹

A review of the literature on Latin American women in the workplace generally documents the inferior image that men hold of women and the kind of assignments women receive in industry.³⁰ The question remains as to why women's labor, particularly in areas of low pay, is highly desired, and yet in other areas few career opportunities are available. In contrast to the traditional roles women are

expected to fulfill, over a third to a sixth (depending on which country) are now employed outside the home. Women's adjustment to their various roles—marital, family, and employment—hinges on a number of cultural, social, and individual factors. In the rural area, progress can be more visible than in the urban, as it has the longer way to go.

In one summary of the socioeconomic situation facing Latin American women, three different viewpoints are relevant:³¹ (a) The *integration* thesis holds that industrialization precedes emancipation and achievement of equality as women take their place in the economic world. (b) *Marginalization* sees women as occupying only a subordinate role in industry or services. (c) The *exploitation* thesis points to women as confined to a proletarian role in the capitalist search for profits. It is possible to re-phrase the debate as the *articulation* versus *exclusion* arguments—whether women are incorporated into or rejected from the economic world.³² So far, integration remains largely a dream, but women's movements are pledged to bring about equalization of their chances in the economic world.

HOW DO WOMEN FARE IN THE POLITICAL SCENE?

Women have played a role in sociopolitical change from colonial times to the present. First of all, the model the *conquistadores* brought to the New World was markedly different from indigenous patterns. An early challenge to the colonial oligarchy was waged by Baltazara Chuiza, who led a revolt against the Spanish in Ecuador. Similar rebellions followed, notably the ill-fated protest of Tupac Amaru and his wife in Peru. Women also participated in the wars of independence. In Mexico leadership of women stretched throughout the nineteenth century.³³ This spirit of resistance glimmered elsewhere in the late nineteenth century, notably the strikes of miners in Chile, where women maintained *cocinas apagadas* (unlit ovens) or withheld food in order to encourage the men to hold off settlement until their demands were met.³⁴

Regardless of their ambiguous social and legal status, women are slowly and painfully making residual gains in their access to Latin American society. They had little success in changing their depressed role during the nineteenth century. However, certain social factors sparked a momentum for women to organize. In Argentina industrialization at the turn of the century, arrival of immigrants from Europe, and the diffusion of new political philosophies became a catalyst for women to insist on suffrage and entry into the professions. Argentina finally modified its legal definition in the Woman's Civil Rights Law of 1926 by granting the wife power of attorney. Still, the emphasis was on woman as wife and mother. Even the support Eva Perón gave through her establishment of the Partido Peronista Femenino was hardly a move toward feminine emancipation—this conservatism persisted to the 1990s.³⁵

The vote was also extended to women in the twentieth century; Ecuador, hardly rated as the most enlightened country in Hispanic America, was the first to give women voting rights in 1929. Brazil, Uruguay, and Cuba came along a few years later. Despite high literacy rates Argentina and Chile lagged until the late 1940s. Paraguay brought up the rear in 1961—still, decades before Switzerland. Opposition to empowering women with the vote was based on much the same stereotypes as European and North American males had uttered a generation earlier—women are not suited to the task of choosing officials. There was also the idea that they were too much influenced by the Church.

In this frontier of women's rights the twenty republics display a diversity of chronology and aspirations, even though the fundamental desire is for recognition of their status and the end of gender discrimination, if not actual persecution. Marginal improvement is occasionally visible as in the declaration of gender equality in the 1945 Constitution in Ecuador, even though its implementation was delayed. In part because of the power of the Roman Catholic Church in Colombia, women's marital rights were forestalled, but a 1974 law acknowledged men's adultery to be almost as reprehensible as women's. Even in an advanced country like Uruguay, shelters appear along with demands for the end of wife-beating—expressed in the novel idea of making violence against women a crime.³⁶

The Impact of Women's Movements

Women's movements have been an intriguing aspect of Latin America in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Jane Jaquette looks at women's movements as falling into three types: (1) human rights movements with a focus on violation of civil liberties in the climate of authoritarian regimes; (2) feminist groups growing out of disaffection with the failure of political parties to recognize women's needs—a movement beginning with consciousness-raising, developing into active organizations; and (3) mobilizing impoverished urban women, especially during the economic recession of the 1980s, which began as a grassroots movement spurred by the Church, political organizations, and international foundations. In a comparison of five countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay) the intersection of these three movements varied widely from parallel to integrated activities and in the degree of support offered by political, religious, and economic structures.³⁷

Movements take place in different periods, but the 1970s and 1980s were crucial, a score of organizations appearing in Venezuela in those decades.³⁸ On the other hand, in Paraguay, after suffering thirty-five years (1954-1989) under the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner, a woman's movement sprung up in the 1990s—eight of the fifteen members of the national executive committee of the MCP (Paraguayan Peasants' Movement) are women. Among its objectives are legal recognition of women and meeting various practical needs, like limiting family size—specifically the use of contraceptives, still discouraged by the Church in that country. Throughout

Latin America women's voices are heard on a broad spectrum of issues—wage differentials, protection of the rights of indigenous women, decriminalization of abortion, and most critical, ending verbal and physical abuse by spouses and men in general. Prostitutes are also demanding legal recognition.³⁹

Women's movements abound in every country with the possible exception of Haiti. They emerge from middle or lower class, urban or rural, national or local orientation. More often, movements develop out of a favorable societal moment as when a progressive regime achieves power or as an underground phenomenon in a regressive military takeover. For instance, with the end of the civil war in 1990 and demilitarization of the mid-1990s, women in El Salvador are finding for the first time in their history a significant opening, though modest, into politics—29 of the 262 mayors are women.⁴⁰ In Mexico a coalition of women's organizations include in their agenda: guaranteeing workers' rights in the *maquiladoras*, declaring rape a public crime, requiring men to prove their non-paternity if they are not to pay for child support, and protecting women in the penal code.

In other words, movements develop in varying stages and express differing nuances. Among middle-class intellectuals feminism is more ideological as it stems from the debates among left-wing students and professors, inspired by ideas from Europe and North America. In contrast are working-class women's movements rooted in the *barriadas* and trade unions, usually dedicated to soup kitchens and similar tasks. At the same time, its mobilization is oriented to a political program pledged to reform reproductive rights and reduce violence against women. True feminists feel that such projects as soup kitchens only underline the passive, exploitive destiny of women. In the ever-changing scene of political, economic, and ideological pressures a sinuous line of both bifurcation and merging are apparent in feminist movements.⁴¹ Fundamentally, Latin American women are determined to end the mythology surrounding their gender and to widen the democratic channels for a fuller participation.⁴²

The Intricacies of Political Participation

As implied above, most of the twentieth century is marked by only a fragmentary advance in women's rights.⁴³ As one example, despite a major role women played in the Mexican Revolution (1910-1928), the vote did not come to women until 1953. For Latin America in general, social and political reform appeared in the brief democratic wave of the early 1960s, but reversed in later dictatorships. Consequently, the impetus to address women's problems yielded significant gains only in the last fifteen years of the century as political channels became more open. Whatever the image of the political conservatism of women, they are more liberal in certain attitudes and more activist than are men, as they are increasingly aware of their inferior position in the political and economic world.

Women were ambivalent about participating in the political process, but voting statistics since the late 1980s indicate a reversal. Further, the changes in gender ideology lead to various effects. In Buena Vista, a community in Morelos, Mexico, women organized to initiate sociopolitical change in municipal services: access to water supply, land, health, and education. In part the movement was inspired by the theme of “mother as redeemer.”⁴⁴ Similarly, women’s groups in Mexico City perform a number of services, from caring for the ill to getting out the vote and pressing for a better community, including housing.⁴⁵ Studies of social movements point to the relative success of women over men in various organizations, particularly ecological ones—all the more impressive considering the commitment they make in spite of the work load both inside and outside the home.

A study of a favela in Recife (probably Brazil’s poorest city, where 47.7 percent live in “absolute poverty”—or earning below 60 percent of the minimum wage) reveals the significance of the mobilization of women. In this community political action was “gendered,” women playing a compelling role in the majority of movements directed toward public services—housing, utilities, and health care. Three factors are central: (1) Women have the responsibility for survival of the household, that is, obtaining the critical resources. (2) Poor women cannot fulfill this role as individuals, more than men they are forced into collective action. (3) In a “machista authoritarian government” setting “spontaneous direct collective action” worked better than conventional political tactics. This kind of mobilization is less resented by military regimes when performed by women rather than men. That is, when initiating action for the good of the family, women do not invade the male prerogative of politics.⁴⁶

In the political arena women meet resistance from both the right because of their interest in social action and from the left because of their supposed conservatism. In reality, their involvement has a long history. They were active in the formation of the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA) in Peru during the 1920s. Similarly, they held key positions in early socialist movements in Cuba, Chile, and Nicaragua. Women were very supportive of the Cuban revolution, followed by emergence of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) and extension of work opportunities to women, even though women seldom reach high government positions. By 1974 women composed only 13 percent of the membership of the Communist Party.

Chile offers another reminder of the inability of socialism to root out machismo. Women were divided, usually by social class, in their loyalty to Popular Unity under Salvador Allende, who appointed only one woman to his cabinet and then only for a brief period. During the Pinochet dictatorship emerged the organization Women For Life (many of its members had lost sons, brothers, and husbands in the reign of terror). Their demonstrations were greeted by water cannons and other violent action, but the organization was an agent in the twilight of the Pinochet rule in 1989. In the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua 30 percent of guer-

rilla forces are reported to have been women. Besides playing a leading role in health care, women demanded greater access to birth control methods and to job training courses, rising to positions of power in labor organizations. Yet, in new left-oriented regimes, authorities are initially reluctant to give women positions of power.⁴⁷ Patriarchalism, it seems, crosses class lines and political ideology.

A comparison of women's mobilization in five countries sheds some light on the rising influence of women in national struggles. In Colombian and Cuban guerrilla activity of the 1950s and 1960s women had less direct involvement, whereas in the movements against authoritarian rule in the 1970s—El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Uruguay—feminism had its impact. Both men and women were trying to change their universe toward more equalitarianism and democracy. Salvadorans, Sandinistas, and Tupamaros articulated more explicit protest to patriarchalism, pushing first for other feminist long-term goals like ending discrimination in education and the labor force. Secondly, short-term goals (child care, health clinics, and literacy) were to facilitate women's role in family functioning.⁴⁸

In summary, women appear to follow at least two paths toward sociopolitical action. One is overtly ideological, particularly among more educated women, as they work through political parties and other organizations, more often on a nonviolent than a violent basis. The other occurs more during dictatorships and may be an expression of *marianismo* as they view themselves as the suffering mother of Christ. This was most visible in the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo during the anguish and terror of the generals' reign in Argentina and the Families of the Disappeared in Pinochet's Chile. In the eyes of one observer, both these movements became a model for Latin American women to organize for an equalitarian order—preferably socialist.⁴⁹ Yet, any generalization is fraught with complexities. Many Peruvian women in Ayacucho wrestled with pressures—often violent—from family, church, and government in their decision as to whether to join or not join the Sendero Luminoso.⁵⁰

The Heroic: Violence, Martyrs, and Change Agents

Women in most cultures suffer physical and mental abuse at the hands of the male, whether spouse, other relative, acquaintance, or stranger. This force is sanctioned by a traditional society, as in the *patria potestas*, institutionalized by the Romans and adopted in Western cultures until the nineteenth century. It lingers on in some quarters, certainly in the Latin American world. Another kind of violence is meted out to both genders by authoritarian regimes. This terrorism falls more on men than women, but the form of violence assumes more traumatic methods and effects on women—and on children. This style of violence characterized Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay during their military governments of the 1970s and early 1980s. In addition there is a persistent siege of violence in Central America, notably El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, which only in the 1990s showed some abatement.

The “cone” countries are often cited for a state of terror for women; ironically, as they represent a highly advanced area of Latin America. Argentina is the most publicized case. The “dirty war” from 1976 to 1983 was probably the most tragic episode in Argentine history. The generals who ruled the country were determined to eliminate even the suspicion of insurrection. Some 15,000 citizens of various ages, particularly the young, were sequestered, kidnapped, or simply disappeared. Among the groups of resistance none was more enduring and dedicated than Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (the mothers of the Plaza de Mayo). On April 13, 1977, 14 mothers appeared in the plaza. These women had come from the Junta inquiring after missing sons and daughters, only to be told “your son probably ran off with someone,” or “your daughter was killed by a terrorist colleague.”⁵¹ A week later, 20 women, and by September some 300 were circling the Pyramid two by two, wearing white head scarves. Terrorism soon followed with tear gas, arrests, and kidnappings. As nuns were among the protesters, the government had little pretext to claim that the demonstrations were a form of subversion.

Even though over half the victims were completely innocent of what might be conceived of as political dissent, terrorism became ever more far-reaching. Simply being in the address book of a suspect was sufficient grounds for arrest. Another savage form of duress was the disappearance of infants and children who were sent to neighboring countries or adopted by childless government officials.⁵² At the World Cup in June 1978, women paraded with signs “We do not have news of our children, our grandchildren, or our parents.” Yet, international attention seemed only to aggravate the terrorism. Attorneys defending the Commission of Relatives joined the lists of the disappeared. Laws were passed in order to facilitate the certification that the victims had died, all of which was to discourage inquiry into their fate. This Argentine episode has many facets; one telling aspect of these demonstrations is the portrait of citizens moving beyond grief to make a political statement. Apparently the action of these women failed to move the military and political elites, but their relatives, friends, neighbors, and eventually the public at large understood their position.⁵³ However politically marginalized, they were indirectly promoting a democratic nation.

Despite a more democratic tradition in Chile, terrorism under Pinochet was no less a tragedy. The 1973 rightist coup against the Unidad Popular of Allende ended three years of a socialist program. Although estimates vary, presumably over 3,000 disappeared or were killed in the first several months of the Pinochet dictatorship.⁵⁴ This violence fell upon both women and men, especially in the lower class and the rural population.⁵⁵ The principal targets were men, yet women also became victims of imprisonment, kidnapping, and rape. As in other militarist regimes (Argentina, Uruguay, El Salvador, and Guatemala, among others) women were subject to the most brutalized method of torture as “required” for state “security.” The techniques reach various levels of depravity, often in the form of “family torture,” which is an attempt to extract information from an uncooperative male detainee. Rape and a number of

torture procedures are often used in front of a woman's husband to force his confession. Often the same basic methods are applied to both sexes, but, for the male they are to destroy his "sexual confidence," for the female torture is "systematically directed to her sexual identity and anatomy."⁵⁶

Similar histories characterize much of Latin America. Physical and mental punishment meted out to women as well as men in Central America is documented in a number of volumes. Nor are democracies immune to seizure, disappearances, and torture. For over a century, but especially since the 1940s, Colombia has a history of violence stemming from political warfare, guerrilla movements, drug trafficking, and military campaigns. A report from Mexico tells of how mothers, as led by the leftist political leader Rosario Ibarra, have a campaign to find out the fate of their sons and other relatives. Inspired by the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, this movement was successful in liberating 148 of 522 disappeared persons, many of whom were hunted down by government agents and the police.⁵⁷

Conclusions

Socialization and gender relations are structural in Latin America, yet are undergoing change, notably in those sectors of society most affected by trends set in advanced Western cultures. In particular, machismo is threatened, but will persist as males are seldom enthusiastic about giving up their domination and power.

What is the future of feminism in Latin America? The profile of women's status and needs remains problematic. Among the issues is the feminization of poverty—also a problem in the United States. The situation is more severe in developing countries. One hopeful note in Latin America is the increased educational opportunities and employment of women, which means a growing consciousness and communication of their disadvantage. In their restricted social world women have even fewer options than do men. Moreover, women in the feminist movement stress that their style is different from that of their North American cousins, at least those in organizations like NOW (National Organization of Women), but the issues and goals are similar, such as equal pay, child care, and legal equality. Increasingly, modernity became linked to gender concerns. Research points to societal factors as predictive of the modernist attitudes of women. For example, in the 1960s when women were beginning to challenge the status quo, a Brazilian study found size and industrialization of the community to be positive factors in women accepting equity, achievement-orientation, and personal autonomy.⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, from the 1960s to the 1990s women became increasingly engrossed in politics.

The twenty-first century will see shifts in the global and international power structure. Undoubtedly Latin America will be an active player in this scheme. As the region is generally closer to the Western cultural heritage than are Africa and Asia, we may see an improvement in societal relations, including the participation of women in whatever benefits accrue. As with their Western sisters, Latin American women now

understand value structures and power dimensions that have stood in their way.⁵⁹ Women are gradually learning the power game and how to avoid the hazards and roadblocks of the past.

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