CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CONTEMPORARY CHANGE
SERIES V. LATIN AMERICA, VOLUME 2

CULTURE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Culture, human rights and peace in Central America / edited by George F. McLean, Raul Molina, Timothy Ready.

p.cm (Cultural heritage and contemporary life, Series V, Latin America ; vol. 2)

1. Central America--Political and government--1979- 2. Central America--Civilization--20th century. 3. Politics and literature--Central America--History--20th century. 4. Liberation theology. 5. Human right--Central America--History--20th century.

I. McLean, George F. II. Molina, Raul. III. Ready, Timothy. IV. Series.

F1439.5C85 1989 88-37136 CIP

972.8’053--dc19
ISBN 0-8191-7356 (paper)
ISBN 0-8191-7357-6 (paper)

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INTRODUCTION

GEORGE McLEAN and TIMOTHY READY

After a long and relatively quiet period during which Central America attracted very little attention beyond its borders, it has entered a period of great and urgent tensions. Social, economic and political patterns which had long prevailed are now called into question. The responses to these questions range across the spectrum from revolution to repression, and are accompanied all too frequently by violence in its many guises. Real progress seems ambiguous and elusive. In a situation of change, in which understanding is desperately needed but only extremists claim clarity, a process of disciplined and concerned reflection is a pressing need.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees have fled the region due to threats imposed by extreme poverty, political repression and violence. In the last fifteen years, over 100,000 Central Americans have settled in the city of Washington alone.

In turn, in these days of global interaction, regional unrest does not long remain a matter of indifference to other peoples. Expressing concern primarily about geopolitical considerations, some nations have attempted to influence events in Central America by intervening through political, economic and military means. Even beyond such intended intervention, the normal interchange of commerce and culture by other countries vitally affects patterns of development in Central America. Both within and between nations, such issues have become the basis for multiple engagements, intense concern, and deep division. In order to avoid being destructive and to play a responsible and positive role there is need for balanced and penetrating insight. In the midst of these problems members of the Association of Presidents of the National Universities of Central America (CSUCA) visited their sister universities in North America in the hope of developing a better understanding, and hence a more appropriate response, to their crisis. In preparation for their initiative, George McLean visited each of their Universities. As a response to their visit a mere informational series of lectures did not appear to be enough. It seemed that concerned scholars could go further by pooling their personal competencies in an intensive 10-week interdisciplinary seminar aimed at generating better understanding of the issues as a basis for future interaction. This seminar was sponsored jointly by CSUCA, represented by Raul Molina, and the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP). The work carried out in the seminar is the basis for this volume.

The principal participants were the authors of the several chapters. The contributors wrote from the perspective of various disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, education, political science, economics, philosophy, theology and literature. Seminar participants met weekly in order to form a community of understanding in which a cumulative process of discovery, reflection and insight could take place. As the seminar progressed, the many dimensions of a problematic were progressively unfolded. Participants came primarily from universities in the Washington area. On occasion, they were joined by other specialists: an economist from the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB); a political scientist from the Wilson Center and the Center for Advanced Study at Princeton; two anthropologists from international human rights groups; and a specialist in the methodology of the social sciences from the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. All added new and challenging insights.

Interpretative reports on the pattern of the themes developed in the course of the discussions were drawn up by the Seminar Director, George McLean. They have been included in this

volume after the relevant chapters. The first of these, found after Chapter III, reflects the discussions up to that point. The sequence of the discussions reflects the cumulative character of the engagement of the issues and the deepening of insight. A written interchange between G. McLean and T. Ready regarding the interaction between cultural resources and distorted power relations took place over a number of weeks; it is appended to the report of the discussion after Chapter III. This interchange typifies the struggle progressively to articulate and rearticulate the issues through interdisciplinary dialogue in search of ever better comprehension.

The volume, then, is not simply a collection of disparate essays, but reflects an effort to work and think together in order to develop one's insights in response to those of specialists in other fields. This constituted a true community of learning stemming from a shared deep concern for the peoples of Central America. The organizing concepts, methods, and themes for the volume are set forth in the first chapter, written by George McLean, entitled, "Hermeneutics of Cultural Heritage: Social Critique and Future Construction." McLean raises the question of how the cultural heritage of Central America can serve as a foundation for bringing together conflicting perspectives on Central American culture and society in such manner as to provide a basis for social critique and thereby lead to the enhancement of the dignity of all. In other words, what resources can be utilized from the ennobling cultural traditions which Central Americans share to address the changing realities now emerging?

In Chapter II, Timothy Ready raises the troubling fact that an inequitable distribution of social power, originating in the colonial era and persisting in various forms until the present, lies at the origin of the alternate cultural horizons of the parties now in conflict. He argues that in order to secure peace with justice, material and political inequality must be dealt with so as to arrive at a value consensus based upon principles derived from a common cultural heritage. Only addressing the inequality which leads to the violation of the most basic of human rights will make possible a cultural resolution which can enhance the shared human dignity of Central Americans as they interact in their communities.

James Riley reviews the history of Central America in Chapter III and emphasizes the challenges which they face in developing viable, functioning nation states. The problems of the region are considered to be fundamentally of internal origin, rather than as having been caused by external forces. He suggests that the Mexican development of what could be called a populist authoritarian democracy as a result of its Revolution of 1910, could serve as a model for the smaller Central American states which now face problems similar to those faced by Mexico in the early Twentieth Century.

Paul Peachey discusses in Chapter IV the impact of modernization upon family structure. One common correlate of modernization is that domains of life which were addressed within the realm of the family in traditional societies are now handled in a more impersonal, bureaucratically organized manner in modern societies. How adequate are the institutions organized at the level of the state to address the needs of individuals in the context of their communities? How are families and modern institutions articulated in the various countries of Central America? Peachey raises the question of similarities and differences between the Central American and other regions of the world in the effect of modernization upon family structure.

In Chapter V the contribution of Federico Sanz, an economist from the Interamerican Development Bank, describes the structure and functioning of the economies of Central America in statistical terms. He reviews both the transitory and more permanent features of Central American economies, and assesses their adequacy in addressing fundamental human needs in the areas of health, nutrition and education. He argues that modification of development strategies

and changes in the international trading system will be necessary in order more adequately to address the severe poverty and related human tragedies experienced by the peoples of Central America.

Mario Rojas and Roberto Hozven both address the central theme of the seminar by reviewing the poetry and prose of prominent literary figures. In Chapter VI Rojas discusses the work of Central American writers of liberation, who impress upon the consciousness of their nations and the world the unpublicized drama and tragedies of the oppressed of their countries. He emphasizes that dialogue among the various segments of Central American societies must be the basis for the emergence of a universal sympathy and concern for the well-being of others. Censorship makes the establishment of mutual sympathy and understanding difficult; it contributes to the potential for the perpetration of violent, and dehumanizing acts and policies by whichever segment of society is in power.

Hozven, in Chapter VII, emphasizes the role of the writer as critic of society. Writers such as Rubén Darío and Ernesto Cardenal have contributed penetrating commentary on Nicaraguan society in their respective eras. Both called attention, in an aesthetically forceful manner, to the corruption of communication and of the sociopolitical context in which it occurs. Both write about the challenge of creating authentic cultural discourse where the language of the community has been repressed and perverted.

Hozven draws attention also to the dissemination of repressive power in Central American and other societies by means of the widespread utilization of "arrogant speech." He defines this as speech which attempts to dominate the other through erudite references or by the categorization and subsequent dismissal of what is said by the interlocutor. He cites Darío's call to put the arrogance of speech at a distance in order to hear one's own speech from the viewpoint of the hearer.

Consistent with the hermeneutic method presented by McLean in the opening chapter, Hozven calls attention to how the*method* of the great literary figures of the region can serve as a model to emulate in the search for a just peace. The method is at least as important as the specific message which the writers have communicated. It is, "to move from the production of arrogant speech to its recognition so as to produce the distance which permits knowledge. This means that we must become the other through distancing ourselves from the self that we were."

Henry Johnson, in Chapter VIII, discusses the appropriateness of various models of education for the promotion of peaceful development in Central America. He defines peace as not merely the absence of conflict, "but the possibility of a certain quality of life to the achievement of which education is thought to be ancillary." In the light of the previous chapters his review of the relationship between educational systems and the cultures from which they are derived leads to the startling question of whether education in any real sense is possible. "*Is there any longer a pedagogically adequate culture*? . . . In other words, given the situation we have been exploring, educational theory must now begin . . . with historically grounded sociocultural critique, and rebuild: it must, so to speak, make itself possible." He criticizes the dehumanizing trends in modern cultures taking hold in Central America and in other parts of the world as tending to decontextualize knowledge from the communities in which people live. This leads to questions regarding the worth of an educational model in which the primary goal is to train members of society to perform technical functions in impersonal bureaucratic systems, whose value remain unquestioned. Johnson concludes by arguing that an appropriate model of education is one that emphasizes contextualized knowledge, as in the study of the arts, rather than one which uncritically emphasizes "scientific" training to assume technocratic roles.

Eulalio Baltazar and Brian Johnstone describe Latin American theologians as interpreters of culture, just as are the literary figures discussed by Rojas and Hozven. In addition, literary figures and liberation theologians both can be understood to function as prophets in dramatically describing the ills of their societies and articulating new vision of reality. In this light and with Johnstone, Baltazar, in Chapter IX, discusses liberation theology as a product of the Latin American experience. He focusses upon the philosophical roots from which liberation theologians write, and the correspondence of systems of theology to the societies from which they are derived.

Brian Johnstone describes theology as mediating between faith and interpretations of existing cultural and historical realities. Hence, it is important to note that the historical realities which gave rise to the predominant theologies of Europe differ from those which affect Central America. Johnstone argues that suffering, especially the suffering of the poor, is a point of departure for liberation theology, and that suffering is an experience with which human beings everywhere can empathize.

In the discussion and the subsequent redevelopment of his paper for this volume, Prof. Hozven carries the theme further through in-depth literary analysis to show that suffering is not only a mute and indifferent universal semaphore, but that in their bodies persons who are violated express their deepest, and hence culturally most specific, sensibilities.

In liberation theology, as Johnstone points out, empathetic understanding with those who suffer leads to action to eliminate the sociopolitical causes of that suffering. But while recognizing the historical and cultural appropriateness of liberation theology, he suggests its need for a more elaborate theory of human rights. This, he believes, would lead to a more adequate theory of justice and thereby safeguard the human dignity, not only of groups which have been oppressed, but of all persons in a society.

The authors present this volume of their work as a serious effort to contribute, along with other people of good will, to the understanding that is needed to address the challenge of promoting peace and human rights in Central America. Their profound realization that much more needs to be taken into account implies that this volume is also an invitation to further interchange with CSUCA and scholars of the universities of Central America.

The Catholic University of America
Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

CHAPTER I

HERMENEUTICS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND FUTURE CONSTRUCTION

GEORGE F. McLEAN

This chapter concerns the cultural heritage as a resource for social critique in the search for peace. Here cultural heritage refers especially to the cumulative sense of human dignity and appropriate social relations which constitutes the heart of the culture(s) we inherit. Social critique refers to the evaluation of social structure in terms of the dignity of the person in community. The search for peace refers to the complex challenge, in a time of rapid change, of applying the resources of these cultures in new ways in order to develop needed vision and promote social peace.

This raises a cluster of problems:

I. In what does culture consist: what is the character of the value content of a culture; on what basis can it constitute a point of reference and resource for social critique and for peace?

II. Can this culture have new meaning for these new times: how does it both live through time as a tradition and in each new age make specifically relevant contributions?

III. Can a culture critique the past which inspired it and be a guide to yet unknown pathways of peace: what is the basis for a transforming critique which will enable the culture to be an authentically liberating, rather than an enslaving, force?

This paper will consider each of these questions in sequence.

THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF A CULTURAL HERITAGE

It is characteristic of modern times--and possibly foundational to our problematic--that tradition has progressively ceded its standing to technique. This may be traced to Descartes who, at the end of the Renaissance, resolved to sort through its tumultuous accumulation of knowledge, new and old, in order to select and order that which was clear and distinct to the mind's intuition. Further, though a conclusion which has been clearly established by one person does not have to be rejustified by that person each time it is used, this dispensation is non-transferable.[1] Hence, the image of the philosopher became that of a solitary hero working out the interconnections of ideas. That this is done best in isolation, whereas life always is lived with others, forces one to ask whether this still prevalent understanding has not lost sight of the relevance of thought to life--something Marx was keen to observe.

Correlatively, tradition as it arises from the community, provides an initial sense of truth, and thereby lays a foundation for insight and judgment--that is, heritage as fore-understanding or pre-judgment--gradually assumed the ever more pejorative connotations which presently are conveyed by the term `prejudice.'[2] But if our heritage be a useless impediment to thought, upon what are we to base our efforts to evaluate and respond to present issues? It has become necessary therefore to rebuild the value and to assure the reading of our cultures and traditions--our cultural heritage. This task has been undertaken by Prof. Hans-Georg Gadamer in continuation upon the phenomenological work of Martin Heidegger.

In *Truth and Method*, Prof. Gadamer reconstructed the notion of a heritage as: (a) based in community, (b) consisting of knowledge developed from lived experience through time, and (c) possessed of authority. Because tradition sometimes is interpreted as a threat to personal and

social freedom attention will be given to the way a cultural heritage reflects the life of free and responsible members of a concerned community.

Community

Autogenesis is no more characteristic of the birth of knowledge than it is of persons. Just as a person is born into a family on which he or she depends absolutely for life, sustenance, protection and promotion, so one's understanding develops in community. It is from one's family in one's earliest weeks and months that one does or does not develop the basic attitudes of trust and confidence which undergird or undermine their capacities for subsequent social relations. There one learns care and concern for others independently of what they do for us, and acquires the language and symbol system in terms of which to conceptualize, communicate and understand.[3]

Similarly, through the various steps of one's development, as one's circle of community expands through neighborhood, school, work and recreation, one comes to learn and to share personally and passionately an interpretation of reality and a pattern of value responses. The phenomenologist sees this life in community as the new source for wisdom. Hence, rather than turning away from daily life in order to contemplate abstract and disembodied ideas, the place to discover meaning is life in the family and in the progressively wider circles into which one enters.

Time and the Building of Tradition

If it were merely a matter of community, however, all might be limited to the present, with no place for tradition-- literally, that which is "passed on" (*tradita*) from one generation to the next. The wisdom with which we are concerned, however, is a not a matter of mere tactical adjustments to temporary concerns; it concerns rather the meaning we are able to envision for life and which we desire to achieve through all such adjustments over a period of generations. Hence, contemporary interchange needs to be complemented by the historical depth of accumulated human insight predicated upon the full wealth of human experience.

This process of trial and error, of continual correction and addition in relation to a people's evolving sense of human dignity and purpose, constitutes a type of learning and testing laboratory for successive generations. In this laboratory of history the strengths of various insights and behavior patterns can be identified and reinforced, while deficiencies are progressively corrected or eliminated.

But even this language remains too abstract, too limited to method or technique. While this can be described in general and at a distance in terms of feed-back mechanisms, what is being spoken about are free acts, expressive of passionate human commitment and sacrifice in responding to concrete danger, building and rebuilding family alliances, and constructing and defending one's nation. The cumulative result of this extended process of learning and commitment constitutes the content of a tradition.[4] The historical and prophetical books of the Bible are an extended, concrete account of one such process of a people's discovery of wisdom in interaction with the divine.

The impact of the convergence of cumulative experience and reflection is heightened by its gradual elaboration in ritual and music, and its imaginative configuration in epics such as the Mahabharata or in dance. All conspire to constitute a culture which, like a giant

telecommunications dish, shapes, intensifies and extends the range of our personal sensitivity, free decision and mutual concern.

Tradition, then, is not simply everything that ever happened, but what appears significant. It is what has been seen through time to be deeply true about human life. It contains the values to which our forebears freely and passionately commitment themselves in specific historical circumstances and/or progressively over time. The content of a tradition is expressed in works of literature whose worth progressively emerges as something upon which character and community can be built. Tradition then constitutes a rich source from which multiple themes can be drawn, provided it be accepted and embraced, affirmed and cultivated.

Hence, it is not because of personal inertia on our part or arbitrary will on the part of our forbears that tradition serves as model and exemplar. On the contrary, the importance of tradition derives from both the cooperative character of the learning by which wisdom is drawn from experience and the cumulative free acts of commitment and sacrifice which have defined, defended and passed on through time the corporate life of the community.[5]

Authority

Perhaps the greatest point of tension between a sense of one's heritage and the enlightenment spirit relates to authority. Is it possible to recognize authority on the part of a tradition which perdures while still retaining freedom through time? Could it be that authority, rather than being the negation of freedom, is its cumulative expression, or even the positive condition for the creation of new realizations of freedom?

One of the most important characteristics of human persons is their capability for development and growth. One is born with open and unlimited powers for knowledge and for love. Life consists in developing, deploying and exercising these capabilities. Given the communitary character of human growth and learning, dependence upon others is not unnatural--quite the contrary. Within as well as beyond our social group we depend upon other persons according as they possess abilities we, as individuals and community, need for our growth, self-realization and fulfillment.

This dependence is not primarily one of obedience to their will, but is based upon their comparative excellence in some dimension--whether this be the doctor's professional skill in healing, or the wise person's insight and judgment in matters where profound understanding is required. The preeminence of wise persons in the community is not something they usurp or with which they are arbitrarily endowed; it is based rather upon their abilities as these are reasonably and freely acknowledged by others. All of these--the role of the community in learning, the contribution of extended historical experience, and the grounding of dependence in competency--combine to endow tradition with authority for subsequent ages.

There are reasons to believe, moreover, that tradition is not a passive storehouse of materials simply waiting upon the inquirer, but that its content of authentic wisdom plays a normative role for life in subsequent ages. On the one hand, without such a normative referent prudence would be as relativistic and ineffective as muscular action without a skeletal substructure. Life would be merely a matter of compromise and accommodation on any terms with no sense of the value either of what was being compromised or of that for which it was compromised. On the other hand, were the normative factor to reside simply in a transcendental or abstract vision the result would be devoid of existential content.

In history, however, one finds vision of actual life which both transcends its own time and is directive for time that follows. The content of that vision is a set of values and of human and social goals which, by their fullness and harmony of measure, point the way to mature and perfect human formation and thereby orient the life of a person.[6] Such a vision is historical because it arises from the life of a people in time and presents an appropriate way of preserving that life through time. It is also normative because it provides a basis upon which past historical ages, present options and future possibilities are judged.

The fact that humans do not remain indifferent before the flow of events, but dispute--even bitterly--the direction of change appropriate for their community reflects the fact that every humanism is committed to the realization of some common--if general--model of perfection. Without this, even conflict would be impossible for there would be no intersection of the divergent positions, and hence no debate or conflict.

One's heritage or tradition constitutes just such a classical model. As such it is not chronologically distant in the past and therefore in need of being drawn forward artificially. It lives and acts in the lives of all whom it inspires and judges; through time it is the timeless dimension of history. Hence, rather than reconstructing it, we belong to it--just as it belongs to us. Such a tradition is, in effect, the ultimate community of human striving, for human understanding is implemented, not by isolated individual acts of subjectivity, but by our situatedness in a tradition. By fusing both past and present this enables us to determine the specific direction of our lives and to mobilize the consensus and commitment of which true community is built.[7]

Conversely, it is this sense of the good or of value, derived from the concrete lived experience of a people through its history and constituting its cultural heritage, which enables it in turn to assess and avoid what is socially destructive. In the absence of tradition, present events would be simply facts to be succeeded by counter-facts. The succeeding waves of such disjointed happenings would constitute a history written in terms of violence which could be restrained only by some Utopian abstraction built upon the reductivist limitations of modern rationalism. Eliminating all expressions of freedom, this is the archetypal modern nightmare, *1984*.

This stands in stark contrast to one's heritage or tradition as the rich cumulative vision evolved by a people through the ages to a point of normative and classical perfection. Just as this is exemplified architecturally in a Parthenon or a Taj Mahal, it is embodied personally in a Confucius, Gandhi, Bolivar, or Lincoln, a Martin Luther King or a Mother Theresa. Superseding mere historical facts, as concrete universals they express that harmony of measure and fullness which is at once classical and historical, ideal and personal, uplifting and dynamizing, in a word, liberating.

The truly important battle at the present time is, then, not between, on the one hand, a chaotic liberalism in which the abstract laws of the marketplace dictate and tear at the lives of persons, peoples and nations and, on the other hand, a depersonalizing sense of community in which the dignity of the person is suppressed for an equally abstract utopia--a victory by either would spell disaster. The central battle is rather to enable peoples to draw on their heritage constituted of personal assessments and free decisions, elaborated through the ages by the various communities deliberating and working out their response to present circumstances. That these circumstances are often shifting and difficult in the extreme is important. But what is of definite importance is that this people's response be truly theirs, that is that it be part of their history, their free and personal response to the good, and not simply the imposed effect of

someone else's history, or--worst of all--of abstract, impersonal and depersonalizing structures, slogans or utopias.

APPLICATION: HERITAGE AND THE PRESENT

There is a second set of problems regarding tradition which concern, not its nature and origin, but its relation to the present. To the degree that one recognizes the validity and even authoritative character of one's heritage, one would seem to be in danger of diminishing the significance and even the freedom of one's present efforts to find answers to the new issues which arise in personal, and especially social, life. Indeed the very reality of novelty is at issue, for if present life is but a simple repetition of what has already been known, life loses its challenge, progress is rejected in principle and hope will die. Let us turn then from the construction and content of a cultural heritage to its application in our days through dialogue growing out of care and concern.

In brief, this is the correlative of the problem faced above. Just as a classical ideal is constituted from concrete past expressions of freedom rather than of abstract and depersonalized law, so our challenge is how to understand the application of this ideal today in a manner which promotes rather than suppresses the creative exercise of freedom.

Novelty and Application

To understand this we must, first of all, take time seriously, that is, we must recognize that reality includes authentic novelty. This implies that tradition, with its authoritative or normative character, achieves its perfection not in opposition to, but in the very temporal unfolding of reality. Because persons determine their changing social universe and its values, for an adequate sense of culture one must attend to the truly new elements introduced by historical acts of encounter in community.

As response to the good takes place in concrete circumstances, the guiding principles of human action, even in ethics as a science, can be neither purely theoretical knowledge nor a simple historical accounting from the past. Instead, they must help achieve moral understanding in one's concrete circumstances. This implies an important difference of ethics from techné. In the latter, action is governed by an idea as an exemplary cause which is fully determined and known by objective theoretical knowledge. Skill consists in knowing how to act according to that well-understood idea or plan. When this cannot be carried out some parts of it are simply omitted in the execution.

In contrast, in ethics the situation, though similar in being an application of a practical guide to a particular task, differs in important ways. First, in moral action subjects make themselves as much as they make their object; agents differentiate themselves by their actions. Hence, moral knowledge as understanding of the appropriateness of one's actions is not fully determined independently of the persons involved.

From this it follows that the identity of a person or of a people as constituted through a past (or tradition) and exercised through present free acts is a central factor in the determination of what is appropriate. This does not override what can be known in the general terms of one's specific nature; rather from within it specifies the implications of this nature for the actions of those involved. Secondly, adaptations by moral agents in applying the law do not diminish, but correct and perfect it. In itself the law is imperfect for in a relatively unordered world it cannot

contain in any explicit manner responses to the concrete possibilities which arise in history. It is precisely here that human freedom and creativity come into play in shaping the present according to a sense of what is just and good. They do this in a way which manifests and indeed creates more of what justice and goodness mean.

That the law is perfected by its application in the circumstances is driven home by the experience that a simple mechanical replication of the law works injustice rather than justice. If ethics is to be an instrument for realizing the good it must be, not only knowledge of what is right in general, but the search for what is right in the situation. For this *epoché* and equity are required in order to perfect the law and complete moral knowledge.[8] This is particularly essential in situations of personal and structured inequality in which an ordinary application of general and abstract laws can be expected only to extend and deepen the injustice. Hence, special attention must be paid to the concrete circumstances of persons in their mesh of psychological, economic and social interrelations.

Concern for Others

The question of what the situation asks of us is answered in the light of what has been discovered about appropriate human action and exists normatively in the tradition. This is properly the work of intellect (*nous*) with the virtue of prudence (*phronesis*), that is, thoughtful reflection which enables one to discover the appropriate means in the circumstances. But to be appropriate the means must truly fit all who are engaged in the situation. Hence, it is essential to be finely tuned to other persons, precisely as they are persons with their own freedom, feelings and understanding.

Such an assessment of what is truly appropriate will require also the virtue of sagacity (*sunesis*), that is, concern for others, for adequately to appreciate the situation one must undergo it with the affected parties. Truly ethical knowledge can be had only by one who is united in mutual interest or love with the other. Such knowledge is profoundly social.

This goes notably beyond simply a concern for justice, that is, for rendering to others what is clearly due them by right. It is true that an ethical or moral situation cannot exist without justice. Nevertheless, justice is based upon persons as distinct. It distinguishes and even opposes one to the other in a mutual relationship of rights and duties. In reality each party tends to look more to their own rights or what others owe them, rather than to their own duties and hence what they owe *to others*. Hence, the result of a relationship based only upon justice is more likely to be strife than harmony and peace. This can be overcome and justice rendered only when concern for self is broadened to concern for others as well, that is, when sagacity (*sunesis*) is added to prudence (*phronesis*).

In sum, the application of the heritage or tradition is not a subsequent, accidental part of understanding, but radically co-determines this understanding. Social consciousness must seek to understand the good, not as an ideal which is known independently and then applied to the circumstances, but as related to the concerns of all. In this light our sense of unity with others begins to appear as a condition for applying our tradition, that is, for enabling it to live in our day. Conversely, this implies the need to look at the dynamisms which separate us, make sagacity (*sunesis*) difficult, impede our moral judgment and thereby inhibit living our tradition. This will be studied below. First, however, let us look more closely at the hermeneutic process by which social understanding creatively articulates the meaning of one's cultural heritage in present circumstances.

HERMENEUTIC AS DIALOGUE OF HORIZONS

Horizon and Historicity

If one's horizon is the totality of all that can be seen from one's vantage point, then the application of a living tradition involves a dialectic of the horizons of different times or groups. One such dialectic is had in reading a `text' from the past--this could be a document, such as "The Declaration of Independence" or of "The Rights of Man," or even the broad pattern of values which constitutes a tradition or cultural heritage. A similar dialectic of horizons is had in searching with others for the implications of such a `text' for appropriate social action in a time of crises.

We do not enter upon this task of understanding with a blank mind as Locke supposed, or proceed to suspend all judgment under a pervasive Cartesian doubt. Instead, we summon up all our resources to construe an initial or prior conception of the meaning of the document or of the words of the one with whom we are in dialogue. Gadamer terms this a `fore-understanding', or `pre-judgment', and hence `prejudice' in the non- pejorative sense of a tentative projection of the general meaning of our interlocutor. The content of this anticipation is not an objective, fixed content to which we come; but what we produce as we participate in the evolution of the tradition and thereby further determine ourselves. For our horizon reflects not only the content of the past, but the sensibility of the time in which I stand and the life project in which I am engaged. This pre-judgment is gradually corrected in the process of reading the text in detail until it corresponds to the meaning the text has in its distinctive relation to me. In this manner there is a creative unveiling of the content of the tradition as this comes progressively and historically into the present and, through the present, passes into the future.[9]

In this light time is not a barrier or separation, but rather a bridge and opportunity for the process of understanding; it is a fertile ground filled with experience, custom and tradition. The contribution of time lies in opening new sources of understanding which reveal unsuspected elements and even whole new dimensions of meaning in the tradition. How does this take place?[10]

Horizons are not limitations, but vantage points, for the mind as open or mobile is capable of being aware of its present horizon and of transcending this through the acknowledgement of other horizons and of the horizons of others. Indeed, historic movement implies precisely that we not be bound by one horizon, but move in and out of horizons. It is the very act of becoming aware of one's horizon that establishes historical consciousness, puts one's horizon at risk in dialogue with others, and thereby liberates one from the limitations of his and her horizon. When our initial projection of the meaning of the `text' or of the other will not bear up under progressive questioning we are justified in making needed adjustments in our projection of their meaning. In turn, this enables us to adjust and/or enlarge the horizon from which we had been thinking.

Questioning and Openness

It is important then that we retain a questioning attitude. Rather than simply following through with our previous ideas until a change is forced upon us, true openness or sensitivity to new meaning requires a willingness continually to revise our initial projection or expectation of meaning, our horizon. This is neither neutrality as regards the meaning of the tradition, nor an

abandonment of passionate concern regarding action towards the future. Rather, to be aware of our own horizon and to adjust it in dialogue with others is to make it work for us in our effort to discover the new and rich implications of our tradition which are required for our times.

Because such discovery depends upon the questions, the art of discovery is the art of questioning. Consequently, whether working alone or in conjunction with others, our effort at finding the answers should be, not to suppress a question, but to reinforce and unfold it. To the degree that its probabilities are intensified it can serve as a searchlight to bring out new meaning. In contrast to opinion which suppresses questions and to arguing which searches out the weakness of the others' argument, conversation as dialogue is a mutual and cooperative search for truth. Through eliminating errors and working out a common meaning truth is progressively unveiled.[11]

Further, it should not be expected that the text or tradition will answer but one question, for the sense of the text reaches beyond what even its author intended. Because of the dynamic character of being emerging into time, the horizon is never definitively fixed. At each step a new dimension of the potentialities of the text is opened to understanding, for the meaning of the text lives with the consciousness, not of its author, but of the many readers living with others through time and history. This dialectic of our horizon with that of the others intensifies our ability to ask questions and to receive answers which are ever new.[12]

Finally, this openness consists not merely in receptivity to new information, but in a recognition of our historical, situated and hence limited vision. Real escape from that which has deceived us and held us captive is to be found not through those who are well integrated into our culture and social structures, for dialogue with those of similar horizon opens one only to a limited degree. Real liberation from our most basic limitations and deceptions comes only with a conscious effort to take account of the horizons of those who differ notably, whether as another nation, or as a distinct culture intermingled with our own, or--still more definitively--as living on the margins of all of these societies and integrated into none.

Fundamentally, such openness is directed, not to others as persons who are to be surveyed objectively or obeyed unquestioningly, but to ourselves. It opens our horizons, extends our ability to listen to others, and assimilates the implications of their answers for changes in our own positions. In other words, it is an acknowledgement that the cultural heritage has something new to say to us. The characteristic hermeneutic attitude of effective historical consciousness is then not methodological sureness, but openness or readiness for experience.[13] Seen in these terms our heritage is not closed, but the basis for a life that is ever new, more inclusive and more rich.

CRITIQUE: HERITAGE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The Need for Critique

In these days of ever greater rational systematization of all areas of life, it would seem that a critical dimension must be added if this project is to be successful. This requirement is implied by Gadamer's own identification of the need for historical distance and for new horizons of questioning in order to draw out of the heritage additional dimensions of meaning.[14] Emancipating the `text' from its author's psychological and sociological context so that it can live through all ages and speak to all time--the psycho-cultural and socio-cultural decontextualization of the content of the heritage--is a fundamental condition for hermeneutic

interpretation. Conversely, this implies the importance of its recontextualization in the horizons of those who would draw upon this heritage in response to the needs of their own times. This, in turn, implies opening and adjusting their horizons through dialogue with differing horizons[15]; for this two levels of critique are required.

On the structural level this requires that one go beyond Gadamer's description of discourse simply as the spontaneous conversation of question and answer. One must take account also of discourse as work, crafted by praxis from the smaller units of words, phrases and sentences. As meaning takes place in structures which mediate understanding,[16] structural analysis of the depth semantics of the text is important in grasping the sense of the work. This is the more true as the minds which reconstruct the texts are themselves ordered not only by scientific structures, but by controlling relations of social dependence. Such dependence needs to be made manifest in order that reflection on the tradition be truly free. Hence, the critical consciousness which the linguistic, social and psychological sciences make possible, in turn, can make significant contributions to the effective implementation of the hermeneutic project. Further, where the actual social structures are unjust their clear analyses by the social sciences is important for emancipation from the effects of these injustices upon our internal pattern of interests.

On the existential level and beyond the internal organization of the text, there is also its reference or the way in which life as temporal and historical--as the existential power to be-unfolds in front, as it were, of the text. Here critique of any deadening repetition of the past liberates the self from fixed ideologies which would freeze one in relationships which, though perhaps creative in their origin, have now become structures of oppression.

As an interlocuter in this dialogue, tradition enables the reader consciously to examine his or her own subjectivity and by opening new horizons makes possible the imaginative variations of one's ego. The text thereby enables one to achieve the distance required for a first critique of one's own illusions and false consciousness, and of the ideologies in which one has been reared. The temporal character of being and mankind's projection toward the historical future make possible a critique of ideologies which would hold one in a repetitive stagnation. This is a liberation of the subject in and through history.

Both levels of critique are required in the hermeneutic project. Gadamer emphasizes appropriating the tradition, identifying with it, acknowledging its pre-presence as fore-understanding in every question, and looking for its application in each new age. This leaves him with reservations regarding the objectivating distance native to the social sciences, the elaboration of the nature of whose contribution has been left to other philosophers. Among the most notable of these is Jurgen Habermas who turns to the notion of interests in order to unite both the driving existential thrust toward freedom and the multiple structuring which this undergoes in social relations.

Interest

Method. To grasp what Habermas means by `interest' it is important to distinguish two types of science. The first is empirical inquiry in which one proceeds by specifically designed scientific experiments carried out by *instrumental action* that is designed to manifest one particular facet of reality. This attains objectivity by the use of measurements and aims at knowledge which gives control over particular objectified processes of nature. Unfortunately, such activity is generally thought of without its more inclusive and indeed indispensable context of *communicative action*. There, the grammar of ordinary language links even the nonverbal

elements of life with symbols, actions and expressions to provide schemata for interpreting the world and acting therein, namely, for a hermeneutics. This context includes not only the particular knowledge derived from the experiments one purposefully constructs, but the entire range of experience, past and present, as well as the depth of the unifying view that integrates one's culture.

In further contrast to empirical inquiry, the hermeneutic sciences are not neutral, but have an interest structure. This consists of the basic orientations of human work and interaction toward the "specific fundamental conditions of the possible reproduction and self-constitution of the human species."[17] These are not mere adaptations to the environment, but are located in the cultural milieu as a self-formative process of the species, and first of all of the subjects of that species. In particular, Habermas is concerned with interest in autonomy and responsibility achieved through the power of reflection in which the subject, by becoming transparent to self, is freed from domination by external factors.[18]

This identifies both the need and the method for critique. Johann Fichte had pointed to interest as the basic constitutive element of reason itself. Interest in successful action directs us toward what is known to work. Thus, we expand our knowledge to "cumulative learning processes and permanent interpretations transmitted by tradition." "Interpretations" depend, in turn, upon the values and the interests of the past which have given shape to our culture. Thus interests not only are based upon, but are even constitutive of knowledge. To say this in a different way, cognitive processes are embedded in, and reflect, life structures; since these in turn express our interest in preserving life through knowledge and action, interest is internal to knowledge.

Reason can grasp itself as self-interested, however, only by critically dissolving the objectivistic understanding of the sciences and entering into self-reflection. This is liberative for it enables us to break beyond the set structures in which we are enmeshed in order to look at the interests from which these derive. This enables us to make responsible fundamental choices regarding our life and our society. Thus, self-reflection constitutes a new stage of the self-formative process of the species.

Metaphysics. For Habermas, as for Gadamer, however, the basic issue here concerns not method, but being. This drew his attention to Fichte's notion of interest as the fundamental selfrealizing thrust of the dynamism of being. Interest is the point of identity of conscious reflection with dynamic expression, of theory with practice, and of knowledge with concern, all within the limiting confines of multiple social beings. It is the dynamic presence of Being Itself as it emerges ever more consciously and creatively in all the acts of our lives.

In acts of knowledge interest is the essential intentional thrust of self-affirmation and proclamation by which core of inner truth and light even small discoveries share in the plenitude of meaning. By this inner goodness and joy the small events of our lives converge into moments of transcending happiness: interest is the power of being in which we share.

Fichte was concerned lest beings in their plurality become impediments one to another in the free affirmation of this interest or power of being. If being were fundamentally matter and extended, and therefore all beings were impervious one to another, the only way to protect freedom would be to reduce all philosophy to unity, as did the idealists and materialists. However, because existence is characterized as unity, truth and goodness, and human beings are characterized by reflective self-awareness, Habermas sees social unity as essentially open. It consists of a plurality of beings realized both in communication as knowing and being known

and in mutual love as social concern. Interest affirms itself by reaching out to others with whom it shares. As a result individuals, who at first appear to be only different and contrary one to another can now be seen as united. Persons who had existed in limitation now advance in the direction of plenitude. This advance is the real sense of Habermas' project, whose strategy is now clear. Let us turn then to the tactical hermeneutic tools he fashions to analyze and overcome the structural impediments to the full reunion of peoples in the harmony of social peace.

Critical Hermeneutics

As the intention of Habermas is to unite people in a divided world, he bases truth, not in correspondence to objects, but in the mind and its assent. "Truth belongs categorically to the world of thought (*Gedanken*, in Frege's sense) and not to that of perceptions."[19] This, however, is not a matter of assent on any basis, for that would confuse the rational with the arbitrary, or the true with what is arbitrarily willed. If the truth of the statement is not defended by correspondence to what is beyond the act of the mind and yet not all acts of assent are truthful, then the truth of the assent must depend upon some characteristic of that assent itself.

Habermas locates this in the requirement that assent be the result of at least potentially open rational argumentation. All issues of direct and indirect relevance--including those of cultural horizons as contexts, social meta-theory and epistemology--must be open at least potentially to rational argument. Conclusions should be delayed until this has been attended to: any conclusion will be automatically suspect when such openness has been supressed. This includes an implicit operational claim that everyone would come to the same conclusion if it were possible to think through all the evidence and be guided by the better argument; that is the meaning of the requirement that the conclusion must be fully rational.

This has direct implications for the development of social discourse. Basically discourse must be such as to enable and promote an open search for truth. Given the difference in interests between various persons and groups, this requires that all issues be open. Hence: (a) issues on all levels must be able to be raised and attended to in discussions of the matter, and (b) everyone must be able to assume any role in the dialogue, to present his or her questions and concerns of whatever type, and to assent or oppose any issue. That is, there must a symmetrical distribution of opportunities for all to speak and equal opportunity to assume diverse roles in the discussions.

As this notion of pure communicative interaction is central to the issue of truth as characteristically human, requirements of openness and symmetry apply not merely to the closed environments of a laboratory or seminar, but above all to social life. This constitutes a basic transformation of total outlook. Where the sciences looked for abstract, objective content that was universally true, here the universality is attached to interests and hence to the inclusion of all peoples as bearers of the many dimensions both of question and of answer.[20] The resource is the persons and groups as distinct and free; it is they who must be promoted and brought forward.

Real dialogue and agreement, however, cannot be had where oppression and injustice reign: truth can be obtained only with justice and freedom: "The truth of statements is linked in the last analysis to the intention of the good and true life."[21] Unfortunately, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that such an ideal situation is, and always has been, counterfactual, that it never has existed historically and that, given human weaknesses, it may never be actualized.

Be that as it may, in at least three ways the ideal dialogical situation remains crucial, especially in our relationship with our heritage. First, it provides a basis for a critical attitude regarding the past through an assessment of the circumstances in which elements of the tradition

were formulated. Secondly, it orients present constructive efforts towards the establishment of the just structures needed for dialogue that will be sufficiently authentic to generate a well founded consensus. Thirdly, it directs one's attention to the search for the external and internal reasons for which people are not able to enter freely into the discussion. In such circumstances conclusions, even if objectively sound, would be counterproductive in principle because open to the charge of being, not reasonable, but merely the effect of self-delusion. Hermeneutics must then be critical of the actual social structures, for within the particular cultures these promote or impede social communication.

CONFLICT AND SOCIAL CRITIQUE

A Social Critique

Hermeneutic efforts to reappropriate the heritage, especially as having normative and liberative value must identify the dangers to open and symmetric dialogue and the way in which they operate. This has two dimensions. One regards our life as integrally related to its material context and the implications of this for the internal dynamics of our psyche. For this Habermas turns to Marx and Freud. The other is the crisis evolving from the overall rationalization of contemporary life. This is sometimes referred to as the process of modernization operative in all countries whether of the first, second or third worlds. I will consider both of these dimensions of Habermas' critique; for the former I will focus upon Freud as including and carrying further some of the basic themes of Marx.

Freud is interpreted by Habermas as focusing upon the tension between, on the one hand, one's internal libidinal and aggressive powers and, on the other hand, the needs for the preservation of the species through collective efforts in response to the constraints of our physical environment. The task of parents and society, incorporated within us as the superego, is to keep these two from self-destructive confrontation.

In this the amount of resources available is crucial. When these are restricted it is necessary for society as superego to shift the energies of its members from the libidinal and sexual to productive work. Thus, the weaker the control over external physical nature the greater the need for social institutions to compel relatively rigid uniform behavior and to remove this compulsion from criticism. In these circumstances libidinal energies are channeled into cultural traditions whose wish fantasies express, in the subliminal form of suspended gratification, socially repressed libidinal intentions. Similarly, social institutions provide interaction structures for directing rational action in a way that not only serves the functional needs cited by Marx, but stabilizes and protects the transcending social motives and handles needs which cannot be satisfied by redirection, transformation or suppression.[22]

From this notion of substitute gratification Freud elaborates a theory of illusions. These are not private contradictions of reality as are delusions, but public and consciously fixed forms which legitimate prevailing social norms deriving from the unconscious processes of substitute gratification. Such forms are the assets of a civilization and include religious worldviews and rites, ideals and value systems, which together suggest utopias. When technical progress makes it possible to reduce or dispense with socially necessary institutional repression, the utopias can be freed from the ideological legitimation of authority and become able to base, in turn, a critique of historically absolute power structures. This is an important lever in the struggle against the

injustice which arises when those in social power burden others with a disproportionate share of privations. It is the poor and variously deprived who first invoke against the established order the utopian elements of a culture--its ideals, value system and religion.[23] They must be heard!

Habermas considers this analysis--as well as the parrallel one by Marx--to be a crucially important step toward the development of an adequate critical hermeneutics, but finds in it a basic metaphysical flaw. Its effort to direct attention to the reflection through which human liberation or emancipation must take place is undermined by an initial and basically materialist presupposition according to which personal reflective action and public cultural factors must ultimately be derivative. Emancipation could not be the central reality of life itself, but only a propitious state for physical survival. Habermas not only disagrees with the arbitrariness of this presupposition, but proceeds to show how the structural elements Freud cites are essentially analytic dimensions of a situation of interpersonal--if deformed --communication between psychoanalyst and patient. Their meaning is derivative, not of physical forces, but of the reality of symbolic communication and its disruptions.

He finds a similar problem in Marx's ultimate solution of the social problematic through an increase in the means of production or instrumental action. This deflects attention from the properly intersubjective character of the basic institutional nucleus with its social roles, its rules, and its norms of community action, and hence of the political and economic orders. Liberation from the suppression of persons by the institutional framework of labor and rewards requires more than merely instrumental productive action, for this can respond only to external constraints. Communicative action is required in order to be aware: (a) of the moral totality of human dignity as this is reflected in the highest vision of a cultural heritage, (b) of its disruption by repressive institutional manipulation for the private interest of the class in power, and (c) of the types of changes which will be truly emancipative.

Nevertheless, Freud's analysis, like Marx's, does provide important insight into the dynamics of public life. Habermas draws upon this for scientific causal explanations of the dynamics of the process of emancipation. In this sense psychoanalysis can serve as a special form of interpretation theory inasmuch as it enables one to attend to the latent content of symbolic expression which is otherwise inaccessible to conscious reflection. He refers to this as an internal foreign territory; we might even call it an internal foreign power.

In reality the problem is not merely that the inherent basic strivings of the person toward self-realization are suppressed temporarily, perhaps for acceptable social reasons. The danger is that even after these reasons have ceased to exist two factors might continue to operate. Externally, those in power might seek to extend this suppression of the strivings of the person toward self-realization. This appears to be the all too common situation as elites struggle to retain their privileges. Indeed, the very reality of privilege, by enabling some to provide their next generation with better education, has an internal mechanism for self-perpetuation. Internally, the striving toward self-realization might insist on remaining suppressed and hence positively disrupt the normal pattern of social observation and response.[24] This disorder in the expression of interests must be identified, brought to light and properly ordered in relation to new and evolving human situations. This is a precondition in order that the search for freedom itself be internally or intrapersonally responsible and free.

To help others interpersonally, on the other hand, it is important not to destroy the freedom of those who suffer these inhibitions. This requires great discretion regarding the hermeneutic process in order to avoid an elitist attitude in their regard, which would be but a new

repression. For this, symmetrical relations are essential in assisting those who, due to their social circumstances, lack the necessary conditions of dialogue for comprehending their interests and real situation. Prudent discussion is required in any effort to change these conditions.[25]

Modernization, as characterized by a technical rationalization of life, is seen by Habermas to be basically inimical to emancipation in the ethico-political field. It directs attention not to the development of character and prudence, but to the identification of the laws of human nature and their use in achieving desired behavior through arranging the corresponding circumstances. With time these laws became quantified relations predicated upon operative definitions in terms of which the consideration of values is excluded because it is not seen as admitting of truth or falsity.

As a result, in a series of steps described by Habermas in "Dogmatism, Reason, and Decision: On Theory and Practice to our Scientific Civilization,"[26] the conception of practical life has changed radically. First, since values are not able to figure in the mathematical rationalization of life they could not be the subject of rational consultation and consensus, but only the basis for competition between rival interest groups. Here decision theory can provide the preference rules and decision procedures according to which the choice between alternate means is made. But this is merely formal; it leaves at the root of the preference an area of values beyond rational justification and control.

This has three results. First, practical life becomes radically decisionistic so that irrationality lies at the very heart of the decision-making process. Secondly, the political process becomes increasingly technocratic as scientific competency is directed towards clarifying applications of the available resources and possible techniques.

Thirdly, for lack of a rational basis for values, attention shifts entirely to the formal element of control as strategies are developed for succeeding in situations of competing interests. The political process generates its own supreme value of self-assertion and requires an understanding of the way in which such a system can be self-maintaining and self-regulating. As the system has stability as its goal and requires capabilities for its maintenance, all is manipulated in function of such stability and maintenance, rather than according to the traditional values and goals of the political process or even the enlightenment value of emancipation.

Technocratic consciousness is the final step in the rationalization of modern life into a cybernetically self-stabilizing system. This lacks any sense of society as a cooperative unity of persons who freely, fairly and corporately organize their actions. In this circumstance the political development of the person becomes, not merely superfluous, but obstructive. Since major decisions must be made by a technocracy, one's involvement in the political process is reduced simply to choosing a leader for the system.[27] As a result of this political disenfranchisement, interests begin to turn inward towards family and personal gain, thereby substituting individual and socially disintegrative self-interest for social concerns.

At this point there arises a new situation. The set of social values which were prescinded from in order to promote the rationalization of life, is now substituted by anti-social values pitting the private against the social. As the mechanisms of social stabilization react to suppress these anti-social elements all inexorably develops in the direction of increasing domination and suppression, rather than of emancipation and freedom.[28] Were this process of privitization simply to direct one's attention to one's own family, from whose traditions might be drawn a value pattern for legitimate social action as was the case in Central America in Post-Colonial days, it would not be so radically dangerous. Unfortunately, today the opposite is the case. For the

pattern of rationalization in the public sphere suggests a model of rationalization in the private as well. This results in a sense of questioning and contingency regarding the contents and even the techniques of tradition. Respect for authority and the habit of cooperation are undermined by the pervasiveness of state activity which depend upon the intensification of these very attitudes.[29]

In sum, the supremacy of the technocratic over the political consciousness produces a technocratic elite and suppresses the emancipatory interests, not only of one or another class, but of the entire human species.[30] In this situation of need as identified by Marx and Freud, and of despair as identified by Habermas, where can one turn for the value resources required for work toward human rights and peace in Central America?

THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

The relation between hermeneutics and social critique is dialectical. The social sciences provide an indispensable element of awareness and hence of emancipation in the world of increasingly technical and convoluted structures. But heritage and tradition must provide an essential context and the basic principles for the critique to which these sciences contribute. Paul Ricoeur has attempted to codify some of the contributions of the tradition.[31]

First, critique is carried out within a context of interests which establish the frame of meaning. The sequence of technical, practical and emancipatory interests reflects the emergence of mankind out of nature and corresponds to the developmental phase of moral sensitivity. Habermas studies Kohlberg closely on this and employs his work.[32] To the question of the basis of these interests, however, no adequate answer is provided. They are not empirically justifiable or they would be found at the level of technical interests. Neither do they constitute a theory as a network of working hypotheses for then they would be regional and justified at most by the interest in emancipation, which in turn would leave them entrapped in a vicious circle.

The only proper description of these interests as truly all-embracing must be found in the direction of Heidegger's existentials and hence of being itself with its unity, truth and goodness. These are hidden only in being so present that they are in need of being unveiled by hermeneutic method. Thus, Gadamer's hermeneutic project on the clarification of fore-understandings or `prejudices' and Habermas's critical work on interests and the social sciences, though not identical, share common ground.

Secondly, in the end, critiques of ideologies appear to share characteristics common to those of the historical hermeneutic sciences. Both focus upon the development of communicative action by free persons. Their common effort is to avoid a reduction of all human communication to instrumental action and institutionalization for it is there that manipulation takes place. Success or failure in extending the critique of interests beyond instrumental action to communicative action determines whether the community will promote or destroy its members.

Such critique is unlikely ever to be successful, however, if we have no experience of communication with our own cultural heritage. For in a dialogue distortions can be identified as such only if there is a basis of consensus and this must concern not only an empty ideal or regulative idea, but one that has been experienced, lived and shared. "He who is unable to interpret his past may also be incapable of projecting concretely his interest in emancipation."[33]

Thirdly, today communicative action needs more than a model to suggest what otherwise might not occur to our minds, for the rationalization of human life has become such that all of its aspects are controlled pervasively in terms of instrumental action. Whereas Marx could refer in his day to surplus value as the motive of production, this is true no longer. Instead, the system

itself of technology has become the key to productivity and all is coordinated toward the support and promotion of this system; it is the ideology of our day. As a result the distinction between communicative action and instrumental action has been overridden and control no longer can be expected from communicative action.

This raises a new type of question, namely, how can the interest in emancipation be kept alive? Undoubtedly, communicative action must be reawakened and made to live if we are not to be simply subjects--indeed `slaves'--of the technological machine. But how is this to be done; whence can this life be derived if the present situation is pervasively occupied and shaped by science and technology as the new, and now all-encompassing, master? It can be done only by drawing upon our heritage in the manner suggested by Heidegger. We need to retrieve or reach back into our heritage--now as never before--in order to find the radically new resources needed for emancipation in an increasingly dominated world.

Finally, there is a still more fundamental sense in which critique, rather than being opposed to tradition or taking a questioning attitude thereto, is itself an appeal to tradition. Criticism appeals unabashedly to the heritage of emancipation it has received from the Enlightenment. But this tradition has longer roots which reach back to the liberating acts of Exodus and the Resurrection. "Perhaps" writes Ricoeur "there would be no more interest in emancipation, no more anticipation of freedom, if the Exodus and Resurrection were effaced from the memory of mankind."[34]

According to the proper norms of communicative action, these historical acts should be taken also in their symbolic sense in which liberation and emancipation express the root interest basic to traditional cultures. In this manner they point to fundamental dimensions of being: to Being Itself as the unique existent in whom the alienated can be reunited, to the logos which founds subjectivity without an estranging selfishness, and to the spirit through whom human freedom can be creative in history. Remembrance and celebration of this heritage provides needed inspiration and direction both for any in power which might be indifferent to the needs of the poor and alienated and for the alienated poor themselves. On this basis they can reach out in mutual comprehension, reconciliation and concern to form a social unity marked by emancipation and peace.

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NOTES

1. *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking for Truth in the Sciences*, Parts I and II; and*Meditations on the First Philosophy*, Meditation I, in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, E.S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, trans. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969).

2. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1975) pp. 241-45.

3. John Caputo, "A Phenomenology of Moral Sensibility: Moral Emotion," George F. McLean, Frederick Ellrod et al., eds., *Act and Agent: Philosophical Foundations for Moral Education and Character Development* (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Education and The University Press of America, l986), pp. 199-222.

4. Gadamer, pp. 245-53.

5. *Ibid*. Gadamer emphasizes knowledge as the basis of tradition in contrast to those who would see it pejoratively as the result of arbitrary will. It is important to add to knowledge the free acts which, e.g., give birth to a nation and shape the attitudes and values of successive generations. As an example one might cite the continuing impact had by the Magna Carta through the Declaration of Independence upon life in North America, or of the Declaration of the Rights of Man in the national life of so many countries.

6. *Ibid*., p. 254.

7. *Ibid*., p. 258.

8. *Ibid*., pp. 278-86.

9. *Ibid*., pp. 261-64.

10. *Ibid*., pp. 267-71, 235-34.

11. *Ibid*., pp. 325-32.

12. *Ibid*., pp. 335-40.

13. *Ibid*., pp. 324-25.

14. *Ibid.*

15. Paul Ricoeur, "Hermeneutics and the Critique of Ideology" in J.B. Thompson, ed., *Paul Ricoeur, Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 82, 90-91.

16. *Ibid*., pp. 92-93.

17. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Boston: Beacon, 1971), pp. 196-97.

18. *Ibid*., p. 211.

19. Habermas, "Wahrheitstheorien," in *Wirklichkeit und Reflexion* (Pfulligen: Neske, 1973), p. 232. Thomas A. McCarthy,*Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press, 1978), p. 307.

20. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. J. Viertel (Boston: Beacon, 1973), pp. 150-51.

21. See McCarthy, p. 307.

22. Habermas, *Knowledge*, pp. 275-79.

23. *Ibid*., pp. 280-81.

24. *Ibid*., pp. 196-201.

25. *Ibid*., pp. 208-209.

26. Habermas, *Theory and Practice.*

27. See Niklos Luhman's argument for nonparticipatory social planning, *Theorie der Gesellschaft oder Sozialtechnologie was Leistet die Systemforsehung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971): see McCarthy, *Critical Theory*, pp. 222-31.

28. *Ibid*., pp. 1-11 and 383.

29. J. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon, 1975), p. 72.

30. *Ibid*., pp. 369-82.

31. Ricoeur.

32. Lawrence Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought," in T. Mishel, ed., *Cognitive Development and Epistemology* (New York: Academic Press, 1971), pp. 151-236.

33. Ricoeur, p. 97.

34. *Ibid*., pp. 99 and 100.

CHAPTER II

CULTURE, POWER AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

TIMOTHY READY

INTRODUCTION

At birth, human beings are the most incompetent of all creatures on earth. We are born with no understanding of the nature of our surroundings, nor what must be done in order to survive. The infant is totally dependent on other people to provide for his/her basic needs and gradually to teach the cultural code that provides the necessary but arbitrary definitions of the way things are and the way things ought to be.[1] This artificial construction of reality[2] which we call culture is largely, but not totally shared by the members of a society. Culture provides the rationale in terms of which people in different segments of society pursue their interests and define their relationships to each other and to nature.

Paradoxically, this distinctly human capacity for culture separates us from others with equally arbitrary symbolic elaborations of what is and ought to be. Indeed, differences in values and conventional understandings frequently have led to intra- and inter-societal conflict. Conversely, common understandings and values among members of a society, or segments thereof, are conducive to peaceful social intercourse. Conflict may be resolved or averted by appeal to commonly held beliefs and values. Given this brief description of the characteristics and functions of culture, however, it must be recognized that no-one has ever seen a culture. Cultures are not things. As a system of commonly shared meanings and understandings, culture is neither energy nor matter, and therefore does not exist as such. Rather, the concept of culture, itself, is a human artifact in the form of a symbol. It is an imperfect tool, like that which the concept denotes. The concept of culture facilitates our understanding of some aspects of the human condition, but is less useful in regards to others.

Presently, there is conflict and widespread violation of human rights in much of Central America. Neither of these conditions are especially new to the region, but in recent years both have entered a more acute phase. It would be ethnocentric to argue that these endemic problems are caused primarily by the culture(s) of Central America. Similarly, it would be unrealistic to hope that, by itself, reflection on the positive aspects of a cultural heritage will eliminate conflict and guarantee human rights.

The countries of Central America have unique, although related histories and cultures. The seven nations of the region are composed of varying mixtures of peoples derived from many different cultures: Spanish as well as various Indian cultures, African cultures, and even Anglo-Saxon culture. Over time, distinct syncretic combinations of these cultures have developed in each of the Central American countries and in regions within them. Variations correspond as well to ethnic identity and social class.

But it is not just cultures that have come together in this region; people have come together. From the beginning of the colonial era to the present, fate has brought together in a common social and economic system peoples with varying amounts of economic, juridical and military power. Each of these peoples has had its own interests to pursue, but the degree of success that each has had has been anything but equal. Specifically, the political, economic and social structures of the region, and the shared systems of meaning and values that comprise the region's

cultures, have been profoundly influenced by colonialism.[3] It is argued that both the causes and solutions for human rights violations in Central America can best be understood, not by reflection upon the values of a single culture, but in terms of the relative power of individuals and other social entities with somewhat different cultural premises, values and interests.

COLONIALISM, NEOCOLONIALISM, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

One of the first to chronicle the devastating effects of colonialism was the former Spanish soldier turned priest, Bartolome de Las Casas. In his *Brevissima Relacion de la Destruycion de las Indias,* published in 1552, Las Casas argued that the cruelty with which the indigenous population of the Americas had been treated led to the death of 15 to 20 million people. Modern accounts of the colonial era claim that the indigenous population of Mesoamerica decreased from approximately 25 million in 1500 to 600,000 in 1620.[4] Although this decline has been attributed to the spread of European diseases to a population without immunological protection, it is undoubtedly true that the various institutions of forced labor and/or massive resettlement (e.g. *reduccion, encomienda, corregimiento, mita*) greatly debilitated the population due to poor nutrition and the general disruption of society.[5] In Central America, the greatest concentration of indians was (and is) in highland Guatemala. In other areas, such as the Atlantic lowlands where the Spanish colonizers found that the indigenous workforce was inadequate in number, 1.5 million slaves were imported from Africa to work on plantations.[6] Although the colonial enterprise was legitimized in terms of Christianizing the Americas, and there were attempts by people like Las Casas to make colonial rule more humane, it is clear that the basic rationale underlying the pursuits of the Spanish Crown and of the colonists was fundamentally exploitative. Indians who did not become attached to the land of *criolle hacendados* as virtual serfs were forcibly resettled in nucleated hamlets to facilitate the collection of tribute[7]. Indians, especially those who were least exposed to the "civilizing effects" of colonial society, were typically labelled as unintelligent ("gente sin razon") or uncivilized ("no civilizados").[8]

The economies and societies of what later were to become the Central American states were geared to mercantilist demands dictated from Europe.[9] From the beginning, not only was there little concern for the development of a system of production and of trade to meet the internal needs of the colonies themselves, but the Crown also insured continuing dependence by prohibiting trade among the colonies, and between the colonies and other European nations.[10] Priority was given to the production of commodities for export rather than foodstuffs and other goods necessary for the well-being of the colonists. In Guatemala large numbers of Indians fled to remote "regions of refuge" to escape colonial administration.[11] Most of the indigenous population of other Central American nations, however, was either killed or detached from their communities and assimilated into an emerging mestizo or ladino culture.[12]

After Spain lost control of its Central American colonies in the 1820s, most of Central America was briefly united in a common state. Soon, however, regional criolle elites asserted their control and their independence from each other.[13] With the possible exception of Costa Rica, which was an area of little interest to the Spanish and in which great disparities of wealth between an urban elite and rural masses never emerged,[14] history suggests that the contemporary economic, social and political structures of the Central American nations have been profoundly influenced by the 300 years of colonial rule.[15]

As was observed by anthropologists Eric Wolf and Edward Hansen, the nations of Latin America, including those of Central America, developed "enclave economies" since gaining their

formal independence from Spain.[16] For example, the economies of the Central American nations became dependent on the export of one or two agricultural commodities, such as bananas, coffee, cotton and sugar.[17] In the Twentieth Century the presence of representatives of multinational corporations and national business leaders affiliated with the enclave economy led to the concentration of educational and medical resources along with economic and political power in the capital cities of each nation.[18] Cities such as Guatemala City, San Salvador and Managua come to be perceived by many in their respective countries as centers of modernity, and repositories of Western civilization. In contrast, lacking these resources, the impoverished countryside came to be perceived as having not yet benefitted from modernization.[19] Poverty, with its attendant chronic malnutrition, endemic infectious diseases and high infant mortality rates, was associated with the maintenance of a "traditional" way of life, particularly in regions inhabited by culturally and linguistically different indigenous peoples.

However, as has been argued by Rodolfo Stavenhagen, the absence of "modernization" is not the cause of poverty in places like highland Guatemala. Rather, the poverty of the countryside is primarily attributable to the gross inequality in access to productive resources such as land.[20] Decisions were made by political and economic elites to produce export commodities in order to earn foreign exchange to acquire imported goods for which there is a demand in the domestic market. This ignores the unfortunate fact that a large percentage of the population of the Central American nations either does not participate in the enclave economy or earns very low wages as landless itinerant laborers. They do not have the earning power to make their needs for adequate nutrition and shelter felt in the marketplace. Without structural changes in access to productive resources economic growth and modernization are not likely to rectify these problems. In the l980's, however, both episodic and endemic structural problems have, not only inhibited economic growth, but caused profound economic contraction in the region.

CULTURE AND GOOD WILL

It would be neither accurate nor fair to say that the economic and political leaders of the Central American nations are unconcerned about the malnutrition and disease endemic to the region. All the governments have tried to promote modernization and economic growth. Indeed, from 1960 until the start of the present decade, the absolute size of the economies of all of the Central American states (measured in terms of changes in the gross domestic product) increased substantially.[21] However, since the economies of almost all Latin America have been shrinking during most of the l980's, with even more drastic declines in the Central American nations engulfed in war, per capita incomes recently have registered a marked decline. These standard measures of the "health of economies," however, do not address the question of the distribution of wealth. It cannot be assumed that the poor benefit even when there is growth in the economy. Nonetheless, with the exception of Nicaragua, government planners and businessmen continue to attempt to promote modernization and economic growth primarily through private enterprise.

The political and military conflicts that have engulfed Nicaragua, E1 Salvador and Guatemala all have their unique historical antecedents. However, all of these conflicts share many fundamental predisposing factors. Among these are the domestic maldistribution of productive resources and wealth, demographic expansion, international recession, high interest rates, unstable prices for export commodities, trade imbalances, and ever-increasing international indebtedness. Access to food, shelter and basic health care are the most basic human rights, yet

these have not been secured for a large proportion of the population of the Central American states.

Although it is undoubtedly true that few would wish to deny these rights to the poor of the region, the previously mentioned chronic structural problems in fact do deny to the poor access to these rights. As noted by the anthropologist, Richard N. Adams, structure can be defined as that which is perceived to be beyond the control of individual human beings.[23] Social, economic and political structures, of course, have dynamic properties that must be understood in their own terms. Yet these structures, when stripped of their mystifying appearance of legitimacy and unalterability, can and should be understood in human terms. Fundamentally, these structures are the habitual patterns in which human beings, each of whom think, feel, laugh, cry, and who have their own hopes and dreams, relate to each other.[24]

As documented by anthropologist Michael Richards in the case of Guatemala, the brutal repression of rural poor people challenging the legitimacy of existing economic and political structures is legitimized in terms of the noble struggle to defend city-based Western Civilization from the barbarism of the rural poor.[25] However, in an ethnographic study of a Guatemalan Indian community conducted more than 20 years ago, Manning Nash found that the maintenance of a distinctive rural and Indian culture is not inconsistent with modernization or economic growth.[26] Indeed, among the peasantry of Central America, relatively isolated rural communities have had an insulating and protective effect in relation to the national society. The rich folk traditions associated with such communities have long provided meaning to people considered marginal in terms of national society and facilitated self provisioning of basic needs.[27]

ln the face of continuing demographic growth and maldistribution of the ownership of land, however, life in these rural communities is becoming more tenuous. Increasingly, the rural poor are forced to leave their communities, become itinerant laborers, or join the ranks of the unemployed. Some have sought work in other countries, including the United States. In Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, many have come to the conclusion that the present social structure is unjust, and have found support for their conclusions in the Church, especially in Christian "base communities." Both in recent years and in the more distant past, many have sought change through nonviolent resistance. Typically, they have met with little success and much brutality.[28] With many now taking up arms, the social order, as repressive as it may have been, is being seriously challenged. Violent threats against human life have become commonplace. Despite some recent tentative steps toward democracy in the region, the likelihood of establishing peace with justice in the foreseeable future is far from certain.

JUSTICE AND NONVIOLENT RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT

The theologian, Leonardo Boff, has defined justice in the following way: "Justice is the minimum amount of love without which relations between people cease being human and become transformed into violence" (translation mine).[29] In a region so thoroughly steeped in the Christian tradition, virtually all parties immersed in conflict justify their actions in terms of Christianity. Like all cultural traditions, the Christian tradition of Central America has many variations, and certain values may be interpreted differently by persons in different positions in society. Few people could tolerate believing that they were personally responsible for injustice or for denying others their human rights. Rather, the distinctive pattern of cultural knowledge and beliefs of persons in different segments of society tends to justify the behavior expected of one in such circumstances. The affluent, and those whose interests are allied with what Wolf and

Hansen called the "enclave economy," believe that justice is best served by opposing threats to the existing institutional structure which they perceive as the bulwark of Western civilization. For those who have suffered the insecurity, deprivation and humiliation of poverty, justice is more likely to be conceived in terms of eliminating the institutional structure that has failed to insure their basic human rights.

Is this conflict caused then by the culture? Would reflection upon the cultural heritage bring about justice and end the conflict? As stated above, it is not reasonable to argue that the conflicts of Central America primarily are caused by culture, although surely the distinctive understandings and values of participants in the conflict help to perpetuate them. Cultural justifications correspond to the historically derived structures--structures of external dependence and internal hierarchy that are the heritage of the colonial era. Reflection on that colonial heritage may be useful in enhancing understanding of a social and economic structure that has marginalized a large segment of the population. However, analyses of modern nonviolent social movements suggest that the likelihood of their succeeding depends largely on the resources that are available to dramatically demonstrate that it is no longer viable to maintain structures of oppression.[30] Privileged groups must be made to perceive both the moral bankruptcy and the material impracticality of maintaining the status quo.[331]

No social system is capable of meeting all the needs and wants of all its people. It is the nature of society that the interests of individuals and groups will come into conflict. Thus, social structural change to eradicate injustice such as occurred with the Sandinista revolution will almost inevitably lead to calls for further change to protect the rights and interests of one group or another. However, in considering the possible causes and solutions to these problems, covert and overt economic and military subversion against Nicaragua, sponsored by the U.S. government, obviously must be taken into account; so must the reaction of the Nicaraguan government in seeking assistance from Soviet block countries at the risk of falling into a new form of dependence to an external power. The guerrilla warfare and the constant American intervention underscore once again the main point of this paper: the primary causes of the conflicts in the region are not cultural misunderstandings and are not likely to be resolved solely by reflection on positive aspects of the cultural heritage. Rather, the problems of Central America must be understood in terms of groups, both inside and outside of the region, who have conflicting interests and grossly unequal power, and who pursue those interests in a context of economic and military dependency.

If it is accepted that justice, as defined by Leonardo Boff, is worth pursuing, then deliberate efforts to eliminate violence from relations between human beings necessitates, at the least, that sufficient concern be manifested about the problems of the region such that those involved try to understand how their actions, in the context of existing structures, affect others. However, as Jurgen Habermas noted in a critique of his own work, knowledge acquired in the process of self reflection is not a sufficient condition for social transformation.[32] Social transformation requires that knowledge of how interests influence cultural premises be complemented by capability--by power.[33]

In conjunction with reflection, the people of the United States can do little more, but should do nothing less, than support policies that place priority on the defense of human rights and the provision of basic human needs. Given the history of domination that the U.S. has exerted over the region since World War I,[34] it would be presumptuous for North Americans to suggest what the people of Central America should do. Besides the ongoing armed conflict, nonviolent action against injustice continues within El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Much of the power--potential and actual--of such organizations as Servicio Paz y Justicia, and Guatemala's Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo is derived from their association with religious institutions, leaders, and values. Although the support for these organizations by the Christian churches, as institutions, has varied from time to time and place to place,[35] the cultural heritage of the Christian message has been, in recent years, a powerful force for change. The transforming power of the church is limited, however, by the fact that the conflicts of the region are reflected in the Church, itself. The endemic violence of poverty, as well as the acute violence of warfare presently show few signs of abating. Nonetheless, it appears that reliance upon the Christian Church, both as cultural heritage and institution that bridges the boundaries of class, ethnicity and nationality, is perhaps the most viable means of promoting the reflection that is necessary and the structural social transformation required to bring peace with justice to Central America.

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CHAPTER III

HISTORY, POLITICS AND NATION-MAKING IN CENTRAL AMERICA

JAMES D. RILEY

The troubled politics of most Central American nations have been poorly understood by many observers and subjected to a range of ideological interpretations. To those of the Left, the upheavals are perfectly described by dependency theory and seen as the result of foreign economic domination--mainly by the U.S. In alliance with local allies, this is seen as attempting to prevent legitimate reforms and the rise of strong national states which could contest its economic control of the region. To the Right, the situation is a textbook case of Marxist intrigue in which the Soviet Union, using its surrogate, Cuba, supports violent revolution and stirs the troubled waters formed of legitimate social grievances and inevitable economic problems. Its attempt is both to create trouble for the United States, and to establish docile satellites in the affected region. What joins these two views is a belief that the most significant causes of instability come from outside the region.

In this paper, I would like to suggest another way of viewing the problems, one in which instability is the result of an internal dynamic of change. In each country this involves a struggle to cope with a changing sense of national identity which requires a redefinition of national purpose and a restructuring of national institutions to serve that purpose. The Central American states are, in effect, undergoing the same type of quest which was undertaken in the United States 200 years ago. Just as its constitution represents a uniquely American solution to its problems, so too will the Nicaraguan, Guatemalan, Honduranean and Salvadoranean solutions. (It would appear that Costa Rica has already found its own.)

* The term "Nation-making" used in the title appears inelegant and, perhaps, imprecise; but it was carefully chosen by the author rather than the more common "Nation Building" or "National Formation" because of a truth it conveys. We are delving into a process which has more in common with an artisan craft than a construction project. The hands of the artist mold and change the shape of his creation as he goes along, and no two creations--even made by the same artist--are alike. In contrast, the builder follows a preconceived plan which can be replicated by others *ad infinitum*. So it is with nations. They are shaped and reshaped by people involved in an ongoing historical process, not constructed according to a preconceived formula or evolving in a steady movement toward a Platonic ideal.

THE COLONIAL PATTERNS

The concept of the Nation-State is a foreign import to Central America. During the pre-Colombian period, the Indian societies in Central America advanced little beyond the tribal or independent village level.[1] At various times conquest kingdoms--the Quiche being the most notable of the local variant--developed, but they invariably disintegrated and left relatively untouched the basic loyalties of the people to their tribe, village or clan (calpulli-chinamit). Moreover, although the Indians of Guatemala and Honduras were intimately involved in the trade patterns of Meso-america because of the cacao which could be grown on the Pacific Coast, the result of commerce was not the growth of regional unity, but rather conquest. The Lingua

Franca of Central America became Nahuatl, a vestige of the establishment of trading colonies of Teotihuacanos, Toltecs and, ultimately, Aztecs in the region.[2]

The lack of any large scale regional confederations such as dominated central Mexico, combined with the disunity of Spanish conquest groups, made the Spanish occupation of Central America both difficult and costly. First of all, rather than one conquest, there were several. The defeat of major groups such as the Quiche or the Cakchiquel did not pacify the region because they controlled relatively little territory; consequently, more *entradas* to deal with lesser tribes were necessary so that warfare extended for a long period of time. Moreover, the character of the Spanish conquest differed dramatically from that of Mexico. Competing groups assaulted Central America from both north and south. Finding no great kingdoms to be controlled or wealth to be distributed, they used the region's human and material resources for further exploits outside the region, particularly in the Peruvian campaigns. The fact that the conquistadores had no particular interest or concern in maintaining and nurturing the Indian groups--as they did, for example, in Mexico and Peru--gave the early conquest period its particularly rapacious character, numerous examples of which would grace the writings of Bartolomé de las Casas.

The ultimate result of the conquest combined with the short-lived boom in Cacao demographically and socially to devastate the region. The wars, enslavement and forced movements of Indians, and disease combined to destroy populations. In less settled regions such as Nicaragua and Honduras, populations fell from the range of 200-400,000[3] prior to contact to approximately 20-25,000 in each by 1590. The population of Costa Rica declined from an estimated 80,000 in 1563 to scarcely 1,000 in 1714.[4]

The much larger and more organized populations of Guatemala and El Salvador suffered as badly and by the beginning of the seventeenth century were also a fraction of their former size. In the Cacao province of Soconusco (in El Salvador), despite heavy forced immigration of Indians to maintain the labor force, the tributary population fell from a pre-conquest estimate of 30,000 to only 2,000 in 1613.[5] In the highlands, the village of Santiago Atitlan declined from 12,000 tributaries in 1524 to 1,000 in 1585.[6]

By 1600, the demographic face of Central America had changed considerably from what it had been in 1500. Guatemala and El Salvador which had enjoyed population densities rivaling those of modern times, had been reduced to a shadow of that condition. Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica were almost totally depopulated creating vast unused grasslands in southern Central America.

The Indians who remained alive in the North as the sixteenth century closed were also in vastly different social and economic circumstances. Much of the pre-Colombian political and social structure had been destroyed. Obviously, the Spanish went about the task of dismantling any political organization which could rival them; consequently, any nobility above that of the village disappeared. The social structure within the villages also changed. Spaniards relied on local nobles--caciques--as intermediaries between the Spanish and the Indian worlds, but economic pressures from both above and below soon reduced this nobility to the level of the *macehuales*. Consequently, the villages became an undifferentiated economic mass and in governance tribal chiefs were replaced by elders.

The consequence of the century of tragedy was to destroy the pre-Colombian cultures and any basis for reestablishing the pre-conquest unities which had existed. In addition, the new societies which were created by the Spanish presence had only the most ephemeral unity and inter-community contact. While Spaniards searched for the "produit moteur" which would bring them prosperity, great demands were made on the Indian communities--forcing them to relate to

the outside world and to engage in a larger market economy. But by the middle of the seventeenth century, the search for valuable commodities had been shown to be a failure and Central America lapsed into a period of somnolence which by and large would last until the late nineteenth century.

During this period of quiet, considerable cultural and political fragmentation developed. The only city of note, Santiago de Guatemala (Antigua), was purely an administrative capital. Lacking any "produit moteur," the region relied almost totally on subsidies from Mexico to maintain a cash economy. With this flimsy basis, Santiago supported only a very small economic hinterland, extending little beyond the Valle de Guatemala itself. Eventually, those who could not flee the region entirely retreated back to the countryside where they maintained themselves in a condition of self-sufficiency. In regions of Guatemala, haciendas were established which continued to place cultural and economic pressures on Indian communities, but the small ranchers who populated Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras were poverty-stricken economic refugees and possessed little contact with each other, much less with the outside world. Nominally Spanish, they nevertheless would have been scarcely recognized as ethnic brothers by the small elite of Santiago and its hinterland. The hispanicized populations were very small; at the end of the seventeenth century, the capital, Santiago, counted scarcely 1,000 vecinos (roughly equivalent to free adult males): Granada in Nicaragua sheltered only 200; Cartago in Costa Rica, 600; San Salvador, 200.[7]Compared to Mexico they scarcely qualified as villages.

In much of the Indian heartland, the demands made on the Indian communities effectively ceased--there was no need for Indian labor and no cash to be soaked from them. The result was that the farther one got from Santiago--Western Guatemala is a good example--the more Indian communities went their own way. With few commercial possibilities, villages became increasingly self-sufficient economically and isolated even from each other.

In practice, the formal political unity of Central America was non-existent. Indian communities were self-governed and, except when it was unavoidable, turned only infrequently to any outside political authority. In the ladino regions of Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, political life revolved around the cabildo of the dominant town. With little possibility of appeal to Santiago because of distance and poverty, necessary political and judicial decisions were made at the town level. The politics of the cabildo and *corregimiento* were also of interest because, in societies which lacked any economic bases for status, possession of office (both civil and ecclesiastical) offered not only a small salary and some economic opportunities, but also prestige. This is reflected in the colonial rivalries which would plague areas such as Nicaragua after independence.

The ultimate situation, to quote Macleod, was a Central America that was rural, self-sufficient, poor for the most part, fragmented politically and economically, and culturally introverted. It was during this period that the basis was laid for the modern . . . political and economic divisions of the area, and for the cultural cleavage between `Indian' and `ladino' which hampers Guatemalan nationhood to this day.[8]

Central America achieved its independence as an afterthought. When Mexico obtained its independence in 1821, Spanish authorities in Guatemala, in effect, simply left. Initially, Central America fell into the Mexican "Empire," but in 1823 declared its independence, forming a Federation. Each of the modern nations was a state of that federation.

The transition was managed by the work of the small intellectual and economic elite of Santiago which represented the only group in the region with some intellectual sense of how one went about constructing a nation.[9] For most of the Central American states, little changed as a

result of independence and little thought was given to organization and purpose. The dominant town became the state capital and the families who had previously vied for positions on the Cabildo now vied for positions in the state government. With few economic ties and only a weak political attachment, integration into the federation was formal at best.

In the 1840s the Central American Federation formally broke apart and the states became nations.[10] Governors were now presidents; but again very little thought was given to political organization and there was no real concept of the "Nation" and its purpose.

The difficulties of modern times stem in part from the attitudes and concerns of the political elites of that time. Thus, in order to consider the failures of "Nation-Making" and how and why elites created systems which excluded the mass of the population, it behooves us to consider the period since 1840 in more detail. However, because an individual consideration of each country is beyond the scope of a short essay of this sort, I would like to select a single country--Guatemala--to illustrate the basic point I am trying to make. Only in Guatemala were ideological labels--liberal and conservative--of any meaning, and only there was there any real struggle concerning the proper structure and purpose of government. Guatemalans tried to create a "nation" at that time, and because it is in so much difficulty at the moment its failures are of more than passing interest.

GUATEMALA AND NATIONAL PURPOSE

Interestingly, Guatemalan liberals such as Mariano Galvez perceived that government existed to promote the well-being of the total population and had promoted the economic and social development of the region.[11] However, Galvez's concept of development required adoption of European (read British) culture and mores. He considered the Indian majority benighted and colonial institutions, including the Church, responsible. Therefore, he set about encouraging European colonization and exploitation of the lowlands, in addition to modernization of the political institutions of the country. The attack on the Catholic Church, especially, provoked a reaction from the Indian population which played a principal role in ousting the liberals, destroying the federation, and bringing to power a conservative caudillo, Rafael Carrera.

Carrera's power rested on his respect for religion and his pledge to defend Indian "liberties," i.e., their right to continue to live in isolation and independently of the ladino community. Unfortunately, when Carrera died in 1865, the Indian communities were incapable of reuniting to defend those "liberties." Their lack of interest in controlling the central government and participating in national life would be their undoing.[12]

Liberal caudillos, of which Justo Rufino Barros was the most notable, were able to impose "Progress" and establish ladino domination of national institutions. For several reasons the Indian majority did not effectively oppose harsh and exploitative measures imposed by the national government in pursuit of economic development. First, there was the disunity of Indian culture which made effective alliances, even between neighboring villages, almost impossibile except when confronted with a direct attack on the core traditions, such as happened when the liberals attempted to tamper with religion in the 1830s. Second, the liberals of the Barros era had no wish to destroy Indian culture and traditions. In fact, although they created policies which would send 100,000 Indians a year from the Highlands to the *Boca Costa* to work as migrants on coffee plantations, the government of Barros did everything it could to see that this migration did not destroy village life.[13]

The assault from the outside led the Indian community to turn even more strongly inward and to seek as few contacts with the outside world as possible. The defensive Indian community, as Nash describes it,[14] was able to protect its membership, but at the cost of isolation from the mainstream of National life, poverty, and inability to defend itself when the ladino community decided that community resources were worth the cost of appropriation. Thus, the two worlds remained psychologically and physically separated and utterly disdained each other.

What kept the ethnic division from erupting into open strife and allowed a relatively "stable" set of governmental institutions to continue was the fact that Guatemala enjoyed economic development only in peripheral regions. Thus, the broader impact of development was slow to appear. It was not until after 1940 that an urban middle sector emerged to question the older institutions. More importantly, it was not until after 1940 that incipient modernization made Indian labor and Indian land sufficiently valuable to merit wholesale assault on Indian communities and their traditions.

Much of the current strife in Guatemala is the result of unrestrained expropriation of Indian resources which began in the 1950s.[15] Traditional methods of resistance have failed to throw back these assaults and the Indian communities, increasingly frustrated and frightened concerning the future of their way of life, have joined in the violence of the guerrilla war.

PROBLEMS OF NATION-MAKING

The purpose of this brief analysis of Guatemalan history is to bring into focus the issue of nationhood and its relation to structures. Throughout the history of Guatemala there had been a division between Indian and Ladino. After independence the Ladino elite dominated the institutions of the state and conducted a series of policies in line with their perceptions of the interest of the nation. This provoked no violence from the Indian community, not because they were not capable of violence --their support of Carrera belies that--but because they had no interest in the "Nation" and did not perceive Ladino control and policies as fundamentally dangerous to things they considered important. They were used to exploitation in the form of labor levies and taxes; they had had long centuries of experience with outsiders making demands on them. But they had developed a series of methods for dealing with the demands of outsiders which moderated exploitation and allowed them to maintain the essentials of their world as they saw fit.

Within the Ladino community, political power was exercised by a small elite and usually in an authoritarian manner. The regimes of Barros and Ubico had much in common with those of the colonial governors. Political stability within the Ladino community was the result of essentially satisfied expectations. However, modernization created a middle sector in Guatemala which increasingly desired participation in national institutions. It is these groups--intellectuals, small entrepreneurs, urban workers and bureaucrats--who provided the basic support for the ladino reform movements of Juan Arevalo and Jacobo Arbenz. Thus in the 1940s and 1950s, conflict increasingly emerged not only between Ladinos and Indians, but also within the Ladino community itself. Violence erupted because the old style of politics could neither incorporate the new demands of the Ladino community, nor deal with the protests of the Indians. The contending parties had no traditional way of talking to each other or of resolving peacefully the problems of each group.

The only possible tactic in this situation is intimidation, the lack of success of which has increased the rigidity of the old elite and the polarization of society. Tragically, the United

States, by labeling it a struggle of Communists vs. Democrats, exacerbated the problem in 1954 by abetting the overthrow of the last democratically elected government of the country. The government of Castillo Armas, who was so disliked as to be assassinated by his palace guard in 1957, initiated a series of military dictatorships whose only solution to the problems until recently has been suppression.

The approach of the military and the old elites will not work. Short of exterminating the entire Indian population (50 per cent of the total population), and totally alienating the middle sectors, violence is not able to bring peace. Conversely, it is rather doubtful that the guerrillas can succeed in exterminating the dominant Ladino groups. Rather, the contending parties have to find a way of incorporating their interests and cultures into a common political system--one which might not be democratic in character--and a shared sense of nationhood. If there is no other basis for nationhood, one might be found in shared distrust with a recognition that the other is not going to go away. Certainly no one can rewrite Guatemalan history to say that the Indian and Ladino communities share a common past and bond of brotherhood. The violence of the past must be recognized, but so too must the dangers and futility of violence in the future.

I have dwelt upon the Guatemalan situation because the lack of nationhood and the polarization of the communities is so apparent. But, while the dynamic is different in each case, the same constitutional issue and historical process is operative in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

In Nicaragua, for example, the basis for conflict is not ethnic, but rather a traditional political system based on family rivalries.[16] Even during the colonial period, elite families of Leon and Granada vied for control of local offices because, in a money-poor environment which lacked any economic basis for prestige, governmental office provided the only employment and the only way in which elites could distinguish themselves. After independence, these elite families would label themselves Liberal and Conservative, but the labels had little ideological content and their feuds little meaning. The vast majority of the Ladino population lived in rustic isolation as subsistence peasants and ignored these petty feuds.

In the latter nineteenth century, however, the United States intervened for its own purposes and the game became more serious as the financial opportunities stemming from office holding increased. Unwittingly, in its pursuit of its own security and believing that it was fostering democracy, the United States gave one of the players--Anastasio Somoza Garcia--a tool to end the competition.

The *Guardia Nacional* with its monopoly on force stopped the petty warfare, but the political attitudes of the elite remained unchanged. Possession of office brought no concern for the public welfare beyond the welfare of the elites occupying the posts. Despite development, that attitude did not change. As in Guatemala, the emergence of the middle classes during the l950s and 1960s created tensions when peasants, hertofore outside the process, began to lose their lands to outsiders and to be forced into the cities as laborers.

The ultimate consequence of the economic process was that new groups desired a role in the political processes in order to protect their own interests. Instead of being granted entry, however, exploitation increased and became more arbitrary when Anastasio Somoza Debayle took power. He fell because his rapacity alienated even those elites who had supported his father.

The success of that revolution did not resolve the problem of political structures. The parties which combined as anti-somocistas--the FSLN, the traditional elites, and the newly emerged peasants--still have not found a constitutional system or political process which could incorporate all their interests. Thus, the civil war continues.

My point is that this is a uniquely Nicaraguan problem that must be solved by Nicaraguans. The fact that Costa Rica is not involved and is at peace, despite having much the same colonial heritage, ethnic situation and environment, proves this point. Costa Ricans found a system growing out of their own unique tradition.[17]

SOLUTIONS?

Is there any historical precedent for negotiations and compromise between social groups without a shared sense of nationhood and a constitution culturally and politically acceptable to all important groups in the society? In my estimation, the answer is yes: Mexico went through precisely these struggles in the early twentieth century and its constitution of 1917, with subsequent political interpretation from 1917 to 1940, offers an instructive case of how contending groups, while disdainful of each other, can find a constitutional *modus vivendi*.[18]

The Mexican case is instructive in several ways. First, prior to 1910 the existing constitutional system as well as its political implementation failed to recognize the legitimate interests of an Indian sub-culture. The elites who wrote the constitutions of the nineteenth century were urban, secular and Creole (white) in origin and considered it irrelevant--or regressive--that the majority of the country was rural, intensely Catholic, and Indo-mestizo. As in Guatemala, political relations were characterized by disdain for the others' traditions, and on the part of the dominant creole class, an attempt to exterminate those traditions. Nevertheless, between 1917 and 1940, this dominant creole elite found a way of coming to terms with traditions it abhorred.

Second, while exploitation and considerable disparities in the distribution of income continue (Mexico has the most mal-distributed income of any country in Latin America), political scientists report that there is wide acceptance of the political system and very little interest in violent revolution.

Third, the process of developing these compromises on which political peace was based was a very violent one, and one which the United States labeled as "Communist"--actually Bolshevik--and tried to stop.[19]

Finally, Mexico's solution to its problem produced a political system which both functions as a modernizing force and can be seen as compatible with the political traditions of the older communities. Rather than following a North American model totally, or a European ideology such as Socialism or Corporatism, it probably can be described best as an authoritarian democracy. It is an eclectic solution and works precisely because Mexicans ignored foreign entanglements, both ideological and political, and came up with pragmatic solutions to problems which reflected Mexican realities and Mexican traditions.

This final point is my basis for believing that the Central American states can do likewise.

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NOTES

1. This analysis generally follows Murdo MacLeod, *Spanish Central America: A Socioeconomic History, 1520-1720*(Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1973).

2. *Ibid*., p. 28.

3. *Ibid*., charts, pp. 53, 59.

4. *Ibid*., p. 332.

5. *Ibid*., p. 71.

6. *Ibid*., p. 131.

7. *Ibid*., p. 218.

8. *Ibid*., p. 309.

9. The best study of these attitudes is found in William Griffith, *Empires in the Wilderness: Foreign Colonization and Development in Guatemala, 1834-1844* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1965).

10. Two good studies of the dynamics of political processes are Thomas L. Karnes, *The Failure of Union: Central America 1824-1960* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1961); and Miles-Wortman, *Government and Society in Central America, 1680-1840* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1982).

11. Consult Griffin.

12. E. Bradford Burns, *The Poverty of Progress* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980).

13. Two articles by David McCreery detail the impact of development on Indian populations. "Coffee and Class: The Structure of Development in Liberal Guatemala," *HAHR*, 56 (1976), 438-460; and "Debt Servitude in Rural Guatemala, 1876-1936," *HAHR*, 63 (1983), 735-760.

14. Manning Nash, "The Impact of Mid-Nineteenth Century Economic Change Upon the Indians of Middle America," in Magnus Morner, ed., *Race and Class in Latin America* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1970).

15. Richard N. Adams, *Crucifixion by Power: Essays on the Guatemalan National Social Structure, 1944-1966* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1970).

16. On this dynamic, consult Thomas Walker, *Nicaragua: the Land of Sandino* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981); Richard Millett, *Guardians of the Dynasty* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1977); Lester Langley, *The United States and the Caribbean in the Twentieth Century* (Athens, Georgia: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1980).

17. For an interesting insight into the Costa Rican dynamic, see John Bell, *Crisis in Costa Rica: The 1948 Revolution* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1971).

18. Useful overviews include Ramon Ruiz, *The Great Rebellion* (New York: Norton Press, 1980); Frank Tannenbaum, *Mexico: the Struggle for Peace and Bread* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1950); and Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, *Democracy in Mexico* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970).

19. See particularly, Robert Freeman Smith, *The United States and Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico, 1916-1932* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972).

DISCUSSION OF RELATED ISSUES IN
HERMENEUTICS, HISTORY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND CULTURE

Different understandings of the relative importance of the three dimensions of the present problematic: political, economic and cultural, generate various understandings of the requirements for effective policy. In all cases, however, progress toward an effective resolution of present problems must overcome the hermeneutic impediments to effective interchange so that all parties, and hence all factors, in the conflict can be attended to in an effective manner. Without this progress stability in the region is not possible and the future would promise only a revolving succession of inherently unstable structures.

Political Dimensions of a Response

A number of reasons suggest that it may not be best to focus directly and abstractly upon economic equalization and social justice. As actual expectations, they are unrealistic and have never characterized the concrete human condition. Changes based upon these goals, e.g., in USSR, China and Cambodia, have led to massive progroms and loss of the cultural resources for rebuilding the nation. As a result a renewed effort is presently underway in China to recapture its neo-Confucian heritage and in the USSR to develop community, rather than mere social equality. More concretely for Central America, such proximate goals, by threatening the internal privileged elites and the external capitalist neighbors, generate political instability. The experience of Mexico over many decades shows that the rural populations will support enthusiastically a resolution despite extreme economic deprivation and inequality, provided certain conditions are met.

Therefore the focus of policy efforts might best be upon engaging the conflicting parties in a dialogue through which their diverse concerns can be identified and some compromise worked out which responds to, and harmonizes, their interests to the degree possible. In this the proximate norm of success would be pragmatic, namely, that which produces sufficient satisfaction in the various sectors of the populace to result in political stability.

A cultural element (see further development below) is important here inasmuch as the various peoples' vision of personal dignity and appropriate social relationships is central to their evaluative decisions regarding which social, political and economic conditions are, or which are not, acceptable. For example, in the Mexican experience the compromise which accommodated the rural poor included some land, some access to political power, and a tacit accommodation with the religious traditions of the people represented structurally by the Church and culturally by popular religiosity (e.g., such devotions as those related to Our Lady of Guadalupe).

Economic Dimensions of a Response.

Key economic changes which have taken place in the last 30 years include the development of cities, small industries, and commercial crops. These have made peasant labor commercially valuable, moving it progressively into the labor force and hence into the world economy. They also have given land new economic value and led to the reduction of land available to subsistence peasant farmers.

Corresponding to these changes, violence has appeared on a number of levels. On the structural level the impoverishment of groups is reflected in the burdens of migration, poverty, illiteracy, and ill health as manifested in the high rate of infant mortality and the low life expectancy. On the physical level the abuses of human rights and the killing increasingly manifest that in the past the passivity of the rural Indian population often was not acquiescence, but a technique for survival against a generalized threat, even of genocide. Finally, external ideological, economic and military pressures have destroyed past steps toward effective resolutions in terms of local circumstances and the preferences of the people.

In these conditions, not only of diverse and often conflicting interests, but of vastly unequal power, it is necessary to show that structures of oppression no longer are economically viable, and to equalize the competency--and hence the power--of the various groups as conditions for their effective participation in future development.

Here, the cultural factor provides the context for differentiating and relating the values and interests of groups. This is reduced in importance inasmuch as the economic changes which give labor the economic value of a commodity in production lead to an increasing tendency to identify the rural peasant and urban worker in terms of class. This, however, may be part of the problem. In any case, a solution in economic terms alone seems infeasible because demands for material gratification, being unlimited in extent and hence unable to be satisfied, are endlessly disruptive: no system will be capable of meeting all needs.

The Cultural Dimension of a Response

A culture consists ultimately in the characteristic self-understanding developed by a people of their proper dignity as mutually related to nature, to family and community, to the broader societies of the region and nation, and to their ultimate and generally religious horizon of meaning. As such it determines the appropriate mode and the relative importance of such factors as political participation, material possessions and spiritual expression. As this constitutes one's basic self-understanding, when it is threatened profound disruption and violent reactions follow. This was seen in the early Indian rebellion in Guatemala against the first liberal government of M. Galves. Because culture is pervasive it has many avenues for expression and transformation.

Culture and Modernization. The overarching and integrating problematic appears to be the developing coordination of life according to the structure of scientific reasoning, or the modernization of life, and the impact of this upon the more traditional cultures of a region. The most notable characteristics of such cultures include a self-concept in terms of extended family and village relations; a subsistence economy in which work was always available, though it provided meager sustenance; and a political structure reflective of family or clan relationships of responsibility or preference. In contrast, modernization expands the sense of individual independence and freedom, with notable implications for traditional customs, place of residence and political participation. It raises material expectations and new material and economic possibilities for land and labor, which at times can be personally damaging. In the socio-political order it generates an expectation of equality of participation and of impartiality on the part of the administration and its bureaucracy.

The tension between the culture and modernization means that peaceful progress cannot be had without a creative transformation of the traditional culture, i.e., the discovery of new

applications of the values of the old cultural identity so that they might live in new ways and acquire new meanings in the present and for the future.

Cultural Pluralism and National Unity. A first difficulty in drawing upon tradition for a process of reconciliation is the pluralism which characterizes the present—whether the diversity of ethnic cultures themselves or the diversity of the rural ethic cultures from that of the urban areas toward which the migration is generally directed. Do traditions divide us or can they be resources for adaptation and unity?

First there are certain points of common agreement based on the unity of the species. Further, a cultural horizon, understood as all that can be seen from one point of view, should not be a restriction or blinder but a perspective in and out of which one moves freely.

Most importantly, the various cultures, each in their own terms, have at their deepest level and in their highest expressions a sense of respect for human dignity, of hospitality, and of concern for others—in sum, of self-transcendence. This is reflected in their heroes and saints such as a Gandhi and a Mother Theresa. In turn, this raises the question of how to evoke the resources of a culture in a time of stress in order to change the attitude from one of polarization to one of cooperation in expressing the values in all traditions for the development of a broader, more inclusive community.

The concrete problem would appear to be: how to develop the ability of a people as a whole to draw upon its resources of reconciliation in the face of manipulative propaganda efforts (1) which create symbols in the service of more limited or questionable goals, (2) which develop a sense of estrangement and opposition between groups and horizons, and (3) which ignore the needs of other groups from whose exploitation one is profiting.

In view of the above, dialogue with other groups seems especially needed in order (1) to reveal the resources of our own traditions to ourselves, (2) to draw out the meaning of its principles, and (3) to make clear the egoism, selfishness and other unworthy motives and modes of action of which we have been largely unaware. In this the goal is to find areas of broad human concern which deepen national or group interests to a level at which we can begin to lay a basis upon which people can work together.

Dialogue and Reconciliation. In this light it becomes possible to see the need for the establishment of dialogue between diverse groups in order to work toward a mutually satisfactory response to their various interests. This must be sensitive to the cultural patterns, i.e., to the symbols of self-respect and codes of communication and consent in terms of which these interests are shaped and are able to be transformed. This will require deep sensitivity to popular values at the root of the Indian and Ladino heritages, and a desire to find the distinctive ways in which these can render humane and socially creative the rationalization of modern life presently underway.

To the *pragmatic political* elements of a solution this would add: (1) a deeper sensitivity to what one was being asked to compromise, (2) thence the possibility of search out ways in which important values and cultural forms can be adapted rather than rejected, (3) cultural resources for the social sacrifices needed in a time of change if social cohesion is to survive, and (4) the basis for dialogue as a non-violent route to hammering out a compromise.

To the *economic* elements of a solution this would add clarification of the distinctive patterns of cultural knowledge and beliefs which serve to justify the diverse evaluations and responses to circumstances. If left unclarified these lead only to conflict, but once clarified they

open the possibility at least of appropriate mutual concern and compromise. The cultural values must be called upon to reinforce the resources of human goodness as experienced and lived in the highest traditions and customs of the cultures, such as concern for the suffering and not being willing to be its cause. They can base thereby a willingness to look into the structural causes of suffering which derive from the inappropriate exercise of one's interest.

If no solution is feasible in terms of any one of these factors alone—economic, political or cultural—this could imply the need to work out an appropriate role for all three elements, and others to be considered below. This must be done on a basis which does not compromise any of the others, but by finding the appropriate role and contribution of each makes it possible to appreciate its full urgency. For example, after the pattern of the four causes it may help to distinguish and reunite the above elements as material cause (the economic factors), formal cause (political structures) and final cause (cultural values) in relation to the efficient causality exercised through dialogue in working out the vision on which peace can be built.

AN INTERCHANGE ON CULTURE

TIMOTHY READY and GEORGE F. McLEAN

T. Ready:

1. *Culture and human interests*: Culture is a human artifact in symbolic form; it is used by human beings to adapt to the environment. Therefore, the cultural premises shared by people (groups and societies) have adaptive value in relation to the environments being faced. Nonetheless, while culture is the main tool of *homo sapiens* in adapting to the environment, it is much more. Just as culture is a human product, humans are a cultural product, for culture is part of our environment. Indeed, only through culture do we encounter nature. (See Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*.)

Bearing this in mind, I do not view culture as a simple form of material determinism. Humans have many interests that are a complex function of psychological needs and predispositions and unique cultural formulations. These are important in influencing cultural constructions. Though the desire to maximize material advantage is not universal, it is part of the human condition that we are predisposed to seek some degree of security. We are predisposed also to seek filiation--to feel that we are related to other people, to nature and to conceptualizations of the supernatural (see Ch. 10 of J. van Baal, *Symbols for Communication*). We need to feel that we understand that part of our environment perceived as relevant to our ability to act.

Ethnological research has revealed a number of behavioral predispositions which are a complex function of biology, unique cultures, and the exigencies of living in society; and the psychologist, A. Maslow, has identified a number of human needs. Although I would agree that we may be predisposed to a greater or lesser extent to seek to secure most of what he discusses, the specificity of Maslow's elaboration opens it to the criticism of being culture bound. In any case, when I refer to interests as related to culture, the interests are as mentioned above.

The examination of work as a social phenomenon seems often to be the most useful place to begin in attempting to understand society and culture. Work is broadly understood as socially organized productive activity with resultant control over the product of labor. This view of work is related to the early writings of Marx. It is reflected also in the very insightful encyclical of John Paul II, *Laborem exercens,* and its discussion of work, both as subjectively experienced and "objectively" organized, as being related to the creation of a just society and to the understanding of injustice. This encyclical and the long-standing importance of the Christian Church as a social institution central to the cultural heritage in Central America, provide a basis for the statement that the church offers the best hope for the securing human rights through peaceful means. Hope, however, is not the same as expectation.

2. *Material and symbolic components in cultural change.* How can it be demonstrated that structures of oppression are no longer viable? It is useful to examine various forms of social power or control over the environment of others. I continue to believe that the history and continuing relationship of economic and political dependence is essential to understanding "fields of power" in Central America: this backdrop is too obvious to ignore. There are other

forms of power, however: "the power of reason," "moral force," and the power wielded by great writers, "prophets" (secular or sacred or both), politicians and religious leaders. In addition to both the arbitrary and the culturally legitimized use of power through social institutions, those who can *both* articulate and communicate a compelling vision of society and culture have great power. The power of cultural myth makers is charismatic, but it is likely to wear off when the charismatic figure (perhaps E. Cardenal) has to exercise power in a different way, e.g., as administrator and implementor of "The Great Vision." A shared perception of threat from foreign powers helps to perpetuate the charismatic vision in the face of less than hoped for results from the new social order.

Practically, power never is absolute. Even the most oppressed have some influence over the environment of the more powerful. Power can be understood as a dimension of all social relationships and all structures.

The essential question is how to mold a compelling new vision of the Central American States which could be a template for the construction of a more just society and could bring an end to the chronic and acute violations of human rights through peaceful means? In order for a new social and cultural order to be accepted, the previous social order with its attendant cultural formulations must be shown to be not viable. History shows that change seldom comes until there is a serious crisis in the existing socio-cultural system. Although the crisis need not be economic (see A.F.C. Wallace's "Revitalization Movements"), the likelihood of change in this era of the myth of modernity and development is slim in the absence of a demonstrably viable economic order. Evidence suggests that the poor are now, and for a long time have been, experiencing an increasingly acute economic crisis. Surely this is a major (but not sole) factor explaining the breakdown of the social fabric. A worsening debt crisis, a severe world recession or a depression almost certainly would lead to change in which elites would perceive that the current social order is no longer viable for them. The cultural crystalization of circumstances at that time would dictate whether such a crisis would lead to social reconciliation in the face of common adversity or to the strengthening of inequitable structures.

3. *Human responsibility within prevailing structures*. Upon reflection the statement that "Structures are no more than the habitual patterns in which individual human beings interact with each other" seems an *overstated* attempt to draw attention to the common tendency to analyze or view structures in a depersonalized way. Both thought and action are influenced by structures, and we participate in them. To ignore personal responsibility for participation in--and influence by structures--masks behind culturally legitimated institutions our responsibility for our actions. An important implication of this for the academic enterprise is that commonly accepted paradigms in disciplines are culturally relative. To believe that we are "objective"--that is, scientific in some *acultural* sense detached from social influences--is naive and perverts or hinders our ability to understand social life in its more existential dimension. Cultural interpreters (prophets, great writers, academics) are not detached from society nor are they objective. Rather, their genius is derived from their ability to understand intentions, suffering, and the striving of others. This gives their cultural "crystalizations" their power and makes them compelling. This is central to our discussion and understanding of authentic cultural representations vs the spurious and/or demagogic.

4. *Emergent properties of social, political and economic structures.* Structures have properties or functions which transcend the intentions and probably the consciousness of

individual actors. Their latent functions comprise a level of analysis unto itself. Nonetheless we must be aware of the personal responsibility or the effects of structures intended or otherwise.
G. McLean:

The division between the pragmatic-political, the economic and the cultural dimensions highlights the distinctiveness of these contributions. Each dimension has its own importance and each has its proper and indispensable relation to the others. To the degree that the present problem centers upon the powerful dissociative effects of the modern abstractive powers for rationalizing life, the most difficult and possibly the most important part of working toward an adequate conception of the problem and of possible directions for a response may be precisely in this reintegration in contemporary terms.

In this work there are many starting points. The choice among them could be a matter of methodology, but it could also connote a sense of what is most important or a ranking of values. This becomes especially important in concrete decision making. For example, that the Indian population of Guatemala came to be treated simply as a factor in the international labor market was not a problem on the basis of the work involved. They were quite willing to work--and even migrated to do so--but this tore them from their cultural fabric, and hence from their self-understanding in relation to their family, land, community and ancestors. Labor was an issue only in as much as it related to the broader context of human dignity and to the human interrelations articulated in their culture.

This is not to say that the labor or economic issue is not vitally important, indeed, it is a particular flash point in the present confrontation of rationalization and traditional culture. Nevertheless, its proper understanding requires that it be inserted appropriately into *their* hierarchy of values and *their* pattern of relations (i.e., their *culture*) in order correctly to interpret and respond to related economic problems of work and land, and related political problems of social authority, responsibility, etc. Thus, e.g., in U.S. Indian and some African cultures where land is not owned but only used, schemes for the distribution of land ownership--which in other cultures might be a requisite for a solution--may be only a new form of the basic problem of land disappropriation. Similarly, in the organic social relations of Asian cultures a notion such as "one man-one vote" could be a formula for anarchy.

This underlines the importance of studying human interrelations according to the cultural patterns which shape human interaction in work, production and distribution, as in all other parts of life, according to symbols and myths which are characteristic of a people. The possibility of change can be opened by an economic crisis, but for its direction one still must look to "the cultural crystalization of circumstances" for the determination of whether this will be followed by "social reconciliation in the face of common adversity or . . . inequitable structures."

If this be so then we must look to that cultural crystalization which makes the difference. This will require study of the coordinating cultural patterns of the tradition and of the challenge to these from new modes of rationalizing and working with the physical and social environment. In this the goal will be to identify the characteristics of an appropriate template for future social relations and to mobilize the elements of concern and commitment required for progressive social transformation.

T. Ready:

A critical challenge in resolving the current problems in Central America is undoubtedly to devise a new "cultural crystalization" that would serve as an appropriate "coordinating template" with a solid foundation in the culture(s) of the region. If there is to be any hope of a peaceful resolution of the conflicts, this *must* be done.

But the conflict should not be described as being caused by cultures clashing--dissociative, rationalized modern culture with traditional Indian culture. If this is a correct reading it seems important carefully to examine what is meant by the term "traditional culture." Although I could accept the term with some major reservations in reference to rural indigenous peoples of Guatemala, the term does not fit very well with the cultural orientation of most other peoples of Central America. The term could seem to imply that there exists some rich, timeless culture that has been isolated from the outside world. As argued by Mexican sociologist, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, however, in *Social Classes in Agrarian Societies*, and "Seven Fallacies about Latin America," and by economist Andre Gunder Frank in "The Development of Underdevelopment", the terms "modern" and "developed" should not be taken as synonymous. Neither should the terms "traditional" and "underdeveloped." Traditional societies are not underdeveloped because of the integrity of their social institutions and of their cultures. Rather, most rural peoples of Central America have been subjected to a systematic process of underdevelopment wherein the autonomy of their cultures is undermined. More importantly, the viability of their social institutions has been undermined.

Thus, the problem is not just one of cultures in conflict. Such conflict may be important, but "*only* in as much as it is related to the broader context of human dignity and human interrelations as articulated by culture." I would emphasize the meaningfulness of human *action* and communication. This is a function not just of the integrity of a cultural tradition (viewed in isolation), but also of the utility of culturally informed social action and institutions to productively address human intentions. As I argued above, these intentions are defined by the complex interaction of unique cultural traditions and psycho-biological predispositions (e.g., not to go hungry, to protect the lives of loved ones). When a sociocultural system does not provide the means for taking action to address these fundamental problems of the human condition of a large segment of the population, that sociocultural system is distorted. As this distortion is a function of hundreds of years of colonialism and neocolonialism, any cultural crystalization which would lead to a just peace must come to grips with this fundamental issue.

G. McLean:

The expression "culturally informed social action and institutions" is particularly apt, for cultural factors appear to relate to social action very much as form to matter. In this light the terms "sociocultural system" and "the complex interaction of unique cultural traditions and psycho-biological predispositions" can also be helpful.

The importance of "psychobiological predispositions" can be reflected upon helpfully in terms of the classically articulated priority of the formal and actual to the material and potential which it shapes. Conversely, however, the form is evoked from the matter which, in turn, must be disposed for this form. Hence, a progressive indisposition of the matter will lead to the substitution of one form by another.

The term "traditional culture" is not intended to suggest a "timeless culture . . . isolated from the outside world" or "the integrity of a cultural tradition (viewed in isolation)," but derives rather from Gadamer's sharp and persistent polemic against the predominance of technical reason

in modern life. Its goal is to substitute for the Platonic sense of meaning and values as separated, transcendent and static ideals, the Heideggerian sense of these as arising originally within human experience. In this latter sense, meaning and values live only by means of their continual and creatively new applications in ever changing circumstances. In turn, more of the truth is manifest through the application of the tradition in new circumstances.

Though truth comes from experience this, however, is not an empiric*ism*, and if it is applied in ever new ways in new circumstances that is not a pragmat*ism*. Truth, meaning and values then are not reduced to their circumstances; their content as had by human persons is more rich than any particular application. For this reason we can speak of tradition, of truth as passed on (*tradita*) and lived in new manners as circumstances change. This, in turn, manifests the distinctive character of properly human capabilities: they include, but reach beyond, the limited determinateness of physical objects. This is identically the foundation of the human capacity for freedom, language, and culture.

For this reason also culture as form has a priority in its relation to the psycho-biological predispositions to which it relates as to matter. This is not recognized in systems which begin from food gathering and see the distinctively human merely as instrumental to this process--whether this be approached from the point of view of consumption or of production. This is not because humans do not make good instruments for such a process--a person can be a magnificent instrument. Rather, the priority of culture over the psycho-biological processes rests precisely on the basis of the human capacities of understanding and of will which qualitatively quite surpass these processes.

When this is considered also in terms of final cause--that is, of what it is for or of what people are really concerned about--it renders intelligible the willingness to undergo enormous physical hardship including hunger, decades lived in prison, exile or hiding, and even the death of one's loved ones. This has always occurred when a people's freedom--or what might be the same, their cultural identity understood as what they freely have chosen to be--is threatened.

Only social action that is "culturally informed" is *human* action; action that is not so informed is by that very fact dehumanizing, no matter how productive it might be. This is what makes the issue of cultural authenticity so central at the present time in which technical interests and instrumental reason are rapidly changing the patterns of social relations on all levels from the international to the familial. Only if this transformation is culturally informed can it hope to fulfill its potential for promoting rather than destroying human rights and peace.

T. Ready:

Clarification of how such concepts as "traditional culture" and "cultural tradition" are employed is obsolutely crucial to understanding these topics. The social sciences typically have been reluctant to deal with the meaning of "truth," or concepts like "freedom," "liberation," or "authentic culture." The clarification of what each of us means by these value laden terms can only help to draw out the often unstated premises behind our thinking and the thinking of others.

To speak of psycho-biological predispositions as influencing the meaningfulness of human action does not mean that our "human nature" is somehow prior to, or more important than, culture. Rather, human nature, with its jumble of ill-defined and sometimes mutually inconsistent urges, is expressed through culture. It is impossible to think of human beings without thinking of culture or some other term(s) roughly representing that which we understand to be culture. However, to consider human beings apart from their existential circumstances, and not as

intentional creatures with certain psycho-biological predispositions inevitably enmeshed in patterns of social interaction (exchange) can produce an excessively sterile view of humanity. Though humans "willingly undergo enormous physical hardship, hunger. . ." this is not because cultural form somehow supercedes action. Rather, those aspects of human nature having to do with something larger and transcendent of oneself have, in the course of social exchanges and cultural currents, come to take precedence over one's material welfare. There are probably as many social and cultural explanations for why this happens as there are instances in which it occurs.

To focus solely on how an *individual's* action is culturally informed, however, would miss the point that human action takes place in patterns or structures, the order of which is largely beyond the control of individuals--particularly individuals with relatively little social power. To understand whether an individual's action is informed by a cultural tradition (Gadamer), one must examine how patterns of social interaction in which the individual is involved are established and maintained. What are the manifest and latent functions of such patterns of interaction in work (broadly defined) and other aspects of life? Such questions must be addressed at more than one level of analysis, and this is what is most problematic in attempts to understand the issues in Central America.

Noting that "technical interests and instrumental reason are rapidly changing the patterns of social relations on all levels," and the importance of this for understanding questions of culturally informed human rights, peace, and human action seems to consider modernization (understood as technological change and attendant social restructuring) as the primary cause of disruption in Central America. However, technological change, particularly in the Third World, is *deliberately* introduced by those with power *within specific economic and political structures*. Whether the changes associated with modernization function to enhance human liberation (P. Peachey) or to dehumanize social action by destroying authentic cultural traditions (Gadamer) depends on *how* such changes are introduced, what values inform such innovation, and what consequences (intended and otherwise) these innovations have upon extant shared systems of meaning (culture) and upon the viability of social action to address human intentions.

Thus, I reiterate my argument that the conflicts of Central America are not the result of a value-neutral process of modernization and rationalization of life, but rather, a question of what values inform the way in which modernization takes place, and what interests are singled out for "rationalized" treatment. Inasmuch, as over the years, the majority of the peoples of Central America have had little or no say in this process, I suggest that their interests have not been represented and that this has "dehumanized" social interaction and undermined customary cultural meanings. The motivation of the poor to engage in violent conflict, thereby risking their material well being for a vision--realistic or not--of a better society, is derived primarily from this. Thus, any new cultural vision, if it is to come to grips with "inauthentic culture" and structural injustice and thereby prevent further violent conflict, must address the question of power, and not just the inexorable and seemingly neutral process of modernization.

G. McLean:

The above is most helpful, particularly concerning: (a) the importance of examining how patterns of social interaction are established and maintained, (b) what values and interests inform innovation, (c) what consequences follow, (d) the need for people to have a say in the direction of change if it is not to undermine customary cultural meanings, (d) the general question of

power and (e) the need to attend to multiple levels of analysis. The following suggestions concern three areas, namely, method, values, and the person.

1. *Method*. It would seem useful to note the distinctive character of terms such as `truth,' `freedom' or `authentic culture.' They do not lend themselves to a single or univocous definition, and hence do not lend themselves to rationalistic methodologies predicated upon clear and distinct ideas. Instead, such terms are analogous and have a different meaning each time they are used in order to be able to reflect the freedom of the person and the uniqueness of cultures. This implies, in turn both distinctive methodologies for knowledge and distinctive structures for social action in order to protect and promote personal and cultural identity and freedom. In an age of progressive abstractive rationalization of all phases of life this is a central and pervasive problem.

The diversity of levels of analysis must be attended to because each has its own ordering of priorities which cannot be extended to another level of analysis without creating difficulties. Thus, as material causes or factors the psycho-biological are predispositions and have precedence over other factors. This cannot be converted into a precedence in the formal order or that of values without serious confusion. One may need to eat three times today and may not vote until tomorrow, but this does not imply that one's capacity for eating is of a higher nature than one's capacity for citizenship.

Sometimes such precedences enter surreptitiously and implicitly through the employment of a temporal model according to which material welfare is attended to before more transcendent dimensions of meaning. Since in this model the latter "come to take precedence over the material" only after some time and for socio-cultural reasons, they are interpreted as being less fundamental and less necessary to human life. What began as a temporal order becomes a ranking in value. Indeed, what for Aristotle was but a working hypothesis concerning a temporal sequence (e.g., his notion of wonder beginning only after material needs were satisfied), is unsuspectingly transformed into a metaphysical position concerning the nature of reality as it was for Marx. All the evidence from symbolic artifacts, however, suggests that the lives of the earliest humans with the simplest social forms were patterned in terms clearly exceeding simply pragmatic goals. A transcendent totemic principle of Unity was not a subsequent development, but the initial position. The notion that mankind moved from material to transcendent concerns is anacronistic, contrary to all evidence, and reflects simply a specifically modern evolutionary materialism.

In principle, the simple analysis or distinction of the various levels should not be a difficulty, because each level is essentially related to the one above it in such wise that taking the higher into account does not cancel the others. The fact that nutrition supports the sensory capabilities of an animal does not diminish the importance of nutrition. Indeed, it is only in relation to the higher that the lower factors can truly be realized. (Ingestion of a physical substance which renders a person senseless is not appropriate nutrition).

Unfortunately, fascination with clear and distinct ideas, however, holds us in the analytic mode and impedes such synthetic interrelation of all levels of human life. This would seem to be the case whether cultural forms are seen as superseding action, or the other way around. In reality, we act in terms of our distinctive cultural forms whether the action be a dance at Ankor Wat or study at Berkeley.

At present, Latin American scholars appear to be giving increasing attention to the work of the late anthropologist Prof. Koch, the philosopher J. Scannone and others (see *Stromata*). They have traced some roots for one Latin American philosophy to the Andean cultures with their

notion of the ever fruitful Earth as *Pacha Mama*. From this they draw a particularly action and community oriented sense of being as *nosotros estamos*. In this may lie, I suspect, the possibility of retrieving something of that unity of matter, action and spirit constituted by the human person which our modern capacities for rational analysis have lost during the difficult process of thematization.

2. *Value*. Undoubtedly, the central question is which values inform the way in which modernization takes place. This is due to a number of factors.

First, as mentioned above, change is inevitably problematic when induced by power elites without attention to, or consultation regarding, the concerns of large portions of the citizenry. Where change goes against the will of the people it is understandably explosive. Though questions of power and of interests are important, massively people do choose to change their lives, and almost universally in the direction of the newer means of building and implementing homes, schooling, health, or communications. Many move to the city so that at least their children will have new opportunities.

Such changes in the direction of a more abstractive and technological implementation of life is not value neutral, but have profound influence upon interpersonal family and social relations. They induce new expectations and priorities as regards physical satisfaction, and imply new requirements and pressures upon time and attention. In other words, while the progressive rationalization of life is shaped differently by different cultures, it has great impact on each of these cultures. For countries which changed little during previous centuries, and even until after World War II, this implies specially intense dislocation.

Hence, along with the question of how to handle what is inauthentic because imposed against one's will, and while recognizing that this has special problems due to the interrupted development of related mediating structures, there is the more general question of how to live through the substantive changes implied by a modernization which may well have been chosen for one of a myriad of reasons. It is truly, as Dr. Peachey notes, a tragedy within a tragedy (see pp. 66-80 above), and one with more than two levels. The inauthenticity comes not only from not being consulted or involved--leading to the plaintive cry: if only we were left alone! It comes also from the impersonal and potentially depersonalizing type of change that is being chosen-and this is perhaps especially true when the choice is made by those less experienced and hence less realistic.

What is hopeful is that it has been found that the process can be shaped differently according to the characteristics of different cultures, e.g., Western and Asian. This implies the possibility for shaping the process according to values which are characteristic of the culture; it founds the hope that technological change need not be destructive of a culture but can be informed thereby. If this be so then the new capabilities for communication need not be bereft of the value of freedom and made simply an instrument for control; the new instruments of power need not be faceless military machines shorn of that sense of order and responsibility which traditionally had characterized rule by the heads of leading families; and the rendering of service need not be reduced to the commercial exploitation of mass man. This will not happen, however, without sedulous attention to shaping these newly developing relationships by truly new applications of the values deeply felt by a culture. The good news--that which gives hope--is that the values of a culture can shape its process of change.

3. *Culture as Mediation of Individual and Society*. It is true that an individual's "action takes place in patterns or structures, the order of which is largely beyond the control of individuals--particularly individuals with relatively little social power," and that this *could* lead to the submersion and effective annihilation of the person in society. It is precisely for this reason that the resources of human dignity and freedom which have been lived in the past and are available to us as the tradition (the *tradita*) are so indispensable.

Hence, a focus upon "how an *individual's* action is culturally informed" would not miss the point. Rather, it precisely undergirds the hope for mediating the individual to the society, and vice versa, in ways that annihilate neither, but promote both. This is due to the facts: (a) that culture is the result of the free actions of the community over time, (b) that it provides those who are born into it with the possibility of interacting freely, harmoniously and productively with others, and (c) that this is precisely because in its distinctiveness and its unique exercise it is the analogous realm of `truth' and `freedom'. Hence, assuring that the culture is not overridden by the technical rationalization of the various spheres of physical and social life is identically the concrete process of "liberation" in the real circumstances of our time.

Along with attention to the patterns of interest and power, this attention to culture and its promotion promises to be a most promising avenue both for future investigation and for future social reconstruction.

CHAPTER IV

MODERNIZATION AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY SYSTEM IN CENTRAL AMERICA

PAUL PEACHEY

During the past century virtually all the earth's peoples have been drawn into the vortex of modernization. The countries of Central America are no exception. But modernization, as we know it, has proceeded unevenly; some countries are in the early stages, others well under way, and still others highly advanced. Much of the conflict among nations today stems directly or indirectly from these disparities. Even within countries modernization proceeds unevenly among groups and classes. Uneven modernization, whether within or between countries, has proven thus far to be a source of turmoil and conflict. Modern social formations, even when intrinsically benign, may be seriously disruptive when introduced into pre-modern configurations.

Modernization, of course, is a summary concept, a kind of intellectual shorthand, that refers to configurations of interactive changes in technology, in culture, in social and personality organization. Changes in these various sectors, though tending to occur simultaneously and interdependently, display varying degrees of autonomy in their development. Students, for example, may be trained more rapidly than the economy can provide corresponding employment. Or a government may borrow money to build factories before it has the necessary pool of skilled labor to man them. But many, and perhaps the most fateful, asymmetries among various institutional sectors arise inadvertently. Efforts have been made to rank order the changes in various institutional sectors or to identify the key variable that can account for the entire process, and thus to develop theories of modernization. Thus far these efforts have enjoyed only limited success.

In any given context, however, a working definition is desirable, if only as a common point of reference. Here I will follow Wilbert Moore's definition of modernization as "rationalization of the ways social life is organized and social activities performed." By this Moore means "the use of fact and logic in the choice of instrumental behavior for the achievement of various identified goals: increased economic output, improvement of health and life expectancy, a reliable civil service, an appropriately educated population, the achievement of governable urban areas."[1] "Instrumental" goal-directed action, both individual and collective, contrasts strongly with the informal unspecialized configurations of pre-modern activity patterns. As a summary concept, modernization thus conceptualizes the varied processes of rationalization which may occur among populations without denying the idiosyncracies of any particular instance.

Modernization, it will be assumed here, is a suitable perspective from which to assess the turmoil in Central America. Contrary to most of the chapters in this volume, however, which deal directly with "inside" data or experiences, this chapter of necessity presents an "outside" view, for the writer is not directly acquainted with Central America. Here the question is: what do we know about the processes of modernization generally which may help to comprehend and respond to the travail of Central America? Within the purview of this question, the present chapter has a more limited task, namely, the question, how are kinship, family and community--effectively the micro structures and processes of society--implicated in the transformations known as modernization? Against this background, a few tentative comments on modernization and family patterns in Central America will be hazarded in the final pages of this chapter.

EMERGENCE OF THE MACRO ORDER

Human existence is rooted in two distinct orders, the one biological, the other cultural; one is given in nature, the other is humanly constructed.[2] The distinction between the two orders, to be sure, is relative. The cultural world appears in part as an extension of nature, for biological needs and drives underlie cultural manifestations. Primitive social organization appears to have been kinship-based, and hence biologically derived. On the other hand, "blood"-based social configurations are social constructs. Biological factors enter the cultural order only in terms of the meanings accorded to them. Moreover, increasing social complexity tends to dilute or to weaken the force of biological derivations and supra-biological factors increasingly come into play.

With the growth of the cultural order, further differentiations emerge. Out of the formations that rise directly from the biological base, namely, kinship and family, there emerges a vast and expanding domain of configurations which are "artificial," i.e., deliberately willed and contrived rather than appearing unwilled in nature. Thus we can distinguish not only the two orders, the biological and the sociocultural, but also within the latter, the "natural" and the "artificial." Accordingly we will regard the family, rooted as it is in the biologically given, as "natural," and a corporation such as General Motors as "artificial." While both "natural" and "artificial" formations appear in most, if not all, societies, the relative importance of the one or the other varies greatly by developmental stage, and from society to society. Societies in which "natural" formations dominate we tend to describe as "traditional"; those in which "artificial" formations dominate we describe as "modern."

Meanwhile, depending on the observer's focus, other polar typologies have been employed in social analysis. These typologies have been discussed extensively in the literature, and will not be reviewed here. We note especially the "private" vs. "public" domain, or the "micro" vs. "macro" levels of action of organization. These and other typologies, though not fully synonomous, nonetheless refer to related contrasts.

In traditional societies, artificial and macro formations appear, at most, inchoately. Given the limited technological base of preindustrial civilizations, micro level action dominated the daily experience of "the masses" since prehistoric times. The full-blown development of artificial macro systems, though foreshadowed in early civilizations, had to await the communication and transportation technologies which have come into their own in recent decades, and with no end in sight. Nowhere has the end stage of "modernization" been achieved.

Modernization means an "exponential" growth of "artificial" social formations, of human action in relation to the natural. Quantitatively speaking "modern" societies differ from "traditional" societies in the fact that in the latter most of the human endeavor occurs in artificial configurations.[3] Viewed in these terms, modernization means essentially the creation of an artificial order; hence the bifurcation of interhuman reality. The emergence of macro systems from the micro configurations of pre-modern existence, it will be argued below, is a necessary condition for human development and liberation.

Two simple and interdependent revolutionary social inventions underlie the rise of the "artificial" macro order, namely, the spearation of "role" and "person" and the separation of home and work. The separation of role and person has far-reaching consequences for both individuals and collectivities. For the latter, it permits the deliberate creation of vast systems of human interaction independent of particular human beings, systems described above as "artificial." Groups--particularly formal groups--organizations, and corporations constitute

systems of roles. Persons enter such systems only insofar as they occupy those roles; they are recruited interchangeably to perform such roles. Indeed, technology increasingly permits the substitution of machines for persons as role incumbents (of course, only for certain types of role "behavior"). Specialization, joint endeavor and system scale thus can evolve indefinitely.

For the individual human being, the separation of role and person, linked to the growth of role-based systems of action, opens previously unimaginable vistas of freedom and choice. While any given role may dictate activity within the role, any particular role has access only to a limited aspect of the person. To the extent that role repertories of individuals are enlarged, the individual gains autonomy vis-a-vis any particular role he/she may play. In that sense, advancing social differentiation serves as a precondition of human emancipation and autonomy.

THE FATE OF MICRO WORLDS

How, we asked at the outset, are family and community, the micro structures and processes of society, implicated in these transformations? What are the consequences for the private micro worlds of the rise of the public macro order? Within the limits of this paper, only a few general observations will be possible. Basically, family and community, confronted with the vast new macro order, find themselves in a highly ambiguous position. On the one hand the micro order of kinship and family is thrown sharply on the defensive. It is not only that functions performed in earlier times by household and families are increasingly assumed by "artiticial" macro systems--educational agencies, industrial enterprises, political bodies, and the like. It is also that the very existence of familial institutions is called into question. The polity, the economy, and increasingly the society "deal" only with individuals, using these as interchangeable role incumbents. Families, though entities possessing their own life, fall from view, below the macro calculus.[4] Thus already in 1861 the legal historian, Henry Sumner Maine, observed that in "progressive societies" the individual increasingly replaces the family as the unit of which the laws take account. Drastically reduced in scope, in substance, and in structural relevance when compared to the macro order, families and familial institutions show increasing signs of disintegration.

But this is only half the story, though, alas, it is the more readily visible half. The growth of artificial, macro systems, consisting as they do of roles rather than of persons, tosses back, as it were, to the private sphere of marriage and family, a social-psychological task of unprecedented magnitude and intensity. First, since the macro systems of social action which constitute modern societies vastly enlarge the role repertory of individuals, the self can, but also must, increasingly transcend any particular role. The synthesis and integration of the self from this fragmentary role diversity accordingly becomes an ever more complex task, and indeed, for many individuals, an overwhelming burden. That is, the self can no longer repose, as it were, in group engendered unity. Secondly, families, and more particularly marriages, as "role budget centers"[5] are the primary, and perhaps the sole, source of psychological support for the individual in the process. On marriage and the family fall the burden of both the socialization of the young and the psychological sustenance of the adult. Perhaps it can be said that familial institutions represent the only communal hold-out in a world otherwise dissolved into fleeting combinations of roles. In a word, to use the language of Talcott Parsons, families function as "person factories," a task which, given their overtaxed condition, they can hardly carry out.[6]

Today the ambiguities surrounding marriage and family have not been resolved. One may draw comfort from the fact meanwhile that, historically, marital and familial systems have

shown great resiliency and that we should not conclude that they are about to disappear. Various restorative impulses are now at work, not without reason or benefit. But the clock cannot be turned back. Traditional family formations, burdened as they were with functions that we now view as belonging to the macro order, surely could not meet contemporary psychic expectations, even if these could be recaptured. Moreover, macro, role-based systems of social interaction require populations sufficiently disengaged from particular micro ties to be available, both psychologically and physically, for allocation to macro system positions (roles). In fact, vestiges of entrenched kinship and family interests still survive in the modern world. As we shall see below, the subversion of social justice by family oligarchies is part of the Central American pathos today.

But is this ambiguity a global problem, arising wherever modernization occurs, or is it uniquely Western, even American? It has often been assumed that the nuclear family, replacing the traditional "extended" pattern, is a correlate, if not indeed a product, of the modern urban-industrial revolutions. William Goode,[7] in a comparison of family systems in major world regions, reported a general trend toward the nuclear pattern as societies modernize. At the same time, during the past two decades, however, the "new family history" has fundamentally challenged this thesis. It has been shown that in Northern Europe, especially in Great Britain, the nuclear family antedated the industrial revolution by several centuries.[8] Moreover, this family history is apparently linked to the evolution of the individualism that is peculiar to northwestern Europe. It is possible, thus, that the nuclear family was a "cause" rather than an "effect" of the industrial revolution. In any case, a full analysis will need to take into account the individualism which emerged in the Western world, again particularly in the United States. At this point, then we can say only that expectations of converging outcomes in the modernization of various countries have not been confirmed. Countries not only follow differing paths in the modernization process, but also arrive, as it were, at differing destinations.

Moreover, with regard to the presumed correlation between modernizing processes such as urbanization and industrialization, it is now evident that kinship systems not only may survive modernization under certain conditions, but may also greatly ease the burdens of transition. Though family and kinship under some conditions or in certain respects may impede the process of modernization, family and kinship ties generally have proven to be both more resilient and more supportive in the modernization process than many advocates of modernization predicted.

MEDIATING STRUCTURES: THE "MESO" SCALE

As a first approximation, the simple distinction between micro and macro or private and public levels of action is analytically useful. Reality, however, is far more complex. Between the two spheres, strictly speaking, lies a vast region of mixed endeavor. Much ideological debate today, indeed much geopolitical conflict, revolves about contradictory definitions of this intervening region. Practically, in any modernizing society, this region becomes a kind of battleground for initiatives flowing from the opposite micro and macro poles.

Modernization, as we have noted, entails the rise of multiple macro systems of action. These have become integrated at the nation-state level. Thus, while "society" and "state" are distinguishable entities, during the national era the scope of the former is largely tied to the scope of the latter. While the state serves as guarantor and in some respects as embodiment of the common or public good, in Western democracy the state is limited. Numerous social energies are allowed not only to emerge into the meso region from the micro and private spheres, but to flow

from meso-structure to the micro-structure. In the Marxist-Leninist model, on the other hand, mediating structures are treated as macro level derivatives.

Meanwhile, modernization has become a global phenomenon, not only as already indicated in the sense that all countries and peoples are influenced by the process, but also in the sense of the emerging networks of global interdependence. Nation-states as ostensibly sovereign or self-sustaining systems become increasingly porous, less and less able to control all the transactions taking place within their territorial boundaries or those reaching beyond them.

The resulting asymmetries are bewildering. At a time when the majority of UN member countries have not yet developed full scale macro level systems, history appears already to be surpassing the very stages they as yet have failed to attain. Globally speaking, the nation-state system is in many respects obsolete. Yet as Karl Deutsch[9] has observed, it has been the only effective tool for the mobilization of larger population aggregates for collective action. Thus nation states and nationalism will persist for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, many, if not most, national boundaries in any case are "historical accidents" resulting in states that are either too large or too small to function as self-managing and self-sufficient societies.

CENTRAL AMERICAN MODERNIZATION AND KINSHIP

On this analytical map, it is not too difficult to locate the Central American societies. Additionally, as if the burdens of accidental boundaries, ethnic diversity, and uneven development were not pain enough, these countries are burdened by cruel geopolitical fate, for they sit on the doorstep of a "Great Power." Great powers suffer from a peculiar sense of insecurity--they feel the need for secondary political and even economic dominance of adjacent regions beyond their own boundaries. The tragedy in this instance is further compounded by the fact that Central America is being made into a battle ground in the US-Soviet context. We can note only that these tragic realities cut across and distort the modernization dynamics we here seek to unravel. In the heat of the controversy, both advocates and opponents of US intervention tend to trivialize the pathos of modernization and development. In this respect, interventionists and non-interventionists appear as mirror images. Meanwhile, it seems reasonable to predict that the current political turmoil in the region will make new demands on kinship systems, thereby both strengthening and disrupting them.

The ambiguities which generally surround kinship and family institutions in the modernizing processes described above are acutely evident in Central America as well, though with important nuances. Throughout the region kinship flourishes, persisting in less developed regions as the basic social fabric. Strong family bonds reportedly are a prized value throughout the region. But kinship, in the form of family-based oligarchies in government and to some extent in the economy, is also at the root of the region's most ruinous problems. The late Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua, and the legacy it has left, may serve as a dramatic example.

Viewed abstractly, this region embracing a territory of 200,000 square miles and a population of some 25 million, might logically form a single political jurisdiction. However, efforts directed to that end, following the end of Spanish rule in the nineteenth century failed. Yet in an era dominated by nation-states and national economies, such small entities as Belize or El Salvador hardly seem viable. The Central American Common Market, inspired in part by its European precedent, is a contemporary response[10]; its long-term fate no doubt is hostage to larger international developments beyond the control of the states of the region.

Meanwhile arguments for political consolidation must be tempered by the increasing doubts surrounding the nation-wide system. Though there is something fanciful about the "small is beautiful" notion,[11] the need for "grass roots" renewal and for decentralization of centers of initiative in modern (post-modern?) societies is no longer deniable. Interpretation and assessment of Central American kinship and familism must be informed by this larger perspective. The question arises: is it necessary to "defamilize" whole societies in order to overcome familial oligarchy in polities and economies?

The institutions of kinship and family, obviously enough, are rooted in the cultural history of the region. While this is not the place to retrace the population history of Central America, its particularities must be kept in mind. The most salient feature is the degree of amalgamation of the immigrant (Spanish) and native populations. Most of these countries form part of what has been called "Mestizo America,"[12] a vast region extending from parts of Mexico through Central, and deeply into Latin America, where these two populations largely have been absorbed into each other.

Nonetheless there are important variations. The Costa Rican people, on the one hand, are almost entirely European, while more than half the Guatemalan population is of unassimilated Mayan descent. The European stock, on the other hand, descended primarily from sixteenth century Spanish colonials, differs fundamentally from the European infusions on the North American continent. Neither in the sixteenth century nor subsequently did this Spanish culture participate deeply in the liberalizing revolutions that transformed northwestern Europe and North America, both for better and for worse.

Against this backdrop, trends reflected in the several following tables are revealing.

Similarly these rates are comparable to rural/urban distinctions, though here the import is more ambiguous--given the agrarian nature of the Central American economics, the portion of the population characterized as urban (34-50%) is relatively high.

There is a rich body of ethnographic literature on Central America, dating from the middle decades of the present century. Carlos and Sellers,[13] in combing those studies for family data, found the yield sparse. They also cite other studies, more statistical in nature, especially by Cornelius. The former literature, dramatized by Redfield's studies in Yucatan, was informed theoretically by the decline-of-community schools in sociological theory, thus purportedly documenting the decline of family and kinship with advancing urbanization (here "modernization").[14] Oscar Lewis, in a series of well-known writings[15]challenged not only the Redfield thesis, but also the use of aggregate data, in the manner of Cornelius, because "this type of analysis concealed the importance of the family as a building unit between the individual and society."[16]

A glance at Tables 3 and 4 depicting marriage and divorce rates and trends is useful here.

Divorce apparently is rare, but then the marriage rate is low as well, though slowly rising. On the other hand, cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births are commonplace, not unlike patterns in poverty areas common in North America.

As already noted, much of the debate concerning modernization and kinship pertains to the supposed transition from the "extended" to the "nuclear" family system. Hugo Nutini, writing a few years earlier, concluded, after examining a number of studies, that "given the rather generalized patrineolocal residence pattern in Mesoamerica, at any given point in time between 20 and 30 percent of all households harbor extended families (of a variety of types")."[17] Nutini notes the importance of the family cycle in the interpretation of family statistics--"extendedness" may be a function of stage in the family cycle. This distinction is important as well in the Carlos

and Sellers study noted above. That is, during the family-launching stage any given nuclear family may appear to be "extended" only to return eventually to its nuclear form. While only one local study claimed that the extended pattern prevailed universally, if one makes the foregoing allowance, a 20-30% extended rate signifies that the pattern is widespread.

An important feature of Central American familism (*parentesco*) is the system of "ritual co-parenthood" (*compadrazgo*), namely, "the creation of a security network of ritual kinfolk through ceremonial sponsorship."[18] Though analogous to the godparenting prevailing in other societies, and rooted in the same Roman Catholic traditions, the practice in Central America is of greater social and economic importance. Its development is pronounced in the relations between the Ladino and Indian populations, between which caste-like distinctions otherwise prevail. In a symbolic manner, *compadrazgo* affords a link between the two, with Maya Indians seeking compadre relationships with Ladinos. Though fictive in character, *compadrazgo*doubtless extends and reinforces the reach of kinship throughout the society generally.

Carlos and Sellers conclude their synthesis of four decades of ethnographic studies in parts of Central America with the judgment that "the model of waning familial influence and gradual disorganization and disintegration of large family groups is not true for Latin America. Instead, the modernization process is being molded to the existing family and kinship institutions and areas of traditional family study." They urge that what they have said "about the functions and importance of the nuclear-extended family-*compradrazgo* network not be ignored in studies of social structure and change, as they have been in the past. Modernization will occur and affect individuals in these networks without necessarily destroying the networks themselves."[19] The above studies antedate the upheavals in the region in the 1980s whose impact has yet to be assessed. Current research interests reportedly have shifted to political developments.[20]

CONCLUSION

Central American developments can be said to reinforce the claim that comparative studies of modernization do not confirm convergence theories of modernization, namely, the expectations that modernization will lead to identical, increasingly afamilial outcomes. Nonetheless, especially in Central America, the jury of history is still out, particularly since the studies cited here antedate the current political upheavals in the region. To reject convergence theories is not *ipso facto* to reject the afamilial tendencies implicit in modernization processes. Whether in the long run the larger Latin American experience will help to temper and indeed transform certain atomizing global trends, or itself be overwhelmed by those trends belongs to the future in which we will have a stake.

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DISCUSSION OF RELATED ISSUES IN
THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

The Problem

The term `modernization' is often taken as the move from the collective to the individual, and from the traditional to the more reasoned (critical). While this generally has positive connotation, it is not value neutral. The term `development' is more economic in origin, but connotes a related socio-political evolution. It is not as value neutral as is the term `growth'.

`Rationalization' is not contrasted to irrational, but connotes a particular type of reason, namely, the abstract and instrumental. The former has the power to focus, analyze and develop specialized roles, as well as the danger of being disintegrative and reductionist. Hence, it is generally also instrumental reason and has the power to choose goals, organize teams according to roles and mobilize action. This is accompanied, however, by the utilitarian and functionalist dangers of disregarding the dignity of persons and their natural social cohesion and treating them as mere instruments or tools for economic and/or ideological goals.

The problem of modernization in Central America can be understood in three ways, which are not mutually exclusive. The first is external, according to which the problem is created as outside forces in the past (colonialization) and present impede what would have been a natural and gradual evolution of the social structures in terms of the local culture and circumstances and in response to their vital needs. This view is important, but is not sufficient in view of the success of such other cultures and that of Japan in responding to external influences. Further, it does not take adequate account of the serious internal dislocations involved in the modernization/rationalization of any culture.

A second or temporal understanding of the problematic stresses the suddenness with which modernization has come upon Central America, due especially to the much delayed and reduced impact of the enlightenment and of industrialization upon the Iberian peninsula and derivatively upon Latin America. This is essential, but does not appear to take account of the external factors and the degree of dislocation experienced in other areas such as England which went through a more gradual process of industrialization.

A third understanding sees the problem as a tragedy within a tragedy, that is, as an internal problem within an external problematic, integrating the above factors while allowing for varying emphases upon each. The internal tragedy consists in a transition from a traditional culture with a number of strengths: the person was integrated into the human community through his or her family; relationships were in personal, face to face terms; persons were identified with their role in which, like craftsmen, they took great personal pride and responsibility; and the meaning of life extended beyond functional relations to transcendent values which, lived ritually, gave the basic form to life.

The transition was from this tradition to a utilitarian relationship in which the meaning of persons is reduced to their technical function or role in a rationalized system of production. Generally this implies dislocation from a village to an urban setting; education in abstractive and functionalist rationality; physical availability for one's role on a regular basis and for extended hours for one's role; a correlative absence from one's family and a corresponding psychological redirection of attention; and, as a result of all these, a new understanding both of self and of family relations.

Thus, though production is essentially the work of such natural units as the family, the conceptualization of production in terms of abstractive technical reason recasts the person and the family as mere tools or instruments of production. As technical reason comes increasingly to predominate over other modes of understanding, so also does a reductionist view of the person and family in terms of ideologies of production and/or consumption. Habermas has analyzed the progressive phases of this internal tragedy (see Chapter I above).

All of this is played out within an overarching external tragedy which makes an adequate and proportionate response increasingly difficult. The external tragedy has a number of dimensions. (a) First, there is the aftermath of the earlier colonial domination of every phase of life. (b) Second, there are the present geopolitical struggles over spheres of influence by the larger political units. As articulated in terms of their characteristic ideologies, the resultant tensions effect every area of life. (c) Lastly, there is the tendency of macro structures to outstrip national boundaries and, through economics and communications, to effect the internal life of nations in terms which may well ignore or damage internal interests and concerns.

Mediating Structures and the Problem of Human Values and Human Rights

Based upon the contrast between macro structures (state/public) and micro structures (family/private), it is possible to construct models for structures mediating between the two. For an ideology which sees all in terms of the state such mediating structures as business, health, education and religion are a function of the macro structure up to, and even pervading, the micro or family structures. In contrast, for an ideology which sees all in terms of the private the mediating structures are a function of the micro structures--even the state is instrumentalized for private goals. Thus, for example, corporations are seen as private agents and, though their policies have increasingly pervasive influence upon the lives of ever larger numbers of people, they are not open to orientation from the macro structures.

Given the rationalist character of modernization and its tendency to reduce everything and everyone to functions or instruments for attaining certain goals, there has been a tendency in management systems to depersonalize the people involved and reduce them to simple functions of management decisions made by very few individuals at the highest level. Rather than extending the private, modernization thus depersonalizes the mediating area of production. Through the intensity of intercorporate competition and internal requirements for advancement, it psychologically pervades and geographically uproots micro or family structures.

Both major contemporary ideologies appear to be symptoms of the same malaise, namely, the absorption of other dimensions of reason by the power of technical or scientific rationalization in which the micro order of person and family, the mediating structures of health, education and commerce, and the macro order of public institutions, all are instrumentalized in function of production/consumption.

In the search of other dimensions of meaning and values some thinkers would caution against turning to the people. Caught in the restrictive categories of modern abstract rationalization, these thinkers interpret any move beyond technical reason as an abandonment to will, and hence to such untrammelled self-assertion as that of the German *volk*. Therefore, they advise remaining in the universal values of the enlightenment. This, however, does not take account of the fact, pointed out by Ricoeur, that these universal enlightenment values were themselves discovered in the earlier experience of *Exodus*. Indeed, determinedly turning away from concrete persons to abstract universals leaves the micro order of person and family at the

mercy of whatever is decided in abstract terms, which are intentionally insensitive to personal reality.

In contrast, as noted by H.G. Gadamer, the values of the cultural tradition of a community are the result, not of arbitrary will, but of an understanding of life acquired through time and shaped by our forebears' free and honored responses to human issues. The best of these--as ages (a Golden Age of Greece), as heroes (a King Arthur or Simon Bolivar), and as saints (a Gandhi or Martin Luther King)--become classic norms for human efforts in succeeding generations. In this way the lived values are not abstractions from life, but its renderings: they are the perduring elements of human experience at its most rich, inclusive and successful.

In view of this the mediating structures should be neither reductively statist nor individualist, but composed of persons in their various aggregates of neighborhood, work and community. They should enable people freely and fully to assess their problems and enrich their life together by creative and cooperative applications of their cultural heritage. This has a broad range of applications, from quality circles in industry, to basic neighborhood Christian communities, to the need for dialogue between groups in situations of multiple and conflicting concerns and views. In this the role of art, especially in its graphic (Mexico) and musical forms, in creating new images and symbols for newly emerging groups and communicating to large numbers of people, can be of vital importance.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT, CRISIS AND PROSPECTS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN ECONOMY

FREDERICO SANZ

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 1960s, Central America's economic growth derived from two principal sources:

(a) *exports* to third countries, mainly of traditional products, which generated foreign exchange and domestic savings; and

(b) *industrial development*, spurred by the Central American Common Market (CACM), which comprised a regional free-trade area, a common external tariff, and a policy of fiscal incentives for industrial development. CACM brought in direct foreign investments, or external savings, as a complement to the domestic savings.

The countries of the region were in the process of providing both the exporting external sector and the Central American Common Market with an economic infrastructure. which would facilitate their effective functioning. Thus, over a period of decades, the Central American highway, telecommunications and electrical interconnection systems were put in place. In actual fact, the economic infrastructure at the regional level developed more efficiently than the same infrastructure at national level.

While this emphasis upon developing the regional road, telecommunications and power system did not exclude the development of agriculture for internal consumption nor the building up of an adequate national and regional social infrastructure (education, health, housing, drinking water, sewerage), the priority assigned to agriculture and social infrastructure was less than that given to the economic infrastructure.

In the macroeconomic policy sphere, the Central American countries followed policies that were in general conventionally orthodox and which, in conjunction with the stability and growth of the international economy, enabled the system to grow with a certain stability up to the early years of the 1970s.

In the course of the 1970s the international economic scene changed, first with the monetary crisis, followed by the oil crisis, the crisis in commodity supply and prices, and a further oil and financial crisis. In this changing international context, the two factors which fostered regional development--exports and industrial development--no longer functioned with the same efficacy. In fact, the income derived from exports of traditional products did not generate either sufficient savings or sufficient foreign exchange to balance the external sector, notwithstanding the sugar bonanza of 1974 and the coffee bonanza of 1976, 1977 and 1978. The imbalance in the external sector became increasingly acute to the extent that it could be offset only by constantly greater external borrowing.

Meanwhile, as a result of the loss of dynamism in the process of integration, the regional industrial sector broke up. The rate of investment slowed down and, insofar as the sector continued to grow, this was due to the momentum carried over from previous years. In 1978 the crisis became more complex, deeper and all-embracing as both political and social and economic factors were intermingled, together with national, regional and extra-regional interests.

To better understand this crisis, Part II of this study reviews regional economic growth since 1951 and its relationship with that of exports, industrial development, economic infrastructure, the agriculture sector and social infrastructure. Part III will set forth the basic elements of the present crisis and the future outlook.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

The general characteristics of the region's economic growth following the initial steps toward integration make it possible to divide this growth into three main periods: (a) from 1951 to 1971, a time of growth accompanied by external stability; (b) 1972-1978, characterized by growth with internal and external instability, coupled with greater use of external financing; and (c) from 1979 onward, a period of economic depression with external and internal instability, the latter aggravated by extra-economic phenomena.[1]

The most rapid and stable growth occurred in the 1960s. The average growth of the regional GNP was 4.7% p.a. in the previous decade, but reached 5.9% in the 1960s. This surge of growth during the 1960s can be attributed in part to renewed dynamism on the part of traditional exports to third countries, especially in the first five years of the decade, and to the positive impact of the economic integration process on industrial development. These two factors were mutually reinforcing. The traditional exports to countries outside the region facilitated the integration process by raising the level of overall demand and enabling internal savings which, at least in part, financed the new directly productive activities which would then participate in the increased intra-regional trade. The integration process, for its part, gave a further fillip to the economic activity of the five countries, enabling them to export more. In this way the traditional "outward-looking" development model was complemented by the "inward-looking" growth begun under the shelter of multilateral integration during the 1960s.

Traditional Exports to Third Countries

As already noted, the sustained growth of the Central American economies during the 1960s was a reflection of the vigorous expansion of the world economy at that time. Besides generating an increase in internal savings, the growth of the traditional export sector created propitious conditions for the Central American governments to set up a free-trade area in the short space of five years, from 1961 to 1966.

The favorable development of the external sector was, to a large extent, the root cause of the growth of the Central American economies. In the same way, its deterioration marked the limit of the expansion of internal economic activity. External financing or debt acted as a buffer during the periods of contraction, preventing the falls in the value of exports from automatically crimping capacity to import, and hence the economy's capacity for growth.

This semiautomatic way of managing the effects of economic fluctuations kept the system functioning with a certain smoothness, but without resolving the underlying problems. As a result, there was a feeling of stable growth accompanied by the formation of an industrial nucleus that would provide the economic system with greater firmness and autonomy. However, there were always minority groups which were aware of the internal sector's extreme vulnerability. These groups endeavored to diversify exportable production and markets through the establishment of bodies for national and region-wide export promotion. Unfortunately, these

first experiments in promoting nontraditional exports at the end of the 1960s did not bear much fruit.

Between 1971 and 1974 the changes in the world economic environment significantly altered international relations for an indefinite period. During this forced adjustment, the equilibrium of Central America's external sector was lost. However, the development of the Eurodollar markets at that time coupled with the abundance of funds for loans at the international level created irresistible opportunities for external indebtedness, diverting the countries from implementation of the necessary structural reforms.

Central America effectively responded to these changes in the same way as the rest of Latin America. The degree of openness both to trade and to world capital flows increased, heightening the vulnerability of the region to fluctuations in the international prices of goods and services and creating a new vulnerability to fluctuations in interest rates and the availability of funds in the international capital markets.

The indexes for exports and imports of goods and services, as a percentage of GNP show an upward trend through 1977 (see Table 1). After 1977, the indexes decline owing to an increasing downturn in the activities of the external sector and in domestic economic activity.

In this way, by the end of the 1970s the region was much more vulnerable to variations in the costs of raw materials, interest rates, and insurance and transport costs than early in the decade.

Table 2 presents the terms of trade for Central America over the period 1974-82, from which it is apparent that the short-term fluctuations were quite sizable and also that, in general, there was no trend toward deterioration or improvement over the long term. In other words, the real problem generated by the short-term fluctuations in the terms of trade is more important than the problems caused by the long-term trend. Al-though there is no clear long-term trend toward deterioration in the terms of trade, a distinct fall has been evident in them in recent years.

The rise in the prices of oil and imported products as of 1973 created pronounced inflationary tensions that implied a real revaluation of the Central American currencies which maintained a fixed par value. This still applies in those countries that have not devalued and (to a certain extent) in those that have not accepted the realistic parallel market.

The impact of the higher prices of goods and services, the fluctuations in the terms of trade over recent years, the reappreciation of the national currencies, and the problems of national and regional coexistence led to a worsening of the current account deficit.

Table 3 shows that the goods account at regional level was positive in 1972, but posted negative balances thereafter; as regards the services account all the countries show deficits throughout the period.

The general economic scene showed a relatively conservative and prudent management of the external sector up to 1981. The efforts to maintain the fixed nominal exchange rate are indeed open to criticism, although there were reasons for those efforts. However, it appears that the roots of the present crisis lie fundamentally in the deterioration of the terms of trade, payments for services, the world recession and the rise in interest rates, together with the region's political and social problems which have spurred a massive outflow of private capital and brought direct investment and private sector loans to a standstill.

Table 3 further shows that between 1974 and 1978 the countries accumulated a current account deficit of US$3,554 million, i.e. 96% of the total amount of IDB loans to Central America in its 25 years of operation. From 1979 to 1983 the region became a net exporter of

capital--precisely in the years when the Central American countries were desperately seeking additional financing. From 1978 to 1984, the cumulative deficit was US$9,470 million.

Industrial Development

During the 1950s, industrial policy was not a major component of the set of economic policies adopted by the Central American countries, but the decade served as a period of preparation, study and accumulation of initial experience for the shaping of an industrial policy that would have to form a central element of economic policy for the following stage. The basic decisions on industrial policy were taken between 1959 and 1960, with the establishment of the CACM.

The central assumption of the regional industrial policy was the creation of an expanded market based on consolidation of the national markets which would serve as a springboard for the expansion of national and regional production. The industrial strategy was based on the regional demand through the expanded market, since the small individual national markets were inadequate for the purpose, while the region possessed neither the experience nor the technical and financial resources for exporting manufactured goods beyond its boundaries.

At that time industrialization was viewed as a joint undertaking that called, not so much for large-scale innovations, as for simple intensification of what was already being done in the national sphere. Despite its simplicity, this industrialization strategy imparted a genuinely and organically regional dimension to the process.

The production policy was defined principally by the following: (i) a free-trade area; (ii) a common external tariff; and (iii) a Central American Agreement on Fiscal Incentives for Industrial Development. Both the tariff and the agreement contained clear provisions for stimulating the manufacture of consumer and intermediate goods, and for facilitating the import of the raw materials and capital goods needed for their manufacture.

The integration of the raw material, capital goods and intermediate goods industries could have been effected by means of the exclusive allocation of specific plants on the basis of the Central American Agreement on Integration Industries. However, even before it was signed this agreement encountered considerable opposition, both within Central America and elsewhere, so that it did not in practice produce the hoped for results.

Rather, the new industrial policy explicitly and deliberately left the utilization of manufacturing opportunities in individual countries and region-wide to the private sector and the initiative of each country. The design, planning, capitalization, financing, technological arrangements and execution of projects were left in private hands. The governments' responsibilities consisted of providing institutional and administrative mechanisms to facilitate the action of national entrepreneurs and encouraging the participation of foreign investment.

To facilitate integration, the governments speeded implementation of the regional economic infrastructure, including the construction of highways, port facilities, and installations for the generation and transmission of electrical energy. They integrated and expanded the Central American road system, installed the regional telephone network and went part of the way toward electrical interconnection. The essential purpose of this infrastructure was to meet the transportation and telecommunications requirements of industrialization.

Despite the existence of a good economic infrastructure, industrial development was not equitably distributed. Because efficient use was not made of the Central American Agreement on Integration Industries, the industrial policy remained without national and regional programming

mechanisms for the basic manufacturing activity it was intended to build. Because these programming mechanisms were lacking, the disequilibrium in industrial development between countries remained as before the integration process was begun, and the possibility of producing intermediate and capital goods was limited.

Nevertheless, the world economic environment of the 1960s was highly favorable for implementation of the new industrial and integrated trade policy. The world economy, especially in the industrial countries, was growing rapidly, in a context of stable price and exchange rates that favored fast expansion of the volume of international trade. Under these conditions, the Central American economies were able to increase their revenues from exports of traditional products, complemented by the real and financial investment flows from outside the region. This made it possible for them to finance steadily increasing imports of capital goods.

The greater dynamism of the manufacturing sector brought about significant changes in the structure of GNP in all the countries. The industrialization coefficient rose from 12.3% to 15.9% of GNP between 1960 and 1970 (see Table 4).

Exports of manufactured goods increased in proportion to the total exports to CACM countries. The regional trade in these items increased from US$56.5 million in 1963 to US$225.4 million in 1969, i.e. by an average annual rate of 25.9%--considerably more than the average inflation rate in that period. It can be stated that industrialization focused on meeting the needs of a new economic space and a growing market. The rest of the production effort was aimed, simultaneously, at taking advantage of possibilities offered by economic spaces already in existence (see Table 5).

The growth of manufacturing production during the 1960s did not result in a similar increase in the proportion of the labor force employed in industry. Toward the end of the decade (1968) industrial employment was roughly the same in percentage terms as it was at the beginning, namely, at 9.6% and 10.1% of the economically active population, respectively (see Table 6).

There were significant changes in the structure of production in terms of the major groups of manufactures in the 1960s. These changes revealed a shift toward production of intermediate goods, and only marginally toward production of capital goods and consumer durables.

The development of industries producing intermediate goods in this stage was brought about through the establishment of entirely new activities which did not strengthen the body of inter-industry relations (upstream or downstream linkages), but focused rather on other sectors such as agriculture, construction, transportation and trade. Some industrial activities were set up in all the countries without any thought being given to specialization, while others, in contrast, were established in just one or two countries in observance of certain considerations regarding specialization.

As can be seen from Table 7, between 1960 and 1979 the percentage supply of internal demand for intermediate goods of regional origin increased significantly, whereas in the other categories of goods the changes in the percentages were modest. In the case of nondurables, this was due to the high level of supply in the 1960s, while as regards consumer durables and capital goods, in the period 1960-79 it was due to a lack of programming of industries that needed the expanded market. In other periods the reason was the lack of preparation in the private sector to start activities in sectors that required high investments and permanent development incentives. Progress in import substitution took place in the intermediate goods and nondurable consumer goods categories.

Between 1970 and 1979 the industrialization process developed in very different circumstances from those of the previous decade. The industrial sector did not contribute to

regional development during the 1970s on the same scale as it had before, even though industrial production grew more rapidly than agro-livestock production and the GNP. The factors that held back the progress of industrialization during this period were twofold: the international crises and the crisis in the CACM.

The international crises substantially modified the premises on which the industrialization process in Central America had been based up to that point. However, the problems created by international upheavals could have been managed with fewer negative effects if the crisis of confidence in the CACM had not worsened.

This crisis of confidence in the permanence of the CACM was of far reaching impact. The basic reasons for it were the perception that the costs and benefits of integration had not been equitably distributed, together with the predominance of national interests over regional interests when there were conflicts. Though the 1969 armed conflict with El Salvador is given as the reason for Honduras' withdrawal from the CACM, Honduras actually withdrew from the CACM in 1971 when the negotiations to improve the distribution of integration costs and benefits broke down. In the same way, the predominance of national interest in the supply of raw materials and staple products in 1973 and 1974 demonstrated the fragility of legal commitments in difficult times, leading the regional enterprises to break up into a multiplicity of national ones in order to ensure supply at least to their respective national markets.

Tables 8 and 9 show the structure of the intra-regional and total trade in manufacturing in the period 1972-82, in which the high proportion of manufactured goods (around 94%) in the intra-regional trade stands out, though this trade represented no more than 20% of total imports of manufactures.

During the 1970s, industrial production maintained its orientation toward nondurable consumer goods and intermediate goods in a climate of instability. This instability weakened, but did not change, the direction of industrialization. During this period industrial activity was not furthered by new investments; instead of large plants being put up, numerous small ones were built, thus providing further evidence of the lack of confidence in the permanence of the expanded market.

At the start of the regional crisis of 1979-83, the regional industrial sector was no longer the mainstay of economic growth it had been in the 1960s. In actual fact, that sector's deficit vis-a-vis the rest of the world increased (see Table 10).

In the present circumstances there is a danger that the regional industrial sector may partially disappear. Intra-regional demand has shrunk as a result of the foreign exchange shortage. The Central American Clearinghouse, which for more than 20 years always used national currencies for its transactions and foreign exchange solely for settling balances due, is now using dollar instruments for transactions. It is surprising and promising to note that, notwithstanding the current difficulties, intra-regional trade in 1984 amounted to US$775 million, approximately 50% of which was automatically offset. In order to maintain acceptable levels of trade and industrial production, the Central American countries have granted credits among themselves, since 1981, totalling US$600 million to ensure the functioning of the Central American Clearinghouse (see Tables l0a, l0b, l0c and l0d).

Economic Infrastructure

As already noted, the two most dynamic factors behind regional development were exports of certain traditional products and the industrialization prompted by the CACM. In the past

decade external savings were also of importance. As a result of these factors, and also to obtain the fullest advantage from them, an extensive and up-to-date economic infrastructure was being constructed.

The roads, railways and ports were built to handle the extra-regional exports and imports of goods and services. When the CACM was set up, the intra-regional infrastructure was developed at the same time, based upon roads, telecommunications and electrical interconnections.

Central America now possesses an adequate regional economic infrastructure that is integrated with that of the rest of the world and relatively more modern than the national infrastructures. Between June 1971 and December 1983, 173 regional infrastructure projects were completed in the region at a cost of US$2,634 million. The investment in the period displays a fluctuating trend. The subsectors receiving the most investment were hydroelectric energy, roads and mining, with figures of US$754.1 million, US$711 million and US$405 million, respectively, equivalent to 28.6%, 27.0% and 15.4% of all investment during that twelve-year period.

Data compiled as of December 31, 1983[2] inventories 264 projects. The investment envisaged is US$8,254.8 million, of which it is estimated that 61% or US$5,035.4 million will be financed with external funds and 39%, i.e. US$3,219.4 million, by local funds.

In sector terms, the investment is concentrated in energy and transportation, which receive US$5,813.8 million and US$1,829.3 million, sums that represent 70.4% and 22.2%, respectively, of the total investment planned.

The hydroelectric energy sector would absorb 63.6% of the energy sector's investments, and the remaining 36.4% would be used for transmission equipment, electrical interconnection, geothermal and thermal energy, and biomass. In the transportation sector, the road subsector has priority with planned investment of US$1,227.3 million, equivalent to 67.3%, leaving 32.9% for the railway, air, maritime, lake, river and freight terminal subsectors. The rest of the sectors, which include communications, natural resources and water control, will receive 7.4% of the total planned investment.

As of December 31, 1983, 60.4% of the internal and external funds needed to finance the 264 projects mentioned was in hand, i.e. US$4,988.5 million. Of the external resources totalling US$5,035.4 million required, US$2,920.0 million already had been secured.

The main institutions that helped with the financing are the IDB, which provided US$789 million or 27%; the CABEI, with US$455.6 million or 15%; the IBRD, with 13.8; the Venezuelan Investment Fund with 6.9%; and AID and OPEC with 3.4%.

Some of the principal aspects of the regional economic infrastructure constructed over the past few decades to serve regional integration and the external sector are described in the following, divided under three headings: roads, telecommunications and energy.

Roads. The Central American road system approved in 1963 is now almost completed: over 5,300 km. It not only links the five capitals and San Pedro Sula, i.e. Central America's main centers of production and consumption, but also passes through the most densely populated areas and those of greatest agro-livestock significance. In this way the road system has become a major support for the functioning of the CACM.

For reasons of use and of a technical nature it is necessary to maintain and increase the capacity of the existing road system and also to widen its area of influence, especially on the Atlantic side of the region. The Central American Transportation Study envisaged additional coverage by means of a regional network with a length of approximately 11,600 km.

Telecommunications. The Central American governments began their cooperation in the establishment of a regional telecommunications system in 1959. The improvements introduced since then have been most significant at both the national and the regional level.

In the course of 1959-69 the automatic six-digit system was installed in all the countries. The regional telecommunications artery project was completed in 1971 and put into service in the same year. This project linked the five capitals and San Pedro Sula (Honduras), with a connection to the exterior via Mexico to the north and via Panama to the south, and three via satellite in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. The project was financed by the CABEI. Construction of the second stage of the regional telecommunications artery was completed in 1979, and comprised expansion of the regional microwave artery. Execution of the third stage was programmed for realization between 1981 and 1986 at a cost of US$186 million, 83.3% of which would be financed by the CABEI and the rest by contributions from the governments.

The project consists of procurement of new exchanges, establishment of alternative routes, ground stations for the traffic with the United States and the rest of the world, and personnel training by the Central American Telecommunications Institute (INCATEL) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

Energy. Apparent gross energy consumption in Central America in 1980 was served 48% by oil, 38.5% by wood, charcoal and sugarcane bagasse, and 13.5% by hydroelectric and geothermal energy.[3]

A number of large-scale hydroelectric projects are currently being carried out in Central America. They are mutually complementary through the electrical interconnection of the countries and are designed to permit rational and economic use of the energy generated. Examples are the Chixoy project in Guatemala, San Lorenzo in El Salvador, El Cajón in Honduras, Garreinaga in Nicaragua, and the Arenal and Carabici projects in Costa Rica.

At the present time Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica are interconnected. The physical interconnection between the first two dates from 1976 and that between the second two from 1982. The interconnection between Costa Rica and Panama became operational in 1985, and the line between El Salvador and Guatemala in 1986.

The national electrical systems have been steadily expanded by large investment programs focusing mainly on hydroelectric projects. Despite the expansions already carried out, further work will have to be done in this area because, except for Costa Rica, the population with electricity is still very small.

Agriculture and Rural Development: A Sector that has Lagged Behind. Central America's industrialization was not carried out at the expense of the export agricultural sector, the value of whose exports doubled between 1961 and 1970. However, the agricultural sector as a whole has been slipping in terms of relative significance in GNP since the traditional agricultural sector failed to achieve growth rates similar to those of GNP; the rates it actually posted were very much lower than those of the industrial sector (see Tables 11 and 12).

Between 1961 and 1970 the income from exports of the main agricultural products more than doubled in four countries. For the region as a whole, the value of the chief agricultural exports (coffee, bananas, cotton, sugar and meat) in 1984 represented the same proportion of total exports to markets outside the area as in 1961 and 1970, i.e. approximately 85%.

1. Export and Subsistence Agriculture. Despite the high proportion of agricultural export products in Central America's trade with the rest of the world, the agro-livestock sector has been characterized by a pronounced dualism in which two quite different types of agricultural production coexist: (a) production for export (coffee, cotton, meat, bananas, sugar and other products) with higher productivity and better business organization, and (b) production of subsistence food crops (mainly grains, vegetables and fruits for which there is a general demand) by thousands of small-holders with modes of cultivation which are not comparable with those used by the large-scale producers of cash crops and products for export.

The macroeconomic policies and the specific agricultural policies have resulted in widening the gulf between the export and the traditional agriculture sector. Production of the traditional export products has been encouraged as a source of foreign exchange needed to maintain industrial development and national economic activity, while the prices of products for domestic consumption have been kept low so as not to affect the purchasing power of the lower-income urban dwellers and not to raise the cost of agro-industrial products, which would hamper exports. In this way a transfer of resources took place from small and medium farmers to the urban population. The efforts to modernize agricultural production for domestic consumption with a view to raising the productivity and incomes of small and medium farmers have not been as effective as was hoped, despite the fact that some institutions for coordinating and improving agro-livestock technology have been set up at the country and sub-regional levels. In the final analysis, it would appear that this productive subsector did not feature among the priorities of the modernization policy, nor was it considered a multiplier factor for national development.

2. Agro-industry. Development of agro-industries was always considered a basic element for better utilization of natural resources and a means for creating an independent industrial development nucleus.

The growth of agro-industrial production in Central America was significant, rising from US$633 million in 1960 to US$2,966 million in 1978. Agro-industry's contribution to the total value of Central American production, calculated at current prices, is of the order of 65%. Similarly, at the regional level 42% of intra-regional trade in 1978 consisted of agro-industrial products. However, even this subsector is highly dependent upon imports. Thus in 1975 and 1976 the paper, paper products, printing and publishing industry imported between 65% and 95.8% of the inputs used.

3. Agro-industry and the CACM. The trade in unprocessed or minimally processed agricultural products intensified with the establishment of the free-trade area. However, as industrial development progressed, the trade in agro-livestock products declined in relative significance. Variable integration seemed to have lost its relevance during the 1970s in the national agricultural development plans and policies, with the concept of Central American self-sufficiency being supplanted by that of national self-sufficiency. In practice, this resulted not only in a very marked reduction in intra-regional agricultural trade, but also led to this trade being limited to an offsetting of surpluses and shortfalls.

While in the industrial sector a fragmentation of enterprises was observed in the 1970s because of uncertainty regarding the regional market in terms of supply, where agriculture was concerned it was national security, protection of farmers and the relatively low level of development of the sector that led to a policy of control of trade and national self-sufficiency.

However, the policies designed to achieve this national agricultural self-sufficiency were not successful and exacted a high social and financial cost. It would seem advisable that these

policies be reviewed in light of past experience[4] and the desirability of implementing a regional agricultural policy.

Social Infrastructure: A Nonpriority Sector. The economies and societies of the Central American countries have undergone substantial changes over the past 25 years, partly on account of the growth and diversification of the production system, the integration of national and regional economic infrastructure, which has fostered urbanization, and the creation of an emergent middle class. These changes have led to heavy demands for provision of adequate basic social infrastructure services such as safe water, sewerage, education and health, which have not been provided in accordance with the expectations of the majority of those concerned.

Changes in the social infrastructure would appear to be only a byproduct of the style of growth that has prevailed over the past few decades, and not the outcome of a planned exercise carried out with the same priority as the promotion of traditional exports, industrial development and economic infrastructure.

Income distribution was still extremely inequitable in 1980 (see Table 13), having deteriorated in the previous four years. The growth model promoted failed to meet the basic needs of 40% of the region's population (see Table 14).

As is apparent from the data, considered with all due reserve, in 1980 some 13.2 million Central Americans (64% of the total population) were living in a state of poverty in that their income did not cover their basic needs. More than 8.5 million (41%) did not have sufficient income to meet the cost of the minimum basket of foodstuffs considered necessary for life and health. This state of affairs was much worse in the rural areas than in the towns, and there were significant differences between one country and another.

lt is certain that in relative terms the illiteracy rates and other indicators which show the situation of the social infrastructure have been brought down. However. in absolute terms the number of those who are unable to cover such essential needs as food, housing, clothing and access to basic services has increased.

The problem has become more acute in recent years, partly because of the prevailing social and political instability which has led to major population moves within the region and to emigration. The fall in per capita income and the reallocation of public spending to sectors such as national security have also added to the problem.

Two out of three Central American children under five years of age are affected by malnutrition, with the range running from 38.6% in Costa Rica to 80% in Honduras. Recent statistics show that out of about 850,000 children born each year, 100,000 die before reaching the age of five; while the malnutrition that will affect two thirds of those who survive will cause 10% to suffer physical and mental development problems. Central America, with only 3.5% of the continent's population, had 33.4% of its total number of malaria cases in 1982. Around 50% of the population does not have permanent access to health services. With the exception of Costa Rica, the Central American countries spend less than US$40 per capita on health services. A cut back of funding for the health sector has worsened the problem, together with the movement of over 500,000 persons within the region and the exodus of other refugees.

These observations, drawn from a study published by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on the "Priority Health Needs in Central America and Panama," make quite clear that social infrastructure has not been a priority sector in the development model that has been followed over the past 25 years.

Moreover, the Central American region is passing through its deepest social, economic and political crisis of the last 50 years. Although the countries have committed themselves to the social goal of providing health for all by the year 2000, the present crisis has reached such proportions that the social sectors, including health, are finding it hard to maintain the previous levels of social development.

All of the foregoing leads to the conclusion that social infrastructure is beset by very serious problems which will have to be analyzed in the short term. The IDB has ascertained that social infrastructure projects for education, health, nutrition, water supply and sewerage are being particularly affected by the financial situation, with the result that the completion of some projects in an advanced stage of realization and the initiation of new high-priority projects are being delayed.

CRISIS AND PROSPECTS

From the above observations it is easy to identify the causes of the present crisis in Central America. The international economic and political climate is exercising a marked impact on the behavior of the regional economy. This climate has been extremely hostile ever since 1974 despite the sugar bonanza of 1974 and the coffee bonanza of 1976, 1977 and 1978. As of 1974 the deficit of the services sector increased substantially, creating a permanent disequilibrium in the external sector, notwithstanding the fact that up to 1980 the service of the external debt was not a very heavy burden.

The two key factors on which regional development was successfully based in the 1960s do not have the necessary dynamism in the present circumstances. In today's economic order, development cannot be based on the prices and the production volumes of traditional agricultural products. As has already been noted, while these may ensure a positive trade balance, they cannot assure the equilibrium of the external sector. As regards regional industrial development, experience points up the difficulty of creating an autonomous nucleus of industrialization without a guaranteed free-trade zone and without selecting a form of industrialization that minimizes imports of materials and capital goods for the new industries.

As of 1974, the two traditional bases of Central American regional development began to be replaced by external savings, the object of which was to ensure the permanence of the economic system rather than to foster development. Until 1974, external savings had complemented internal savings; after that year, they became the central element of the functioning of the system.

In addition to these factors, the crisis is made more severe when the different groups constituting society demand a more equitable share in the costs and benefits of development as a condition for guaranteeing a national coexistence pact. Within this more equitable perception of development, social infrastructure and rural development will have to become priorities.

The climate of violence that has prevailed in the region since 1978 has drained the countries of human and financial capital. The drain of human capital has a greater short, medium and long-term impact upon development than the loss of financial resources, and renders finding a way out of the crisis even more complicated and protracted.

In the short term, one of the problems connected with reactivating the regional economy is the shortage of foreign exchange for the inputs needed to maintain economic activity and to finance the orderly marketing of harvests. This situation has pushed very many enterprises out of business and caused a rapid fall in employment and income levels.

If the present deterioration of the industrial sector is allowed to continue this would have serious consequences for Central America's future development, since the sector will have to serve as one of the pillars for regional and national development in the future, provided the errors of the past can be avoided.

To sum up, while the present crisis has new and transitory elements it is, in its origins and effects, primarily of the structural and permanent type. As long as the economic policy priorities are left unchanged and the development model and strategy are not modified, the crisis will persist either openly or latently in Central America.

Modification of the model and of the development policies is a prerequisite, but not in itself sufficient, for a lasting solution of the crisis. The external economic and other factors must also be favorable (or at least not unfavorable) if such a solution is to be achieved.

InterAmerican Development Bank
Washington, D.C.

NOTES

1. See *Informe regional para Centoamérica*, July, l983.

2. See SIECA, "Décimotercer informe sobre el Inventario de proyectos regionales de infrestructura en Centroamérica, con datos a Diciembre de l983," SIECA/84/UBF/IF/20, Guatemala City, November, l984.

3. If the average efficiency of utilization of the sources is taken into account, electrical energy would cover from 30% to 35% of the energy actually used.

4. See SIECA, *La cooperación subregional y el intercambio de productos agrícolas en Centroamérica* (Guatemala City: SIECA, l979).

DISCUSSION OF RELATED ISSUES IN
THE ECONOMY

The groups involved vary by country, but include the political parties, the private economic sector, the army, and the Indians. Each needs not only to share in power, but to be ready to make room for new groups. At present, however, any new group must fight to obtain power. A pluralist model is needed which can accept conflict between groups. As long as such conflict remains less than violent, it need not suppress freedom or fairness.

Economic Factors

Some consider the divisions between groups in Central America as being not cultural, as in the case in Belgium and Lebanon, but economic. In this case, a corporatist model might provide a more appropriate consociationalist analogue, in contrast to the class struggle of the Marxist model.

While there was general agreement that the economic factor is fundamental, a simply economic interpretation does not seem to account, not only for the Indian groupings present in some countries, but for the military which appears to be moved primarily in terms of power and only secondarily in terms of wealth as an offshoot of power. Nor does class provide an adequate interpretative context if it means melding the rural peasant and the urban worker within the same group.

Class analysis in the Marxist manner seems both in theory and in practice to lead, not to the acceptance of an equilibrium of shared power, but to the intensification of conflict and the suppression of all but one group. The interpretation of the Central American situation in terms of superpower conflict is but the liberal mirror image of that view. Similarly, the rejection of elections could be either a confirmation of this or a rejection, not of the democratic process, but of an unbalanced system within which an election would yield an unbalanced result.

At any rate, to the considerable degree that economic interest is in play the situation is doubly grim, for the jousting for economic power is taking place within an economy which structurally is not viable. This is a new sense of "a problem within a problem."

Long term solutions would appear to lie neither in a subsistence economy nor a closed economy, but in significant change in the world economic order. In the short term additional flows of capital to Central America are required to cover the imbalance of imports while stimulating growth. This growth must be appropriate so as not to deepen the dependency. At the same time, recognition of the degree of interdependence in the world today is simple realism, and stands in stark contrast both to attitudes of refusal to help on the part of those who can do so and the refusal of help by those who are in certain aspects dependent or inter-dependent. As no basic resolution of the economic problem is foreseeable within the next decade or indeed in any particular time frame, realistic planning should concerns how to live with the problem, rather than after it.

Cultural Factors

The historical perspective of Chapter III provided essential insight into the formation of groups, their relative ordering, how certain groups came to form a power elite, the terms in

which others were excluded and came to constitute a dispossessed class, and the conflicts which derive from recent changes.

Cultural factors emerge as particularly crucial in the search for any political solution in terms of power sharing due to the lack in the region of a tradition of respect for minority rights and of a search for an equilibrium which provides for the interests of each group. Further, groups seek dominant power and are unwilling to give this up or to share it with others. This exclusive character generates tension and struggle by the groups excluded; it becomes doubly dangerous in times of change and the emergence of new groups. This is reflected in the rhetoric employed as a search to convince others of the rightness of one's own position precisely as one's own (see ch. VI), rather than as objectively true or as good for all in an inclusive equilibrium.

This suggests both that the cultural factor is a basic component of the problem and the correlative need to look into the culture to find the value resources which promote a concern for stability and equilibrium. Such an equilibrium must be grounded in respect, and ultimately in a love for others on a basis that takes one beyond mere self-respect even in the most laudable terms. In turn, this points to the development of a sense of national identity (see Ch. III) and beyond that to the cultural, educational and communicative capabilities of the Church (see Ch. II).

External Factors

Multinational corporations exercise considerable influence in shaping the economy in terms which go beyond, and at times counter to, national and regional interests. At its highest decision-making levels the U.S., speaking in terms of self-interest, cannot be counted upon to provide the supplementary help needed in order to promote equilibrium at least as a formal goal.

Internal power generally is possessed by the military, but as this forms into an interest group it exercises its power in the interest of its own group rather than in favor of a formal equilibrium. The Contadora group could contribute notably on social and economic problems. The Church, acting on the neighborhood, village, national and supranational levels, and reaching across class and national boundaries, seems best able to contribute through its concern for the basic human possibilities of the culture.

It seems very important to recognize the interdependent character of the life on all levels in these times and to be open to mutual respect, to help, and to being helped. This is a basic condition for the development of the cooperation needed for a viable economic and political order in an age of interdependence.

CHAPTER VI

SOME CENTRAL AMERICAN WRITERS OF LIBERATION

MARIO A. ROJAS

I don't particularly want to generalize, but in the vast majority of Latin American countries where there are no newspapers worthy of that title, no congresses that are truly representative--or, for that matter, no real political parties or trade unions--and where, too, cinema, television and radio are all in the hands of the most corrupt pedlars that can you possibly imagine, it's finally left up to the Latin American writer to say what history is afraid to say, what the mass media refuses to say. In Latin America, then the writer is confronted by a permanent challenge to explain the essential truth of the continent.[1] *Carlos Fuentes*

INTRODUCTION

Although the Central American political and economic situation is what makes headlines here [in the USA], there is no better way to understand the region than by turning to its writers. In their best works, the unresolved contradictions of the area can be seen without simplification and in their full tragic implications.[2]

This social concern of writers can be traced to the period even before the independence of their countries from Spain. Later it became stronger when voices of dissent emerged against absolutist and dictatorial governments, which in most cases turned out to be more oppressive that the Spanish rulers. This political involvement has become a tradition in Latin America. Writers quite often assume a leading role in guiding their people on different political and ideological issues and have become some of the most important opinion molders. They verbalize this social and political awareness in newspapers and on talk shows, in which they treat such issues as dictatorship, human rights, social injustice, health, education, poverty and militarism.

In these interviews such strong statements can be heard as that by the Mexican Carlos Fuentes referring to the Nicaraguan situation: "What can we say about a country that comes out of 45 years of dictatorship. . . . My attitude is to let these countries resolve their problems. I would like to ask Reagan `What right do you have to meddle in things you don't understand?'"[3]

It is not surprising then that, in accepting Nobel Prizes, without exception all the Latin American writers have not talked much about literature itself, but--aware of the vast audience they are reaching--have adopted a political tone to inform the world about the Latin American social and political reality. Thus in Pablo Neruda's Nobel lecture, "Toward the Splendid City," we read:

In the mist of the arena of America's struggles I saw that my human task was none other than to join the extensive forces of the organized masses of the people, to join with life and soul, with suffering and hope, because it is only from this great popular stream that the necessary changes can arise for writers and for nations. And even if my attitude gave, and still gives, rise to bitter or friendly objections, the truth is that I can find no other way for writers in our far-flung and cruel countries, if we want the darkness to blossom, if we are concerned that the millions of people, who have learned neither to read us nor to read at all, who still cannot write or write to us, feel at home in the dignity without which it is impossible for them to be complete human beings.[4]

Eleven years later, another Latin American writer, Gabriel García Márquez, who calls himself an emergency politician, took up Neruda's stand in Stockholm and gave an account of the what had happened in Latin America since the Chilean poet's speech: "There have been 5 wars and 17 military coups; there emerged a diabolic dictator who is carrying out, in Gods name the first Latin American ethnocide of our time. In the meantime, 20 million Latin American children died before the age of one." Turning to Central America in this account, he adds the following facts: Because they tried to change this state of things [human right violations] nearly 200,000 men and women have died throughout the continent, and over 100,000 have lost their lives in three small and ill-fated countries of Central America: Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. If this had happened in the United States, the corresponding figure would be that of 1,600,000 violent deaths in four years. . . . Since 1979, the civil war in El Salvador has produced almost one refugee every twenty minutes. The country that could be formed of all the exiles and forced emigrants of Latin America would have a population larger than that of Norway.[5]

Because of this political commitment and involvement, it is hard to find in any Latin American nation a writer who has not joined the struggle for human rights, especially against censorship which deprives them of the means to express their ideas. Many of them have been victims of different kinds of censorship and repression, but have found a way to defy and resist repression; others have paid for their beliefs, after being tortured, by becoming one more in the long list of `desaparecidos'. Many names come to mind, when we think of committed writers from Central America.[6] Here we will concentrate on only four writers of liberation whose prophetic voices of denunciation and hope are seen as an inextricable part of the Latin American struggle for social justice and human rights: the Guatemalan Miguel Angel Asturias, the Nicaraguans Ernesto Cardenal and Pablo Antonio Cuadra, and the Nicaraguan-Salvadorian Claribel Alegría.

MIGUEL ANGEL ASTURIAS AND THE SEARCH FOR ROOTS

The multinationals claim that they come in order to bring new technologies, a stable currency, and many new jobs. In practice, there is economic growth for a minuscule minority of rich natives who form a natural alliance with the incoming multinational. For the nonwhite peoples as a whole there is an increase in foreign and a minimum of new jobs, because modern technologies reduce to a minimum the number of workers needed and because such workers as are required need a technical training that is too advanced for the nonwhite indigenes.

Destruction of native cultures? Enslavement? Yes. Not openly and officially, however, but indirectly and subtly.[7]

(*Dom Helder Camara*) Born in 1899, Asturias received his law degree in 1923 with a thesis on Indian problems.[8] Soon after the completion of his university studies he left for Europe where he lived for ten years. He first stayed for some time in London where he frequently visited the Mayan collection in the British Museum, but soon moved to Paris to enroll at the Sorbonne to study under the direction of George Raymond, a scholar of Central American anthropology and mythology. Professor Raymond had translated the *Popol Vuh* into French, and Asturias subsequently rendered it into Spanish.

In 1930 Asturias returned to Guatemala while the country was under the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico. In 1946 he published *El Señor Presidente*, a novel which at first went unnoticed, but later became his best known work. In 1954 Asturias was deprived of his passport and citizenship, and forced into exile, first in Chile and then in Argentina. In 1966 the new president

of Guatemala appointed him ambassador to France. The next year he was awarded the Nobel Prize. Because at that time the government of Guatemala, with the assistance of the U.S.A., was crushing revolutionary guerrillas, many of his leftist friends thought he was under the service of a repressive regime--particularly the Cuban cultural establishment did not join the celebration of this award. In these years, Asturias had published other works, including *Men of Maize* (1949), which is considered by many critics to be his best novel.

For Asturias the Latin American writer has one essential function: "to reflect in his work the reality of his country." But, he points out, "[We Latin American writers] do not restrict ourselves to determining the facts, but try to modify the facts, to improve them, to submit them to justice. Latin American literature is committed to life . . . [but the committed author] is also committed to demonstrating greater mastery, greater artistic talent."[9] For Asturias the role of the writer is clear. He must be a guide of the people and assume a prophetic voice, and he must do all this without neglecting the excellence of his art.

The main literary preoccupation of Asturias was to recreate the kind of language conceived by the ancient Mayans for whom words were sacred, dedicated to the gods. For the Mayan--as for most primitive cultures--language has a magical power: to pronounce a word is to create what it names or to possess mastery over it. Many of the events of Asturia's novels are presented subjectively from the point of view of his characters. This literary choice endows his novels with a magical atmosphere. The Indians' interpretation is not of a concrete reality but one which arises from a definite magical imagination. This is a world, explains Asturias, where "there are no boundaries between reality and dream, between reality and fiction, between what is seen and what is imagined. The magic of our climate and light gives our stories a double aspect--from one side they seem dreams, from the other, they are realities."[10] With these words and without being fully aware of it, Asturias was establishing a new poetic formula which would give form to a literary tendency known as "magical realism" that has become one of the salient features of contemporary Latin American narrative. To this school belong such novels as Alejo Carpentier's *The Lost Steps*, Juan Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo*, Carlos Fuentes' *Aura*, Gabriel García Márquez's *One hundred Years of Solitude*, José María Arguedas's *Deep Rivers*, and recently Isabel Allende's *The House of the Spirits*--to name but the most successful.[11]

In his last collection of novels, the so-called "banana trilogy": *Viento fuerte*, *El papa verde*, and *Los ojos enterrados*--as well as in *Weekend in Guatemala*--Asturias strongly condemns the United States' presence in Central America. He denounces the massive geological destruction that big corporations, among them The United Fruit Company, are causing especially to Guatemala where Indian peasants are losing not only their land, but their system of values and precious traditions.

Paradoxically, while the influence of Asturias has been very powerful outside[12]--and has inspired novels such as García Marquez's *El otoño del patriarca (The Autumn of the Patriarch*), Mario Vargas Llosa's *Conversación en la catedral*, and Alejo Carpetier's *El recurso del método (Reasons of State*),[13] to name a few--this has not been the case in his own country, Guatemala. Nevertheless, recently, some influence can be seen upon four novels by Guatemalans, though for obvious reasons these have gone almost unnoticed in their country. With one exception, they were published in Mexico with small printings and have been banned by the Guatemalan government. These novels are variations on the theme of *El señor Presidente* or on guerrilla movements organized against the dictator Ubico and other Guatemalan dictators since 1954. (These novels are *Los compañeros* (1976) by Marco Antonio Flores, *Los demonios*

salvajes (1978) by Mario Roberto Morales, *Después de las bombas* (1979) by Arturo Arias, and *El pueblo y los atentados* (1979) by Edwin Cifuentes.[14]

Asturias initiated a new movement in Latin American literature, especially in the narrative genre. Writers began a more profound exploration of the Latin American situation and its roots, looking for the underlying forces that shape the traditions they want to preserve as their only form of survival against colonialism. Through works that are anthropologically oriented they probe the hidden mechanism that beats in the Latin American heart and propose social and economic changes which are appropriate, rather than imposed and alien to its inhabitants, especially to the native Indians. But what most affects and worries them as writers is what the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano calls "structural censorship" which cuts off access to books for the majority of people. "If only 5 percent of the population in Latin America can buy a refrigerator, what percentage can buy books"? asks Galeano. He continues:

Structural censorship is being applied day by day to an immense multitude, prohibiting access to books and journals, even though these may circulate freely. There is another problem: how can this multitude read if they do not know how? The rate of illiteracy in Latin America and in the Third World, as you know, is quite high.

This kind of "structural censorship"[15] is what Ernesto Cardenal first in Solentiname and then as a Minister of Culture of the Sandinista Government has tried to eradicate.

ERNESTO CARDENAL: POETRY, CHRISTIANITY AND REVOLUTION

At the root of the theology of liberation we find a spirituality, a mysticism: the encounter of the poor with the Lord. Today the poor are a whole class of marginalized and exploited persons in our society, marked as that society is by an exclusive partnership with a dependent capitalism. A theology--any theology--not based on spiritual experience is mere panting religious breathlessness.[16] Leonardo Boff

The first of Cardenal's collections of poems was written from 1943 to 1945 in a poetry workshop in Nicaragua. This collection, *Carmen and other Poems*, which was never published, are poems of love showing the influence from Darío, Neruda and Vallejo. They were written in traditional forms of free verse with a high degree of lyricism and subjectivity.

The harp on your breast resounds in the darkness: the melody of your hair is like a pine grove in the wind, and the moon springs from the sky as a clear shining skin, a body most radiant weeping in my hands.

The turning point of Cardenals' poetic development took place in New York during his years at Columbia University from 1947 to late 1949, where his professors included Carl Van Doren and Lionel Trilling. At Columbia he assimilated the best American poetry and was deeply influenced by the poetry of Ezra Pound, whom he considers to be his "main teacher." In the manner of Pound, but using his creative style, Cardenal began the development of a poetic form, which he named later "exteriorism." He defines it as follow:

Exteriorismo is a poetry created with images of the exterior world, the world we see and sense, and that is, in general, the specific world of poetry. *Exteriorismo* is objective poetry: narrative and anecdotic, made with elements of real life and with concrete things, with proper names and precise details and exact data, statistics, facts, and quotations. . . . In contrast, interiorist poetry is a subjective poetry made only with abstract or symbolic words: rose, skin,

ash, lips, absence, bitterness, dreams, touch, foam, desire, shade, time blood, stone, tears, night. . . . I think that the only poetry that can express Latin American reality and reach the people and be revolutionary is exteriorism. . . . Poetry can serve a function: to construct a country and create a new humanity, change society, make the future Nicaragua a part of the future great country that is Latin America.[18]

He developed his poetics in a collection of poems which Pablo Antonio Cuadra--another important poetic voice in Nicaragua-characterizes as "the vision of America from a foreign eye." Indeed, Cardenal, adopting the perspective of explorers, travellers, and adventurers especially of the 19th century, rediscovers the beauty of Central America, and especially that of his native land. To these series of narrative poems belong "Raleigh" and "With Walker in Nicaragua" in which Cardenal, under the inspiration of Pound, uses documentary sources and the montage technique as compositional devices.[19]

In "Raleigh," the beauty and majesty of the American forest is perceived through the enchanted eyes of Sir Walter Raleigh (1554-1618) who came to America to look for the fictitious "ciudad del dorado." Through Raleigh, Cardenal rediscovers America and sees it in biblical terms as a land of hope, the promised land. In this poem it is possible to trace the presence of those prophetic images which will be one of the distinctive features of his poetry and will become more powerful and effective after his ordination to the priesthood.

(. . .)
And on the banks, flowers and ripe green fruits.
And some green birds
we amused ourselves a good while watching them [pass]
And breadfruits and monkeys and the Campana bird and the sweet fragrance and balsam and soapberry
and the wax that the Karamana tree secretes
and the moisture in those jungles of sandalwood and [camphor:]
the trees were abounding in milk and honey,
they were abounding in amber and fragrant gums
and some fruit that would burst with a bang
from afar we'd hear it at night exploding.
And we saw the Crystal mountain, we saw it afar off, standing on the horizon like a silver church
and the river fell from its tip with a terrible noise
[like a thousand bells.]
And the daughters of the Orinoco laughing amid the
[tree...]
And cascades that shoe from afar like cities,
like a smoke rising over some great town
and the rumble and thunder and rebounding of the [waters.]
I never saw a more beautiful country:
the virgin green valleys,
the birds towards the evening singing on every tree,
the stags that came tamely to the water as to master's whistle
and the fresh air from the east
and the glisten of gold stones in the sunlight.
. . .[20]

In "With Walker in Nicaragua," Cardenal turns to an historical event that took place in Nicaragua in the nineteenth century. Walker was an American adventurer who invaded Nicaragua with an army of mercenaries and freebooters and declared himself President, legalizing slavery and imposing English as the official language of the country. After some time, Walker is forced out of Nicaragua and executed later in Honduras. The poem is narrated from the point of view of an old man who was one of the Walker's comrades-in-arms. Again through a vision of a foreigner, Cardenal describes Nicaraguan landscape as a wonderland and his affection for his culture and people, especially peasants and Indians, is growing stronger.[21]

During the years of 1952-1957, motivated by Pound's translations of epigrams from the classics, Cardenal began his own collection of epigrams, first of love but later, as Cardenal became more involved with revolutionary politics, impregnated with distinctive political tone. Here are examples of both:

"Epigram 5"
When I lost you we both lost:
I lost because you were what I loved most
and you lost because I was the one who loved you
[most.]
But between the two of us you lose more than I do:
for I can love others the way I loved you but
you'll never be loved the way you were loved by me.

"Epigram 18"
Suddenly in the night the sirens
sound their long, long, long alarm
the siren's miserable howl
of fire, or death's white ambulance
like a ghost wailing in the night,
coming closer and closer above the streets
and the houses, it rises, rises, and falls,
and it grows, grows, falls and goes away
growing and dying. It's neither a fire nor a death:
Just the Dictator flashing by.[22]

The second poem was written at a time when Cardenal was involved in political activities which ended in 1954 in an unsuccessful assault upon the Presidential Palace. This attack was directed by Adolfo Baez Bone and Pablo Leal who, along with several close friends of Cardenal, were killed. In this poem Cardenal chooses the figure of the dictator of Nicaragua to symbolize the social and political situation of the country. Although there is no reference to the social situation, it is sufficient to mention the name of the dictator. In his epigrams, Cardenal has reached the perfection of one of the Pound's techniques, the assimilation and convergence of multiple associations into a single image.[23]

Shocked by the events, Cardenal left the country and in May, 1957, entered the Trappist monastery in Gethsemani, Kentucky. Here as a novice he was under the spiritual guidance of the poet-priest Thomas Merton. Strongly influenced by Merton, Cardenal found the way to expand his love from his native land to humanity as a whole, and ultimately to God. After two years with Merton he was advised, for reasons of health, to leave the monastery. He continued his studies in Mexico and Colombia, and finally was ordained a priest in 1965.

During these years he wrote *Gethsemani, Ky* in 1960 and *Salmos* (Psalms) in 1964. In *Salmos*, which made him internationally known, Cardenal fully integrated poetry, religion and politics. The image of God depicted in *Salmos* is the God of the Old Testament: the God of justice, the liberator from economic and political oppression. The Portrait of Jesus is not the Sacred Heart, but one on the side of the poor who is constantly contending with contemporary evils. It is a God that suffers, but in confrontation. The God of the *Salmos* is "el dios pobre": God is with the poor and does not accept without strength the injustice inflicted upon his people (The Lord does not abandon his people/does not forget the exploited/"Psalm 93"). Cardenal is asking God to enter into a fearless confrontation with the twentieth century evils: concentration camps (Hear me O God because I call upon you in my innocence/You will free me from the concentration camp/"Psalm 4"); political prisoners (Defend me Lord from false trials!/Defend the exiled and the deported/those accused of espionage/those condemned to forced labor/"Psalm 7"); dictatorships, gangsters, corrupt politicians (Do not let me be lost among bloodthirsty politicians/Their attache cases filled with crimes/and their bank accounts stuffed with bribes/"Psalm 25"); the army and secret police (Lord break their secret agents/and their War Councils/And let their military forces disappear from earth/"Psalm 9"); political propaganda and commercials (We do not subscribe to their newspapers/we are not members of their political parties/we do not speak their slogans/nor use their jargon/We do not listen to their programs or believe their commercials/"Psalm 15"); and the economic oppressors (Snatch me from the claws of the Banks/by your hand Lord deliver me from the businessman/and from the member of the exclusive clubs/from those who have lived for too long/ "Psalm 16"). He invokes the liberating spirit of God to give his people the courage and the power to resist any form of dehumanization or oppression.[24]

After his ordination, Cardenal was able to realize his life's ambition to found a kind of monastic community in lake Nicaragua. Following Merton's advise, this would not be a place of retreat from the world, but a community open to the rest of the society. He named it "Nuestra Señora de Solentiname" (Our Lady of Solentiname). In this privileged site he was able fully to harmonize the artistic, political and religious dimensions of his life's work. For about ten years Cardenal lived at Solentiname in relative tranquility, writing poetry and providing spiritual direction to the families that made Solentiname their home. Every Sunday, the community of peasants commented on the Gospel as they interpreted the Bible in relation to their own geographical, social, and political context. Some of these commentaries have been published as *The Gospel of Solentiname*.[25]

During this period, Cardenal wrote also *Homage to the American Indians*. His close reading of the sacred writings of the Maya helped him to find his mission in relation to his people: he was meant to be not just a Catholic priest, but above all a prophet, a continuation of the Mayan *chilan* (a soothsayer).[26] From then on Cardenal begin to exercise the double role that has been assumed by many Latin American and Third World priests: the initiator of social changes for justice and peace, and also the soothsayer or prophet. Impelled by the political situation of Nicaragua under the Somoza dictatorship and convinced that there was no way to harmonize this with the tranquility of Solentiname, Cardenal concentrated his efforts on openly fighting oppression. This political commitment had begun to grow after Cardenal's visit to Cuba.[27] In 1972 he wrote "Nicaraguan Canto," dedicated to the FSLA.[28] In 1977, Solentiname turned Sandinista and the community was destroyed by the National Guard. Some of the Solentiname people died in this confrontation. This was the end of Cardenal's nonviolent stance and he proclamed himself a member of the Sandinista movement. He refers to his experience in

Solentiname and his decision to join the Sandinista movement when he says in his epilogue of *The Gospel in Solentiname*:

Twelve years ago I arrived at Solentiname with two companions to found a small, contemplative community. Contemplation means union with God. We soon became aware that this union with God brought us before all else into union with the peasants, very poor and very abandoned, who lived dispersed along the shores of the archipelago. Contemplation also brought us to revolution. It had to be that way. If not, it would have been fake contemplation. My old master, Thomas Merton, the inspirer and spiritual director of our foundation, told me that in Latin America I could not separate myself from political strife. In the beginning we would have preferred a revolution with nonviolent methods. But we soon began to realize that at this time in Nicaragua a non violent struggle is not feasible. Even Gandhi would agree with us. The truth is that all authentic revolutionaries prefer nonviolence to violence; but they are not always free to choose.

The Gospel was what most radicalized us politically. Every Sunday in Mass we discussed the Gospel in a dialogue with the peasants. With admirable simplicity and profound theology they began to understand the core of the Gospel message: the announcement of the kingdom of God, that is, the establishment on this earth of a just society, without exploiters or exploited, with all goods in common, just like the society in which the first Christians lived. But above all else the Gospel taught us that the word of God is not only to be heard, but also to be put into practice.[29]

This political commitment became manifest soon after his visit to Cuba in 1970. His experience there, recorded in his book*In Cuba,* developed in him a sympathy toward Marxism.[30] When asked about the incompatibility between Christianity and Marxism, he was emphatic in establishing a clear distinction between the two:

Christianity and medical science, for example, aren't the same thing, but they're not incompatible. Marxism is a scientific method for studying society and changing it. What Christ did was to present us with the *goals* of social change, the goals of perfect humanity, which we are to co-create with him. These goals are a community of brothers and sisters, and love. But he did not tell us which scientific methods to use in order to arrive at the goals. Science has to tell us this--in our case, the social sciences. Some take one science, others another. But if anyone substitutes Marxism for Christianity, that person has made a mistake, just as if he or she were to take any other social science and substitute it for Christianity. Correctly understood, Marxism and Christianity are not incompatible.[31]

Between 1972 and 1973 he wrote "Canto General" and "Oraculo sobre Managua" ("Oracle over Managua"). The latter relates the life of Leonel Rugama and the desolation of Managua left by the earthquake of 1971, especially the shanty-towns or slums which suffered the most. The life of Rugama and the earthquake are pretexts used by Cardenal to express his inclination toward Marxism. The section of the poem which relates the story of Rugama--a Sandinista poet, priest, and Marxist--echoes the story of Cardenal himself. The life and death of Rugama helped Cardenal reflect on the history of humanity and the dynamic integration of the universe, the constant change of which will bring new life:

The seminary students used to take a walk to Acahualinca
to see the foot prints
And so you went underground
and died in the urban guerrilla fighting
All life unites

unites and does not divide
(it integrates)
For that you gave your life, you
on the fifth planet of the medium-sized star of the
[Milky Way.]
Great feelings of love
at the risk of looking ridiculous--Che had said.
Every living substance unites.
What is fecundation really?
Every living substance: fusion with what is different
unification with opposite.[32]

In "Oracle," we find a clear resonance of Christologic Teilhard de Chardin's ideas of the universe and of its evolution. "Just as Jesus exists all for God, so man exists all for Christ, and the whole universe evolves and converges in order to realize the plenitude of the stature of Christ in Man."[33] For the cosmos to be Christocentric, evolution must be anthropocentric. Cardenal's poetry after his conversion to Marxism becomes more testimonial, structurally simpler and its language direct. Here is segment of his poem "Amanecer/Dawn"

. . .
Now the roosters are singing.
Natalia, your rooster's already sung, sister,
Justo, your's has already sung, brother.
Get up off your cots, your bed mats.
I seem to hear the congos awake on the other coast.
We can already blow on the kindling--throw out the
[pisspot.]
Bring an oil lamp so we can see the faces.
A dog in a hut yelped
and a dog from another has answered.
Juana, it's time to light the stove, sister.
The dark is even darker because day is coming.
Get up Chico, get up Pancho
There's a horse to mount,
we have to paddle a canoe.
Our dreams had us separated, in folding
cots and bed mats (each of us dreaming our own dream)
but our awakening reunites us.[34]
. . .

On 18 July 1979, Cardenal and other members of the revolutionary government flew from San Jose Costa Rica to Nicaragua where the poet was given the post of Minister of Culture. In this position, Cardenal is more involved than ever in integrating political ideas and poetry. The vision he once dreamt of for Solentiname has now become one for Nicaragua. He explains his mission:

My job is to promote everything cultural in Nicaragua. I have a ministry of poetry, music, painting, crafts, theater, folklore and tradition, and scholarly research, which includes libraries,

magazines, films and recreation. I think of my ministry this way: just as Christ put his apostle in charge of distributing the loaves and fishes, he has put me in charge of spreading culture. The people do not consume culture, they create it. This is what I did in Solentiname, only now I do it country-wide.[35]

Cardenal has set up workshops where ordinary people--workers, soldiers, children, peasants--can learn to write poems about their families, their workplace, communities and country. The main goal of these workshops is the decentralization and disalienation of cultural production: "We want a culture that is not the culture of elite but rather of an entire people . . . . Our people have expropriated their culture, which is now their own, as they are owners of their land and their historical reality."[33]

When Cardenal was asked about the controversy created by his being a Minister of the Sandinista Party and thus engaged in party politics against Church regulations, he responded:

This is a revolution that has been carried out in the service of the people and is still serving the people. In serving the revolution, we're serving the people. . . . In some poems I've managed to write recently, I've recorded the very deep experiences I've had in this office. I consider that my divine vocation is the vocation of service, of servant, of `minister.' And I must offer this service wherever God asks me to offer it. The will of God is expressed in the concrete circumstances of one's life--and in my case this is the way it has been expressed to me. I'd be betraying my vocation if I refused to make these sacrifices.[37]

CLARIBEL ALEGRIA AND THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN IN CENTRAL AMERICA

My name is Rigoberta Menchú. I am twenty three years old. This is my testimony. I didn't learn it from a book, and I didn't learn it alone. I'd like to stress that it's not only *my* life, it's also the testimony of my people. It's hard for me to remember everything that's happened to me in my life since there have been very bad times but, yes, moments of joy as well. The important thing is that what has happened to me has happened to my people too: my story is the story of all the poor Guatemalans. My personal experience is the reality of a whole people.[38]

The kind of liberation that women look for depends naturally on their social, cultural context and educational background. In the third world, women--in contrast to developed countries--have to join men and equally direct their effort to the struggle against hunger, repression and human dignity before fighting for women's rights *per se*. This is the orientation of women's movements in Central America: the liberation of their societies. Claribel Alegría is one of the poets who best represent this social commitment; she has become the voice of the voiceless in Central America.

Born in Estelí, Nicaragua, Claribel Alegría experienced political exile at the early age of nine when her father was forced to leave the country and live in El Salvador. She is regarded as one of the most powerful voices of contemporary poetry in Central America. Her commitment to the cause of women is clearly manifest in her novel, *El detén*, published in 1977, in which she depicts the difficult and painful life of a young female adolescent in a society whose social and moral norms are fiercely applied to women, but usually disregarded for men. This is a novel in which she deals with problems women have to face in any contemporary society, but which in Latin American are usually experienced only by families of the upper middle class. Motivated by the historical events that took place in Nicaragua, she realized that her concern should be with poor and especially peasant women who have to fight daily against oppression, exploitation and persecution. Alegria herself explains this change:

[Some time ago], I had no other commitment towards my work than to try to express the instant or flash of an emotion and to immobilize it in a poem. . . . For many years I never even thought of any degree of commitment to my country. It was history and the bloody and shameful events what shook me and compelled me to move from lyric subjectivity towards the literature of denounciation and testimony.[39]

This social commitment is shown in the novel, *Cenizas del Izalco* (Ashes of Izalco); in her collections of poetry, *Sobrevivo, Poesía viva*, and *Flowers from the volcano;* and other poems in such collections with other Central American authors as*Poesía Rebelde*. Besides her own writing, she is the editor of several books of testimonial literature, such as *No me agarran viva: la mujer salvadoreña en la lucha, Para romper el silencio: resistencia y lucha en las cárceles salvadoreñas,* and*Nicaragua: la revolucion sandinista*. In all these testimonial works, events are told by those who officially have no right to speak, and whose views would not otherwise be expressed. These books relate actions of real people: agents of liberation and frequently victims of persecution, torture and death.[40]

In *No me agarran viva* the main character, a women from the upper middle class confronted with the tragic situation of her country, joins the struggle of the poor for a more dignified life. She identifies herself with the suffering poor: peasants, workers, slum dwellers and guerrillas, and fights for their cause. After reaching a post of high responsibility in clandestine actions she falls victim of her own ideals. Alegria's testimonial writing is described by George Yúdice in the following terms:

Claribel Alegría develops a new narrative technique--at least one that is new for her--to serve as recipient and to express the voices of the people which constitute the emergent subject of her writing. Her testimonial narrative coming from the tradition of the reading of the Gospels as a form of `concientization' is a collective testimony in which the people are embodied in the figure of a woman who gives up her life in a quasi Christ-like death.

It is precisely through `death' that this subject enters history. In other words the narration of Eugenia's death reproduces the history of the people. The narration then is like a gravestone in which the history of the people is inscribed.[41]

In "La mujer del río Sumpul" ("The Woman of Sumpul River"), a narrative poem, Alegría tells the story of a wounded woman, whose husband and older sons have lost their lives in battle. Hiding with her two young children by the waters of the river Sumpul, she is attempting to escape from the guards.

. . .
The woman beside the river
awaited for her death
but the guards didn't see her
and carried on
the children didn't cry
it was the Blessed Virgin
she says to herself
a buzzard
slowly circles above them
she looks at it
so do the children
the buzzard drops
and doesn't see them

it is the Blessed Virgin
the woman repeats
the buzzard flies
right in front of them
loaded with rockets
and the children see it
and smile
it circles twice
three times
and starts to climb
the Virgin has saved me
the woman exclaims
and covers her wound
with more leaves
she has become transparent
her body is merged
with the earth
it is earth
it is water
it is the planet
mother earth
damp
oozing forth tenderness
the wounded mother earth
sees the deep gash
which has opened
the wound is bleeding
the volcano throws forth lava
a furious lava
mixed with blood
our history
has become lava
the incandescent people
merging with the earth
. . .[42]

The woman, who is bleeding with her babies, holds their cry. Despite their tender age they have already learned how to survive: any cry, they know well, will mean their death. The danger is also in the air: up there in circles the ominous bomber carefully searches the ground, its rockets targeting any moving soul. But the Virgin protects them and the sinister vulture (the Hawk-hunter) does not see them. In this way another vivid poem in the history of resistance is written. The woman's blood merges with nature to become transfigured and reborn into an incandescent and invincible collective force, that of the people.

Alegría's poems constantly recreate mesoamerican myths as in "Flowers from the volcano." There the Salvadorian volcanoes evoke both the terror of the present era and of the violent Latin American history, in which the blood and terror that began with the ancient gods has increased in

the present day. The poet prophesies that this cyclic rite of blood will end. At the conclusion of the poem, neither lava nor blood descends from the volcano, but a group of children who carry flowers grown by the peasant families.

. . .
Farther up, in the crater
within the crater's walls
live peasant families
who cultivate flowers
their children sell.
The cycle is closing,
Cuscatlecan flowers
thrive in volcanic ash
they grow strong, tall, brilliant.
The volcano's children
flow down like lava
with flowers,
like roots they meander
like rivers the cycle is closing.
The owner of two-story houses
protected from the thieves by walls
peer from their balconies
and they see the red waves descending
and they drown their fears in whiskey.
They are only children in rags
with flowers from the volcano,
with Jacintos and Pascuas and Mulatas
but the wave is swelling,
today's Chacmol still wants blood,
Tlaloc is not dead.[43]

PABLO ANTONIO CUADRA: THE LIBERATION OF THE WORD: DIALOGUE IN SEARCH OF UNIVERSAL SYMPATHY

Real liberation from our most basic limitations and conceptions comes only with a conscious effort to take into account the horizons of those who differ notably, whether as another nation, or as a distinct culture intermingled with our own, or--still more definitively--as living on the margin of all societies and integrated into none.[44] George F. McLean

Poet and journalist, Pablo Antonio Cuadra (1912)--along with Jose Coronel Urtecho, and Ernesto Cardenal--is considered one of the leading voices in contemporary Nicaraguan poetry.[45] His most important collections of poems are *Canto temporal*(*Temporal Song*), *El jaguar y la luna* (*The jaguar and the moon*), and *Cantos de Cifar* (*Songs of Cifar*).[46] In the 20's and 30's Cuadra and Utrecho worked closely with the avant-garde movement which revitalized Nicaraguan poetry after Ruben Darío. Early in his life, Cuadra also became involved in political movements opposing the Somoza dictatorship. Like many other young writers, he was arrested in 1937 and forced into exile in Mexico. He remained there until 1950, when he was allowed to

return to Nicaragua. In 1953 he became editor of the most important daily newspaper in Nicaragua, *La Prensa*, in collaboration with publisher Pedro Joaquin Chamorro. Because of the defiant opposition of *La Prensa* to the dictatorship, but mostly as a reprisal for the murder of Somoza Garcia, Cuadra was arrested once again. After being freed he returned to his post as editor of *La Prensa* to continue his fight against Somoza Debayle, the last of the Somoza dynasty, whose government ended in 1979 when the FSLN took control of the country. During the last years of the Somoza dictatorship, *La Prensa*became the "national conscience" of the Nicaraguan people. It was subjected to constant harassment culminating in the murder of its publisher, Chamorro, and the destruction of the *La Prensa* headquarters, set afire one month before the Sandinista victory.[44] This attack on *La Prensa* is considered a decisive factor in the Sandinistas' rise to power.

Just after the Sandinista victory a writers' symposium, organized by Ernesto Cardenal and the Argentine writer Julio Cortázar, was held in Managua in November 1978. The topic of the meeting was "The Writer and Revolution." Cuadra's enthusiastic response to this event was recorded in the editorial of *La Prensa*:

Cortázar set forth the terms for the discussion: A double commitment, he said, commitment to the people (true *being*) and commitment to the work (authentic *doing*). But Javier Arguello, the youngest and last to speak, closed the opening debate by saying `There is no commitment--we are freedom; we are the people.' Like the saying of Saint Augustine 'Love and do what you will.' It seemed to me then as if a beautiful rainbow was rising in the sky, from my generation, from before, from the time of Darío, to the present--this proclamation of liberty as the essence of commitment.[47]

Cuadra soon became deeply disappointed by a revolution that had turned--in his own words--into a "falsified revolution," into an "ideological dictatorship" moving away from the "Estatuto Fundamental" which had been supposed to establish the foundations for a democratic and pluralistic society.[48] *La Prensa* immediately denounced this deviation and began its resistance to the dictatorial ideology. The newspaper was accused of "diversionism" and "selling out" the country. It was subjected to constant threat and censorship, and what was supposed to be a public dialogue ended in a tense confrontation. This situation is commented upon by Cuadra as follows:

I must tell you that, from the onset, they, the commanders of the Sandinista Front looked upon criticism with displeasure. They did not want any criticism made. In other words, Freedom bothered them! It really did. In defeating Somoza, did we not also defeat the sort of government which `commands' and `dictates' so that we might replace it with a government which negotiates. This a mentality contradictory to the root and essence of the revolution in which they themselves embarked and which was launched against the dictatorship and for the sake of freedom. Only within a democracy, which elects its own officials, keeps them in check and criticizes them, and which respects plurality and freedom of expression, can the government recognize its reality and not be deceiving. Only then can the goverment become aware of the reactions of its peoples, and thus create original answers.[49]

Although Cuadra recognizes the cultural achievements of the Sandinista Government, he is in complete disagreement with the "official doctrine on culture" imposed by the government, and against the ideological orientation of the poetry workshops directed by the Ministry of Culture. In reaction to Bayardo Arce, one of the Sandinista comandantes, who claims that "art is worth nothing if the workers and peasants do not understand it,"[50] Cuadra comments:

Wouldn't it be more favorable to the culture, we have asked, to educate the people to understand art and not to lower art to the level of those that do not understand it? Would we have

asked Rubén Darío to get down to the mentality of a farm worker when he accomplished the great revolution in the Spanish language and in the Hispanic American Literature?

True socialization of poetry, argues Cuadra, consists in using all the educational means to bring together the people and the poem. Instead, to cheapen literature, to lower its level, is a sad homage to the people. "An odious paternalism' as Cortázar said."[51]

Cuadra considers the poetry produced in the People's Poetry Workshops to be highly politicized and militant. He laments the fact that many talented young people who participate in these worshops believe that a poem is worth nothing without a political message. An example of this confusion is that of the young poet, who in a television program declared: "It was wrong to write love poetry; in the workshop I learned why my poetry was bad. It was that it did not have a message." [52]Cuadra's unhappiness for this negation of creative spontaneity is perceived in the following poem:

1984
I live in a country made sad
by the cultivators of rifles.
Everything can be figured out
with the testicles. Standing,
foreheads yesterday crowned with laurels
or imaginations, now empty
with eyes fixed on gunsights.
Homotextuals consult Marx
What would someone say
looking at this surplus-value of corpses?
In this scheme a good Lord does not fit
But there is room for happiness
and also for weeping
and the grinding of teeth. Invent
paradises and your hell will burn you.

My country is inhabited by soldiers, My country
which bursts with poems
repeating slogans. My country
with its gush of children
condemned to death.
What hope do we feel
on our knees? We are calling
in the emptiness: Manuel!
Ramon! Felix! Federico!
But our sons
are gone![53]

La Prensa, which was published under the motto "Without freedom of the press there is no freedom at all," has been silenced intermittantly by the Sandinista government, and Cuadra has become exiled in his own country. The "worst aspect of censorship--Cuadra has said--is that it kills criticism which is the essential ingredient of culture . . . , the only resource that makes possible human perfection and culture"[54] and can free revolution from stagnation. He certainly

will continue his struggle to resist any form of censorship or any imposed official style in order to liberate the word in such a way that language instead of a medium of domination and social control will be a medium of emancipation.

Only sincere and cooperative dialogue can make it possible for human beings freely and creatively to express themselves and to construct a democratic and pluralistic society. As G. McLean expresses in his illuminating introductory essay to this volume, "to be aware of our own horizon and to adjust it in dialogue with others is to make it work for us in freeing ourselves to live more fully the rich implications or our tradition required for our times."[55] Neither cersorship, nor national or international coercion, nor military intervention or any other form of human rights violation will bring peace to Central America.

Only an open dialogue ("the mutual and cooperative search for truth"[56]) among people and nations will help to find the right path for real liberation and peace. In his "Dialogue, Democracy, and Peace in Central America," the eminent Mexican poet, Octavio Paz, concludes that "democracy is dialogue, and dialogue paves the way for peace. We will be in a position to preserve peace only if we defend democracy."[57] The poet continues:

Violence exacerbates differences and keeps both parties from speaking and hearing; monologue denies the existence of the other; dialogue allows differences to remain yet at the same time creates an area in which the voices of otherness coexist and interweave. Since dialogue excludes the ultimate [ultimatum], it is a denial of absolutes and their despotic pretensions to totality: we are relative, and what we say and hear is relative. But this relativism is not a surrender: in order for there to be a dialogue, we must affirm what we are and at the same time recognize the other in all his irreducible difference. Dialogue keeps us from denying ourselves and from denying the humanity of our adversary. . . . *Dialogue is but one of the forms, perhaps the highest, of universal sympathy*.[58] (Emphasis mine.)

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NOTES

1. *A Fist and the Letter: Revolutionary Poems of Latin America*, eds. and trans. Roger Prentice, and John M. Kirk (Vancouver, Canada: Pulp Press, 1979), p. 11.

2. Emir Rodriguez Monegal, "Central America: Four Writers in the Labyrinth" (*La prensa*, January 28, 1984), p. 96.

3. Alan Riding, "Revolution and the Intellectual in Latin America," *The New York Time Magazine*, March 13, 1983, p. 40.

4. Pablo Neruda, *Toward the Splendid City* (Nobel Lecture), (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1974), pp. 29-31.

5. Gabriel Garcia Ma rquez, "The Solitude of Latin America" (Nobel Lecture; The Nobel Foundation, 1982).

6. For more on repression of writers in general see *The Writer and Human Rights*, edited by the Toronto Arts Group for Human Rights (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1983).

7. Dom Helder Camara, *Hoping Against the Hope*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984), pp. 35-37.

8. See Richard J. Callan, *Miguel Angel Asturias* (New York: Twayne, 1970), pp. 11-17.

9. "An interview with Asturias," *Review* (Fall, 1975), pp. 6-7.

10. Rodriguez Monegal, p. 97.

11. A new realm of magic realism can be found also in contemporary Latin American films. See Fredric Jameson, "On Magic Realism in Film," *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1986), 303-325.

13. A comprehensive examination of novels depicting the figure of the Latin American dictator is found in Julio Calvin o Iglesias, *La novela del dictador en Hispanoamerica* (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispa nica, 1985).

14. See Seymour Menton, "Los sen ores presidentes y los guerrilleros: The New and the Old Guatemalan Novel," *Latin American Research Review*, 2 (1984), 93-117.

15. Eduardo Galeano, "For Haroldo Conti," in *The Writers and Human Rights*, p. 14. (Conti is an Argentine writer whose name is in the list of `desaparecidos' in his country).

16. Leonard and Clodovis Boff, *Salvation and Liberation,* trans. Robert R. Barr (New York: Orbis Books, 1984), p. 2.

17. Translated by Rei Berroa.

18. E. Cardenal, *Flights of Victory/Vuelos de Victoria*, ed., and trans. Marc Zimmerman (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1985), p. x.

19. See Jonathan Cohen, "Introduction," in E. Cardenal, *With Walker in Nicaragua, and Other Poems*, ed. and trans. Jonathan Cohen (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1979).

20. E. Cardenal, *With Walker*, pp. 28-29. In the composition of this poem, Cardenal followed closely Walter Raleigh's *The Discouery of Guiana* (1596). An intertextual analysis of the two works can be found in Eduardo Urdanivia Bertarelli, *La Poesia de Ernesto cardenal: Cristianismo y revolucio* n (Lima: Latinoamericana Editores, 1984), pp. 29-41.

21. To write "With Walker in Nicaragua," Cardenal used Clinton Rollons, *Filibustering in Nicaragua*, published in *The San Francisco Chronicle* between October 1909 and January 1910. The poet also followed closely the book by William Walker,*The War in Nicaragua* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, l985).

22. Cardenal, *Apocalypse and other poems*, ed. Robert Pring-Mill and Donald D. Walsh, trans. Thomas Merton, et al. (New York: New Directions, 1977).

23. See Jonathan Cohen, "Introduction," pp. 11-12.

24. E. Cardenal, *The Psalms of Struggle and Liberation,* trans. Amile G. McAnany (New York: Herder & Herder, 1971).

25. E. Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, trans. Donald D. Walsh (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books), (four vols., 1976-1980). See also a selection of commentaries on the Gospel illustrated with painting by peasants in *The Gospel in Art by the Peasants of Solentiname*, ed. Philip and Sally Scharper (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1984).

26. E. Cardenal, *Homage to the American Indians* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).

27. E. Cardenal, *In Cuba* (New York: New Directions, 1974). 28. "Nicaraguan Canto" in Cardenal, *Zero Hour and other documentary Poems,* ed. Donald D. Walsh, trans. Paul W. Borgeson, et al. (New York: New Directions, 1980).

29. *The Gospel in Solentiname*, v. 4, pp. 271-72.

30. In 1976, Cardenal clarifies that his trip to Cuba was not the decisive factor that lead him toward Marxism: "I became politicized by the contemplative life. Meditation is what brought me to political radicalization. I came to the revolution by way of the Gospel. It was not by reading Marx but Christ. It can be said that the Gospels made me a Marxist." *Flights of Victory*, p. xv.

31. Teofilo Cabestrero, *Ministers of God, Ministers of the People: Testimonies of Faith from Nicaragua,* trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983), pp. 31-32.

32. "Oracle over Managua." in *Zero Hour,* pp. 43-62.

33. "The Christology of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin," in *Evolution, Marxim and Christianity* (London: Garnstone Press, 1967), p. 91.

34. In *Flights of Victory,* p. 5.

35. Quoted in Jonathan Culler, "Introduction" in *With Walker,* p. 16.

36. "Sandinista Poetics," in *The Minnesota Review,* 20 (1983), 133.

37. Cabestrero, p. 31.

38. Rigoberta Menchú, *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala,* edited and introduced by Elizabeth Burgos-Cebray, trans. Ann Wright (London: Verso, 1984).

39. Speech read at the Latin American Book Fair, Washington, D.C., University of the District of Columbia, April 27, 1986.

40. The most important books by Alegria are: *Via única* (Montevideo: Alfa, 1965); *Sobrevivo* (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1978); *El detén* (Barcelona: Lumen, 1977); *Album familiar* (San Jose : EDUCA, 1982); *Flowers from the Volcano,* trans. Carolyn Forche (Pittsburgh: University of Pitsburgh Press, 1982); *Poesia viva* (London: El Salvador Solidary Campaign, 1982); C. Alegría and Darwin J. Flakoll, *Cenizas de Izalco* (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1966); *Nicaragua: la revolución sandinista* (México: Era, 1982); *No me agarran viva. La mujer salvadoreña en la lucha* (Me xico: Era, 1983).

41. George Yúdice, "Letras de emergencia: Claribel Alegria," in *Revista Iberoamericana,* 132-33 (1985), p. 957.

42. "The woman of Sumpul River," in *Poesia Rebelde/Poems of Rebellion*, trans. N. Caistor, et al. (London: El Salvador Solidary Campaign, 1982), pp. 16-19.

43. *Flowers from the Volcano,* pp. 44-51.

44. G. McLean, "Cultural Heritage, Social Critique and Future Construction," Ch. I above, p. 11.

45. Jose Coronel Urtecho showed some sympathy to the Somocista regime and, in contrast to Cuadra, is working with the Sandinistas. In an interview with Jose Miguel Oviedo he clarifies his position as follows: "I'd been an early follower of Somoza . . . but then came the mess, the corruption, the obscenity of the political system. . . . I left the Somoza movement in disgust. . . . I believe now that the Sandinista movement is the only way to be Christian in Nicaragua . . . ," "Nicaragua: Voices in Conflict, in *Review,* 31, p. 21.

46. The works of Cuadra translated into English are: *The Jaguar and the Moon* (New York: Unicorn Press, 1971), *Songs of Cifar and the Sweet Sea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

47. Cuadra, "In Defiance of Censorship: Culture and Ideology in Today's Nicaragua," in *Journal of Contemporary Studies,* 3 (Summer/Fall, 1985), pp. 119-20.

48. "Entre Poesia y Politica: Pablo Antonio Cuadra entrevistado por Steven F. White," *Vuelta,* 102 (Mayo, 1985), p. 32.

49. *Ibid.*

50. "In Defiance", p. 121.

51. *Ibid.,* 122.

52. *Ibid.,* 123.

53. "1984" in *Journal of Contemporary Studies,* 1 (Winter/Spring, 1985), p. 87.

54. "In Defiance," 125.

55. G. McLean, p. 10.

56. G. McLean, p. 11.

57. Octavio Paz, "Dialogue, Democracy, and Peace in Central America" in *Journal of Contemporary Studies*, 1 (Winter/Spring, 1985), p. 82-83

58. *Ibid*., p. 83. Some speech-act theorists have determined the conditions for a communication to be successful. See: John L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962); John Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: CUP, 1979); and H.P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation" in Peter Cole, and Jerry L. Morgan, *Syntax and Semantics*. 3. "Speech Acts" (New York: Acadenic Press, 1975), pp. 41-58. The most important (`felicity', Austin) condition for the success of a speech act is "sincerity": the speaker must mean what he says, that is, believe it to be true. This means, for example, that a speaker genuinely wants the information he requests, that he is really grateful for that for which he extends thanks, that he truly believes that his advice is for the authentic benefit of the listener, that he would not say what he knows to be false, that he does not say that for which he lacks evidence, and that he will avoid ambiguity. If this "sincerity condition" is met, dialogical efforts, such as that which the "Contadora Group" is attempting to establish in order to solve the Central American problem, can produce successful results, otherwise this effort will terminate, as would any speech act which abuses this basic condition, in failure.

CHAPTER VII

LITERATURE AND SOCIAL TENSIONS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

ROBERTO HOZVEN

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter III above on "The Politics of Nation-making in Central America," James Riley raises two questions which suggest a way of reflecting upon the relation of the literary experience of Central America to the region's social and political events. The questions are: how does one go about constructing or forging a nation; and how can one regain one's own country?

On one level are the global historic events and their effects in shaping the tradition from which Central America emerges; on another level the critic is submerged by the plurality of social and political patterns in terms of which Central Americans perceive, interpret and react.

As literary critic, I will choose as a basis for interpretation literary works which have the following characteristics.

- First, they relate most effectively the world of imagery to the social context, thereby reflecting the homologies between the formal properties established among the elements within the text and the social patterns found in social structures.

- Second, they invoke particular, dramatic and pressing actions through which the reader can evaluate both the quality of the poem and the complexity of the situation it presents.

- Third, they have as their aim not to offer conclusions about experience, but to unveil the processes of the mind's emotional and intellectual reactions to the social situation.

- Fourth, they interpret the reality they depict in a manner which produces a liberating effect in their readers. Such interpretations provide readers with a new vision of themselves within their society by generating original mental models. These arise through a dialectical approach to tradition which simultaneously is anchored in the past and conforms to expectations for the future which affect the present. "The content of this anticipation [related to tradition] is not some objective, fixed, content to which we come; it is rather what we produce as we participate in the horizon of the tradition and thereby further determine ourselves."[1]

- Fifth, they affect us esthetically in a way that is at once immediate and distant. That is, works which both retain the stirring and alluring effects of the texture of real events and provide us with a reflective distance or focus for considering the imaginative context evoked by actions.

- Finally, Octavio Paz has described the relationships between the analysis of social facts and literary texts as "the exercise of criticism as an exploration of language and the exercise of language as an exploration of reality."[2] Their analytic difference and its interpretation depend less upon their "essential nature" than upon the way both disciplines contrive and carry out their specific work of structuring reality. What matters is to emphasize the dynamic processes introduced by the literary texts in their imaginative embodiment of the social scene, while keeping in view the overall interaction within which immediate social facts have their meaning.

Given the emphases upon linking literary analysis with potential social criticism due to the repressive and violent socio-political history that has characterized the genesis of Central-American institutions, I will structure this presentation in response to two general questions: (1)

what are the cultural models in terms of which literary texts have reflected upon the urgent problems affecting their society; and (2) what do these literary cultural models express or create that is specific or original to the society from which they arise?

The former question (1) relates to the author's producing new visions with which to reflect upon the problems endured by his or her community under the disturbing pressure of several levels of events. The latter question (2) concerns the process by which those models enable the esthetic experiences provided by literary patterns to become dramatic and existential as the author and the reader gradually deepen the psychological and sociological implications of the overall situation.

The former stresses the spatial structures of the text, since it calls for original patterns of thought permitting an overall understanding of the global dilemmas endured by society. Simultaneously this provides a vantage point from and towards which literary reasoning flows. The latter emphasizes one temporal and existential structure since what matters here is the progressive understanding of human actions as they unfold the text and are embodied in acts of awareness on the part of the reader. Here, the vantage point corresponds to literary, rather than to sociological experience because literature, as Roland Barthes writes, is one of the few cultural activities whose sole constant aim is to liberate from enslaving forces or ideologies by opening more widely the scope of one's apprehension of human reality.[3]

FROM LITERATURE TO SOCIETY

Regarding literature's critique of society and reality by the exercise of language, the issue becomes: how can one identify, reflect upon, and transform through literature the unconscious pattern of values which undergirds the dynamics of life which is specific to Central-America?

Rubén Darío (Nicaraguan poet: 1867-1916)

Rubén Darío laid the basis of modernism as a systematic foundation for an as yet inexistent Hispanic-American intellectual system. Beyond its formal and stylistic pattern this included the following.

1. Literature was conceived as a conscious cultural production for a cultural market sustained and nourished by modern bourgeois industrial, commercial, liberal and democratic society. The new literature was intended to contribute to the creation of such a society within the Hispano-American tradition.[4] This meant moving from the 19th to the 20th century as technical progress partially suppressed the geographic distance between America and Europe. This broad theme will be considered in the works of Rubén Darío, Ernesto Cardenal and Miguel Asturias. As Octavio stated: "To go to Paris or London was not merely to visit another continent, but to jump to another century."[5]

However, progress, industry and capital were not praised as factors of productivity, labor and savings as in Walt Whitman; the focus was rather upon consumption, waste and pleasure. "The gold as it is wasted and spent becomes the real economic base of Darío's lyric and of modernism from a socio-historic perspective."[6] The symbols of notorious consumption marked his work and characterized its ideological contradiction and underdevelopment.

2. Writers were conceived as self-reflective creators of their own intellectual activity. Their personal style became their trademark as well as the foundation of their writing and future professional competence. Literary authors became professionals paid for their work, just as

industrial society makes us pay for its merchandise.[7] Artists were seen as reflecting upon their intellectual activity, supporting themselves through the publication of their texts in periodicals, and thereby shaping public opinion. This contrasted with the earlier romantic Spanish-American artists, whose support and protection had depended upon and reflected the patronage of the ruling classes, to whom in most cases they also were related by bonds of family.

Further, whereas the romantics drew upon the internal resources of the artist in reflecting upon classical models, modernism was rather "in favor of presenting scenes which exhibit the mind in the process of seeking an adequate stance by which to foreground the very process of interpreting the particular experience the mind is engaged in."[8] Modernist artists did not choose the tragic defeat of the romantic hero as a model of artistic life--they did not envisage the loss of their life to be their destiny as artists. Instead they were opportunistic in seeking recognition wherever it might be found.

This attitude could explain Darío's ambivalent position regarding United States, as it appears in "To Roosevelt" (1903) and in "Greeting the Aigle" (1906). In the first poem Darío contrasts the Hispanic way of life, with its spirituality, christianity, charitableness and ethnic integration, to the American characteristics of pragmatism, egoism, ethnic exclusion and the imperialist and colonialist drive. In the latter poem he praises what was criticized in the former: pragmatism and egoism become components of progress, while ethnic exclusion and the imperialist spirit become courageous virtues at the expense of creole inertia. Concha provides two clues: Darío's travel to the Panamerican Conference in Rio de Janeiro and his encounter with Mr. Root "who, between whiskies, gained the appearance of a `great and gentle' protector. The values of the elite, in full imperialist offensive, did not take any account of the Central American spirit."[9] In fact, Darío sought to develop a new cultural model according to which the bourgeois and the poet could recognize each other.

3. Literary content, as with most 19th century authors, was articulated according to a Christological vision which, in Darío's case, assumed pagan resonances which he oriented toward a cosmic aesthetic naturalism. If the origin of his liricism is Christ, its culmination is Ovid.[10]

Ernesto Cardenal (Nicaraguan poet: 1925-)

For Darío the fundamental problems had been "how to create culture in and from a wasteland" and "how to produce a cultural system where there had been mistrust and denial of one's own cultural roots"? A half-century later, in the face of the violent repression of the Somoza period, Ernesto Cardenal confronted a related problem: *how to produce a cultural discourse where the language of the community has been repressed and perverted?*

Cardenal responds that the way to unblock the repression and restore the perverted language is to assume the purgative experience of Christian suffering.[11] This breaks through the interior atomization resulting from repression and permits the beginning of the reconstitution of oneself as a perceiving and feeling being. To feel sorrow is to regain a lost sensibility and to trangress the limits imposed by official censorship upon our emotions and, consequently, upon those of others. This literary model would be centered on the figure of the "suffering Christ." In view of the indissociability of humanity and language, the phenomenon of the "desaparecidos" has its parallel in linguistic perversion which renders a community incapable of articulating the repression it suffers or the hope that could give it life. In this light Cardenal's poems of love and ordeal appear truly significant.

By destroying the language of community, repression isolates its members and leads to the interior desert of egoism. This social perversion can be rectified by psychological suffering, as conceived by the psychoanalyst of culture, J.B. Pontalis.[12]

Let us note some of his most essential insights on the nature of "psychic pain or suffering."

From the point of view of the process in question, its first essential characteristic . . . is the phenomenon of a breaking down of barriers, occurring when `excessively large quantities of energy break through the protective devices', and then a discharge, within the body, of the cathexis thus accumulated.[13] Pain is an effraction, it supposes the existence of limits: limits of the body, limits of the ego, it brings about an internal discharge, which could be called an *implosive* effect."[14]

The poet breaks through social repression and censorship by enduring and performing in his poems the suffering of the lacerated social body. Literally: "the social subject opens censorship with his pain."[15] If terror was intended to arrest the meaning of words once and for all, the poem reestablishes their circulation through this pain. I agree with this interpretation and read Cardenal's poems as following this path.

But, how does this psychic process take place; what are the mechanisms through which "implosive" psychic pain accomplishes its social, explosive and liberating effects in its readers? What is engaged, repressed or suppressed in its dynamism?

Pontalis goes on: What occurs with the experience of satisfaction (the gulf between *Befriedigung* and *Wunschphantasie*) is not to be found in the case of pain: there is no metaphor here, that is to say, no creation of meaning, but only analogy, the direct transfer from one register to another: . . . the body transforms itself into psyche and the psyche into body, . . . (that is the) `body-ego, or this psychic body.'[16]

Pain "reveals an unknown land" to the sufferer, i.e., "we receive spatial and other representations of parts of the body which are ordinarily not represented in conscious ideation. I *have* anxiety, I *am* pain, it could be said in obviously abrupt terms: . . . The subject cannot communicate his pain; . . . pain belongs only to oneself."[17]

In a very synthetic manner, this defines "psychic pain." Let us infer the related cathartic operations performed by the poet in his/her poems:

First, he or she has to create metaphors, meanings, representations which socially mediate the coalescence of the body-ego with the psychic body, and enable the subject to communicate both with the real objects (which cause the pain) and with the pain itself.

Second, the poet has to reassure the community, introducing lines of division between physical pain (that, e.g., of the "desaparecidos" or tortured), and psychic breakdown (the paranoid effect of censorship).

Third, in order to accomplish the above and overcome the "state of mental helplessness" caused by a "pain belonging only to oneself," the poet must regain full contemporariness with his or her present. This is defined as an intrinsic unity of temporal and spatial relationships fused together to form one concrete whole.

Otherwise the social subject will experience the good object as lost at the present time (i.e., civil rights as being irretrievable though they are truly one's due) and the bad object (i.e., repression of rights) as actual and permanent. If this happens--and this is precisely what happens under dictatorship--the subject will endure his or her present life as if it were an anticipation of an alluring utopia which never takes place, that is, the subject begins to experience his life and expectations as an anterior future. This entails the radical incertitude of projecting all that one is or does into a future which is already subordinate to another future--which may or may not take

place. "No doubt psychic pain depends, in the final analysis, on object-loss, whether real or fantasmatic. . . . In the case of pain, the object ceases to function as a possible surety; he is, at best, a substitute, and behind this substitute, there is always another one in infinite `transference'."[18]

Fourth, Brian Johnstone's reflection in Chapter X below about the immediacy of suffering because of its closeness to bodily experience and its ability thereby to bear "a clear message across cultures"[19] receives new light from Pontalis' insight.

(a) The true immediacy of suffering lies in the fact that it reveals to the sufferer "an unknown land" which is not only physical but also psychic, metaphorical and meaningful. This unknown land breaks open the opposition and sweeps away the separation traditionally recognized between the signified (which alone thusfar had been considered to have meaning) and the signifier (which thusfar had been considered meaningless). From now on the body becomes a sign which signifies less by the "pretended" conscious awareness of the ego (signified) than by the concrete symbols conveyed by its flesh (signifier). Therefore, a suffering body-ego or psychic body can reveal the truth because of the unfolding of the "unknown lands."

The unconscious is that chapter of my history that is marked by a blank or occupied by a falsehood: it is the censored chapter. But the truth can be rediscovered; usually it has already been written down elsewhere, namely, in the monuments: this is my body. That is to say, the hysterical nucleus of the neurosis in which the hysterical symptom reveals the structure of a language . . . . In semantic evolution: this corresponds to the stock of words and acceptations of my own vocabulary, as it does to my style of life and to my character.[20]

This is the way the "implosive" effect of suffering discloses unknown lands. These will reveal the truth to us as long as we learn to recognize the significant bodily signs which depend upon the organization of the signifier.

(b) A "clear message" is sent out "across cultures"[21] by the suffering body provided pain makes us aware of, and fully contemporary with, the latent social implications concealed in our present. In fact, what suffering sends `across cultures' is more a *procedure* than a *message* since psychic pain is one of the primary means both *for materializing present time in space*and *for spatially unfolding meaningless events in all their temporal meaningfulness*. Under the pressure of suffering, what happens is similar to what Bakhtin defines as the representational importance of chronotope in narrative.

Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. . . . Time becomes, in effect, palpable and visible; the chronotope makes narrative events concrete, makes them take on flesh, causes blood to flow in their veins.[22]

This means both breaking through the alienated mechanism of the anterior future (expectation enchained to another expectation) and recognizing that the suffering body expresses itself as a language. If suffering is immediate and global from the point of view of its psychic process ("the very property of pain being to blur the frontiers between physic and psychic"[23]), the body which conveys it, however, is structured as a language. The signs sent out (or expelled) by a suffering body are always codified within one's specific culture in spite of their *apparent* bodily immediacy. I underline "apparent" because the body, as psycho-analysis has taught us, is also organized and written by one's specific culture.

From this brief analysis of how "implosive" psychic pain accomplishes its "explosive" and liberating effects, it can be seen that, just as the dictator personifies the perverted language of the community, the poet breaks the repression with verses that take up the amorphous, censored

feelings and discourses of the community. Literally, the poet breaks through the censorship with his poems:

Haven't you read, my love, in the *News*:
SENTINEL OF PEACE, GENIUS OF WORK
PALADIN OF DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA
DEFENDER OF CATHOLICISM IN AMERICA
THE PROTECTOR OF THE PEOPLE
THE BENEFACTOR . . . ?
They plunder the people's language.
And they falsify the people's words.
(Just like the people's money.)
That's why we poets do so much polishing on a poem.
And that's why my love poems are important.
(*Epigrams*, 1961)[24]

In this sense, the exercise of language as an exploration of reality is social and political through and through.

The experience of psychological suffering, as depicted at its strongest in *Canto Nacional* (1973) and *Oráculo sobre Managua*(1975), is rendered incarnate in the imagination through the depiction of the actions endured by the poor and the wretched. The suffering is not so much *declared* as it is inevitably assumed by the reader as he or she goes through poems which render present apocalyptic scenes caused by the political anomy of the "fascized institutions." This is Ezequiel Martinez Estrada's dialectical phrase to say that the most pernicious effect of the dictator on civil institutions is that these institutions, finally, begin to act as does the dictator.[25] In fact, the suffering is less represented than suggested through the impressions the poems summon up and establish in the reader's mind. In agreement with the modernist approach, what Cardenal seeks to establish in the mind are not objects or their images, but their impressions in the reader's mind.

For example, concerning the reality of torture:
Don't beat me...Don't beat me...My God!
My God! You are killing me! His face was one single lump.
Nosecheekbonesforehead one single lump. His left eye
was almost falling out. The Superior said: Give him more...Give him more...
Kill him. He was beating him with the butt of his carbine and he was shouting:
Beat him!...Beat him!...Give him more!...Kill this son
of-a-bitch... Kill him!...Don't leave him alive. The soldiers kept on beating him
with bunches of electric wires. He was naked
in the water trough. Beat him...Give him more...Beat him. Kill him...
Kill him...The same person was beating him with
bunches of wires.
And stomping on him. He stomped on his heart. I'm going to kill you, you son-of-a-bitch.[26]

Or when he describes an apocalyptical scene:
The sewers end there.
On the shore of the lake the children are playing at making small holes

with little sticks to see who can get more flies out of his digging In the water with cotton fibers, toilet paper, some
condoms.
The slaughter-house is close. Above their wastes, buzzards.
A stream of milky sewer-water flows toward the lake
to the right the poisoned soft-green lagoon of Acahualinca...
huts on the plain where the trucks from the capital dump
(or used to dump) Managua's garbage
a plain of tin-cans, papers, plastic, glass, automobile skeletons
buzzards in withered trees waiting for more trucks
Other sewers empty there
without reaching the lake (the moon glimmers
above the shit)
There children with small twisted eyes,
sickly, extenuated, with bodies badly disproportioned, beetle-like
with stomachs protruding and legs like toothpicks
and when afternoon begins to end he moves along seeking the fever
he eats dirt which is a pleasure
Old women bent over the entrails which the
slaughter-house cast off
scaring the buzzards.[27]

In this sense, what Cardenal calls "exteriorism"[28] turns out to be an efficient poetic tool as long as it summons up and conveys to the reader's mind the restrained voice of the oppressed, mainly the poor and the wretched. The objectivism praised by "exteriorism," namely, "elements of real life and concrete things, with proper names and precise details," constitute only an initial step. From this the reader interprets the particular experiences in which his/her mind is engaged. From the point of view of its poetic effect, "exteriorism" is exterior only in name!

This type of experience was anticipated in his *Epigrams* (1961) and *Psalms* (1965). Both texts diffuse a mystic feeling of joy before the divine value of creation, but are interwoven with a socio-political awareness of human suffering (Holocaust, dictatorships, totalitarian regimes). In *Canto Nacional* and *Oráculo sobre Managua* he deepens and projects the particular suffering of the Nicaraguan community under Somoza's dictatorship. In sum, through his poems, from *Epigrams* to *Oráculo sobre Managua*, Cardenal moves from the Epiphany of a divine love of Creation to becoming progressively anchored in the Calvary endured by the Latin-American communities under their dictatorships. Both sets of texts provide a cultural path to reestablish a national consensus based upon the Christian humanist postulates of right to life, love and solidarity with those who suffer.

Miguel Angel Asturias (Guatemalan writer: 1899-1974; Nobel Prize, 1967).

Among Asturias' many important literary productions, one aspect has had especially important consequences, both literary and sociological, for Central-American culture and history. He is the first writer to undertake one of the most tearing topics in Spanish-American narrative: the dictatorship novel. This was inaugurated with great success by his *Señor Presidente*(1946) and become an important narrative trend in latter Spanish-American novels: *Conversacion en la*

catedral by Mario Vargas Llosa (1969), *Yo el Supremo* by Augusto Roa Bastos (1974), *El recurso del método* by Alejo Carpentier (1974), and*El otoño del Patriarca* by García Márquez (1975) are among the best known.

According to Angel Rama, the enormous public reception of these novels and their literary interest is based upon the fact that they dare to present and "recognize a Spanish-American archetype rooted, not in the exterior historical manifestations of society, but in its modeling forms, in its images reflecting psycho-social unconscious drives."[29] Further, the dictator figures ("Caudillo," "Benefactor" or "Protector of the Civil Rights by God's grace," as they insisted upon being called) could be the result of the governments' betrayal of the will of the people, as Jose Marti observed in his essay "Our America."

> The government must originate in the country. The spirit of the government must be that of the country. Its structure must conform to rules appropriate to the country. Good government is nothing more than the balance of the country's natural elements. . . . It is by conforming with these disdained native elements [the natural man's wounded pride, humility or threatened interests] that the tyrants of America have climbed to power, and have fallen as soon as they betrayed them. Republics have paid with oppression for their inability to recognize the true elements of their countries, to derive from them the right kind of government, and to govern accordingly. In a new nation a governor means a creator.[30]

From his psycho-anthropological approach to culture Freud can tell us much about the figure of the dictator.[31] The dictator, first, subjugates the collective subjectivity of the nation by imposing on it his own overinflated will, that is, the dictator forces the community to substitute his own Ego-Ideal for that of its own. Second, the dictator "devours" the social time of the community by suppressing all associative links other than those which are not related to himself. He thus suppresses the social space of the community and prevents it from building its own psychic and juridic space. Third, the dictator holds on to power by means of the *cause-effect* mechanism of terror. Terror is an *effect* of absolute subjection to his arbitrary will, for the individual becomes juridically and politically unprotected due to the lack of other mediating levels between the dictator's power and the vulnerability of the socially isolated person. Terror is also a *cause* because it is one of the most important variables which chain together the "fascized institutions."

Let us compare this interpretation[32] with what Asturias himself and one of his best known critics have observed about this topic. First, the dictator is "the myth-man, the superior being, who fulfills the functions of the tribal chief in primitive societies, annointed by sacred powers, invisible as God. . . . The fascination he causes in everyone occurs outside of the boundaries of the chronological time."[33] From this remark of the author regarding his novel, I underline "the a-chronological aspect of his fascination and of his characters." This social a-chronism (or socially paralyzed time) is due to the fact that the tyrant has blocked out historical temporality (he "devours" it, as Freud writes figuratively) because he has thwarted the equalitarian contract among the members of the community regarding the socio-political generation of civil power. As long as there is no social consensus, there will be no social time or human temporality, but only mythical time. As this is cyclic, the dictator's a-chronism will last.

Second, the only hope of participation by becoming part of the mechanism of social power would require alienation of the self in the other, that is, in the self of the dictator ("The only possibility left is to think with Mr. President's head."[34]) But not even this would succeed, as can be seen by the case of Mr. President's actuary who was executed for spilling an inkwell over some of the dictator's documents. The old employee winds up feeling guilty and fairly punished.

Third, "Fear has become an everyday habit in the world controlled by the dictator."[35] As I described it elsewhere, the origin of fear (or terror) in the dictatorship novel is twofold: on the one hand, it arises due to the renunciation by the subject of his own Ego-Ideal when he has to substitute it by that of the dictator; on the other hand, it arises also when the person's self disappears, becoming lost "in the many souls of the mob." "This double structural alienation of the Ego explains his terror and also his thirst of human servitude,"[36] for a sense of security is achieved only by placing our anxieties in the hands of another. Ezequiel Martinez Estrada called it "the fundamental psychological invariant of the socio-political institutions in La-tin America."[37]

FROM SOCIETY TO LITERATURE

Moving now in a reverse manner no longer from literature to society but rather from society to literature, what do these literary models reveal about society when they are questioned about their social responsibility? More concretely, can these "subjective," ficticious models teach us anything "objective" about society; can these literary models show how they are themselves *fed-back from society*? Can these models be something more than mere reflections of the society which underlies them; in other words, can these models--beyond merely reflecting society as a mirror--produce an original understanding about the society? What do they say to us when we approach them from society?

Ruben Darío

I would propose the following hypotheses as a basis for further reflection. Darío's model, *grosso modo*, seems to imply that discourse is constructed consciously from two simultaneous verbal axes: (1) from one axis which affirms or states objectively, and (2) from another axis, superimposed on the first, which examines and analyses what the first states: "eyes within the eye to see how it sees" according to the description of Argos by Gracian. In a word, Darío inaugurates in hispanic discourse awareness of the reflexivity of language which is simultaneous with the self. To write literature becomes a strategy against the indissolubility of the self.[38] It is the same experience that Joyce achieved in English literature and Mallarmé in French.

The sociological effect of this literary strategy is ideological dis-alienation. One of the most effective instruments of ideological dis-alienation may be that of making evident to people, through and in the language in which they write or express themselves, the at times abysmal discrepancies between their concrete and real conditions of existence and what they believe those conditions to be. That is, they are revealed to themselves by the very discourse which writes or speaks through them. This is the experience which Darío expressed as being either "the artifice of his own language" or "his fight against the banality in literary language."

I understand this as affirming, on the one hand, the possibility of performing one's own dis-alienation through becoming aware of one's "cliches"; and, on the other, the socio-ideological role taken over today by contemporary literature and men of letters as "évéilleurs de conscience." That is, to write becomes at once a private and a public affair, a reflexive and a self-reflexive activity. Like M. Jourdan, the modernist writer realizes that he is performing at the same time at least three functions: (a) incarnating a new vision or "mimesis" for his time or, perhaps better, "for the future of his community", (b) performing a kind of "catharsis" of what has been

repressed in his community, and (c) fixing the boundaries of what can be thought within his community. This fulfills the role of the "Maudit", i.e., of being at the intersection of all fires, simultaneously praised and detested not only by the public--which affects one's "pride"--but also by the ruling class or dictators--which can affect one's survival. What do these three functions have in common from the vantage point of writing itself?

The contemporary Latin American writer who has internalized the modernist lesson breaks down in his writing the stereotype which speaks (or writes) through his own writing. In sum, he writes with originality, varying the common phraseology or the ossified language of the community, which is the first that comes to his mouth or pen. This stereotypical language is that of Common Sense, i.e., it makes sense instantly and rejects the time required (the "durée" in Bergson's sense) for reflection. The fight against what is stereotypical within one's self requires a social (and learning) experience, because the problem brought into the open is, in fact, that of society's different levels or interests as carried by the respective illocutionary forces of our speech.

Ernesto Cardenal

In what way then can Cardenal's literary model, centered in the suffering Christ, provide in return an objective experience of Nicaraguan society? If the model of psychological suffering breaks through the inner subjective as well as the inter-subjective barriers established by social repression, this happens by overcoming the process of censorship and self-censorship which isolates the member of the community. The anti-censorship poems of Cardenal teach the way in which socio-political censorship functions, not only in Nicaragua, but also in the rest of the afflicted Spanish American countries. This has four dimensions.

First, the ambiguous functioning of censorship with respect to the censored material. In fact, you never know *exactly* what has been censored; this is the difference between "censorship" and the juridical "interdiction" which explicitly prohibits particular material. Because of this ambiguity of censorship its effects overflow its strictly linguistic borders, so that it affects or "seizes" the entire socio-pragmatic environment of man, as well as the root being of every subject.

Secondly, censorship induces an element of paranoia in those who suffer under it. People react by constructing protective speeches projected toward the future in order to anticipate the unexpected which might come either from the others or from their own unexpected but possible reactions. This mental "rumination" takes people away from their concrete present and projects them into nowhere, because a constant defensive reaction in the present nullifies the future itself. Could this be one of the psycho-social causes of our endemic procrastination?

Thirdly, censorship also enriches us with a second original sin: it makes us ontologically guilty in relation to the agencies of State. People are socially guilty and debitors in relation to the law, for which the individual is no more than a "blind spot": the one who deserves and endures all the duties, obligations and coercions of the law, but without any of its civil or human rights. This produces a schism between man and society, man and others, and man and himself.

Fourthly and resulting from the previous, people internalize censorship to such a point that it begins to be less they who act under its effects than internalized censorship itself which now acts as repudiation through the people who act it out. Censorship transfers itself from the censored object to the complete process through which it functions. Here lies the fundamental point: the individual disappears under the pressure which flattens him. Henceforth, censorship itself

becomes the objective agent, the only valid interlocutor which interacts socially through the subjects which are its incarnations. Censorship ensconces itself in society, turning people into vertriloquests who act it out, for it decides beforehand what will or will not be said within the social body. This deviation of man within the socio-linguistic labyrinth reminds one of "the double game of the licit and the illicit" which Martinez Estrada called "fraudulent energies" and which occurs when "the licit way of acting is cast aside not only as the most uncomfortable and difficult, but also as the most irrational and unjust."[39]

Miguel Angel Asturias

The model of the dictator created by Asturias attests to a well known social phenomenon in contemporary society: the multiplication and dissemination of repressive mechanisms at all levels of society and active in the different powers of speech. The all embracing power previously centered in the dictator has become miniaturized, distributing itself throughout the whole social body; it has been embodied in the finest mechanism and most subtle forces of social interaction. The repressive power--like the devil--becomes legion and his emblem, today, is that of *arrogant speech*.

We can hear it--and sometimes we hear ourselves reproducing it--in politics where it rules as the power to restrain by force. Along with the juridical, it is the only discourse which can perform what it says. Perhaps what one resents the most in its coercive behavior is its pretension of ruling *sub specie aeternitatis*, when in fact it is always choosing one particular entity or subject to the detriment of another, or, when it is disregarding universal concreteness in the name of universal impartialness. It is also heard at the university, where it rules as "discours du savoir," that is, speech which attempts to dominate the other, e.g., either by erudite references which show that the speaker knows more of the tradition, or by categorizing and then dismissing one's interlocutor. The speaker supposedly knows more and denies the interlocutor's claim to knowledge by interpreting (that is "bringing into subjection") their conceptual system in the light of a supposedly more comprehensive rational theory. Here the attitude is not that of unveiling what truly is (Heidegger's *Aletheia*), but of sophistical self-affirmation by the speaker. Sometimes it even reigns in the bosom of the family as the "master's speech," that is, speech that expresses fidelity to another person from whom we expect self-recognition.

How can all these types of arrogant speeches be defined? Roland Barthes provided a provisional answer: "that which engenders deficiency in the recipient and, thereby, guilt in the one who receives."[40]

The struggle against these miniaturized powers calls for a complete analysis which should look into all aspects of our social existence and inter-subjective relationships. That is, we should not merely remember, but practice the lesson of Darío: to be able to put the arrogance of our speech at a distance to be able to hear our own speech, no longer merely in terms of our own self-esteem, but from the viewpoint from which we are heard; in short, to move from the production of arrogant speech to its recognition so as to produce the distance which permits knowledge. This means that we must become the other through distancing ourselves from the self that we were.

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NOTES

1. George F. McLean, "Cultural Heritage, Social Critique and Future Construction," chap. I, p. 9 above.
2. *The Other Mexico: Critique of the Pyramid*, trans. by L. Kemp (New York: Grove Press, 1972), p. 77.
3. Roland Barthes, *Lec, on* (Paris: Seuil, 1978), pp. 17-18.
4. Angel Rama, "Prólogo," in Rubén Darío, *Poesía* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1977), pp. xlvii-xlix.
5. Octavio Paz, *Cuadrivio, Darío, Lopez Velarde, Pessoa, Cernuda* (Mexico: Joaquin Mortiz, 1965), p. 19.
6. Jaime Concha, *Rubén Darío* (Madrid: Ediciones Júcar, 1975), pp. 60-61.
7. Noé Jitrik, *Las contradiciones del modernismo. Productividad poética y situacion sociológica* (México: Colegio de México, 1978), pp. 7-8; and Rama, x-xi.
8. Charles Altieri, "The Poem as Act: A Way to Reconcile Presentational and Mimetic Theories," *The Iowa Review*, 6 (1975), 104.
9. Concha, p. 50.
10. *Ibid*., p. 114.
11. Canovas' excellent analysis of Raul Zurita's lyric establishes a crucial link between Christian suffering and "psychic pain." This latter has been worked out by J.-B. Pontalis. This theoretical, and indeed concrete, link can also be extended profitably to better understand Ernesto Cardenal's poetry, written not under the Pinochet, but under the Somoza dictatorship. Rodrigo Cánovas, "Literatura chilena de la década 1973-1983: cuatro respuestas a la experiencia autoritaria: Enrique Lihn, Raúl Zurita, ICTUS y Juan Radrigán" (Austin: Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Texas, 1985), pp. 111-113.
12. J.-B. Pontalis, "On Psychic Pain" in *Frontiers in Psychoanalysis. Between the Dream and Psychic Pain*, trans. C. & P. Cullen (London: Hogarth, 1981), pp. 194-211.
13. Pontalis here refers to Freud's 1895 *Project*.
14. *Op. cit*., p. 196.
15. Cánovas, p. 112.
16. Pontalis, pp. 198-99.
17. *Ibid*.
18. *Ibid*., 200.
19. See Chapter X by Brian Johnstone in this volume.
20. Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits. A Selection*, trans. by A. Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977), p. 50.
21. See Johnstone, Chapter X.
22. M. M. Bakhtin, "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination*, M. Holquist, ed. (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 250.
23. Pontalis, pp. 199-200.
24. Ernesto Cardenal, *Apocalypse and Other Poems*, trans. by Thomas Merton et al. (New York: New Directions Books, 1977).
25. Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, *Los invariantes historicos en el Facundo* (Buenos Aires: Casa Pardo, 1974), p. 23.

26. Ernesto Cardenal "Canto Nacional al FSLN," *Poesía de Uso* (*Antología, 1949-1978*), introduccion de Joaquín Marta Sosa (Buenos Aires: El Cid, 1979), p. 308-309. Eng. transl. by Robert Hammond.

27. "Oráculo sobre Managua," *Ibid.*, p. 323. Transl. by Robert Hammond.

28. Cardenal, *Poesía nueva en Nicaragua*, selec. y prólogo de E. Cardenal (Buenos Aires: Carlos Lohlé, 1974), pp. 9-11.

29. Angel Rama, *Los dictadores latinoamericanos* (México: Fondo de Cultura Economica, Colec., 1976), p. 9.

30. In José Marti, *Writings on Latin America and the Struggle for Cuban Independence*, trans. E. Randall; ed. P. Foner (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), p. 87.

31. See mainly his *Totem and Taboo* (chapter IV, sub. chapters v-vii) and *Psychology of the Crowds* (chapters X-XII), from which I have derived the mechanism of the "structure of the herd" to study the processes underlying dictatorships.

32. See my study of *El otoño del Patriarca* by Gabriel García Marquez, "El otoño . . . , la horda y sus patriarcas,"*Cuadernos Americanos,* XLIV (1985), 225-240.

33. Miguel Angel Asturias, "El Señor Presidente," (Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. Bocconi, 1964-1965), cited by Guiseppe Bellini, *La narrativa de Miguel Angel Asturias* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1969), p. 38, n. 5.

34. G. Bellini, p. 40.

35. *Ibid*., p. 47.

36. Hozven, p. 236.

37. Martínez Estrada, p. 29.

38. Luiz Costa Lima, *O contrôle do imaginário. Razao e imaginacao no Occidente* (Sao Paulo: Editoria brasiliense, 1984), p. 178.

39. E. Martínez Estrada, *op. cit*., p. 68.

40. Barthes, p. 11.

DISCUSSION OF RELATED ISSUES IN

LITERATURE AND THE INTERPRETATION OF LANGUAGE

*The Problematic for Language, Speech and Writing: How to create culture from a wasteland**?***

Five factors emerge as central to the development of the present problematic.

A specious liberalism. This pulverizes the large majority of the people in the name of such slogans as "equality" and "progress." These are used to justify disregard for the culture of the people and hence for their personal and social dignity, their labor and their land.

An autocratic power center. A substitution of the figure of the "Dictator" for the social ego implies the suppression of social space and social time not related to the autocratic power center. This results in terror, both as a cause inasmuch as the exercise of power by the state was untrammelled, and as an effect inasmuch as the individual was left unprotected.

Propaganda. Under the control of the "Dictator" the media consistently and insistently repeats the repressive ideology. Interpreting all in these terms, it thereby forms in the people a warped vision, with associated distorted emotive responses.

Censorship. This has four dimensions:

(1) material: for lack of knowing just what has been censored its effects spread pervasively to the entire area of social action;

(2) protective speech: in order to avoid condemnation speech is directed away from the concrete present and into the future, whose very realization is thereby impeded;

(3) guilt: by making people guilty beforehand censorship creates a kind of second original sin by which the person is alienated from the society; and

(4) internalization: becoming internalized through the preoccupation which it generates in persons, censorship reduces them to acting as ventriloquists of the "Dictator" who, in turn, becomes the only valid interlocutor.

Arrogant speech. In various ways and on multiple levels all are guilty of this general phenomenon when they generate on the part of the hearer a sense of personal emptiness or social insufficiency. In the situation of the "Dictator" this takes on the character of a systematically corrosive attack upon the person and upon society.

Literature: How to regain one's country and oneself by processing through language what one has been suffering

The goal here is not merely to describe, but to improve reality by shaping it in terms of justice (Asturias), and liberating the people from economic and political oppression (Cardinal). In this it is the task of the writer to be both prophet, carrying out a critique of society, and soothsayer, pointing the way to the future and initiating change. From this, in turn, there follows a criterium for distinguishing good and bad literature. Good literature will open for the reader the possibility of exercising one's freedom and responsibility more reflectively by contributing the vision and mobilizing the will which enable people to live more fully. Bad literature, on the contrary, deadens and diminishes these capacities by repetition (propaganda) and the exclusion of other dimensions of meaning (censorship). The focus of the work of E. Cardenal at Solentiname and since has been to extend this creative work from an elite few to a broad popular base so that the people as a whole can become more fully alive and take charge of their culture--and hence of the sense of their lives.

Vision can be developed through literature in a number of ways. First, exteriorism, as adopted by Cardenal, shifts language from the abstract to the concrete in order to enable literature to bear witness to the actual situation of the people and to the harsh realities of their daily life. Such testimonial literature, while often not possessed of the aesthetic qualities of interiorist literature written in terms of abstract symbols, is nonetheless an important contribution to awareness of dimensions of a nation's life which often are ignored due to cultural or ideological prejudices and then forgotten, systematically camouflaged by propaganda or hidden by censorship.

Secondly, imaginative variation of the concrete is another way of developing needed vision. Beyond direct description of concrete realities, the writer can also distance him/herself sufficiently to be able to create new symbols which unite people, open horizons for hope and stimulate new initiatives. Central American literature has a number of special resources for this. In Mayan culture for example, the word is seen as directed and dedicated to the gods in such wise that one creates or assumes power over the reality one names. Thus, reality arises from the imagination so that stories are at once both dream and reality, both what is imagined and what is seen (Asturias). This enables poets such as Claribel Alegria to fuse the mythic and the concrete in ways that free the mind from the controls of the current ideology so that it might analyze its limitations and articulate hopes which transcend suppression and reach toward freedom.

Christian symbolism is used in various ways by Darío and Cardenal. The former draws more upon the sense of transcendent harmony. The latter proceeds by way of the image of Christ as a prophetic voice from outside the centers of power, identifying himself with the poor and the suffering. This is presented in terms of confronting the contemporary means of economic or political repression with their apparatus of "Dictator," concentration camp and secret police. Christ expresses the plenitude of human reality toward the realization of whose image society should be made to converge.

Thirdly, Darío recognizes multiple levels of vision in the one mind or in speech which, in principle, is open to new modes of reflexive awareness. In terms of communication it becomes possible: (a) analytically to distinguish multiple currents within the one work of literature, (b) to identify within us veiled speech which implicitly shapes our explicit speech or talks through us, and (c) to become aware that all language is embedded in presuppositions of which we are not conscious but of which we might become aware. Such presuppositions may be various forms of egoism, e.g., racial prejudices, which were initially inherited from Europe, then formulated under the mottoes of equality and progress, progressively institutionalized in socio-political structures, and eventually applied through the various instruments of institutionalized repression.

In relation to literature, these instruments are especially propaganda and censorship. By using all three approaches in appropriate combination the writer is able to expose the reality, nature and method of terror and repression which, by this very fact, are lessened in their repressive impact and made vulnerable to effective counter action. As this work of critique is essential to the poet it can be asked whether it would be possible for a poet such as E. Cardenal to remain over time both true to his work as poet and an acceptable part of a power structure with more limited concerns.

Emotions. Literature not only treats the entire situation, but communicates to the entire reader. It not only effects intellectual understanding and the imagination through the generation of effective symbols, but also moves the will and forms the emotions. Thus it provides the dynamic impetus needed to achieve change in embedded and well-implemented structures.

Literature enlivens the person, even through the process of Christian suffering (Cardenal). By enabling one to feel sorrow literature makes it possible to regain a lost or suppressed sensibility, to distance oneself from oppressive structures, and to open new fields of vision and hope. By thus enabling creative action, not only for oneself but with others, it frees one from the atomized paralyses induced by oppression.

Resources for Critique and Reconstruction

The task of the writer as integral to the common human effort to reshape social reality in terms of justice has a number of implications. First, one cannot simply identify present or past vision as bad in contrast to future notions as good without identifying where present sensibilities militate against justice and how future vision might be shaped in relation thereto.

In turn, this implies the need to attend to that level of a people's consciousness at which is found its sense of what is right and just, and its fundamental adhesion thereto. If this is not simply inborn and identical for all peoples, but reflects in its shape and mode the historical experience of each people, then it is more than an abstract ideal or even a future projection. It relates also to the past from which it is drawn, and thus can be called tradition. Loss or rupture of this access to its tradition leaves a people radically subject to manipulation.

Tradition must contain also the resources for reviewing characteristics of our speech which are destructive of others, that is, for enabling us to recognize arrogant speech as such and to move to change. For this we need to be able to see ourselves as others see us. This, in turn, requires a sense, not only of justice, but more fundamentally of love by which one shares with, or identifies with, the other (see Aristotle's notion of *sunesis).* In today's circumstances this gives new and more urgent importance to the symbols of Christ's identification with the poor and of their liberation through His suffering.

Finally, in the present problematic circumstances external and institutionalized structures attempt to distract attention from injustice, to explain it away, to justify it in terms of future goals or to suppress all related information through propaganda and censorship. In response, powerful struggles take place within the person to cope with this situation by denial and transference. In these circumstances, a number of crucial tasks challenge the writer and speaker: (a) to draw on the various sources of information and scientific analysis in order to understand these external and internal dynamics, (b) to evoke the sense of value and moral probity experienced positively in a tradition through its symbols and myths--and possibly even more vividly and in an inverse manner through the suffering inflicted by injustice and oppression (i.e., through the evil of what is evil)--and (c) to work out symbols which open the path toward new growth and make it possible for the various dimensions of society and the various fields of expertise to work creatively toward social reconstruction.

CHAPTER VIII

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS RESPECTING THE NATURE AND ROLE OF EDUCATION IN PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT[1]

HENRY C. JOHNSON, JR.

Este es el mensaje de Pataruco:
al reunificarse el hombre en la
reconciliacion con su origen y
la aceptacion de su ser, brota
una nueva vitalidad creativa.
Rafael Tomás Caldera

The pages that follow are beginnings. Their purpose is to find some of the right questions as the necessary prolegomena to the construction of adequate answers. My procedure will be to examine what I take to be certain principles and "facts" (though one always fears using that latter term) and some questions which, in conjunction, they appear to raise. These questions will be examined in turn for possible clues to more adequate, contextually generated educational answers. It is necessary to add the qualifier "contextually generated" because education and schooling are answers to questions which lie outside themselves: educational ideas and practices are neither self-interpreting nor self-justifying.

In substance, the argument is as follows. The theme of this seminar is the problem of achieving peace in an area long characterized by self-destructive conflict. Peace, clearly, does not mean simply the absence of conflict in its crude form, but the possibility of a certain quality of life to the achievement of which education is thought to be ancillary. In part, we are agreed, the problems arise from a fundamental conflict between "modern" developments, the remnants of indigenous social structures and their supporting cultural traditions. As traditional education is conceived to be inadequate to the process of "modernization," that process has brought its own new "education." But this imported "education," in turn, has eroded further the cultural base necessary for any coherent education.

Consequently, the educational task is no longer the conventional one of constructing an educational regimen adequate to express and sustain the culture, but the radically more difficult one of reconstructing a culture adequate to an educational process--all this *in medias res*, so to speak. The nature of the "new" education (already grown old in its host socio-cultural environment) makes its importation and application very questionable since it manifests the same difficulties inherent in "modernization" itself. The roots of both lie in the hegemony of a techno-science which, for example in education replaces the development of persons in community with the production of skilled functionaries defined by "manpower" models driven by abstract and ahistorical macro-economic principles. To begin the process of reconstruction, it is urged that we: (a) restore philosophical critique as the formal instrument necessary to unmask the difficulties and guide this reconstruction, and (b) re-examine the potential of art (especially

literary art) to provide a fundamental element in the historically and existentially grounded substantive content needed for educational renewal.

Education and Modernization: Some Historically Conditioned Principles

To begin, then, let us consider certain basic facts and principles. (1) "Modernizing" countries have without exception committed themselves to programs of education and schooling as instruments of social policy.[2] As Professor Peachey has pointed out in chapter IV above, the conventional definition of modernization includes "appropriate education" as an instrumental mechanism.[3] The inclusion of some educational regimen of both theory and practice is necessary to any coherent culture and society. Not surprisingly, then, as Professor Hozven has pointed out in chapter VII, much of the long conflict between church and state which characterized Central and South America has been focused on the attempt to wrest from the Church not only its vast and ambiguous wealth, but its control over the educational process.[4] Again, Hannah Arendt argues persuasively that when any society cannot make up its mind, so to speak, about education, that society is in the late stages of decline if not of extinction.[5] Surely, the wages of educational confusion is death: a society/culture that cannot envision what to become through the deliberate formation of its young has lost its sense of its future, and hence of itself.

As I have suggested, this educational concern appears to be universal in modernizing countries. My experience, especially through the medium of international students and colleagues, is that whether one is looking at Latin America, Central Africa, or East Asia, educational questions and strategies are being sharply debated, usually in close and conscious connection with a political and economic agenda. In the United States, where education and schooling are omnipresent and enormously wealthy (and therefore often deemed successful), we have traditionally attempted to depoliticize education--a thing impossible, of course. Consequently, "dialogue" about education and schooling in the United States, ignoring the fundamental levels of educational thought and practice, comprises only superficial spats, largely restricted to technical issues. In developing nations, however, the dialogue is generated by social and philosophical divisions and consequently reaches the level of fundamental issues and policies. Precisely because of its reality and vitality, this dialogue frequently erupts into academic chaos and even violence. The consequence, one need not deny, is often counter-productive; but at least it serves to keep the historical nature of education and schooling in clear view and to emphasize the real issues which are present--at least some of the time. (When I see a Latin American university barricaded and struck I often cannot suppress a sigh of regret. On the other hand, when I face a bland and falsely homogeneous class of my own I more frequently sigh for a radical or two to disrupt the issueless slumber of many of the students.)

(2) Now, if education and schooling are both crucial processes in any culture/society and also very consciously problematic in modernizing or developing nations, how one thinks about education and schooling becomes a vital question. That is because there is, I repeat, no such thing as eduction in general, except for occasional (and usually dangerous) scholarly purposes. Education and schooling are, to use Professor Peachey's categories, "artificial" not "natural," although we are so thoroughly schooled that we feel the process to be almost second nature.[6]

There also are no modernizing countries in general. Each is a singular nation with its own history, to which its educational ideas and schooling mechanisms are indissolubly related as context. By historical, I mean not the past in general, nor any fixed point or object within it, but the on-going socio-cultural context--including, of course, the political and economic--which has

roots in our common past experience, but which consciously and unconsciously inheres in our present and participates in the determination of our future. The present is, I believe, an arbitrary moment in our human experience seen developmentally. The present is made by overlapping past and future: we are the conjunction of what we see ourselves to have been and done and what we see ourselves as doing and becoming.

Thus, time is neither the measure nor the problem; origin and destiny are. And, origin and destiny are always the fundamental educational categories. Educational content is what we take from the multiple potentialities and experiences we have had (the fields of our knowledge and activity) and then refocus in terms of that transitional moment between a valued origin and a valued destiny in order to illuminate our passage consciously and in terms of some ideal principle. The education *process*--dangerously, but increasingly seen in terms only of schooling--is the manner in which we contrive to effect that conscious passage, which by definition is never still.

(3) Given the truth of the previous proposition, it follows that each society/culture has its unique educational history. But there also may be, I am inclined to believe, some general features of "Latin American" educational history, though there is no Latin American history of education in general. Some of these characteristic features are as follows:

(a) There is a deeply rooted Ibero-American colonial "classical" tradition. This is linked closely to certain categories and ideals characteristic of an elite social group. Presently, it is manifest less obviously in the prevalence of its humane wisdom than in its socially bifurcating credentialism; too frequently, its practical mode is an autocratic didacticism. In a sense, it is a decadent tradition. By that I mean, not that either its content or its values are all materially evil, but that it has come to be formally in contradiction with much of its own traditional content and values. The consequent danger is that what is left of its humane substance will be rejected mindlessly because of its presently defective form. Perhaps some of the difficulty in its career can be attributed to its partial manifestation through particular movements, e.g., the Germanic idealism of the sort exemplified by Krause; and frequently the inspiration of these schools of educational thought, e.g., Italian neo-idealism, were blatantly aristocratic or openly fascist.

Upon the anti-colonial revolution and "liberation" and as a reflection of that history, a secular "liberal" thrust was widely manifest in both culture and education. Though sometimes rhetorically "enlightened," this movement never realized its presuppositions in the liberation of the common people. It contradicted much in the popular culture, especially of course its religious base, without providing an alternative for the folk, let alone a common, indigenous substrate which could undergird and stabilize the conflicts inseparable from the process of change.[7]

(b) Whatever the merits of the previous account of the "classical" and "liberal" social and educational traditions, it is virtually indisputable that few if any contemporary social or cultural leaders view these root traditions as fully compatible with "modernization." Indeed, virtually entailed in the notion of modernization has been the notion that a new "matching" educational system must be provided. In most if not all cases, that has been understood to mean the educational system characteristic of the "advanced" North American and European countries whence "modernized" industrial-technological society itself has taken its rise.

This "modern education" usually is evangelically proclaimed through a variety of means: one medium is the "multinational" corporations and commercial development agencies of whom it might be said, adapting John Wesley, "the world is their school district." Another is the "multinational universities" which now relish their role of spreading the gospel of modernization that they (blindly, I believe) take to be the cause of their limited success, even while they bewail

their lack of power to make a "real impact". Finally, there are the vast international social-political agencies whose presence is so conspicuous throughout the world: AID, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States, to name only a few major ones. The notion of education shared by these instrumentalities, while promoted at great cost and with loud rhetorical flourish, has paid little attention to the *historical* relevance of their educational policies.

This "matching" educational system brings with it certain general characteristics. Conventionally joined to a "rational planning" approach to all public institutions, education is usually centralized, bureaucratized, and (for that reason, my experience suggests) usually unresponsive both to local differences and local needs. Again, this "matching" notion of schooling is almost always ideologically driven in terms of "manpower planning policy" or some other variant of "human capital" theory. Inevitably, this engine produces (quite literally) an "education" in which the person is defined and developed as an extension of the economic machine--and, machines have no history, in whole or in part.

Evidence of such tendencies is, of course, everywhere, for "modernization" is not something that happens to some who are less fortunate; it is characteristic of us all without exception. Furthermore, it is not a goal in the sense of an end-state on which "happy morning" all shall be "modernized." It is a continuous process that is gaining in inertia for us all. Look, for example, at the North American public and private schools and their "relevant" new programs of vocational testing, tracking, and socio-economic indoctrination, which many now propose for early elementary school. Under the guise of personal development and fulfillment, these mechanisms are dangerous instruments of class and role definition, the impact of which, however unnoticed, may well be catastrophic.

Nor does the "developed" pedagogical "west" appear to have much in the way of significant alternatives to provide either for itself or for "export." One set of purported alternatives is categorizable in general terms under the rubric of "romanticism." These are often styled as examples of "humanism" in education, as if they were the successors to the classical humanist tradition. They are, however, nothing of the sort. The romantic educational movement is psychologically defined and driven; it represents little more than an individualistic fugue--a speciously attractive flight from reality that exists only epiphenomenally and is, by and large, only admired by, and open to, the wealthy. As alternatives, such movements usefully point up our educational discomfort, but, as even their Father founder (Jean Jacques Rousseau) would probably admit, they show little promise as the foundation of fundamental educational change.

A contrary alternative, educational radicalism, is both a very complex phenomenon and little if any more sensitive to the singular historicity of the nations and peoples into which it is imported. Whether in its extreme Marxist-Leninist form or in its many softer and less doctrinaire varieties, radicalism also usually is not an indigenous development but an insertion from abroad. Whatever its rhetorical identification with "the people," it is no better than imperialistic technocratic education in honoring the principle that the roots of educational development must grow from the soil in which they are expected to flourish.

Perhaps most puzzling of all is the fact that there appear to be no effective different and indigenous Christian alternatives. Why this is the case I am at a loss to say, except for the probably too simple explanation that on the part of the various religious bodies economic erastiansim--now, thankfully, showing some signs of breaking up--may have borne too well its poisonous fruit. The churches have also, on the one hand, too easily identified their potentially much richer educational tradition with a rather too static Hellenism, or, on the other hand,

allowed themselves (in a mirror image protest) to be lured down the garden path of individualistic psychologism. In any case, religiously grounded education has surely more obviously manifested the problem than become a clear source for its resolution. My argument, however, is not that these alternatives are unimportant, unsatisfactory though they may be. In fact, they are very important in understanding the difficulties in "modern" educational theory and practice in the "developed" West. They are also important to establish the fact that "modern" education is by no means the universal and always successful social mechanism that its pretentious facade may suggest to the uncritical observer.

The Need for a Philosophical Critique of Education

The persistence of the alternatives just discussed suggests that our techno-scientific pedagogy needs a critique far more fundamental than one sketched merely in terms of its dubious origins and problematic effects. I cannot either fully accomplish such a critique here nor point to its having been done elsewhere. I believe, however, that it is now our first order of pedagogical business and that it may be on the horizon, brought into view by the increasing difficulty of patching or repainting our now old "modern" education. What perhaps can be said is that our educational difficulties arise from the peculiar conjunction of educational theory and practice (including the "research" now presumed to direct it) and the "science" that is now taken to found and to legitimize the whole enterprise. While "science" has driven out philosophy--by reducing it to a species of ideology--it is, I suggest, philosophy that must rescue us. Not philosophy in the sense of a body of received doctrines, but philosophy as the source of the self-critique which neither science nor education can provide for themselves. In particular, philosophy must address such points as may be summarized in the following form:

Point: "Modern" techno-pedagogy is largely pegged to a methodologically monistic theory of science that is both embarrassingly inadequate even to science itself and compels the reduction or elimination of too much of the traditional humane study central to genuine education.

Point: "Modern" educational theory's positivistic bias renders problematic any serious concern for those values that both underlie and are part of the content for any socially or personally relevant education. This poverty of critical axiological development moves us not into an axiologically neutral position, but into an anti-social individualism and a selfcontradictory ethical relativism. No educational system can fulfill its obligations either to persons or to societies on this ephemeral foundation. The reductionist move also produces a social-historical naivete that renders much of our human past (and hence our present and future) unintelligible.

Point: The arts--and here I mean the role they have traditionally fulfilled *both* as an important *mode of* the educational process and as *content in* the educational process--are relegated to a merely recreational status or recast as personally satisfying or therapeutic.

Point: The final consideration has to do with "rationality." We have noted briefly the meaning and role of rationality as a social and organizational principle in our present crisis.[8] One crucial aspect of this question has been pointed out by the hermeneutic philosophers and social critics. Underlying much of the new techno-science, and (I would add) the new techno-pedagogy, is what I prefer to call a "transfer of rationality" from the person to the techno-scientific system. In the long run, technology is not a thing or a particular machine, but a mode of thinking and working--indeed, of living. Except for the few who create and control it, from genetic engineers to computer designers and master programmers, the role of most of us is to

accept it, to fit in, to be determined by a system presumed to be more rational than any one of us taken singularly can be. It may in fact be the case that the consequent educational goal for many no longer is the full development of critical intelligence at all! Both socially and educationally, this opens a chamber of horrors. It is the ultimate contradiction of the very possibility of those crucial normative principles that must shape any educational idea, practice, or act--namely the achievement of fully humane, morally responsible intelligence, in a conscious community of believers and actors, who together control their corporate and personal lives. That this is particularly relevant to the question of peaceful socio-cultural development is not difficult to see.

It is important to lay more foundation for the points or accusations just made. Before that can be done, however, an important intervening question must be considered. What right and what authority do any of us have who are not in a situation to presume any competence or stake in these matters? Much of this essay itself suggests that adequate resolutions of problems in any of the spheres about which we have been talking can come only out of the socio-historical context in which they arise. While I fully assent to that general proposition, I would offer one or two important qualifications.

All have a right to ask to be included in the dialogue we are calling for and this for two reasons. First, our mutual world which surrounds our more limited ones is now so compressed and interdependent that a threat to peace for anyone is a problem for all. The very notion of "*self*-interest," upon which so much political and economic policy is still unfortunately based, is both archaic and dangerous. Second, the society and culture--and therefore the education--for which those of us in North America share responsibility represent major sources of the fundamental problem which confronts all of us. Insofar as we are able also to share in an open and critical self-examination, it may be possible to alleviate the problem from both ends. Legitimacy for this interaction lies in the principle that, although each community has its unique socio-historical matrix, it is not idiosyncratic. There are continuities in human nature and human experience as well as crucial differences, else we could neither understand nor talk at all.

The Scientific Construction of Educational Theory

To return to the basic argument, we must look further at the contemporary interrelations of science, education, and philosophy. For the most part, in its practical form, "research" means "science" or strictly "empirical" inquiry on the model of some sort of "scientific method." More specifically, educational "research" means some sort of educational science--some sort of "techno-science" that functions chiefly by applying selected aspects of behavioral science (social and/or individual) to such educational problems as they can illuminate. There are exceptions and the boundaries are not always perfectly clear, but the programs of our professional educational organizations furnish the evidence necessary to sustain that judgment.

In our understanding of professional research, philosophical activity--especially that which is historically grounded--is ignored for two reasons. The first, stemming from what has just been said, is that educational research has been crudely reduced to science or scientific research, while, more importantly, all other sorts of educational analysis or theorizing have been consigned to a limbo of "common sense," "intuition," or mere "speculation," or perhaps swept tidily under the very large rug labeled "ideology." The reason for the ease with which this redefinition of the domain of educational research has been accomplished is the assumption that science needs no critique of itself, because scientific propositions (or scientific "truths" as many like to call them) are implicitly universal and obviously self-justifying. Consequently, any

attempt to direct, let alone limit, "science" is both intellectually and morally unacceptable. By the same token, not to ground education virtually exclusively on techno-science would be equally reprehensible.

Now, to avoid the intellectual chauvinism implicit in such views, more discerning scientists (educational and otherwise) will sometimes distinguish between "pure" and "applied" science. "Pure" science is exactly that: "pure," unalloyed by base motives and uncontaminated by time, place and purpose. It is the application of science by those less pure folk who must accommodate its clean abstractions to a dirty world that results in compromise. Such persons, often crudely economic in their motives, do need watching.

Here, however, the argument needs to become historical and practical rather than pristinely deductive. In a world that cared little for science, science could be largely disinterested and thankfully amateur. Though few such individuals may still exist, no such world any longer exists. Given the contemporary nationalized and institutionalized forms of science, it is scientists (pure and otherwise) who first apply science. Science now *is* an application. If we consider the scientists who cheerfully participated and continue to participate in institutionalized and nationalized science indifferently in democracies or dictatorships, it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish their work *qua* science. As moral agents it is possible, of course, but their science says nothing about that. A recent example would be those scientists who did their work for John Manville and Union Carbide or those academic scientists who, neatly dividing the truths they will learn from the outcomes of their activity, have hastened to pocket attractive research contracts for "Star Wars." Science (as Bacon told us it would) is now principally valued not for its truth but for its effect in "producing new works." Its mystical authority may derive from its presumed truth value, but its desirability issues from its promised effects.

Far from being "pure," then, science (including educational science) can easily become a socially and historically conditioned weapon, *especially in Third World settings*. But science itself does not consider that possibility--philosophy can and must. The word "weapon" has the sound of a very unphilosophical accusation. But I believe that philosophers must, from time to time, say "J'accuse!" Whatever intellectual life was like in some scientific Eden, at *present* science is institutionalized in concrete socio-historical settings. These settings do not provide it with some ideal freedom, but in fact, even in academia, usually drive it into captivity to certain nationally and economically defined goals.

Again, as the previously mentioned "hermeneutic" philosophers and historians have pointed out, the power of science has been transmuted into a potential threat to liberty and democracy. We all argue that in the modern world knowledge is power. When that knowledge becomes available only to political and economic elites, and is used for their purposes, the consequences to human life can be catastrophic. Increasingly, we watch a succession of prestigious scientists "advise" our political leaders --usually with what they want to hear. Soon we are told that we cannot be told because we cannot understand, and therefore we cannot judge and choose. The presuppositions of liberty and democracy are, however, that the people *can*understand and *can* choose regarding those actions which affect their lives.

Science does not make this situation clear. As an establishment (which it has become), science does not want to clarify the situation; as a mode of inquiry, science does not have the tools to do so. In practice, present-day science is captive to certain aspects of its socio-historical context and therefore inimical to the process of liberating and democratizing human social life. This is possible because science, qua science, is not self-reflective unless accompanied by philosophical activity. Such philosophic activity is not contradictory to science, nor is the

recommendation of its inclusion a form of cultural antagonism. It is simply to assert that science does not represent a new absolute metaphysic. It is one form of human activity which, as part of the totality of human thought and action, must come under the comprehensive scrutiny for which the name philosophy stands.

The Visible Hand of the Dismal Science

In much of the Third World, then, techno-science is in fact the new intellectual colonialism, introduced as the handmaiden of the new form of political colonialism, economic colonialism. In the chaotic post-war period "reconstruction" was undertaken by the "victors" on the most benign of platforms: We needed to avoid destroying our enemies lest they again fall victim to fascist solutions. At the same time, Western nations were divesting themselves of their imperial colonies. For these struggling entities, in an admission of previous failure, the need was diagnosed to be something called "development." Other less directly colonized countries struggling for stability were seen to have similar needs. All needed aid for development--a development that soon was determined by international economic structures rather than by their own indigenous criteria. These structures and the development plans created in correspondence with them were, of course, created by applied economic science with the aid of social engineering. Thus, educational reform came to mean, not an indigenous activity, but a systematic revision of pedagogical practice, largely if not exclusively through the application of those pedagogical models and their supporting research paradigms which ostensibly had brought about the superior development being transferred to the struggling nations.[9]

The work of the World Bank is an instructive example. At first concerned exclusively with reconstruction, then with development, the Bank initially paid no attention to education until it discovered that without a populous engineered to fit them its programs would not work. The educational interest that resulted, however, was tailored to its prior mission: development as measured by increased economic "productivity." Once having changed its posture, the Bank's impact quickly became massive. From 1963-1985 the Bank sponsored 304 educational projects in 90 countries, involving about 5 billion dollars. By 1985, the Bank's "educational" lending represented 6.4% of its activity. In five Latin American countries alone its current projects represent a total "investment" of some 454 million dollars.[10]

The form of educational "development" and "reform" fostered by this sort of educational "investment" is, then, determined in the first instance by economic policy and defined by the techno-scientific preoccupation we have been discussing. Thus, while programs may talk of "equity" and "access" for the "poor," the destiny of the disenfranchised is predetermined by the demands of a "modernization" essentially divorced from social-historical conditions and cultural content. At least two serious results follow: (1) The "target" populations are forced to choose between a colonialist traditional education which is patently supportive of traditional elites and structures and an imported techno-pedagogy and research which pays little or no attention to their unique history and culture. (2) This imported techno-pedagogy is superimposed upon a culture in which philosophy, literature, art and music have previously formed the warp and woof of personal identity and social meaning and value. Yet, these deeply rooted carriers of meaning and identity, of heritage and purpose, now have no function.

Impaled on the horns of this dilemma, no genuinely indigenous educational reform can be built. The choice is now between two colonialisms, one dead and one very much alive. The net effect is not only that "educational reform" comes only with great difficulty and that "research"

seems to have little impact, but, far worse, that the necessary cultural base is seriously eroded in the process--this effect is aided, of course, by such other forms of cultural importation as the "media," advertising, and popular music. Only a socially and historically sensitive philosophical activity, I would insist, can bring us into a productive consciousness of this situation.

Artful Intelligence and the Creation of Educational Alternatives

I will conclude this section with one or two more specific proposals for what philosophy can usefully accomplish. First, philosophical activity can lead us in a return to a broader, less intellectually imperialistic notion of educational research itself. The beginning of this, it seems to me, is to see educational research generically as the critical application of human intelligence in all its modes to the problems of educational theory and practice, including schooling, in all their dimensions and contexts. This proposed definition raises rather than settles many questions, of course, but it raises the right questions. Second, philosophical activity can help us to comprehend and incorporate into our educational research and reform a consciousness of the limitations of science and of its interface with moral and ethical issues which it cannot resolve single-handedly. Third, philosophical activity can help us build educational theories which are not merely formal, as most have been in recent decades, but substantive, integrating the modes and contents of human experience (i.e., lived culture) into morally responsible and historically sensitive patterns for the mutual development of societies and persons.

My modest first-hand experience in developing countries persuades me also that their contribution to resolving these difficulties could have meaning in the so-called developed world as well. As noted, from the conflicts they experience there arises a sense of engagement with genuine educational issues and consequences which could produce the first new educational theory and policy in the West since the turn of the century. The apparent success in developed countries, coupled with its commitment to techno-pedagogy and a very profitable *business* called educational research, has produced not solutions to its own educational quandaries, but an inability to conceive of, let alone construct, alternatives. Hence, there may be need of the fruits of those who labor elsewhere.

In closing, I will turn finally to the fundamental questions which I initially suggested could be raised at this point. From a conventional perspective, these questions would be largely technical. But the fundamental question is, I think, not *how* we can educate, but *whether* we can educate at all. I have argued an obvious and intimate connection between culture and education. But, that surely is not news! The conventional move is then to ask, "Is our pedagogy adequate to our culture? Is it an effective means for bringing the young into the human community we share?" But, it has also been argued throughout this volume--very importantly, I believe--that there may be no culture and little community at our disposal, but only a "wasteland" left by generations of disintegration through exploitation. If that be the case, the question takes a very different turn: *Is there any longer a pedagogically adequate culture*? If there is not, can there be one? In other words, given the situation we have been exploring, educational theory must now begin, I think, with historically grounded sociocultural critique, and rebuild: it must, so to speak, make itself possible!

Questions about the possibility of education are no longer merely technically difficult but radically problematic because it is by no means clear that the very notion of educating makes any sense under present conditions. Education is perhaps a notion left over from the time of principled societies and cultures that could furnish norms--i.e., stable meanings and values--for

guiding development both social and personal. Where are they in the wasteland? While, as we have noted Peter Berger to argue, "development" *should* entail governance by ethical principles, the "ethic" characteristic of both the "developed" and the "developing" now seems little more than a radically private and relativistic hedonism.

Our formal procedural principles, here in the wasteland, are reductionist. Our political and economic thought has become a set of bloodless abstractions. Thus, both in our thought and in our pursuit of goods, we have lost sight not only of others, but of ourselves as well. Modernization, we have said, is the process in which we are all caught up. According to its canons, we are to consume ourselves into perfection: but we consume ourselves in the process. For some three thousand years, wise men in every culture have told us that appetite cannot be satisfied; but now we have tried to make it the legislative principle of our lives and institutions. In theological terms, a generation that laughs at the notion of original sin has managed to mass-produce it. We have--some of us--everything to live with and nothing to live for.

Of course, this quite objective immorality cannot continue. The machine is not producing more and more for more and more. It is producing more and more for relatively fewer and fewer. The imbalance between the haves and the have-nots grows rather than declines. When the images of becoming one's desires (of desiring as the only form of becoming), mediated through our "advanced" culture and its media, finally spark the Armageddon, what, who, will be left to desire? The refugee camps of Africa and Asia and the *ranchos* of Latin America are, unfortunately, not curious accidents. Poverty with T.V., impotence and desire conjoined, are the potential nuclear elements of a future cataclysm.

What then of education? Can simultaneously both repair the ruins and recreate education under these conditions? Customarily we have regarded certain studies or disciplines as the fundamental building blocks of any educational regimen. These studies have had their educational role because they have represented, I believe, fundamental forms of human experience and understanding. But we are, I have argued, in shambles ourselves. Much of our science (at least as it is taught in schools) is still crudely positivistic and reductionist. It feeds us only abstractions. Our history, being thoroughly disemboweled, would have to be "thickened up," as William James put it, were it to function pedagogically with any effectiveness. Philosophy has repented of its flight into analysis, but where is it heading? Religion has been cast out and substituted by religious "thought" and psychologized spirituality. What is left?

It has been suggested in this volume that art--particularly in the form of literature, poetry, and drama--is not merely a reflection of culture but an instrument for building it, for making it.[11] I tend to agree. That is why, in fact, until recent generations it was the heart of the educational process. Real art is inescapably about human life. It works through myths and images, and perhaps it is the case that only myths and images can rebuild and populate the barren landscape. Perhaps through a restoration of art to its proper place we can return to an educationally adequate context, though it may be only in a sub-community and through the creation of a sub-culture--a real counter-culture, a real leavening if you will.

Art has not been guiltless, of course, and has its own at least potential besetting sins. The aim here is not some mindless notion of expunging science or replacing it with art, but for art to provide once again a crucial integrative focus. Art ideally could function together with a more humane history, with a science educationally understood as a humane activity, and with other "subjects" similarly reconceived. Art, so defined, can make good myths, images and stories, in and through which we can live together rather than apart. If we can once again embody the truth

rather than reduce and abstract it, perhaps there is still hope. If we cannot, hope will probably be unnecessary.

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NOTES

1. Some portions of this chapter were explored in another paper, "The Utility of Traditional Philosophy in Educational Research and Reform," delivered in a symposium on "Educational Research in the Global Community," 1986 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

2. I follow here Peter Berger's important distinction between "growth," "modernization," and "development," a distinction with both formal and substantive content. "Growth," he argues, is virtually universally defined in economic terms, as concerned with wealth of goods. "Modernization" describes the process by which we seek to stimulate growth and to increase the supply of goods without regard for the implications of that process. "Development," Berger argues, at least should mean placing growth and modernization under the authority of ethically conditioned political principles. See Peter L. Berger,*Pyramids of Sacrifice: Political Ethics and Social Change* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1976), pp. vii, 8-36, *et passim*. Clearly, I am indebted to Berger for far more than a definition or two, and anyone concerned with these problems must at least listen to what he has said, for example, in his *Facing up to Modernity* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); or his and Michael Novak's more recent *Speaking to the Third World* (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1985).

3. See Prof. Peachey, chapter IV above, on "appropriate education."

4. See Prof. Hozven, chapter VII above, on the Church and educational control.

5. Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), Chapter V, pp. 173-96, esp. pp. 185-93.

6. See Prof. Peachey above on education as "artificial."

7. It is perhaps useful to keep in mind that the "state" as the actual "supplier" of services such as education is a relatively recent invention. The churches have always served as a transnational institutional means for providing both educational content and the necessary basis of support for the development and extension of schooling. When secularly oriented movements (understandably, from their socio-philosophical perspective) choose to remove education from the control of the Churches, it was not immediately clear what other agency could take their place in an effective manner.

8. The literature reflecting the "hermeneutic" perspective is now vast and complex. However, I am particularly indebted here to Josef Bleicher's *The Hermeneutic Imagination: Outline of a Positive Critique of Scientism and Sociology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), Chapters 1 and 2. See G. McLean, chapter I above.

9. Here again the relevant literature is very extensive. For another critique, see Denis Goulet and Michael Hudson, *The Myth of Aid: The Hidden Agenda of the Development Reports* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1971). The following are some of the sources that have particularly provoked my thinking and guided my observations.

For some sources in which I sense the problem, see Robert G. Meyers, *Connecting Worlds: A Survey of Developments in Educational Research in Latin America* (Ottawa: Educational Research and Advisory Group, 1981). Meyers calls frequently for the growth of a "research mentality" (e.g., p. 18), although he admits that the universality (my term) of the enterprise can be questioned (e.g., p. 11). He regrets the fact that researchers don't keep in touch, but he fails to see that conflicting modes of thought may make that contact difficult. "Politics," he insists, provides "constraints" on research, which should (it appears) transcend all that sort of thing. His review also suggests that the impetus for research comes from "outsiders" and that it is regrettably lower in "education" than in agriculture and industry--the latter differing, apparently, from the former largely in degree rather than kind. See also R. G. Davis and N. F. McGinn, "Education and Regional Development" in Lloyd Rodwin and Associates, *Planning Urban Growth and Regional Development* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969).*Educational Planning in the Context of Current Development Problems*: Proceedings of the 1983 I.I.E.P. Seminar, Paris (published by the Institute), esp., the articles by Reiffers and Silvestre, and by Ernesto Schiefelbien--the latter fixing attention on the need for causal models for research.

The current state of affairs in Latin America is partly visible through *La Educacion*, a review published by the Departamiento de Assuntos Educativos of the O.E.A., Washington, D.C. The Department also issues periodic reprints of particular articles as "Estados del Arte de la Investigacion Educativa en America Latina." Regional publications differ considerably (as I see it) in mood and content. See, for example, the publications of the Centro de Reflexion y Planificacion Educativa (CERPE), Caracas, Venezuela, esp. their *Investigaciones Educativas Venezolanas,* which demonstrate much more politically and culturally oriented work. The "multinations" (if I may apply that term) are essentially neutralist, trying to avoid the political as dangerous and the cultural as unrigorous and unscientific. For another, but not incompatible view, see Joseph S. Tulchin, "Eversins Patterns of Research in the Study of Latin America," *Latin American Research Review* 18 (1983), 85-94.

10. *Annual Report* of the World Bank, 1985 (and other years), published in Washington, D.C. by the Bank. Also extremely important are the *Educational Sector Policy Papers*. In the third edition (Washington, D.C., 1980) for example, the argument given is that education "should be effectively related to work and environment," embracing the "knowledge and skills necessary for performing economic, social and other developmental functions" (p. 86). The chief need is for "capacities to design, analyze, manage, and evaluate programs for education and training" (p. 87). The foundations for this work are primarily economic formulae.

11. See Prof. Hozven, chapter VII above, regarding literature and building culture.

DISCUSSION OF RELATED ISSUES IN
EDUCATION

Goals

Skills and techniques. Education is rightly concerned with the transmission of knowledge, which must include the techniques and skills required for survival. This is true for urban as well as rural areas and is an integral part of a humanistic education. In some circumstances, however, the development of emphasis upon skills and techniques has not been related to the true needs of the countries involved, but has reflected the orientation, concerns and vision of other, helping, countries. This has been disruptive by inducing educational institutions to develop centers or programs poorly adapted to their circumstances, needs or capabilities. The impact of ideologies of "success" and consumption upon the content of education from its earliest levels often conveys implicit value messages of hedonism and conformity.

Informal education can be an important corrective to the emphasis upon the technical, but there has been a tendency increasingly to transfer to the school the informal educational responsibilities of the home. This has been accompanied by an abandonment or reduction of personal values in favor of the scientific and technical.

Normative content vs value neutrality. Beyond skills and techniques, it is the normative content of education which seems both most lacking and most needed in the present social crises. Hesitations regarding attending to values in education have arisen from the substitution of an increasingly scientific orientation in the curriculum, an increasingly secular outlook in society accompanying the progressive materialisms of left and right, and the fear of state manipulation if value content were to be addressed specifically. Value neutrality, however, is an illusion for the vacuum left by abstracting from values is, in fact, filled by a secular and materialistic view conducive to hedonism and passivity. Considerable pressure is experienced, even in peer reviews, to inhibit one from departing from a reductive materialism. This becomes the norm and any other view is considered disruptive.

Education as a Process

Shared values and sharing values. If social values characterize the ways in which we relate to each other in a culture, then some universality can be expected inasmuch as what harms others, when generalized in our society, harms oneself as well: in "For Whom the Bell Tolls" the bell tolls for you. In a nation with reasonably well-established and long functioning structures the national identity and values would have been assimilated by the citizens raised in this context. In contrast, where nation-making is recent and very much in process a stronger, ideological effort may be needed in this regard. In any case, within the school or university context it is essential that there be an authentic search for truth in all fields. The primary concern of education is the development of the student as a personal member of the community. This implies a search not only for information, but for the values by which that person and society with their cultural identity can thrive.

A hermeneutic task. The conditions for education as a group effort are essentially the hermeneutic conditions of open dialogue in which each person is free to assume any role (proponent, questioner, critic) in order that all aspects of the issues be explored from as many perspectives or horizons as possible.

Some note as characteristic of Latin American cultures that its rhetorical mode of discussion is focused not upon the truth of the matter, but upon convincing the other of my own position precisely as mine. This could be problematic for education if it impedes the process of removing one's own misconceptions through being presented in dialogue with other points of view (see chapter I). The emphasis upon convincing others tends to promote an ideological mode of speech which could be a factor, not only in politicizing, but in polarizing educational institutions.

Art and literature are important for personalizing discourse in contrast to depersonalizing abstractions, for expressing the historicity of the culture, and for promoting personal dialogue. In the *New York Times* (Oct. 17, 1987), M. Friedman remarks that "Psychoanalysis is the study of self deception. And it may be that the deep necessity of art is the examination of self deception."

CHAPTER IX

LIBERATION PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY AND CULTURE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

EULALIO BALTAZAR

This paper considers how theological reflection by liberation theologians can contribute to the other modes of reflection: historical, anthropological, sociological, economic, literary and educational regarding culture, human rights and peace in Central America.

The 1968 conference of Latin American Bishops in Medellin provided the ecclesiastical impetus for a theology of liberation. In that conference the Bishops strongly condemned unjust social structures which institutionalized violence and thereby oppressed the poor. Not only did they denounce violations of human rights, they called also for action to remove oppressive structures and systems. They justified their position theologically by explaining that "liberation" at the economic and political levels has a supernatural dimension and is an integral part of the economy of salvation as an anticipation of complete redemption in Jesus Christ. It was left to Latin American theologians to articulate the new ecclesiastical and theological language and the category of "liberation." This signified a new approach and style of theological reflection, which today is known as "liberation theology" or "theology of liberation."

The first and perhaps the most influential articulation of this new style of theological reflection is found in the now classic work of Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*.[1] Gutierrez notes that the old style of theological reflection which was learned and imported from Europe could not solve the socio-political problem in Latin America. One cannot interpret the present reality of the oppressed in Latin America in the light of European theology which was based on "the challenge posed by the *nonbeliever*. . . . In Latin America, however, the main challenge does not come from the nonbeliever but from the*nonhuman*--i.e., the human being who is not recognized as such by the prevailing social order."[2] Gutierrez is aware that theology always interprets the Word of God in the context of one's history and one's cultural universe so that the Gospel message is reshaped for the benefit of society.[3] The mistake was to import into the Latin American situation a theology based on European culture. The effect has been that this theology justified "a situation contrary to the most elemental demands of the Gospel."[4]

The task of liberation theology then is "a theological reflection born of the experience of shared efforts to abolish the current unjust situation and to build a different society, freer and more human."[5] As a first step, the Church must be liberated from false theologies; it must undergo conversion so that it can return to being what it really is.[6]

EUROPEAN THEOLOGY AS FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS

Liberation theology must distance itself from European theology in a dialectical manner which involves unmasking the ideological nature of European theology. Enrique Dussel calls European theology the theology of the center, while Latin American theology, in contrast, is a theology of the periphery. As Dussel notes, "it is not the same to think from the center as to think out of oppression or to think about the periphery from the periphery itself."[7]

Dussel tries to unmask the ideological dimension of European theology by linking it with European colonialism and its philosophic underpinning. The European "I," he notes, first experiences itself as `I conquer' as in the "I conquer" of Cortes or of Piazarro.[8] This economic colonialist experience and style of life formed the substructure for the European ideology articulated by Descartes. Thus the power of conquest was expressed philosophically as "Ego cogito" or "I think." But if the European is the center of thinking, where does this leave the "other"? Dussel answers: "The Indian, for example, the African, the Asian is reduced to an idea, but even then not as something exterior but as an idea internal to the system `I' set up."[9]From the philosophic "I think" it is but a short step to the theological, "I think what is theological."[10] The theological "consisted of doctrines, theoretical *articles* of faith that were thought of in terms of sentences with subject and predicate."[11]The offshoot of this theoretical, rationalistic and dogmatic theology was that the poor "who are the epiphany of God, have been reduced to a *cogitatum* (`that which is thought')."[12]

Dussel criticizes not only Tridentine theology or scholasticism, but also Rahner's and Schillebeeckx's brands of existential theology as being solipsist, for although existential theology is an advance over Tridentine theology by basing theological reflection on the existential idea of man-as-being-in-the-world, the world that is affirmed is the European world. For the Latin American who does not belong to the European world but who thinks the Faith in a European way and identifies Christian truth with it, the result is "supreme theological alienation."[13] Modern theologies of hope also are deficient in that they lack historico-political mediation.[14] Progressivist and evolutionary theologies such as that of Teilhard de Chardin too are rejected as lacking political vision,[15] as are Catholic liberalism and developmentalism which aim to achieve social and economic advances without questioning and altering the system or oppressive structures.[16]

THE NEW THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

From a philosophical point of view the new methodology is not "I think, therefore, I am" but "I am, therefore, I think." In other words, the primary category is not thought, but life, not theory but practice (praxis). The way you live determines the way you think, and not the other way around: translated theologically, praxis determines theological reflection. As Gutierrez explains it, liberation theology communicates the Gospel "re-read from the standpoint of the other, of the poor and the oppressed."[17] The life or concrete situation of the oppressed is the *locus theologicus* of liberation theology.

Luis Segundo gives this new theological methodology the name of *hermeneutic circle*.

It is the continuing change in our interpretation of the Bible which is dictated by the continuing changes in our present-day reality, both individual and societal. `Hermeneutic' means `having to do with interpretation.' And the circular nature of this interpretation stems from the fact that each new reality obliges us to interpret the word of God afresh, to change reality accordingly, and then to go back and reinterpret the word of God again, and so on.[18]

Hugo Assmann also observes that the old methodology of going directly to tradition and the Bible to do our theological reflection will not do.

The basic reference points of traditional theology, the Bible and tradition (however the latter may be understood) do not suffice for doing theology because they are not directly accessible. Our approach to these touchstones of the Christian faith is affected and conditioned by blocks set

up in the past. We must take note of these blocks in our present context and try to remove them in our analysis and praxis.[19]

A more detailed explanation of this new methodology is given by Leonardo Boff,[20] who speaks of three levels of mediation. By mediation is meant *means* by which liberation theology realizes what it proposes to itself as its task and end. These three mediations are the socio-analytical, the hermeneutic, and pastoral practice.[21]

1. At the level of socio-analytic mediation we need a critical knowledge of the causes or mechanisms that produce oppression and misery. This knowledge is the result of multi-disciplinary analysis. But mere *empirical analysis* will not do. This mode merely draws up a list of `clamoring facts', but fails to go beyond the factual dimension to analyze deeper causes. Nor will*functional analysis* do. This method sees the facts, but tries to solve the problem of poverty and oppression by advocating development, progress, modernization, maximization of wealth, etc.: it fails to question the system or the structure. Why, despite modernization and industrial progress, "do the poor grow poorer and the rich ever richer"?[22]

The proper method is *dialectical structuralism* which "moves from 1) structure to 2) a radical critical awareness to 3) liberation."[23] The result of this mode of analysis points to the need for a new form of organization for the whole society, an organization on other bases--no longer from a point of departure of the capital held in the hands of a few, but an organization of society based on everyone's labor, with everyone sharing, in the means and the goods of production as well as in the means of power. And this is called liberation.[24]

2. The second step in the new methodology is hermeneutic mediation. This means reading the socio-analytical "text" of reality in the light of the Gospel. "What is God trying to tell us in these social problems, now adequately grasped by scientific reason? This is the challenge. Reason is not enough here. Enter . . . faith."[25]

There are three levels of interpretation. The first is the interpretation of the socio-political situation in terms of salvation history. By using the categories of faith, such as sin, justice, injustice, charity, grace, perdition, the kingdom of God, etc., we evaluate whether society is oriented toward God's design or not.[26] The second level is a reading of the faith-tradition itself. The question is, does an interpretation of the categories of faith abet, or legitimize, existing oppressive structures?[27]

We find that God-language has become the property of the privileged classes. In the past theological language was clerical, full of technicalities and scholastic distinctions. Then it became apologetic, used to defend the Church against infidels. Next it became bourgeois, to defend the rich. Now liberation theology tries to return "the use of speech and God's word to the people of God."[28]

A new reading of the Gospel results in a new view of God as the God of the oppressed. Christ is no longer seen ontologically as composed of two natures (hypostatic union), but functionally as liberator.[29] The Church is seen no longer statistically as an institution of grace, but as a sign of salvation, a servant of the world and as God's instrument for the historical liberation of humanity. Sin and grace are seen no longer in the context of individual salvation and hence as individual realities, but as social and hence as structural sin and structural grace.

The third level of interpretation is a reading of the whole of human activity, both Christian and non-Christian, in the light of the Gospel.

3. Finally, the third and last step in the new method of theological reflection is reflection upon pastoral practice. The question is how the Church is to translate into concrete action what

has been retrieved from re-reading the Scriptures from the standpoint of the oppressed: how can the Church perform liberating activity?[30]

First, the Church plays a liberating role as a sign of salvation. "It must attempt to articulate its word, its catechesis, its liturgy, its community action, and its interventions with established authority, in the direction of liberation."[31]

Secondly, the Church needs to cooperate and interact with other agencies and forces that equally are involved in the transformation of society.[32]

Lastly, Christians and basic Christian communities and organizations must go beyond the symbolic to a direct role in changing the economic and political structures which oppress the poor.[33]

SOME PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE THEOLOGY OFLIBERATION

Liberation theology is not the only theology followed in Latin America. As Juan Carlos Scannone observes, there are four basic theological orientations in Latin America:[34]

1. a conservative, preconcilliar theology;
2. a postconciliar theology based upon European or progressivist North American models;
3. a liberation theology predominantly influenced by Marxist categories and methodology in its concern to analyze and transform reality; and
4. a liberation theology predominantly concerned with being a theology of popular pastoral activity.

If the Church is to present a united front against oppression it might be necessary to arrive at a common formulation and articulation of the Christian Faith. Marxist oriented liberation theologians have the special problem of showing how it is possible for a Christian to be a Marxist, how it is possible to use Marxism purely instrumentally without accepting also its metaphysics of atheistic materialism. Thus, the papal letter, *Octogesima Adveniens* (n. 33) warned that "it would be illusory and dangerous . . . to accept the elements of Marxist analysis without realizing their relationship with ideology, and to enter into the practice of class struggle and its Marxist interpretations, while failing to note the kind of totalitarian and violent society to which this process leads."

Here a number of concerns are operative. One is that liberation theology might reduce salvation in Christ to the socio-political order, thus destroying the transcendence and otherness of faith. This fear is certainly valid and has been expressed by the present Pope. But in their writings liberation theologians are at pains to explain the distinction between salvation and liberation. Leonard and Clodovis Boff in their book, *Salvation and Liberation* use many analogies to explain the relation between salvation and liberation, but, as with all analogies, precision is inherently lacking.

What is needed is a philosophic frame of reference such as those Augustine and Aquinas drew from Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies. For liberation theologians, however, these philosophies will not do for they cannot give sufficient justification for the Church's involvement at the socio-political and historical levels. Rather, they search for an immanentist frame of reference. The Marxist dialectics of history is an example, and the liberation theologians have "baptized" it so to speak, just as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas did the pagan philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Only time will tell whether this new theological experiment will be accepted by the Church.

Another concern is that the use of a Marxist mode of analysis could ideologize theology. But one might ask whether the traditional theologies of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas were not ideologized by their use of Platonic and Aristotelian categories. This raises the question whether it is ever possible to have a non-ideological theology and directs one to the hermeneutic problem of understanding tradition which is the subject of Chapter I by G. McLean above.

Despite the theological philosophic and hermeneutic problems associated with liberation theology, they should not cause a suspension of judgment or a paralysis of action with respect to the problem of poverty and injustice in Central and Latin America. One does not have to use Marxist modes of analysis to discover that there is conflict among the classes in Latin America and that any theology worthy of the name must guide the Church in responding the conflict. As noted, various theological orientations should carry on a dialogue toward arriving at a unified course of action. The older theologies should welcome into their midst the new theology of liberation without fear, remembering that in their infancy Platonic and Aristotelian theologies were eyed with suspicion and fear by many theologians and churchmen in their time.

Besides carrying on an intramural dialogue among various theological orientations, liberation theology should also carry on an interdisciplinary dialogue especially at the socio-political level of analysis of the present Latin American situation of oppression. Besides the Marxist interpretation there are alternative and perhaps complementary ways of understanding the causes of oppression. As Leonard Biallas notes, "one dimension often sidetracked in various theologies of liberation is the nature and alleviation of violence."[35] Gutierrez mentions the contributions of Freud and Marcuse in the area of psychological liberation;[36] the ideas of B.F. Skinner (behavioral psychology), Carl Gustav Jung and Rollo May (collective unconscious and archetypes), Konrad Lorenz and E.O. Wilson (sociobiology) on the subject of oppression and violence also should be considered.

Finally, dialogue should be carried on with the indigenous cultures and religions in Latin America. Meaningful participation by Indians in the struggle for liberation could be attained if the categories and symbols used to analyze their oppressed condition were derived from their religion, history and culture. The work of J.C. Scannone and his associates, found in*Stromata*, has greatly advanced this work. For the Christianized Indians Paulo Freire's "consciousness-raising" pedagogical method should be rethought in order to take account of such questions regarding its philosophical presuppositions noted by Peter Berger in his book *Pyramids of Sacrifice* (ch. 4).

All these problems aside, this new theology holds real promise for the liberation of the poor and the oppressed in the third world.

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NOTES

1. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973).
2. See his article, "Liberation, Theology and Proclamation," in *Concilium* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), p. 69.
3. *Ibid*., p. 68.
4. *Ibid*., pp. 73-74.
5. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. ix.

6. Joseph Comblin, "What Sort of Service Might Theology Render"? in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, ed. Rosino Gibellini (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 63.

7. Enrique Dussel, *Ethics and the Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1978), p. 159.

8. *Ibid*., p. 152.

9. Ibid.

10. *Ibid*., p. 154.

11. *Ibid*..

12. *Ibid*., p. 156.

13. *Ibid*., p. 159.

14. *Ibid*.

15. Guttierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 173.

16. *Ibid*., Ch. 2. See also his "Liberation and Development," in *Cross Currents* 21 (1971), pp. 243-56.

17. See his "Liberation, Theology and Proclamation," p. 73.

18. See his *Liberation of Theology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976), p. 8.

19. See his "The Power of Christ in History," in *The Frontiers of Theology in Latin America* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 134-45.

20. See Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, *Salvation and Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984).

21. *Ibid*., p. 5.

22. *Ibid*., p. 6.

23. *Ibid*., p. 9.

24. *Ibid*., p. 8.

25. *Ibid*., p. 9.

26. *Ibid*.

27. *Ibid*., pp. 9-10.

28. Comblin, *op. cit*., p. 63.

29. See Leonard Boff, *Jesus Christ Liberator* (Maryknoll: N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1978)

30. Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, *Salvation and Liberation*, p. 11.

31. *Ibid*., p. 11.

32. *Ibid*., p. 12.

33. *Ibid*.

34. See his "Theology, Popular Culture, and Discernment," in *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America* (Orbis Books, 1979), p. 221.

35. See his "The Psychological Origins of Violence and Revolution," in *Liberation, Revolution and Freedom*, ed. T. McFadden (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p. 157.

36. *Theology of Liberation*, pp. 30-32.

CHAPTER X

HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND THEOLOGY

BRIAN V. JOHNSTONE

The aim of this chapter is to offer a theological perspec- tive on some of the issues which have arisen in the previous analyses of the situation of Central America. Though this will lead to some discussion of "Liberation Theology," it is not the purpose of this chapter to attempt a comprehensive analysis of this topic. Nor is it assumed that that type of theology is the only one which would find acceptance in the region. The focus of the chapter will be upon the understanding of human rights and justice in one type of theology which has been developed with a specific reference to the culture of the region we are considering. It will be appropriate to begin with the contribution of a theologian, Jon Sobrino, who has developed a theology within this cultural setting.[1]

THEOLOGY AND CULTURE

A difference between cultures marks the starting point of Jon Sobrino's analysis where he contrasts "European Theology" and "Latin American Theology."[2] On the basic question, "Why do theology"? both "European" and "Latin American" theology would agree that theology is concerned with mediating between people's faith and their culture. The word "faith" can mean both the personal commitment of believers--the act of faith--and the beliefs to which they are committed--doctrines expressed in particular theological languages. The language in which the beliefs are expressed is, of course, related to culture. From the "European" perspective the problem is that the accepted beliefs may come under attack to such a degree that many no longer may find them credible[3] and reject the belief system. The critical issue to be addressed is this threatened, or actual, fracturing of the belief system and consequent unbelief. The task of theology is to sustain the belief system, for example by showing that Christian beliefs, although not reducible to reason, are supremely reasonable. Further, if the belief system is discarded, it cannot provide a coherent pattern giving meaning to people's lives. Hence, theology's task includes providing such a coherent meaning for life.

For "Latin American" theology, the problem is different. In this case the basic threat is not the fracturing of meaning patterns, but the real and actual fracturing of human persons and communities by hunger, oppression and captivity.[4] This theology has its starting point, not in the threat to meaning, but in the actual destruction brought about by the structures of the society which are condemned as "sinful."[5] The question which theology must ask is not how this interpretation of sin can be aligned with the interpretations of sin provided by the Scriptures and Church doctrine, and thus integrated in a coherent system of meaning. Rather, the task of theology is to identify the presence of sin and to ask how to be rid of it, that is, how to contribute to changing the situation. As Sobrino expresses it, the task of theology is ". . . to transform this real world and at the same time recover the meaning of faith."[6]

Ethical concern has a key place in this conception of theology. In the first place, an ethical judgment is involved in interpreting a given situation as sinful. A further ethical question is to be asked in inquiring why one does theology and what happens when theology is conducted in a particular way? If the motive for doing theology is basically to provide a coherent pattern of meaning for human persons and communities living in a certain situation, the status quo of that

situation remains unchanged and, at least indirectly, justified.[7] Theology of the "European" type would be prone to do precisely this.

Whatever view one takes as to the role of theology, it is clear that it involves a mediation between faith and interpretations of the existing cultural and historical realities. In this discussion, I propose to focus on some of the interpretations of the situation of Central America which have been presented in the preceding chapters.[8] In particular, I will focus upon the following: distorted power relationships, distorted communication, and the corrosive attack on persons and society. As we have seen in Chapters VI and VII, literature interprets the response to this "wasteland" situation by asking how to regain one's country and oneself by processing through language what one has been suffering. The goals formulated are: to improve reality by shaping it through *justice* to liberate people from economic and political oppression. The task is that of a prophet carrying on a critique of society and of a soothsayer pointing to the future and initiating change. The criterion for a good interpretation (in literature) is the opening of possibilities for freedom, responsibility and a fuller living. A bad interpretation, in turn, is one which deadens and diminishes these possibilities.

There is a moral element in these proposals which theology must seek to grasp and interpret within its own perspective. For example, it should focus on distorted power relationships and formulate goals in terms of justice and/or liberation, taking as criteria the possibilities for more complete freedom and richer living revealed in the Christian message. Specifically, in its moral perspective, theology would focus upon violence in its structural and actual forms, the abuse of human rights, the deaths, and the external ideological, economic and military pressures which threaten to destroy effective resolution of the problems. Given these realities, how are we to go about formulating a theological response?

SUFFERING: THE BASIC EXPERIENCE

The formulation of a theological response is subject to the same difficulty as that encountered in the sphere of culture in general. In the latter case the problem is, "how to produce a cultural discourse where the language of the community has been repressed and perverted?" It is suggested that the recovery is to be found in and through the experience of Christian suffering. Similarly, the problem would be how to find an adequate theological discourse in a context where this also is subject to perversion.

It may be that suffering itself provides one human reality, at least, which has trans-cultural significance.[9] It is not the brute reality of the injury itself which is of primary significance, rather the historical reality of suffering presents the inner state of the one who suffers. It is not merely a physical reality, for to suffer, a person must think, that is, interpret the experience. As a human reality, suffering is, then, culturally conditioned. Nevertheless, suffering as an inner state is expressed or interpreted, on a first level, in the physical, bodily signs of pain.[10] The inner human meaning, shaped by a particular culture, is expressed through bodily signs which have meaning across cultural differences. The original protest against suffering is expressed in the signs evident in the faces and bodies of those suffering.[11] Because such interpretations mesh so closely with our own bodily experience--the only experience which itself is unmediated--the experience of suffering is uniquely communicable. Thus, its bodily reality is the base against which any other interpretation can be tested for truth.

Suffering as a Privileged Source of Knowledge

Thus the reality of suffering to which the literature points might also be the reality with which theological interpretation could begin. It is a basic conviction of liberation theologians that those who suffer have a special insight into the truth of human affairs and indeed into the truth of the Gospel itself. Gustavo Gutierrez describes the backbone of liberation theology as consisting of two fundamental insights. The first is the theological method of critical reflection from within praxis. The second is the decision to work from the perspective of the poor.[12]

Jon Sobrino holds that one could find today within the Church of the poor a "better"--though by no means unique-channel for the experience of God. He does not claim that all the poor or all the individuals in the Church of the poor have the same experience, nor that their interpretation of their experience is somehow protected or insured against error. Nor is it claimed that all the poor have special insight or that the experience of poverty provides an infallible way of knowing.[13] But there is a conviction among liberation theologians that those who suffer want, oppression and estrangement have open to them a privileged way to an understanding of life and human purposes.

For some theologians--I will take Leonardo Boff as a representative--the encounter with the suffering ones is the primary and essential starting point of theological reflection. There is an implicit epistemology of ethical-religious knowledge in this conception of liberation theology for which he cites a statement from the Puebla Final Document:

Viewing it in the light of faith, we can see the growing gap between rich and poor as a scandal and a contradiction to Christian existence. The luxury of a few becomes an insult to the wretched poverty of the masses. This is contrary to the plan of the creator and the honor due to him.[14]

The starting point is an experience of misery, heightened by contrast, which gives rise to the protest expressed in such terms as, "This cannot be; this is not pleasing to God." Stirred by the protest, the Christian conscience is moved to act.[15] A call to religious, ethical and social action is demanded by the faith itself.[16]

Suffering: a Theological Question

This analysis is similar to that proposed by some European theologians who have developed the notion of the "experience of contrast."[17] The contrast between the reality of misery and one's awareness of the positive values which are being violated provokes a fundamental protest which leads to a theological question and to ethical questions. The theological question is some form of "theodicy" issue of how God is implicated, if at all, in this suffering and misery. At least two kinds of answers which could be given. The first attempts to integrate the reality of suffering into a theological framework to show that it does not fracture the religious meaning system, but is contained within it. This approach has obvious affinity with the so-called "European" perspective discussed earlier, and like it could tend to justify the situation which causes the suffering. The second approach takes a different route. Some theologians argue that suffering cannot be legitimated or rendered meaningful by integrating it into a theological system. Thus, it cannot be justified by appeals to "the will of God" or by a later act of God which will set everything right, for example, by the reward of a better life in heaven. Rather, God does not will suffering in any way, but is acting to overcome suffering.[18] Such an interpretation exposes suffering and misery as things to be challenged and overcome; at the same time this provides a theological foundation

for action aimed at removing the causes of suffering. Engagement in overcoming suffering is to act as God is acting.

An illustration of what this could mean in the practical context of Central America can be found in a novel by Manlio Argueta, entitled *One Day of Life*.[19] At the end of the day, one woman describes a discovery: "For me, everything was part of nature. He who is, is. Everyone carries his own destiny. I used to believe in those things. If one is poor, well, that's life. What are we going to do if God didn't reward us with a better life?"[20] Now she has moved beyond this, and has discovered the meaning of conscience: "Conscience . . . is to sacrifice oneself for those who are exploited."

Suffering: Ethical Questions

Together with the theological question we must raise more specific ethical questions. It will be recalled that Boff's starting point was the experience of misery and oppression with an ethical protest against the growing gap between the rich and poor. This is judged to be an insult and contrary to the will of God. However, in Boff's account, there is no ethical analysis of this explicitly in terms of justice or rights. This point bears some investigation. Sobrino gives specific attention to the promotion of justice.[21] His thesis is that justice is an essential requirement of the Gospel message. Justice is a form of love which is validated, not only by the fact that Jesus practiced it, but also by certain internal characteristics. These characteristics indicate the consonance of the practice of justice with the message of the Gospel as a whole.[22] The characteristics are discovered not merely by an analysis of the concept of justice, but by observation of its actual practice.[23] This points to the following characteristics:

(1) justice takes seriously the existence of oppressed majorities;

(2) the reality of injustice and oppression are revealed as the most radical denial of God's will through the destruction of the created order and the death of human beings.

(3) when faced with these negations, justice tries to give life;

(4) justice urges the adoption of a partisan perspective, namely that of the weak, the poor and the oppressed;

(5) justice thus fosters solidarity with the poor and oppressed; and

(6) the practice of justice often leads to personal conversion.[24]

"Justice" is used here in a broad sense; injustice is identified in such violations as killing and oppression. As Sobrino's work is concerned with fundamental theological issues, it would be unreasonable to require a detailed ethical analysis of justice and injustice. Killing, impoverishment and oppression would be spontaneously identified by morally concerned persons as injustice. Yet there would seem to be place for a more specific analysis of injustice if such spontaneous responses are to be ethically focused and if they are to lead to more specific moral imperatives. I am not arguing that specific imperatives can be derived from the analysis of an abstract concept of justice; Sobrino would rightly reject this. But if justice is practiced in engagement for the oppressed, it is both legitimate and necessary to seek to discern the form and structure of that practice by reason of which we call it "justice," for only if we can establish clearly what counts as justice can we also discern that which is contrary to justice.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

Granted that oppression, suffering and dependence involve violations of justice and rights, how is this to be explained? Three ways of thinking about justice and rights are to be considered: (a) that developed in liberation theology; (b) the theories of justice and rights developed in our culture, within the liberal tradition; and (c) the conceptions of justice and rights within the social teaching of the Church. A critical comparison of these three approaches will show the key importance of the cultural factor in our understanding of justice and rights.

Liberation Theology

It is somewhat surprising to a reader from the "first world" that the literature on liberation theology makes infrequent appeal to the rights language which has become the typical language of protest in Western culture, and only relatively rarely appeals to the doctrine on human rights of official Roman Catholic social teaching.

I would argue that this is not merely an accident in the sense that the authors who propose and defend liberation theology simply have not yet gotten around to incorporating rights language in their thought. Rather I propose that there is a quite definite reason for what seems, from my perspective, to be a strange neglect. My suggestion is this: neither the rights language so familiar in our culture nor the social teaching of the Church can cope adequately with *distorted power relationships,* whereas this is precisely the problem which liberation theology seeks to address. I will now illustrate, from the writings of some theologians of liberation, these two points: (1) the centrality of the problem of power relationships, and (2) the absence of a developed ethical analysis of justice and rights.

In Boff's account the experience of contrast provokes "ethical indignation."[25] Such indignation or protest presupposes some positive awareness of the values being violated, otherwise it would be impossible for one to experience contrast. At this point, where one would anticipate some reference to the values of justice, no such reference is made. Though justice is mentioned quite frequently, it is usually in a rather general sense. Thus, for example, Boff explains how, in contact with the exploited social class of the poor, a person experiences a genuine encounter with the Lord and makes a commitment to justice, identified as the prime characteristic of the Kingdom of God.[26] The epistemology of "this new discourse on faith," as Boff describes it, is concerned with the correct articulation of connections between faith and social conflicts, or salvation and historical liberation.[27] It is noteworthy that the connection is to be made immediately between faith and social conflict. There does not seem to be any need, in this discourse, for an ethical analysis in terms of justice and rights, which might mediate between faith and social reality.

In Gustavo Gutierrez's major work, no particular importance is attached to detailed analyses of justice and rights. When the word "justice" is used, it has the broad meaning of "righteousness" or is given more specific content drawn from the Scriptures--for example, not keeping back the wages of the poor, not oppressing the alien, the orphan and the widow.[28] The basic ethical issue is identified as one of conflict arising out of oppression and the striving for liberation;[29] the fundamental issue is control and dependency.[30] What was wrong with the developmental proposals of the past was that they were to be achieved within the existing structures of power without challenging them.[31] What is called for is a break with the status quo, that is, a profound change of the private property system, access to power by the exploited class, and a social revolution that would break the structure of dependence and thus allow for the change to a new society.[32] Together with this goes a tragic and conflictual picture of reality

which, Gutiérrez argues, is not sufficiently acknowledged in such official Church documents as *Gaudium et Spes* and *Populorum Progressio*.[33]

In his *Ethics and the Theology of Liberation*, Enrique Dussel bases his analysis on dependence, domination or exclusion from the center, by which is meant the center of power.[34] In his later work, this author again focuses on the realities of dependence and oppression. He poses the question whether it is even possible to philosophize in a dependent culture.[35] The answer might seem to be negative, since a dominating culture is one in which the ideology of the dominator has been adopted by the dominated, that is the colonized. However, there is another possibility, namely, that philosophical discourse take another point of departure, specifically from the opposition, the contrast or, as Dussel expresses it, the dissymetry between the polarities of center/periphery, dominator/dominated, totality/exteriority.[36] From this starting point he maps out a pattern of thinking in which politics introduces ethics, which then introduces philosophy.[37] But, he does not find it necessary or appropriate to articulate the ethics in terms of justice or rights.

The notion of justice receives explicit treatment in José Míguez Bonino's *Towards a Christian Political Ethics*.[38] However, Bonino is concerned first of all with what he calls a "theological determination of priorities." He criticizes Christian tradition with having given first place to order, or more precisely peace considered as order, in preference to justice.[39] In Bonino's view, the requirements of justice must take priority over social and political order. Justice means "the right of the poor." Thus, the criterion of right government is the rights of the poor. This interpretation of justice is justified by direct appeal to the Scriptures and to some of the early Fathers.[40] The notion of justice here would seem to have a close affinity with "the preferential option for the poor" which is fundamental to liberation theology.[41] However, I think it is still true to say that where one would expect to find a developed ethics of justice and rights, these are absent.[42] I will now examine two traditions which might be called upon to fill this gap.

Rights in the Liberal Tradition.

The notion of rights has been developed in relationship with freedom. According to Wilhelm Weber, the idea of freedom which emerged from the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution began as an abstract idea of equal rights for all. As this proved too general, it could not be made operational and there arose two clearly divergent responses; on the one hand, that to advocate equal rights for all without changing the social and economic order was to promote a mere abstraction, and therefore what was required was precisely a change in the social and economic order; on the other, that any proposal to organize such a change of the social and economic order would be a threat to the rights of individuals which were held paramount. There thus emerged two profoundly different ideologies of freedom in the politics of the 19th and 20th centuries which have continued to the present. One is concerned with the generality, with the freedom of the totality. The other is concerned with the freedom of the individual and resistant to any notion of subsuming the individual under the totality.[43]

From this historical division have emerged three basic conceptions. One takes its stand on the freedom of the individual and has as its central affirmation civil and political rights. This is the tradition of liberal democracy and the Western cultural tradition. The second affirms the centrality of social and economic rights, and has an affinity with the Marxist position. Christian social ethics, at least as articulated by some representatives from the first world, has proposed a "third way," in which civic and political rights are upheld, together with social and economic

rights.[44] The social teaching of the (Roman Catholic) Church has proposed its own version of such a third way.[45]

In the Marxist view the rights claimed in the liberal tradition are those of the dominant members of a bourgeois civil society: they are those of egoistic persons separated from others and from the community. It is a question of preserving the liberty of the ego regarded as an isolated monad withdrawn into oneself. Thus, eagerness to preserve human rights is simply a mask for the love of money, property and bourgeois dominance. Only the communist society can guarantee the rights of man, namely, the rights to produce, to technical education which aids human mastery over human destiny, and to participate in the building of a new society. These are set forth as goals and guides for the State and for State bureaucratic authorities. The individual has rights only as a member of the socialist society, controlled in principle by the working class. This, in turn, guides the actions of the state and requires of the state active protection of all social rights. The individual has proper claims against bureaucratic structures when the structures prevent full participation in the socialist civil society.[46]

It might be suggested, then, that the reticence in using the language of justice and rights is part and parcel of the assumption of Marxist categories by liberation theology.[47] Such an answer would be an oversimplification. I would suggest that an examination of representative theories of justice and rights in the liberal tradition manifests the source of difficulty. In John Rawls's theory of justice, for example, individual liberty has priority.[48] Rawls's second principle, however, states that social and economic equalities are to be arranged so that they are both to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged and attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair opportunity.[49] Rawls's theory thus includes what might be called a type of "preference for the poor."

A trade off between individual liberty and other social goods would be permissible in certain social conditions, if it is necessary to raise the level of civilization to the point where basic needs have been generally met.[50] If an actual historical situation were such that the conditions did not allow the effective realization of equal liberties, then Rawls's theory could rationally justify restrictions on liberty. But this would seem to be of little help when what is required is a radical transformation of the social conditions distorted by oppressive power structures.[51] What is needed is not an abstract theory, but a conception of justice which can guide the transformation in actual historical circumstances.

The proprietarian theory of Robert Nozick is summed up in the slogan "From each as they choose, to each as they are chosen."[52] His position could sanction a system in which the wealthy and their successors could maintain economic and legal privileges indefinitely and in which the less well off are caught in an endless cycle of relative deprivation. Other authors, such as Alan Gewirth develop a theory of rights by a closely reasoned analysis of the necessary conditions of human action, but do not seem to consider situations where actions, in concrete history, may be suppressed by distorted power relationships.[53] It would seem clear that such theories of rights and justice are culture bound and inadequate to interpret the oppression and dependence of Central America or of Latin America as a whole.

The Social Teaching of the Church

The official statements of Church teaching in this area strongly defend a wide range of fundamental human rights.[54] It is not being suggested that liberation theologians would ignore these rights. However, there are differences which may account for the absence of extensive

reference to the social teaching of the Church in the work of liberation theologians. For some, at least, there is a dichotomy between liberation theology and the social teaching of the Church. The "Instruction on Certain Aspects of the `Theology of Liberation'," for example, presumes that there are sharp differences.[55] The relationship between liberation theology and the social teachings of the Church calls for a more thorough treatment than I can provide here. However, there are reasons for thinking that one source of difficulty is cultural. A number of authors, among which Marie Dominique Chenu is one of the most forthright,[56] have challenged the social teaching of the Church as having an ideological character. If so, the theologies of liberation would not be constructed on the basis of this social doctrine.[57] Josef Ratzinger, in an earlier article, also criticized an ideological element in Catholic social doctrine.[58] More recently Werner Kroh objected to its three level model[59] where theological doctrine stands on the top, a separate and distinct social teaching structured in terms of the "natural law" on the next level, and practical implementation on a third. It is argued that the "natural law" component contains particular cultural features drawn in the main from Europe, which are given the status of the "natural" and thus assume a fixed, ideological character. Insofar as these alien but absolutized cultural elements are included within the natural law component of this teaching, theologians of liberation would justifiably have reservations about its applicability to their situation. Furthermore, the assumption of basic order and harmony and the consequent hesitation to accept the conflictual character of human reality, which has marked such teaching, might well be seen as not appropriate to a situation calling for the radical change of power relationships.[60]

There is reason then to suggest that both the rights theories from the liberal tradition and the social teaching of the Church contain elements which make it difficult for them to deal with a situation of distorted power relationships, such as that of Central America.

Granted these real shortcomings in the available theories of rights and justice, I would argue nevertheless that there is need for a more explicitly developed theory of justice within liberation theology as it has been developed in Latin America. For example, we need to be able to say explicitly why the increasing gap between rich and poor and why a condition of imposed dependency is wrong. Unless these points can be explained, moral norms cannot be formed for the action required to change the situation. Such a change, most would agree, is precisely what ought to be sought in Central America.[61]

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NOTES

1. Jon Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984). Jon Sobrino, a Jesuit Priest, is a professor of philosophy and theology at the Universidad José Simeón Cañas, El Salvador.

2. *Ibid*., p. 14. The analysis is carried on in terms similar to those discussed at length in the paper by Dr. Balthazar.

3. *Ibid*., p. 13. "Myth" here is used in the sense of the fanciful, untrue.

4. *Ibid*., p. 17.

5. *Ibid*., p. 16.

6. *Ibid*., p. 20.

7. *Ibid*., p. 20. On methodological issues, see especially the volume of papers from the conference on theological method:*Liberación y Cautiverio: Debates en torno al método de la teología en América Latina* (Mexico City: Comité Organizador, 1975), cited in Roger Haight, S.J., *An Alternative Vision: An Interpretation of Liberation Theology* (New York: Mahwah, 1985), p. 302, note 12; Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*, trans. and ed. by Sr. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), pp. 45, 36-37, 149-178; Juan Luis Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, trans. by John Drury (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976).

8. In this I must acknowledge my debt to several of the earlier contributions to this volume. The way in which these have been interpreted is, of course, the responsibility of this author.

9. The proposal is that of Ernesto Cardenal. See chapter Vii by Roberto Hozven above.

10. Cf. Rodney Needham, *Belief, Language and Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 140.

11. Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, ed. by G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von Wright, trans. by G.E.M. Anscombe (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), no. 225. "We do not see facial contortions and make inferences from them. . . . We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored, even when we are unable to give any description of the features.--Grief, one would like to say, is personified in the face."

12. Gustavo Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History* trans. by Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1983), p. 200. "As a result the poor appear within this theology as the key to an understanding of the meaning of liberation and of the meaning of the revelation of a liberating God."

13. Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, pp. 127-128.

14. Puebla 28/128, cited in Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, *Salvation and Liberation: In Search of a Balance Between Faith and Politics* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984), p. 3.

15. *Ibid*.

16. *Ibid*., p. 5. Boff goes on to speak of three "mediations." The first is socio-analytical, by which we acquire a critical knowledge of reality, freed from naiveté, empiricism and moralism. The second is "hermeneutical mediation." Prophetic cries unleash action, but fail to modify reality and are not guaranteed to be correct interpretations of reality in the light of faith. Finally, it is necessary to seek out viable strategies for the liberation of the poor, within the framework of religious, political, military, ideological and economic forces. This is what he calls the mediation of pastoral practice. These have been explained in chapter IX by Dr. Balthazar above.

17. On the contrast experience see Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., "Questions on Christian Salvation of and for Man," in*Towards Vatican III: The Work That Needs to Be Done*, ed. David Tracy, et al. (New York: Seabury, Concilium, 1978); pp. 27-44; "Erfahrung und Glaube," in *Christliche Glaube in moderner Gesellschaft*, Vol. 25 of *Enzyklopadische Bibliothek*, ed. Franz Bökle, et al. (Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1981), 74-116; E. Schilebeeckx, *Christ: the Experience of Jesus as Lord*(New York: Crossroad, 1981); "Christian Identity and Human Integrity," in *Is Being Human a Criterion of Being Christian*?, Jean-Pierre Jossua and Claude Geffré, eds. (New York: Seabury, *Concilium*, 1982), pp. 23-31.

18. Cf. Schillebeeckx, *Christ*, p. 727.

19. Manlio Argueta, *One Day of Life*, trans. by Bill Brow (New York: Vintage Books, 1983). The novel is set in El Salvador.

20. *Ibid*., p. 171.

21. *The True Church and the Poor*, pp. 39-63.

22. *Ibid*., p. 50.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid*., p. 51.

25. Boff, *Salvation and Liberation,* p. 15.

26. *Ibid*., p. 25.

27. *Ibid*., p. 29.

28. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation,* pp. 194-5.

29. "Concretely in Latin America this conflict revolves around the oppression-liberation axis." *Ibid*., p. 36.

30. For a detailed exposition of the situation of control and dependency, see chapter V by Marta Julia Cox and Frederico Sanz above.

31. Guttierrez, *A Theology of Liberation,* p. 26.

32. *Ibid*., pp. 26-27.

33. *Ibid*., p. 34.

34. Enrique Dussel, *Ethics and the Theology of Liberation,* tr. by Bernard McWilliams, C.SS.R. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1974), pp. 166, 175.

35. Enrique Dussell, *Philosophy of Liberation,* trans. by Aquilina Martinez and Christine Morkovsky (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis), p. 172.

36. *Ibid*., p. 172.

37. *Ibid*., p. 173.

38. José Míguez Bonino, *Towards a Christian Political Ethics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), pp. 79-86.

39. He sums up what he calls the "Augustinian" view. "The premise of Augustine's position in these cases is quite clear--peace understood as order. Society is an organism that must function harmoniously. The chief purpose of societal organization is the suppression of conflict and tumult. Changes, or the respect for personal freedom or for justice, might endanger that order. Whenever an alternative emerges, therefore, the Christian ought to work for the best possible solution, the most just and generous one, *short of endangering the existing order*." *Ibid*., p. 83. This is surely a questionable interpretation of Augustine.

40. *Ibid*., p. 86. In the short work being discussed here these justifications are not developed at any length.

41. On this concept and its modification at Puebla to "preferential option for the poor and the young," see Juan Luis Segundo,*Theology and the Church* (Minneapolis, MN.: Winston Press, A Seabury Book, 1985), p. 41.

42. It is interesting to refer at this point to the "political theology" developed by Johannes Baptist Metz. This has some similarities with, and some differences from, liberation theology. Metz once defined "political theology" as "the specifically Christian hermeneutics of political ethics as an ethics of change." Johann Baptist Metz, "`Politische Theologie', in der Diskussion," in *Diskussion zur `politischen Theologie'*, ed. Helmut Peukirt (Mainz and Munich: Kaiser and Matthias Grünewald, 1969), p. 282. However, Metz to my knowledge has not developed this political ethic of change, and has not invoked a developed theory of justice and rights to this end.

43. Cf. Wilhelm Weber, "Die Katholischen Sozialethik vor dem Problem der Unbewaltigten Freiheit in der Gesellschaft," in*Ordnung im sozialen Wandeln,* ed. Alfred Klose et al. (Berlin: Dunker and Humbolt, 1976), pp. 215-229.

44. Cf. Jurgen Moltmann, *On Human Dignity: Political Theology and Ethics,* trans. with an introduction by M. Douglas Meeks (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 19-35; Cf. David

Hollenbach, *Retrieving and Renewing the Catholic Human Rights Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 141.

45. See Marie-Dominique Chenu, O.P., *La "doctrine sociale de l'église" comme ideologie* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1979), p. 93.

46. Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question*, in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3 (1975), pp. 162-163. See Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Bd. I (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1972), pp. 363-365. Cf. Max Stackhouse, *Creeds, Societies and Human Rights: Studies in Three Cultures* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), pp. 167-198.

47. The uncritical adoption of Marxist "analysis" was one of the charges brought against some theologians of liberation by the *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation,"* (VII). This, it is said, leads to a radical questioning of ethics and an implicit denial of the distinction between good and evil (VIII, 9). The document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is published in *Origins*, 14 (1984), 194-204.

48. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1971).

49. *Ibid*., p. 302.

50. *Ibid*., p. 152. Rawls writes, "The denial of equal liberty can be defended only if it is necessary to raise the level of civilization so that in due course these freedoms can be enjoyed. Thus, in adopting a serial order we are making a special assumption in the original position, namely, that the parties know that the conditions of their society, whatever they are, admit the effective realization of the equal liberties." Cf. p. 542.

51. See Hollenbach, *Claims in Conflict* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 19, for a critique of Rawls.

52. Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), p. 160.

53. Alan Gewirth, *Human Rights: Essays on Justification and Applications* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

54. For an excellent account of this teaching see Hollenbach, *Retrieving and Renewing the Catholic Human Rights Tradition*.

55. See X. 4; "For the `theologies of liberation', however, the social doctrine of the church is rejected with disdain. It is said that it comes from the illusion of a possible compromise, typical of the middle class, which has no historic destiny." The opposition between the two was made clear, for example, at the Assembly of the German Bishops in September, 1984, on the theme "The Social Teaching of the Church, or The Theology of Liberation." See Hansjurgen Verweyn, "Ekklesiologie der Befreung," *Theologische Revue*, 8l (1952), 89-98.

56. Chenu, *La "doctrine sociale de l'église" comme ide- ologie*, pp. 57, 89. Chenu recognizes the validity of the term "social doctrine" in a general sense, namely as an expression of the belief that the Gospel includes "consubstantially," besides personal perfection, a collective, social engagement in the construction of the world and the promotion of humanity. What he challenges is a "social doctrine" which proposed a set of abstract general principles, founded on an interpretation of the natural law, from which applications were to be deduced for all situations. This approach passed by the historical realities of different social and political situations.

57. *Ibid*., p. 93. The term has been revived by Pope John Paul II. He has used the term on a number of occasions, particularly in reference to Latin America. It is used to express "a correct Christian idea of liberation." [Puebla Speech, III, 6] See Peter Hebblethwaite, "The Popes and Politics: Shifting Patterns in `Catholic Social Doctrine'," *Daedalus*, III: 1 (1982), 85-99, esp. 93.

58. Joseph Ratzinger, "Naturrecht, Evangelium und Ideologie in der katholischen Soziallehre, Katholische Erwägungen zum Thema," in *Christlicher Glaube und Ideologie*, ed. by K. von Bismark and W. Dirks (Stuttgart, Berlin: 1964), pp. 24-30.

59. Werner Kroh, *Kirche im Gesellschaftlichen Widerspruch* (Munich: Kosel Verlag, 1982), pp. 140, 201.

60. More recent official statements of the social teaching of the Church recognize the element of conflict more clearly. The*Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation*" recognizes "The acute need for radical reforms of the structures which conceal poverty and which are themselves forms of violence . . . " (XI. 8). It then qualifies the statement by recalling that this should not let us lose sight of the fact that the source of injustice is in the hearts of men. Gutierrez had made the same point; see *A Theology of Liberation*, p. 35.

DISCUSSION OF RELATED ISSUES IN
LIBERATION PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Alternatives to Liberation Philosophy and Theology

The liberal human rights tradition seems surprisingly absent from the works of liberation theologians. A number of reasons have been cited for this. Some would suggest that a simplistic and extreme view of the liberal tradition, as typified by Adam Smith and Milton Freedman, discouraged those who elaborated upon the liberation themes from looking into the liberal tradition. Modifications of this tradition through the long socialist-liberal dialogue generally has not been taken into account--though admittedly recent political leadership in many countries often has been strongly conservative.

More fundamentally, it would appear that the basic individualism of the liberal tradition makes it alien to the sense of community in Latin American cultures, ideological in its articulation, and hence perceived as being, not only accidentally, but essentially exploitive and oppressive. Seen in this light such an approach would be fundamentally undesirable, even with social compromise or attenuation.

Further, the liberal mode of appealing to rights appears to reflect the long Platonic and idealistic tradition of depreciating the concrete in favor of the abstract. Thus, it tends to be fascinated with the development of the economy as a system and with the rights of those at its power center, while being insensitive to the concrete needs of those on its margins. Typically, it emphasizes the right of private property rather than the right to work, which is seen only in function of private production.

Finally, it supposes a situation of basic order and sufficiency. While Rawls would admit a suspension of some freedom and social goods until basic needs are attained, his system is directed, not to the concrete situation and *a fortiori* not to a situation of systemic disorder, but to the abstract articulation of a set of rules to which all would agree. In contrast, where the emphasis of liberation theology is upon the destruction of the structures of oppression, it seems inopportune for it to speak of rights as these are appealed to by those in power in order to impede the process of confrontation and change.

Earlier chapters on history and literature have already noted: (a) that early liberalism was only a veneer in Central America for administration by elite families and was accompanied by considerable disdain for the human dignity of the Indians and the poor; and (b) that the speech pattern is not one of free expression, but of personal persuasion to the correctness of the speaker's view.

The social doctrine of the Church is not, as suggested by J.M. Bonino, determined by concern for order and stability. This belies the multiple dimensions both of its theological resources and of the history of its way of acting in the world. Nonetheless, this same history is not without instances of alliance between conservative and religious leaders and of ideological manipulation of religion. Hence, attention to hermeneutic procedures is important in order to assure new and progressive applications of the religious heritage. These must include taking adequate account, not only of the transcendent elements of natural law, but of the concrete and changing situation, including its distortions (see Chapter I).

One essential contribution which the social doctrine of the Church could make to liberation theology would be to broaden its reading of the Gospel message in order to add not only to issues of justice and rights, but the dimensions of love and reconciliation. Without these, change could be simply a cyclical series of egoistic self-assertions by those out of power against those who are in power in an increasing spiral of violence.

Further, these religious values must not only be traced to Scriptures written by an alien culture, but be rooted in the culture(s) of the people if they are to be deeply appreciated and authentically lived. This attention to the roots of popular religiosity presently appears to be a major source of new life for Latin America, especially where the technical rationality of ideological structures carries the danger of rendering some liberation analysis deadeningly repetitive.

Sources of Liberation Philosophy and Theology

Beyond the meeting of the Latin American Bishops at Medellin in 1968, one might trace liberation theology back to theologians in Europe, especially in France and the Low Countries. Joseph Comblin was a major architect of the vision articulated in the Medellin documents, and many of the Latin American theologians were trained at the University of Louvain in Belgium. There the pressing concern of the post World War II period was the evangelization of a "de-Christianized" and heavily Marxist--working class. Thus, the context of their theology was the Marxist analysis of the situation of the working class.

To this should be added the currents of German phenomenology leading from Heidegger (*Being in Time*), through Rahner (*The Spirit in the World*), to the key Vatican II document, "The Church in the World." Such writings provided the crucial ingredients for the formulation of a theology in terms of praxis. The earlier focus upon a socio-economic analysis of reality along Marxian lines and at the level of technical rationality contrasts to this phenomenological attention to popular culture, values and religiosity which more recently has become increasingly predominant.

Liberation Philosophy and Theology as Process

Praxis and social analysis as the point of departure. In liberation philosophy and theology the point of departure is not Scripture, dogma or a transcendent metaphysics, but the lived situation of the people. All must be understood in terms of this lived reality; discourse must never stray from it. Where the key metaphysical supposition about the nature and limits of reality is a materialist ideology which reduces reality to the material and at the same time rejects metaphysics, self-criticism and the acceptance of criticism--or even of alternate views--is rendered impossible precisely where they might touch issues of fundamental philosophical and theological importance. This is the ideological trap. The phenomenological corrective focuses no less upon the concrete, but with a broader sensibility to the character of the person in the community as has begun to be recognized as essential even--or especially--by Gorbachev for areas impacted by Marxist ideologies.

Political rights are real only if operational. They can be so only if they have an adequate economic and educational base. Thus, the exercise of political rights are limited for a citizenry without education and literacy. It is necessary, therefore, to begin with the real conditions of the life of the people. These conditions must be evaluated in terms of their history which, in turn, is

specific to each part of the world and each nation. Marxist analysis would reduce this to the story of relations between people in the production and distribution of goods, and hence in the formation and interrelation of classes. Thus, critical theory focuses upon distorted power relationships and the distorted psychology of a people and their social behavior. This date, however, is not simply factual, but reflects especially a socio-economic analysis of the situation which, in turn, inevitably is mediated by social theory. Here there is danger in supposing that we are simply describing or at most criticizing a situation that has been read objectively without recognizing that the analysis itself includes multiple suppositions. It is crucial that the philosophy and theology recognize this for only then will they be in position to transcend the reductivists ideologies of left and right and reflect notions of person, community which are no less rich than the cultural traditions of their peoples.

Suffering. Although persons from outside the situation might have difficulty perceiving its nature, suffering is a point of privileged access, even across cultures. This is due to the fact that it is concrete and often physically manifest; it unveils one's essential social, political and bodily limits; and it remains when one can no longer sublimate.

At the same time, suffering is not merely physical, for to suffer one must think and this inner state of the one who suffers is of primary significance. Suffering, therefore, is culturally conditioned, and this contributes to its importance when what is sought is not "objective facts" but the human meaning of the situation of a person or people.

On the other hand, one of the major efforts related to liberation philosophy and theology is its process of "conscientization" or of actively promoting the development of an awareness of the situation. If that process is carried on in terms of an ideologically oriented social analysis, as noted in the previous section, then suffering which reflects the resultant inner state would mirror also the ideology of the sufferer in its conjunction with the external circumstances.

Mediation. The three levels of interpretation cited by Dr. Baltazar concerned reading all human activity and social conflicts in terms of the gospel and of salvation history. Dr. Johnstone noted the immediate connections between faith and social conflict, salvation and historical liberation, and that these were not mediated by the liberal notion of justice or the language of rights as a guide in the application of the motive force of ethical indignation.

Some would see this as indicating a reductionist approach to faith as being no more than socio-economic history. Others would suggest that this is due to the fact that the social analysis was not an objective descriptive, but was already ideologized in terms of a Marxist materialist ideology. In this light judgments of justice and injustice not only would already be included in the analysis, but would be closed to any other analysis, reflection or mediation. Hence, it would remain only to restate this in terms of the Gospel as a stirring symbolism; its mediation to action would be merely the execution of what the dialectic legislates. This is not, at least, the intent of liberation theologians.

It is important to note that by beginning from an interpretation, which is at the same time a critique, one is in a hermeneutic circle, and therefore in absolute need of dialogue for self-critique and correction. This is especially true of liberation philosophies and theologies due to the Marxist ideological character of its initial social analysis.

Goals of Liberation Philosophy and Theology

Some consider that the methodology of liberation theology politicizes the Gospel in the service of goals which are less ample and less spiritual, and which are conducive to violent confrontation after the manner of the materialist dialectic. Its focus would be then upon the alienating and conflicting claims of injustice, rather than upon reconciliation in the Gospel spirit of love and mutual concern.

Others consider the attention to the political to be a needed and important corrective to a theology and to a reading of the Gospel which had divorced unrealistically the life of Jesus from the intense political currents of his time and rendered the Gospel irrelevant to the concrete needs of persons living in time.

Still others feel that the political dimension obscures what is really taking place in liberation theology, namely, a search for dignity in terms of a search for divinity, rather than for rights. This is carried out as a narrative theology similar to the Hebraic interpretation of their own history as the story of God's providence. In these terms, liberation theology is neither merely stimulated from without nor an arrogant claim to hold the sole truth. Rather, it is the people's own autobiography, a projection of their own experience on ever broader and more inclusive levels: psychological, economic, political and cultural.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following publishers have generously permitted quotation from their published works: Farrar, Straus & Giroux: Pablo Neruda, *Toward the Splendid City*; *The Journal of Contemporary Studies:* Pablo Antonio Cuadra, "1984" and Octavio Paz, "Dialogue, Democracy and Peace in Central America"; New Directions: Ernesto Cardenal, *Apocalypse and Other Poems,* and *Zero Hour;* Orbis Press: Teofilo Cabestrero, *Ministers of God, Ministers of the People*, Dom Helder Camara, *Hoping Against Hope*, Ernesto Cardenal, *Flights of Victory* and *The Gospel in Solentiname*, and Leonardo and Clodovus Boff, *Salvation and Liberation*; Pulp Press: Carlos Fuentes, *A Fist and the Letter*; University of Pittsburgh Press: Claribel Alegria, *Flowers from the Volcano*; *Vuelta*: Pablo Antonio Cuadra, "In Defiance of Censorship."

Deep admiration and appreciation are due especially to the scholars whose work constitutes this volume for their generous gift of professional competency, extensive time and intensive effort. In this they exemplify the profound mututal concern needed between the peoples of the Americas--north, central and south--in these times of confusion and great suffering.

Appreciation is extended also to Mrs. B. Kennedy for her work in preparing the seminar and manuscript, and to the James A. McLeans for their continued support in this effort.