

Part One

INDEPENDENCE AND ITS AFTERMATH

After independence, the new state had to find its place in the world. It had to define its political, economic, and social policies, and to establish a stable government.

The first task was to define the nature of the state. The new state had to decide whether it would be a republic or a monarchy, and whether it would be a federal or a unitary state. It also had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state.

The second task was to define the political system. The new state had to decide whether it would be a presidential or a parliamentary system, and whether it would be a constitutional or a non-constitutional state.

The third task was to define the economic system. The new state had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state, and whether it would be a free market or a planned economy.

The fourth task was to define the social system. The new state had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state, and whether it would be a free market or a planned economy.

The fifth task was to define the foreign policy. The new state had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state, and whether it would be a free market or a planned economy.

The sixth task was to define the military policy. The new state had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state, and whether it would be a free market or a planned economy.

The seventh task was to define the cultural policy. The new state had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state, and whether it would be a free market or a planned economy.

The eighth task was to define the educational policy. The new state had to decide whether it would be a capitalist or a socialist state, and whether it would be a free market or a planned economy.

The Struggle for Independence

Many factors combined to cause the Latin American wars of independence. The discontent of the Creole class with Spanish restrictions on its economic and political activity, the influence of French and English liberal doctrines of political liberty and social equality, the powerful example of the American and French revolutions, and foreign interest in the liquidation of the Spanish Empire in the Americas—all played a part in producing the great upheaval.

The immediate cause of the Spanish American revolutions was the occupation of Spain by French troops in 1808. Napoleon's intervention provoked an uprising of the Spanish people, headed by *juntas*—local governing committees. Creole leaders in the colonies soon took advantage of Spain's distress. Professing loyalty to "the beloved Ferdinand VII," a prisoner in France, they forced the removal of allegedly unreliable Spanish officials and formed governing *juntas* to rule in the name of the captive king. Their claims of loyalty did not convince the Spanish authorities, and fighting soon broke out between rebellious patriots and loyalists to Spain.

Simón Bolívar led the struggle for independence in northern South America, and José de San Martín directed the military efforts of the patriots to the south. In 1822, the enigmatic San Martín resigned command of his army, leaving to Bolívar the task of completing the conquest of Peru, the last Spanish stronghold in the New World. The 1824 battle of Ayacucho virtually ended the war. Brazil achieved a relatively peaceful separation from Portugal in 1822, under the leadership of Prince Pedro and his adviser José Bonifacio de Andrada.

The Mexican Revolution, initiated in 1810 by the Creole priest Miguel Hidalgo, was continued after his death by another liberal curate, José María Morelos. These men attempted to combine the Creole ideal of independence

with a program of social reform to benefit the Indian and mixed-blood masses. The radicalism of Hidalgo and Morelos alienated many Creole conservatives, who joined the royalist forces to suppress the revolt. Later, fearing the loss of their privileges as a result of the liberal revolution of 1820 in Spain, the same conservative coalition schemed to bring about a separation from Spain. They found an agent in the ambitious Creole officer Agustín de Iturbide. His Plan of Iguala offered a compromise solution temporarily acceptable to liberals and conservatives, to Creoles and many Spaniards. Slight loyalist opposition was swiftly overcome, and in September 1822, a national congress proclaimed the independence of the Mexican Empire.

1. THE FORGING OF A REBEL

In his brief but valuable autobiography, Manuel Belgrano (1770–1820), one of the fathers of Argentine independence, describes the influences and events that transformed a young Creole of wealth and high social position into an ardent revolutionary. The French Revolution, disillusionment with Bourbon liberalism, the English invasions, and finally the events of 1808 in Spain all played their part in this process. Although not published until after his death, Belgrano's autobiography was written in 1814 while he waited to hear the outcome of his trial for military failures suffered by the insurgent army while under his command. He was subsequently exonerated of all charges and sent to Europe as an emissary of the independent Argentine government.

The place of my birth was Buenos Aires; my parents were Don Domingo Belgrano y Peri, known as Pérez, a native of Onella in Spain, and Doña María Josefa González Casero, a native of Buenos Aires. My father was a merchant, and since he lived in the days of monopoly he acquired sufficient wealth to live comfortably and to give his children the best education to be had in those days.

I studied my first letters, Latin grammar, philosophy, and a smattering of theology in Buenos Aires. My father then sent me to Spain to study law, and I began my preparation at Salamanca; I was graduated at Valladolid, continued my training at Madrid, and was admitted to the bar at Valladolid. . . .

Since I was in Spain in 1789, and the French Revolution was then causing a change in ideas, especially among the men of letters with whom I associated, the ideals of liberty, equality, security, and property took a firm hold on me, and I

Manuel Belgrano, *Autobiografía*. Cited in Ricardo Levene, ed., *Los sucesos de mayo contados por sus actores* (Buenos Aires, 1928), pp. 60–71. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

entrance of the enemy troops, and realized how few of them there were for a town of the size of Buenos Aires. I could not get the idea out of my head, and I almost went out of my mind, it was so painful to me to see my country under an alien yoke, and above all in such a degraded state that it could be conquered by the daring enterprise of the brave and honorable Beresford, whose valor I shall always admire. [BK: A resistance movement under the leadership of Santiago Liniers drives the British out of Buenos Aires. A second English invasion, commanded by General John Whitelocke, is defeated, and the entire British force is compelled to surrender.]

General Liniers ordered the quartermaster-general to receive the paroles of the officer prisoners; for this reason Brigadier-General Crawford, together with his aides and other high officers, came to his house. My slight knowledge of French, and perhaps certain civilities that I showed him, caused General Crawford to prefer to converse with me, and we entered upon a discussion that helped to pass the time—although he never lost sight of his aim of gaining knowledge of the country and, in particular, of its opinion of the Spanish Government.

So, having convinced himself that I had no French sympathies or connections, he divulged to me his ideas about our independence, perhaps in the hope of forming new links with this country, since the hope of conquest had failed. I described our condition to him, and made it plain that we wanted our old master or none at all; that we were far from possessing the means required for the achievement of independence; that even if it were won under the protection of England, she would abandon us in return for some advantage in Europe, and then we would fall under the Spanish sword; that every nation sought its own interest and did not care about the misfortunes of others. He agreed with me, and when I had shown how we lacked the means for winning independence, he put off its attainment for a century.

How fallible are the calculations of men! One year passed, and behold, without any effort on our part to become independent, God Himself gave us our opportunity as a result of the events of 1808 in Spain and Bayonne. Then it was that the ideals of liberty and independence came to life in America, and the Americans began to speak frankly of their rights.

2. A QUESTION OF LEADERSHIP

The principal military campaigns to liberate South America from Spanish colonial rule were directed by two men, Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín.

José de San Martín, "Letter to the Most Excellent Liberator of Colombia, Señor Simón Bolívar," Lima, Peru, August 29, 1821. Excerpt translated by the editors.

Both were professionally trained Creole military officers and revolutionary freemasons (like their North American counterpart, George Washington). The similarities end there. Simón Bolívar (1783–1830), president and supreme commander of the armies of Gran Colombia, was an ambitious visionary politician bent on uniting all of northern South America under one government. José de San Martín (1778–1850), Protector of Peru and commander of the Argentine Army of the North, was a professional soldier who had served with distinction in Spanish army campaigns in Africa and against the French invaders. The two commanders met in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on July 26, 1822, to plan the final campaign to defeat the royalist army in Peru. The meeting was held in secret, and historians can only speculate about what transpired. But in an August 29 letter sent from Lima, Peru, to “the Most Excellent Liberator of Colombia, Señor Simón Bolívar,” San Martín announced his intention to step down, leaving Bolívar in charge of the patriot armies. Evidence suggests that San Martín considered Bolívar incapable of sharing command—or the glory of the final campaign—and the letter supports this interpretation of events. He had other reasons as well. In a letter sent just a few days earlier to his Chilean ally Bernardo O’Higgins (1778–1842), San Martín confessed, “I’m tired of being called a tyrant and of everyone saying that I wish to be king, emperor, or the devil himself. Moreover my health is much deteriorated. Finally, my youth was sacrificed in service to the Spanish, my middle years in service to my country; I think I have the right to dispose of my old age.”

Dear General:

As I told you in my last letter . . . having taken back supreme command of this republic [Peru] . . . the duties that surrounded me at the time did not permit me to write you with the care I would have liked. Now that I have fulfilled those duties, I [write again] not only with my customary frankness but also with the attention that the best interests of America require.

The outcome of our meeting [in Guayaquil] has produced what I was promised for the quick termination of the war. Unfortunately I am firmly convinced either that you did not take seriously my offer to serve under your orders, with the forces at my command, or that my person is somehow troublesome to you.

The reasons you gave me were that your sense of propriety would never permit you to command me and that even in the event that this difficulty could be surmounted you were sure that the Congress of Colombia would not authorize you to leave the territory of the republic. Let me tell you, general, that these reasons don’t seem plausible to me. The first refutes itself. As for the second, I am convinced that Congress would greet your request with unanimous approval if it had to do with finishing the struggle in which we are currently engaged with

the help of you and your army, and that the honor of putting an end to war would flow back as much on you as on the republic you preside over.

Don't be deceived[,] general. The news you have of the royalist forces is wrong: in Upper and Lower Peru they number more than 19,000 veterans [probably a numerical inversion of 10,900], who can be mustered in the space of two months.

The patriot army, decimated by illnesses, can send into battle only 8,500 men, most of them new recruits. General Santa Cruz's division—whose casualties, he writes me, have not been replaced despite repeated requests—will have experienced considerable losses after his long overland march and can provide no support for the current campaign. The division of 1,400 Colombians that you sent will be needed to maintain the garrison at Callao and order in Lima.

It follows that without the support of the army at your command, the operation underway to establish intermediate ports [not controlled by the Spanish] will not provide the hoped-for advantages. If powerful forces don't distract the enemy, the struggle will be prolonged indefinitely. I say indefinitely because I'm firmly convinced that whatever the vicissitudes of the present war, the independence of America is irrevocable. But I'm also firmly convinced that its prolongation will destroy its peoples [*pueblos*], and it is a sacred duty of the men to whom their destiny has been entrusted to avoid the continuation of evils of such magnitude.

In conclusion, general, my mind is made up. I have convoked the first congress of Peru for the twentieth of this coming month, and the day after its installation, I will embark for Chile, convinced that my presence is the only obstacle that blocks you from coming to the aid of Peru with the army at your command.

For me, it would have been the pinnacle of happiness to finish the war of independence under the command of a general to whom America owes its liberty. Destiny took a different turn and it is necessary to accept that fact.

Without doubt, after my departure from Peru, the government you establish will request the active cooperation of Colombia and you will not be able to deny such a just request, I'm sending you a list of all the leaders whose military and private conduct it might be useful for you to know about. . . .

I will say nothing to you about joining Guayaquil to the republic of Colombia. Allow me[,] general, to tell you that I don't believe it is up to us to decide this important point. Once the war is over, the respective governments should have no problem coming to an agreement that will be in the interests of the new states of South America.

I have spoken frankly to you, general, but the sentiments expressed in this letter will remain buried in the most profound silence. If they should come to light, the enemies of our liberty would take advantage of them to slander [our liberty], and the schemers and self-seekers would use them to sow discord.

With Captain Delgado, the bearer of this letter, I'm sending you a shotgun and a pair of pistols along with the *caballo de paso* [a Peruvian horse breed renowned for its smooth gait] I offered you in Guayaquil. Please accept, general, these tokens of appreciation from the foremost of your admirers.

With these sentiments and only desiring that you have the glory of ending the war of South American independence, I am again yours truly.

3. MAN OF DESTINY

There is no more controversial figure in Latin American history than Simón Bolívar (1783–1830). To his admirers or worshipers he is the Liberator of a continent; to his critics he is the proverbial “man on horseback,” an ambitious schemer who sacrificed San Martín to his passion for power and glory. Louis Perú de Lacroix, a French member of Bolívar’s staff, wrote the following description of the Liberator in a diary that he kept during their stay at Bucaramanga in 1828.

The General-in-Chief, Simón José Antonio Bolívar, will be forty-five years old on July 24 of this year, but he appears older, and many judge him to be fifty. He is slim and of medium height; his arms, thighs, and legs are lean. He has a long head, wide between the temples, and a sharply pointed chin. A large, round, prominent forehead is furrowed with wrinkles that are very noticeable when his face is in repose, or in moments of bad humor and anger. His hair is crisp, bristly, quite abundant, and partly gray. His eyes have lost the brightness of youth but preserve the luster of genius. They are deep-set, neither small nor large; the eyebrows are thick, separated, slightly arched, and are grayer than the hair on his head. The nose is aquiline and well formed. He has prominent cheekbones, with hollows beneath. His mouth is rather large, and the lower lip protrudes; he has white teeth and an agreeable smile. . . . His tanned complexion darkens when he is in a bad humor, and his whole appearance changes; the wrinkles on his forehead and temples stand out much more prominently; the eyes become smaller and narrower; the lower lip protrudes considerably, and the mouth turns ugly. In fine, one sees a completely different countenance: a frowning face that reveals sorrows, sad reflections, and somber ideas. But when he is happy all this disappears; his face lights up, his mouth smiles, and the spirit of the Liberator shines over his countenance. . . .

Louis Perú de Lacroix, *Diario de Bucaramanga, estudio crítico*, ed. Monseñor Nicolás E. Navarro (Caracas, 1935), pp. 327, 329–331. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

The Liberator has energy; he is capable of making a firm decision and sticking to it. His ideas are never commonplace—always large, lofty, and original. His manners are affable, having the tone of Europeans of high society. He displays a republican simplicity and modesty, but he has the pride of a noble and elevated soul, the dignity of his rank, and the amour-propre that comes from consciousness of worth and leads men to great actions. Glory is his ambition, and his glory consists in having liberated ten million persons and founded three republics. He has an enterprising spirit, combined with great activity, quickness of speech, an infinite fertility in ideas, and the constancy necessary for the realization of his projects. He is superior to misfortunes and reverses; his philosophy consoles him and his intelligence finds ways of righting what has gone wrong....

He loves a discussion, and dominates it through his superior intelligence; but he sometimes appears too dogmatic, and is not always tolerant enough with those who contradict him. He scorns servile flattery and base adulators. He is sensitive to criticism of his actions; calumny against him cuts him to the quick, for none is more touchy about his reputation than the Liberator....

His heart is better than his head. His bad temper never lasts; when it appears, it takes possession of his head, never of his heart, and as soon as the latter recovers its dominance it immediately makes amends for the harm that the former may have done....

The great mental and bodily activity of the Liberator keeps him in a state of constant moral and physical agitation. One who observes him at certain moments might think he is seeing a madman. During the walks that we take with him he sometimes likes to walk very rapidly, trying to tire his companions out; at other times he begins to run and leap, to leave the others behind; then he waits for them to catch up and tells them they do not know how to run. He does the same when horseback riding. But he acts this way only when among his own people, and he would not run or leap if he thought that some stranger was looking on. When bad weather prevents walking or riding, the Liberator rocks himself swiftly back and forth in his hammock or strides through the corridors of his house, sometimes singing, at other times reciting verses or talking with those who walk beside him. When conversing with one of his own people, he changes the subject as often as he does his position; at such times one would say that he has not a bit of system or stability in him. How different the Liberator seems at a private party, at some formal gathering, and among his confidential friends and aides-de-camp! With the latter he seems their equal, the gayest and sometimes the maddest of them all. At a private party, among strangers and people less well known to him, he shows his superiority to all others by his easy and agreeable ways and good taste, his lively and ingenious conversation, and his amiability. At

a more formal gathering, his unaffected dignity and polished manners cause him to be regarded as the most gentlemanly, learned, and amiable man present. . . .

In all the actions of the Liberator, and in his conversation, as I have already noted, one observes an extreme quickness. His questions are short and concise; he likes to be answered in the same way, and when someone wanders away from the question he impatiently says that that is not what he asked; he has no liking for a diffuse answer. He sustains his opinions with force and logic, and generally with tenacity. When he has occasion to contradict some assertion, he says: "No, sir, it is not so, but thus. . . ." Speaking of persons whom he dislikes or scorns, he often uses this expression: "That (or those) c***." He is very observant, noting even the least trifles; he dislikes the poorly educated, the bold, the windbag, the indiscreet, and the discourteous. Since nothing escapes him, he takes pleasure in criticizing such people, always making a little commentary on their defects. . . .

The ideas of the Liberator are like his imagination: full of fire, original, and new. They lend considerable sparkle to his conversation, and make it extremely varied. When His Excellency praises, defends, or approves something, it is always with a little exaggeration. The same is true when he criticizes, condemns, or disapproves of something. In his conversation he frequently quotes, but his citations are always well chosen and pertinent. Voltaire is his favorite author, and he has memorized many passages from his works, both prose and poetry. He knows all the good French writers and evaluates them competently. He has some general knowledge of Italian and English literature and is very well versed in that of Spain.

The Liberator takes great pleasure in telling of his first years, his voyages, and his campaigns, and of his relations and old friends. His character and spirit dispose him more to criticize than to eulogize, but his criticisms or eulogies are never baseless; he could be charged only with an occasional slight exaggeration. I have never heard his Excellency utter a calumny. He is a lover of truth, heroism, and honor and of the public interest and morality. He detests and scorns all that is opposed to these lofty and noble sentiments.

4. THE ROMANCE OF INDEPENDENCE

The revolutionary fervor that fueled Latin American independence movements sparked more than just political passions. Scholars have long noted the influence of Enlightenment-inspired notions of social equality, individual

Manuela Saenz, "A Su Excelencia General Simón Bolívar," El Garzal, a 27 de julio de 1822; Simón Bolívar, "Mi adorada Manuelita," Cuartel General Pasto, a 30 de enero de 1823. Excerpts translated by the editors.

5. LIBERAL REVOLUTION IN MEXICO

The first phase of Mexican independence began on September 16, 1810, when a Creole priest, Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1750–1811), gave the famous Grito de Dolores (Cry of Dolores), calling for independence and the overthrow of the current “bad” government—although not the King of Spain, who was under house arrest in France—in the name of the “dark-skinned” Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico’s patron saint and spiritual mother. Although Hidalgo and his fellow conspirators raised a sizeable army that captured (and sacked) several major cities and towns in north central Mexico, his forces were defeated by a much smaller but much better-trained Spanish army; within the year Hidalgo had been captured, excommunicated, defrocked, shot, and decapitated. A former seminary rector and later a village priest, Hidalgo had drawn inspiration from Enlightenment-inspired “liberal” ideas and in 1810, during his brief stint as supreme commander of the revolutionary army, he decreed an end to slavery and a return of some Indian lands. However, the brevity of his insurrection prevented him from developing a clear political agenda. One of his lieutenants, a mestizo priest, Father José María Morelos (1765–1815), took up Hidalgo’s banner and waged a more successful insurgent campaign in south central Mexico. In 1813, before he too was defeated and executed, Morelos convened a constitutional convention in the town of Chilpancingo and supplied it with twenty-three “points” that he titled, *Sentiments of the Nation*. Endorsed by the assembly on September 14, Morelos’s points reflect the influence of “liberal” ideas such as popular sovereignty, legal equality, representative government, lower taxes, and a ban on torture as well as more “conservative” notions of religious intolerance.

1. That America is free and independent of Spain, and of any other nation, government or monarchy . . .
2. That the Catholic religion shall be the only one without tolerance of any other.
3. That all ministers of the Church shall be supported entirely and only by tithes and *primacias* [the “first fruit” of the harvest biblically offered up in thanks to God], and that the people shall not have to pay more fees than those of their devotion and offerings.

José María Morelos, “23 puntos dados por José María Morelos para la Constitución Sentimientos de la Nación, 14 de septiembre de 1813,” in Carlos Herejón, ed. *Morelos: Antología documental* (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1985), pp. 133–135. Excerpt translated by the editors.

4. That dogma shall be upheld by the hierarchy of the Church, comprised of the Pope, bishops, and priests, because every plant that God has not planted will be pulled up by the roots: *Omnis plantatio quam non plantavit Pater meus caelensis eradicabitur* (Matthew 15:13). [Eds: Morelos includes the Latin text of Jesus's teaching, which refers to God as "my heavenly Father."]
5. That sovereignty springs directly from the people, who choose only to entrust it to the Supreme National American Congress, composed of representatives of the provinces in equal numbers.
6. That the legislative, executive, and judicial powers shall be divided into compatible bodies to exercise [their respective powers].
7. That representatives serve for four years, taking turns, with the longest-serving members leaving office so the newly elected can take their positions.
8. That the salary of the representatives will be sufficient but not excessive, and for the present will not exceed 8,000 pesos.
9. That only Americans [that is, those born in the Americas] can hold public office.
10. That foreigners will not be admitted [into Mexico], unless they are skilled artisans, capable of instructing others and free of all suspicion.
11. That states change their practices and, to that end, the country will not be completely free and ours until the government is reformed, suppressing tyranny, replacing it with liberal ideas, and also expelling from our soil the Spanish enemy that has declared itself so forcefully against our country.
12. That since a good law is superior to any man, those that our congress dictate shall require fidelity and patriotism, moderate opulence and indigence, and in this way increase the daily wages of the poor, better their standard of living, and dispel ignorance, pillage, and theft.
13. That the general laws apply to all, without an exception for privileged bodies [such as the clergy and the army], and that these shall exist only in so far as they are useful.
14. That for a law to be enacted, a council of wise men in good number be brought together, so that they may exercise sound judgment in carrying out the responsibilities with which they are charged.
15. That slavery be prohibited forever as well as any [legal] distinctions between classes, leaving everyone equal, and Americans shall be distinguished from one another only by their vice or virtue.
16. That our ports be open to friendly foreign nations, as long as they do not go inland, however good their intentions. And there will be special ports for this purpose—disembarking at all others being prohibited—with tariffs [import-export fees] set at ten percent.

17. That everyone shall behave with propriety and respect in their homes as they would in a sacred asylum, with punishments set for violators.

18. That the new legislation shall not permit torture.

19. That constitutional law establish for all towns [throughout the nation] the celebration of December 12, dedicating it to the patroness of our liberty, Mary Most Holy of Guadalupe, [and] charge all towns with a monthly devotion.

20. That foreign troops or those of another kingdom not set foot upon our soil, and if they come to help, that they never be [permitted] near the Supreme Junta [Ruling Council].

21. That no [military] expeditions be sent outside the country, especially in naval operations, excepting those [missionary expeditions] that seek to propagate the faith to our brothers in faraway lands.

22. That an end be put to the infinity of burdensome tributes, taxes, and fees, and that each individual be directed to pay five percent of his seeds or other earnings, or another similarly light charge . . . since with this light levy and the careful administration of goods confiscated from the enemy, it will be possible to cover the costs of the war and the salaries of government employees.

23. That every year September 16 be solemnly celebrated as the day on which the cry of independence arose, and our holy liberty began, because on this day the lips of our nation parted to claim its rights, with sword in hand so that it might be heard, [and in this way] commemorating the worthiness of our great hero, señor Don Miguel Hidalgo and his companion Ignacio Allende [a soldier-patriot executed by Spanish authorities].

6. THE PLAN OF IGUALA

Ironically, the work begun by Hidalgo and Morelos was consummated by a Creole officer, Agustín de Iturbide (1783–1824), who for nine years had fought the insurgents with great effectiveness. Behind Iturbide were conservative churchmen, army officers, and officials, who preferred separation from Spain to submission to the liberal Constitution of 1812, which the army imposed on Ferdinand VII. In his Historical Essay on the Mexican Revolutions (1831), Lorenzo de Zavala (1788–1836), a brilliant Mexican statesman, publicist, and historian, describes the origin and triumph of the Plan of Iguala, a much less liberal document than the constitution proposed by Morelos, Iturbide's former opponent.

Popular revolutions present anomalies whose origin or causes are unknowable. Men who have followed one party, who have fought for certain principles, who have suffered for their loyalty to certain views or persons, suddenly change and adopt a completely different line of conduct. Who would ever have thought that the Mexican officer who had shed the blood of so many of his compatriots to maintain his country in slavery was destined to place himself at the head of a great movement that would destroy forever the Spanish power? What would have been thought of a man's sanity if in 1817 he had said that Iturbide would occupy the place of Morelos or would replace [revolutionary Francisco Javier] Mina? Yet the astonished Mexicans and Spaniards saw this happen.

Don Agustín de Iturbide, colonel of a battalion of provincial troops and a native of Valladolid de Michoacán, was endowed with brilliant qualities, and among his leading traits were uncommon bravery and vigor. To a handsome figure he united the strength and energy necessary to endure the great exertions of campaigning, and ten continuous years of this activity had fortified his natural qualities. He was haughty and domineering, and it was observed that to stay in favor with the authorities he had to remain at a distance from those who were in a position to give him orders. Every time that he came to Mexico City or other places where there were superiors, he gave indications of his impatience. . . . It is said that he was involved in a plan hatched at Valladolid in 1809 for the achievement of independence but withdrew because he was not placed in command, though his rank at the time did not qualify him for leadership. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that Iturbide had a superior spirit, and that his ambition was supported by that noble resolution that scorns dangers and does not retreat before obstacles of every kind. He had faced danger and difficulty in combat; he had learned the power of Spanish weapons; he had taken the measure of the chiefs of both parties—and one must confess that he did not err in his calculations when he set himself above all of them. He was conscious of his superiority, and so did not hesitate to place himself at the head of the national party, if he could only inspire the same confidence in his compatriots. He discussed his project with men whose talents would be useful to him in the political direction of affairs, and henceforth he threw himself heart and soul into forming a plan that would offer guarantees to citizens and monarchists and at the same time would remove all cause for fear on the part of the Spaniards.

Anyone who examines the famous *Plan of Iguala* (so called because it was made public in that town for the first time), bearing in mind the circumstances of the Mexican nation at the time, will agree that it was a masterpiece of politics and wisdom. All the Mexicans desired *independence*, and this was the first basis of that document. The killings of Spaniards that had taken place, in reprisal for those that the Spaniards had committed during the past nine years, required a

preventive, so to speak, to put an end to such atrocious acts, which could not fail to arouse hostility among the 50,000 Spaniards who still resided in the country. It was necessary to make plain the intentions of the new chief in this respect. Accordingly, he seized upon the word *union* as expressing the solidarity that should exist between Creoles and Spaniards, regarded as citizens with the same rights. Finally, since the Catholic religion is the faith professed by all Mexicans, and since the clergy has a considerable influence in the country, the preservation of this church was also stated to be a fundamental basis, under the word *religion*. These three principles, *independence*, *union*, and *religion*, gave Iturbide's army its name of "the Army of the Three Guarantees." The representative monarchical system was established, and various articles stated the elementary principles of this form of government and the individual rights guaranteed to the people. Finally, the Spaniards were given freedom to leave the country with all their property. The expeditionary forces were offered the privilege of returning to Spain at the expense of the public treasury; those who chose to stay would be treated like Mexican soldiers. As can be seen, the plan reconciled all interests, and, raising New Spain to the rank of an independent nation, as was generally desired, with its immense benefits, it silenced for the time being the particular aspirations of those who wanted the *republic* on the one hand and the *absolute monarchy* on the other. All the sons of the country united around the principle of *nationality*, putting aside for the moment their different ideals. We shall soon see the sprouting of these germs of ideas, as yet enveloped in mists or suppressed by the great matter of the common cause.

Don Agustín de Iturbide made all these preparations in the greatest secrecy, and to conceal his projects more effectively he entered or pretended to enter the church of San Felipe Neri to take part in religious exercises. There, it is said, was framed the document I mentioned. This display of piety, and the prudence and reserve with which he managed the affair, inspired the viceroy, who also was devout, to entrust him with the command of a small division assigned to pursue Don Vicente Guerrero, whose forces had increased considerably after the arrival of the news of the Spanish revolution. At the end of the year 1820 Colonel Iturbide set out from Mexico City, charged with the destruction of Guerrero but actually intending to join him at the first opportunity to work with him for the achievement of national independence. A few days after his departure from the capital, Iturbide drew near to Guerrero's camp. The latter had routed Colonel Berdejo, also sent out in his pursuit, in a minor clash, and this provided Iturbide with an opportunity to send Guerrero a letter inviting the patriot leader to abandon the enterprise that had cost the country so much futile bloodshed: "Now that the King of Spain has offered liberal institutions and confirmed the social guarantees of the people, taking an oath to support the Constitution of 1812,

the Mexicans will enjoy a just equality, and we shall be treated like free men." He added: "The victories that you have recently gained over the government forces should not inspire you with confidence in future triumphs, for you know that the fortunes of war are mutable, and that the government possesses great resources."

This letter was written very artfully, for at the same time that it suggested a desire to enter into agreements and relations with the insurgents it aroused no suspicion in the viceroy, who interpreted it as reflecting the same policy that had been so useful to him in pacifying the country. Presumably the persons employed by Iturbide to deliver these letters carried private instructions explaining his intentions. General Guerrero replied, with the energy that he always showed in defending the cause of independence and liberty, that he was resolved "to continue defending the national honor, until victory or death"; that he was "not to be deceived by the flattering promise of liberty given by the Spanish constitutionalists, who in the matter of independence [hold] the same views as the most diehard royalists; that the Spanish constitution [offers] no guarantees to the Americans." He reminded Iturbide of the exclusion of the castes [hierarchy of racial categories] in the Cadiz constitution; of the diminution of the American representatives; and, finally, of the indifference of the viceroys to these liberal laws. He concluded by exhorting Iturbide to join the national party, and invited him to take command of the national armies, of which Guerrero himself was then the leader. The vigorous tone of this letter, the sound observations that it contained, the convincing logic of its judgments, produced an astounding effect upon the Mexicans. Iturbide needed no persuasion; we have seen him depart from Mexico City with the intent of proclaiming the independence of the country, and the only matter left unsettled was the precise method of beginning the work, with himself as the leader of the daring enterprise.

He received this letter in January 1821, and replied to General Guerrero, in a few lines, that he wished to "confer with [him] about the means of working together for the welfare of the kingdom" and hoped that he (Guerrero) "would be fully satisfied concerning his intentions." An agreement was reached for an interview between the two men. [Eds: Historians are not in agreement concerning the time of the first meeting between Iturbide and Guerrero.] General Guerrero himself supplied me with details of what took place at this meeting. The conference was held in a town in the State of Mexico. . . . The two chiefs approached each other with some mutual distrust, although that of Guerrero was plainly the more justified. Iturbide had waged a cruel and bloody war on the independents since 1810. The Spanish leaders themselves hardly equaled this unnatural American in cruelty; and to see him transformed as if by magic into a defender of the cause that he had combated, would naturally arouse suspicions in men like the Mexican insurgents, who had often been the victims of

their own credulity and of repeated betrayals. Nevertheless, Iturbide, though sanguinary, inspired confidence by the conscientiousness with which he proceeded in all matters. He was not believed capable of an act of treachery that would stain his reputation for valor and noble conduct. For himself, he had very little to fear from General Guerrero, a man distinguished from the beginning for his humanity and for his loyalty to the cause he was defending. The troops of both leaders were within cannon shot of each other; Iturbide and Guerrero met and embraced. Iturbide was the first to speak: "I cannot express the satisfaction I feel at meeting a patriot who has supported the noble cause of independence and who alone has survived so many disasters, keeping alive the sacred flame of liberty. Receive this just homage to your valor and to your virtues." Guerrero, who also was deeply moved, replied: "Sir, I congratulate my country, which on this day recovers a son whose valor and ability have caused her such grievous injury." Both leaders seemed to feel the strain of this memorable event; both shed tears of strong emotion. After Iturbide had revealed his plans and ideas to Señor Guerrero, that leader summoned his troops and officers, and Iturbide did the same. When both armies had been joined, Guerrero addressed himself to his soldiers, saying: "Soldiers: The Mexican who appears before you is Don Agustín de Iturbide, whose sword wrought such grave injury for nine years to the cause we are defending. Today he swears to defend the national interests; and I, who have led you in combat, and whose loyalty to the cause of independence you cannot doubt, am the first to acknowledge Señor Iturbide as the chief of the national armies. Long live independence! Long live liberty!" From that moment everyone acknowledged the new leader as general-in-chief, and he now dispatched to the viceroy a declaration of his views and of the step he had taken. Iturbide sent General Guerrero to seize a convoy of Manila merchants bound for the port of Acapulco with 750,000 pesos; he himself set out for the town of Iguala, forty leagues to the south of Mexico City, where he published the plan which I have outlined. The Spanish troops began to leave Iturbide's division, but the old patriot detachments began to reassemble everywhere to come to his aid.

All Mexico was set in motion by the declaration of Iguala. Apodaca immediately ordered General [Pascual] Liñán to march with a large division against the new leader, to strangle in its cradle this movement of threatening aspect. But this was not the tumultuous cry of Dolores of 1810; the viceroy was not dealing with a disorderly mob of Indians armed with sickles, stones, and slings and sending up the confused cry "Death to the *gachupines* [a disparaging term for immigrants from Spain]; long live Our Lady of Guadalupe!" He faced a chief of proven bravery, who, supported by the national will and followed by trained leaders, spoke in the name of the people and demanded rights with which they were well acquainted.... While this chief was making extraordinary progress in the provinces, the capital

was in the greatest confusion. The Spaniards residing in Mexico City attributed the successes of Iturbide to the ineptitude of [Viceroy Juan José Ruiz de] Apodaca, who a short time before, according to them, had been the peacemaker, the tutelar angel, of New Spain; now this same man suddenly turned into an imbecile incapable of governing. They stripped him of his command, replacing him with the Brigadier Francisco Novella. This fact alone suffices to give an idea of the state of confusion in which the last defenders of the Spanish government found themselves. Reduced to the support of the expeditionary forces, the dying colonial regime immediately revealed the poverty of its resources. . . . Of the 14,000 soldiers sent to defend the imaginary rights of the Spanish government, only 6,000, at the most, remained—and what could they do against the Mexican army, which numbered at least 50,000 men? Arms, discipline—everything was equal except morale, which naturally was very poor among troops suddenly transported to a strange land, two thousand leagues away from their country. . . . Was it surprising that they surrendered, in view of the situation? Thus, between the end of February, when Iturbide proclaimed his Plan of Iguala, and September 27, when he made his triumphant entry into Mexico City, only six months and some days elapsed, with no other memorable actions than the sieges of Durango, Querétaro, Cordóba, and the capital. It was at this time that General Antonio López de Santa Anna, then lieutenant colonel, began to distinguish himself.

7. A LETTER TO DOM PEDRO

Brazil made a swift and relatively bloodless transition to independence. The immediate causes of separation were the efforts of a jealous Portuguese cortes to revoke the liberties and concessions Brazilians had won since 1808 and to force the prince regent, Dom Pedro, out of Brazil. Messages of support from juntas throughout the country, such as the following 1822 message from the junta of São Paulo, encouraged the prince to defy the Lisbon government and to issue his famous "fico" ("I remain").

We had already written to Your Royal Highness, before we received the extraordinary gazette of the 11th instant, by the last courier: and we had hardly fixed our eyes on the first decree of the Cortes concerning the organization of the governments of the provinces of Brazil, when a noble indignation fired our hearts:

Cited in Maria Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, and 1823* (London, 1824), pp. 174–177. Accessible at <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015073755186;view=lup;seq=9>.

because we saw impressed on it a system of anarchy and slavery. But the second, in conformity to which Your Royal Highness is to go back to Portugal, in order to travel incognito only through Spain, France, and England, inspired us with horror.

They aim at no less than disuniting us, weakening us, and in short, leaving us like miserable orphans, tearing from the bosom of the great family of Brazil the only common father who remained to us, after they had deprived Brazil of the beneficent founder of the kingdom, Your Royal Highness's august sire. They deceive themselves; we trust in God, who is the avenger of injustice; He will give us courage, and wisdom.

If, by the 21st article of the basis of the constitution, which we approve and swear to because it is founded on universal and public right, the deputies of Portugal were bound to agree that the constitution made at Lisbon could then be obligatory on the Portuguese resident in that kingdom; and, that, as for those in the other three parts of the world, it should only be binding when their legitimate representatives should have declared such to be their will: How dare those deputies of Portugal, without waiting for those of Brazil, legislate concerning the most sacred interest of each province, and of the entire kingdom? How dare they split it into detached portions, each isolated, and without leaving a common centre of strength and union? How dare they rob Your Royal Highness of the lieutenancy, granted by Your Royal Highness's august father, the King? How dare they deprive Brazil of the privy council, the board of conscience, the court of exchequer, the board of commerce, the court of requests, and so many other recent establishments, which promised such future advantage? Where now shall the wretched people resort in behalf of their civil and judicial interests? Must they now again, after being for twelve years accustomed to judgment at hand, go and suffer, like petty colonists, the delays and chicanery of the tribunals of Lisbon, across two thousand leagues of ocean, where the sighs of the oppressed lose all life and all hope? Who would credit it, after so many bland, but deceitful expressions of reciprocal equality and future happiness!

In the session of the 6th of August last, the deputy of the Cortes, Pereira do Carmo, said (and he spoke the truth) that the constitution was the social compact, in which were expressed and declared the conditions on which a nation might wish to constitute itself a body politic: and that the end of that constitution is the general good of each individual who is to enter into that social compact. How then dares a mere fraction of the great Portuguese nation, without waiting for the conclusion of this solemn national compact, attack the general good of the principal part of the same, and such is the vast and rich kingdom of Brazil; dividing it into miserable fragments, and, in a word, attempting to tear from its bosom the representative of the executive power, and to annihilate by a stroke of the pen, all the tribunals and establishments necessary to its existence

and future prosperity? This unheard-of despotism, this horrible political perjury, was certainly not merited by the good and generous Brazil. But the enemies of order in the Cortes of Lisbon deceive themselves if they imagine that they can thus, by vain words and hollow professions, delude the good sense of the worthy Portuguese of both worlds.

Your Royal Highness will observe that, if the kingdom of Ireland, which makes part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, besides that it is infinitely small compared to the vast kingdom of Brazil, and is separated from England but by a narrow arm of the sea, which is passed in a few hours, yet possesses a governor-general or viceroy, who represents the executive power of the King of the United Kingdom, how can it enter the head of anyone who is not either profoundly ignorant, or rashly inconsiderate, to pretend, that the vast kingdom of Brazil, should remain without a center of activity, and without a representative of the executive power; and equally without a power to direct our troops, so as that they may operate with celerity and effect, to defend the state against any unforeseen attack of external enemies, or against internal disorders and factions, which might threaten public safety, or the reciprocal union of the province!

We therefore entreat Your Royal Highness with the greatest fervor, tenderness, and respect to delay your return to Europe, where they wish to make you travel as a pupil surrounded by tutors and spies: We entreat you to confide boldly in the love and fidelity of your Brazilians, and especially of your Paulistas [residents of São Paulo], who are all ready to shed the last drop of their blood, and to sacrifice their fortunes, rather than lose the adored Prince in whom they have placed their well-founded hopes of national happiness and honor. Let Your Royal Highness wait at least for the deputies named by this province, and for the magistracy of this capital, who will as soon as possible present to Your Highness our ardent desires and firm resolutions; and deign to receive them, and to listen to them, with the affection and attention, which your Paulistas deserve from you.

May God preserve your Royal Highness's august person many years.

8. MEMORIES OF INDEPENDENCE: THE SINS OF THE FATHER

Miguel Hidalgo (1753–1811), the scholarly, white-haired priest of the town of Dolores and onetime rector of the college of San Nicolás Valladolid, hardly seemed fitted by background and disposition to head a revolution. It was

Searching for a New Road

The Spanish American wars of independence inspired sharp rhetorical attacks on Spain's work in America. Bolívar, for example, claimed that Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas—renowned "Protector of the Indians" in the decades immediately following the conquest—had seen America bathed "with the blood of more than twenty million victims." After independence the Spanish colonial legacy became a major issue in the political struggles of the new states. Liberals condemned Spanish tyranny, obscurantism, and backwardness and insisted on the need to liquidate the colonial heritage; conservatives, who often recalled the old social order with nostalgia, offered at least a partial defense of Spain's colonial rule.

These differences among Spanish American elites produced a long, uphill struggle to achieve stable societies. The new states lacked a strong middle class, experience in self-government, and the other advantages the United States enjoyed at independence. The result was an age of violence, dictatorship, and revolution. Its symbol was the *caudillo* (strong man) whose power was based on authoritarian practices, no matter what the constitutional form. The *caudillos* played a crucial mediating role in the struggles between political parties, usually called Conservative and Liberal, which were active in most of the new states. Conservatism drew its main support from the landed aristocracy, the Church, and the military; liberalism attracted the merchants, provincial landowners, and professional men of the towns. Regional conflicts often cut across the lines of social cleavage, complicating the political picture.

As a rule, the Conservatives favored a highly centralized government and the social arrangements of the colonial era; the Liberals, inspired by the success of the

United States, advocated a federal form of government, guarantees of individual rights, lay control of education, and an end to special privileges for the clergy and the military. Neither party displayed much interest in the problems of the landless, debt-ridden peasantry who formed the majority of almost every nation.

Independent Brazil made a relatively easy and rapid transition to a stable political order. The troubled reign of Dom Pedro I (1822–1831) and the stormy years of the Regency (1831–1840) were followed by the long and serene reign of Dom Pedro II (1840–1889). Brazil's ruling class of great landowners deliberately sacrificed disruptive promises of "liberty" for solemn assurances of order and security, and vested the young emperor, called to rule at the age of fifteen, with virtually absolute power. The generally upward movement of Brazilian economic life and the considerable political skills of the emperor contributed to the success with which the system functioned for half a century.

1. THE FATAL LEGACY

In the decades after independence, Latin American leaders debated which road their countries should take to reach the goals of economic progress and political stability. Liberals looked to the United States, England, and France as models of dynamic advance; conservatives proposed to retain those features of the colonial regime not incompatible with the new republican order: the supremacy of the Catholic Church, clerical control of education, a hierarchical society with special privileges for the clergy and military, and the like. In 1844 two ardent liberals startled the staid conservative society of Santiago with their contributions to the debate. Francisco Bilbao (1823–1865) threw a bombshell with his famous essay on "The Nature of Chilean Society," in which he declared, "Slavery, degradation: that is the past. . . . Our past is Spain. Spain is the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages are composed, body and soul, of Catholicism and feudalism." Bilbao was tried and condemned for blasphemy, sedition, and immorality; he lost his university chair, and his book was officially burned by the public hangman. (See Excerpt 4, this chapter, for Bilbao's unfavorable opinion of post-independence governments.) That same year, José Victorino Lastarria (1817–1888), more moderate and scholarly, caused a lesser stir with a public address "Investigations on the Social Influence of the Conquest and the Colonial System of the Spaniards in Chile." Despite an occasional factual

José Victorino Lastarria, "Investigaciones sobre la influencia social de la Conquista y del sistema colonial de los españoles en Chile," in *Obras completas*, vol. 7 (Santiago de Chile, 1909), pp. 44–69. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

the least possible friction between the popular will and the constituted public authority. The science of achieving this balance is acquired almost imperceptibly, through practice and study. Progress in the practice of this science is hastened by progress in the enlightenment of the people, and integrity of mind and spirit needs the progress of enlightenment.

Love of country, love of law, and respect for magistrates are the exalted emotions that must permeate the soul of a republic. The Venezuelans love their country, but they cannot love her laws, because these, being sources of evil, have been harmful; neither can they respect their magistrates, as they have been unjust, while the new administrators are scarcely known in the calling which they have just entered. Unless there is a sacred reverence for country, laws, and authority, society becomes confused, an abyss—an endless conflict of man versus man, group versus group.

All our moral powers will not suffice to save our infant republic from this chaos unless we fuse the mass of the people, the government, the legislation, and the national spirit into a single united body. Unity, unity, unity must be our motto in all things. The blood of our citizens is varied: let it be mixed for the sake of unity. Our Constitution has divided the powers of government: let them be bound together to secure unity. Our laws are but a sad relic of ancient and modern despotism. Let this monstrous edifice crumble and fall; and, having removed even its ruins, let us erect a temple to Justice; and, guided by its sacred inspiration, let us write a code of Venezuelan laws....

I pray you, Legislators, receive with indulgence this profession of my political faith, these innermost yearnings of my heart, these fervent pleas, which, on behalf of the people, I venture to place before you. I pray you, grant to Venezuela a government preeminently popular, preeminently just, preeminently moral; one that will suppress anarchy, oppression, and guilt—a government that will usher in the reign of innocence, humanity, and peace; a government wherein the rule of inexorable law will signify the triumph of equality and freedom.

Gentlemen: you may begin your labors, I have finished mine.

4. THE AGE OF VIOLENCE

"There is no good faith in America," wrote Bolívar in 1829, "nor among the nations of America. Treaties are scraps of paper; constitutions, printed matter; elections, battles; freedom, anarchy; and life, a torment." Many Spanish

American observers echoed Bolívar's cry of despair during the chaotic half century that followed independence. Nearly twenty years after delivering the damning condemnation of Spanish imperialism mentioned in the introduction to the first excerpt in this chapter, Chilean liberal, Francisco Bilbao (1823–1865), subjected republican government in Latin America to an equally damning critique in his 1862 essay *America in Danger*.

The conquest of power is the supreme goal. This leads to the immoral doctrine that "the end justifies the means." . . . But since there are constitutional provisions that guarantee everyone his rights, and I cannot violate them, I invoke the system of "preserving the form."

If the Constitution declares: "Thought is free," I add: "within the limits established by law"—and since the law referred to is not the constitutional provision but one that was issued afterwards, I inscribe in it the exceptions of Figaro. "Thought is free," but there can be no discussion of dogma or exposition of systems that attack morality. And who is to judge? A commission or jury named in the last analysis by the authorities. And we have the colonial "censorship" reestablished under the guise of the freest institution of all, the jury. Sublime victory of duplicity! "But the form has been preserved."

The electoral power is the only power exercised by the "sovereign people," and it exercises this power not to make the laws but to select the persons who will make them. Very well. The majority vote, then is the expression . . . of the popular will.

That is the basis of republican power, and that is why free and legitimate elections establish the legitimacy of power.

The election is free, it is said; but what if I control the election returns? What if I, the established power, name the inspector of the election returns, if the law permits one to vote twenty times a day in the same election? What if I dominate the elections and frighten my opponents away with impunity?

What happens then? Why, the government is perpetuated in office, and the popular will is flouted and swindled.

But "the form has been preserved," and long live free elections!

"The domicile is inviolable," but I violate it, adding: "save in the cases determined by law." And the "cases" are determined in the last analysis by the party in power.

"The death penalty in political cases is abolished," but I shoot prisoners because I consider that these are not "political cases"; and since I am the infallible authority I declare that these political prisoners are bandits, and "the form has been preserved."

The Executive can be accused before the Chamber of Deputies and is subject to impeachment for one year after leaving office.

But that Chamber has been selected by me, and functions for one year after my departure. The persons who must judge me are my employees, my protégés, my creatures, my accomplices. Will they condemn me? No. Nor will they dare to accuse me. I am vindicated, and the "form" has saved me. Montt smiles over the bodies of his eight thousand victims. [Eds: The reference is to the Chilean Liberal revolt of 1851, crushed by the administration of President Manuel Montt with a heavy loss of life.]

"The press is free." But I name the jury, and, backed by the authority of that free institution, I can accuse, harass, persecute; I can silence free speech. Then there reigns, absolute and sovereign, the opinion of one party. I spread the shroud of infamy over the corpse of the vanquished and cry: "The press is free!"

All liberal publicists, it can be said, accept the doctrine of "the separation of powers," as indispensable for the safety of the Republic.

But if the Executive has the power to name the judges; if the Executive participates in the framing of the laws; if the Executive can use the electoral law to name the members of Congress, what remains, in the last analysis, of the famous separation of powers?

"The guarantees established by this constitution cannot be suspended." But if I have the power to declare a province or the Republic in a state of siege, authorized to do so, as in Chile, by a "Council of State" appointed by the President, what security can a citizen have?

This miserable Machiavellianism has "preserved the forms" at the cost of plunging Chile into bloodshed and reaction for a space of thirty years.

There is discussion, the press is free; citizens come together, for they have the right of assembly; an enlightened public opinion almost unanimously clamors for reforms; preparations are made for elections that will bring to power representatives of the reform movement; and then the Executive Power declares the province or the Republic in a state of siege, and the suspended guarantees soar over the abyss of "legal" dictatorship and constitutional despotism!

And then? Either resignation or despair, or civil war, etc., etc. Then revolution raises its terrible banner, and blood flows in battles and on scaffolds. Respect for law and authority is lost, and only force holds sway, proclaiming its triumph to be that of liberty and justice. . . .

We have seen that our republican constitutions bear in themselves the germ of "legal despotism," a monstrous association of words that well describes the prostitution of the law. And since despotism, being "legal," is vindicated, the result is that the sentiment of justice is erased from the consciences of men.

Its place is taken by sophistry, duplicity, and intrigue, used to win power at all cost, for power legitimizes everything. . . .

Experience proves that in the legal combat of the parties the party in power always gains the victory. Experience shows that the party that conducts itself loyally is swindled and routed. What can be the result of this state of affairs? That justice is forgotten, and success becomes justice. To win, then, is the supreme desideratum.

Then the debased conscience alters even the countenances of men, and their words, in the expression of [French diplomat] Talleyrand, serve only "to mask their thought."

Then chaos emerges. Words change their meaning, the tongues of men become as twisted as serpents, their speech grows pompous and hollow, the language of the press is like the tinsel thrown on a grave to adorn "a feast of worms," and the prostitution of the word crowns the evolution of the lie.

The conservative calls himself a progressive.

The liberal protests that he is a loyal Catholic.

The Catholic swears by liberty.

The democrat invokes dictatorship, like the rebels in the United States, and defends slavery.

The reactionary asserts that he wants reform.

The educated man proclaims the doctrine that "all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds."

The "civilized man" demands the extermination of the Indians or of the gauchos. [Eds: This is an ironic reference to D. F. Sarmiento's book, *Civilization and Barbarism: The Life of Juan Facundo Quiroga*; see next excerpt.]

The "man of principles" demands that principles yield to the principle of the public good. There is proclaimed, not the sovereignty of justice, presiding over the sovereignty of the people, but the sovereignty of "the end"—which legitimizes every "means."

The absolutist proclaims himself the savior of society.

And if it governs with coups d'état, states of siege, or permanent or transitory dictatorships, while the constitutional guarantees are flouted, mocked, or suppressed, the party in power will tell you: civilization has triumphed over barbarism, authority over anarchy, virtue over crime, truth over the lie. . . .

We have behind us a half century of independence from Spain. How many years of true liberty have any of the new nations enjoyed?

That is difficult to say; it is easier to reckon the years of anarchy and despotism that they have endured.

Shall Paraguay be the "model" with its forty years of dictatorship?

Or shall it be the Argentine Republic, with its provincial and national dictatorships, culminating in the twenty-year tyranny of [Governor of Buenos Aires Province Juan Manuel de] Rosas?

And who knows what is to come?

Shall it be Chile, beginning with the dictatorship of [Supreme Director Bernardo] O'Higgins and continuing with an intermittent dictatorship of thirty consecutive years?

Shall it be Bolivia, with its terrifying succession of sanguinary dictatorships?

Shall it be Peru, which has had more dictators than legal presidents?

Shall it be Ecuador, with its twenty years of the dictatorship of [President Juan José] Flores?

Shall it be New Granada? And there one almost finds the exception, but [President José María] Obando, the liberal legal president, was "overthrown for being a dictator."

Shall it be Venezuela, with its twenty years of Monagas? [Eds: Bilbao is likely referring to the brothers José Tadeo Monagas and José Gregorio Monagas, who dominated mid-nineteenth-century Venezuelan politics and ruled the country as presidents from 1847 to 1858.]

Shall it be the little republics of Central America, and even Mexico? But this will suffice.

And these dictatorships have proclaimed all the principles.

The *pelucones* [Eds: "bigwigs," the nickname given to Chilean conservatives by their liberal opponents in the period after the winning of independence], the conservatives, the reds, the liberals, the democrats, the Unitarians, the Federalists, all have embraced dictatorship. With the best of intentions the parties genially proclaim: "dictatorship in order to do good."

That is to say: despotism in order to secure liberty.

Terrible and logical contradiction!

5. CIVILIZATION AND BARBARISM: FACUNDO QUIROGA

The caudillo appeared in many guises. In his polemical 1845 biography of Juan Facundo Quiroga (1788–1835), a rural caudillo from the Argentine

D. F. Sarmiento, *Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants: Or Civilization and Barbarism*, trans. Mrs. Horace Mann (New York, 1868), pp. 76–90. Accessible at <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:/13960/t27943b39;view=1up;seq=1>.

province of La Rioja, future president Domingo Sarmiento (1811–1888), a prominent member of the liberal Unitarian opposition, depicted him as a barbarian whose rule represented dictatorship in its crudest, most lawless form. For Sarmiento, a cultural divide between the forces of civilization and barbarism characterized most early nineteenth-century Latin American societies. In Argentina, liberal Unitarians like Sarmiento and Esteban Echeverría (author of the next excerpt) represented themselves as the civilizing impulse necessary to the development of modern nation-states, while Federalists like Facundo and Juan Manuel de Rosas (1793–1877), governor of Buenos Aires Province and head of the Argentine Federation (which included La Rioja), embodied a backward-looking barbarism that encouraged the worst traits of a society that had yet to overcome the legacy of colonial oppression.

Facundo, as he was long called in the interior—or General Don Facundo Quiroga, as he afterwards became, when society had received him into its bosom and victory had crowned him with laurels—was a stoutly built man of low stature, whose short neck and broad shoulders supported a well-shaped head, covered with a profusion of black and closely curling hair. His somewhat oval face was half buried in this mass of hair and an equally thick black, curly beard, rising to his cheek-bones, which by their prominence evinced a firm and tenacious will. His black and fiery eyes, shadowed by thick eyebrows, occasioned an involuntary sense of terror in those on whom they chanced to fall, for Facundo's glance was never direct, whether from habit or intention. With the design of making himself always formidable, he always kept his head bent down.... To conclude, his features were regular, and the pale olive of his complexion harmonized well with the dense shadows which surrounded it.

The formation of his head showed, notwithstanding this shaggy covering, the peculiar organization of a man born to rule.... Such natures develop according to the society in which they originate, and are either noble leaders who hold the highest place in history, ever forwarding the progress of civilization, or the cruel and vicious tyrants who become the scourges of their race and time.

Facundo Quiroga was the son of an inhabitant of San Juan, who had settled in the Llanos of La Rioja, and there had acquired a fortune in pastoral pursuits. In 1779, Facundo was sent to his father's native province to receive the limited education, consisting only of the arts of reading and writing, which he could acquire in its schools. After a man has come to employ the hundred trumpets of fame with the noise of his deeds, curiosity or the spirit of investigation is carried to such an extent as to scent out the insignificant history of the child, in order to connect it with the biography of the hero: and it is not seldom that the rudiments of the traits characteristic of the historical personage are met amid fables invented by flattery....

Many anecdotes are now in circulation relating to Facundo, many of which reveal his true nature. In the house where he lodged, he could never be induced to take his seat at the family table; in school he was haughty, reserved, and unsocial; he never joined the other boys except to head their rebellious proceedings or to beat them. The master, tired of contending with so untamable a disposition, on one occasion provided himself with a new and stiff strap, and said to the frightened boys, as he showed it to them, "This is to be made supple upon Facundo." Facundo, then eleven years old, heard this threat, and the next day he tested its value. Without having learned his lesson, he asked the headmaster to hear it himself, because, as he said, the assistant was unfriendly to him. The master complied with the request. Facundo made one mistake, then two, three, and four; upon which the master used his strap upon him. Facundo, who had calculated everything, down to the weakness of the chair in which the master was seated, gave him a buffet, upset him on his back, and, taking to the street in the confusion created by this scene, hid himself among some wild vines where they could not get him out for three days. Was not such a boy the embryo chieftain who would afterwards defy society at large?....

Facundo reappears later in Buenos Aires, where he was enrolled in 1810 as a recruit in the regiment of Arribenos, which was commanded by General [Francisco Ortiz de] Ocampo, a native of his own province, and afterwards president of Charcas. The glorious career of arms opened before him with the first rays of the sun of May; and doubtless, endowed with such capacity as his, and with his destructive and sanguinary instincts, Facundo, could he have been disciplined to submit to civil authority and ennobled in the sublimity of the object of the strife, might someday have returned from Peru, Chile, or Bolivia, as a General of the Argentine Republic, like so many other brave gauchos who began their careers in the humble position of a private soldier. But Quiroga's rebellious spirit could not endure the yoke of discipline, the order of the barrack, or the delay of promotion. He felt his destiny to be to rule, to rise at a single leap, to create for himself, without assistance, and in spite of a hostile and civilized society, a career of his own, combining bravery and crime, government and disorganization. He was subsequently recruited into the army of the Andes, and enrolled in the Mounted Grenadiers. A lieutenant named Garcia took him for an assistant, and very soon desertion left a vacant place in those glorious files. Quiroga, like Rosas, like all the vipers that have thriven under the shade of their country's laurels, made himself notorious in after-life by his hatred for the soldiers of Independence, among whom both the men above named made horrible slaughter.

Facundo, after deserting from Buenos Aires, set out for the interior with three comrades. A squad of soldiery overtook him; he faced the pursuers and engaged in a real battle with them, which remained undecided for a while, until,

after having killed four or five men, he was at liberty to continue his journey, constantly cutting his way through detachments of troops which here and there opposed his progress, until he arrived at San Luis. He was, at a later day, to traverse the same route with a handful of men to disperse armies instead of detachments, and proceed to the famous citadel of Tucumán to blot out the last remains of Republicanism and civil order.

Facundo now reappears in the Llanos, at his father's house. At this period occurred an event which is well attested. Yet one of the writers whose manuscripts I am using, replies to an inquiry about the matter, "that to the extent of his knowledge Quiroga never attempted forcibly to deprive his parents of money," and I could wish to adopt this statement, irreconcilable as it is with unvarying tradition and general consent. The contrary is shocking to relate. It is said that on his father's refusal to give him a sum of money which he had demanded, he watched for the time when both parents were taking an afternoon nap to fasten the door of the room they occupied, and to set fire to the straw roof, which was the usual covering of the building of the Llanos! [Original footnote: The author (Sarmiento) afterwards learned that Facundo related this story to a company of ladies, and one of his own early acquaintances testified to his having given his father a blow on one occasion.]

But what is certain in the matter is that his father once requested the governor of La Rioja to arrest him in order to check his excesses, and that Facundo, before taking flight from the Llanos, went to the city of La Rioja, where that official was to be found at the time, and coming upon him by surprise, gave him a blow, saying as he did so, "You have sent, sir, to have me arrested. There, have me arrested now!" On which he mounted his horse and set off for the open country at a gallop. At the end of a year he again showed himself at his father's house, threw himself at the feet of the old man whom he had used so ill, and succeeded amid the sobs of both, and the son's assurances of his reform in reply to the father's recriminations, in reestablishing peace, although on a very uncertain basis.

But no change occurred in his character and disorderly habits; races, gambling parties, and expeditions into the country were the occasions of new acts of violence, stabbings, and assaults on his part, until he at length made himself intolerable to all, and rendered his own position very unsafe. Then a great thought which he announced without shame got hold of his mind. The deserter from the Arribenos regiment, the mounted grenadier who refused to make himself immortal at Chacabuco or Maipú, determined to join the *montonera* of Ramírez, the offshoot from that led by Artigas, whose renown for crime and hatred for the cities on which it was making war, had reached the Llanos, and held the provincial government in dread. Facundo set forth to join those buccaneers of the pampa. But perhaps the knowledge of his character, and of the

importance of the aid which he would give to the destroyers, alarmed his fellow provincials, for they informed the authorities of San Luis, through which he was to pass, of his infernal design. Dupuis, then (1818) governor, arrested him, and for some time he remained unnoticed among the criminals confined in the prison. This prison of San Luis, however, was to be the first step in his ascent to the elevation which he subsequently attained. San Martín had sent to San Luis a great number of Spanish officers of all ranks from among the prisoners taken in Chile. Irritated by their humiliations and sufferings or thinking it possible that the Spanish forces might be assembled again this party of prisoners rose one day and opened the doors of the cells of the common criminals, to obtain their aid in a general escape. Facundo was one of these criminals, and as soon as he found himself free from prison, he seized an iron bar of his fetters, split the skull of the very Spaniard who had released him, and passing through the group of insurgents, left a wide path strewn with the dead. Some say that the weapon he employed was a bayonet, and that only three men were killed by it. Quiroga, however, always talked of the iron bar of the fetters, and of fourteen dead men. This may be one of the fictions with which the poetic imagination of the people adorns the types of brute force they so much admire; perhaps the tale of the iron bar is an Argentine version of the jaw-bone of Samson, the Hebrew Hercules. But Facundo looked upon it as a crown of glory, in accordance with his idea of excellence, and whether by bar or bayonet, he succeeded, aided by other soldiers and prisoners whom his example encouraged, in suppressing the insurrection and reconciling society to himself by this act of bravery, and placing himself under his country's protection. Thus his name spread everywhere, ennobled and cleansed, though with blood, from the stains which had tarnished it.

Facundo returned to La Rioja covered with glory, his country's creditor: and with testimonials of his conduct, to show in the Llanos, among gauchos, the new titles which justified the terror his name began to inspire; for there is something imposing, something which subjugates and controls others in the man who is rewarded for the assassination of fourteen men at one time. . . .

Something still remains to be noticed of the previous character and temper of this pillar of the Confederation. An illiterate man, one of Quiroga's companions in childhood and youth, who has supplied me with many of the above facts, sends me the following curious statements in a manuscript describing Quiroga's early years: "His public career was not preceded by the practice of theft; he never committed robbery even in his most pressing necessities. He was not only fond of fighting, but would pay for an opportunity, or for a chance to insult the most renowned champion in any company. He had a great aversion to respectable men. He never drank. He was very reserved from his youth, and desired to inspire others with awe as well as with fear, for which purpose he gave his

confidants to understand that he had the gift of prophecy, in short a soothsayer. He treated all connected with him as slaves. He never went to confession, prayed, or heard mass; I saw him once at mass after he became a general. He said of himself that he believed in nothing." The frankness with which these words are written prove their truth....

Facundo is a type of primitive barbarism. He recognized no form of subjection. His rage was that of a wild beast. The locks of his crisp black hair, which fell in meshes over his brow and eyes, resembled the snakes of Medusa's head. Anger made his voice hoarse, and turned his glances into dragons. In a fit of passion he kicked out the brains of a man with whom he had quarreled at play. He tore off both the ears of a woman he had lived with, and had promised to marry, upon her asking him for thirty dollars for the celebration of the wedding; and laid open his son Juan's head with an axe, because he could not make him hold his tongue. He violently beat a beautiful young lady at Tucumán, whom he failed either to seduce or to subdue, and exhibited in all his actions a low and brutal yet not a stupid nature, or one wholly without lofty aims. Incapable of commanding noble admiration, he delighted in exciting fear; and this pleasure was exclusive and dominant with him to the arranging [of] all his actions so as to produce terror in those around him, whether it was society in general, the victim on his way to execution, or his own wife and children. Wanting ability to manage the machinery of civil government, he substituted terror for patriotism and self sacrifice. Destitute of learning, he surrounded himself with mysteries, and pretended to a foreknowledge of events which gave him prestige and reputation among the commonalty, supporting his claims by an air of impenetrability, by natural sagacity, an uncommon power of observation, and the advantage he derived from vulgar credulity.

The repertory of anecdotes relating to Quiroga, and with which the popular memory is replete, is inexhaustible; his sayings, his expedients, bear the stamp of an originality which gives them a certain Eastern aspect, a certain tint of Solomonic wisdom in the conception of the vulgar. Indeed, how does Solomon's advice for discovering the true mother of the disputed child differ from Facundo's method of detecting a thief in the following instances: An article had been stolen from a band, and all endeavors to discover the thief had proved fruitless. Quiroga drew up the troop and gave orders for the cutting of as many small wands of equal length as there were soldiers; then, having had these wands distributed one to each man, he said in a confident voice, "The man whose wand will be longer than the others tomorrow morning is the thief." Next day the troop was again paraded, and Quiroga proceeded to inspect the wands. There was one whose wand was, not longer but shorter than the others. "Wretch!" cried Facundo, in a voice which overpowered the man with dismay, "it is thou!" And so it was; the culprit's confusion was proof of the fact. The expedient was a simple one; the credulous gaucho,

fearing that his wand would really grow, had cut off a piece of it. But to avail one's self of such means, a man must be superior in intellect to those about him, and must at least have some knowledge of human nature.

Some portions of a soldier's accoutrements having been stolen and all inquiries having failed to detect the thief, Quiroga had the troops paraded and marched past him as he stood with crossed arms and a fixed, piercing, and terrible gaze. He had previously said, "I know the man," with an air of assurance not to be questioned. The review began, many men had passed, and Quiroga still remained motionless, like the statue of Jupiter Tonans or the God of the Last Judgment. All at once he descended upon one man, and said in a curt and dry voice, "Where is the saddle?" "Yonder, sir," replied the other, pointing to a thicket. "Ho! four fusileers!" cried Quiroga. What revelation was this? that of terror and guilt made to a man of sagacity.

On another occasion, when a gaucho was answering to charges of theft which had been brought against him, Facundo interrupted him with the words, "This rogue has begun to lie. Ho, there! a hundred lashes!" When the criminal had been taken away, Quiroga said to someone present, "Look you, my master, when a gaucho moves his foot while talking, it is a sign he is telling lies." The lashes extorted from the gaucho the confession that he had stolen a yoke of oxen.

At another time he was in need of a man of resolution and boldness to whom he could entrust a dangerous mission. When a man was brought to him for this purpose, Quiroga was writing; he raised his head after the man's presence had been repeatedly announced, looked at him and returned to his writing with the remark, "Pooh! that is a wretched creature. I want a brave man and a venturesome one!" It turned out to be true that the fellow was actually good for nothing.

Hundreds of such stories of Facundo's life, which show the man of superior ability, served effectually to give him a mysterious fame among the vulgar, who even attribute superior powers to him.

6. CIVILIZATION AND BARBARISM: THE DANGEROUS CLASSES

In the previous excerpt, Sarmiento focused on the "barbaric" rural caudillo Facundo Quiroga, but the best known of nineteenth-century Latin America's caudillos was another Argentine, Juan Manuel de Rosas (1793–1877), who

Esteban Echeverría, "El Matadero," in *Obras completas de D. Esteban Echeverría*, ed. Juan María Gutiérrez (Buenos Aires, Carlos Casavalle Editor, 1870–1874), pp. 209–242. Excerpt translated by the editors.

—“He had a river of blood in his veins,” noted another.

—“Poor devil: we only wanted to have some fun with him and he took things too seriously,” exclaimed the Judge frowning like a tiger. “We have to report it, untie him and let’s go.”

They verified the order, locked the door, and then the rabble set off behind the horse of the Judge, his head bowed and silent.

The Federals had concluded one of their innumerable glorious deeds.

In those days, the throat-slitting butchers of the Slaughterhouse were the apostles who spread Rosas’s federation with club and dagger—and it’s not difficult to imagine the federation that would come out of their heads and knives. They called Unitarians savage in accordance with the jargon invented by the Restorer, patron of the brotherhood. But for everyone who was not a throat-slitter, butcher, brute, or thief; for all decent, good-hearted men; for all educated, patriotic friends of enlightenment and liberty; and as the scene just described clearly reveals: the focal point of the federation was in the Slaughterhouse.

7. MEXICO CITY UNDER SANTA ANNA

Most descriptions of caudillo rule stress the brutality and instability of the period. In this 1841 letter, the Scottish-born wife of the Spanish ambassador, Frances Calderón de la Barca, provides an unexpected glimpse into the rich cultural and institutional life of Mexico City under Santa Anna. The practice of upper-class women touring and even sponsoring charitable institutions was an old one that transcended the political feuding and periodic pronunciamientos (revolts) that occupied their male counterparts. Toward the end of the excerpt, the letter refers to Santa Anna’s wooden leg. Lost in battle against foreign invaders, the leg was a symbol, at least to the caudillo’s loyal followers, of his sacrifice for the nation.

A great función was given in the opera in honor of his excellency [Santa Anna]. The theatre was most brilliantly illuminated with wax lights. Two principal boxes were thrown into one for the president and his suite, and lined with crimson and gold, with draperies of the same. The staircase leading to the second tier where this box was, was lighted by and lined all the way up with rows of footmen

Frances Calderón de la Barca, “Letter the Forty-Seventh,” in *Life in Mexico, During a Residency of Two Years in That Country*, 2 vols. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1843), 2: 272–299. Accessible at <https://archive.org/stream/lifeinmexicoduri02cald#page/n7/mode/2up>.

in crimson and gold livery. A crowd of gentlemen stood waiting in the lobby for the arrival of the hero of the fête. He came at last in regal state, carriages and outriders at full gallop; himself, staff and suite, in splendid uniform. As he entered, Señor Roca presented him with a libretto of the opera, bound in red and gold. We met the great man *en face*, and he stopped, and gave us a cordial recognition. Two years have made little change in him in appearance. He retains the same interesting, resigned, and rather melancholy expression; the same quiet voice, and grave but agreeable manner; and surrounded by pompous officers, he alone looked quiet, gentlemanly, and high bred. The theatre was crowded to suffocation; boxes, pit, and galleries. There was no applause as he entered. One solitary voice in the pit said "Viva Santa Anna!" but it seemed checked by a slight movement of disapprobation, scarcely amounting to a murmur....

The generals, in their scarlet and gold uniforms, sat like peacocks surrounding Santa Anna, who looked modest and retiring, and as if quite unaccustomed to the public gaze! The boxes were very brilliant—all the diamonds taken out for the occasion. His Excellency is by no means indifferent to beauty—*tout au contraire*; yet I dare say his thoughts were this night of things more warlike and less fair.

Let all this end as it may, let them give everything whatever name is most popular, the government is now a military dictatorship. Señor —— calls this revolution "the apotheosis of egotism transformed into virtue"; and it must be confessed, that in most of the actors, it has been a mere calculation of personal interests.

The following day we visited . . . the Hospital de Jesús. . . .

The establishment, as a hospital, is much finer, and the building infinitely handsomer than the other. The director, a physician, led us first into his own apartments, as the patients were dining, and afterwards showed us through the whole establishment. The first large hall, into which we were shown, is almost entirely occupied by soldiers, who had been wounded during the *pronunciamiento*. One had lost an arm, another a leg, and they looked sad and haggard enough, though they seemed perfectly well attended to, and, I dare say, did anything but bless the revolutions that brought them to that state, and with which they had nothing to do; for your Mexican soldier will lie down on his mat at night, a loyal man, and will waken in the morning and find himself a *pronunciado*. Each one had a separate room, or at least a compartment divided by curtains from the next; and in each was a bed, a chair, and a small table; this on one side of the long hall. The other was occupied by excellent hot and cold baths. We then visited the women's apartment, which is on a similar plan. Amongst the patients is an unfortunate child of eight years old, who in the *pronunciamiento* had been accidentally struck by a bullet, which entered her left temple and came out below the right eye, leaving her alive. The ball was extracted, and a portion of the brain came out at the wound. She is left blind, or nearly so, having but a faint glimmering of light. They

say she will probably live, which seems impossible. She looks like a galvanized corpse—yet must have been a good-looking child. Notwithstanding the nature of her wound, her reason has not gone, and she sat upright in her little bed, with her head bandaged, and her fixed and sightless eyes, she answered meekly and readily to all the questions we put to her. Poor little thing! she was shocking to look at; one of the many innocent beings whose lives are to be rendered sad and joyless by this revolution. The doctor seemed very kind to her. . . .

We went in the evening to visit the Cuna [orphanage], which is not a fine building, but a large, healthy, house. At the door, where there are a porter and his wife, the babies are now given in. Formerly they were put in at the *reja*, at the window of the porter's lodge; but this had to be given up, in consequence of the tricks played by boys or idle persons, who put in dogs, cats, or dead animals. As we were going upstairs, we heard an old woman singing a cheerful ditty in an awfully cracked voice, and as we got a full view of her before she could see us, we saw a clean, old body sitting, sewing and singing, while a baby rolling on the floor in a state of perfect ecstasy, was keeping up a sort of crowing duet with her. She seemed delighted to see these ladies, who belong to the *Junta*, and led us to a large hall where a score of nurses and babies were performing a symphony of singing, hushing, crying, lullabying, and other nursery music. All along the room were little green painted beds, and both nurses and babies looked clean and healthy. The ——s knew every baby and nurse and directress by name. Some of the babies were remarkably pretty, and when he had admired them sufficiently, we were taken into the next hall, occupied by little girls of two, three, and four years old. They were all seated on little mats at the foot of their small green beds; a regiment of the finest and healthiest children possible; a directress in the room sewing. At our entrance, they all jumped up simultaneously, and surrounded us with the noisiest expressions of delight. One told me in a confidential whisper, that "Manuelita had thumped her own head, and had a pain in it"; but I could not see that Manuelita seemed to be suffering any acute agonies, for she made more noise than any of them. One little girl sidled up to me, and said in a most insinuating voice, "*Me llevas tu?*" "Will you take me away with you?"—for even at this early age they begin to have a glimmering idea that those whom the ladies choose from amongst them are particularly favored. We stayed some time with them, and admired their healthy, happy and well-fed appearance; and then proceeded to the apartment of the boys; all little things of the same age, sitting ranging in a row like senators in congress, and, strange to say, much quieter and graver than the female babies; but this must have been from shyness, for before we came away, we saw them romping in great style. The directresses seem good respectable women, and kind to the children, who, as I mentioned before, are almost all taken away and brought up by rich people, before they have time to

know that there is anything peculiar or unfortunate in their situation. After this adoption, they are completely on a level with the other children of the family—an equal portion is left them, and although their condition is never made a secret of, they frequently marry as well as their adopted brothers and sisters.

Those who are opposed to this institution, are so on the plea that it encourages and facilitates vice. That the number of children in the hospital is a proof that much vice and much poverty do exist, there is no doubt; that by enabling the vicious to conceal their guilt, or by relieving the poor from their burden, it encourages either vice or idleness, is scarcely probable. But even were it so, the certain benefits are so immense, when laid in the balance with the possible evils, that they cannot be put in competition. The poor mother who leaves her child at the Cuna, would she not abandon it to a worse fate, if this institution did not exist? If she does so to conceal her disgrace is it not seen that a woman will stop at no cruelty, to obtain this end? as exposure of her infant, even murder? and that, strong as maternal love is, the dread of the world's scorn has conquered it? If poverty be the cause, surely the misery must be great indeed, which induces the poorest beggar or the most destitute of the Indian women (whose love for their children amounts to a passion) to part with her child; and though it is suspected that the mother who has left her infant at the Cuna, has occasionally got herself hired as a nurse, that she may have the pleasure of bringing it up, it seems to me that no great evil can arise, even from that.

These orphans are thus rescued from the contamination of vice, from poverty, perhaps from the depths of depravity; perhaps their very lives are saved, and great sin prevented. Hundreds of innocent children are thus placed under the care of the first and best ladies in the country, and brought up to be worthy members of society.

Another day we devoted to visiting a different and more painful scene—the *Acordada*, or public jail; a great solid building, spacious, and well ventilated. For this also there is a *Junta*, or society of ladies of the first families, who devote themselves to teaching the female malefactors. It is painful and almost startling to see the first ladies in Mexico familiarly conversing with and embracing women who have been guilty of the most atrocious crimes; especially of murdering their husbands; which is the chief crime of the female prisoners. There are no bad faces amongst them; and probably not one who has committed a premeditated crime. A moment of jealousy during intoxication, violent passions without any curb, suddenly aroused and as suddenly extinguished, have led to these frightful results. We were first shown into a large and tolerably clean apartment, where were the female prisoners who are kept apart as being of a more decent family than the rest. Some were lying on the floor, others working—some were well dressed, others dirty and slovenly. Few looked sad; most appeared careless and happy, and none

seemed ashamed. Amongst them were some of the handsomest faces I have seen in Mexico. One good-looking common woman, with a most joyous and benevolent countenance, and lame, came up to salute the ladies. I inquired what she had done. "Murdered her husband, and buried him under the brick floor!" Shade of Lavater! It is some comfort to hear that their husbands were generally such brutes, they deserved little better! Amongst others confined here is the wife, or rather the widow, of a Governor of Mexico, who made away with her husband. We did not see her, and they say she generally keeps out of the way when strangers come. One very pretty and coquettish little woman, with a most intellectual face, and very superior-looking, being in a fact a relation of Count ——'s, is in jail on suspicion of having poisoned her lover. A beautiful young creature, extremely like Mrs. ——, of Boston, was among the prisoners. I did not hear what her crime was. We were attended by a woman who has the title of *Presidenta*, and who, after some years of good conduct, has not the charge of her fellow-prisoners—but she also murdered her husband! We went upstairs, accompanied by various of the distinguished criminals, to the room looking down upon the chapel, in which room the ladies give them instruction in reading, and in the Christian doctrine. With the time which they devote to these charitable offices, together with their numerous devotional exercises, and the care which their houses and families require, it cannot be said that the life of a Mexican señora is an idle one; nor, in such cases, can it be considered a useless one.

We then descended to the lower regions, where, in a great, damp, vaulted gallery, hundreds of unfortunate women of the lowest class, were occupied in *travaux forces* [forced labor]—not indeed of a very hard description. These were employed in baking tortillas for the prisoners. Dirty, ragged, and miserable-looking creatures there were in the dismal vaults, which looked like purgatory, and smelt like—Heaven knows what! But, as I have frequently had occasion to observe in Mexico, the sense of smell is a doubtful blessing. Another large hall near this, which the prisoners were employed in cleaning and sweeping, has at least fresh air, opening on one side into a court, where poor little children, the saddest sight there, were running about—the children of the prisoners.

Leaving the side of the building devoted to the women, we passed on to another gallery, looking down upon several hundreds of male prisoners, unfortunately collected together without any reference to the nature of their crime; the midnight murderer with the purloiner of a pocket-handkerchief; the branded felon with the man guilty of some political offence, the debtor with the false coiner; so that many a young and thoughtless individual whom a trifling fault, the result of ignorance or of unformed principles, has brought hither, must leave this place wholly contaminated and hardened by bad example and vicious conversation. Here there were indeed some ferocious, hardened-looking ruffians—but

there were many mild, good-humored faces; and I could see neither sadness nor a trace of shame on any countenance; indeed they all seemed much amused by seeing so many ladies. Some were stretched full-length on the ground, doing nothing; others were making rolls for hats, of different colored beads, such as they wear here, of little baskets for sale; whilst others were walking about alone, or conversing in groups. This is the first prison I ever visited, therefore I can compare it with no other; but the system must be wrong which makes no distinction between different degrees of crime. These men are the same *forçats* [forced laborers] whom we daily see in chains, watering the Alameda or Paséo, or mending the streets. Several hundreds of prisoners escaped from the Acordada in the time of the *pronunciamiento*—probably the worst amongst them—yet half the city appears to be here now. We were shown the rows of cells for criminals whom it is necessary to keep in solitary confinement, on account of disorderly behavior—also the apartments of the directors.

In passing downstairs, we came upon a group of dirty-looking soldiers, busily engaged in playing at cards. The *alcalde*, who was showing us through the jail, dispersed them all in a great rage, which I suspected was partly assumed for our edification. We then went into the chapel, which we had seen from above, and which is handsome, and well kept. In the sacristy is a horrid and appropriate image of the bad thief. We were also shown a small room off the chapel, with a confessional, where the criminal condemned to die spends three days preceding his execution with a padre chosen for that purpose. What horrid confessions what lamentations and despair that small dark chamber must have witnessed! There is nothing in it but an altar, a crucifix, and a bench. I think the custom is a very humane one.

We felt glad to leave this palace of crimes, and to return to the fresh air.

The following day we went to visit San Hipólito, the insane hospital for men, accompanied by the director, a fine old gentleman, who has been a great deal abroad, and who looks like a French marquis of the *ancien régime*. I was astonished, on entering, at the sweet and solitary beauty of the large stone courts, with orange trees and pomegranates now in full blossom, and the large fountains of beautifully clear water. There must be something soothing in such a scene to the senses of these most unfortunate of God's creatures. They were sauntering about, quiet and for the most part sad; some stretched out under the trees, and others gazing on the fountain; all apparently very much under the control of the administrator, who was formerly a monk, this San Hipólito being a dissolved convent of that order. The system of giving occupation to the insane is not yet introduced here.

On entering, we saw rather a distinguished-looking, tall and well-dressed gentleman, whom we concluded to be a stranger who had come to see the establishment, like ourselves. We were therefore somewhat startled when he advanced

towards us with long strides, and in an authoritative voice shouted out, "Do you know who I am? I am the Deliverer of Guatemala." The administrator told us he had just been taken up, was a Frenchman, and in a state of furious excitement. He continued making a tremendous noise, and other madmen seemed quite ashamed of him. One unhappy-looking creature, with a pale, melancholy face, and his arms stretched out above his head, was embracing a pillar, and when asked what he was doing, replied that he was "making sugar."

We were led into the dining-hall, a long airy apartment, provided with benches and tables, and from thence into a most splendid kitchen, high vaulted, and receiving air from above, a kitchen that might have graced the castle of some feudal baron, and looked as if it would most surely last as long as men shall eat and cooks endure. Monks at San Hipólito! how many a smoking dinner, what viands steaming and savory must have issued from this noblest of kitchens to your refectory next door.

The food for the present inmates, which two women were preparing, consisted of meat and vegetables, soup and sweet things; excellent meat, and well-dressed *frijoles*. A poor little boy, imbecile, deaf and dumb, was seated there cross-legged, in a sort of wooden box; a pretty child, with a fine color, but who has been in this state from his infancy. The women seemed very kind to him, and he had a placid, contented expression on his face; but took no notice of us when we spoke to him. Strange and unsolvable problem, what ideas pass through the brain of that child!

When we returned to the dining-hall, the inmates of the asylum, to the number of ninety or a hundred, were all sitting at dinner, ranged quietly on the benches, eating with wooden spoons out of wooden bowls. The poor hero of Guatemala was seated at the lower end of the table, tolerably tranquil. He started up on seeing us, and was beginning some furious explanations, but was prevented by his neighbor, who turned round with an air of great superiority, saying, "He's mad!" at which the other smiled with an air of great contempt, and looking at us said, "He calls me mad!" The man of the pillar was eyeing his soup, with his arms as before, extended above his head. The director desired him to eat his soup, upon which he slowly and reluctantly brought down one arm, and ate a few spoonfuls. "How much sugar have you made to-day?" asked the director. "Fifty thousand kingdoms!" said the man....

The director then led us to the gallery above, where are more cells, and the terrible "Cuarto Negro," the Black Chamber; a dark, round cell, about twelve feet in circumference, with merely a slit in the wall for the admission of air. The floor is thickly covered with straw, and the walls are entirely covered with soft stuffed cushions. Here the most furious madman is confined on his arrival, and whether he throws himself on the floor, or dashes his head against the wall, he can

do himself no injury. In a few days, the silence and the darkness soothe his fury, he grows calmer, and will eat the food that is thrust through the aperture in the wall. From this he is removed to a common cell, with more light and air; but until he has become tranquil, he is not admitted into the court amongst the others.

From this horrible, though I suppose necessary den of suffering, we went to the apartments of the administrator, which have a fine view of the city and the volcanoes, and saw a virgin, beautifully carved in wood, and dressed in white satin robes, embroidered with small diamonds. On the ground was a little dog, dying, having just fallen off from the *azotea* [roof], an accident which happens to dogs here not infrequently. We then went up to the *azotea*, which looks into the garden of San Fernando and of our last house, and also into the barracks of the soldiers, who, as —— observed, are more dangerous madmen than those who are confined. Some rolled up in their dirty yellow cloaks, and others standing in their shirt-sleeves, and many without either; they were as dirty-looking a set of military heroes as one would wish to see. When we came downstairs again, and had gone through the court, and were passing the last cell, each of which is only lighted by an aperture in the thick stone wall, a pair of great black eyes glaring through, upon a level with mine, startled me infinitely. The eyes, however, glared upon vacancy. The face was thin and sallow, the beard long and matted, and the cheeks sunken. What long years of suffering appeared to have passed over that furrowed brow! I wish I had not seen it. . . .

Having stopped in the carriage on the way home, at a shoemaker's, we saw Santa Anna's leg lying on the counter, and observed it with due respect, as the prop of a hero. With this leg, which is fitted with a very handsome boot, he reviews his troops next Sunday, putting his *best foot foremost*; for generally he merely wears an unadorned wooden leg. The shoemaker, a Spaniard, whom I can recommend to all customers as the most impertinent individual I ever encountered, was arguing, in a blustering manner, with a gentleman who had brought a message from the general, desiring some alteration in the boot: and wound up by muttering, as the messenger left the shop, "He shall either wear it as it is, or review the troops next Sunday without his leg!"

8. DOM PEDRO II: A POLITICAL PORTRAIT

Historians and biographers of Dom Pedro II (1825–1891) have written sufficiently concerning his amiable, democratic traits, his patronage of arts and

Joaquim Nabuco, *Um estadista do imperio: Nabuco de Araujo, sua vida, suas opiniões, sua época*, 2 vols. (São Paulo, 1936), 2:374–385. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

Part Two

CONSTRUCTING THE NATION-STATE

The construction of the nation-state was a process of gradual, piecemeal, and often haphazard development. It involved the creation of a national army, the unification of the country, the establishment of a national currency, and the creation of a national language. It also involved the creation of a national culture, the promotion of national unity, and the creation of a national economy. The process of constructing the nation-state was a long and difficult one, involving many setbacks and challenges. It required the cooperation of all sections of society, from the ruling classes to the working classes, from the urban population to the rural population, from the educated classes to the uneducated classes. It required the creation of a national identity, the promotion of national values, and the creation of a national culture. It required the creation of a national army, the unification of the country, the establishment of a national currency, and the creation of a national language. It also involved the creation of a national culture, the promotion of national unity, and the creation of a national economy. The process of constructing the nation-state was a long and difficult one, involving many setbacks and challenges. It required the cooperation of all sections of society, from the ruling classes to the working classes, from the urban population to the rural population, from the educated classes to the uneducated classes.

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Real and Imagined Communities

After the great upheavals of the revolutionary period, followed by the long era of civil war and economic uncertainty, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a gradual consolidation of the newly independent nations. The cycle of dictatorship and revolution continued in many lands, but the revolutions became less frequent and less devastating. Old party lines dissolved as both Conservatives and Liberals united under the banner of progress. To a great extent, this much-delayed change of course was possible because Latin America had found a place in the international economic system. In the context of the neocolonial compact that defined the terms of the international division of labor, the export sectors of these economies expanded, with each country specializing in the production of a few primary products for the European market—guano in Peru, sugar in the Caribbean, beef and grain in Argentina, sugar and coffee in Brazil, copper in Chile, and so on. Free-trade policies were almost unanimously adopted. A flood of foreign investment and an increase in available credit allowed for the modernization of the economic infrastructure of this system. New ports and, perhaps more important, new railways closed distances and transformed landscapes everywhere. However, Latin America's place in the international economic system directly depended on the price of its raw materials and foodstuffs, a fact that would have serious consequences for its future development.

The relative prosperity brought by growing trade with Europe allowed for greater political stability, an indispensable component of a new economic order that demanded peace and continuity. As the civil wars ended and the power of the *caudillos* ebbed, new political elites found a more receptive context for the

long-postponed projects of liberalism. In Mexico, where political instability lasted longer than in most other nations, the conservative tide gave way to a liberal one, allowing Benito Juárez to lead the *Reforma* [reform movement], which sought to install modern capitalism and a constitution that would protect civil liberties. Legislation on communal land was passed in areas where collective ownership (whether Indian or ecclesiastical) was an obstacle to private land-ownership. Juan B. Alberdi—an opponent of Rosas's dictatorship in the 1830s—became the inspiration for the new Argentine leadership in its promotion of immigration, education, and an economic system increasingly focused on the export of foodstuffs. European immigrants arrived in Brazil as well, attracted by the strong incentives offered by the government. As in other societies, port cities grew steadily, generating urban middle and lower classes that acquired increasingly demanding habits of consumption.

Yet these new winds of optimism, material progress, and liberal politics were at odds with certain harsh realities. Slavery continued in Brazil and Cuba, and its legacy would haunt these societies long after abolition. Indians were under oppression in Peru, Mexico, and many other societies. Indeed, the situation of rural villages worsened with the loss of communal land, exposing rural workers to the worst kind of debt peonage. The modern, educated, industrious communities (modeled on European or North American ideals) that Latin American liberal elites imagined for their nations were directly contradicted by structural elements of these societies. Despite the changes of the time, the challenges brought by the persistent gap between the communities as imagined and the realities of Latin American nations would remain.

1. ROADS TO THE FUTURE

Another important struggle between Spanish American liberalism and conservatism took place in Argentina between 1830 and 1852. Against the tyranny of Juan Manuel de Rosas, representing the narrow interests and views of the great cattlemen of the province of Buenos Aires, the cultured youth of the capital rose in romantic but ineffective revolt. In 1852 Rosas fell, buried under the weight of the many enmities, domestic and foreign, that his policies had aroused. On the eve of the convention of 1853, which was summoned to draft a new constitution for Argentina, a book by Juan Bautista Alberdi (1810–1884)

Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República Argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1951), pp. 62–63, 85–88, 90–92, 240–245. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen and the editors.

appeared, titled Bases and Points of Departure for the Political Organization of the Argentine Republic, which strongly influenced the work of the delegates. The following selections from this book illustrate the optimistic, "civilizing," and pragmatic temper of Argentine liberalism in the age of Alberdi and presidents Bartolomé Mitre and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento.

Our youth should be trained for industrial life, and therefore should be educated in the arts and sciences that would prepare them for industry. The South American type of man should be one formed for the conquest of the great and oppressive enemies of our progress: the desert, material backwardness; the brutal and primitive nature of this continent.

We should therefore endeavor to draw our youth away from the cities of the interior, where the old order with its habits of idleness, conceit, and dissipation prevails, and to attract them to the coastal towns so that they may obtain inspiration from Europe, which extends to our shores, and from the spirit of modern life.

The coastal towns, by their very nature, are better schools than our pretentious universities....

Industry is the grand means of promoting morality. By furnishing men with the means of getting a living you keep them from crime, which is generally the fruit of misery and idleness. You will find it useless to fill the minds of youths with abstract notions about religion if you leave them idle and poor. Unless they take monastic vows they will be corrupt and fanatical at the same time. England and the United States have arrived at religious morality by way of industry; Spain has failed to acquire industry and liberty by means of religion alone. Spain has never been guilty of irreligion, but that did not save her from poverty, corruption, and despotism....

The railroad offers the means of righting the topsy-turvy order that Spain established on this continent. She placed the heads of our states where the feet should be. For her ends of isolation and monopoly this was a wise system; for our aims of commercial expansion and freedom it is disastrous. We must bring our capitals to the coast, or rather bring the coast into the interior of the continent. The railroad and the electric telegraph, the conquerors of space, work this wonder better than all the potentates on earth. The railroad changes, reforms, and solves the most difficult problems without decrees or mob violence.

It will forge the unity of the Argentine Republic better than all our congresses. The congresses may declare it "one and indivisible," but without the railroad to connect its most remote regions it will always remain divided and divisible, despite all the legislative decrees.

Without the railroad you will not have political unity in lands where distance nullifies the action of the central government. Do you want the government, the

legislators, the courts of the coastal capital to legislate and judge concerning the affairs of the provinces of San Juan and Mendoza, for example? Bring the coast to those regions with the railroad, or vice versa; place those widely separated points within three days' travel of each other, at least. But to have the metropolis or capital a twenty days' journey away is little better than having it in Spain, as it was under the old system, which we overthrew for presenting precisely this absurdity. Political unity, then, should begin with territorial unity, and only the railroad can make a single region of two regions separated by five hundred leagues.

Nor can you bring the interior of our lands within reach of Europe's immigrants, who today are regenerating our coasts, except with the powerful aid of the railroads. They are or will be to the life of our interior territories what the great arteries are to the inferior extremities of the human body: sources of life....

The means for securing railroads abound in these lands. Negotiate loans abroad, pledge your national revenues and properties for enterprises that will make them prosper and multiply. It would be childish to hope that ordinary revenues may suffice for such large expenditures; invert that order, begin with expenditures, and you will have revenues. If we had waited until we had sufficient revenues to bear the cost of the War of Independence against Spain, we would still be colonists. With loans we obtained cannons, guns, ships, and soldiers, and we won our independence. What we did to emerge from slavery, we should do to emerge from backwardness, which is the same as slavery; there is no greater title to glory than civilization.

But you will not obtain loans if you do not have national credit—that is, a credit based on the united securities and obligations of all the towns of the state. With the credits of town councils and provinces you will not secure railroads or anything notable. Form a national body, consolidate the securities of your present and future revenues and wealth, and you will find lenders who will make available millions for your local and general needs; for if you lack money today, you will have the means of becoming opulent tomorrow. Dispersed and divided, expect nothing but poverty and scorn....

The great rivers, those "moving roads," as [French scientist and philosopher Blaise] Pascal called them, are yet another means of introducing the civilizing action of Europe into the interior of our continent by means of her immigrants. But rivers that are not navigated do not, for practical purposes, exist. To place them under the exclusive domination of our poor banners is to close them to navigation. If they are to achieve the destiny assigned to them by God of populating the interior of the continent, we must place them under the law of the sea—that is, open them to an absolute freedom of navigation....

Let the light of the world penetrate every corner of our republics. By what right do we maintain our most beautiful regions in perpetual brutality? Let us

grant to European civilization what our ancient masters denied. In order to exercise their monopoly, the essence of their system, they gave only one port to the Argentine Republic; and we have preserved the exclusivism of the colonial system in the name of patriotism. No more exclusion or closure, whatever be the pretext that is invoked. No more exclusivism in the name of the Fatherland. . . .

What name will you give a land with 200,000 leagues of territory and a population of 800,000? A desert. What name will you give the constitution of that country? The constitution is a desert. Very well, the Argentine Republic is that country—and whatever its constitution, for many years it will be nothing more than the constitution of a desert.

But what constitution best fits a desert? One that will help to make it disappear: one that will enable it in the shortest possible time to cease being a desert and become a populated country. This, then, should and must be the political aim of the Argentine constitution and in general of all South American constitutions. The constitutions of unpopulated countries can have no other serious and rational end, at present and for many years to come, than to give the solitary and abandoned countryside the population it requires, as a fundamental condition for its development and progress.

Independent America is called upon to complete the work begun and left unfinished by the Spain of 1450 [Eds: before Spain's unification under King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in 1469]. The colonization, the settlement of this world, new to this day despite the three hundred years that have passed since its discovery, must be completed by the sovereign and independent American states. The work is the same; only its authors are different. At that time Spain settled our lands; today we settle them ourselves. All our constitutions must be aimed at this great end. We need constitutions, we need a policy of creation, of settlement, of conquest of the solitude and the desert. . . .

The end of constitutional policy and government in America, then, is essentially economic. In America, to govern is to populate. . . .

How will the vivifying spirit of the European civilization come to our land? The same way it came in all periods: Europe will bring us its new spirit, its habits of industry, its practices of civilization, in the immigrations it will send to us.

Each European that comes to our shores brings us more civilization in the habits that he communicates to our inhabitants than are contained in many books of philosophy. Perfection that cannot be seen or touched is hard to understand. A laboring man is the most edifying catechism.

Do we want to plant and adapt English freedom, French culture, [and] the industriousness of the man of Europe and the United States in [Latin] America? Let us bring living pieces of them in the customs of their inhabitants, and let's settle them here.

Do we want habits of order, discipline, and industry to prevail in our America? Let's fill it with people who will have those deep habits. They communicate; next to the European industrial attitude, the American industrial attitude will soon emerge. The plant of civilization doesn't spread from seeds. It's like the vine; it grows from a torn-off branch.

This is the only way America, today a desert, will turn into an opulent world in a short time. Reproduction alone is a very slow way.

If we want to see our states become bigger in a short time, let's bring from outside its element already formed and prepared.

Without big populations, there is no development of culture, no meaningful progress; everything is mean and small. Nations with half a million inhabitants, they may be according to their expanse of territory; but according to their population they'll be provinces, villages; and all of their things will carry the mean stamp of the province.

Important notice to South American men of state: primary schools, high schools, universities, are, in themselves, very poor ways to progress without the big enterprises of production—children of the great portions of men.

The population—the South American need that represents all the others—is the exact measure of the capacity of our governments. The minister of state who doesn't double the census of these peoples every ten years, has wasted his time in trifles and trivialities.

Make the *roto*, the *gaucho*, the *cholo* [Eds: semi-derogatory names for the urban lower classes, cowboys, and people of mixed race], the elemental unit of our popular masses, go through all the transformations of the best system of instruction; but in a hundred years you won't make out of him an English worker, who labors, consumes and lives with dignity and comfort. Put the million inhabitants that constitute the average population of these Republics, in the best possible place for education . . . will you have a great and flourishing state as a result? Certainly not: a million men in a territory that can accommodate 50 million, is that anything other than a pitifully small population?

This argument is made: educating our masses, we'll have order: having order, the foreign population will come.

I'll tell you that this argument reverses the true method of progress. It will produce neither order nor popular education except through the influx of masses with deep-seated habits of order and good education.

Multiply the serious population, and you'll see those vain agitators, disregarded and alone, with their plans for frivolous revolts, in the middle of a world absorbed with grave occupations.

2. THE GUANO BOOM

During the second half of the tumultuous nineteenth century, many Latin American nations experienced a series of economic booms and busts. One of the earliest and longest of these booms was in guano, the manure of sea birds found in huge quantities on islands off the coast of Peru. The Peruvian guano boom lasted from the mid-1840s to around 1880 and, as the following excerpt from 1845 demonstrates, it sparked tremendous optimism, speculation, and corruption in both the public and private sectors. This "exposition" to the Peruvian congress by two disgruntled speculators also reveals some of the international economic implications (and pitfalls) of a classic boom cycle. Despite (and probably because of) the incredible profits generated by these booms, they contributed significantly to the region's seemingly chronic political, economic, and social instability—and, paradoxically, to its economic underdevelopment vis-à-vis Western Europe and the United States.

Don Francisco Quiros and Don Aquiles Allier, both businessmen of this Capital [Lima], with due respect, present ourselves to Congress and declare: That it is today unquestionable that the idea of applying the use of guano from the [Pacific] islands to European agriculture will be a source of incalculable benefits for Peru and that in the near future, thanks to this idea, the Republic will be able to count on vast resources taken exclusively from a sector that had in the past always been sterile and unproductive for the national treasury.

His Excellency the President of the Republic did Peru a distinct service when, disregarding uninformed concerns, he agreed to admit the proposals that Don Francisco Quiros made to the government with the object of launching into the world of commerce this commodity hitherto unknown outside our coastal region. And it is now commonly acknowledged that this fertilizer enjoys wide acceptance in countries where it has been tried and in particular in Great Britain. It is impossible to calculate the immense profits that Peru will realize from a source of wealth over which it has almost exclusive control....

While the African deposits supply the foreign markets, the extraction of Peruvian guano will remain largely paralyzed but will resume operations with vigor and benefit as soon as the strength and power of its adversary diminishes; such that Peru in probably a very short time will come to see itself in an advantageous

Francisco Quiros and Aquiles Allier, "Exposición que don Francisco Quiros y don Aquiles Allier eleven al soberano congreso" (Lima: Imprenta del Correo Peruano, 1845). Excerpt translated by the editors.

position relative to African guano, which meanwhile will have spread the use of guano and made it one of the necessities of foreign agriculture.

Adopting for ourselves the prudent and measured approach that the English have established in Ceylon [Sri Lanka] for the extraction of cinnamon, and that General Andrés de] Santa Cruz established in Bolivia for that of *cascarilla* [a tree bark used as a popular tonic], it is undeniable that Peruvian guano will reach the highest price that agriculturalists can pay, and that with the extraction of several tons, small in comparison with what is currently taken from Africa to consumer markets, the Government will realize the double advantage of not squandering the nation's resources by using them up and of taking out sufficient resources to cover its necessary expenses.

Looking at the guano business in the immediate future, it seems beyond doubt that those who initiated this business and had the idea to give value to a commodity that until then was of no use to the Nation have rendered Peru a real service of some importance.

The men who have rendered this service are Don Francisco Quiros and Don Aquiles Allier, and Congress should know what has happened to them as a result.

The first thing to note is that when the lease for the guano deposits was agreed upon, neither we nor anyone else knew the price guano would bring in Europe. We had no idea that it would reach anything like the price of the first sales. Thus, when we received a letter, dated May 1841, from William Joseph Meyers and Company of Liverpool, advising us that given the appearance of the vegetation of some plants fertilized with a small quantity of guano, they hoped to sell the first shipment at twelve pounds sterling [per ton], Don Aquiles Allier wrote a letter to his Excellency President Don Agustín Gamarra, then in Lampa, to give him the unexpected news, adding that if these hopes were realized, our intention was that the Government would share in the profits of the transaction.

Having made known the circumstances—in order to show that we never intended to entrench ourselves behind a solemn contract executed by a Government of undisputed constitutionality, nor that we were so blinded by our rights that we did not know that justice, equity, and our own consciences obliged us to turn over to the Government the greater part of a contract whose profits reached a level that we had not calculated nor could have calculated at the time we negotiated it—therefore it was unnecessary to use arbitrariness or violence with us.

These are the circumstances that Don Aquiles Allier referred to when he said in an issue of *Comercio* published on that date, that there were written proofs that it had never been our intention to keep all the profits from the deal once the extent of that they would reach was made known. And we stand by our belief that if his Excellency President Gamarra had not met the honorable death [in battle with Bolivia] that to Peru's misfortune ended his presidency, today we

would not have to deplore the loss of our investment, the enormous damages we have suffered, and our notable reverse of fortune, but would have been celebrating a new just and rational contract that would take into account both the legitimate interests of the State and the respect that public agreement deserve[s] and should maintain.

As soon as it was known in Lima from the Liverpool correspondence that arrived on the English ship *Dyron* that the guano had been sold for nearly 120 pesos per ton, a veritable fever took control of everyone's brain. We were attacked with considerable violence and Mr. Colmenares, the public prosecutor for the Supreme Court, even went to the extreme of asking for an embargo of Don Francisco Quiros's assets for having resorted to deceit and fraud, cheating the government in the contract they had negotiated with him.

Meanwhile, His Excellency Mr. Menendez had sent for Don Francisco Quiros to work out with him an alteration of the lease, and in effect an agreement was reached with the President and Mr. Cano, the Finance Minister, for a new contract according to which the lease continued under the condition that the Government would take two-thirds of the new profit of the guano and the other part would go to the contractors. They drew up a draft of this new contract and ordered a final version to be signed and published. Under these circumstances, his Excellency Mr. Menendez told Don Francisco Quiros that since the deal had been arranged and concluded, and the Government was now a business partner, it seemed natural and in order that they know as much about it as we did, and they hoped that we would allow them to review the correspondence on the matter that we had received from Europe.

Although the contract had not yet been signed, seeing that his Excellency Mr. Menendez asked us for the correspondence, and under the assumption that the deal was arranged and concluded as agreed upon, we believed it would be an insult to the President of the Republic to doubt his good faith and suspect him capable of renegeing on the gentlemen's agreement, so we turned over all our correspondence.

In it, his Excellency Mr. Menendez and his Ministers, saw the notice given us by Messrs. William Joseph Meyers and Company verifying the sale of seven million tons of guano as soon as it arrived, two million at the price of eighteen pounds sterling, (or ninety pesos) and the other five thousand at a floating and conditional price subject to the market value of the commodity.

Reading the notice of these sales must have made a tremendous impression on his Excellency Mr. Menendez since far from signing the contract agreed upon the day before, which he had considered arranged and concluded, he sent for us two days after having read the correspondence and, in the palace, in the presence of his Ministers, he told us that the public was convinced that we had received

the contract in exchange for a gift of five thousand pesos, and that, finding his reputation damaged by such rumors, he had resolved not to get involved in this business and would pass it along to the Supreme Court for a ruling. That said he returned our correspondence.

Its Excellency, the Council of State, also found itself possessed by the same vertigo that had afflicted everyone else. Some members proposed authorizing the Executive to dispose of one or two million pesos worth of guano as soon as possible, and since this meant annulling our lease, the council passed an unprecedented resolution.

What we had expected from what was said and written came to pass: everyone clamored for the annulment of our contract, renegeing on earlier offers of great benefit to the treasury. When the Government realized that no one was coming forward with acceptable offers, they called for bidders in the official newspaper. When this did not work out, they acknowledged that their treatment of us had been unjust and imprudent. His Excellency Mr. Menendez sent for Don Francisco Quiros, and General Ladez sent for Don Aquiles Allier, in order that we work things out with the Government and resume our guano deal under the conditions previously agreed upon. We resisted at first because it seemed that after what had happened, we were exposing ourselves to new worries and hardships, but we finally capitulated. His Excellency Mr. Menendez, when he received our verbal acquiescence from Don Francisco Quiros, seized his hand, held it firmly in his own, and said that he would never forget the service we were rendering to the Government and to himself in particular by lifting from his shoulder the weight of this affair that had so overwhelmed him.

By virtue of our acquiescence, we met that same night in the home of the Finance Minister, Dr. Cano, and there we agreed to the terms of a contract which stipulated that we would give up thirty of the forty thousand [pesos] that we had turned over for rights to the first four years of the lease on the guano deposits, of which only one year had transpired, and that we would advance the Government 287,000 pesos on account against its share of the profits. We would receive in return a five-year lease to export guano internationally. As a result of this agreement, we turned over the 87,000 pesos of the first installment, having been assured by the Minister that his Excellency would sign it and that the decree would appear in the next issue of *El Peruano* [the official newspaper].

Much was our surprise, when we saw that instead of publishing the contract, agreed upon and stipulated with us, it was published with notable alterations which had never been mentioned to us, stating instead of five years, *one obligatory and four optional years for [exportation to] Europe rather than internationally....*

The next day following the publication of the decree of 8 December 1841, three contractors from the Capital, presented themselves, asking to submit

proposals with better conditions than ours as the law allowed them to do. The pretense of legality was maintained and a ruling of the Public Prosecutor of the Supreme Court invalidated the offers of the aforementioned contractors, but before the decision was reached, his Excellency Mr. Menendez attached a verbal condition to the resolution in which we agreed to donate to the State the uniforms and equipment for a cavalry regiment at a cost to us of eight thousand dollars.

Notwithstanding the verbal assurances that his Excellency Mr. Menendez had given us on various occasions, we saw published in the 29 December issue of *El Peruano*, that is to say ten days after our contract was signed and ratified, some proposals which offered to advance the Government 150,000 pesos for the four optional years of our concession and extending it to include international sales in place of Europe. The upshot of these proposals was that we, whose hands had been shaken so gratefully and whose services would never be forgotten, saw ourselves threatened with having paid for the privilege of exporting guano to Europe and for just one year....

The publication of this proposal, in addition to seeming to us offensive to the honor and probity of the Government, naturally alarmed us, because in the mere fact of allowing it to be published in the official newspaper, the Government let it be known that it considered the proposal admissible. We returned again to the house of his Excellency Mr. Menendez, who again reassured us, saying that he wanted everything related to guano out in the open and he had ordered published any and all proposals to the Government, but that none would be allowed to affect our contract, of whose finality we should rest assured.

After so many and such repeated assurances from his Excellency Mr. Menendez, one can imagine our surprise when a few days after this conversation, obeying an invitation that we received to meet at seven at night in the house of his Excellency, the President of the Council of State, charged with executive power, his Excellency declared in the presence of his Ministers, that the Government had resolved to dispose of the four optional years of our contract, and had called for a meeting of interested contractors so that we could reach an agreement on the matter.

We were so surprised by the turn of events, after what had happened with his Excellency Mr. Menendez, that we left instantly without waiting for the other contractors, distrustful that in our understandable anger some expression might escape us that would fail to show due respect to the authority of the Government in whose presence we found ourselves. Then, we proceeded to lodge a protest against these unexpected and unheard of proceedings.

Seeing finally, that the Government had resolved to dispose of our property against the express tenor of a contract signed and ratified just days before, and whose ink had scarcely had time to dry, we knew that we had no means of

salvation other than joining together with our competitors because it was materially impossible for us after a sacrifice of 38,000 pesos, as a forced gift, and given the obligation to advance 287,000 pesos, and adding in the new advance of 200,000 pesos that these gentlemen [our competitors] had offered in order to conquer the scruples of his Excellency Mr. Menendez and his Ministers, and since failing to join with them was going to result in our inevitable ruin thanks to the impossibility of extracting enough guano to cover our advances in the one year of European export left to us, since our competitors had already assembled a fleet of ships with the purpose of preventing us from assembling the means to supply the market that would otherwise remain open and would become theirs at year's end. As a result of this meeting, the current contract was approved on 19 February 1842.

While they despoiled us here of our legitimately acquired rights, in England the business had suffered a disastrous setback. The heat of enthusiasm had been followed by the ice of disappointment. MacDonald and Company had purchased the seven thousand tons in the belief that their name alone would inspire enough confidence in farmers that they would decide to use guano without having experimented with it first, because they [MacDonald and Co.] had been the first to introduce nitrates from Tarapacá as a fertilizer.

But when the time came for consumer sales, that is to say the months of February, March, and April, MacDonald and Company were disappointed and realized that the farmers, unwilling to accept their word as guarantee, far from switching to guano, only bought the minimum amount necessary in order to make tests. Then, these speculators realized the imprudence of having purchased an unknown commodity at such a high price, and this operation would have cost them a huge part of their investment if, opportunely for them, the news had not arrived in England that the Government of Peru had annulled our lease and called for bidders to make proposals for the extraction of guano.

MacDonald and Company took advantage of this news to notify Messrs. William Joseph Meyers and Company that since our concession was cancelled, they saw no reason to go forward with the purchases of guano because they had agreed to the purchases with the understanding that this commodity could be obtained from only one source but that since now there were various sources, they repudiated their contract and refused to accept delivery of the guano.

Messrs. William Joseph Meyers and Company received this declaration from MacDonald and Company almost at the same time that we informed them of the new contract with the Government that obliged us to advance 287,000 pesos, which we hoped to draw against the proceeds of the sales that they had informed us about in their earlier letters.

The coincidence of such unexpected events filled Messrs. William Joseph Meyers and Company with dismay, the Government's annulment of a contract

to which they were party seemed to them outside the practice followed in other countries and undermined their confidence in the new agreement into which we had entered, and they were determined to protest all of our bills of exchange, which they in fact did. The bill holders here went before Trade Court, which went so far as to seal the doors of our warehouses and offices, which delivered us an affront that we did not deserve and reduced us, Quiros to suspending his business deals and mortgaging his farms, and Allier to stopping all business transactions in order to avoid a massive bankruptcy of his estate and factory, and both to suffering incalculable losses.

This has been the recompense that we have received for services rendered to the Government of Peru up until this point, that is to say enormous setbacks and obstacles, the exclusive doing of his Excellency Mr. Menendez....

[Members of Congress], we humbly request that you address our complaint, granting us the reward and indemnity that you think that we deserve, and that we request under the present circumstances only because it in no way harms the Treasury or deprives it of ready resources. On the contrary, evident and positive advantages would accrue to the State from this act of equity and justice that we hope to receive from a magnanimous nation.

3. LIBERAL FAMILY VALUES

The movement to which Mexican historians give the name La Reforma (The Reform) represented an ambitious liberal effort to transform "backward" Mexico into a progressive middle-class country. The movement's climactic moments were the implementation of the Reform Laws, which sought to restrict church privileges, force the sale of church properties not used for religious services, restrict fees for church services, and assert state control over the registry of birth, death, and marriage. One of the reform laws, Ley Lerdo, also instituted civil marriage, transforming a religious sacrament into an assertion of liberal principles of citizenship and family values. The incorporation of these controversial laws into the liberal 1857 Constitution helped usher in the bloody War of the Reform (1857–1861), which was swiftly followed by the French Intervention (1861–1867). The "Epistle"—attributed to liberal ideologue Melchor Ocampo (1814–1861)—was incorporated into the 1859 civil matrimony law by interim president, Benito Juárez, who was in exile in Veracruz at the time. It is still read to Mexican couples as part of the civil marriage ceremony. The gender roles and

Melchor Ocampo, "Epistle," included as artículo 15, *Ley de Matrimonio Civil* (Veracruz, México, July 23, 1859). Excerpt translated by the editors.

raising good and accomplished citizens; and at the same time rightly censures and scorns those that through abandonment or misplaced affection, or through their own bad example corrupt the sacred charge that nature confers on them in granting them children. And finally, when Society sees that such persons are not worthy of elevation to the dignified position of parenthood, but should have lived under the tutelage of a guardian since they are incapable of conducting themselves with dignity, it pains [Society] to have blessed with its authority the union of a man and a woman who do not know how to be free and to lead themselves towards the good.

4. A MEXICAN RADICAL

Nineteenth-century conservatives and liberals gave little or no attention in their programs to the land problem—the growing concentration of landownership, with all its negative economic, social, and political consequences. In Mexico, however, where the problem of land monopoly had become increasingly acute, and where a social revolutionary tradition existed since the time of Hidalgo, left-wing liberals raised the land question in the Constitutional Convention of 1856–1857. The chief spokesman for this small band of Mexican radicals was Ponciano Arriaga. In a speech remarkable for its modern socioeconomic ideas, especially on the pernicious effects of unproductive latifundios (great estates) on Mexican society, Arriaga vividly described the effects of the land monopoly but offered a relatively moderate solution: the state should seize and auction off uncultivated estates more than fifteen square leagues in extent. Ongoing debates about the need for agrarian reform in Mexico would come to a head during the 1910 Revolution.

One of the most deeply rooted evils of our country—an evil that merits the close attention of legislators when they frame our fundamental law—is the monstrous division of landed property.

While a few individuals possess immense areas of uncultivated land that could support millions of people, the great majority of Mexicans languish in a terrible poverty and are denied property, homes, and work.

Such a people cannot be free, democratic, much less happy, no matter how many constitutions and laws proclaim abstract rights and beautiful but impracticable theories—impracticable by reason of an absurd economic system.

Francisco Zarco, *Historia del congreso extraordinario constituyente de 1856–1857*, 2 vols. (México, 1957), 1:546–555. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

There are Mexican landowners who occupy (if one can give that name to a purely imaginary act) an extent of land greater than the area of some of our sovereign states, greater even than that of one or several European states.

In this vast area, much of which lies idle, deserted, abandoned, awaiting the arms and labor of men, live four or five million Mexicans who know no other industry than agriculture, yet are without land or the means to work it, and who cannot emigrate in the hope of bettering their fortunes. They must either vegetate in idleness, turn to banditry, or accept the yoke of a landed monopolist who subjects them to intolerable conditions of life.

How can one reasonably expect these unhappy beings to escape from their condition as abject serfs through legal channels, or hope that the magic power of a written law will transform them into free citizens who know and defend the dignity and importance of their rights?

We proclaim ideas and forget realities; we launch on discussions of rights and turn away from stubborn facts. The constitution should be the law of the land, but we do not regulate or even examine the state of the land. . . .

How can a hungry, naked, miserable people practice popular government? How can we proclaim the equal rights of men and leave the majority of the nation in conditions worse than those of helots or pariahs? How can we condemn slavery in words, while the lot of most of our fellow citizens is more grievous than that of the black slaves of Cuba or the United States? When will we begin to concern ourselves with the fate of the proletarians, the men we call Indians, the laborers and peons of the countryside, who drag the heavy chains of serfdom established not by Spanish laws—which were so often flouted and infringed—but by the arbitrary mandarins of the colonial regime? Would it not be more logical and honest to deny our four million poor Mexicans all share in political life and public offices, all electoral rights, and declare them to be things, not persons, establishing a system of government in which an aristocracy of wealth, or at most of talent, would form the basis of our institutions?

For one of two things is inevitable: either our political system will continue to be dominated for a long time to come by a *de facto* aristocracy—no matter what our fundamental laws may say—and the lords of the land, the privileged caste that monopolizes the soil and profits by the sweat of its serfs, will wield all power and influence in our civil and political life; or we will achieve a reform, shatter the trammels and bonds of feudal servitude, bring down all monopolies and despotisms, end all abuses, and allow the fruitful element of democratic equality, the powerful element of democratic sovereignty—to which alone authority rightfully belongs—to penetrate the heart and veins of our political institutions. The nation wills it, the people demand it; the struggle has begun, and sooner or later that just

authority will recover its sway. The great word *reform* has been pronounced, and it is vain to erect dikes to contain those torrents of truth and light. . . .

Is it necessary, in an assembly of deputies of the people, in a congress of representatives of that poor, enslaved people, to prove the unjust organization of landed property in the Republic, and the infinite evils that flow from it? . . . In the realm of a purely ideal and theoretical politics, statesmen discuss the organization of chambers, the division of powers, the assignment of jurisdictions and attributes, the demarcation of sovereignties, and the like. Meanwhile other, more powerful men laugh at all that, for they know they are the masters of society, the true power is in their hands, they exercise the real sovereignty. With reason the people think that constitutions die and are born, governments succeed each other, law codes pile up and grow ever more intricate, "pronouncements" and "plans" come and go, but after all those changes and upheavals, after so much disorder and so many sacrifices, no good or profit comes to the masses who shed their blood in the civil wars, who swell the ranks of the armies, who fill the jails and do forced labor on the public works, who, in fine, suffer all the misfortunes of society and enjoy none of its benefits. . . .

With some honorable exceptions, the rich landowners of Mexico (who rarely know their own lands, palm by palm), or the administrators or majordomos who represent them, resemble the feudal lords of the Middle Ages. On his seignorial land, with more or less formalities, the landowner makes and executes laws, administers justice and exercises civil power, imposes taxes and fines, has his own jails and irons, metes out punishments and tortures, monopolizes commerce, and forbids the conduct without his permission of any business but that of the estate. The judges or officials who exercise on the hacienda the powers attached to public authority are usually the master's servants or tenants, his retainers, incapable of enforcing any law but the will of the master.

An astounding variety of devices are employed to exploit the peons or tenants, to turn a profit from their sweat and labor. They are compelled to work without pay even on days traditionally set aside for rest. They must accept rotten seeds or sick animals whose cost is charged to their miserable wages. They must pay enormous parish fees that bear no relation to the scale of fees that the owner or major-domo has arranged beforehand with the parish priest. They must make all their purchases on the hacienda, using tokens or paper money that do not circulate elsewhere. At certain seasons of the year they are assigned articles of poor quality, whose price is set by the owner or majordomo, constituting a debt that they can never repay. They are forbidden to use pastures and woods, firewood and water, or even the wild fruit of the fields, save with the express permission of the master. In fine, they are subject to a completely unlimited and irresponsible power.

It follows that society is to blame for this monstrosity and that women must be absolved of it. As long as women are subject to the yoke of men or prejudice, as long as they do not receive the most minimum professional education and are deprived of their civil rights, no moral law can exist for them. As long as they can only have access to possessions by appealing to the passions of men, as long as they cannot have title to anything and can be despoiled by their husbands of the property they acquired by their labor or by inheritance from their fathers, as long as they can only be secure in their possessions or liberty by being celibate, no moral law exists for them. It can be said that until women are emancipated, prostitution will continue to grow.

6. BLACK SLAVERY UNDER THE EMPIRE

Under the empire, as in colonial times, black slavery formed the massive base of virtually all of Brazil's significant economic activity. The condition and prospects of the black people in Brazil aroused the lively interest of foreign visitors, especially those from countries like the United States with slave systems of their own. This excerpt from the account of two US missionaries to Brazil presents a summary view of the situation at midcentury.

The subject of slavery in Brazil is one of great interest and hopefulness. The Brazilian Constitution recognizes, neither directly nor indirectly, color as a basis of civil rights; hence, once free, the black man or the mulatto, if he possess energy and talent, can rise to a social position from which his race in North America is debarred. Until 1850, when the slave-trade was effectually put down, it was considered cheaper, on the country-plantations, to use up a slave in five or seven years and purchase another, than to take care of him. This I had, in the interior, from intelligent native Brazilians, and my own observation has confirmed it. But, since the inhuman traffic with Africa has ceased, the price of slaves has been enhanced, and the selfish motives for taking greater care of them have been increased. Those in the city are treated better than those on the plantations: they seem more cheerful, more full of fun, and have greater opportunities for freeing themselves. But still there must be great cruelty in some cases, for suicides among slaves—which are almost unknown in our Southern States—are of very frequent occurrence in the cities of Brazil. Can this, however, be attributed to

D. P. Kidder and J. C. Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians Portrayed in Historical and Descriptive Sketches* (Philadelphia, 1857), pp. 132–135. Accessible at <https://archive.org/details/brazilbrazilians00kidd>.

cruelty? The Negro of the United States is the descendant of those who have, in various ways, acquired a knowledge of the hopes and fears, the rewards and punishments, which the Scriptures hold out to the good and threaten to the evil; to avoid the crime of suicide is as strongly inculcated as to avoid that of murder. The North American Negro has, by this very circumstance, a higher moral intelligence than his brother fresh from the wild freedom and heathenism of Africa; hence the latter, goaded by cruelty, or his high spirit refusing to bow to the white man, takes that fearful leap which lands him in the invisible world.

In Brazil everything is in favor of freedom; and such are the facilities for the slave to emancipate himself, and, when emancipated, if he possess the proper qualifications, to ascend to higher eminences than those of a mere free black, that *fuit* [Eds: "was" (Latin); that is, slavery will have become a thing of the past] will be written against slavery in this Empire before another half-century rolls around. Some of the most intelligent men that I met with in Brazil—men educated at Paris and Coimbra—were of African descent, whose ancestors were slaves. Thus, if a man have freedom, money, and merit, no matter how black may be his skin, no place in society is refused him. It is surprising also to observe the ambition and the advancement of some of these men with Negro blood in their veins. The National Library furnishes not only quiet rooms, large tables, and plenty of books to the seekers after knowledge, but pens and paper are supplied to such as desire these aids to their studies. Some of the closest students thus occupied are mulattoes. The largest and most successful printing establishment in Rio—that of Sr. F. Paulo Brito—is owned and directed by a mulatto. In the colleges, the medical, law, and theological schools, there is no distinction of color. It must, however, be admitted that there is a certain—though by no means strong—prejudice existing all over the land in favor of men of pure white descent.

By the Brazilian law, a slave can go before a magistrate, have his price fixed, and can purchase himself; and I was informed that a man of mental endowments, even if he had been a slave, would be debarred from no official station, however high, unless it might be that of Imperial Senator.

The appearance of Brazilian slaves is very different from that of their class in our own country. Of course, the house-servants in the large cities are decently clad, as a general rule; but even these are almost always barefooted. This is a sort of badge of slavery. On the tables of fares for ferry-boats, you find one price for persons wearing shoes (*calçadas*), and a lower one for the *descalças*, or without shoes. In the houses of many of the wealthy *Fluminenses* you make your way through a crowd of little woolly-heads, mostly guiltless of clothing, who are allowed the run of the house and the amusement of seeing visitors. In families that have some tincture of European manners, these unsightly little bipeds are kept in the background. A friend of mine used frequently to dine in the house

of a good old general of high rank, around whose table gamboled two little jetty blacks, who hung about their "pai" [father] (as they called him) until they received their portions from his hands, and that, too, before he commenced his own dinner. Whenever the lady of the house drove out, these pets were put into the carriage, and were as much offended at being neglected as any spoiled only son. They were the children of the lady's nurse, to whom she had given freedom. Indeed, a faithful nurse is generally rewarded by manumission.

The appearance of the black male population who live in the open air is anything but appetizing. Their apology for dress is of the coarsest and dirtiest description. Hundreds of them loiter about the streets with large round wicker baskets ready to carry any parcel that you desire conveyed. So cheaply and readily is this help obtained, that a white servant seldom thinks of carrying home a package, however small, and would feel quite insulted if you refused him a *preto de ganho* to relieve him of a roll of calico or a watermelon. These blacks are sent out by their masters, and are required to bring home a certain sum daily. They are allowed a portion of their gains to buy their food, and at night sleep on a mat or board in the lower purlieus of the house. You frequently see horrible cases of elephantiasis and other diseases, which are doubtless engendered or increased by the little care bestowed upon them.

7. THE ANTISLAVERY IMPULSE

*Black slavery was the great domestic issue of Dom Pedro II's reign, and after 1880 the abolitionist movement assumed the character of a popular crusade. In Joaquim Nabuco, son of a distinguished liberal statesman of the empire, Brazilian abolitionism found a leader of towering intellectual and moral stature. His eloquent indictment of slavery, *O Abolicionismo* (1883), made a profound impression in Brazilian intellectual circles. In one chapter of this book, Nabuco examines the social and political consequences of slavery in Brazil.*

History knows no example of free government founded on slavery. The governments of antiquity were not based on the same principles of individual liberty as modern states; they represented a very different social order. Since the French Revolution there has been only one notable case of democracy combined with slavery—the United States; but the southern states of the Union never were free governments. American liberty, taking the Union as whole, actually only dates

Joaquim Nabuco, *O Abolicionismo* (São Paulo, 1938), pp. 167–195. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

from Lincoln's Proclamation freeing the millions of slaves in the South. Far from being free, the states south of the Potomac were societies organized on the basis of the violation of all human rights. American statesmen like Henry Clay or [John C.] Calhoun, who compromised or identified themselves with slavery, did not properly calculate the force of the antagonism that was later to prove so formidable. The ensuing course of events—the rebellion in which the North saved the South from committing suicide through the formation of a separate slave power, and the manner in which the rebellion was crushed—proves that in the United States slavery did not affect the social constitution as a whole, as is the case with us. The superior part of the organism remained intact, and even strong enough to bend the hitherto dominant section of the country to its will, despite all its complicity with that section.

Among us there is no dividing line. There is no section of the country that differs from another. Contact is synonymous with contagion. The whole circulatory system, from the great arteries to the capillaries, serves as a channel for the same impurities. The whole body—blood, constituent elements, respiration, force and activity, muscles and nerves, intelligence and will, not only the character but the temperament, and above all the energy—is affected by the same cause....

In the southern states of the American Union a social color line was drawn. The slaves and their descendants did not form part of society. Race mixture took place on a very small scale. Slavery devastated the soil, obstructed industrial growth, prepared the way for economic bankruptcy, impeded immigration—produced, in fine, all the results of that kind that we know in Brazil; but American society was not formed from units created in that process....

In Brazil just the opposite occurred. Brazilian slavery, though based on the difference between the two races, never developed a prejudice against dark skin, and was infinitely more sagacious in that respect. The contacts between the races, from the first colonization by the *donataries* [royal grantees of land, etc.] until today, have produced a mixed population; and the slave who receives his certificate of freedom simultaneously acquires the rights of citizenship. Thus there are no perpetual social castes among us; there is not even a fixed division into classes. The slave, as such, practically does not exist for society, for he may not even have been registered by his master, who in any case can alter the registration at will. For the rest, registration in itself means nothing, since the government does not send inspectors to the *fazendas* [plantations], nor are the masters obliged to account for their slaves to the authorities. This being, who enjoys no more right of protection by society than any other piece of personal property, on the day after he has gained his freedom becomes a citizen like any other, with full political rights. Furthermore, in the very shadow of his own captivity he can buy slaves, perhaps—who knows?—some child of his old master. This proves the

confusion of classes and individuals, and the unlimited extent of social crossings between slaves and free men, which make the majority of Brazilian citizens political mixed-bloods, so to speak, in whom two opposed natures struggle: that of the master by birth and that of the domesticated slave.

Our slavery extended its privileges to all without distinction: white man and black, *ingenuos* [Eds: children born to slaves after the 1871 Law of the Free Womb, and therefore ostensibly free] and freedmen, slaves, foreigners and natives, rich and poor; and in this way it acquired a redoubled capacity for absorption and an elasticity incomparably greater than it would have had if there were a racial monopoly of the institution, as in the South of the United States. In 1845, the year of the Aberdeen Bill [Eds: a bill, much resented by Brazilians, that empowered the British government to take unilateral measures to suppress the Brazilian slave trade], Macaulay said in the House of Commons: "I think it not improbable that the black population of Brazil will be free and happy within eighty or a hundred years. I do not see a reasonable prospect of a like change in the United States." He appears to have been as correct in his insight into the relative happiness of the Negro race in the two countries as he was wrong in his belief that the United States would lag behind us in the emancipation of its slaves. What deceived the great English orator in this case was his assumption that the color line was a social and political force in favor of slavery. On the contrary, its chief strength consists in banishing race prejudice and opening the institution to all classes. But for this very reason the greatest possible ethnic chaos prevailed among us, and the confusion that reigns in the regions where the process of national unity is working itself out with all those heterogeneous elements reminds one of the proud disorder of the incandescent stars.

Athens, Rome, and Virginia were, to draw an analogy from chemistry, simple mixtures in which the different elements retained their individual properties; Brazil, on the other hand, is a compound in which slavery represents the causal affinity. The problem that awaits solution is how to make a citizen of this compound of master and slave. The problem of the American South was very different, because there the two species did not mix. Among us slavery did not exert its influence exclusively below the Roman line of *libertas*; it also exerted it within and above the sphere of *civitas*; it leveled all the classes, except the slaves, who always live in the social depths; but it leveled them by degrading them. Hence the difficulty, in analyzing its influence, of discovering some feature in the temperament of the people, or in the aspect of the country, or even in the social heights most distant from the slave huts, which should not be included in the national synthesis of slavery. Consider our different social classes. They all present symptoms of retarded or impeded development, or what is worse, of artificial, premature growth....

An important class whose development is impeded by slavery comprises the cultivators who are not landowners and the dwellers in the countryside and the hinterlands in general. We have already seen the unhappy state of this class, which constitutes nearly our entire population. Since they lack all independence and are dependent on another man's whims, the words of the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," have for the members of this class a concrete and real significance. Their plight is not that of workers, who, dismissed from one factory, can find work in another establishment, or of day laborers who can go to the labor market to offer their services, or of families which can emigrate; they constitute a class without means or resource—taught to consider work a servile occupation, having no market for its products, and far removed from a region of wage labor (if there is such an *El Dorado* in our country)—a class that consequently must resign itself to living and raising its children in dependency and misery.

This is the picture which a compassionate sugarmill owner presented of a section—the most fortunate section—of this class at the Agricultural Congress held in Recife in 1878:

The cultivator who is not a sugarmill owner leads a precarious life; his labor is not remunerated; his personal dignity is not respected; he is at the mercy of the sugarmill owner on whose land he lives. There is not even a written contract to bind the interested parties; everything is based on the absolute will of the sugarmill owner. In exchange for a dwelling, often of the most wretched kind, and for permission to cultivate a patch of manioc, invariably situated in the most unproductive land—in return for this the sharecropper divides equally with the sugarmill owner the sugar obtained from his crop. The owner also gets all the syrup and rum derived from the sugarcane; all the refuse—an excellent fuel for the manufacture of sugar; and all the sugarcane leaves, which provide a succulent food for his cattle. Thus the landowner receives the lion's share—all the more unjustly when it is remembered that the sharecropper bears all the expense of planting, cultivation, cutting, and preparation of the cane, and of its transport to the sugarmill.

And this is a favored class, that of the sharecroppers, below which there are others who have nothing of their own, tenants who have nothing to sell the landowner and who lead a nomadic existence, having no obligations to society and denied all protection by the State.

Consider now the other classes whose development is retarded by slavery—the working and industrial classes, and the commercial classes in general.

Slavery does not permit the existence of a true working class, nor is it compatible with the wage system and the personal dignity of the artisan. The artisan himself, in order to escape the stigma with which slavery brands its workers, attempts to widen the gulf that separates him from the slave, and becomes

imbued with a sense of superiority that is based in one who himself emerged from the servile class or whose parents were slaves. For the rest, there can be no strong, respected, and intelligent working class where the employers of labor are accustomed to order slaves about. As a result, the workers do not have slightest political influence in Brazil.

Slavery and industry are mutually exclusive terms, like slavery and colonization. The spirit of the former, spreading through a country, kills every one of the human faculties from which industry springs—initiative, inventiveness, individual energy, and every one of the elements that industry requires—the formation of capital, an abundance of labor, technical education of the workers, confidence in the future. Agriculture is the only Brazilian industry that has flourished in native hands. Commerce has prospered only in the hands of foreigners. . . . The advent of industry has been singularly retarded in our country, and it is barely making its entrance now.

Brazilian large-scale commerce does not possess the capital available to foreign commerce, in either the export or the import trade; and retail trade, at least as concerns its prosperous sector, with its own life, is practically a foreign monopoly. At various times in our history this has provoked popular demonstrations, proclaiming that retail commerce must become Brazilian, but this cry was characteristic of the spirit of exclusivism and hatred of competition, no matter how legitimate, in which slavery reared our people. More than once it was accompanied by uprisings similar in character but actuated by religious fanaticism. Those who supported the program of closure of Brazilian ports, and of annulling all the progress made since 1808, were unaware that if we took retail commerce away from foreigners it would not pass into native hands but would simply create a permanent shortage of goods—because it is slavery, not nationality, that prevents any significant development of Brazilian retail trade.

In relation to commerce, slavery proceeds in this fashion: It shuts off to trade, whether from distrust or from a spirit of routine, all of the interior except the provincial capitals. Aside from the towns of Santos and Campinas in São Paulo, Petropolis and Campos in Rio de Janeiro, Pelotas in Rio Grande do Sul, and a few other cities, outside the capitals you will not find a business establishment that is more than a little shop selling articles necessary for life, and these are generally crudely made or adulterated. Just as you will find nothing that betokens intellectual progress—neither bookstores nor newspapers—so will you find no trace of commerce except in the ancient rudimentary form of the store-bazaar. Consequently, aside from the articles that are ordered directly from the capital, all commercial transactions take the form of barter, whose history is the history of our whole interior. Barter, in fact, is the “pioneer” of our commerce, and represents the limits within which slavery is compatible with local exchange.

Yet commerce is the fountainhead of slavery, and its banker. A generation ago it supplied plantation agriculture with African slaves; many rural properties fell into the hands of slave traders; and the fortunes made in the traffic (for which counterfeit money sometimes had a great affinity), when not converted into town and country houses, were employed in assisting agriculture by way of loans at usurious rates. At present the bond between commerce and slavery is not so dishonorable for the former, but their mutual dependence continues to be the same. The princes of commerce are slave owners; coffee always reigns on the exchanges of Rio and Santos; and commerce, in the absence of industry and free labor, can function only as an agent of slavery, buying whatever it offers and selling whatever it needs. That is why in Brazil commerce does not develop or open new perspectives for the country; it is an inactive force, without stimuli, and conscious that it is merely an extension of slavery, or rather the mechanism by which human flesh is converted into gold and circulates, within and outside the country, in the form of letters of exchange. Slavery distrusts commerce, as it distrusts any agency of progress, whether it is a businessman's office, a railroad station, or a primary school; yet slavery needs commerce—and so the latter tries to live with it on the best possible terms. But so long as slavery endures, commerce must always be the servant of a class, and not an independent national agent; it cannot thrive under a régime that will not permit it to enter into direct relations with consumers, and will not allow the population of the interior to rise into that category.

Of the classes whose growth slavery artificially stimulates, none is more numerous than that of government employees. The close relation between slavery and the mania for officeholding is as indisputable as the relation between slavery and the superstition of the All-Providing State. . . . Take at random any twenty or thirty Brazilians in any place where our most cultured society is to be found; all were, or are, or will be government employees—if not they, then their sons.

Officeholding is . . . the asylum of the descendants of formerly rich and noble families that have squandered the fortunes made from slavery, of which it can be said, as a rule, as of fortunes made by gambling, that they neither last nor bring happiness. But officeholding is also our political olive tree, that shelters all those young men of brains and ambition but no money who form the great majority of our talented people. Draw up a list of distinguished Brazilian statesmen who solved their personal problem of poverty by marrying wealth (which meant, in the great majority of cases, becoming humble clients of the slave-owners); make up another list of those who solved that problem by acquiring government jobs; in those two lists you will find the names of virtually all our outstanding politicians. But what this means is that the national horizons are closed in all directions—that fields that might offer a livelihood to men of other

than commercial talents, such as literature, science, journalism, and teaching, are severely restricted, while others that might attract men of business ability are so many closed doors, thanks to lack of credit, to the narrow scope of commerce, to the rudimentary structure of our economic life. . . .

But can we have this consolation, that having degraded the various professions and reduced the nation to a proletariat, slavery at least succeeded in making the landowners a superior class, prosperous, educated, patriotic, worthy of representing the country intellectually and morally?

As concerns wealth, we have already seen that slavery ruined a generation of farmers whose place was taken by slave labor. From 1853 to 1857, when the obligations formed during the period of the slave traffic should have been in the process of liquidation, the mortgage debt of the city and province of Rio de Janeiro rose to sixty-seven thousand *contos*. The present generation has been no more fortunate. A large part of its profits was converted into human flesh, at a high price, and if an epidemic were to devastate the coffee plantations today, the amount of capital that the agriculture of the whole Empire could raise for new plantings would horrify those who believe it to be in a flourishing state. On top of this, for the past fifteen years there has been talk of nothing but "aid to agriculture." In 1868 appeared a little work by Sr. Quintino Bocayuva, *The Crisis of Agriculture*, in which that notable journalist wrote: "Agriculture can only be revived by the simultaneous application of two types of aid that cannot be longer delayed: the establishment of agricultural credit and the procurement of labor." The first measure was to be "a vast emission" based on the landed property of the Empire, which would thus be converted into ready money; the second should be Chinese colonization.

For fifteen years we have heard on all sides the cry that agriculture is in crisis, in need of aid, in agony, facing imminent bankruptcy. The government is daily denounced for not making loans and increasing the taxes in order to enable the *fazendeiros* [plantation owners] to buy still more slaves. A law of November 6, 1875, authorized the government to give its guarantee to the foreign bank—no other could make its notes circulate in Europe—which would lend money to the planters at a rate lower than that of the domestic money market. In order to have sugar centrals and improve their product, the landowners must have the nation build them at its expense. The same favor has been asked for coffee. On top of sugar centrals and money at low interest rates, the great planters demand railroad freight rates set to their liking, official expositions of coffee, Asiatic immigration, exemption from any direct tax, and an employment law that would make the German, English, or Italian colonist a white slave. Even the native population must be subjected to a new agricultural recruitment in order to satisfy certain Chambers of Commerce; and, above all, the rate of exchange, by an economic

fallacy, must be kept as low as possible so that coffee, which is paid for in gold, may be worth more in paper money....

As concerns its social functions, a landed aristocracy can serve its country in different ways: by working to improve the condition of the surrounding population of the countryside in which its estates are situated; by taking the direction of the progress of the nation into its own hands; by cultivating or protecting art and literature; by serving in the army and the navy or distinguishing itself in a variety of careers; by becoming the embodiment of all that is good in the national character, of the superior qualities of the people—of all that merits being preserved as tradition. We have already seen what our landed aristocracy achieved in each of these respects, when we noted what the slave system over which it presides has done to the land and the people, to the masters and the slaves. Since the class for whose profit it was created and exists is not an aristocracy of money, birth, intelligence, patriotism, or race, what is the permanent role in Brazil of a heterogeneous aristocracy that cannot even maintain its identity for two generations?

When we turn from the different classes to social institutions, we see that slavery has either turned them to its own interests, when of compromising tendency, or created a vacuum about them, when hostile, or hampered their formation, when incompatible with the slavery system.

Among the institutions that have identified themselves with slavery from the start, becoming instruments of its pretensions, is the Church. Under the system of domestic slavery, Christianity became mixed with fetishism, just as the two races mixed with each other. Through the influence of the wet nurse and the house slaves on the training of the children, the mumbo-jumbo terrors of the converted fetishist exert . . . the most depressing influence on the minds of the young. The faith, the religious system that results from this fusion of African traditions with the antisocial ideal of the fanatical missionary is a jumble of contradictions that only a total lack of principle can seek to reconcile. What is true of religion is true of the Church.

Our bishops, vicars, and confessors do not find the sale of human beings repugnant; the Bulls that condemn it have become obsolete. Two of our prelates were sentenced to imprisonment at hard labor for declaring war on Freemasonry; none, however, was willing to incur the displeasure of the slavocracy....

Take another social force that slavery has appropriated in the same way—patriotism. The slavocracy has always exerted itself to identify Brazil with slavery. Whoever attacks it immediately falls under suspicion of connivance with foreigners, of hostility toward the institutions of his own country. Antonio Carlos de Andrade was accused by the slave power of being un-Brazilian. To attack monarchy in a monarchical country, to attack Catholicism in a Catholic country, is perfectly proper, but to attack slavery is national treason and felony....

But as with all the moral forces that it subjugated, slavery degraded patriotism even as it bent it to its will. The Paraguayan War offers the best illustration of what it did to the patriotism of the slaveowning class, to the patriotism of the masters. Very few of them left their slaves to serve their country; many freed a few blacks in order to win titles of nobility. It was among the humblest strata of our population, descendants of slaves for the most part—the very people that slavery condemns to dependence and misery—among the illiterate proletarians whose political emancipation slavery indefinitely postponed—that one felt beating the heart of a new *patria*. It was they who produced the soldiers of the Volunteer Battalions. With slavery, said José Bonifacio de Andrada in 1825, “Brazil will never form, as she must form, a spirited army and a flourishing navy”—because with slavery there can be no true patriotism, but only a patriotism of caste or race; that is, a sentiment that should unite all the members of society is used to divide them....

Among the forces of progress and change around which slavery has created a vacuum as hostile to its interests, the press is notable—and not only the newspaper but the book, and everything that concerns education. To the credit of our journalism, the press has been the great weapon of struggle against slavery, the instrument for the propagation of new ideas; efforts to found a “black organ” have always collapsed. Whether insinuated timidly or affirmed with energy, the dominant sentiment in all our journalism, from North to South, is emancipation. But in order to create a vacuum around the newspaper and the book, and around all that could foster abolitionist sentiment, slavery has instinctively repelled the school and public education, maintaining the country in ignorance and darkness—the milieu in which it can prosper. The slave hut and the school are poles that repel each other.

The state of public education under a slave system interested in universal ignorance is well illustrated by the following excerpt from a notable report by Sr. Ruy Barbosa, reporter for the Commission on Public Instruction of the Chamber of Deputies:

The truth—and your Commission wants to be very explicit on this point, displease whom it may—is that our public instruction is as backward as is possible in a country that regards itself as free and civilized; that decadence and not progress prevails; that we are a people of illiterates, and that the rate of illiteracy is declining at an intolerably slow rate if it is declining at all; that our academic instruction is infinitely below the scientific level of the age; that our youth leave the secondary schools more and more poorly prepared for advanced study; and that popular education, in the capital as in the provinces, is merely a desideratum....

Among the forces whose emergence slavery has impeded is public opinion, the consciousness of a common destiny. Under slavery there cannot exist that

powerful force called public opinion, that simultaneously balances and offers a point of support to the individuals who represent the most advanced thought of the country. Just as slavery is incompatible with spontaneous immigration, so will it prevent the influx of new ideas. Itself incapable of invention, it will have nothing to do with progress....

And because we lack this force of social change, Brazilian politics are the sad and degrading struggle for spoils that we behold; no man in public life means anything, for none has the support of the country. The president of the council lives at the mercy of the Crown, from which he derives his power; even the appearance of power is his only when he is regarded as the Emperor's lieutenant and is believed to have in his pocket the decree of dissolution—that is, the right to elect a chamber made up of his own henchmen. Below him are the ministers, who live by the favor of the president of the council; farther down still, on the third plane, are found the deputies, at the mercy of the ministers. The representative system, then, is a graft of parliamentary forms on a patriarchal government, and senators and deputies only take their roles seriously in this parody of democracy because of the personal advantages they derive therefrom. Suppress the subsidies, force them to stop using their positions for personal and family ends, and no one who had anything else to do would waste his time in such *skimaxai*, such shadow boxing, to borrow a comparison from Cicero.

Ministers without support from public opinion, who when dismissed fall into the limbo of forgotten things; presidents of the council who spend their days and nights seeking to fathom the esoteric thinking of the Emperor; a Chamber of Deputies conscious of its nullity and wanting only to be left alone; a Senate reduced to being a *prytaneum* [Roman shrine]; political parties that are nothing more than employment agencies and mutual benefit societies for their members. All these ostensible evidences of a free government are preserved by national pride like the consular dignity in the Roman Empire, but what we really have is a government of primitive simplicity in which responsibilities are infinitely divided while power is concentrated in the hands of one man. He is the chief of State. When some leader seems to have effective authority and power, individual prestige, it is because at that particular moment he happens to be standing in the light cast by the throne. Let him take one step to the right or left away from that sphere of light, and he vanishes forever into the darkness....

This so-called *personal government* has been explained by the absurd theory that the Emperor corrupted an entire people; that he demoralized our politicians by means of supreme temptations after the manner of Satan; that he stole the virtue of parties which never had ideas or principles, save as a field of exploitation. The truth is that this government is the direct result of the practice of slavery in our country. A people accustomed to slavery does not prize liberty or learn to

practice self-government. Hence the general abdication of civic functions, the distaste for the obscure and anonymous exercise of personal responsibility, without which no people can be free, since a free people is only an aggregate of free individuals. These are the causes that have resulted in the supremacy of the only permanent and perpetual element—the monarchy.

8. ON RACIAL MISCEGENATION IN BRAZIL

*In Brazil, the process of nation-building was linked to debates that were specific to the national context. The late overthrow of monarchy (1889) and the establishment of a republic, for example, turned the opposition between the two into an expression of modernity and tradition. Another central issue of the period was the link between racial miscegenation and modern nation-building. Like many of his contemporaries, Euclides Da Cunha (1866–1909) was deeply influenced by European evolutionist ideas of race, and adopted their pessimistic views on race mixture. The rebellion of Canudos in the backlands provided him with the opportunity to reflect on racial and geographical determinism. Like Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's *Facundo*, Da Cunha's famous book *Os Sertões* (1902; translated into English as *Rebellion in the Backlands*) is an essay on national interpretation and, to a great extent, a reflection on Brazilian national character. While condemning the military repression of the Canudos uprising and denouncing the brutal inequalities behind the utopia of the modern nation, Da Cunha exposes, in the excerpt below, the concern of many turn-of-the-century intellectuals over the racial instability of the typical sertões (backlanders), a mixture of Indian and African ethnicities.*

The mixture of very diverse races is, in the majority of cases, prejudicial. Evolutionary theory concludes that even the mixed-race offspring of a superior race show the irrepressible stigmas of the inferior. Rampant race mixture is a step backward. The Indo-European, the Black, and the indigenous Guarani or Tapuia represent oppositional evolutionary stages, and crossing them obliterates the preeminent qualities of the first group and stimulates the most primitive attributes of the last two. For this reason, the *mestiço* (person of mixed race)—the

Euclides Da Cunha, *Os Sertões*, vol. 1 (São Paulo, 1902), pp. 45–46. The original text (in Portuguese) is available through Ministério Da Cultura (Brazil), Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Departamento Nacional do Livro at http://www.dominiopublico.gov.br/pesquisa/DetalheObraForm.do?select_action=&co_obra=2163. Excerpt translated by the editors.

Modernity and the Emergence of the Nation-State

As they consolidated their place as producers of raw materials and foodstuffs during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Latin American economies further accelerated their path toward modernity. Argentina was probably the most spectacular case. With every indicator of economic expansion skyrocketing, hundreds of thousands of European immigrants arrived every year to settle permanently. But a similar tendency was evident everywhere else on the continent. Key areas of the export economy were in foreign hands—particularly those that were technologically complex. Railways carried commodities from the producing areas to the ports, sugar mills, refrigerated meatpacking plants, and grain-storage silos. Some countries—particularly in Central America and the Caribbean—saw the development of foreign enclaves that grew increasingly isolated from neighboring zones as they modernized their infrastructure and developed according to the demands of foreign markets. Prosperity, however, did not mean economic stability, because the oscillations of the international market could quickly lead these dependent national economies from feverish growth to total collapse in short periods of time.

This general context of export-led prosperity allowed political elites to consolidate their power, as the dominant climate of ideas shifted gradually from midcentury liberalism toward a more conservative—even authoritarian—conception of politics. A new type of “progressive” *caudillo*—Porfirio Díaz in Mexico, Rafael Núñez in Colombia, Antonio Guzmán Blanco in Venezuela, Justo Rufino Barrios in Guatemala—symbolizes this era of pragmatic liberalism. The

phrase “Order and Progress,” a motto used by political leaders, encapsulates the importance attached to both the concentration of power in the hands of the executive branch and to material prosperity. Traditional liberal claims for civil liberties and constitutional methods of government were no longer central to liberalism. Regional revolts did not disappear completely, but they became increasingly rare as states, in pursuit of a monopoly on violence, centralized and professionalized their armed forces. Material prosperity also allowed states to expand and streamline their bureaucracies, a fact reflected in the imposing state buildings that multiplied throughout the capital cities. Urban modernization became visible in other ways as well: new avenues were opened, sewage systems were constructed and public transportation developed, while electric lighting changed the social experience of the street. Political discourse took a decidedly positivistic turn. The prestige of science persuaded leaders to associate their administrations with the languages and views of reform provided by medicine and biology.

As the century drew to a close, dissatisfied urban middle- and working-class groups combined to form parties that challenged the political establishments in a number of countries. Interestingly, the economic systems of these countries remained beyond major ideological challenge until the first decades of the following century. Democratic parties, quite moderate in their demands, challenged the political elites on moral grounds. The most radical opposition developed at the end of the century, and it came from anarchist organizations (in Argentina) and socialist groups in Chile, Argentina, and Brazil.

1. POLITICAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The year 1880 represents a turning point in the process of state and nation-building in Argentina. The end of the “Indian problem,” officially settled with the “Campaign of the Desert” (as the final stages of the war against the Indians were called), eliminated one of the main barriers to economic expansion, opening up vast tracts of new land and subjugating about 14,000 Indians. Thanks to the prestige he gained as the military leader of this undertaking (1879–1880) and to the endorsement by a broad coalition of governors and Buenos Aires political factions, Julio A. Roca won the presidential election. One of the most contentious issues—it caused an uprising after Roca’s

General Julio A. Roca, “Discurso ante el Congreso al asumir la presidencia,” *La Prensa*, October 13, 1880. Excerpt translated by the editors.

I finish here, Honorable Sirs, with a brief statement of my approach to government: Sincere intentions; firm will to defend the nation's executive branch and to have our laws be strictly enforced; great humility in my own abilities; deep faith in the future greatness of the Republic; a spirit of tolerance of all opinions, as long as they are not revolutionary; and the healing of all the wounds that are inflicted and received during the electoral process—such are the personal qualities that I bring to the first office of my country. Fortunately, at this moment there is not one Argentine who does not understand the secret of our prosperity: that it depends upon keeping the peace and maintaining an absolute respect for the Constitution; and the outstanding qualities of superior men are certainly not needed to make straight, honest, progressive government. I can say, truly and without boasting, that the banner of my government will be: Bread and Administration. In order to achieve this, I will rely upon the protection of holy providence (that is never invoked in vain), the help of your insights, and the support of the national consensus that has brought me to this office, and of all honest men living in our land.

2. BUENOS AIRES: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the French newspaper Le Figaro commissioned journalist Jules Huret (1864–1915) to travel to several European and American countries. As part of this mission, Huret visited Buenos Aires, and in 1911 he published his views on the prosperous Argentine capital. His impressions largely coincide with those of most foreign observers of that period: a new cosmopolitan nation in the midst of a frenetic race toward progress with many signs of a bright future ahead.

We arrived in Buenos Aires one lovely winter morning. It was the month of July, and for the disembarking, all of the Argentine ladies had put on, with charming coquettishness, the most beautiful and most modern toilettes which they had brought from Paris.

This was demanded by fashion and the fevered impatience of those who were waiting for them. One of our traveling companions, who wept with emotion when she saw her mother (whom she had not seen for some time) on the pier, crossed the ramp and had barely reached dry land when I saw her surrounded by friends and relatives circling around her. With one hand holding her handkerchief, moist with tears, she opened with the other hand her fur coat, as if to show

Jules Huret, *De Buenos Aires al Gran Chaco* (Buenos Aires, Hypsamérica, 1988), pp. 26–29. Excerpt translated by the editors.

its lining, which was as beautiful as the coat itself. She had barely dried her tears and was already smiling to welcome their congratulations.

From the pier, one single structure commands the view of the city. It is the most recently constructed hotel—the Plaza Hotel, a seven-story building whose whiteness stands in sharp contrast to the blue of the sky. Thus, there is little similarity between the arrival in Buenos Aires and the arrival in New York—nothing of the monumental sight of North American cities, as certain comparative descriptions have claimed. Quite the contrary. The first impression one experiences is that of arriving in a great European city. That impression is due to the fact that nothing extraordinary claims our attention. It is true that streets are laid out as a chess board, and that many houses have no more than a first floor, but one is distracted from these idiosyncrasies by the city's bustling streets.

What town does Buenos Aires remind us of? Properly speaking, none. Perhaps London, for its narrow streets full of houses, its match vendors, and the black helmets of its policemen; Vienna, for its two-horse Victoria carriages; Spain, in general, because of its houses with plain façades, grated windows, and for the griminess of some of the more marginal streets; New York, for its shoe-shine boys; Paris, for its beautiful Avenida de Mayo, its spacious sidewalks, and cafés with terraces.

I did not experience, at first, any of the impressions of the traveler who finds himself far from his center, none of the exoticness that great distances suggest, instilling in us a sense of being far away. Nevertheless, if you disembark on one of those sunny winter days that are not uncommon in Argentina, you will be seduced by the sweetness of the atmosphere and the idyllic purity of the sky. There are palm trees everywhere, and in the woods of Palermo, where you will take your first stroll, the great eucalyptus, the pepper and bamboo trees will make you understand that you are in a country with a wonderful climate, in an enchanted Riviera where life must be abundant and easy.

Between the pier where the boat lands and the center of town, you are surprised by the liveliness and activity everywhere. In the face of that enormous town, that immense unknown that has been growing in silence for twenty years without its Latin sisters noticing, I was not immune from the general surprise that I later observed in all those who had disembarked.

That vast port, with its ample piers, as clean as those of a German port, crowded with ships in three and four abreast; the orderliness of the disembarking; the politeness of the functionaries; the comfort of the Customs waiting-rooms; the luxurious cars driving you to the hotels through the main arteries; the bustling streets in the commercial district; Florida Street, so narrow, with its Parisian stores; the traffic in nearby streets, 25 de Mayo, Bartolomé Mitre, and Reconquista; the great offices and the teeming Banks, showing off their logos in

white porcelain and sending your imagination wandering to the sites of London or Hamburg; all of that, taken separately or as a whole, makes up this great European town, a mixture of the capitals and commercial metropolis of Europe.

Nothing indigenous or typically local dilutes this impression. Where are the gauchos [cowboys] arriving from the countryside, the beggars on horseback, or the powdered Cármenes [seductive Spanish women] I expected to see? To what far away neighborhood do I have to go to hear serenades outdoors by night? I saw nothing but elegant women wearing toilettes from Rue de la Paix, and young men dressed in Piccadilly suits, promenading in their carriages.

The impression of wealth is soon matched by that of activity. The luxury of the carriages and automobiles parading down the avenues; the general look of passers-by, elegant, polished, with fashionable ties, shoes with half boots as shiny as crystal—all of these reinforce the impression of prosperity suggested by the port and commercial streets.

I search in vain for people with red ties, buttons made with large diamonds, or bombastic trinkets. I see people like you and me, perhaps a bit more elegant, with a British correctness (slightly out of place, because what suits the English and their affected rigidity, their stiffness and phlegm, does not suit the vivacious and spontaneous Latins). One certainly finds shinier shoes here than in any part of Europe. One notices their taste for polish and the cleanliness of their feet, whether varnished or polished, remind me of those of Athenians and Spaniards.

The impression of prosperity and luxury grows even more if one visits the western neighborhoods, as sumptuous as our Passy or our Plaine-Monceau, though with greater variety and even more private hotels, some quite exquisite. In certain areas, they remind one of Berlin or, even better, Charlottenburg, Schoeneberg, or Wilmersdorf with its new streets of houses, only more stylish and elegant.

The tidiness of the streets, the regularity and frequency with which they are cleaned, also reminds one of German towns. Men with small brooms and shovels work constantly in the busiest streets, cleaning and sweeping all day.

3. A DIFFERENT MODEL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A NEW PROGRAM FOR CHILE

The formula for Argentine development advocated by politician Juan Bautista Alberdi (see Chapter 1), with its stress on opening the country to European capital, commerce, and immigrants, may be described as the classic

José de Balmaceda, *El pensamiento de Balmaceda*, ed. Fernando Silva Vargas (Santiago de Chile, 1974), pp. 67–68. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

a new and clear day. You will receive only blessings, because, have no doubt, only the victory of intelligence over ignorance will receive the acknowledgement and praise of more fortunate generations, the generations of future centuries.

5. PORFIRIO DÍAZ ASSESSES HIS LEGACY

For nearly thirty-five years (1876–1911), Mexico was under the effective control of one man, General Porfirio Díaz. According to the regime's propagandists, this prolonged period of relative stability provided a much-needed respite from contentious politics and a golden opportunity for economic development under the expert guidance of Díaz's cadre of loyal científicos (technocrats). Economic development, in turn, was promoting the growth of democratic sensibilities in the Mexican people through expanded educational and employment opportunities. Much of that economic development would come from increased foreign investment drawn by generous financial incentives and guarantees of security. In this famous 1908 interview with American journalist James Creelman, Porfirio Díaz demonstrates his understanding of this developmentalist agenda as well as his mastery of public relations. The promise of free elections in the upcoming presidential campaign, probably intended for American rather than Mexican readers, encouraged the development of a political opposition that would eventually put an end to Díaz's authoritarian rule.

"It is a mistake to suppose that the future of democracy in Mexico has been endangered by the long continuance in office of one President," he said quietly. "I can say sincerely that office has not corrupted my political ideals and that I believe democracy to be the one true, just principle of government, although in practice it is possible only to highly developed peoples." . . .

"I received this Government from the hands of a victorious army at a time when the people were divided and unprepared for the exercise of the extreme principles of democratic government. [Eds: Díaz came to power in a military coup in 1876 after a disputed election.] To have thrown upon the masses the whole responsibility of government at once would have produced conditions that might have discredited the cause of free government.

"Yet, although I got power at first from the army, an election was held as soon as possible and then my authority came from the people. I have tried to leave

James Creelman, "President Díaz, Hero of the Americas," *Pearson's Magazine* 19, no. 3 (March 1908): 243–245. Accessible at <https://archive.org/details/presidentdiazher00cree>.

the Presidency several times, but it has been pressed upon me and I remained in office for the sake of the nation which trusted me. The fact that the price of Mexican securities dropped eleven points when I was ill at Cuernavaca indicates the kind of evidence that persuaded me to overcome my personal inclination to retire to private life.

"We preserved the republican and democratic form of government. We defended the theory and kept it intact. Yet we adopted a patriarchal policy in the actual administration of the nation's affairs, guiding and restraining popular tendencies, with full faith that an enforced peace would allow education, industry and commerce to develop elements of stability and unity in a naturally intelligent, gentle and affectionate people.

"I have waited patiently for the day when the people of the Mexican Republic would be prepared to choose and change their government at every election without danger of armed revolutions and without injury to the national credit or interference with national progress. I believe that day has come." . . .

"It is commonly held true that democratic institutions are impossible in a country which has no middle class," I [Creelman] suggested.

President Díaz turned, with a keen look, and nodded his head.

"It is true," he said. "Mexico has a middle class now; but she had none before. The middle class is the active element of society, here as elsewhere."

"The rich are too much preoccupied in their riches and in their dignities to be of much use in advancing the general welfare. Their children do not try very hard to improve their education or their character.

"On the other hand, the poor are usually too ignorant to have power.

"It is upon the middle class, drawn largely from the poor, but somewhat from the rich, the active, hard-working, self-improving middle class, that a democracy must depend for its government. It is the middle class that concerns itself with politics and with the general progress.

"In the old days we had no middle class in Mexico because the minds of the people and their energies were wholly absorbed in politics and war. Spanish tyranny and misgovernment had disorganized society. The productive activities of the nation were abandoned in successive struggles. There was general confusion. Neither life nor property was safe. A middle class could not appear under such conditions." . . .

"The future of Mexico is assured," he said in a clear voice. "The principles of democracy have not been planted very deep in our people, I fear. But the nation has grown and it loves liberty. Our difficulty has been that the people do not concern themselves enough about public matters for a democracy. The individual Mexican as a rule thinks much about his own rights and is always ready to assert them. But he does not think so much about the rights of others. He thinks of his

privileges, but not of his duties. Capacity for self-restraint is the basis of democratic government, and the self-restraint is possible only to those who recognize the rights of their neighbors.

"The Indians, who are more than half of our population, care little for politics. They are accustomed to look to those in authority for leadership instead of thinking for themselves. That is a tendency they inherited from the Spaniards, who taught them to refrain from meddling in public affairs and rely on the Government for guidance.

"Yet I firmly believe that the principles of democracy have grown and will grow in Mexico."

"But you have no opposition party in the Republic, Mr. President. How can free institutions flourish when there is no opposition to keep the majority, or governing party, in check?"

"It is true there is no opposition party. I have so many friends in the Republic that my enemies seem unwilling to identify themselves with so small a minority. I appreciate the kindness of my friends and the confidence of my country; but such absolute confidence imposes responsibilities and duties that tire me more and more.

"No matter what my friends and supporters say, I retire when my present term of office ends, and I shall not serve again. I shall be eighty years old then.

"My country has relied on me and it has been kind to me. My friends have praised my merits and overlooked my faults. But they may not be willing to deal so generously with my successor and he may need my advice and support; therefore I desire to be alive when he assumes office so that I may help him."

He folded his arms over his deep chest and spoke with great emphasis.

"I welcome an opposition party in the Mexican Republic," he said. "If it appears, I will regard it as a blessing, not as an evil. And if it can develop power, not to exploit but to govern, I will stand by it, support it, advise it and forget myself in the successful inauguration of complete democratic government in the country.

"It is enough for me that I have seen Mexico rise among the peaceful and useful nations. I have no desire to continue in the Presidency. This nation is ready for her ultimate life of freedom." . . .

"The railway has played a great part in the peace of Mexico," he continued. "When I became President at first there were only two small lines, one connecting the capital with Vera Cruz, the other connecting it with Querétaro. Now we have more than nineteen thousand miles of railways. Then we had a slow and costly mail service, carried on by stage coaches, and the mail coach between the capital and Puebla would be stopped by highwaymen two or three times in a trip, the last robbers to attack it generally finding nothing left to steal. Now we have a

cheap, safe and fairly rapid mail service throughout the country with more than twenty-two hundred post-offices. Telegraphing was a difficult thing in those times. Today we have more than forty-five thousand miles of telegraph wires in operation.

"We began by making robbery punishable by death and compelling the execution of offenders within a few hours after they were caught and condemned. We ordered that wherever telegraph wires were cut and the chief officer of the district did not catch the criminal, he should himself suffer; and in case the cutting occurred on a plantation the proprietor who failed to prevent it should be hanged to the nearest telegraph pole. These were military orders, remember."

"We were harsh. Sometimes we were harsh to the point of cruelty. But it was all necessary then to the life and progress of the nation. If there was any cruelty, results have justified it."

The nostrils dilated and quivered. The mouth was a straight line.

"It was better that a little blood should be shed than much blood should be saved. The blood that was shed was bad blood; the blood that was saved was good blood."

"Peace was necessary, even an enforced peace, that the nation might have time to think and work. Education and industry have carried on the task begun by the army." . . .

"And which do you regard as the greatest force for peace, the army or the schoolhouse?" I asked.

The soldier's face flushed slightly and the splendid white head was held a little higher.

"You speak of the present time?"

"Yes."

"The schoolhouse. There can be no doubt of that. I want to see education throughout the Republic carried on by the national Government. I hope to see it before I die. It is important that all citizens of a republic should receive the same training, so that their ideals and methods may be harmonized and the national unity intensified. When men read alike and think alike they are more likely to act alike."

"And you believe that the vast Indian population of Mexico is capable of high development?"

"I do. The Indians are gentle and they are grateful, all except the Yacquis [Yaquis] and some of the Myas [Maya]. They have the traditions of an ancient civilization of their own. They are to be found among the lawyers, engineers, physicians, army officers and other professional men."

Over the city drifted the smoke of many factories.

"It is better than cannon smoke," I said.

"Yes," he replied, "and yet there are times when cannon smoke is not such a bad thing."

6. A POPULAR PERSPECTIVE ON MODERNITY

The prints of José Guadalupe Posada (1852–1913), especially his skeletal *Calaveras*, have become perhaps the best-known example of Mexico's rich popular culture and an inspiration to generations of Mexican (and Mexican American) artists eager to develop a distinctive national (or ethnic) style. (The literal translation of the word *calavera* is "skull." In Mexican popular culture the term is used to describe a range of artistic creations ranging from skeletons from sugar candies for children to satirical poems intended to remind their readers of their mortality.) Posada did his most important work as an illustrator for a Mexico City broadsheet publisher, Antonio Vanegas Arroyo, and for the capital's lively turn-of-the-century penny press. The Vanegas Arroyo broadsheets were single pages (sometimes on brightly colored paper), with an illustration, often by Posada, at the top and explanatory text at the bottom. The subject matter varied widely—death, oddities of nature, bullfights, religious images, sensational crimes, bandit escapades, executions, political commentary, battles (especially during the revolutionary years), macho men, and heartless women—anything the publisher thought would sell. While the broadsheets functioned primarily as tabloids, the penny press specialized in political and social satire. Intended for a working-class audience that bore the brunt of Porfirio Díaz's obsession with order, the penny press mocked vain women, corrupt politicians, Yankee interlopers, capitalist exploiters, upper-class pretensions, and ignorant policemen. The four images included here reflect popular attitudes toward the Díaz administration's attempts at modernization: "Great Electric Skeleton" uses traditional Day of the Dead imagery and humor to expose the often violent side of modern conveniences like electric streetcars—violence that in the case of Mexico City was both symbolic and real. "The American Mosquito" is a humorous example of long-standing popular complaints about the encroachment of capital and culture from the United States, often in conjunction with the railroads. "New and Entertaining Verses of a Brave Man from Bajío to his Buddies" contrasts the rough, traditional masculinity of a provincial cowboy from north-central Mexico with the smoother, more modern style of his urban counterparts. "Feminism Imposes Itself" reflects urban male anxieties about the emasculating effects of modern civilization. The number 41 refers to the scandalous 1901 arrest of forty-one men, half of them dressed as women, at a private party in downtown Mexico City—an incident that turned the number 41 into a popular code for male homosexuality.

The Rise of Mass Politics and Culture

The first decades of the twentieth century witnessed the appearance of a new conception of politics that allowed for the increasing visibility and participation of the masses in several Latin American countries. The foundations of the neo-colonial system, after being repeatedly undermined by international crises, were finally destroyed by the Great Depression. Meanwhile, political exclusion gave way to an era of mass politics and great charismatic leaders, who maintained the legitimacy of their rule by means of periodic political rituals—rallies, demonstrations, and so on. A growing consensus over the increased role of the state in the regulation of the economy, in the development of national industry, and in the organization of labor was at the root of most of the national and regional efforts during this era of mass politics.

The first major movement against the existing economic system (characterized by large plantations, peonage, and foreign control over national resources) and in favor of raising the living standards of the masses was the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Its first leader, Francisco Madero, emphasized political rather than social objectives. But popular pressure forced his successors to accept a program of social reform. It was translated into the language of the law in the Constitution of 1917. Nevertheless, reform proceeded slowly and uncertainly. By 1928, many revolutionary leaders, now grown wealthy and corrupt, had abandoned their reformist ideals. Popular discontent with the rule of the “millionaire socialists” produced an upsurge of change in the administration of President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940), when the agenda of the Mexican Revolution resumed its course and the material and cultural conditions of the majorities began to improve. In the context of a positive reassessment of state intervention in social

and economic arenas, Cárdenas distributed land to the *ejidos* (state communal land grants) and made efforts to improve agricultural productivity. He also strengthened urban labor by replacing the old, corrupt leadership. Foreign economic influence was weakened in 1938, when the oil industry was nationalized. Like other leaders of his time, Cárdenas was interested in national control of strategic industries but was not opposed to private ownership in most instances.

In Peru, the cycle of modernization led by Augusto Leguía came to an end during the international economic crisis of 1930, which had an especially damaging effect on the finances of countries that depended on the United States for loans. The political landscape was altered significantly by the emergence of new, modern political parties, representing popular and urban middle-class constituencies. With a strong anti-imperialist program, APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance) would emerge as a key player in Peruvian politics, a role it occupies to this day. The integration of the indigenous majority into modern society was the other great theme of reformist and revolutionary voices. APRA's leader, Víctor Haya de la Torre, developed the intellectual foundation of a program committed to the adoption of indigenous heritage and social agenda as important elements of its platform. In the 1920s and 1930s, José Carlos Mariátegui would develop another influential school of thought on these questions, more squarely framed within the larger ideological context of Marxist socialism. Access to political power remained elusive, however, as military figures or conservative civilians dominated the political scene in the 1930s and 1940s, respectively, leading APRA to long periods of proscription, radical opposition, and occasional rebellion.

In Brazil, the shift to populist politics was directly linked to the Great Depression and the collapse of the coffee industry. The establishment of a republic in 1889 had not threatened the dominance of the coffee producers and cattle ranchers of São Paulo and Minas Gerais. The sugar industry, seriously affected by the abolition of slavery in 1888, had already declined in importance. The problem of overproduction and falling prices for coffee led to official efforts to maintain prices at an artificially high level. After 1920, this chronic crisis diverted workers and capital to the manufacturing sector, which experienced considerable growth in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and other urban centers. The collapse of the coffee industry in 1929, combined with bitter interprovincial rivalries, enabled Getúlio Vargas, a shrewd *caudillo* from Rio Grande do Sul, to seize power through a coup d'état. The Vargas years (1930–1945) saw sweeping centralization of power by the federal government, government assistance for the new industrialists as well as for agriculture, and a drastic silencing of all opposition. At the same time, his politics of wealth redistribution and legal protection of urban workers brought him enormous popularity as the "father of the poor."

In Argentina, the era of mass politics and culture was linked to the expansion of the urban population due to an influx of clerical and industrial workers (either native Argentines or recent European immigrants). In this more mobile society, the public education system played a key role, helping assimilate the children of these recent arrivals, increasing the literacy rate of the urban masses, and creating rising expectations of upward social mobility and political participation. Changes in the electoral legislation led to the first triumph of Hipólito Yrigoyen, the "radical" leader who opposed the oligarchic regime that had held power since 1880. Although Yrigoyen did little to challenge the economic preeminence of the landowning elite, his quasi-religious leadership style, combined with the plebeian tone of his administration, did much to alienate the conservative opposition. After fourteen years of radical rule, Yrigoyen was ousted by a military coup, inaugurating what would become a long sequence of military interventions in Argentine politics. Ironically, it was from the ranks of the army that the next charismatic leader would emerge. In 1943, Colonel Juan Perón participated in another military coup—this time against an unpopular conservative administration—and soon showed himself to be the strongman of the regime. Perón's popularity came from the great support he garnered from industrial workers, who greatly benefited from the social policies he inaugurated. He became president in 1946 and was reelected in 1951. His government combined authoritarian measures against political opponents with nationalist economic policies, and a powerful appeal to a working class that would remain ever faithful to its leaders, Perón and his wife, Evita. Although he was ousted by another coup in 1955, to this day the political identity of the Argentine working classes is decidedly Peronist.

1. FOR LAND AND LIBERTY

In his Plan of San Luis Potosí, which was a call for revolution, Francisco Madero had emphasized political objectives, only lightly touching on the subject of land reform. But in the mountainous southern state of Morelos, where the Indian communities had long waged a losing struggle against the encroaching sugar haciendas, the revolution led by Emiliano Zapata was chiefly about reclaiming rights over those lands. When Zapata became convinced that Madero did not intend to carry out his promise to restore land to the villages, he revolted and issued his own program, the Plan of Ayala, for which he continued to battle until the great guerrilla fighter was slain by treachery in 1919.

"Plan de Ayala," in Gildardo Magaña, *Emiliano Zapata y el agrarismo en México* (México, 1934–1937), vol. 1, pp. 126–130. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

Zapata's principled and tenacious struggle and the popularity of his ideas among the landless peasantry contributed to the adoption of a bold program of agrarian reform in the Constitution of 1917. Important provisions of the Plan of Ayala follow.

The Liberating Plan of the sons of the State of Morelos, members of the insurgent army that demands the fulfillment of the *Plan of San Luis Potosí*, as well as other reforms that it judges convenient and necessary for the welfare of the Mexican nation.

We, the undersigned, constituted as a Revolutionary Junta, in order to maintain and obtain the fulfillment of the promises made by the revolution of November 20, 1910, solemnly proclaim in the face of the civilized world . . . so that it may judge us, the principles that we have formulated in order to destroy the tyranny that oppresses us. . . .

1. Considering that the President of the Republic, Señor Don Francisco I. Madero, has made a bloody mockery of Effective Suffrage by . . . entering into an infamous alliance with the *científicos* [technocrats], the *haciendados* [estate owners], the feudalists, and oppressive *caciques* [chieftains], enemies of the Revolution that he proclaimed, in order to forge the chains of a new dictatorship more hateful and terrible than that of Porfirio Díaz . . . for these reasons we declare the said Francisco I. Madero unfit to carry out the promises of the Revolution of which he was the author. . . .
4. The Revolutionary Junta of the State of Morelos formally proclaims to the Mexican people:
5. That it endorses the *Plan of San Luis Potosí* with the additions stated below for the benefit of the oppressed peoples, and that it will defend its principles until victory or death. . . .
6. As an additional part of the plan we proclaim, be it known: that the lands, woods, and waters usurped by the *haciendados*, *científicos*, or *caciques* through tyranny and venal justice henceforth belong to the towns or citizens who have corresponding titles to these properties, of which they were despoiled by the bad faith of our oppressors. They shall retain possession of the said properties at all costs, arms in hand. The usurpers who think they have a right to the said lands may state their claims before special tribunals to be established upon the triumph of the Revolution. . . .
7. Since the immense majority of Mexican towns and citizens own nothing but the ground on which they stand and endure a miserable

existence, denied the opportunity to improve their social condition or to devote themselves to industry or agriculture because a few individuals monopolize the lands, woods, and waters—for these reasons the great estates shall be expropriated, with indemnification to the owners of one-third of such monopolies, in order that the towns and citizens of Mexico may obtain *ejidos*, colonies, town sites, and arable lands. Thus the welfare of the Mexican people shall be promoted in all respects.

8. The properties of those *haciendados*, *científicos*, or *caciques* who directly or indirectly oppose the present *Plan* shall be seized by the nation, and two-thirds of their value shall be used for war indemnities and pensions for the widows and orphans of the soldiers who may perish in the struggle for this *Plan*.
9. In proceeding against the above properties there shall be applied the laws of disentail and nationalization, as may be convenient, using as our precept and example the laws enforced by the immortal [former President Benito] Juárez against Church property—laws that taught a painful lesson to the despots and conservatives who at all times have sought to fasten upon the people the yoke of oppression and backwardness.

2. A REVOLUTIONARY CONSTITUTION

Between November 1916 and January 1917, at a Congress held in Querétaro, the main tenets of the Revolution were rendered into the language of constitutional law. With the end of Huerta's regime, internal strife within the revolutionary forces led to Venustiano Carranza's victory. Eager to stabilize the situation and ensure that recent changes would become enduring realities, the new president called for a Constitutional Convention. In that context, deputies such as Pastor Rouaix—a loyal carrancista and specialist in agrarian law—played a crucial role in the writing of some of the most innovative articles. In this new Constitution, social rights were enshrined as a defining element of the philosophical backdrop of the document, a departure from the previous liberal emphasis on individual rights. As illustrated in the excerpts below, the Constitution also reflected the secular and anticlerical spirit of the Revolution, as well as its nationalistic outlook in the economic realm. It would be a model for other constitutions in the twentieth century. Despite numerous amendments, it remains the foundation of Mexican law to this day.

"The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with the Constitution of 1857," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 17, Supplement (May, 1917), pp. i-v, 1-116. Accessible at <https://archive.org/details/jstor-1013370>.

violence against persons or property, or in case of war when the strikers belong to establishments and services dependent on the government. Employees of military manufacturing establishments of the Federal Government shall not be included in the provisions of this clause, inasmuch as they are a dependency of the national army. (. . .)

- xix. Lockouts shall only be lawful when the excess of production shall render it necessary to shut down in order to maintain prices reasonably above the cost of production, subject to the approval of the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration.
- xx. Differences or disputes between capital and labor shall be submitted for settlement to a board of conciliation and arbitration to consist of an equal number of representatives of the workmen and of the employers and of one representative of the Government.
- xxi. If the employer shall refuse to submit his differences to arbitration or to accept the award rendered by the Board, the labor contract shall be considered as terminated, and the employer shall be bound to indemnify the workman by the payment to him of three months' wages, in addition to the liability which he may have incurred by reason of the dispute. If the workman rejects the award, the contract will be held to have terminated.
- xxii. An employer who discharges a workman without proper cause or for having joined a union or syndicate or for having taken part in a lawful strike shall be bound, at the option of the workman, either to perform the contract or to indemnify him by the payment of three months' wages. He shall incur the same liability if the workman shall leave his service on account of the lack of good faith on the part of the employer or of maltreatment either as to his own person or that of his wife, parents, children or brothers or sisters. The employer cannot evade this liability when the maltreatment is inflicted by subordinates or agents acting with his consent or knowledge.

3. THE "INDIAN PROBLEM"

Peruvian writer and thinker José Carlos Mariátegui (1894–1930) authored many influential essays diagnosing the problems of his society. Despite his background as a Marxist intellectual—evident in his emphasis on economic

José Carlos Mariátegui, "El problema del indio," in *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Lima: Editorial Minerva, 1944), pp. 25–32. The text was originally published in 1928. Original footnotes have been removed. Excerpt translated by the editors.

explanations and periodization—Mariátegui identified the Indian (rather than the industrial worker) as the ultimate oppressed class in Peru. As the following excerpt shows, Mariátegui dismissed traditional ways of conceptualizing the "Indian problem," pointing instead to gamonalismo (the web of local control that attached peons to large landed property) as the explanation. Only the abolition of gamonalismo would permit the liberation of the Indian and the regeneration of Peruvian society.

All of the theses on the indigenous problem that ignore it or avoid it as a socio-economic problem are merely sterile theoretical exercises. . . . Practically speaking, most of them have served only to hide or disfigure the reality of the problem. The socialist critique uncovers it and clarifies it, because it searches for its causes in the economy of the country rather than in its administrative, juridical, ecclesiastical mechanisms, or in the duality or plurality of races, or in its cultural or moral conditions. The Indian question begins with our economy. Its roots are to be found in the system of ownership of the land. Any attempt to solve it with administrative or police measures, with teaching methods or road works, will be a superficial or secondary endeavor, as long as the feudal *gamonales* survive.

Gamonalismo inevitably invalidates any law or ordinance to protect the Indian. The landowner, the boss, is a feudal lord. Written law is powerless against his authority, supported by environment and custom. Unpaid work is prohibited by law, and yet, unpaid work (or even forced work) survives on the large property. The judge, the subprefect, the commissioner, the teacher, and the tax collector are all vassals to property. The law cannot prevail over *gamonales*. The functionary who insists on enforcing it would be abandoned and sacrificed by central power, around which the influences of *gamonalismo* are all-powerful, operating directly or by way of congress, either way being equally effective.

Thus, the new examination of the indigenous problem is much less concerned with the guidelines of tutelary legislation than it is with the consequences of the regime of agrarian property. . . .

This critique repudiates and disqualifies the various theses that consider the question by means of any of the following exclusive and unilateral criteria: administrative, juridical, ethnic, moral, educational, or ecclesiastic.

The oldest and most obvious defeat is, no doubt, that of those who reduce the protection of Indians to a question of mere administration. Since the time of Spanish colonial legislation, the wise and tidy ordinances passed in answer to conscientious investigations have shown themselves to be totally fruitless. Since the days of Independence, the copiousness of the Republic's attempts—by means of decrees, laws, and provisions—to protect the Indians against exaction and abuse

is not inconsiderable. Today's *gamonal*, like yesterday's *encomendero*, has, however, little to fear from administrative theory. He knows that practice is another matter.

The individualistic nature of the Republic's legislation has favored, unquestionably, the absorption of indigenous property by *latifundismo* [the pattern of large land holdings]. In this respect, the situation of the Indian was more realistically contemplated by Spanish legislation. But juridical reform has no more practical value than administrative reform, faced with a feudalism intact in its economic structure. The appropriation of the greatest part of communal and individual Indian property has already been achieved. The experience of all countries that have emerged from their feudal era shows us, on the other hand, that no liberal law can function anywhere without the dissolution of feudalism.

The supposition that the Indian problem is an ethnic problem stems from the oldest repertoire of imperialist ideas. The concept of inferior races helped the white Occident in its project of expansion and conquest. Expecting Indian emancipation from an active mixing of the aboriginal race with white immigrants is an anti-sociological naïveté, only conceivable in the rudimentary mind of an importer of merino lambs. Asiatic peoples, to whom the Indian people are not inferior in the least, have admirably assimilated Western culture in its most dynamic or creative forms, without European blood transfusions. The degeneracy of the Indian is a cheap invention of feudal shysters.

The tendency to consider the indigenous problem as a moral problem embodies a liberal, humanistic, nineteenth-century, Enlightenment conception—the very same that in the political order of the West sparks and motivates the "Leagues for the Rights of Man." The conferences and antislavery societies that in Europe have denounced (more or less uselessly) the crimes of the colonizers are born of this tendency, which has always placed too much trust in the moral sense of civilization....

Centuries ago, religion (with great energy, or at least great authority) placed itself in the domain of reason and morality. This crusade, however, amounted to nothing but laws and wisely inspired measures. The fate of the Indians did not vary substantially....

But today, the hope for an ecclesiastical solution is unquestionably the most backward and anti-historical of all. Those who represent it don't even worry, like their distant—how distant!—masters, about obtaining a new declaration of the rights of the Indian, with adequate authority and decrees, but rather about entrusting the missionaries with the function of mediating between the Indian and the *gamonal*. The works that the Church couldn't achieve when its spiritual and intellectual capacity could be measured in friars like father [Bartolomé de] las Casas, what elements would it count on to prosper today? The Adventist

missions, in this respect, have won the leadership over the Catholic clergy, whose cloisters produce a smaller number of evangelists each day.

The concept that the problem of the Indian is one of education doesn't seem supported by even the most narrow and autonomously pedagogic criteria. Today more than ever, pedagogy takes into account social and economic factors. The modern pedagogue knows perfectly well that education is not merely a question of school and didactic methods. The economic and social milieu inevitably conditions the task of the teacher. *Gamonalismo* is fundamentally opposed to the education of the Indian: its very existence sees the same interest in maintaining his ignorance as it does in encouraging his alcoholism.

The modern school—assuming that within the current circumstances it might grow in proportion to the school-age peasant population—is incompatible with feudal *latifundio*. The mechanics of servitude would totally negate the purpose of the school even if, by means of some inconceivable miracle in the social status quo, it were able to maintain in the atmosphere of feudalism its purely pedagogical mission. The most efficient and grandiose school teaching couldn't perform these miracles. The school and the teacher are hopelessly condemned to denaturalize themselves under the pressure of the feudal environment, incompatible as it is with the most elemental progressive or evolutionist conception of things. A partial understanding of this truth leads one to search for the solution in indigenous boarding schools. But the glaring shortcomings of this formula become clear as soon as one considers the insignificant percentage of the Indian school population that can be housed in those schools.

The pedagogic solution, advanced by many in untainted good faith, is dismissed even on the official level. Educators are, I insist, those who can least consider independence from socioeconomic reality. It does not exist, thus, in actuality, but as a vague and amorphous suggestion, that no body and no doctrine claims to itself.

The new way of looking at the problem of the Indian is by searching for its roots in the problem of the land.

4. WHAT IS APRA?

Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre (1895–1979) was the founder and leader of APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance), the oldest political party in Peru, and one of the oldest in Latin America. Since its birth in 1924 as an

Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, *El antiimperialismo y el APRA* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ercilla, 1936), pp. 35–37, 63–70, 137–141. Excerpt translated by the editors.

and insatiable exploitation—supported by the tenets of democratic-liberalism—it would get quickly caught up in the imperialist machinery from which no bourgeois national structure can escape. For this reason, a new State of this kind requires the extensive and scientific organization of a nationalized cooperative system and the adoption of a political structure of *a workable democracy based on the categories of labor*. In this way, then, the anti-imperialist state can carry out the work of economic and political education that it needs to consolidate its defensive position. So too will it efficiently and in a coordinated way channel the efforts of the three classes [peasants, industrial workers, middle classes] represented in it. The anti-imperialist state will chart and direct its historic path towards a different kind of economic system that rejects and defends itself from the current one through the progressive control of production and wealth—through the nationalization of the land and industry according to the APRA program. This goal must be the touchstone of Indo-American unity and the effective economic emancipation of our peoples.

5. CÁRDENAS SPEAKS

Mexico's struggle for economic sovereignty reached a high point under Lázaro Cárdenas (1895–1970). In 1937, a dispute between US and British oil companies and Mexican unions erupted into a strike, followed by legal battles between the contending parties. When the oil companies refused to accept a Mexican Supreme Court verdict in favor of the unions, Cárdenas intervened. On March 18, 1938—celebrated by Mexicans as marking their declaration of economic independence—the president announced in a radio speech that the properties of the oil companies had been expropriated in the public interest. Although a critical portion of the mining industry remained in foreign hands, the momentum gained by this initiative carried through to the subsequent nationalization of the railways, and inspired other nations to form state-run oil companies. An excerpt from his message to the nation follows.

It has been repeated *ad nauseam* that the oil industry has brought additional capital for the development and progress of the country. This assertion is an exaggeration. For many years, throughout the major period of their existence, the oil companies have enjoyed great privileges for development and expansion,

Government of Mexico, *Mexico's Oil: A Compilation of Official Documents in the Conflict of Economic Order in the Petroleum Industry, with an Introduction Summarizing Its Causes and Consequences* (Mexico, 1940), pp. 878–879.

including customs and tax exemptions and innumerable prerogatives; it is these factors of special privilege, together with the prodigious productivity of the oil deposits granted them by the Nation often against public will and law, that represent almost the total amount of this so-called capital.

Potential wealth of the Nation; miserably underpaid native labor; tax exemptions; economic privileges; governmental tolerance—these are the factors of the boom of the Mexican oil industry.

Let us now examine the social contributions of the companies. In how many of the villages bordering on the oil fields is there a hospital, or school or social center, or a sanitary water supply, or an athletic field, or even an electric plant fed by the millions of cubic meters of natural gas allowed to go to waste?

What center of oil production, on the other hand, does not have its company police force for the protection of private, selfish, and often illegal interests? These organizations, whether authorized by the Government or not, are charged with innumerable outrages, abuses, and murders, always on behalf of the companies that employ them.

Who is not aware of the irritating discrimination governing construction of the company camps? Comfort for the foreign personnel; misery, drabness, and insalubrity for the Mexicans. Refrigeration and protection against tropical insects for the former; indifference and neglect, medical service and supplies always grudgingly provided, for the latter; lower wages and harder, more exhausting labor for our people.

The tolerance which the companies have abused was born, it is true, in the shadow of the ignorance, betrayals, and weakness of the country's rulers; but the mechanism was set in motion by investors lacking in the necessary moral resources to give something in exchange for the wealth they have been exploiting.

Another inevitable consequence of the presence of the oil companies, strongly characterized by their antisocial tendencies, and even more harmful than all those already mentioned, has been their persistent and improper intervention in national affairs.

The oil companies' support to strong rebel factions against the constituted government in the Huasteca region of Veracruz and in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec during the years 1917 to 1920 is no longer a matter for discussion by anyone. Nor is anyone ignorant of the fact that in later periods and even at the present time, the oil companies have almost openly encouraged the ambitions of elements discontented with the country's government, every time their interests were affected either by taxation or by the modification of their privileges or the withdrawal of the customary tolerance. They have had money, arms, and munitions for rebellion, money for the anti-patriotic press which defends them, money with which to enrich their unconditional defenders. But for the progress

of the country, for establishing an economic equilibrium with their workers through a just compensation of labor, for maintaining hygienic conditions in the districts where they themselves operate, or for conserving the vast riches of the natural petroleum gases from destruction, they have neither money, nor financial possibilities, nor the desire to subtract the necessary funds from the volume of their profits.

Nor is there money with which to meet a responsibility imposed upon them by judicial verdict, for they rely on their pride and their economic power to shield them from the dignity and sovereignty of a Nation which has generously placed in their hands its vast natural resources and now finds itself unable to obtain the satisfaction of the most elementary obligations by ordinary legal means.

As a logical consequence of this brief analysis, it was therefore necessary to adopt a definite and legal measure to end this permanent state of affairs in which the country sees its industrial progress held back by those who hold in their hands the power to erect obstacles as well as the motive power of all activity and who, instead of using it to high and worthy purposes, abuse their economic strength to the point of jeopardizing the very life of a Nation endeavoring to bring about the elevation of its people through its own laws, its own resources, and the free management of its own destinies.

With the only solution to this problem thus placed before it, I ask the entire Nation for moral and material support sufficient to carry out so justified, important, and indispensable a decision.

The Government has already taken suitable steps to maintain the constructive activities now going forward throughout the Republic, and for that purpose it asks the people only for its full confidence and backing in whatever dispositions the Government may be obliged to adopt.

Nevertheless, we shall, if necessary, sacrifice all the constructive projects on which the Nation has embarked during the term of this Administration in order to cope with the financial obligations imposed upon us by the application of the Expropriation Act to such vast interests; and although the subsoil of the country will give us considerable economic resources with which to meet the obligation of indemnification which we have contracted, we must be prepared for the possibility of our individual economy also suffering the indispensable readjustments, even to the point, should the Bank of Mexico deem it necessary, of modifying the present exchange rate of our currency, so that the whole country may be able to count on sufficient currency and resources with which to consolidate this act of profound and essential economic liberation of Mexico.

It is necessary that all groups of the population be imbued with a full optimism and that each citizen, whether in agricultural, industrial, commercial, transportation, or other pursuits, develop a greater activity from this moment

on, in order to create new resources which will reveal that the spirit of our people is capable of saving the nation's economy by the efforts of its own citizens.

And, finally, as the fear may arise among the interests now in bitter conflict in the field of international affairs that a deviation of raw materials fundamentally necessary to the struggle in which the most powerful nations are engaged might result from the consummation of this act of national sovereignty and dignity, we wish to state that our petroleum operations will not depart a single inch from the moral solidarity maintained by Mexico with the democratic nations, whom we wish to assure that the expropriation now decreed has as its only purpose the elimination of obstacles erected by groups who do not understand the evolutionary needs of all peoples and who would themselves have no compunction in selling Mexican oil to the highest bidder, without taking into account the consequences of such action to the popular masses and the nations in conflict.

6. SUNDAY IN MEXICO CITY

In the period between 1930 and 1960, internal migration led to the rapid growth of several Latin American cities, as well as the development of suburban towns and neighborhoods. The mix of social classes as well as the expansion and diversification of the leisure market made major cities more attractive for reasons that went beyond the material opportunities they offered. Mexican poet, historian, and essayist Salvador Novo presents an optimistic outlook on the range of cultural practices available to inhabitants of Mexico City in the 1940s. Neither his satirical streak nor the fact that he was openly gay (at a time when being so was severely stigmatized) could hinder his forging of an intellectual path at the center of the cultural establishment. In the 1960s, President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz bestowed upon him the title of "Chronicler of the City of Mexico." In the following piece, Novo describes the many delights of popular life inside and outside the city on any given Sunday: from outdoor picnics to traditional mass, from football matches to bullfights.

Before he went back to the provinces, as he would have to do any day now, I wanted my friend to round out the rather condensed enjoyment of the city that I had been offering him by penetrating on an intimate basis into some of its homes. In this way his image of us would be complete. He would know what we are in public and in the privacy of our family life; in the home—residence, house, apartment,

Díaz, in the schools, the hospital, the parks laid out by the Revolution, the Grandeur of Mexico now slept, drew into the future, stored up its strength—survived.

7. ON THE PROTECTION OF THE BRAZILIAN WORKER

In September 1937, Getúlio Vargas (1882–1954), president of Brazil since 1930, led a coup that canceled the upcoming elections, dissolved Congress, and turned his government into a dictatorship. In many respects, the Estado Novo (New State), as the regime was called, mirrored the program of European fascism. Strongly authoritarian, it persecuted the opposition and censored the press. At the same time, the state vigorously expanded its social and economic capacities, promoting industry and offering workers numerous specific gains. Vargas became a symbolic figure—the workers' guardian. The excerpt below is one of the many state documents publicizing the social achievements of the regime.

Since 1930, the Brazilian Government has been undertaking a social policy whose main goal is to protect the working classes through the betterment of their working conditions, elevating their standard of life and extending the social security system. This plan has been uninterrupted. Indeed, the 1937 Constitution proclaims that work is a social duty and establishes that it is the Government's responsibility to guarantee the fulfillment of this duty, securing favorable conditions and protecting work—whether intellectual, technical, or manual. To secure the enforcement of this principle, the Constitution established certain rules that must be observed by social legislation. In this way, the Constitution guarantees the right of organization, recognizes the current unions as representatives of the workers and authorizes the signing of collective-bargaining agreements. Salaries are protected and must function to provide a minimum standard of life. The work-day is eight hours long, and there is one mandatory day of rest. Paid vacations are mandatory. Workers are protected against unjustified dismissal. Minors under 14 years old are not allowed to work; neither are those 16 years old allowed to work night shifts; women and men under 18 years old cannot work in unhealthy work-sites. Regarding social welfare and assistance, the Constitution establishes that the state must provide medical assistance to the workers and it must protect maternity and create insurance against old age, as well as disability. It also compels professional associations to provide assistance to its members. In order to

enforce these principles, the Constitution anticipates the creation of a Work Tribunal whose goal will be to arbitrate in all work-related litigation.

THE ENFORCEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

The Constitutional declaration of the rights of the working classes is not a mere theoretical promise of social justice. This declaration has been implemented by a series of concrete measures the Government is undertaking. They are: laws limiting the workday to eight hours (or less in certain cases, depending on the nature of the work); laws protecting workers against unjustified dismissal, guaranteeing a certain indemnification based on their monthly salary and the number of years of service. Regarding maternity, female workers are protected by law, insuring the continued payment of their salaries, and are entitled to subsidies and paid vacation both before and after the delivery.

According to the Constitution, minors under age 14 are not allowed to work, minors under 16 cannot work at night, and unhealthy tasks cannot be fulfilled by women or men below 18. The law of professional association allows them to represent their respective professional classes, and to negotiate with the Government or their bosses about issues concerning the interests of the professions they represent. They can also sign collective-bargaining agreements. All workers have the right to 15 days of paid vacation a year. The minimum-wage law includes measures related to the feeding of workers and establishes what must be considered essential in different regions of the country. Work-related litigation must be solved through a collective arbitration committee and, in certain cases—especially in cases of unjustified dismissal and guarantees of employment—by the National Council for Work....

SOCIAL INSURANCE

The problem of social security has benefited from the special attention it has received from the Brazilian government. As a result, there are special institutions meant to insure workers against the risks of handicap, old age and death.... Social security is also extended to all public employees, through the Institute of Pensions for the Public Employee, that sets pensions for retirement, death, and social assistance.

INDIRECT METHODS OF PROTECTION

Besides the direct methods of protection to workers, the Brazilian Government is trying to improve the condition of workers through projects to build inexpensive houses, to which effect the social insurance institutions have been authorized to

use part of their funds in the construction of houses for its members, who will reimburse them within 15 or 20 years. Attention has also been paid to the nutrition question, in the form of clauses included in the legal definition of minimum wage. Several measures have also been undertaken in the construction of hospitals and the campaign against tuberculosis in the working classes.

TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The Constitution establishes that technical and professional education is a duty of the state. This principle has been undertaken through the construction of new institutes for technical education in all states of the federation, as well as the Model Institute in Rio de Janeiro. Technical instruction is administrated at three levels: the first one is aimed at training specialized workers; the second at training leaders; and the third level at training instructors.

EQUALITY OF RIGHTS

Finally, it must be stressed that Brazilian legislation guarantees equality of rights to all workers, regardless of nationality, color or race. It does so while mandating that industry and commerce employ national workers for at least two-thirds of their workforce. But in terms of social protection, foreign workers enjoy the same rights as Brazilians.

8. MULATTO FOOTBALL

*The Brazilian anthropologist-sociologist Gilberto Freyre (1900–1987) was one of the most influential Latin American proponents of the virtues of race mixture and cultural hybridity (along with Mexican writer José Vasconcelos). Although he understood the country's long history of slavery and racism, he argued that Brazil, unlike the United States, was a place where different races and cultures—especially the Portuguese colonizers, indigenous inhabitants, and enslaved Africans—had mixed relatively indiscriminately. The result was a "racial democracy" grounded in a vibrant hybrid cultural tradition that Freyre contrasted favorably with the rigidity of Western European and North American societies. In *The Masters and the Slaves*, for example, he insisted*

Gilberto Freyre, "Football Mulato," *Diario de Pernambuco*, June 17, 1938. Excerpt translated by the editors.

In soccer, as in politics, Brazilian *mulatismo* is marked by a pleasure in flexion, in surprise, in flourishes reminiscent of dance steps and *capoeira*. But dance above all. Dionysian dance. Dance that allows for improvisation, diversity, individual spontaneity. Lyrical dance.

While European soccer is an Apollonian expression . . . a scientific method and socialistic sport where human individuality is mechanized and subordinated to the whole—Brazilian soccer is a kind of dance form in which the human individual stands out and shines.

The Brazilian mulatto de-Europeanizes soccer, giving it the rounded and graceful curves of dance. That is precisely what the European journalist meant when he called Brazilian players, “dancers of the ball.” We danced with the ball. . . .

Our mulatto, Afro-Brazilian style of soccer is a form of Dionysian dance.

9. PERÓN APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE

*On October 17, 1945, thousands of workers peacefully gathered in the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires. They were calling for the release of the most popular figure of the military regime, Colonel Juan Perón, who had been arrested by a rival government faction. As a result of this unexpected popular mobilization, Perón was indeed released, and the saga ended with a speech given from the balcony of the government house. To this day, this event symbolizes the birth of Peronism. “Saved” by his people, Perón would face his opponents, become a presidential candidate, and win elections in 1946, 1951, and (after eighteen years of exile) in 1973. For the opposition, however, October 17 meant something quite different. On that day, the middle classes of Buenos Aires felt their dearest neighborhoods “invaded” by a class of Argentines who had remained quite invisible until then. The echoes of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento’s “civilization and barbarism” in his book *Facundo* were at the center of their interpretation of this new Peronist reality. In a book of memoirs published in 1955, essayist Martínez Estrada (1895–1964)—a staunch anti-Peronist—recalled his impressions of that day in a section titled “The Inhabitants of the Basement.”*

We had talked a lot about our people. The national anthem mentions them, but we did not know them. Perón revealed to us not the people, but rather an area of the people that seemed positively strange and foreign. On October 17, Perón poured into the central streets of Buenos Aires a social sediment that no one

Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, *¿Qué es esto? Catilinaria* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Lautaro, 1956), pp. 26–29. Excerpt translated by the editors.

would have recognized. It seemed like an invasion of people from another country, speaking another language, wearing exotic costumes. And still, they were part of the Argentine people, the people in the National Anthem. Because until then, we had lived in ignorance of a part of the family that made up that people—those low people, those miserable people. Even demagogue politicians had marginalized or forgotten them. And Perón had more than goodness and intelligence: he had the ability to make them visible and exhibit them without being ashamed of them—not as a people, but rather as a tremendous and aggressive force that endangered the very foundations of a society built with just a fraction of its human element (that being the chosen people that we had watched parade on national holidays, dressed in their Sunday best). These were the people that we had not taken into account, as I said, but still existed. Not a buried people, like the Inca or Aztec, a living people, yet also a dead people. No. It was a living people that was now on the move. And they were our ragged brothers, our miserable brothers—what could be called, to use a technical term, the *Lumpenproletariat*. They were also the *Mazorca*, since they came out of meat refrigerating plants like the others that came out of the meat salting plants. They were the same troops that had belonged to [President Juan Manuel de] Rosas, and were now enrolled under Perón's flag, who was at the same time the successor of that older tyrant. Of the same species, and the legal representatives of those masses, they moved through the city, this time without ponchos, in the very bosom of the city without ponchos, but with a knife, the tool of hamstringers, slaughterers, and salters of beef jerky. The country was still a great breeding-ground and slaughterhouse of cattle, as it had been from Echeverría until Hudson. And those sinister demons of the plain that Sarmiento described in *Facundo* had not perished. They are alive this instant and dedicated to the same task, only this time under a roof, in much larger businesses than those of Rosas, Anchorena, Terrero y Urquiza. On October 17 they came out to ask about their captivity, to demand a place under the sun. And they appeared with their butcher's knives in their belts, threatening a *barrio norte* version of Saint Batholomew's massacre. We felt chills watching them parade in a true silent horde, carrying signs that threatened a terrible revenge.

He didn't just give that *infraproletariat* of poor workers a place in the sun. In many ways he placed them above the employee, the teacher, and even the professional. The liberal middle class and the bureaucracy were left behind and below them. He formed a new class, so to speak, intermediate between the superior class of potentates and their associates, and the middle class, properly speaking. He sketched for it a Peronist sociology, philosophy, and even religion, with its codes and doctrines. He took advantage of the cracks produced during centuries of misery and ignorance, and in them he introduced his cold chisel, reducing

"his" people to impotence. How can we reproach the people that did not feel this as a loss of liberty and dignity when they had never had these things to begin with. In taking advantage of their good faith, others had preceded him a long time before.

This is the "obreroismo" [pro-worker attitude] of Perón—how different than [President Hipólito] Yrigoyen's electoralism, but at the same time how similar to Rosas' government of mulattoes and gauchos.

10. EVA PERÓN: ON WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

The beginning of the feminist struggle to improve women's place in society dates from the late 1800s. Much as in Western Europe, Latin American feminism was associated with urban contexts, and frequently with socialist or anarchist agendas. Although women's suffrage was not the first priority of feminist organizations in Latin America, it was a clearly articulated right at least since the early 1900s. It would take much longer, however, for actual laws to be enacted. In Argentina, the cradle of many important feminist organizations, women would have to wait until 1947 for the right to vote. Paradoxically, this achievement was not the result of long-standing feminist demands, but rather an initiative of the new Peronist government, which at the time was closely associated with the Catholic Church. The appointed leader of the Peronist version of this cause was Eva Perón (1919–1952)—Juan Perón's wife, and then only twenty-seven years old. Her campaign took full advantage of the melodramatic talents developed in her previous career as a radio actress. In one of her first independent political performances, although still a far cry from the radical image of the Evita of the late 1940s and early 1950s, she integrated women's suffrage into a context of traditional values—a context quite different from that put forward by the old leaders of the feminist cause.

Friends and companions,

Once again, I request your attention hoping to be the first Argentine woman to lead her companions, to champion their claims.

Once again, I demand your support, because my struggle—the struggle of all Argentine women—cannot be given up until victory is sure. I address all of you, then, with the deep conviction of speaking a common language, a language that is truthful, patriotic, and, above all, profoundly feminine.

Women's anguishes have always been, and will always be, mine. I live and breathe women's concerns. Their hopes are mine. They animate me, they are my impulse. They feed my belief in the goodness and justice of our mission. Everything the woman of my country hopes to obtain is part of my program of action. I could never step back or withdraw from the clear and straight road to what is dearest in my people.

I have told you about the conquest of female suffrage, an imminent achievement for our sex. I must reiterate my previous concepts. I must emphasize the need for the Legislature to promulgate this law so women can take the place they deserve in public institutions. A protector of civic faith, a testimony to national responsibility, a credit to public faith in the men that rule—the woman's vote will be the most powerful weapon ever brandished for the decisive conquest of the Argentine soul. It complements and verifies the male will, and contributes with the certified logic of another vast human sector. Workers, students, employees, professionals, farmers, women in a thousand towns and a thousand occupations, are having an effect on the complex electoral mechanism. They voice their concerns. They express their will. They introduce themselves decisively into the dynamics of the country. They bring their domestic responsibilities, already engaged as they are in the solution of national problems. They rescue from unjustified forgetfulness on the part of the public the feminine mentality and feeling, what is most intimate and clear about human experience. In short, they contribute to the electoral movement the clarity, the sixth sense, the portentous faculty of intuition, seeing right through the tricks of politicians and the fickle games of human passion.

The Argentine woman, responsible for the Christian nurturing of the family; the Argentine woman, essential foundation of the household, represents, above all else, what is unpolluted and truthful. Life itself, with its endless sequence of judgments, its infinite range of great and small needs, is present in the will of the woman. Women think for their households, which means thinking for their families as well as thinking for their country—the sum of all the families dispersed across the fertile ground of our motherland. Thus, female suffrage will provide civic rights to women already knowledgeable in human rights. In this way, women are attaching a universal stamp to their vote, a vote that will now carry the depth of everyday pain, joy, and concern. We mean to bring to the ballot the hearts of the women of this country. To abstract politics we want to bring human warmth, this breadth of life that is always supporting her man in his struggles, and contributing to the national wealth. The woman of the factory is one with the rural woman; the woman of the laboratory lives under the same sky as the teacher in the faraway school; the *porteño* woman [from Buenos Aires] in the street dreams of having a place in Argentine society, just like the sacrificing

woman of the rural *pampa*. The hour of the woman has arrived in Argentina, [and will be a] precursor to American rights movements.

However, female suffrage means something else. It means responsibility. It means a sacred commitment—the responsibility and commitment of the example that the exercise of this right involves. Let us not forget that the woman represents the home. In fact, the home is the cradle of the new men, the environment where they develop. It is his education, the exercise of his first public faith, the example of the beginning of the difficult career of citizenship. This is where the weapon of suffrage is extraordinarily valuable for women: the will to choose, to discriminate, to illustrate; the will to deny or consent in the democratic game of the elections of a people.

I believe that we can't speak of an Argentine household that is not a Christian household. The image of the Crosses in the old houses of our ancestors is still fresh. We were conceived under the Cross. . . . Under the Cross we learned our ABCs and counted on the abacus. Under the Cross we have crossed our hands in the last invocation. Everything of value in our customs is Christian. Dormant or active, the religious sentiment has prevailed over every other sign of non-Argentine ethic. We have told the truth when we have spoken about traditional Catholic faith. And we have lied, or we have made mistakes, when we built upon the foreign atheism that had infiltrated our legislation, or was established by surprise in institutions such as education. So when we speak of the Argentine home, and of the woman as the symbol of that home, we speak of the Christian woman and the home based on this solid foundation of traditional morality. In fact, in order to legitimate our hope that every woman vote, we could add that every woman should vote according to her religious sense, that is, according to the measure of her duty as mother, wife, or daughter. . . .

Women will defend what is permanent with their vote, better than men will. When choosing, women define themselves in relation to the preservation of the home, the family, the Catholic faith, discarding everything that might be opposed to moral scruples and Argentine values. I think that women will be more than regular citizens at the ballot box: they will be the moral outpost, overcoming the sterility and narrowness of mere electoral politics. The hour of the woman is the hour of public virtue for this country. Her home guarantees her will. Her vote is not just a formal right, but a permanent commitment, along with the daily reality of the home. Being wrong would mean abdicating into strange hands her role as leader of her own. Voting wrongly would be a painful family experiment. The female vote inextricably binds within the community principles of moral order and political order. Women can vote and must vote, as the hope of collective dreams. But they must vote, most of all, as a demand of personal liberation, never more just than today.

11. LETTER TO PRESIDENT PERÓN

Much as President Getúlio Vargas did in Brazil, the Peronist government (Argentina, 1946–1955) greatly expanded the state's capacity to provide services for the working classes. For the first time, workers were explicitly included in the dominant definition of citizenship; to the traditional (political) definition, Peronism added a social component. This change took many forms, both in discourse and action. Not the least important of these changes were the many policies of social inclusion and redistribution of wealth undertaken by a great variety of new official departments. Another innovation was the creation of channels of direct communication between the leaders and their people, channels that went beyond the visible rituals of celebration of October 17. Every week, Evita received in her office a multitude of people (mostly poor women and children), who hoped that her Social Assistance Foundation would help them. Other state offices collected the messages common citizens sent to Perón, in which they asked for favors or offered advice on specific problems. The following letter, written by a group of neighbors hoping to become owners of their houses, reveals many aspects of the connection between these leaders and their people.

Buenos Aires, December 17, 1951

To His Excellency the President of Argentina,
General of the Army, Don Juan D. Perón

Most Excellent Mr. President, about two years ago, approximately, your Wife favored us with the award of one of the prefabricated cabins built by the Ministry of Public Works . . . in Villa Lugano, with the help of the Department of Social Assistance, owner of this neighborhood of houses and land. These houses are inhabited by large families with more than three children each, and they are built on plots that we are requesting to buy. We will pay in installments, according to our resources, either to the National Department of Social Assistance or to whomever is designated by the National Mortgage Bank.

We are humble people who have also dreamed of owning a small part of our dear native soil, and of seeing our children grow up healthy and happy, without the fear of having to abandon the roof over our heads, hoping to establish roots in the modest piece of ground where we live today. We appeal to you, most

"Carta de Juan Patrocinio Costa al Presidente Perón, 1952," in Rosa Aboy, *Viviendas para el pueblo. Espacio urbano y sociabilidad en un barrio peronista: Los Perales, 1946–1955* (MA thesis, Universidad de San Andrés, 2002). Excerpt translated by the editors.

Excellent Mr. President, and to your *Señora*, our EVITA, the true Guardian Angel of the helpless. In you we place all our faith and trust in the fulfillment of our longings.

We would take this opportunity to thank you endlessly, and also to say to you, "ALL PRESENT, MY COLONEL!" as faithful and loyal soldiers, our eyes on the horizon of the future, much like the watchmen in the old forts, like radar stations, watching for the enemies of the Revolution, always ready for another OCTOBER 17 if necessary, for the good of this blessed motherland, hoping her children can lead her to the place she deserves in the community of nations.

We greet your Most Excellent Mr. President in the name of all the neighbors of the cabins of Villa Lugano. Please accept a manly hug and a strong handshake from those of fervent faith in the cause, and who have had the honor to address Mr. President.

"FOR THE MOTHERLAND AND FOR PERÓN, EVERYTHING"

*Signed, Juan P. Castro
Secretary of the Neighborhood
Committee
House No. 69*

12. OF MAN, WOMAN, AND TIME

In the first half of the twentieth century Latin American women made some strides toward emancipation from political, economic, and legal disabilities. Their struggle to gain the vote began around 1914 and ended successfully when Paraguay finally granted women suffrage in 1961. A pioneer in that struggle was the Chilean Amanda Labarca (1886–1975). In 1922 she became the first woman professor at the University of Chile and in 1931 was named director of secondary education, the highest post ever attained by a woman at that time. In a book published in 1934 she reflected on the gains and the losses in the struggle for women's liberation.

Progress is as tortuous as the advance of the tide. An inviting beach beckons it inland; a rocky shore detains it. So it has been with the wave of feminism. Great Britain, Scandinavia, the Soviet Republics, North America, have incorporated its theses—once regarded as so daring—in their daily life. France and many

Amanda Labarca Hubertson, *¿A dónde va la mujer?* (Santiago de Chile, 1934), pp. 241–247. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

6

Revolution, Democracy, and Dictatorship

The 1954 suicide of Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas, followed by the 1955 military coup that ousted Argentine president Juan Perón, marked in dramatic fashion the end of populist regimes (if not populist politics) in Latin America. The state-directed economic policies of these regimes, especially their emphasis on import substitution industrialization (ISI), had begun to diversify the larger regional economies, making them less obviously dependent on the United States and Western Europe for their manufactured goods. The nationalization of strategic industries like railroads, oil, and steel had the same intended effect. Some of these policies had alienated important economic players, especially in older export sectors like commercial agriculture, although ISI continued to attract support from the next generation of national policymakers. The mass mobilization of workers was much more controversial. Thus, by the mid-1950s, a new coalition of traditional elites and the increasingly conservative middle class had come to power determined to control the “revolution of rising expectations” among the working classes.

In the 1960s, however, an unexpected event would reshape the Latin American political landscape throughout the following decade. In the context of the Cold War, the triumph of the Cuban Revolution inspired a more radicalized brand of social protest, unprecedented political movements (as in Salvador Allende’s Chile), as well as uprisings, both rural and urban. Burdened by debt, regional economies were forced to cut back on social services and government subsidies, moving away from incipient state welfarism and back toward dependent capitalism. This in turn exacerbated popular discontent, prompting various kinds of popular resistance, from general strikes to guerrilla activities to social revolution. This surge of revolutionary energy and political violence was

formulated in terms of a project of liberation, one that reached continental proportions. It was also connected to a more diffuse cultural movement on the Left, which transformed Havana into a haven for writers, artists, and intellectuals.

Most Latin American governments responded with greater repression. In the 1970s, the Southern Cone countries—Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil—were ruled by military *juntas* that promised to put an end to civilian mobilization for an undetermined period of political and economic “discipline.” Governments in Central America—Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras—were perhaps less bureaucratic but no less repressive. The Andean countries—Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador—and Mexico were only marginally better. Many of these authoritarian regimes received ideological and practical support from the United States, which benefited from both their rabid anticommunism and their willingness to open national markets to international trade.

1. THE NEW LATIFUNDIO

The Lázaro Cárdenas land distribution dealt a crushing blow to the traditional semifeudal latifundio (large land holding). From the first, however, the land reform suffered from structural defects. In many cases the peasants received parcels of land that were too small to be economically viable, while aid in the form of seeds, credit, and technical assistance was often inadequate. After Cárdenas left office, moreover, conservative Mexican governments increasingly tended to favor large private farms and to neglect the communally owned landholdings, called ejidos. The result was the rise of a new hacienda, or latifundio, with disastrous social consequences. At the turn of the twenty-first century, by the government's own admission, 35 million Mexicans were malnourished, while production of basic staple foods stagnated, imports of basic grains increased, and more and more acreage and resources were devoted to raising sorghum and other crops used to feed animals in order to satisfy the taste of an affluent minority and to producing fresh vegetables for the American market.

The result of the agrarian reform after Cárdenas has been to polarize the disparity of landholding. Land ownership has steadily become more concentrated; this is shown by a comparison of census data for 1940, 1950, and 1960. It seems clear that when the figures for 1970 are in[,] this tendency will be even more

Arturo Warman, “El neolatifundio mexicano: Expansión y crisis de una forma de dominio,” in *Ensayos sobre el campesinado en México* (México: Editorial Nueva Imagen, 1979), pp. 39–63. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

same time, real wages can be raised by industrialization and adequate social legislation, the disequilibrium between incomes at the centers and the periphery can gradually be corrected without detriment to that essential economic activity.

This is one of the limits of industrialization which must be carefully considered in plans of development. Another concerns the optimum size of industrial enterprises. It is generally found in Latin American countries that the same industries are being attempted on both sides of the same frontier. This tends to diminish productive efficiency and so militates against fulfilling the social task to be accomplished. The defect is a serious one, which the nineteenth century was able to attenuate considerably. When Great Britain proved, with facts, the advantages of industry, other countries followed suit. Industrial development, however, spurred by active competition, tended towards certain characteristic types of specialization which encouraged profitable trade between the various countries. Specialization furthered technical progress and the latter made possible higher incomes. Here, unlike the case of industrial countries by comparison with those producing primary products, the classic advantages of the division of labor between countries that are equal, or nearly so, followed.

The possibility of losing a considerable proportion of the benefits of technical progress through an excessive division of markets thus constitutes another factor limiting the industrial expansion of these countries. Far from being insurmountable, however, it is a factor which could be removed with mutual benefit by a wise policy of economic interdependence.

Anti-cyclical policies must be included in any programs of economic development if there is to be an attempt, from a social point of view, to raise real income. The spread of the cyclical fluctuations of the large centers to the Latin American periphery means a considerable loss of income to these countries. If this could be avoided, it would simplify the problem of capital formation. Attempts have been made to evolve an anti-cyclical policy, but it must be admitted that, as yet, but little light has been thrown on this subject. Furthermore, the present dwindling of metallic reserves in several countries means that, in the event of a recession originating abroad, they would not only be without a plan of defense but would lack means of their own to carry out the measures demanded by the circumstances.

3. "HISTORY WILL ABSOLVE ME"

Fidel Castro made his entrance into history at dawn on July 26, 1953, when he led a tiny force of Cuban patriots, 165 men and 2 women, in an assault on

the Moncada barracks in Santiago de Cuba. The quixotic adventure ended in disaster. Nearly half the rebels were killed, many being tortured to death after capture. Those who survived were imprisoned. At his trial the twenty-seven-year-old Castro, a lawyer by profession and the son of a large landowner, made a five-hour defense speech in which he outlined the aims of the uprising. In a general way his speech offers a blueprint of the radical reform program that the Cuban Revolution was to implement, but the whole document bears the stamp of a democratic, romantic ideology that Castro would later abandon in favor of Marxism-Leninism. The title of this selection is taken from the final phrase of Castro's speech: "Condemn me. History will absolve me."

When we speak of the people we do not mean the comfortable ones, the conservative elements of the nation, who welcome any regime of oppression, any dictatorship, and despotism, prostrating themselves before the master of the moment until they grind their foreheads into the ground. When we speak of struggle, *the people* means the vast unredeemed masses, to whom all make promises and whom all deceive; we mean the people who yearn for a better, more dignified and more just nation; who are moved by ancestral aspirations of justice, for they have suffered injustice and mockery, generation after generation; who long for great and wise changes in all aspects of their life; people, who, to attain these changes, are ready to give even the very last breath of their lives—when they believe in something or in someone, especially when they believe in themselves. In stating a purpose, the first condition of sincerity and good faith, is to do precisely what nobody ever does, that is, to speak with absolute clarity, without fear. The demagogues and professional politicians who manage to perform the miracle of being right in everything and in pleasing everyone, are, of necessity, deceiving everyone about everything. The revolutionaries must proclaim their ideas courageously, define their principles and express their intentions so that no one is deceived, neither friend nor foe.

The people we counted on in our struggle were these:

Seven hundred thousand Cubans without work, who desire to earn their daily bread honestly without having to emigrate in search of livelihood.

Five hundred thousand farm laborers inhabiting miserable shacks, who work four months of the year and starve for the rest of the year, sharing their misery with their children, who have not an inch of land to cultivate, and whose existence inspires compassion in any heart not made of stone.

Four hundred thousand industrial laborers and stevedores whose retirement funds have been embezzled, whose benefits are being taken away, whose homes are wretched quarters, whose salaries pass from the hands of the boss to those of the usurer, whose future is a pay reduction and dismissal, whose life is eternal work and whose only rest is in the tomb.

One hundred thousand small farmers who live and die working on land that is not theirs, looking at it with sadness as Moses did the Promised Land, to die without possessing it; who, like feudal serfs, have to pay for the use of their parcel of land by giving up a portion of their products; who cannot love it, improve it, beautify it or plant a lemon or an orange tree on it, because they never know when a sheriff will come with the rural guard to evict them from it.

Thirty thousand small business men weighted down by debts, ruined by the crisis and harangued by a plague of filibusters and venal officials.

Ten thousand young professionals: doctors, engineers, lawyers, veterinarians, school teachers, dentists, pharmacists, newspapermen, painters, sculptors, etc., who come forth from school with their degrees, anxious to work and full of hope, only to find themselves at a dead end with all doors closed, and where no ear hears their clamor or supplication.

These are the people, the ones who know misfortune and, therefore, are capable of fighting with limitless courage!

To the people whose desperate roads through life have been paved with the brick of betrayals and false promises, we were not going to say: "We will eventually give you what you need, but rather—Here you have it, fight for it with all your might so that liberty and happiness may be yours!"

In the brief of this cause there must be recorded the five revolutionary laws that would have been proclaimed immediately after the capture of the Moncada barracks and would have been broadcast to the nation by radio. It is possible that Colonel Chaviano may deliberately have destroyed these documents, but even if he has done so, I conserve them in my memory.

The First Revolutionary Law would have returned power to the people and proclaimed the Constitution of 1940 the Supreme Law of the land, until such time as the people should decide to modify or change it. And, in order to effect its implementation and punish those who had violated it—there being no organization for holding elections to accomplish this—the revolutionary movement, as the momentous incarnation of this sovereignty, the only source of legitimate power, would have assumed all the faculties inherent to it, except that of modeling the Constitution itself: in other words it would have assumed the legislative, executive and judicial powers.

This approach could not be more crystal clear nor more free of vacillation and sterile charlatany. A government acclaimed by the mass of rebel people would be vested with every power, everything necessary in order to proceed with the effective implementation of the popular will and true justice. From that moment, the Judicial Power, which since March 10th has placed itself against the Constitution and *outside* the Constitution, would cease to exist and we would proceed to its immediate and total reform before it would again assume the power granted to it by the Supreme Law of the Republic. Without our first taking those

previous measures, a return to legality by putting the custody of the courts back into the hands that have crippled the system so dishonorably would constitute a fraud, a deceit, and one more betrayal.

The Second Revolutionary Law would have granted property, not mortgageable and not transferable, to all planters, sub-planters, lessees, partners and squatters who hold parcels of five or less *caballerías* of land, and the state would indemnify the former owners on the basis of the rental which they would have received for these parcels over a period of ten years.

The Third Revolutionary Law would have granted workers and employees the right to share 30% of the profits of all the large industrial, mercantile and mining enterprises, including the sugar mills. The strictly agricultural enterprises would be exempt in consideration of other agrarian laws which would have been implemented.

The Fourth Revolutionary Law would have granted all planters the right to share 55% of the sugar production and a minimum quota of forty thousand *arrobas* for all small planters who have been established for three or more years.

The Fifth Revolutionary Law would have ordered the confiscation of all holdings and ill-gotten gains of those who had committed frauds during previous regimes, as well as the holdings and ill-gotten gains of all their legatees and heirs. To implement this, special courts with full powers would gain access to all records of all corporations registered or operating in this country (in order) to investigate concealed funds of illegal origin, and to request that foreign governments extradite persons and attach holdings (rightfully belonging to the Cuban people). Half of the property recovered would be used to subsidize retirement funds for workers and the other half would be used for hospitals, asylums and charitable organizations.

Furthermore, it was to be declared that the Cuban policy in the Americas would be one of close solidarity with the democratic people of this continent, and that those politically persecuted by bloody tyrants oppressing our sister nations would find generous asylum, brotherhood, and bread in the land of [revolutionary icon José] Martí. Not the persecution, hunger and treason that they find today. Cuba should be the bulwark of liberty and not a shameful link in the chain of despotism.

These laws would have been proclaimed immediately, as soon as the upheaval was ended and prior to a detailed and far-reaching study, they would have been followed by another series of laws and fundamental measures, such as, the Agrarian Reform, Integral Reform in Education, nationalization of the Utilities Trust and the Telephone Trust, refund to the people of the illegal excessive rates this company has charged, and payment to the Treasury of all taxes brazenly evaded in the past.

All these laws and others would be inspired in the exact fulfillment of two essential articles of our Constitution. One of these orders the outlawing of feudal estates by indicating the maximum area of land any person or entity can possess

for each type of agricultural enterprise, by adopting measures which would tend to revert the land to the Cubans. The other categorically orders the State to use all means at its disposal to provide employment to all those who lack it and to insure a decent livelihood to each manual laborer or intellectual.

None of these articles may be called unconstitutional. The first popularly elected government would have to respect these laws, not only because of moral obligation to the nation, but because when people achieve something they have yearned for throughout generations, no force in the world is capable of taking it away again.

The problems concerning land, the problem of industrialization, the problem of housing, the problem of unemployment, the problem of education and the problem of the health of the people; these are the six problems we would take immediate steps to resolve, along with the restoration of public liberties and political democracy.

4. CASTRO DEFINES THE THEORY OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

January 1959: after two years of guerrilla fighting in the Sierra Maestra, the rebels led by Fidel Castro and Ernesto "Che" Guevara marched into Havana and overthrew the government of Fulgencio Batista. It was a momentous event: at the peak of the Cold War, it suddenly looked like a revolutionary path against dictatorship and United States imperialism might be a real possibility. Cuba would become the enduring beacon of the Latin American political and cultural Left. The revolution quickly took a radical turn: summary execution of Batista's allies and potential enemies to the new order, expropriation of sugar plantations (followed by the flight of most of the landed classes), and censorship of internal opposition. Successive attempts by the US government to murder Castro, or to overthrow his regime—including the failed invasion of the Bay of Pigs in April 1961—greatly contributed to this trend of ideological polarization, as did the US embargo of Cuba, which began in February 1962. In the following interview with sympathizers from Chilean progressive groups, Castro refers to the ideological transformation of his revolution, reframing it in the context of Marxism-Leninism.

A group of professionals, technicians, and artists of the Chilean Popular Action Front visited Cuba some months ago to study its political, economic, and social

Interview with Fidel Castro, published in *El Sol*, Montevideo, 10 May 1963, pp. 4–5. Castro Speech Database. Translated by Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Revised by the editors.

Answer: For the majority of Latin American countries, the only road is armed warfare. There is not the remotest possibility of being able to seize power through elections. On this point, we do not budge one iota from the Second Declaration of Havana. We believe completely in it. The liberation of Latin America marks the end of Imperialism without the need for atomic war. It is the only chance we have of putting an end to misery without waiting forever and a day. An increase in living standards of the mass of people strengthens the struggle for peace and for disarmament. The hundreds of millions that are spent on arms would be used to accelerate the development of the under-developed countries. As imperialism is weakened, the danger of war is lessened. Only the fight against imperialism in Latin America will bring the peace that everyone longs for so deeply.

5. ADVICE FOR THE URBAN GUERRILLA

The Minimannual of the Urban Guerrilla, written by Brazilian activist Carlos Marighella (born in Salvador, Bahia, in 1911), is a guide to strategies for disrupting established authority, with the purpose of creating the conditions for a social revolution. As its title suggests, Marighella considered cities the main cradle of revolutionary movements, distinguishing himself from other 1960s revolutionaries. (Che Guevara, for example, believed that rural areas were better suited for that role.) By that time, Marighella had ended his long career as a prominent member of the Brazilian Communist Party, having served as a legislator and Executive Committee member. He was expelled in 1967 due to his critical views on the leadership's mild, "reformist" policies, and because of his personal commitment to Castro's Cuba. He founded ALN (Ação Libertadora Nacional), a radical organization dedicated to confronting Brazil's military dictatorship (1964–1985) with revolutionary armed struggle. In this context he published his Minimannual. Written in 1969, it became an instant classic in underground networks. The following selection describes ways to win over public opinion by exposing (and taking advantage of) the failures of the dictatorship. In November 1969, shortly after publication, Marighella was killed in a police ambush in the streets of São Paulo.

One of the constant concerns of the urban guerrilla is his identification with popular causes to win public support. Where government actions become inept

Carlos Marighella, "Popular Support," in *Minimannual of the Urban Guerrilla*, accessible at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimannual-urban-guerrilla/>.

and corrupt, the urban guerrilla should not hesitate to step in and show that he opposes the government, and thus gain popular sympathy. The present government, for example, imposes heavy financial burdens and excessively high taxes on the people. It is up to the urban guerrilla to attack the dictatorship's tax collection system and to obstruct its financial activities, throwing all the weight of armed action against it.

The urban guerrilla fights not only to upset the tax collection system—the weapon of armed action must also be directed against those government agencies that raise prices and those who direct them as well as against the wealthiest of the national and foreign profiteers and the important property owners. In short, against all those who accumulate huge fortunes out of the high cost of living, the wages of hunger, excessive prices and high rents. Foreign industries, such as refrigeration and other North American plants that monopolize the market and the manufacture of general food supplies, must be systematically attacked by the urban guerrillas. The rebellion of the urban guerrilla and his persistence in intervening in political questions is the best way of ensuring popular support for the cause which we defend. We repeat and insist on repeating—it is the way of ensuring popular support. As soon as a reasonable portion of the population begins to take seriously the actions of the urban guerrilla, his success is guaranteed.

The government has no alternative except to intensify its repression. The police networks, house searches, the arrest of suspects and innocent persons, and the closing off of streets make life in the city unbearable. The military dictatorship embarks on massive political persecution. Political assassinations and police terror become routine.

In spite of all this, the police systematically fail. The armed forces, the navy and the air force are mobilized to undertake routine police functions, but even so they can find no way to halt guerrilla operations or to wipe out the revolutionary organization with its fragmented groups that move around and operate throughout the country.

The people refuse to collaborate with the government, and the general sentiment is that this government is unjust, incapable of solving problems, and that it resorts simply to the physical liquidation of its opponents. The political situation in the country is transformed into a military situation in which the "gorillas" [i.e., the authorities] appear more and more to be the ones responsible for violence, while the lives of the people grow worse.

When they see the military and the dictatorship on the brink of the abyss, and fearing the consequences of a civil war which is already well underway, the pacifiers (always to be found within the ruling elite) and the opportunists (partisans of nonviolent struggle) join hands and circulate rumors behind the scenes begging

the hangmen for elections, "re-democratization," constitutional reforms, and other tripe designed to fool the people and make them stop the rebellion.

But, watching the guerrillas, the people now understand that it is a farce to vote in any elections which have as their sole objective guaranteeing the survival of the dictatorship and covering up its crimes. Attacking wholeheartedly this election farce and the so-called "political solution," which is so appealing to the opportunists, the urban guerrillas must become even more aggressive and active, resorting without pause to sabotage, terrorism, expropriations, assaults, kidnappings, executions, etc. This action answers any attempt to fool the people with the opening of Congress and the reorganization of political parties—parties of the government and of the positions which the government allows—when all the time parliament and the so-called "parties" only function thanks to the permission of the military dictatorship, in a true spectacle of puppets or dogs on a leash.

The role of the urban guerrilla, in order to win the support of the population, is to continue fighting, keeping in mind the interests of the people and heightening the disastrous situation within which the government must act. These are the conditions, harmful to the dictatorship, which permit the guerrillas to open rural warfare in the middle of an uncontrollable urban rebellion.

The urban guerrilla is engaged in revolutionary action for the people, and seeks the participation of the people in the struggle against the dictatorship and for the liberation of the country. Beginning with the city and the support of the people, the rural guerrilla war develops rapidly, establishing its infrastructure carefully while the urban area continues the rebellion.

6. PRELUDE TO DICTATORSHIP

The 1970 election of an avowed Marxist, Salvador Allende, as president of Chile came as a shock to many conservative Chileans and to the virulently anti-communist US government. Allende's administration quickly embarked on efforts to restructure the Chilean economy by nationalizing the copper mines (mostly owned by US companies) and banks, enacting extensive land reforms, and investing heavily in social services like housing, public health, and education. These major structural changes were attempted without a congressional majority or support from the judiciary, and with considerable resistance from within the armed forces and the police. The Nixon administration opposed Allende's program as well. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger boldly announced: "I don't see why we have to let a country go

who days ago continued working against the sedition sponsored by professional associations, class-based associations that also defended the advantages which a capitalist society grants to a few.

I address the youth, those who sang and gave us their joy and their spirit of struggle. I address the man of Chile, the worker, the farmer, the intellectual, those who will be persecuted, because in our country fascism has been already present for many hours—in terrorist attacks, blowing up the bridges, cutting the railroad tracks, destroying the oil and gas pipelines, in the face of the silence of those who had the obligation to protect them. They were committed. History will judge them.

Surely Radio Magallanes will be silenced, and the calm metal instrument of my voice will no longer reach you. It does not matter. You will continue hearing it. I will always be next to you. At least my memory will be that of a man of dignity who was loyal to [inaudible] the workers.

The people must defend themselves, but they must not sacrifice themselves. The people must not let themselves be destroyed or riddled with bullets, but they cannot be humiliated either.

Workers of my country, I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when treason seeks to prevail. Go forward knowing that, sooner rather than later, the great avenues will open again where free men will walk to build a better society.

Long live Chile! Long live the people! Long live the workers!

These are my last words, and I am certain that my sacrifice will not be in vain, I am certain that, at the very least, it will be a moral lesson that will punish felony, cowardice, and treason.

Santiago de Chile,
11 September 1973

7. THE DEATH OF VICTOR JARA

The military coup that overthrew the democratic Salvador Allende government in September 1973 ushered in a reign of terror without precedent in Chilean history. Many thousands of Allende's followers were tortured and executed. As if aping the Nazis, the fascist junta showed a special hatred for the creators of

Boris Navia, "Testimonio del asesinato de Víctor Jara," *Tareas*, 126: May–August 2007 (Panama: CELA, Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos Justo Arosema, 2007), pp. 136–138, 139–140. Excerpt translated by the editors.

culture and their works. The junta's soldiers attempted to purify Chilean culture by holding book-burning sprees. They devastated the home of Pablo Neruda, Chile's greatest poet and Nobel Prize winner, as he lay dying of cancer. And they tortured and killed Víctor Jara, a beloved composer, folk singer, and theater director, as described in the following account. On September 12, Boris Navia, Víctor Jara, and hundreds of other professors and students were arrested at the State Technical University. Navia regained his freedom a year later, after being imprisoned at various sites. He is today an active human rights lawyer. Here is his account of Jara's martyrdom at the hands of the military.

"Bring that son of a bitch over here!" yelled the military officer. He was pointing at Víctor Jara, who was entering the Chile Stadium along with another 600 professors and students from the Technical University (UTE). We had our hands on the backs of our necks, we were threatened at gunpoint by bayonets. It was Wednesday afternoon, September 12, 1973. It was the day after the fascist coup. The previous day, the 11th, Víctor was expected to sing at the UTE ceremony, where our President, Enrique Kirberg, would receive President Allende, who was about to announce a plebiscite for the Chilean people. However, Allende's voice was silenced by the flames at La Moneda [government palace]. Víctor's guitar would remain there, destroyed by the military boot during the bombing of UTE, another testament to fascist barbarism. "Bring that son of a bitch over here!" repeated the infuriated officer. Helmet down to his eyes, painted face, machine-gun on his shoulder, grenade on his chest, a pistol and a curved knife under his belt, he balanced his tense and arrogant body in his black boots.

"That moron! That one!" A soldier pushes him out of the line. "Don't treat him like a lady!" Following the order, the soldier applies a ferocious rifle butt to Víctor's back. Víctor falls on his face, close to the officer's feet.

"Your mother! You are the moron Víctor Jara. The Marxist singer. The singer of pure shit!" Then, his boot kicks Víctor's body furiously one, two, three, ten times. He kicks his face, which Víctor tries to protect with his hands—the same face that used to smile every time it looked at you, with a smile that never abandoned him until his death, the same smile he always wore when singing of love and the Revolution.

"I will teach you, you son of a bitch, to sing Chilean songs, not Communist songs!"

The kick of a boot on a defenseless body is never forgotten. The officer continues his relentless punishment, blinded by hatred. Hell's boot drives into the flesh of the singer. Threatened by rifles, we contemplate in horror the torture inflicted on our dear troubadour. Despite the order to move on, we are paralyzed by horror. Víctor is on the floor. He does not complain. He does not ask for mercy. His

peasant face looks at the fascist torturer, who loses his temper. Suddenly, he takes out his gun, and we all fear that he will shoot Víctor. Instead he beats him with the barrel of the weapon, time and again. He yells and harasses. It's fascist hysteria.

And then, Víctor's blood begins to soak his hair, to cover his forehead, his eyes. The expression of his bloodied face will stay forever ingrained in our memory. The officer gets tired and suddenly stops his blows. He looks around and notices that hundreds of eyes are watching with anger and horror. Then, he loses his temper and screams: "What's the matter, morons? Move on, you shits!" Then, addressing the soldier: "Put this bastard in the hallway. At the slightest movement, kill him. You understand? Fucking hell!"

The Chile Stadium was rapidly filling with political prisoners. First, two thousand. Soon we would be five thousand. Workers were wounded, covered with blood, bare feet, with ragged clothes, brutally beaten and humiliated. There, as everywhere else, the fascist coup showed a kind of brutality never seen before. We heard the voices of officers urging soldiers to intimidate, to kick, to humiliate this "human scum," the "Marxist sewer."

Until this day, people ask us whether the thousands of prisoners in the stadium witnessed Víctor's tortures. The answer is that only a few did, his closest colleagues from UTE, since everyone's life and destiny was at stake, and the Chile Stadium had turned into a multistage scene of horror and bestiality.

Up there, an officer cut a Peruvian student's ear, accusing him of being Cuban because of his dark skin. Over there, a twelve-year-old kid gets up and runs desperately amongst the prisoners, calling his father, and a soldier guns him down. Suddenly, a soldier trips on an old worker's foot. The "Prince" (nickname of one of the officers in charge) gives the order from above, from behind the blinding lights, to beat him. The soldier beats him in the head with his gun, and the worker bleeds to death. A scream of horror startles us. A worker throws himself into the breach screaming "Viva Allende!" and his body explodes in blood in the field of the stadium. Blinded by spotlights, under the threat of those machine-guns (called "Hitler's saws"), new prisoners keep coming....

On Thursday afternoon, there was turmoil in the stadium. Buses arrived, carrying people from La Legua. There was talk about shootings. Many wounded and dead prisoners came out of the buses. As a result, [the soldiers] seemed to forget about Víctor.

At that point we dragged him to the stands, gave him water, cleaned his face....

And then, that horrendous Saturday September 15, 1973. The officer called The Prince had visitors, they were officials from the Navy. From a distance, we see how one of them begins insulting Víctor, screaming hysterically, beating him. It's the last time we see our dear troubadour alive. For the last time, his eyes look upon his brothers, his broken people.

That night they transfer us to the National Stadium. As we leave the Chile Stadium we see a Dantesque spectacle. Thirty or forty dead bodies are dumped together. Amongst them . . . is the lifeless body of our beloved Víctor Jara, his chest perforated by 42 bullets. Fascist brutality had concluded its criminal work. It was the night of Saturday September 15. The following day, his bloodied corpse would be thrown, along with many others, into the Metropolitan Cemetery.

8. THE ECONOMIC UNDERPINNINGS OF THE DICTATORSHIP

Augusto Pinochet's military government (September 1973–March 1990) brought political authoritarianism, persecution, and censorship. It also brought about structural changes in Chilean economic policies, the planning of which preceded the violent context installed by the Pinochet regime. In 1956, thanks to an agreement signed between the Catholic University and the University of Chicago, a group of young economists travelled to the United States to do their graduate studies at that prestigious university. Upon returning to Chile, they were active in disseminating their ideas among other scholars and businessmen. In 1969, a bold program of economic reform was offered to liberal-conservative politician Jorge Alessandri, who declined to adopt it openly. During the crisis of the Allende administration, the plan was further developed. This time, it was discussed not just among scholars and advocates of neoliberalism, but also among members of parliament and within the military establishment. Indeed, it would become the basis of the economic plan outlined by the Pinochet regime, and officially announced one month after the coup. The following excerpts are part of "The Brick," the name given to the economic plan presented by these economists to the military regime, just hours after it took power.

The main problems of Chilean economy of the last 30–40 years are the following:

1. Low growth rate;
2. Exaggerated state involvement;
3. Scarcity of productive employment;
4. Inflation;
5. Agricultural backwardness;
6. Extreme poverty amongst important sector of the population.

"El ladrillo." *Bases de la política económica del gobierno militar chileno* (Santiago de Chile: Centro de Estudios Públicos, 1992), pp. 27–28, 62–68. Excerpt translated by the editors.

the distortions or imperfections produced by the economic system, the system of prices being an essential indicator of relative scarcity of goods and resources....

Experience has shown that when the state runs an activity, the level of effective control diminishes markedly, as was the case in the many state businesses that during previous governments let their balance sheets fall one or two years behind, making impossible any analysis of [their] relative efficiency. In this example, it is clear that the monitoring authority becomes lax, because the controller is part of the political-administrative government apparatus. The result is a centralized system in which political authority fails to control, because no one is efficient at monitoring himself. In addition, the orders of administrative authorities are carried out by means of a bureaucratic elite of functionaries [who transmit] to the lower levels the concerns and interests of that bureaucracy. In a centralized system, relations between political authority and its subalterns are slow and difficult, as they are usually relations between equals insofar as they belong to the same ideology or party. The orders of the state planner to his "companion" manager don't carry the weight of a decision made by political authority in a decentralized system, where noncompliance involves clear and precise pecuniary sanctions....

In Chile as in other nations, the weakness of the centralized model is shown by its results. Due to the inefficient use of resources, it becomes necessary to generate very high rates of savings and investment in order to obtain reasonable growth rates. It then becomes necessary to limit consumption over long periods of time. On the other hand, in countries with market economies it has been possible to obtain higher growth rates and substantial improvements in living standards of the community, all due to a better use of productive resources. In market economies, prices freely determined by the competition between producers as well as consumers are a reflection of the relative scarcity of goods, allowing for the allocation of resources to those areas where productivity is higher.

The market system involves clear, automatic, and impersonal mechanisms of reward and punishment while providing incentives that are compatible with a central characteristic of human beings: the will and capacity to obtain a better destiny for himself and his family.

9. OPEN LETTER TO THE MILITARY JUNTA

Rodolfo Walsh (1927–1977) is considered one of Argentina's most important contemporary writers. Although he is usually associated with politically

Rodolfo Walsh, "Carta abierta de un escritor a la Junta Militar." Translated by the editors. Original footnotes have been removed.

engaged literature, a substantial part of his earlier work shows a taste for abstract intellectual games, as reflected in his interest in chess, detective fiction, and formal aspects of the short story. In the late 1950s, during Peronism's long proscription from the political arena, Walsh (a former anti-Peronist) became increasingly concerned with the fate of the defeated working class. *Operación Masacre* (1957), his narrative report on the execution of a group of workers outside Buenos Aires at the hands of the anti-Peronist military government, is both a political and a literary landmark. By combining narrative techniques with sound journalistic investigation, it marks the beginning of the genre of literary nonfiction in Latin America, as well as the beginning of Walsh's personal commitment to the poor, which would lead him to embrace the cause of the Peronist guerrilla group, the Montoneros. By the time the military took power in the coup of 1976, Walsh's commitment to social revolution had long since displaced his focus on literary fiction. By then, he defined his writing as that of a politically committed writer-journalist. In the face of brutal censorship—a tactic of the military regime that Walsh considered one of the main ways of instilling terror—he created ANCLA and Cadena Informativa, two clandestine information networks based on word-of-mouth dissemination. His letter to the junta, written on the first anniversary of the coup, was mailed to Argentine newspapers (which could not publish it) as well as to foreign correspondents. Its diagnosis of the nature of the military regime, based on data gathered in the first stages of that regime, is remarkably lucid in the connection it makes between political repression and economic transformation—a link widely acknowledged today but rarely made at the time. Written in desperation, the letter still bears the marks of its author's long commitment to investigative journalism. Rodolfo Walsh was killed on a Buenos Aires street by a military commando on March 25, 1977—one day after writing this letter, his last public utterance.

1. Press censorship, the persecution of intellectuals, breaking into my home in Tigre, the murder of dear friends, and the loss of a daughter who died fighting you: these are some of the facts that force me into this clandestine form of expression, after thirty years of freely and openly making known my views as a writer and journalist.

The first anniversary of this military *junta* leads me to an assessment of the government's actions, based on its documents and official speeches, in which what you call successes are mistakes, what you admit as mistakes are crimes, and what you omit altogether are calamities.

On March 24, 1976, you overthrew a government of which I was a part, to whose discredit you contributed by carrying on its repressive policies, and

whose end was already in sight in the form of elections slated for nine months later. From this perspective, what you brought to an end was not the transitory mandate of Isabel Martínez [Juan Perón's second wife, "Isabelita"], but rather all possibility of a democratic process in which the people might remedy the evils that you have continued and aggravated.

Illegitimate from the beginning, the administration that you lead could have legitimized itself by salvaging the program that 80% of Argentines supported in the 1973 elections, a program that continues to be the objective expression of the people's will, the only possible meaning of the "national being" that you so often invoke. Reversing this stream, you have restored the current of ideas of defeated minority interests that hinder the development of productive forces, exploit the people, and tear apart the nation. Such policies can only be imposed temporarily—by banning political parties, taking control of unions, silencing the press, and setting into motion the greatest terror that Argentine society has ever known.

2. Fifteen thousand missing, ten thousand imprisoned, four thousand dead, tens of thousands in exile: these are the naked statistics of this terror.

With ordinary jails overwhelmed, you made virtual concentration camps of military garrisons, where no judge, lawyer, journalist, or international observer is allowed. The military secrecy of these procedures, which you justify as made necessary by the rigors of investigation, turns most of your detentions into kidnappings, in which unlimited torture and summary execution are permitted.

Over seven thousand writs of habeas corpus have been rejected in the past year. In the cases of thousands of other disappearances, this tool hasn't even been attempted, either because it was known in advance to be futile or because no lawyer would dare to file a writ after fifty or sixty of those who did were themselves abducted.

In this way, you have stripped torture of its time limit. Since the detainee does not exist, there's no possibility of presenting him to the judge after ten days, as is required by a law which has been respected even at the repressive extremes of previous dictatorships.

To the lack of a time limit has been added the lack of limits with regard to methods, a return to the time when pain was inflicted directly on the joints and bowels of the victims, although now with the help of surgical and pharmacological aids that ancient executioners did not have at their disposal. The rack, the "spinning wheel," skinning alive, and the saw of medieval inquisitors all reappear in testimonies, along with contemporary techniques such as the cattle prod and waterboarding.

Arguing that the goal of exterminating the guerrilla justifies any and all means, you have arrived at absolute, timeless, metaphysical torture, in which the original

intent of obtaining information goes astray in the unbalanced minds of those who yield to the impulse to crush human substance until broken, until it has lost the dignity already lost by the torturer, the dignity you have yourselves lost.

3. This Junta's refusal to publish the names of prisoners is covering the systematic execution of hostages out in remote wastelands, late at night, under the pretext of staged combat and imaginary attempts to flee. Extremists who distribute pamphlets in the middle of nowhere, who scrawl graffiti in drainage ditches, or who cram themselves into cars that just happen to catch fire—these are the plot-lines of a script that is not intended to be believed, but rather to deceive international observers. Meanwhile, the domestic narrative is all about reprisals in response to guerrilla actions.

Seventy people shot after a bomb went off at Federal Security Headquarters, fifty in response to the explosion at the Police Headquarters in La Plata, thirty for the bombing of the Ministry of Defense, forty in the New Year's Eve Massacre that followed the death of Coronel Castellanos, nineteen after the explosion that destroyed the precinct house in Ciudadela: these are just some of the 1,200 executions in 300 so-called battles in which there were no wounded among the opposing forces, and in which the side that reported these numbers had no casualties.

Assigned the kind of collective guilt that has been abolished by all civilized norms of justice, having no influence in the political process resulting in their persecution, many of these hostages are union delegates, intellectuals, relatives of guerrilla activists, unarmed dissidents, simple suspects who are killed in order to balance the numbers of casualties, according to the foreign doctrine of "body counting" used by the [Nazi] SS in occupied countries and by the invaders of Vietnam.

Evidence for the cold-blooded shooting of wounded or captured guerrilla militants in real battles comes from the military's own communiqués, which in one year counted 600 dead and only 10 or 15 wounded among the guerrillas, a ratio unheard of even in the bloodiest of conflicts. This perception is further confirmed by a sample undertaken by the press (and circulated clandestinely) which shows that between December 18, 1976, and February 3, 1977, in 40 military actions, the legal forces had 23 casualties and 40 wounded, while the guerrillas had 63 casualties (and no wounded).

More than one hundred people awaiting trial have also been killed attempting to flee, the official version of which is, again, not directed toward anyone who might believe it, but in order to warn the guerrillas and political parties that even well-known inmates can be used as a strategic reserve of reprisals at the disposal of the military commanders, either in the course of combat, as a didactic convenience, or as their mood sees fit.

This is how General Benjamin Menendez, chief of the Third Army Battalion, earned his stripes: first, before March 24, by assassinating Marcos Asatinsky, who was detained in Córdoba; later, through the death of Hugo Vaca Narvaja and fifty other inmates in various episodes involving unlawful flight, enforced without mercy and related without decency. The assassination of Dardo Cabo, detained in April of 1975 and executed on January 6, 1977, with seven other prisoners under the jurisdiction of General Suarez Masson's First Army Battalion, reveals that these episodes are not the isolated outbursts of a few deluded centurions, but rather the expressions of the very policies that you conceive from your high commands, that you discuss in your cabinet meetings, that you impose as commanders of the three branches of the Army, and that you approve, as members of the governing *Junta*.

4. Between one and three thousand people have been secretly massacred after you prohibited reporting about the finding of cadavers. The information has nevertheless leaked out, either because it has affected other countries, or because of its genocidal magnitude, or because of the horror it has produced within its own forces. Twenty-five mutilated bodies appeared on the shores of Uruguay between March and October of 1976—perhaps a small sample of the many who have been tortured to death in Naval Mechanicals School and then thrown from Navy boats into the River Plate, including the fifteen-year-old Floreal Avellaneda, his feet and hands tied, "with wounds in the anal region and visible fractures," according to the autopsy.

A veritable underwater cemetery was discovered in August 1976 by a neighbor diving in San Roque Lake, Córdoba. His report was not accepted at the police precinct, just as his letters to the newspapers went unpublished.

Thirty-four corpses in Buenos Aires between April 3 and April 9, eight in San Telmo on July 4, and ten in the Lujan River on October 9—all leading up to the massacres of August 20, which left a pile of thirty bodies fifteen kilometers from the Campo de Mayo [the military headquarters], and then seventeen more dead in Lomas de Zamora. These facts expose the fiction behind those versions that blame these episodes on right-wing extremist groups, alleged heirs of Lopez Rega's Triple A—as if such groups would be able to cross the country's largest garrison in military trucks, cover the River Plate with dead bodies, or throw prisoners into the sea from the planes of the First Brigade without the knowledge of General Videla, Admiral Massera, or Bridadier General Agosti. Today the Triple are the three Armed Forces, and the Junta you preside over is neither the balance between "violence of different stripes" nor the just arbiter between "two terrorisms." It is the very source of terror that has lost direction and can only babble the discourse of death.

The same historical continuity links the assassination of General Carlos Prats, during the previous administration, with the abduction and death of Generals Juan José Torres, Zelmar Michelini, and Héctor Gutiérrez, along with

dozens of refugees, whose deaths it was hoped would also bring the death of the democratic processes of Chile, Bolivia, and Uruguay.

The certain participation of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Police in these crimes, led by officers trained by the CIA through AID, such as Commissioners Juan Gattei and Antonio Gettor (both acting under the authority of Mr. Gardener Hathaway, Station Chief of the CIA in Argentina), will give rise to future revelations like those shaking the international community right now. As the role of this agency (along with high-ranking military chiefs, led by General Menéndez) in the creation of the Lodge of the Liberators of America (which replaced the Triple A until its role was taken over by the *Junta* on behalf of the Three Branches), is laid bare, these revelations will only continue.

This picture of extermination does not begin to include the settling of personal accounts, such as the assassination of Captain Horacio Gándara, who had for nearly a decade been investigating the business dealings of the chiefs of the Navy, or the murder of *Prensa Libre* journalist Horacio Novillo, who was stabbed and burned after that newspaper made public the personal connections of Minister Martínez de Hoz with certain international monopolies.

These episodes give a final meaning to the definition of this war, as pronounced by one of its leaders [Lieutenant Colonel Pasarelli]: "Our struggle, recognizing neither moral nor natural limits, takes place beyond good and evil."

5. Shocking as these facts may be to the conscience of the civilized world, they are not however the worst that the Argentine people have been made to suffer, nor the worst violations of human rights you have committed. It is in this government's economic policy where one should look not only for the explanation of these crimes, but also a greater atrocity which afflicts millions of human beings with planned misery.

In just one year you have reduced by 40% the real salary of workers, whose portion of the national income has diminished to 30%. You have increased from six to eighteen the number of hours per day a worker needs to provide his family with basic needs, resuscitating forms of forced labor unknown even in the very last colonial redoubts.

By freezing salaries at gunpoint while prices rise at the point of a bayonet, abolishing all means of collective petition, banning assemblies and internal commissions, extending working hours, bringing unemployment to a record 9% while promising to increase it with another 300,000 layoffs, you have set labor relations back to the beginnings of the industrial era. And when workers have tried to protest, you've called them subversives, abducting entire delegate corps who in some cases later reappeared dead. Others never reappeared at all.

These policies have had catastrophic results. In the first year of this administration, food consumption has decreased by 40%, clothing by more than 50%,

while access to medicine has all but disappeared in the poorer sectors of society. In certain areas of Greater Buenos Aires, infant mortality is above 30%, a figure that puts us on a par with Rhodesia, Dahomey, and the Guyanas. Incidence of diseases such as seasonal diarrhea, intestinal parasites, and even rabies is approaching or surpassing worst global levels. As if these were your intended goals, you've reduced the public health budget to less than one-third of military expenses, undermining even the free public hospitals, while hundreds of doctors, professionals, and technicians join the exodus provoked by terror, low salaries, and "rationalization."

It's enough just to walk a few hours in Greater Buenos Aires to verify the speed with which this policy has turned the area into a shanty town of ten million. Half-lit cities; entire neighborhoods without water because monopolies have taken control of the aquifers; thousands of city blocks turned into one huge pothole because you only pave military neighborhoods and decorate the Plaza de Mayo; the shores of the world's largest river polluted by the industrial waste produced by associates of Minister Martínez de Hoz, and the only remedy you propose is to ban people from swimming in it.

Nor have you been any more fortunate in your more abstract economic goals, those you identify as "the country": a decline in the GNP of almost 3%, external debt at nearly 600 dollars per capita, annual inflation close to 400%, an increase in currency circulation which only in one week in December reached 9%, a 13% decrease in foreign investment—all world records, strange fruit of cold deliberation and base incompetence.

While all the creative and protective functions of the state are left to atrophy and dissolve into anemia, one thrives autonomous: 1.8 billion dollars (equivalent to half of Argentine exports) budgeted for security and defense in 1977, four thousand new positions created in the Federal Police, twelve thousand in the Police Department of the Province of Buenos Aires, with salaries doubling those of industrial workers and tripling those of school principals. Meanwhile, your own military salaries are secretly increased by 120%, proving that there is neither stagnation nor unemployment in the kingdom of torture and death, the only field of Argentine activity where production grows and where the rate of guerrilla casualties rises faster than the dollar.

6. Dictated by the International Monetary Fund, according to a formula applied without distinction in Zaire or Chile, Uruguay or Indonesia, the Junta's economic policy only benefits the old landed oligarchy, the new oligarchy of speculation, and a select group of international monopolies led by ITT, Esso, the automobile industry, US Steel, Siemens, with whom Minister Martínez de Hoz and all of his fellow cabinet members have personal ties.

A 722% increase in the cost of cattle production in 1976 makes clear the extent to which the oligarchy has been restored under Martínez de Hoz, as does

the creed of the Rural Society, as illustrated by its president, Celedonio Pereda: "It is stunning that small but active groups keep demanding that food prices remain low."

The spectacle of a stock exchange where in one week certain people have increased their income by one or two hundred percent without working, where certain businesses double their capital overnight without producing more than before, the crazy wheel of speculation in dollars and letters of credit, adjustable values, the simple usury that counts interest by the hour—these are rather curious facts under an administration which supposedly came to put an end to the "feast of the corrupt." By means of the denationalization of banks, savings and credit are transferred into the hands of foreign banks. Subsidizing ITT and Siemens, you reward those companies that have defrauded the state. By reopening outlets you increase the profit of Shell and Esso. By lowering customs taxes you create employment in Hong Kong and Singapore, and unemployment in Argentina. Faced with all of these facts, one would do well to wonder about the "stateless" of official communiqués, the mercenaries in the service of foreign interests, the ideology that threatens the "national being."

Were it not for an overwhelming propaganda campaign, a distorted reflection of evil facts—that this *Junta* wants peace, that General Videla defends human rights, that Admiral Massera loves life—it might still be possible to demand of the Commanders in Chief of the Three Branches that they meditate on the ways in which they are driving the country into an abyss, behind the illusion of winning a war in which, even if they killed the last guerrilla activist, would only start over in new ways, because the causes that have driven the people's resistance for twenty years will not have disappeared but only have been aggravated by the memory of the ravages that resulted, and the revealing of the atrocities committed.

On the first anniversary of your sinister government, these are the thoughts that I've wanted to share with the members of the *Junta*, without hope of being listened to, certain of being persecuted, but remaining faithful to a commitment I made a long time ago to give testimony in difficult times.

10. MOTHERS OF THE DISAPPEARED

As part of its program of repression of Marxist and Peronist subversive groups, the military dictatorship of Argentina (which took power in 1976) began a systematic campaign of terror. With Argentine civil society paralyzed by fear and

kept in the dark by extreme media censorship, illegal groups linked to the army kidnapped thousands of people (the exact figure is still unknown, although human-rights organizations mention as many as 30,000). These victims of state terror—students, workers, lawyers, activists, journalists, teenagers, parents, even entire families—vanished into clandestine concentration camps where they were tortured and often murdered. They simply “disappeared.” During this dark time, the only form of visible resistance came from a group of mothers—housewives with no previous political experience who were looking for their missing children. The “Madwomen of Plaza de Mayo,” as they were labeled by the military leaders, would become a powerful symbol of resistance to dictatorship, a resistance harder to repress because of their status as suffering mothers. In the interview excerpts that follow, they recall the origins of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.

HEBE DE BONAFINI

When Jorge disappeared my first reaction was to rush out desperately to look for him. I didn't cry. I didn't tear my hair out. Nothing mattered anymore except that I should find him, that I should go everywhere, at any time, day or night. I didn't want to read anything about what was happening, just search, search. Then I realized we had to look for all of them and that we had to be together because together we were stronger. We had no previous political experience. We had no contacts. We knew no one. We made mistakes at first, but we learned quickly. Every door slammed in our faces made us stop and think, made us stronger. We learned quickly and we never gave up. Everything they said we shouldn't do, that we weren't able to do, we proved we could do.

DORA DE BAZZE

Our first problem was how we were going to organize meetings if we didn't know each other. There were so many police and security men everywhere that you never knew who was standing next to you. It was very dangerous. So we carried different things so we could identify each other. For example one would hold a twig in her hand, one might carry a small purse instead of a handbag, one would pin a leaf to her lapel—anything to let us know this was a Mother. We used to go to the square and sit on the benches with our knitting or stroll about, whispering messages to each other and trying to discuss what else we could do.

Sometimes we met in churches. Most of us were very religious. At that time I was a believer too, so we went to the churches to pray together “Our Father” . . .

and at the same time we would be passing round tiny pieces of folded paper, like when you're in school, cheating on a test. Then we hid them in the hems of our skirts in case we were searched later. Only the small churches, a long way out, lost in the middle of nowhere, would let us in. The rest closed their doors when they found out we were Mothers.

We tried to produce leaflets as well—we had to do it secretly because it was illegal of course—and little stickers saying “the Mothers will be in such and such a place on such and such a day” and “¿Dónde están nuestros hijos desaparecidos?” [“Where are our disappeared children?”]; or “Los militares se han llevado a nuestros hijos” [“The military have taken our children”]. We went out at night to stick them on the buses and underground trains. And we wrote messages on *peso* notes so that as many people as possible would see them. This was the only way we could let people know that our children had been taken, and what the military government was doing, because when you told them they always said, “They must have done something.” There was nothing in the newspapers. If a journalist reported on us, he disappeared. The television and radio were completely under military control, so people weren't conscious. In the beginning we had no support at all.

MARÍA DEL ROSARIO

At first we didn't march together in the square. We sat on the benches with our knitting or stood in small groups, trying to disguise the letters we were signing to send to the churches, to government officials, to the military. We had to speak to each other quickly, in low voices so it didn't look as if we were having a meeting. Then, when the police saw what was happening and began pointing their rifles at us and telling us to move on, that we had to disperse, that we couldn't be more than two together, we began to walk in twos around the edge of the square. Two in front, two behind—because we had to keep moving but we also had to be able to speak to each other, to talk about what we were going to do next. Every time it got more difficult to communicate with each other because every week there were more police. Sometimes we met in parks as if we were having an office party and there were a few, very few, priests who let us meet in their churches occasionally, and some of the press agencies helped us. France-Presse lent us their offices sometimes.

At first we walked around the outside of the square, but because there were so few of us we were hardly noticed—and we had to make sure the public knew we existed. We wanted people to see us, to know we were there, so we began to walk in the centre of the square, around the monument. Even if people supported us

they stayed outside the square. It was very dangerous for them to approach us. We were very alone in the beginning.

AÍDA DE SUÁREZ

The headscarves grew out of an idea of our dear Azucena. It was at the time when thousands of people walk to Luján on the annual pilgrimage to pay homage to the Virgin. We decided to join the march in 1977 because many of us were religious and also because we thought it would be a chance for us to talk to each other and organize things. But as some of the Mothers were elderly and wouldn't be able to walk, and we would all be coming from different places, we thought, how will we be able to identify each other amongst all those people, because many thousands go, and how can we make other people notice us? Azucena's idea was to wear as a headscarf one of our children's nappies—because every mother keeps something like this, something which belonged to your child as a baby. It was very easy to spot the headscarves in the crowds and people came up to us and asked us who we were. We'd managed to attract attention, so we decided to use the scarves at other meetings, and then every time we went to Plaza de Mayo together. We all made proper white scarves and embroidered the names of our children on them. Afterwards we put on them "*Aparición con Vida*" [literally, "Reappearance with Life"], because we were no longer searching for just one child but for all of the disappeared.

We used to go to the military regiments together to look for other women like us. The only way we could communicate was by word of mouth and we had to find a way to find other women—not just in Buenos Aires, but women from all over the country. The press was silent. The only one that ever wrote anything about us was the English one, the [Buenos Aires] *Herald*. I went to ask for information at the *Herald* offices many times. It was very dangerous for journalists to show any interest in us.

11. THE CHURCH IN THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

A distinctive feature of the Nicaraguan revolution that overthrew the tyranny of the Somoza dynasty in 1979 was the role played by rank-and-file clergy in the revolutionary movement and their later involvement in implementing the

Ernesto Cardenal, "No crean las calumnias sobre Nicaragua (carta a un amigo)," *Cuadernos Americanos* 44 (March–April 1985): 23–27. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

goals of the revolution. On the other hand, the Church hierarchy, headed by Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo, traditionally aligned with the wealthy classes but openly critical of Somoza's corruption, grew increasingly hostile to the Sandinista government. Ernesto Cardenal, one of Latin America's great poets and minister of culture in the Sandinista government, describes the spiritual road traveled by a Jesuit priest who joined the revolutionary struggle.

Our people lived for four centuries in conditions of misery, malnutrition, illiteracy, and abandonment. They worked in unjust and inhuman conditions, lacking means of communication, schools, or culture. They had no part in determining the destiny of our country, no possibility of becoming the makers of their own history. Add to these evils the half century of Somoza dictatorship, which inflicted on our country the greatest injustices, lack of freedom, and a constant and ferocious repression.

Our people have always fought, but only after the founding of the Sandinista Front of National Liberation (FSLN) in 1961 did they struggle in a truly organized and effective way. Thousands of Nicaraguans were assassinated in the course of those years. But new heroes always arose, heroes who fought, offering the last drop of their blood to free our people from slavery, without fear of Pharaoh.

Our Church lived in peace and tranquility with the oppressors. There are some significant facts. Nicaraguans will never forget that during the funeral of General Somoza García, founder of the dynasty, the then archbishop of Managua gave the dictator the title of Prince of the Church.

In 1967 several leaders of the FSLN were captured and later murdered; on that occasion the auxiliary bishop of Managua published an article in the government newspaper in which he practically justified the repression on the grounds that those young men, according to him, were Communists.

I shall never forget the day, on my return as an ordained priest to Nicaragua in 1968, when the popular struggle and the repression were growing daily, that I read the first pastoral letter of the bishops of Nicaragua. It offered no theological doctrine for a better understanding of God's will in those difficult times; it only required priests to wear black cassocks. Not a word about the black situation of our people. With some glorious exceptions, the Church maintained an alliance with the dictatorship.

I had to leave the country in 1969 for nine months in order to complete my religious training by taking the last course required of Jesuits, called the Last Probation. I asked to take it in the city of Medellín [Colombia], for there they had moved the site of the course from a lovely four-floor building set among gardens and sport grounds to a poor ward in the "misery belt" around Medellín. The previous year the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops

had been held there. I lived those months among people scoured by hunger, unemployment, illness, with no electric lighting or any other public service or convenience. I came to feel an enormous love for these people and my life with them marked me forever.

My Christian faith, my human feelings, and all that I daily saw and heard brought me to a conclusion that arose from the depths of my being: Things cannot go on in this way! It is not right that such misery should exist! God cannot be neutral toward this situation!

My spiritual experience among those poor people confirmed the conception that I drew from the Bible of a God who was not neutral, who heard the clamor of the oppressed and took their side. Never was the meaning of the Bible clearer to me than when I read it amid the quagmires and misery of that ward.

In mid-1970 I completed the course and returned to my country, but not before making a vow to the dwellers of that ward of Medellín: "I shall dedicate my life to the complete liberation of the poor of Latin America, in the place where I shall be most useful." I began to work in the Central American University (UCA) of Managua as co-director in charge of students. A long night continued to envelope our people: dictatorship, dependency, prison, torture, hunger, malnutrition, fear, death, and violation of all human and civil rights. The official Church continued to live peacefully side by side with that genocidal government. Only some half-dozen priests were attempting to teach the new pastoral that was born from the documents of Medellín. [Eds: This is a reference to the second conference of Latin American bishops, held at Medellín, Colombia, in 1968, whose conclusions resembled those of the so-called "theology of liberation."]

The Sandinista Front of National Liberation was already known to all and had gained the respect and sympathy of the people by its valiant and clean fight for the people and against the dictatorship. Inspired by the documents of Medellín and seeking the complete liberation of man, I and a few other priests began to participate in all the civic struggles of the people for liberation: demonstrations, occupations of churches, hunger strikes, speeches at meetings, articles in newspapers, etc.

We also began to take part in the struggle of the Christian student groups, which were to become so important later on.

The most significant moment in the Christian participation in the popular struggle was the occupation of the cathedral. Three of us, priests, accompanied by nearly a hundred students of the Catholic University, took part in a hunger strike in the Cathedral of Managua in 1970, demanding respect for the lives of all the university students who had been imprisoned in recent days, permission to speak to them and, in conformity with Nicaraguan law, that within two days they be freed or put on trial on specific charges.

The normal thing was for prisoners to be tortured for weeks in the offices of the National Security. The occupation of the cathedral created a nationwide commotion. The army surrounded the cathedral in a threatening manner. We rang the mourning bells every fifteen minutes, night and day, and announced that we would continue ringing them until justice was done and the law complied with. From the principal parishes of Managua came large groups of people who sat down in the plaza to show their support for us; thousands came, and other thousands passed by, greeting us from cars and buses. In three and a half days we made the dictator yield. For the first time a Christian group had taken part in a forceful political act. Messages of support were published by the Bible Study Classes (*Cursillos de Cristiandad*), the Christian Family Movement, the Christian grass-roots communities (*Comunidades de Base*), etc. In a few days the Bishops' Conference of Nicaragua published a letter condemning our protest. Thousands of Christians signed a respectful letter telling the bishops that the bodies of the students, who were being profaned and tortured in prisons, and not the temple of stone, were the temple of the Holy Spirit. But the most essential part of the letter was that in which the bishops were told that the people of Nicaragua had chosen the path of struggle for justice and that they, the pastors, instead of placing themselves at the head of that people, stood aside and condemned it. Henceforth Christians would be present in all the phases of the popular struggle.

In my talks before Christian groups I would say to them: Latin America is marching toward its transformation. Revolution would soon come to Nicaragua. It was important to be aware that the revolution would be made with the Christians, without the Christians, despite the Christians, or against the Christians. So many years later, people throughout the country have reminded me of that statement.

I knew how important it was that the Church should appear to have a role in this process, that our young people could see that the Church had a program of justice for the exploited; paradoxically, the problem of unity between Christians and revolutionaries did not arise from the latter, but from the Christians. I personally knew the founder of the FSLN, Commander Jose Carlos Fonseca Amador (assassinated in 1976), and knew his receptive attitude and desire for unity with the Christians. I studied the statutes of the FSLN, written by him in 1969, in which he speaks of religious liberty and support for the priests who work for the people. In 1970 I had an interview with Commander Jose Turcios, member of the national directorate of the FSLN (assassinated in 1973). He said to me on that occasion: "What matters is not that you believe there is another life after death and I don't; the basic question is whether we can work together for the construction of a new society."

The Christian grass-roots communities and the young Christians, above all, played an ever larger role in that slow and dangerous march toward liberation. Faith moved thousands of Nicaraguans who committed themselves to that struggle in a natural, spontaneous way. They understood that by fighting for justice and the poor they were following God's cause. Thanks to them, the Nicaraguan Revolution was made with the Christians.

When, in 1973, Commander Eduardo Contreras (assassinated in 1976) asked me to accept an official role in the work of the FSLN, I instantly accepted, remembering the parable of the Good Samaritan, for it seemed obvious that I should not act like that priest and that Levite who went around the injured man. The Samaritans of Nicaragua asked me to help cure our wounded people and, given my Christian faith, I could give only one answer: commitment. I continued to work with students, directing Bible Study Classes, conducting spiritual exercises, and retaining my chair of philosophy at the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN), but at the same time collaborated secretly with the FSLN in the struggle for national liberation.

The cry of the oppressed and the realities of my country were forcing me to discover other aspects of my priestly ministry. There was no break with the priesthood; I merely accented more and more its prophetic aspect. It was an option fully compatible with the different aspects of the priesthood, an option based not so much on the elements of the ministry according to the Old Testament as on the prophetic aspects proclaimed by Jesus in the New. My work was daily becoming more dangerous, since the greater part of my revolutionary activities were public. Somoza's authorities expelled me in 1970 from the National Autonomous University. In 1973 I participated actively in forming the Christian Revolutionary Movement (MCR), which formed so many cadres and leaders for the FSLN. The revolutionary leaders sent me to Washington in 1976 to denounce the crimes and violations of human rights by the dictator Somoza before the United States Congress. On my return to Nicaragua the president of the Nicaraguan Senate proposed that I be declared a traitor to my country. At that time we founded the Nicaraguan Commission on Human Rights.

A thousand details of the struggles, fears, and hopes of the priests who participated in those years of struggle must remain untold for lack of space. Always inspired by our faith, but sometimes wandering in the dark, wishing to see and follow the Lord of History, when all we saw were crimes and the dictator's smiling face as he emerged victorious from every crisis. Sometimes our hopes faded. Often I was afraid, very much afraid, especially of being tortured. Despite the order of arrest issued against us, we entered Nicaragua July 4, 1978. Before two months had gone by, it became necessary to shift completely to underground work. Then came the September insurrection and the next year the final

offensive which led to the triumph of July 19, 1979, won through the heroic sacrifices of 50,000 of my compatriots. We were not the only priests who contributed something to the struggle. Other priests aided the cause by preaching from their pulpits, while many religious men and women collaborated in the most varied ways with the guerrillas. Thousands of Christians fought from every trench and barricade in the fields and cities of Nicaragua. The bishops finally condemned in some of their writings the dictator's violations of human rights and on various occasions took firm positions against Somoza. But all this was accompanied by great contradictions; and right down to the day of victory the bishops wrote not a word in favor of the struggle of the FSLN. What was worse, they often condemned the struggle of the people when they condemned in their writings "violence no matter whence it comes," which placed on the same level the unjust violence of the oppressor and the just, legitimate violence of the oppressed people. Not until one week before the final offensive did the bishops justify the popular insurrection.

It is important for me to make clear that at no time were my decisions the result of a crisis of my priestly condition; they were the result of the spiritual journey of a priest who gradually discovered the prophetic dimension of his priesthood and the demands they imposed in a country like ours. Let me add that all the steps I took in those years were made in consultation with and had the approval of my spiritual superiors and had the approval of my order.

I am profoundly convinced that the Nicaraguan people were the motor that made possible my advance. My only merit was to place myself among them and let myself be pushed forward.

Democracy, Civil War, and Neoliberalism

The 1980s saw the end of military dictatorships in the Southern Cone and a transition toward democracy. Each case differed according to its political context. In Argentina, democracy arrived abruptly, as a result of the catastrophic military defeat against Great Britain during the Malvinas (Falklands) War in 1982. In Uruguay, negotiations between the military and the opposition resulted in a much longer process, one that was fully accomplished only in 1989. In Chile, the deep division between groups opposed to Pinochet frustrated successive attempts to put an end to the military regime until 1989, when a slow transition was negotiated that included coexistence between representatives of the old and new regimes. In Brazil, democracy returned through indirect elections, in a gradual process that was controlled by the military, which maintained considerable influence until 1988. The dominant trend in the region was contagious, however, as progress in one country increased pressure in another. Political leaders and public opinion closely followed events in neighboring countries. Meanwhile, everyone kept an eye on Spain, where the dictator Francisco Franco's death in 1975 had generated momentum toward democracy, and where Social-Democratic President Felipe González (in power 1982–1996) was seen as a model of political maturity and economic modernization.

As democratic elections were celebrated and freedom of expression was regained, civil society experienced a sudden renaissance: increased participation in local politics, expansion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) devoted

to specific social causes, proliferation of new instances of grassroots debate, and so on. Intellectual and artistic life was invigorated by the return of thousands of political exiles. Some of the leading themes of public debate were the causes of dictatorship, the long-term chances of democracy, and the human-rights violations of the 1970s. Again, each country differed in its approach to these issues, according to the relative power of the military in each case: in Argentina, public trials of the *Juntas*; in Chile and Brazil, a more cautious examination of repressive "excesses" without penal implications.

The newly gained institutional stability of Latin American governments in the 1980s and 1990s was soon tested by various economic crises. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with the support of the United States, demanded the implementation of reforms (major cuts in government spending, the opening of national economies to international trade, privatization of public services, and drastic austerity measures designed to restore solvency to the region's debt-ridden national economies) as conditions for providing much-needed loans. These demands were by and large accepted by most governments, effectively ratifying neoliberalism as a general economic trend. Chile was the exception, as the neoliberal trend had begun there in the 1970s under the military regime. The global boom of the early 1990s held out hope that the neoliberal project would indeed foster economic development in the region—the near collapse of the Mexican economy in 1994 notwithstanding.

Despite the trend toward democracy, these decades also saw the return of extreme violence in several regions. In El Salvador, Colombia, and Peru, for example, war (either declared or undeclared) between left-wing insurgencies and US-supported national armed forces escalated to unprecedented levels, fueled by connections between guerrillas and the thriving illegal drug economy. Vulnerable civil populations were held hostage to these conflicts, resulting in atrocious human-rights violations and tens of thousands of deaths.

In countries where political strife had diminished (Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico), another form of violence threatened the consolidation of democratic life. The marginalization of great portions of the population from the formal economic system, the availability of cheap weapons, and the growth of the illegal drug trade made life more violent, especially in major urban areas. As homicide statistics increased, public opinion gradually lost confidence in the power of institutions to deal with everyday violence. Fear of crime began to tear the fabric of urban life, and remains one of the main challenges to democracy in the region.

countries. Disparities between countries showed some tendency to increase: the most pronounced improvements occurred in countries with better initial distributions (such as Uruguay and Jamaica), while some with poor initial distributions (like Brazil, Guatemala, and Panama) became even worse.

Since changes in distribution were combined with rates of economic growth that were also unequal, the incidence of poverty changed in very different ways between some countries and others. In seven countries where poverty had increased in the second half of the eighties, the situation improved in the first half of the nineties. Only three countries managed to reduce poverty in the second half of the eighties (Chile, Colombia, Jamaica) and those three made further advances in the next five years. In the Bahamas, Honduras, and Mexico, the incidence of poverty increased in both periods.

In sum, although the nineties have not seen a period of widespread increase of inequality and poverty, the deteriorating trends of the previous decade have barely been halted, without further progress. Nonetheless, as in other aspects of economic performance, the trend of these variables has been uneven from one country to another.

Overall Performance Unsatisfactory

In short, the region's economic performance has improved during this decade, but it is far from satisfactory. Growth had rebounded, but it has not returned to the levels of the past, nor is it comparable to that of the rapidly developing Asian economies. Unemployment has risen and real wages have only partially recovered from the decline of the eighties. The stability of the macroeconomic environment has improved in various respects, thanks to the external situation and to domestic policies, but the volatility of growth remains higher than it is elsewhere in the world. The trends toward worsening distribution and an increase of poverty unleashed with the debt crisis have halted in the nineties, but no new advances have been made. In each of these areas, however, differences between countries are striking, which suggests that simplistic interpretations of the effects of economic reforms are incomplete.

2. DEATH OF THE "MEXICAN ECONOMIC MIRACLE"

The Mexican neoliberal program of privatization and trade liberalization was started by President Miguel de la Madrid (1982–1988) and much consolidated

Emilio Pradilla Cobos, "Zedillo sabe cómo hacerlo" (Primera de dos partes), *La Jornada*, México, January 3 and 9, 1995. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

during the administrations of Carlos Salinas (1988–1994) and Ernesto Zedillo (1994–2000). Capped by ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), it gave rise to a hectic financial boom as foreign investors rushed in to take advantage of the sale of Mexico's state companies and the speculative opportunities it presented. Although Salinas's measures were initially quite successful in helping a cross-section of the population, the boom mainly benefited foreign bankers, multinationals, and their native allies (by 1994, Mexico had twenty-four listed billionaires, just behind the United States, Japan, and Germany). In the long term, it did not promote sustainable economic development and was in fact detrimental to Mexican national industry. It failed to alleviate the plight of the 13 million to 18 million Mexicans who live in what the United Nations calls "extreme poverty." The debt and monetary crisis of December 1994 plunged Mexico into a deep depression. The Mexican collapse flashed a red light to other Latin American countries with immense foreign debt and economic programs largely based on volatile foreign investment. The following selection analyzes the causes of the disaster and puts the blame squarely on the neoliberal structural adjustment policies of Mexico's PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional, Institutional Revolutionary Party) leadership.

The [Carlos] Salinas government, of which Ernesto Zedillo formed a part, offered us "a happy and prosperous future" based on a neoliberal economic reform: complete freedom of foreign trade and NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement], privatization of state companies in the fields of infrastructure and services, unrestricted foreign investment, a struggle against inflation, strict control of wages and public spending, and the antipoverty program of PRONASOL. [Eds: The National Solidarity Program (PRONASOL), initiated by the Salinas administration, accounted by 1991 for 35 percent of the government's non-debt spending. Ostensibly designed to assist Mexico's poorest classes, it also served PRI's electoral ends by targeting selected communities to receive supplies and equipment for local development projects.] In his election campaign, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas stressed the continuing crisis, the grave trade deficit, the destruction of our economic base, the speculative character of the foreign capital invested in the stock market and its volatility, the inexorable disappearance of our foreign exchange reserves, and the imminence of devaluation. During 1994, Salinas, PRI, and Zedillo denied these facts, hid from the Mexican people the grave economic reality, aggravated it by the multimillion squandering of their election campaign, and retained power by means of lies and fraud. It took only three weeks of Zedillo's government to prove that the neoliberal economic policy was not viable and for the promised "growth with stability" to fade away, making inevitable a massive (over fifty percent) devaluation of the peso....

The government has concealed the structural reasons for the permanent economic crisis because they form part of the neoliberal project that Prita [PRI] governments have applied since 1983. The total, sudden, and uncontrolled opening up of the Mexican market has resulted in an accelerated growth of the trade deficit, due to an avalanche of imports much greater than the increase in exports. This deficit had to be covered at all costs by the indiscriminate entry of foreign capital and by contracting new foreign debts. The foreign debt has not ceased to grow, with the result that a large part of the available foreign exchange has to be devoted to the service of the debt. Today, with the *peso's* devaluation, a very substantial portion of the gross domestic product is committed to serving the debt. The uncontrolled influx of foreign capital has two objectives. One is speculation on the stock exchange. This speculative capital does not increase the productive base, is highly volatile, and flees at the least sign of a fall in the profit rate. The other objective is control of the industrial, commercial, financial, and service sectors, which send their profits abroad in dollars, without fertilizing the national economy. The destruction of the productive base of small and medium-sized agricultural, industrial, and commercial enterprises that cannot survive international competition or modernize leaves the Mexican consumer dependent on foreign goods. Mexico's almost total technological dependence, due to the absence of a local sector producing capital goods or engaged in research and development, is deepened by the drive to modernize at all cost.

We do not enjoy economic sovereignty; today the economy's direction is determined by a handful of great national and foreign capitalists and their speculative activities on the stock exchange and the money market. Their conservatism is such that they give unconditional support to the ruling party, demand more thorough application of the neoliberal model, and lament that the government does not have absolute control of the political and economic situation, but their own actions are harmful to the nation's economic and social stability. On December 29, Zedillo partially recognized these facts but not their causes or the responsible parties; consequently they remain without a solution.

Some PRI legislators who form part of the state apparatus and its high bureaucracy claim that the former government, not the present one, is responsible for the devaluation and its costs. Another smoke screen. The key figures in the present government were distinguished members of the Salinas camp and are committed to the neoliberal policy, whose continuity they proclaimed to the world. Salinas and Zedillo assured us that the macroeconomic adjustment had been successfully completed and it only remained to bring to fruition its "benefits" on the microeconomic level and achieve "well-being for the Mexican family." Today it is clear that the first assurance was a lie, and the second was campaign demagogic to win the elections. In the next six years we will have to pay the costs of

their fiasco and bear the new lies with which they will try to cover up that fiasco, looking to the elections of 1997 and 2000. No doubt remains: Zedillo knows how to get things done. [Eds: This is a sarcastic reference to Zedillo's campaign slogan.]

Who are the winners and losers by the fiasco of the neoliberal economic policy of Salinas and Zedillo, made evident by the recent massive devaluation?

The winners, if such there be, are the great national and foreign capitalists, the money barons—the international financial speculators, who consumed the Mexican foreign exchange reserves used to prop up the stock market and the money market and to guarantee the repatriation of their capital when the crisis was imminent, and who have now returned to buy up at bargain prices the shares of the remaining Mexican companies. The great Mexican-American commercial enterprises, which are hiding and marking up their imported and domestic goods. The moneymen who speculate with foreign exchange. In a word, the handful of beneficiaries of the past and present neoliberal policy.

The losers are the losers of yesteryear. The small and medium-size agricultural, industrial, commercial, and service enterprises whose market has disappeared as a result of unequal competition with the monopolies and imported merchandise or as a result of the recurring and now aggravated collapse of the domestic market. The enterprises asphyxiated by debts in dollars or pesos—borrowed at high rates of interest, with high bank charges—that have come due, enterprises now menaced by the devaluation and the rise of interest rates. The entrepreneurs who lack liquidity, who cannot replace their equipment or modernize because of the high cost of imported machinery and equipment and who cannot obtain it in the domestic market because of the stagnation of the local capital goods industry.

Hardest hit are the wage earners on all levels, suffering from two decades of wage ceilings and the decline of their real income, and now obliged by a pact between government and employers to accept a ten percent wage increase that only hours later was nullified by a devaluation, decreed by the same government, whose inflationary impact cannot be foretold. Other losers are the new unemployed and the workers in the "informal" sector, who will have fewer clients for their subsistence activities. Will the workers silently accept this new and violent expropriation of their means of subsistence? Will they continue to submit to the iron control of a trade union bureaucracy fused with capital and its authoritarian state? Other losers will be the millions of debtors to banks and credit cards who believed the claims of stability, who went into debt and now must pay at exchange and interest rates much higher than when they contracted their debts. The spoliation of the majority of Mexicans in 1982 is being repeated; then they assured us that thanks to neoliberalism it could not happen again.

Ahead lie new threats. In the field of politics, the threat of a hardening of authoritarianism in Chiapas, Tabasco, Veracruz, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and the other impoverished and oppressed rural and urban areas whose just demands for justice, democracy, and development may be stifled with repressive violence: The bully boys of the economic and political elite have tried to convince themselves and everybody else that the problems of the economy and the nation stem from "nonconformity." They will make a great mistake to think that all of Mexican society accepts this lie and that they have the support and justification they need to strike an exemplary blow. We must show them that they are wrong, that Mexicans yearn for peace with justice and dignity and will not accept this false solution.

In the field of economics, the PRI government's policy, delineated by Zedillo on December 29, will once again, in the name of "fighting inflation," tighten the screw of wage austerity and public spending in order to transfer all the costs of the crisis to the workers and taxpayers. He spoke of unspecified fiscal measures that will surely affect the welfare of the broad masses and expand the privatization of state companies (the state oil monopoly, Pemex, the state electricity company, and the state railroads may be among them, since very few are left), the infrastructures (roads, transport, communication), and services (Social Security, schools and universities, etc.) in order to cover the approaching fiscal deficit. These measures were foreshadowed in Zedillo's electoral campaign. The national patrimony, constructed with the taxes of all Mexicans, will continue to be auctioned off to the highest foreign or national bidders, transferred for their individual benefit, while we the taxpayers will continue to pay the enormous sumptuary expenses of the bureaucracy and the costs of the crisis of their policy. At the same time we will have to pay twice for public services, a just and lawful payment to the treasury and another to the private entrepreneurs. One more blow to the national sovereignty and the pockets of Mexicans.

Zedillo said nothing about modifying the neoliberal policy or about a new social policy, or about attacking the structural causes of this new crisis of Mexican capitalism; he spoke of deepening the policy, of purely conjunctural adjustments and more sacrifices for Mexicans. He fired the Secretary of the Treasury, made a scapegoat, but the nature of the government was unchanged. Zedillo's electoral promise of "well-being for the Mexican family" (whose family?) revealed its demagogic character only three weeks after he took office. "Zedillo knows how to get things done"; he learned from his neoliberal teachers in the United States and got his practice in Salinas's government. Because of the characteristics of the Mexican government, we will have to stand six whole years [the length of a Mexican president's term in office] of this political and economic drama. For us there does not exist the possibility, which exists in truly democratic countries, of a change of government.

Globalization and Its Discontents

Two decades have elapsed since a tidal wave of neoliberal economic reforms swept over Latin America in the 1990s. The extent and intensity of the process—privatization of public companies, dismantling of state controls, and a resigned acceptance of the social costs of economic modernization—led many observers to conclude that the region had given up its long-standing fondness for state intervention (and organized social protest) and was entering the “global era” eager to embrace neoliberal recipes for economic growth. The new century, however, reveals a very different Latin America, in which new economic agendas, political identities, and forms of social activism have emerged from the intersection of global trends and local realities.

Perhaps the most visible new direction involves electoral politics. With a few exceptions (for example, Mexico’s controversial 2006 election), Latin American elections have suggested a turning of the ideological tide to the left—the “Three Lefts,” as Ignacio Walker calls them in his essay (see Excerpt 3 below). This ideological shift has produced a new generation of political leaders (and revived a few icons of past social struggles) along with an unprecedented level of political representation for socially marginalized groups. As recently as fifteen years ago, few observers would have predicted that a union leader (Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in Brazil), three women (Michelle Bachelet in Chile, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner in Argentina, and Dilma Rousseff in Brazil), an indigenous activist (Evo Morales in Bolivia), and a radical Roman Catholic bishop (Fernando Lugo in Paraguay) would ever become president of their respective countries.

This political left turn occurred in an economic context that seemed unusually favorable for the region. Increasing global demand for agricultural products

coupled with a worldwide energy crisis that has brought the prices of oil and gas to record levels benefited countries like Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. The upward trend in commodity prices is not expected to change, at least in the short term, and most economic analysts point to new opportunities for Latin America to increase its presence in world markets—even if this signals a return to the region's traditional role as producer of primary (non-industrialized) goods. Moreover, these optimistic predictions seem to hold for the whole region. Studies performed in 2007 by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) show steady economic growth for eighteen countries in the region, its strongest performance since the early 1970s. Some analysts have even begun to talk about a Latin American economic boom.

Economic optimism has led to new expectations, including reduced unemployment, increased social inclusion, and better redistribution of wealth. Although employment figures have risen, statistical measures hide the precarious nature of most new jobs. And economic growth inevitably generates new occasions for social conflict as traditional unions regain negotiating power and labor activism takes advantage of new modes of social protest.

Access to advanced communications technologies has made it possible for historically marginalized groups to express their dissent in new ways. A striking example of the intersection between global trends (technological and ideological) and local issues is the expanded opportunity for political expression now available to indigenous societies in the Andean region and Central America. In association with local, national, and international non-governmental organizations and environmental activists, many indigenous communities are now making their case for cultural, economic, and environmental rights to a much wider audience. In some cases, separatist movements have developed that threaten the very principle of the nation-state. The increasingly popular notion of "pluri-national state," in particular, reflects the desire of indigenous peoples to regain control over their land and its natural resources. For example, in Bolivia ethnic separatism (indigenous and nonindigenous) has coincided with economic interests to produce separatist movements that threaten the administration of the region's first indigenous president.

Another major development has been the enacting of progressive legislation on sexual rights in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, and Mexico, including same-sex marriage, protection of gender identity, and antidiscrimination measures. Due to the region's strong Catholic tradition and well-known conservatism regarding gender roles, this trend would have been unimaginable not long ago. Although it clearly reflects the influence of major global campaigns, the generally positive and supportive response is the result of other developments as well: the successful reformulation of sexual rights into the more

familiar language of human rights, the use of new networking technologies by gay-rights organizations, the initiative shown by political leaders of the left and the modern ("liberal") right, and a wider trend of expansion of social rights in consolidated democracies.

Even with steady macroeconomic growth, the challenges faced by democratically elected governments are daunting. Indeed, translating the advantages of economic renaissance into improvements in governmental institutions and citizens' quality of life is far from easy, as exemplified in the problem of rising urban crime rates, one of the main threats to democracy in Latin America. Closely related to this problem is the encroachment of illegal drug economies and drug power within national territories, a major challenge to state sovereignty and a terrifying source of violence.

Coming years will demonstrate whether or not Latin American societies can take advantage of the region's role in the new global economy. No doubt the future will also reveal new examples of creative adaptation to the new cultural and political challenges of globalization. And it will also tell us whether or not these new opportunities can work to counteract a long history of social inequality and exclusion.

1. LULA SPEAKS OUT

As one economic crisis followed another in Latin America, the relative complacency of the late 1990s gave way to a growing distrust of the neoliberal economic policies demanded by international lenders like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, with the support of major economic players like the United States, the European Union, and Japan. In 2002 a former autoworker and labor organizer, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, was elected president of Brazil, just a few months after the Argentine economy nearly collapsed. The election had profound repercussions throughout the region, especially in Brazil. The popular appeal of Lula's critique of neoliberal economics made him a logical spokesperson for the interests of marginalized peoples and nations throughout the world. Moreover, his political influence in Latin America's largest economy ensured that the developed countries would listen. In this 2003 speech to the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, Lula lays out an ambitious agenda for Brazil, Latin America, and the world.

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Address to the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, January 26, 2003.

2. COMMUNIQUÉ FROM SUBCOMANDANTE MARCOS

Disgust with the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement coupled with constitutional changes that ended land reform in Mexico produced one of the most innovative and durable resistance movements in Latin America. Taking their name from the Mexican revolutionary hero most closely associated with land reform and indigenous rights, the self-styled Zapatistas launched a surprise attack on January 1, 1994, that took over a sizeable portion of the southern state of Chiapas, including several major towns. Fearful of appearing too repressive at a delicate international political moment, the Mexican government entered into talks with the rebels. With the government unable and/or unwilling to address Zapatista demands, these on-again, off-again talks have continued (or not). In this communiqué from May 1994, the Zapatistas' charismatic spokesperson, Subcomandante Marcos, demonstrates a mastery of nationalist symbols—in this case a retelling of the Maya origin myth from the Popol Vuh—that has come to characterize the movement. Carried out in part over the Internet, Marcos's battle over the meaning of nationalist symbols helped undermine the legitimacy of Mexico's ruling party and probably contributed to its defeat in the 2000 presidential election. The wise Native American elder, Old Antonio, is a stock character in Marcos's communiqués and represents the voice of what one Mexican anthropologist has called "Méjico profundo," or deep Mexico.

We are totally surrounded. We have been "heroically" resisting the avalanche of reactions to the event of May 15. Three days ago, helicopters joined the airplanes that watch us from overhead. The cooks complain that there won't be enough pots to cook all the food we will need if they fall at the same time. The superintendent argues that there is enough firewood to have a barbecue, and that we should invite some Argentine journalist to it because the Argentines know how to barbecue. I think about it, it's useless: The best Argentines are guerrillas (e.g., Che), or poets (e.g., Juan Gelman), or writers (e.g., Borges), or artists (e.g., Maradona), or chroniclers (e.g., Cortázar). There aren't any famous Argentine barbecueurs. Some ingenious person proposes that we wait for the improbable hamburgers from the University Student Council. Yesterday we ate radio XEOCH's control console and microphones. They had a rancid taste, like something rotten. The

Subcomandante Marcos, "Communiqué About the End of the Consultations," May 28, 1994. *Zapatistas! Documents of the New Mexican Revolution*. Autonomedia (Brooklyn), 1994. The full text is available at <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/Zapatistas/index.html>.

medics are giving out lists of jokes instead of painkillers. They say that laughter is also a cure. The other day I surprised Tacho and Moi as they were crying... of laughter. "Why are you laughing?" I asked. They couldn't answer because their laughter had left them short of breath. A medic explained, "It is because they have bad headaches." Day 136 of the military blockade. Sigh.

To top it all off, Toñita asks me to tell a story. I tell her a story as it was told to me by old Antonio, the father of Antonio that appears in "Chiapas: The Southwest in Two Winds, a Storm and a Prophecy":

In the time before the world came into being, the gods came together and decided to create the world and to create men and women. They thought to make the first people very beautiful and very strong. So they made the first people of gold, and the gods were very content because these people were strong and shining. Then the gods realized that the golden people never moved; they never walked or worked because they were so heavy. So the gods came together again in order to figure out a way to solve the problem. They decided to make another group of people and they decided to make this group of people of wood. The wooden people worked and walked and the gods were again content. Then the gods realized that the golden people were forcing the wooden people to work for them and carry things for them. The gods realized that they had made a mistake, and in order to remedy the mistake, they decided to make people of corn, a good people, a true people. Then the gods went to sleep and they left the corn people to find a solution to the problem. The corn people used the true tongue to reach an agreement among themselves, and they went to the mountains in order to find a path for people....

Old Antonio told me that the golden people were the rich, the white-skinned ones, and the wooden people were the poor, the brown-skinned ones, who forever work for the rich. They are both waiting for the arrival of the corn people. The rich fear their arrival and the poor hope for it. I asked old Antonio what color the skin of the corn people was, and he showed me several types of corn with different colors. He told me that nobody knew exactly, because the corn people don't have faces....

Old Antonio has died. I met him 10 years ago in a community deep in the jungle. He smoked like nobody else I knew, and when he was out of cigarettes he would ask me for some tobacco and would make more cigarettes. He viewed my pipe with curiosity, but the one time I tried to loan it to him he showed me the cigarette in his hand, telling me without words that he preferred his own method of smoking. Two years ago, in 1992, I was travelling through the communities attending meetings to decide whether or not we should go to war, and eventually

I arrived at the village where old Antonio lived. While the community was discussing whether or not to go to war, old Antonio took me by the arm and led me to the river, about 100 meters from the center of the village. It was May and the river was green. Old Antonio sat on a tree trunk and didn't say anything. After a little while he spoke, "Do you see? Everything is clear and calm. It appears that nothing will happen." . . . "Hmmm," I answered, knowing that he wasn't asking me to answer yes or no. Then he pointed out to me the top of the nearest mountain. The clouds lay gray upon the summit, and the lightning was illuminating the diffuse blue of the hills. It was a powerful storm, but it seemed so far away and inoffensive that old Antonio made a cigarette and looked uselessly around for a lighter that he knew he didn't have. I offered my lighter. "When everything is calm here below, there is a strong storm in the mountains," he said after inhaling. "The mountain streams run strongly and flow toward the riverbed. During the rainy season this river becomes fierce, like a whip, like an earthquake. Its power doesn't come from the rain that falls on its banks, but from the mountain streams that flow down to feed it. By destroying, the river reconstructs the land. Its waters will become corn, beans, and bread on our tables here in the jungle.

"Our struggle is the same," the older Antonio told me. "It was born in the mountains, but its effects won't be seen until it arrives here below." He responded to my question about whether he believed the time had come for war by saying, "Now is the time for the river to change color. . . ." Old Antonio became quiet and supported himself on my shoulder. We returned to the village slowly. He said to me, "You, the Army, are the mountain streams and we are the river. You must descend now." . . . The silence continued and we arrived at his shack as it was growing dark. The younger Antonio returned with the official result of the meeting, and announcement that read, more or less:

We, the men, women, and children of this village met in the community's school in order to see if we believed in our hearts that it is time to go to war for our freedom. We divided ourselves into three groups, one of men, one of women, and one of children to discuss the matter. Later, we came together again and it was seen that the majority believed that it was time to go to war because Mexico is being sold to foreigners and the people are always hungry. Twelve men, twenty-three women and eight children were in favor of beginning the war and have signed this announcement.

I left the village in the early morning hours. Old Antonio wasn't around; he had already gone to the river.

Two months ago I saw old Antonio again. He didn't say anything when he saw me and I sat and began to shuck corn with him. "The river rose," he said to

me after a bit. "Yes," I answered. I explained to the younger Antonio what was happening with the consultations and I gave him the documents that outlined our demands and the government's response. We spoke of what had happened in Ocosingo during the offensive, and once again I left the village in the early morning hours. Old Antonio was waiting for me at a turn in the road. I stopped alongside him and lowered my backpack to look for some tobacco to offer him. "Not now," he said to me as he pushed away the bag of tobacco that I was offering him. He put his arm around me and led me to the foot of a tree. "Do you remember what I told you about the streams and the river?" he asked me. "Yes," I responded, whispering as he had when he had asked me the question. "There is something I didn't tell you," he added, looking at his bare feet. I answered with silence. "The streams . . ." He was stopped by a cough that wracked his entire body. He took a breath and continued, "the streams, when they descend . . ." Once again he was stopped by a cough and I went for a medic. Old Antonio turned down the help of the old *compañero* [comrade] with the Red Cross. The medic looked at me and I made a sign that he should leave. Old Antonio waited until the medic left and then, in the twilight of the dawn, he continued, "The streams . . . when they descend . . . have no way of returning, . . . except beneath the ground." He embraced me rapidly and left. I stayed there watching as he walked away, and as he disappeared in the distance. I lit my pipe and picked up my backpack. As I mounted my horse I thought about what had just occurred. I don't know why, it was very dark, but it seemed that old Antonio was crying.

I just received a letter from the younger Antonio with his village's response to the government's proposals. He also wrote me that old Antonio had become very ill and that he had died that night. He didn't want anyone to tell me that he was dying. The younger Antonio wrote me that when they insisted that I be told, old Antonio said, "No, I have already told him what I had to tell him. Leave him alone, he has much work to do."

When I finished the story that Antonio had told me, six-year-old Toñita solemnly told me that yes, she loves me, but that from now on she won't kiss me because "it itches." Rolando says that when Toñita has to go to the medic's area, she asks if the Sup is there. If she is told that I'm there she doesn't go. "Because the Sup only wants kisses and he itches," says the inevitable logic of a six year old, which, on this side of the stream, we call "Toñita."

The first rains have begun here. We thought that we should have to wait for the arrival of the anti-riot water cannons in order to have water.

Ana María says that the rain comes from the clouds that are fighting on top of the mountains. They do it this way so that men and women will not see their disputes. On the summits of the mountains, the clouds fight their ferocious battles with what we call lightning. Armed with infinity, the clouds fight for the

privilege of dying and becoming rain to feed the land. We Zapatistas are similar to the clouds, without faces, without names, without any payment. Like the clouds we fight for the privilege of becoming a seed for the land.

*All right. Health and a raincoat
(for the rains and the riots),
From the mountains of the
Mexican Southeast,
Subcommander Marcos
May 1994*

P.S.: The majority disguised as the untolerated minority. About all of this whether Marcos is homosexual: Marcos is gay in San Francisco, a black person from South Africa, Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Isidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel, an indigenous person in the streets of San Cristóbal, a gang-member in Neza, a rocker on campus, a Jew in Germany, an ombudsman in the Department of Defense, a feminist in a political party, a communist in the post-Cold War period, a prisoner in Cintalapa, a pacifist in Bosnia, a Mapuche in the Andes, a teacher in the National Confederation of Education, an artist without a gallery or a portfolio, a housewife in any neighborhood in any city in any part of Mexico on a Saturday night, a guerrilla in Mexico at the end of the twentieth century, a striker in the CTM, a sexist in the feminist movement, a woman alone in a Metro station at 10 p.m., a retired person standing around in the Zócalo, a *campesino* without land, an underground editor, an unemployed worker, a doctor with no office, a nonconformist student, a dissident against neoliberalism, a writer without books or readers, and a Zapatista in the Mexican Southeast. In other words, Marcos is a human being in this world. Marcos is every untolerated, oppressed, exploited minority that is resisting and saying, "Enough!" He is every minority who is now beginning to speak and every majority that must shut up and listen. He is every untolerated group searching for a way to speak, their way to speak. Everything that makes power and the good consciences of those in power uncomfortable—this is Marcos.

3. THE THREE LEFTS OF LATIN AMERICA

Generalizing about Latin American politics has never been easy—although scholars and policymakers seem to have difficulty resisting the temptation. For

Mejía, a typical representative of populism); Martín Torrijos in Panama; Oscar Arias in Costa Rica; and even Alan García in Peru, the populist leader of the 1980s who rules very differently now. More recently in Guatemala—and contrary to pre-election polls—Alvaro Colom, the representative of a moderate, social-democratic, center-left party, defeated a hardliner (“mano dura”), former general Otto Pérez, to win the presidency in a country where five thousand persons had been killed in political violence in the previous year. It is too early to say whether Cristina Fernández and “Kirchnerism,” in this second administration, will move in the direction of social democracy, especially considering the background of Peronist political culture in Argentina. (We should also remember that most of the Caribbean countries are “labor” or social democratic.) . . .

A less visible, less strident, and less heroic, but perhaps more successful way forward is opening in Latin America. The program of the new social democratic left seeks to move ahead simultaneously in the direction of political democracy, economic growth, and social equity. It represents a nonpopulist response to the neoliberal economic politics of the 1990s. This path may be less epic than the others that have been tried in the waves of authoritarianism and democracy that have characterized the political history of Latin America, and it may be a long and sometimes tortuous one, but at least it guarantees that it will be the people, democratic citizens, through deliberation, negotiation, compromise, and consensus-building, who will have the final say in the public realm.

4. THE NEW POPULISM

Elected president of Bolivia in January 2006, Evo Morales is the first indigenous (Aymara) president in the history of this multicultural indigenous nation. The leader of the coca grower's union, Morales has long been involved in the struggle to protect the right to grow this traditional Aymara and Quechua crop, resisting US pressure to eradicate it—a struggle that made him popular but also led to political persecution and confinement. As the leader of MAS (Movimiento al Socialismo), Morales promised to reestablish state control over Bolivia's important energy reserves. In addition to strengthening ties with Venezuela and Cuba, he fulfilled this promise shortly after taking power. In this interview, ten months into his tenure as president, Morales describes (for an international audience) what his leadership means for Bolivian indigenous peoples, as he defends their legal and cultural integration in the national

community. Inviting capitalist investors to be partners rather than bosses, he assesses the many challenges facing his nationalistic economic agenda and calls for the respect and goodwill of US policies in the region.

Q: Why did you bring a coca leaf to the United Nations?

A: First of all, thanks very much for the invitation to speak with you today. It's the first time I've been in these lands, the United States. And as the coca leaf has been permanently accused of being a drug, I brought the leaf to show that coca is not cocaine. The coca leaf is green. It's not white; cocaine is white. So I came to show that the coca leaf is a natural agricultural product that can be beneficial to humanity. That's why I was there at the first ordinary session at the United Nations with a coca leaf. Had it been a drug, cocaine, I would certainly have been detained. We're starting the campaign to bring dignity back to the coca leaf, starting with its international decriminalization.

Q: How is it used for beneficial purposes? Why is it so important to you in Bolivia?

A: The coca leaf is part of culture. Its legal and traditional consumption, which is called the *piccheo* in Bolivia, the *chaccheo* in Peru, *el mambeo* in Colombia, is the traditional chewing of coca. Moreover, this traditional consumption is backed up by scientific research done in universities in Europe and the United States. Four or five years ago, a study came out of Harvard University reporting that it's very nutritious—it's a good source of nutrition, and it recommends not only chewing it, but also eating it. The last study done by the World Health Organization has demonstrated clearly that the coca leaf poses no threat to human health.

And there's also ritual use, including in the Aymara and Quechua cultures, for example, when you ask for someone's hand in marriage, the coca leaf plays an important part in that ritual. We could also talk about a number of pharmaceutical products that come or derive from the coca leaf. The first local anesthetics used in modern medicine were derived from the coca leaf. Up to some five, six, seven years ago, the Agua Exporters del Chapare, in Cochabamba [Morales's region of origin], used to buy coca to be exported for the making of Coca-Cola. And we can think of many industrial products derived from the coca leaf that are beneficial to humanity.

Q: Mr. President, in the United States voters are accustomed to leaders promising much, but when they get into office delivering very little. Since you have become president in Bolivia, you have moved rapidly to make changes. You've cut your own salary. You've raised the minimum wage by 50 percent. What is the message you are trying to send to your own people and to Latin American leaders in general?

A: I never wanted to be a politician. In my country, politicians are seen as liars, thieves, arrogant. In 1997 they tried to get me to run for president. I rejected that idea, even though that brought me problems with my own grassroots organizations—the coca growers of Chapare. I was later obligated to become a member of the lower house of parliament. I didn't want to do that at the time, either. I preferred to be the head of a rat than the tail of a horse. I preferred to be the head of my own union fighting for human rights and social rights, and not getting involved in electoral political processes and wind up not fulfilling promises.

But what I was learning in that period in '95, '96, '97 is that to get involved in politics means taking on the responsibility, a new way of looking at politics as serving the people, because politics means service. Serving the people, and not using the people. And after hearing the broad demands of the indigenous peasant movement and the popular movement, I decided to run for president.

For the last national elections, we had a ten-point program. And of those ten, we've fulfilled six already. In terms of the austerity measures that you mentioned a moment ago, I cut my own salary by more than 50 percent, as we cut [those of] the ministers as well as the members of congress. That money has been redirected to health and education, convinced as I am that being president means serving the people. And we said we were going to do a consultation for a referendum on greater autonomy for the regions, and we've done that. Fifty-eight percent of the population said no to greater autonomy, although it is important to secure more autonomy for the regions and the indigenous communities.

We said we were going to nationalize the gas and oil sector. We did, without expropriating or excluding any of the companies. We said it's important to have partners but not bosses. And we followed this principle. The investor has the right to recoup his investment and make a reasonable profit, but we can't allow for sacking, where only the companies benefit, and not the state. I just came from a meeting with businessmen, and I am quite pleased with their proposals.

The struggle against corruption is a key issue in my country. We're starting that campaign aggressively, starting with members of the executive branch. The judicial branch still is not supportive of this process. And I can talk a lot about the other things we're doing to meet the demands that accumulated over time. For example, the centers for eye treatments and surgery, the literacy work that we're doing.

We've also made advances in terms of providing people with legal documents, something that often indigenous peoples don't have. These are the social problems that my family has experienced. My mother, for example, never had an ID. She didn't know when she was born. There's an anecdote about my father. One day I found his ID, and there was a birthdate on it. I said

to my sister Esther, "Okay, let's have a party. We know what my father's birthday is." She was very happy. She said, "Yes, let's do this birthday party." We said to my father, "We're going to throw a party for you." And he said, "But I don't know what my birthday is." We showed him his ID, and we said, "Here it is. Here's your birthday." And he said very bitterly, "I had to invent that date when I was drafted in the military." My father didn't know when he was born. And when I was in a big political rally in 1999 in the electoral campaign for the municipalities and I asked everybody there to raise their hand, "Who's going to vote?" About two-thirds of the people raised their hands. Another third didn't, and I said, "What's going on here? You're not going to vote for Evo Morales?" And they all said, "We don't have IDs." And one *compañero* came to me almost in tears. He said, "This society thinks I'm only useful for raising my hands or giving assent to something, but I'm not good enough to vote." He was from northern Potosí, from the highlands. He didn't know when he was born. He didn't have a birth certificate. These are the sorts of problems. But with the help of some countries, we're receiving support so we can give people documents to fully incorporate them as citizens....

Q: What is your assessment of President Bush?

A: I hope that we can improve relations with Bush's government. We would like their support in these deep, peaceful, democratic transformations that we're pursuing. We hope that we can count on more systematic support in health programs, but especially that they can accept the structural transformations that the Bolivian people have demanded.

Indigenous cultures are cultures of dialogue and life, not cultures of war. I've said publicly and very respectfully that the United States and other countries should get their troops out of Iraq, because it's not acceptable that the invaded and the invaders continue to die, and especially the innocent. Conflicts should be discussed and debated in places like the United Nations....

The indigenous movement lives in solidarity with fellow humans, and also in harmony with Mother Earth. And we're very worried about global warming that's creating water shortages. In the past we've seen the bodies of water that were up to certain levels are now declining. That means that in a very short time we're going to have very serious problems. Without light, we can live with oil lamps, but without water, we can't live. I was pleased to participate in a forum sponsored by ex-President Clinton yesterday, where a commission is studying these issues of global warming.

Q: I'd like to ask you, in many poor countries around the world, it is said that the most powerful official in the country is the US ambassador. But in your campaign, you actually ran against not just the other opponents, but against the role of the US embassy and the US ambassador in Bolivia. What is the role

that the United States has played historically not only in Bolivia but in Latin America, as far as you're concerned?

A: The arrogance of an ambassador or the arrogance of others, including a president, is always an error. This arrogance creates greater rebellion, greater resistance. In 2002, former US ambassador to Bolivia, Manuel Rocha, said, "Don't vote for Evo Morales." And after that, people came out massively to vote for me. I said he was my best campaign chief. And a number of things were said when I came to the presidency: that international cooperation would be reduced, we would no longer have access to markets, and so on, when in fact I've come to the presidency and we've seen a lot more support from other governments. The US embassy tried to criticize the military high command. I said, "That's not going to be changed. That's a sovereign decision." So in this respect, we have obvious differences, but we want to work out those differences. Even though we're an underdeveloped country, we're a sovereign country, a country with dignity. One of the advantages that we have is that we begin to return dignity to the country. The name Bolivia has been elevated. Our peoples need a strong sense of self-esteem. We want relations with all the countries to be based on mutual respect, relations of complementarity, balance, solidarity, and for now cooperation so that we can ensure the changes we're trying to achieve....

Q: You've mentioned on several occasions your indigenous origins in your movement. Throughout Latin America now, five hundred years after the European conquest, the native peoples of Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia are taking a greater role politically. What is the importance of this movement to Latin America?

A: Those excluded for over five hundred years, exploited, and for a time condemned to extermination, also have the rights of any human being and any full citizen. I mentioned at the United Nations that thirty or forty years ago, my mother didn't have the right to walk through public spaces, on sidewalks, in public plazas. And there are some fascist and racist sectors in Santa Cruz who don't want those people to enter the fairgrounds today. This is a fair of agricultural producers, as well as cattlemen, and it's always been inaugurated by the president. Now they don't want this president, the Aymara president, inaugurating it. So there's this strong feeling of excluded people, discriminated people to unite, not for revenge or to oppress or to subordinate anybody but to recognize we have obligations that our rights be fully respected. The thinking of indigenous peoples is not that of exclusion. I can tell you about the experiences of the Aymara, the Quechua from the highlands and the valleys in Bolivia, of how they welcome people in, not exclude people. This is the sector that's been discriminated against. We've been called everything. We've been

called animals. Manuel Rocha once called me the Andean Taliban. But we fundamentally want our rights to be respected. That's our struggle.

5. CHALLENGING THE NATION-STATE

One of the most potent contemporary challenges to the nation-state in Latin America has come from indigenous rights organizations, especially in Andean and Central American countries with large Native American populations. Native resistance to genocide, domination, and exploitation has a long history that dates back to the conquest era. In recent years, these long-standing grievances have coalesced around issues like territorial sovereignty, control of natural resources, and environmental degradation. In Ecuador, for example, an ongoing, widely publicized lawsuit against oil giant Chevron/Texaco by indigenous peoples from the Amazon region has helped raise political awareness among Native American groups and environmental organizations within Ecuador, throughout Latin America, and around the world. The political and social consequences of indigenous mobilizations like the Chevron lawsuit have been remarkable; protests sparked by Native American concerns and led by indigenous rights groups have even brought down governments in Ecuador and Bolivia. In this declaration from a 2008 international conference on indigenous peoples, plurinational nation-states, and water rights held in Quito, Ecuador, Native American groups from Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Chile, and Argentina voice their demands for a plurinational state in which indigenous cultures are accorded equal respect and indigenous peoples maintain sovereignty over their ancestral homelands, including a share of control over the extraction of natural resources like oil, minerals, and water—resources previously controlled solely by national governments and leased to international corporations like Chevron.

WE CONSIDER:

THAT the impoverished peoples of Latin America have been the object of domination, exploitation, and political, social, economic, and cultural exclusion, while a minority, under the auspices of the monocultural Nation-States, have benefited from the riches of our lands.

THAT the peoples of Latin America are pushing ahead processes of profound change, demonstrating that “another world is possible” and that we are part of and a path towards this other world, a world in which human beings can

Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), “Declaración final,” *Encuentro Internacional: Pueblos Indígenas, Estados Plurinacionales y Derecho al Agua* (Quito, Ecuador, March 14, 2008). Excerpt translated by the editors.