Cityscapes
Latin America and Beyond
Latin American Cities

The Legacy of the Vanquished

BY ELENA PONIATOWSKA

The great cities of the world are usually on their best behavior. Well-designed, well-built, they search for the embrace of a river in order to feel blessed. The sweet chestnut trees of Paris comfort the Seine and Hyde Park covers itself with the tender green of the English countryside watered by the Thames. And so does the Rhine. The cities built along rivers sing. Their houses sing and also their cobblestone streets; their bridges sing because all rivers flow towards the sea. And their islands. Like St. Louis and Manhattan are two vessels ready to sail; Amsterdam is the Flying Dutchman, Prague, Budapest, Belgrade look at the sunset over the Danube; Warsaw sees it on the waters of the Vistula, Lisbon on the Tajo. Venice at dusk is the epitome of nostalgia. To see Venice and to die is the wish of young lovers. Washington lies on the side of the Potomac and the Hudson rocks New York. The St. Lawrence has Ottawa and Montreal to protect, but Latin American rivers divide. The waters of the huge Rio de la Plata gush between Buenos Aires and Montevideo and Argentinians and Uruguayans say good-bye to each other from different river banks.

The ferocious new continents with their aggressive capitals consider Europe a handkerchief. Gardens are washed and pressed like precious handkerchiefs. America is the continent of Kleenex (when we don’t blow our noses in our sleeves). America is the continent of waste, and above all,

Latin America is the territory of hunger. Our poverty is the poverty of indifference.

Although Mexico City was never visited by any king of Spain, it waited with patience to give its famous welcome: “My house is yours.” The city was designed to please the monarchs, but King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia rejected the invitation, although condescendingly registering the futility of Latin America to “la madre patria.” The palaces of stone built in their image, the baroque churches, the huge convents, the plazas of the Latin American continent showed a submissive and loyal architecture from Rio Bravo to Patagonia that never lost the hot seal with which the Conquistadors marked their subjects.

Nevertheless, under its classical appearance, the indigenous city breaks through the pavement and howls in the night, looking for its children.

If 400 million people inhabit the Latin American continent, 200 million live in poverty. They look up north and even if Mexico prides itself of having the first social revolution in the 20th Century, in 1910, (seven years before the Russian social insurrection), that started an extraordinary social and cultural phenomenon, ours is still the vision of the vanquished.

Elena Poniatsowska is a Mexican writer.
Latin American Cityscapes

Calabashes of Fate

BY DAVID CARRASCO

“We are living at a culminating period in the history of the city, at a time in fact when we can confidently anticipate the conclusion of two cycles in the process of urbanization. The first is that which took its origin some five thousand years ago with the so-called (but somewhat inappropriately named) Urban revolution; the second constitutes an epicyle on this secular process which was initiated as recently as the eighteenth century, when the emergence of modern industrial technology began to exacerbate inequalities in the incidence of urbanism among the world’s populations. Now, when the rate of urbanization in industrial communities is tending to decline at the same time as it is accelerating in most underdeveloped countries, we are approaching the time when not only will all men live in terms of the city, but urban dwellers will again be disturbed more or less in accordance with regional population densities. It seems inevitable that by the end of the twenty-first century a universal city, Ecumenopolis, will have come to comprise a world-wide network of hierarchically ordered urban forms enclosing only such tracts of rural landscape as may be judged necessary for man’s survival.”

—Paul Wheatley City as Symbol

SCAPE, ESCAPE, ESCAPE, ESCAPE, LANDSCAPE, CITYSCAPE. THESE VARIATIONS ON THE WORD ‘SCAPE’ COMBINE THE NOTIONS OF PLACE AND LOCATION WITH A SENSE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT, FIESTA, POLITICAL PERFORMANCE AND REBELLION THAT RESONATE WITH THIS ISSUE’S THEME OF LATIN AMERICAN CITIES AND BEYOND. JUST THE WORD ‘SCAPE,’ WHICH HAS SEVEN ENTRIES IN THE NEW SHORTER OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, SEEMS TO BE TELLING A PARTIAL SECRET HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA. IT MEANS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, “A THOUGHTLESS TRANSERSION,” “IMPRESSION OF AN ESSENTIAL UNIQUE QUALITY OF A THING OR ACTION, ESPECIALLY AS EMBODIED IN LITERARY, ARTISTIC EXPRESSION” AND “A REPRESENTATION OF A SCENIC VIEW.” AS THIS ISSUE SHOWS WHEN IT MAPS CITIES AT LATIN AMERICA’S BORDERS, ON ITS COASTS, ALONG ITS RIVERS, IN THE DEEPEST VALLEYS AND THE HIGHEST SIERRAS, LATIN AMERICA NOT ONLY CONTAINS CITIES BUT ALSO IS BECOMING, IN CONSPICUOUS AND INCONSPICUOUS WAYS, A SHIFTING, CRAWLING NEW WORLD ECUENOMOSIS, A CITYSCAPE.

In his 1971 book Where the Air is Clear, Carlos Fuentes gave us perhaps the best wordscape of the diversity, danger, mythology, anguish, labor, dynamics and delight of city life in Latin America:
CITYSCAPES

"...in Mexico City, there is never tragedy but only outrage...city of the violated outrage; city witness to all we forget, city of fixed sun, city ancient in light, old city cradled among birds of omen, city tempested by domes, city woven by amnesias, bitch city, hungry city, city in the true image of gigantic heaven. Incandescent prickly pear."

Many essays in this ReVista reflect these metaphors and sometimes use some of these very words to describe, for instance what a woman experiences when walking in a city, or what it feels like to breathe a city's air, the beating of urban drums, describing "emergency villages" or "urban-tinged countrysides." Three phrases catch my eye: "city in the true image of gigantic heaven," "city tempested by domes" and "city of the violated outrage." These phrases directly mirror my thoughts in the introduction to the Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Culture. I wrote that Mesoamerica in particular and Latin America in general were sites of two major cultural transformations in Western Hemisphere history, namely the rise of primary urban generation and the explosive, violent and sometimes wild process of encounter and exchange we call colonialism.

Both of these monumental developments lasted for long historical duration. They were symbolized by diverse and sometimes competing cityscapes that dominated economic development, political order, religious imagination and social relations. I've attempted to develop models to interpret the history of the city in Latin America, following the insistence about the reconfiguration of social thought that "theory...moves mainly by analogy," described by Clifford Geertz in his Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology (New York, Basic Books, 1982). Through these analogies, I've begun to construct a series of resemblances that relate social theory and cityscapes. Each analogy brings creative thinkers into contact with both the analogy and each other. These include the city as cosmological symbol (Otto von Simson, García Márquez, Paolo Soleri, Mircea Eliade); city as religious community (Fustel de Coulanges, Virgilio Elizondo, Emile Durkheim, William B. Fash); city as fulcrum of political power (Max Weber, Stanley Tambiah, Tomás Eloy Martínez, Angel Rama) and city as center of economic exchange (Raymond Williams, Pedro Carrasco, David Harvey). Latin American cityscapes participate in all these analogies and orders but are also places of multiple assaults and fractious creations. They threaten to become what Patrick Chamoiseau in his novel Texaco calls the "ominous reign of a boundless city." In what follows I'll explore four ideas about Latin American cities: city as a perspective to understand Latin America; city as sacred space; city as a performative place; and city as a conflict zone.

THE CITY AS PERSPECTIVE

"City joins and ties, each end is tied to the other, no navine, no cliff, no river cutting through, all is joined and tied...It's not a place of happiness. It's not a place of misfortune. It's the caldars of fate."—Texaco

Latin Americanists often don't take into account that Mesoamerica and South America were two of the seven areas of primary urban generation—the uniquely complex evolution from the social world of the village to urbanized cultures. Only the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, China and Nigeria share the significance of this historical evolution with ancient societies of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru. In all these seven areas and especially in the Inca and Mesoamerican empires, ideal-type cities mediated the existential multiplicities of humans through their grand ceremonial centers and market places built in the image of gigantic heavens or cosmologies. As archaeological work and ethnohistorical manuscripts clearly show, Latin America was the site of both incredible ecological diversity and monumental cityscapes for millennia before Europeans arrived.
The cityscapes changed and thickened. As Angel Rama and others have shown, Spanish and Portuguese grids, imperial and religious architectures, new forms of writing, encomiendas and the Inquisition formed cities throughout Latin America tempested by European style domes covering and occluding indigenous and African gods, modes of exchange, cultural amnesias and human outrages. The results were Mestizo cities with names like Cusco, Lima, Mexico City, Guanajuato, and Bogotá. In whatever form of tragedy or light, these cities came to increasingly dominate politics, consciousness and material exchange. Perhaps it is another Latin voice, Italo Calvino, who summarizes the nature of cities best when he writes in Invisible Cities that they seem to be “the sum of all wonders” and places with the capacity “to soak up memories like a sponge and expand.” Some cities contain “all the other places of the world within them, things that are naturally separate, mingle together in cities.”

New knowledge about Latin America comes not only from seeing this vast landscape as a container of many cities but in seeing the morphology and history of many cities as a way to understand Latin America. Consider how Pablo Neruda’s Nobel Prize Lecture, which emphasizes the landscapes of Chile across which he fled, is entitled and ends “Hacia la Ciudad Esplendida.”

CITYSCAPE AS “TRUE IMAGE OF GIGANTIC HEAVEN”... AND ELITE SOCIETY!

Much scholarship in Latin American studies examines the rupture of indigenous traditions caused by the encuentros of the Atlantic world and the invention of New Spain. However, scholars have not given enough attention to the monumental ceremonial centers that functioned as the sacred pivots of the Pre-Columbian social world, the cityscapes that eventually greeted Europeans at crucial junctures in their conquest projects. The traditional cities of Teotihuacan, Copan, Cholula, Uxmal, Cuzco, Tenochtitlan, were the sites where one of the greatest (r)evolutions in human history took place, a social transformation that dominated millions of indigenous people prior to the 16th century and continued to play decisive roles in how Latin America evolved. One scholar who has developed a stunning model of cityscapes is the urban ecologist Paul Wheatley, whose interpretation of urban genesis has served as a kind of consensus among many scholars of traditional cities. Wheatley sees cities as ways of life, with profound social stratification producing ideal-type settlements where redistributive powers in the hands of sacred and pseudo-sacred authorities resulted in monumental capacities to export control.

CITIES AS A WAY OF LIFE

Many scholars of Latin America don’t quite realize what urban ecologists have made clear, namely that the urban way of life was not a system contained within the city’s walls, or formal boundaries, but rather it spread far beyond the limits of the built form. See Teófilo Altamirano’s essay on internal migration in Peru for someone who has understood the reach of the city into all dimensions of society. Saskia Sassen’s innovative account shows how digital cities link up Latin American “sub-economies” as much to global markets as to national cultures in which they reside. Wheatley is persuasive when he insists that cities were the style centers of the traditional world.
"It is the city which has been, and to a large extent still is, the style center of the traditional world, disseminating social, political, technical, religious and aesthetic values, and functioning as an organizing principle conditioning the manner and quality of life in the countryside. Those who focus their regional studies on peasant society to the exclusion of urban forms are—as I have stated elsewhere—as deluded as Plato’s prisoners (or in another sense, Beckett’s) who mistake the flickering shadows on a wall for reality. They, too, are turning their backs on the generative force of ecological transformation and seeking the causes of the great tides of social change in ripples on the beach of history." (‘City as Symbol,’ Inaugural Lecture delivered at University College, London, November 20, 1967).

In my own work on Mesoamerican cities, I have shown how the dissemination of urban styles results in eccentric rhythms of conflict and exchange between social and geographical peripheries and capital and regional cities, sometimes resulting in imperial domination, but also in rebellion and fracture.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OR SUNDERING PEOPLE FROM THE GODS AND THE GOODS
As many of the essays in this issue testify, cities are fundamentally places of permanent and pervasive social differentiation. This fact is crucial for theorists, activists and policy planners as they seek to understand and influence the struggle for democracy in Latin American societies and beyond. See Felton Earls’ revealing essay on Chicago to get an understanding of how this plays out in Latino, as well as Latin American, cities. Urbanists such as S.N. Eisenstadt, Wheatley and Pedro Armillas have revealed that cities emerged only when the major institutional spheres of society became dissociated once and for all from the masses of the populace. These central economic, ideological and political spheres usually manifested themselves in a concrete form at the settlement hub where the major religious and political mythologies were imprinted on the physiognomies of spectacular buildings. Social differentiation was not only the key to the generation of these effective spaces, architectures and overall urban settlements, but it was also the critical link that bound the larger city-state together throughout history. Following Eisenstadt, who held that the most important breakthrough of ancient social history consisted of the emergence of a religio-political elite controlling all institutions, Wheatley noted that

"It signified for the first time in the history of the world the sumping of the populace at large from direct access to supernatural power, at the same time that it deprived the people en masse of participation in political decision making. In other words, the populace had been alienated from the loci of both sacred and secular power." (The Pivot of the Four Quarters, (Chicago, Aldine Publishing, 1971).

This is a profound point, namely that social stratification or class conflict is endemic to all cityscapes, Latin American, traditional, colonial, modern or postmodern. While everyone may still have access to the gods and the goods of the cityscapes, the most potent avenues toward religious authority and social wealth are forever in the hands of the elites. To avoid the significance of this challenging social architecture is a form of interpretive blindness. This insight about stratifications is reflected in Carolyn Sattin’s account of the
energetic "neighborhood assemblies" of Buenos Aires. She shows how violent and corrupt forms of social domination were changed into seeds of social revolution against the hierarchy.

**REDISTRIBUTION AND CONTROL**

Monumental Central Places, whether pyramids, palaces, plazas, ball courts, stadiums or civic structures, functioned as elite religious and political *axis mundi*, quintessential places of sacralized authority. These central ceremonial precincts, often constructed as replicas of cosmic or idealized political order, were theatres for the vital spectacles dramatizing cultural mythologies directed by specialists hired by the ruling elites. Wheatley and others have shown how cityscapes have an immense magnetism, a centripetal power that draws all manner of goods, ideas, technology, art, produce and commerce into its central institutions and precincts. The city becomes a bulging container that transforms and redistributes everything that comes under its control. Eventually these objects and ideas undergo a centrifugal force by being sent back out, in various ways to specialist communities or the population at large but only after they have been ‘redistributed’ by the systems and values of exchange in the heart of the city. In other words, cityscapes are not territories where the goods, ideas, technology, agricultural are actually ‘shared’ in some balanced or just fashion. Rather they are redistributed, always unevenly, according to formulas of dispensation determined by the sacralized or idealized authorities and luxurious needs of the people who occupy the top rungs of the social pyramid. These elites contrive, prescribe, modulate and disseminate order and value throughout the subsystems of society. Their most crucial export, as Wheatley says, “is control.”

This fact of urban power can serve as a caution and balance with the cultural fashion of seeing everything Latin American in terms of diasporas. The tremendous waves of immigration throughout and from Latin America into the United States cannot be adequately understood unless the symbol of diaspora is studied in relation to the dynamics of cities that both stimulate and attract immigration.

**CITYSCAPES AS PERFORMANCE PLACES**

Working with students in courses on cities and symbols in comparative perspective has not only exposed me to the complex sets of performances that animated cities but also to ways in which cities were *religio-political performance themselves*. City after city in Latin America and beyond that we examined unfolded their histories as dramaturgical landscapes. At least two of the essays in this volume write of the performances within and of Latin American Cities. George Reid Andrews’ “Rhythm Nation: The Drums of Montevideo” shows how the voices of African drums reweave and repair the racialized alienations of that city’s history. And Sattin illustrates how the “cacerolazos” of Buenos Aires perform the spirit of “pueblo argentino” in a quest for healing. Wider studies show how major ideas, ebbs and flows of migration, urban renewals, personal tragedies and hopes of the populace were acted out through various forms of theatre and social drama. As Liz Meléndez San Miguel and Richard Mora write about Tijuana and San Juan, it becomes evident that cities’ intensively dynamic performance spaces and cultural performances do not just represent the values of elites or the official city but often function to critique, rebel against or regenerate the cities or their neighborhoods as meaningful if suffering cityscapes. These various ceremonies—
whether marches, masses, organized massacres, domino games, balconazos, or walking tours—bring the city’s complexities, harassments, corridors of hate and safety to life. In ways analogous to Victor Turner’s notions about social drama, these overt and covert performances are cultural-aesthetic mirrors that reflect the major socio-economic formations of Latin American peoples, neighborhoods, classes and artists. (Victor Turner, “Are there universals of performance in myth, ritual, and drama?” By Means of Performance: Intercultural studies of theatre and ritual, ed. Richard Schechner and Willa Appel, New York, Cambridge University Press).

CITY AS A CONFLICT ZONE AND OF FRACTIIOUS CREATIONS
Cities are constantly performing their social hierarchy and elite pathologies linking sex, death, and inflated authority. Examples appear in works as diverse as Tomás Eloy Martínez’s Santa Evita and in Bruno Bettelheim’s Freud’s Vienna and Other Essays. These authors show how some urban zones contain terrible conflicts and clash with other urban zones. These conflicts lead to destructive, heroic, chaotic and some-

Social stratification or class conflict is endemic to all cityscapes, Latin American, traditional, colonial, modern or postmodern.

power during what could be called an earlier phase of ‘globalization’, the Portuguese led by Alfonso d’Albuquerque attacked and destroyed forever Melaka’s hold on the prices and the fears of Europeans. Today we see threatening linkages between Venezuelan oil and U.S. transportation, Havana’s politics and Miami’s mental health, and the Argentine crisis with U.S.-imposed economic rules. The performance of the psychological depth and power of cities illustrated in the work of Raymond Williams, especially in his The City and the Country, resonates in fascinating ways with the essays herein by Arturo Ardila-Gómez on Bogotá and Teófilo Altamirano on Peruvian cities. Reading a wide series of literary works about British cities, Williams shows how the city and the novel of the city combine to reveal the true significance of the city, which is the revelation of the “double condition” of humankind. When he comments on Charles Dickens’s ability to create a new kind of novel after many false starts, Williams notes that London brought together in unique ways “the random and the systematic, the visible and the obscured which is the true significance of the city, and especially at this period of the capital city, as a dominant social form” (The City and the Country, New York, Oxford University Press, 1973).

This sentiment, that the city is a place of completely new kinds of in-depth human experiences of “unknown and unacknowledged relationships, profound and decisive connections, definite and committing recognitions and avowals” that were brought into contact and exchange, has been echoed in the works of many Latin America creative writers such as García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, and Nelida Piñon, namely. In the words of Fuentes, cities in Latin America are not only places of unacknowledged multiplicities and differences, they are the supreme places for the activation of differences and multiplicities. In the cities of Latin America and beyond, mutual friends and competitors, bitter enemies and outcasts came to realize that “what was important or even decisive could not be simply known or simply communicated, ...it had to be revealed, to be forced into consciousness,” or in my words performed into consciousness, as well illustrated by Diana Taylor’s thrilling Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina’s “Dirty War.”

I give the last word to the Maya about the cityscape as a sum of all wonders and an endless ruin. Centuries after their magisterial ceremonial cities had been engulfed in the jungles and eventually Spanish grids, their descendents secretly wrote the Popol Vuh, the Book of Council. Miguel Leon Portilla, in his Native Mesoamerican Spirituality (New York, Paulist Press, 1980) quotes a passage about their ancient migration. It reads,

“Let us go ourselves and search
and we shall see for ourselves
whether there is something to guard our sign...
and thus we shall live...
They heard news of a city
And went there.”

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What City, Whose City
The Multiplicity of Latin American and Latino Urban Worlds

BY EDWARD ROBBINS

In celebrating Latin America's cultural heritage, one often hears well-intended people speaking of Latin American cities and Latino place making. It might be useful to ask, however, if there is such a thing as a Latin American urbanism or Latino place making?

In delineating the Latin American city or Latino place making, most often we are offered images or texts that describe particular aspects of the city or place. In the case of the U.S. Latino place making, it is reduced to discussions of mainly immigrant neighborhoods: lower middle class, working class and poorer. These areas enjoy a robust, colorful and almost carnival-like street life, reflecting the ethnic identity of their residents: Mexicans, Central Americans, Puerto Ricans, and increasingly South Americans. Housing styles or landscapes are often used as spatial markers for Latinidad. Mike Davis, for example, in his Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reimvent the U.S. Big City (London: Sage, 2000) offers a number of brief but joyful celebrations of Latino place making. In doing so he reduces Latino place to the "glorious sorbet palette" of their homes, the creation of gardens in derelict lots, the growth of street use and vibrancy in the parks associated with some Latinos.

What is missing is a more nuanced discussion of the way Latinos make their neighborhoods and places. If you walk through Los Angeles you will find that there is not one Latino place but a myriad of places. Along Alvarado where Salvadorans and Guatemalans come together to meet, eat and shop, there is a different palette of color, a different social and spatial sensibility than when visiting the Mexican-American neighborhoods of East LA. And all of these areas of poorer Latinos have a distinctly different feel from more middle class Latino areas in the region. Indeed, many middle and upper middle class Latinos choose to live in what Davis might see as conventional "white bread" suburbs. Even in the most "supposedly Latino" of neighborhoods, the interventions by Latino residents, where they occur—and such interventions are not ubiquitous—only tinker with the larger infrastructure, which resembles that lived in by everyone from the Chinese to Samoans.

Chicago, although distinctly different from Los Angeles, is one of the largest Latino cities in the U.S. Latinos have inhabited neighborhoods that over the years have been home to everyone from East-
ern Europeans to African-Americans. There is little fundamentally different in the morphology and forms of the neighborhood in its most recent Latino manifestation.

When I was a child growing up in a mostly Jewish public housing project called Jacob Riis on New York's Lower East Side, the surrounding streets were filled with Jews, Puerto Ricans, Poles and Italians. Streets tended to house a mix of ethnic groups although each ethnic group still had places that were uniquely associated with their cultural life. Jews had their delicatessens and appetizing stores, Poles their butchers and bakeries and Hispanics their bodegas with tropical fruits, yams and plantains. Although people in each ethnic group most often associated with people of the same group, there was also continual intermixing. Jews went to bodegas, Hispanics to delicatessens or Polish bakeries and so on. At various times and in different and the same places, people in the neighborhood lived both in parallel worlds defined by each ethnic group, and also within a very integrated and heterogeneous world of the community center, the school and everyday activities like sports, eating out and walking. Today Jacob Riis is mostly Latino and African-American, the streets that surround the project still inhabited by Puerto Ricans but rapidly gentrifying and new hip cafes and stores share space with bodegas. But in many respects the neighborhood still has the same feel and the same look.

At the same time over the years, some neighborhoods in East Harlem and Queens have become mostly Latino. In East Harlem there are mostly Puerto Ricans. In Queens there are more Peruvians, Dominicans and Colombians. In these communities there are more bodegas and more Latino eating-places, although the foods, the styles and the sound of the language one would find in Queens would differ from that found in East Harlem. The style of buildings and streets built years ago are different as well in the two areas. One then could ask which is the Latino place, which represents Latinidad? My answer is all and none. They are places where Latinos live and work and thus in an obvious sense Latino. But they are in a diverse city where many Latinos no longer live in areas where Latinos are a majority, where many people other than Latinos shop and eat in Latino neighborhoods and in which different styles and types of Latino are represented. Moreover, they have a feel, a landscape and an urban identity entirely different from the Latino areas of Los Angeles and Chicago.

In Latin America we find the same diversity of forms and lifestyles, the same complex reality. Walking in the Recoleta neighborhood of Buenos Aires, at least before the recent economic collapse, one would encounter fancy restaurants, cafes, and exclusive clothing shops like Armani or Gucci. The streets of Recoleta have more in common with
making and urbanity. But it is very selective about the nature of the Latin American urban landscape. Latin American cities also have shopping malls, skyscrapers and new towns that link Latinos in common experiences.

Is the city of Brasilia with its soaring modernist buildings and modernistic landscape designed entirely by Brazilian architects any less Latin American than places like Santa Fe? There, wealthy Anglos more often than not inhabit adobe style houses and dominate the Spanish-derived plazas. Latinos in these areas often live in small ranch style houses in developments on the margins of the city and are mostly found using malls. Modern Latin American cities often combine modernist architecture with what is often called traditional architecture. What then is Latino?

As noteworthy and understandable as attempts to recognize and delineate the Latin American in city making are, the claim that there is such a thing as a Latin American urbanism is reductive of the very urbanism it chooses to elucidate. There is a problem with typifying cities or urban place making as Latin American or Latino (or under any other singular rubric). Cities are complex and layered processes. They sometimes involve the same and sometimes different actors, sometimes in the same place and sometimes in different places. There is the city of the elite, city of the poor, city of immigrants and a city of gentrifiers, there is the city of the cosmopolitan and the city of the “native.” There is the city of global capital and the city of local enterprise—one can go on and on. And, there is the city that includes all interacting with one another. These intersect at times; at times they run parallel to each other. What some might call a Latin American city encompasses all these sites.

What we also find is that a city is made up of different actors who live in the city differently even as they share the same physical place, even the same “identity” at times, as residents or citizens of a given city. At times these actors intersect; often they are completely estranged, living in different worlds in which each is unaware of the other. Individuals inhabit a number of different roles in the city; indeed most of us are not actors with one role but play multiple roles.

As individuals, we are often fractured living as we do in different social spaces e.g. village space, neighborhood space, metropolitan space, gendered space, ethnic space, education space, work space, enjoyment space, and consumption space among others. Of course these spaces are often in the same place and populated by the same people. Yet even as we navigate these conflicting and contradictory urban spaces we often fail to recognize them in the way we depict or represent the city.

The problem with defining a Latin American city or Latino place making is that there is an attempt to substitute a part for the whole complex mess that is the city. It does not engage the richness of cities in Latin America. Synecdoche replaces the complex whole and we are left not with Latin American urbanity but some selective cartoon image of some part of its totality.

By recognizing the diversity, the layers, the multiplicity of class, ethnic groups, architectural styles, and urban forms within Latin America and among Latinos, one can finally do them justice by being inclusive and open to all their variety, problems and potentials.

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Reading the City in a Global Digital Age
Between Topographic Representation and Spatialized Power Projects

BY SASKIA Sassen

When we think about cities, we often think about urban topography—the spaces that cause you to stretch out your map in the car. Many today say that global and digital spaces are supplanting this type of urban space. But this is only partly true. The other half of the story is that many global processes hit the ground at one point or another and digital processes are often deeply embedded in non-digital conditions. It is in this sense that I speak of the spatializing of global processes and digital processes in cities. When these spatializations are complex and produce dense globalized environments in urban space we are probably dealing with global cities, those centers for the command and management of the global economy and the place where people from around the world are likely to meet who would otherwise never do so. It is also in this sense that global cities make possible the emergence of new types of political subjects arising out of conditions of either enormous global power or often acute disadvantage as is typically the case with immigrants and refugees.

I’d like to distinguish, then, between the topographic representation of the city and understanding the city through these spatialized economic, political, and cultural dynamics. This brings a particular type of twist to the discussion on global and digital dynamics since both are associated with dispersal and increased locational options for firms, markets and households with resources/power. If the most powerful global actors are at least partly grounded in cities, then the city is a space where the most disadvantaged groups can engage this type of power—that does not mean vanquish, but it does mean that the urban poor can become present to power and, very importantly, to themselves. The *piqueteros* of Argentina and the *cazerolazos* that we now see all over the region are instances of this. The space of the city, as opposed to the space of a plantation, let’s say, enables this type of concrete street politics. In cities with strong global powers, this presence assumes new meaning and signals a possibility for a global politics by the disadvantaged—who are typically rather immobile, confined to their localities. This is a politics of the global that starts with local actions, but becomes global in its engagement with localized global power and in its recurrence in city after city in Latin America, and indeed around the world. A key part of this argument is the notion that the city also needs to be read in terms of the spatializing of global forces in urban space. Confining ourselves to a topographic reading is not enabling in this regard: all we would see is “here are the poor neighborhoods and there are the rich neighborhoods,” so to speak. Not all of this is new. Cities have long been key sites for the spatialization of power projects—for instance, in the infrastructures for control of past colonial empires akin to today’s cur-
rent global firms and markets. Mexico City and São Paulo are the
two major centers today for the top level management and coordi-
nation functions of global firms and markets in Latin America.
They are two places where the most vast and strategic spatializa-
tions of global dynamics have concentrated. Buenos Aires was that
until the default of 2001-02, and is, in my reading, going to be rein-
serted in global circuits that are likely to be even more exclusion-
ary of large sectors of the population than they were before the
crisis. In a quieter way, but humming all along, there is Santiago.
If the global information economy were really placeless, as is so often
said or believed, there would no longer be spatialization of this type
of power today: it would supposedly have dispersed geographi-

cally and gone partly digital.

Mine is a particular kind of reading of digitization and global-
zation. It seeks to detect the imbrications of the digital and non-
digital domains and thereby to insert the city in mappings of the
digital, both actual and rhetoric—mappings from which the city
is easily excluded. And it is a reading that seeks to detect under what
conditions the global economy localizes in concrete built environ-
ments. The risk in this type of effort, it seems to me, lies in gener-
alizing, using metaphors and figurative language—in brief, to hover
above it all. We need to go digging.

How do we reintroduce place into economic analysis? How do
we construct a new narrative about economic globalization to include
the spatial, economic and cultural elements of the global econo-
my as constituted in cities? A topographic reading would introduce
place yet, in the end, fail to capture the fact that global dynamics
might inhabit localized built environments.

**ANALYTIC BORDERLANDS**

For me as a political economist, addressing these issues has meant
working in several systems of representation and constructing spaces
of intersection. There are analytic moments when two systems of
representation intersect. Such analytic moments are easily experi-
enced as spaces of silence, of absence. One challenge is to see what
happens in those spaces, what operations (analytic, of power, of
meaning) take place there, forming what I have termed analytic bor-
derlands. Why borderlands? Because they are spaces constituted
in terms of discontinuities and usually conceived of as mutually
exclusive. As analytic borderlands, discontinuities are given a ter-


rain rather than reduced to a dividing line.

Methodologically, I focus on circuits—distribution and instal-
lation of economic operations—that cut across institutional orders.
These circuits may be internal to a city's economy or global—one
site on a circuit may contain a few or many other such cities.

Internal circuits allow me to follow economic activities into ter-


rains that escape the increasingly narrow borders of mainstream rep-
resentations of "the" urban economy and to negotiate the crossing
of discontinuous spaces. For instance, it allows me to locate vari-
ous components of what are considered to be backward economic
sectors, including the "informal economy" (whether in New York or
Buenos Aires or São Paulo) on circuits that connect it to advanced
industries such as finance, design or fashion in those same cities.
A topographic representation would capture the enormous discon-


Avenida Paulista in São Paulo is the spine of the city that extends its
global networks.
The space of the city is a far more concrete space for politics than that of the nation. Non-formal political actors can be part of the urban political scene in a way that is much more difficult at the national level.

SITED MATERIALITIES AND GLOBAL SPAN
It seems to me that analysts have had difficulty understanding the impact of digitization on cities because of two analytic flaws. One confines interpretation to a technological reading of the technical capabilities of digital technology. This is fine for engineers. But it inevitably leads one to a place that is a non-place, where we can announce with certainty the neutralizing of many of the configurations marked by physicality and bounded by place, including the urban.

The second flaw, I would argue, is a continuing reliance on analytical categorizations developed before the current digital era. Thus the tendency is to conceive of the digital as simply and exclusively digital and the non-digital as simply and exclusively that, non-digital. One such alternate categorization captures imbrications. Let me illustrate this using the case of finance. Finance, certainly a highly digitized activity, cannot simply be thought of as exclusively digital. To have electronic financial markets and digitized financial instruments requires enormous amounts of conventional infrastructure such as buildings and airports, as well as human talent. Much of this material is, then, inflicted by the digital. Likewise, cyberspace is deeply inflected by the cultures, the material practices, the imaginaries, that take place outside its realm. Digital space and digitization are not exclusive conditions that stand outside the non-digital. Digital space is embedded in the larger societal, cultural, subjective, economic, imaginary structures of lived experience and the systems within which we exist and operate. Real estate, often highly liquefied in the digital and hypermobile form offered by financial services firms, remains very physical. However, that which remains physical has been transformed by its representation by highly liquid instruments that can circulate in global markets. It may look the same, it may involve the same bricks and mortar, it may be new or old, but it is a transformed entity.

Much of what we might still experience as “local” (an office building or a house right there in our neighborhood or downtown) actually is something I would rather think of as a “microenvironment with global span,” a deeply internetworked microenvironment. A localized entity can be experienced as local, immediate, proximate and hence captured in topographic representations. It is a sited materiality. But it is also part of global digital networks that give it immediate far-flung span. To continue to think of this as simply local is not very useful or adequate. It illustrates the inadequacy of a purely topographical reading.

It takes capital fixity to produce capital mobility, that is to say, state of the art built-environments, conventional infrastructure—from highways to airports and railways—and well-housed talent. These are all, at least partly, place-bound conditions, even though the nature of their place-boundedness is going to be different from what it was 100 years ago, when place-boundedness was much closer to pure immobility. Today both capital fixity and mobility are located in a temporal frame where speed is ascendant and consequent.

A bundle of conditions and dynamics marks the model of the global city. Digitization allows for simultaneous worldwide dispersal of operations (whether factories, offices, or service outlets) and the achievement of system integration. Global cities are strategic sites for the combination of resources necessary for the production of these central functions.

THE SPATIALITIES OF THE CENTER
The complex management of the interaction between capital fixity and hypermobility has given some cities a new competitive advantage. This is clearly the case for São Paulo (see Ramos Schiffer 2002) and Mexico City (Parnreiter 2002). The vast new economic topography in electronic space is one moment, one fragment, of an even vaster economic chain that is in good part embedded in non-electronic spaces. There is today no fully virtualized firm or economic sector. Even finance, the most digitized, dematerialized and globalized of all activities has a topography that weaves back and forth between actual and digital space.

The center still can be the central business district (CBD), although profoundly reconfigured by technological and economic change, as we see with the multinodal CBD in São Paulo and Mexico City. The enormous rebuilding that took place in Buenos Aires, both in the center and in the immediately surrounding metropolitan region shows us the amount of investment and the creation of whole new built environments that it takes for cities to become part of the global economy (see Ciccoletta and Mignaqui 2002). Also, the center can extend into a metropolitan area as a grid of nodes of intense business activity. Insofar as these various nodes are articulated through digital networks, they represent a new geographic correlate of the most advanced type of “center.” This is a partly deterritorialized space of centrality.

In addition, we are seeing the formation of a transterritorial “center” made up of intense economic transactions in the network of global cities. These transactions take place partly in digital space and partly through conventional transport and travel. The result is a multiplication of often highly specialized circuits connecting sets of cities.
WHAT DOES CONTEXTUALITY MEAN IN THIS SETTING?

These networked sub-economies operating partly in actual space and partly in globe-spanning digital space cannot easily be contextualized in terms of their surroundings. Nor can the individual firms and markets. The orientation of this type of sub-economy is simultaneously towards itself and towards the global. The intensity of internal transactions in a sub-economy such as global finance or cutting edge high-tech sectors overrides all considerations of the urban area within which it exists.

In my research on global cities I’ve found that these subeconomies develop a stronger orientation towards the global markets than to their hinterlands. Thereby they override a key proposition in the urban systems literature that cities and urban systems integrate and articulate national territory. This may have been the case during the period when mass manufacturing and mass consumption spurred developed economies and thrived on national scales of economic processes. Today, the ascendancy of digitized, globalized, dematerialized sectors such as finance, has diluted that articulation with the larger national economy and the immediate hinterland.

The articulation of these sub-economies with other zones and sectors in their immediate socio-spatial surroundings are of a special sort. Highly priced services cater to the workforce, from upscale restaurants to luxury shops and cultural institutions, typically part of the socio-spatial order of these new sub-economies. But there are also various low-priced services that cater to the firms and to the households of the workers and which rarely “look” like part of the advanced corporate economy. The demand by firms and households for these services actually links two worlds that we think of as radically distinct. It is particularly a third instance that concerns me here, the large portions of the urban surrounding that have little connection to these world-market oriented sub-economies, even though physically proximate. I: is these that engender a question about content and its meaning when it comes to these sub-economies.

What then is the “context,” the local, here? The new networked subeconomy occupies a strategic geography, partly deterritorialized, that cuts across borders and connects a variety of points on the globe. It occupies only a fraction of its “local” setting, its boundaries are not those of the city where it is partly located, nor those of the “neighborhood.” This subeconomy interfaces the intensity of the vast concentration of very material resources it needs when it hits the ground

SANTO DOMINGO PLAZA
BODAS, BAUTIZOS Y EMAILS

Bodas! Bautizos! ¡Quién tenemos invitaciones para todos sus eventos, páselo guero! Así reciben a los visitantes en la plaza de Santo Domingo, en el corazón del centro histórico de la Ciudad de México. Santo Domingo es un sobreviviente, ha logrado reinventarse y adaptarse por más de un siglo a todo tipo de cambios, sin dejar de ser la plaza de los del barrio.
La plaza es un pequeño oasis, que permite tomar aire y descansar un momento, antes de regresar a la agitada vida de la capital. A un costado de la plaza está la iglesia que le da su nombre, al frente está la vieja Escuela de Medicina de la UNAM, un elegante edificio de la época del virreinato, que se utilizó como Aduanas y fue la sede de la Santa Inquisición durante parte de la dominación española. En el centro de la plaza está una pequeña estatua de bronce de la Corregidora, Josefina Ortiz de Domínguez.

Pero sin duda la parte más conocida de la plaza son sus portales, que se extienden a lo largo de 100 metros. Ahí hay una larga fila de puestos con pequeñas puestas planas, y linotipos tan antiguos, que en otros países serían consideradas piezas de museo, que ofrecen todo tipo de impresiones. Los vendedores saltan sobre los visitantes con todo tipo de promociones para ganar clientes. La competencia es tan abierta y agresiva que para muchos visitantes resulta abrumadora. Los vendedores se valen de todo su ingenio para persuadirse.

En Santo Domingo, los escritorios públicos no son un recuerdo, sino un negocio rentable. Hay más de 25 a lo largo de los portales. Ahí los escribanos redactan todo tipo de documentos, desde simples facturas, querellas judiciales hasta las cartas de amor que han dado fama a la plaza.
Santo Domingo huele a viejo, pero pese a todos estos años no ha envejecido. En las últimas décadas, los escritorios públicos sustituyeron las máquinas mecánicas Smith-Corona, por máquinas electrónicas IBM y ahora una nueva forma de escritorio público se ha creado.

En el segundo piso de los portales, justo en la esquina de que ve hacia la vieja Aduana y a un costado del templo, hay un café Internet, el único en Santo Domingo, pero a diferencia de otros en el centro de la ciudad, a éste no van turistas, pues esta plaza, pese a todo su palmarés cultural no es un atractivo turístico por excelencia.
El café Internet es para ligar, coinciden los chavos del barrio, los clientes más jóvenes del negocio, que poco después del medio día pintan de verde y gris—los colores del uniforme de la seccuria pública de la zona—para conectarse a Burundis, el mejor chat para conocer chavos de todos los países del mundo.
Pero los primeros en llegar, son los campesinos. Durante las primeras horas de la mañana llegan al local vestidos con sus trajes indígenas y cachucha de beisbol y con frases entrecortadas, que dejan ver su poco dominio del español. Ellos usan el e-mail para mandarles correos a sus familiares que trabajan en Estados Unidos. Ellos no entienden de tecnología, mucho menos lo que significa la revolución digital. Por eso le piden al encargado que sea él quien escriba y lo manda a la dirección que llevan escrita, que para ellos no son más que garabatos. Para estas personas Internet es algo inexplicable, casi mágico, ya no tienen que esperar mucho tiempo por una respuesta, no necesitan un domicilio conocido para recibir y mandar correo y sus cartas no se pierden. Es tan eficiente, que están seguros que con Internet podrán mandarles una carta al presidente para contarle de su pobreza y muy pronto les llegará la ayuda. Sólo necesitan la dirección.

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and the fact of its global span or cross-border geography. Its interlocutor is not the surrounding, the context, but the fact of the global.

NEW FRONTIER ZONES: THE FORMATION OF NEW POLITICAL ACTORS

A new frontier zone emerges in the global city through an enormous convergence of people. The disadvantaged can gain presence in global cities, presence vis a vis power and presence vis a vis each other. This signals, for me, the possibility of a new type of politics centered in new types of political actors. It is not simply a matter of having or not having power. There are new hybrid bases from which to act. By using the term presence I try to capture some of this.

The fact that topographic representations obscure the existence of underlying interconnections among various fragments of a city takes on a new meaning here. What presents itself as segregated or excluded from the mainstream core of a city may actually be in increasingly complex interactions with other similarly segregated sectors in other cities in Latin America and the world. I see an interesting dynamic where top sectors (the new transnational professional class) and bottom sectors (e.g. immigrant communities or activists in environmental or anti-globalization struggles) inhabit a cross-border space that connects multiple cities.

The space of the city is a far more concrete space for politics than that of the nation. Non-formal political actors can be part of the urban political scene in a way that is much more difficult at the national level. Nationally, politics run through existing formal systems such as the electoral political system or the judiciary. Non-formal political actors are rendered invisible in the space of national politics. The space of the city accommodates a broad range of political activities squatting, demonstrations against police brutality, fighting for immigrant and homeless rights, the politics of culture and identity, gay and lesbian and queer politics. Much of this becomes visible on the street. Much of urban politics is concrete, enacted by people rather than dependent on massive media technologies. Street level politics makes possible the formation of new types of political subjects that do not have to go through the formal political system. Argentinian's piqueteros and acacerolazos, the pro- and anti-government demonstrations in Caracas, the worlds that come together in Porto Alegre during the World Social Forum meetings, all of these instantiate a type of politics and a type of political subject that cannot be captured in the formal national political system.

Through the Internet, local initiatives become part of a global network of activism without losing the focus on specific local struggles, enabling a new type of cross-border political activism. This is in my view one of the key forms of critical politics that the Internet can make possible: A politics of the local with a big difference—localities connected with each other across a region, a country or the world. These counter-geographies are dynamic and changing in their locational features. And they include a very broad range of activities, from emancipatory to criminal.

The large city of today, especially the global city, emerges as a strategic site for these new types of operations. Digital networks are contributing to the production of new kinds of interconnections underlying what appear as fragmented topographies, whether at the global or at the local level. Political activists can use digital networks for global or non-local transactions and they can use them for strengthening local communications and transactions within the city. Today, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro—and so many others—are traversed by these "invisible" circuits. There are many examples of such a new type of cross-border political work. For instance SPARC, organized by Sheela Patel started out organizing slum dwellers in Bombay, centered on women. Now it has a network of such groups throughout Asia and in some cities in Latin America.

This new urban spatiality accounts for only part of what happens in cities and what cities are about. It inhabits only part of what we might think of as the space of the city, whether understood as a city's formal administrative boundaries or as multiple public imaginaries present among diverse urban populations. If we consider urban space as productive, as enabling new configuration, then these developments signal multiple possibilities.

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THINKING ON HAVANA
ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE; COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

I mportant as it is, preserving Havana's very valuable architectural heritage could end in a nostalgic, meaningless task threatened by elitism and the lack of authentic everyday life if it is not coupled with a comprehensive economic and social development that actively involves the participation of the population within the basic principles of ecological soundness. This participation is only possible if it starts at a community base and is felt by the population as something that would directly improve their living conditions. Thinking, management, institutions and work styles should adjust to an endless changing reality, and not the opposite. That realizable utopia requires a visceral commitment of all Cubans, not only to save the built environment but also to preserve from degradation and cynicism a human capital amassed with endeavors, successes, mistakes, hardships and illusions.

Havana has endured many difficult tests in its long history, some apparently terminal blows, and has come out bruised but graceful. Because, in the end, the shared complicity imposed by time layer after layer has woven a thick mesh of relations and meanings which transcend the facades to include the people that mill along the streets without ever needing to look up to know that their lifelong companionship of dreams remains stubbornly in place, peeling, staggered, eroded by salt and water, marvelous and incredibly alive, still useful. A city that no longer is, but continues being.

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Shaping and Reshaping Latin American Cities

Josep Lluis Sert and Town Planning Associates

BY MARY DANIELS

The house designed for his own residence by Graduate School of Design Dean Josep Lluis Sert in the late 1950s offers a distinctive profile in Cambridge’s Shady Hill neighborhood (which is also home to the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies). Depending on one’s viewpoint, the characteristically confused or charmingly eclectic architectural styles of much North American domestic architecture typifies the neighborhood. Most of these houses, surrounded by verdant lawns and other greenery, face the street without walls or fencing. The Sert house, apart from requisite entrances, offers a walled exterior to the street; within that exterior shell, it is a house opening to three distinctive interior courtyards or patios. The Sert House is symbolic of the designer’s aesthetic—scaled to its surroundings, respectful of them, yet inevitably imbued with the traditions of another, distinctive culture.

Sert’s personal and professional lives were marked by emigration: from his native Spain (following the defeat of the Republic in 1937) and from France (with the outbreak of World War II). About the time he arrived in the United States, a broad array of planning initiatives in Latin America were developed under the auspices of national, regional and municipal governments and private corporations. A founder of Town Planning Associates, Sert’s vigor and flexibility were expressed throughout this period (1945–58) in his parallel roles as an architect in practice and as an educator. He became Dean of the Graduate School of Design in 1953 and transformed

Josep Lluis Sert and Cuban president Fulgencio Batista look over “Palace of the Palms” designed by Town Planning Associates as a component of the Havana Master Plan. Taken from a clipping scrapbook.
and developed its curriculum; his architectural work at the university profoundly affected the Harvard campus through what were, in contemporary terms, the revolutionary designs of Peabody Terrace, Holyoke Center and the Science Center.

Sert’s Latin American undertakings ranged in scale from the comprehensive Bogotá Master Plan (in collaboration with Le Corbusier) to modest, environmentally sensitive housing in Tunaco, to the design of “new cities” in Brazil and Venezuela. In 1941, Sert founded Town Planning Associates with Paul Lester Wiener, a German-born American architect based in New York. The firm became involved in a variety of planning projects in Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Cuba; primary research materials about these initiatives can be found in the Sert Collection of the Special Collections Department of the Graduate School of Design’s Frances Loeb Library. These materials, which include sketches, plans, correspondences, clippings, files and photographs, are complemented by the Paul Lester Wiener Collection at the University of Oregon. In addition to documenting the design process in visual terms, the Sert Collection holdings provide some insight into the complexities of the relationship between “imported” specialists and the societies with whom they work. The collection also reveals the complexities of the attempted (or realized) imposition of theoretical ideals upon indigenous social structures, urban architectures and landscapes. Perhaps all too symbolically, among the firm’s last studies was the unrealized Havana Master Plan, which, if implemented, would have drastically affected the character of “Old Habana,” and which also included plans for the “Palace of the Palms,” a grandiose residential fortress designed for Cuban President Fulgencio Batista.

The year 1928 had seen the founding of CIAM—the Congres Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne—an organization to which Sert would devote decades of conceptual and administrative energy. As expressed in the group’s initial manifesto, CIAM’s members affirmed their view that contemporary conditions demanded “une conception nouvelle de l’architecture,” a conception responsive to both the practical and spiritual (in the broadest sense) demands of modern society, and one with a particular emphasis on thoughtful, yet visionary, urban planning. CIAM also formulated and developed methods of urban analysis (and attendant programs of improvement and re-design) which, at worst, were coldly formulaic and, at best, expressive of the value of rational observation and assessment.

To the work of Town Planning Associates (TPA), Sert not only brought the conventionally impressive qualifications of a European architect and planner, enhanced by a significant array of professional contacts in the United States, but also the tangible appeal of an individual for whom Spanish (with Catalan) was a primary language and who was sensitive to, however unshakeable his fidelity to modernism, vernacular expressions in design. In the early 1930s, Sert was an influential member of GATPAC (Grup c’Arquitectes I Tecnics Catalans per al Progres de l’Arquitectura Contemporania), an organization allied with CIAM.
From left to right: A Sert sketch of great verve depicting Carnaval revelers in Rio, one of the few items in the Sert Collection so directly expressive of "atmosphere." The cover for the MOMA Bulletin of June 1947—the two cities compared in the exhibition were Chicago (the Michael Reese urban renewal plan for the South Side) and TPA's new town, the "Cidade dos Motores." A sketch scratched on a sheet of hotel stationery is slightly formalized in another drawing related to the Lima plan, which also reflects the annotated "low houses and patios L pattern." A photograph of one of the "Cidade dos Motores" models prepared during the project.

The group's journal, AC, was a showcase not only for the work of its members, but offered investigations into the vernacular design of the Mediterranean world. Panels of bright color, the use of pierced screens or variegated façade surfaces, the utilization of the courtyard/patio in both the public and the private realm, the exploitation of indigenous building materials and techniques: these recurring elements of "Mediterranean" design also found expression in Latin American applications. These applications were derivative not only of the inchoate cultural traditions of colonialism, but were also intelligent responses to the demands of climate and local economic realities.

Every archive, no matter its claims to comprehensiveness, is incomplete. This general truth applies to the files that document the Latin American projects of Town Planning Associates. The Sert Collection's inventory (available in print format in the Frances Loeb Library and available in early 2003 through the Harvard University Library's OASIS site) can provide a more specific description and enumeration of the relevant materials. Let me highlight a very few representative commissions drawn from a variety of projects, in which the TPA planning philosophy was reflected in its essential form and amended by the principals' experiences in Latin America.

The first Town Planning Associates project was begun in 1943; the commission was doubtless a product of Paul Lester Wiener's personal and professional connections in Brazil, as well as pressure from the United States (vis-à-vis the rather laggard Brazilian war effort). In that year, Brigadier-General Antonio Guedes Muniz, the chief of the Brazilian Airplane Factory Commission, assigned TPA the task of designing a new town for a population of 25,000—the so-called "Cidade dos Motores." This new town was to be built on an undeveloped
site on the Rio-Petropolis Highway and to be based on CIAM's principles of the four (later expanded to five) urban "functions" of dwelling, work, recreation and transportation. The fifth "function," the civic core, increasingly preoccupied Sert and was expressed decisively in early drawings for the downtown area of the Cidade dos Motores. Ironically, perhaps, this civic center is derived more directly from the 1573 "Law of the Indies" promulgated by Philip II, which codified the role of the plazas so characteristic of both Spanish and Portuguese colonial towns, than from the rubrics of 20th century urban planning dicta. The Spanish Crown actively fostered the development of its colonial cities, whether in administrative centers—Lima, Bogotá, Mexico City—or in smaller communities. A complex variety of sources can be indicated for the characteristic grid plan. It was drawn not only from the oft-cited prototypes (i.e., Santa Fe de Granada) but also from the theoretical literature of urban design, architecture of Renaissance treatises and the more pragmatic works of military specialists in the architecture of fortification and defense. Urban life also reflected the social concerns and legal structures that not only affected, but also often dictated, the relationships among the various ethnic, racial and economic communities in colonial cities.

The industrial port of Chimbote on the northern Peruvian coast was the focus of a TPA analysis in 1947. Sert's sketches indicate very direct responses to local cultural practices and an increasingly positive view of the use of low-rise urban housing (on a courtyard model) rather than the mixed developments, inevitably punctuated by high-rise towers, the doctrinaire CIAM planners favored. In the elaboration of the Chimbote plan presented to the 8th CIAM Congress, Sert not only presented this amendment to urban housing design, but also emphasized the potential role of municipal plazas as elements of democratic life; potential locales for discussion and assembly, not strictly on a commercial basis.

Following a period of intense factional warfare in Colombia, Town Planning Associates was awarded commissions to develop master plans for the cities of Cali and Medellín in 1949; later that year, a commission (with Le Corbusier) was undertaken to devise a pilot plan, followed by an elaborated master plan, for the Colombian capital, Bogotá. The collaboration with the internationally recognized Le Corbusier guaranteed substantial public discussion although the most significant aspect of the work was the particular emphasis given to transportation networks; indeed, the expressway system near-defines

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**COLONIAL CITIES**

**THE ANTITHESIS OF DISORDER**

"Potosí" exclaims Tom Cummins, his lively eyes twinkling, his neat graying ponytail just grazing his collar line, "You can't have an issue on cities without Potosí. Some people think cities in Latin America just started yesterday. Potosí is incredible! It grew from nothing to a huge city overnight in the 1500s because of silver, and it's twice as high as Mexico City. Now that's a tale of a city!"

Thomas B. F. Cummins, Harvard's Dunbaron Oaks Professor of Pre-Columbian and Colonial Art History, is sharing his passion for colonial cities spring semester by teaching the course "The Towns and Cities in the New World: The Architecture of Power" in the Department of History of Art and Architecture. The course examines the importance of the city in the 16th- and 17th-century New World. It traces the development and use of the grid plan as an artistic, religious, and political expression and looks at the architecture and decoration of churches that were the center of these towns, whether Quito, Cuzco, or Taxco.

It's Cummins' first time teaching the course at Harvard, but he first began a version of the course in 1996 at the University of Chicago. What's apparent during a long conversation that starts off in his office in the Sackler Museum and ends up over coffee in a Starbucks is that the course is an ongoing process—just like cities.

"I never ceased to be amazed at all the new great literature being written," he says, explaining that he was drawn to the subject as a researcher in Cusco, Peru, in 1970. "My interest in cities came from the fact that cities have great art."

For those of us who think of cities as sprawling spaces of chaos, Cummins' vision of Latin American cities makes it clear that their origins were the antithesis of disorder. Many of the colonial cities in Latin America were "the Renaissance ideal cities that never gets built in Europe, at least not on this scale," observes Cummins.

In some countries, the Spaniards found urban spaces, like in Mexico where the Mayans had created big cities and an urban society. In other places, like Peru, there weren't any cities, so the colonizers made people move into cities, imposing
the residential, commercial and recreational districts which it links. Sert, faithful to his developing conception of the urban "core," also derived a variety of schemes to expand the functions of the central Plaza Bolívar, as well as to maintain and expand the traditional pedestrian street of the old city, the Calle Real. The work of TPA and Le Corbusier is graphically well represented in the Sert Collection; of significant ancillary interest are the related correspondence files, particularly those from Le Corbusier, which detail the travails of both local Colombian politics and the difficulties of being paid as contractually guaranteed! Next door in Venezuela, Sert the architect got a chance to interact with Sert the planner in designing a church for the public square of Puerto Ordaz (one of the new industrial towns commissioned by U.S. Steel). This structure reflects not only the traditional focal role of the church in the Latin American city center, but also the austere elements of modernist architectural design and its signature building material together with the utilization of local materials and construction techniques. Using innovative material (reinforced concrete) and traditional size, scale and placement, Sert devised a simple structure, with its own walled patio, punctuated by a bell tower. The bell tower's surface is broken into colored rectangles, each displaying a symbol of Christ's Passion. The patio is paved, in the local tradition, in black and white pebbles.

Throughout Latin America, the work of Town Planning Associates encompassed projects (many never built) which included residential design, healthcare, recreational and industrial facilities, governmental structures, and planning projects which ranged from individual neighborhoods to ambitious urban and regional formulations. During the firm's working life, its work was featured in architectural and planning journals; it was also promoted in a lecture series initiated by TPAs principals and through its inclusion in a 1947 Museum of Modern Art exhibition Two Cities: Planning in North and South America. During the past decade, Sert's professional life (including his long connection with CIAM) has become of interest to a broad-based international research community. Of particular value and quality are Josep M. Rovi


Whatever the scholarly interest, the more formal reports, plans and designs may generate, the most appealing materials in the Sert Collection may be those which express the immediate, instinctive response of the architect to the site and the culture. To the archivist or curator of a collection of architectural materials, the designer's sketchbook or sketches remain the most desirable acquisition, reflecting as they do precisely that immediacy of response. Amid the varieties of other informative and valuable documentation of the work of Town Planning Associates, Sert's Latin American sketches have particular charm, character and significance. Indeed, the sketches offer the germs for the individualized approach (with expressed sensitivity to vernacular construction and, unusually, ecological concerns) that distinguishes TPA's work in the fishing settlement of Tumaco from its more grandiose projects.

Very little, indeed only fragments, of Town Planning Associates' work was realized in Latin America. The reasons are various—financial constraints, regime changes, disputes among rival agencies and other, more ambiguous realities.

However, the firm's activities on the ground, its reports and visual presentations (drawings, formalized plans, models and photographs) were not without effect. Town Planning Associates' analyses were—to the heads of state, corporate executives and planning agencies who had sought their services—dramatic indications of the complexities inherent to developing structures and infrastructures for community and economic development, housing, social services and transportation for the Latin American cities of the late 20th century.

Mary F. Daniels is the Special Collections Librarian of the Frances Loeb Library, Harvard Design School.

Hierarchies and ordering spaces.

"There wouldn't be Latin America as it is without the drive to build cities," observes Cummins. "Looking at the ordering of cities dispels many of the precepts about colonialization, that it is simply a violent disorderly set of conquistadores."

"Obviously, some of them were disordered," he continues. "But the vision was one of order. In fact, they organized these great cities that are today seen as absolutely unmanageable."

The Spaniards built along the grid system, and ordered systems of space. They looked at the ways buildings faced, taking into account the way the wind blows and distributed the population into what Cummins terms "sociological spaces."

"But it's not just about space," he comments, his words racing as he strings the concepts together. "It's also the overriding sense of what the Spanish wanted to do with the Americas."

I listen as he elaborates how the city becomes a memory, an artificial memory, a system of memory that emerges from rhetoric. The Spanish were asking, "How do you construct a city in your mind? How do you indoctrinate people?"

"What kind of elements are important, what aren't for the social and artistic life of the city?" he asks, pointing out the close relationship in Spanish between terms for architecture and other forms of representation. The frontispiece of a book and the facade of a major structure are called the same thing—a portada. In painting, lienzo is a canvas; in architecture, it's the face of a building.

I've spoken Spanish for several decades now; these words are familiar to me in both their senses, but I had never made the association. Suddenly, over a cup of coffee in a Starbucks, a different and ordered vision of the colonial world becomes vivid to me. I know I have to take Cummins' course someday.

June Carolyn Ericks is the editor-in-chief of ReVista. She also loves cities—colonial and otherwise.

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City Spaces
The Built Environment Matters

By José A. Gómez-Ibáñez

The built environment is important in shaping the quality of life in Latin America's cities, as the following articles in the "City Spaces" section of this Revista all stress. Most of us believe that a city's development pattern and the quality of its infrastructure can influence its economic competitiveness. A city will be more attractive to both firms and residents if it can support high concentrations of business activity while still offering employees accessible, attractive, and affordable housing. But it is surprising how greatly the pattern of urban development seems to affect the social and physical health of the city as well. The layout of residential districts are thought to influence levels of crime and social cohesion, for example, while the location of residences and industry affect pollution levels. As Latin America grows richer and more democratic, moreover, the built environment is likely to loom larger both as a determinant of citizen satisfaction and as a source of political controversy.

Many Revista readers will be familiar with Mexico City's air pollution, and MIT professor and Nobel Laureate Mario Molina and his colleague and wife Luisa describe an interdisciplinary effort to understand and solve the problem. The metropolitan area suffers from its location in a valley where polluted air is often trapped by the prevailing winds. The metropolitan area has grown rapidly over the last fifty years, bringing many more polluting businesses and residences into the valley. Moreover, the development has been sprawling and low density, which has encouraged high levels of motor vehicle use and emissions. So far Mexico has attacked the problem primarily by setting stricter standards for the emissions of motor vehicles and businesses, but the Molinas argue that it should also move some polluting activities, such as electric power plants, out of the valley.

Three other articles examine the effects of housing development patterns on social problems. Mariela Marino, an architect at the University of Buenos Aires, recounts the evolution over the past several decades of two exclusive forms of residential communities in Buenos Aires: squatter settlements for the very poor and gated suburban communities for the rich. Both contrast sharply with the traditional residential blocks formed by the street grids laid out by colonial planners in Buenos Aires and most other Latin cities. The grid pattern allowed residential neighborhoods to develop with distinctive character even while making those neighborhoods permeable to outsiders. The new squatter settlements and gated communities, in contrast, isolate the poor and the rich, reducing the interaction that is important to social understanding and to the richness and vitality of urban culture.

Even more troubling and less familiar is Graciela Fortín-Magaña's account of how otherwise laudable housing reforms resulted
Meléndez argues that the sanjuaneros have successfully converted suburban shopping malls into a new form of plaza where people of all classes go to mingle.

Two other articles discuss the potential of major infrastructure projects to transform a city socially and politically as well as economically. Arturo Ardila-Gómez explains how a series of mayors made Bogotá’s residents take pride in their city once again. The mayors changed attitudes in part by improving the physical quality of the city. They started small by keeping the streets clean and installing sidewalks where they were badly needed, and ultimately built a high-quality express busway system that is a model for other cities and a source of civic pride.

Pablo Allard describes how a major urban highway project ushered in a new era of citizen participation in the politics of metropolitan Santiago. The Ministry of Public Works had long wanted to relieve traffic congestion by building a major expressway that would cut east-west across the metropolitan area. The Ministry was unaccustomed to grassroots opposition to its projects, perhaps because many social organizations had been suppressed under the Pinochet regime. But when the Ministry unveiled its plans in the mid-1990s, neighborhoods along the route and environmentalists rebelled. They managed to win major concessions in the design of the project. Their success has transformed forever the politics of major infrastructure projects in Chile’s cities and encouraged citizen activism on other local issues as well.

Finally, many of these themes about the size and spatial organization of cities are brought together in a comprehensive study of Santiago led by Edward Glaeser, a professor in Harvard’s Economics Department, and John R. Meyer, who recently retired from the Kennedy School and the Economics Department. Glaeser, Meyer and their collaborators organized their study loosely around the question of whether Santiago, which is home to more than one-third of all Chileans, is too big. Being economists, their approach is to look at the incentives Chileans have to live in Santiago or elsewhere. Does government policy distort the location choices of firms and households by, for example, providing higher levels of support for public services in Santiago than in other cities? Their answer, in broad terms, is that the government policies seemed to favor Santiago unduly in the 1970s, but that government resources and services have been more evenly and equitably distributed across the country since the advent of democracy. There are some exceptions, most notably in education. Glaeser argues that the Chilean government spends too much on higher education relative to primary education, making the capital with its higher education institutions a magnet for the middle class. Education aside, government policy does not seem to significantly favor locations in Santiago over locations elsewhere.

Glaeser, Meyer and their colleagues also consider whether government policies toward Santiago’s transportation, housing, pollution, and other problems could be improved. Some of their findings echo those of other authors in this issue of ReVista. Santiago’s topography and air pollution problems are similar to those of Mexico City, for example, and will require tighter pollution emission standards similar to those recommended by Mario and Luisa Molina. Santiago should consider building busways instead of costly subway extensions, which is consistent with Arturo Ardila-Gómez’s praise for Bogotá’s new busway system. And the public housing projects for the poor in Santiago seem to exhibit some of the same problems that Graciela Fortín-Magaña found among the private housing projects for the poor in El Salvador. Like their private counterparts in San Salvador, Santiago’s public housing authorities economize on land costs by picking sites that are so remote that residents have long commutes and spend many hours away from their homes and children.

Cities often seem to be neglected in discussions of Latin America. Much of the attention is understandably focused on economic and political problems at the national scale such as the strength and stability of the economy, the burden of government debt, or the gains in democracy. But Latin America is highly urbanized, and ReVista’s “City Spaces” articles suggest how much and in how many ways the skill with which cities are built and city services are delivered matters.
Improving Urban Air Quality
The Mexico City Case Study

BY LUISA T. MOLINA AND MARIO J. MOLINA

In Sao Paulo, Santiago de Chile and Mexico City, some days you can hardly breathe the air. Likewise in Los Angeles, Beijing and Bangkok. Rapid population growth, uncontrolled urban expansion, unsustained economic growth, increased energy consumption and increased motorization all translate into serious air pollution problems in cities throughout the world. A persistent and pervasive threat to health, air pollution does more than choke lungs. It also poses a tremendous economic and social cost to society.

Over the past three years a benchmark integrated assessment of air quality in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area (MCMA)—one of the world’s largest megacities—has been undertaken by a team of Mexican, U.S. and other international scientists and engineers under our leadership. This case study of the Integrated Program on Urban, Regional and Global Air Pollution, a collaborative research and education program initiated at MIT, addresses in a coordinated and interdisciplinary manner the air pollution problems stemming from human activity in megacities. In the area of health, we have collaborated closely with our counterparts at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Mexico City epitomizes the types of environmental problems experienced by megacities around the world and the common obstacles to solving them. Although international attention has focused on global climate issues, most local decision makers do not take into account the relationships between urban, regional and global pollution in addressing the common causes—scientific, economic and social—that underlie these interrelated problems.

Through this integrated assessment approach, we develop recommendations emphasizing the interaction between a wide range of disciplines. The approach requires not just an understanding of the air pollution science but also how to balance economic, social and technological factors, and how to make decisions in the presence of uncertainty and incomplete data.

The Mexico City Program’s researchers have now published a book entitled The Air Quality in the Mexico Megacity: An Integrated Assessment, providing an overview of the current understanding of the air pollution problem, and lessons learned from air quality management programs to date. The book also includes recommendations for research and institutional change so that cost-effective measures can be efficiently developed and implemented. The material presented in the book has provided the foundation for the strategic planning for the new ten-year air quality management program prepared by the Mexican Metropolitan Environmental Commission (Comision Ambiental Metropolitana or CAM). Some of the recommendations suggested by the Program have already been adopted and implemented by the Mexican authorities.

AIR POLLUTION IN THE MEXICO CITY METROPOLITAN AREA

The Mexico City Metropolitan Area (MCMA) has undergone rapid population growth and massive transformation in the last century. As the site of the nation’s capital, the MCMA is home to the national political institutions, the greatest concentration of economic investments, and most of the country’s industrial and financial infrastructure. The MCMA has attracted migrants from other parts of the country and stimulated economic growth as the nation began industrialization. The population grew rapidly from 3 million in 1950 to 18 million in 2000, continually occupying land further away from the historic center of the Federal District. In the last half-century alone, the urbanized area of the region has increased more than ten times, from just 45 square miles in 1940 to 580 square miles by 1995. The expansion pushed the city beyond the Federal District and into some municipalities of the State of Mexico and other neighboring states.

The topography and meteorology of the MCMA contribute substantially to the problem of air pollution. The region where the MCMA is located is surrounded by mountains at a subtropical latitude and at high elevation (7350 ft above mean sea level), where thermal inversions are frequent phenomena and high pressure systems tend to "trap" the pollutants in the Valley. More than 18 million inhabitants, more than 3.5 million vehicles, and about 35,000 industries and services coexist in these conditions. Together, these activities consume more than 12 million gallons of fuel per day, producing emissions of thousands of tons of pollutants, which can react in the atmosphere to generate other pollutants that can be more dangerous to health than the original pollutants.

Both the Mexican government and citizens have recognized air pollution as a major social concern since the mid-1980s. In the 1990s, there were successful reductions in the concentrations of some pollutants such as lead, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide. Comprehensive air quality management programs were developed and carried out. The monitoring and evaluation of air pollution were improved. The government strengthened and began to enforce a vehicle inspection and maintenance program. Natural gas in industry and the power sector replaced fuel oil. Among other measures,
Buses, trucks and cars in Mexico City contribute to air pollution daily.

IMPACTS OF AIR POLLUTION

Human health is the major concern over air pollution and the major driving force for policy actions in the MCMA. However, the Program also considers effects of air pollution on ecosystems, as well as the linkage with global warming. Mexico, like other countries in the world, contributes to global warming and is likely to be affected by it.

A health effects sub-team—led by the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) in collaboration with Mexican scientists from the Environmental Health Office of the Health Ministry and the Autonomous Metropolitan University—has assessed health risks posed by current and anticipated levels of air pollution. It has also estimated the economic implications of Mexico City's air quality. The study focused on exposure to pollutants, mainly very small polluting particulates and ozone. The team found that in 1998 the average population exposure to particulate matter was comparable to those in several of the largest cities in the world (about 90 μg/m³). Studies in various cities around the world, including Mexico City, show a correlation between daily fluctuations in deaths and daily fluctuations in air pollution levels. The findings suggest that one more person out of every hundred would survive on any given day with just small decreases in air pollution (one for each 10 μg/m³ decrease in levels of PM₁₀). The implication is that such a reduction would reduce premature mortality in the Mexico City area by about 1000 cases. The effect could be several times larger if one considers long-term responses to particulate matter exposure.

Ozone levels have received much attention in Mexico City, as the one-hour air quality standard of 110 ppb is being exceeded more than 300 days every year. Although the effect on mortality is not as striking as that of particulate matter, ozone has significant effects on respiratory function and on hospital admissions for respiratory conditions such as asthma.

The monetary value of the health benefits expected from air pollution control is difficult to estimate because of the uncertainties of assigning monetary values to the reduction of health risks. Most estimates of the monetary value of reductions in mortality risks are derived using estimates of society's willingness to pay for such improvements. The first study of this kind in Mexico is being conducted as part of the Mexico City Program. Past estimates were extrapolated using values derived from studies conducted in the U.S. and other developed countries.

TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

Transportation is a critical enabler of economic activity and beneficial social interactions. Yet, the transport sector is the most important source of pollutants emitted into the MCMA atmosphere in 1998. The growing problems of congestion, accidents, and noise are also very worrisome. The MCMA now faces the challenge of reducing the adverse environmental impacts and other negative effects of transportation without giving up the benefits of mobility. This dilemma becomes most pressing under conditions of rapid urban growth, which is likely to increase travel demand significantly.

As the population has increased and the residential areas have decentralized, patterns of passenger trip mode choice in the MCMA have also shifted dramatically. Currently, the growth of private cars is 6% per year, while usage of metro and buses is decreasing. The road infrastructure lacks peripheral streets. Many vehicles lack basic pollution control
devices required by the vehicle inspection program. Despite regulations about maximum vehicle age, the taxi fleet is aging and has ill-maintained emission controls. The diesel truck fleet in Mexico is also severely aging (nearly 30% is 15 years or older) and turns over very slowly. Consequently, the emissions from motor vehicles and traffic congestion have grown considerably.

Although MCMA government authorities have taken major steps to reduce transportation emissions, new measures are needed to resolve the current chaotic situation. The growing need for transportation must be accompanied by incentives to increase turnover rate for vehicle fleet and retrofitting of trucks with emission control devices. Service quality and personal security must be provided to increase use of public transportation. Infrastructure must be developed to allow inter-city truck traffic to bypass downtown Mexico City. New specifications for lower sulfur content in gasoline and diesel should enable the introduction of future cleaner vehicle technologies. In short, a transport policy must be created throughout the entire MCMA that enables mobility with a low level of pollution.

INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL SECTORS

In addition to transport, pollution sources in the MCMA area include power generation; production of goods and services; home and industrial use of fuels and solvents; and the management and distribution of fuels. Soil erosion also emits dust into the atmosphere.

Two power plants, Jorge Lujane and Valle de Mexico, provide about 60% of the MCMA's power requirement. Despite improvements, certain production units are more than 40 years old. Both plants are coming to the end of their life cycle and must be replaced; the new ones should be built outside the Mexico City Valley. At the same time, the MCMA must implement a program for rational consumption of energy with a rate system that would encourage energy conservation.

In recent years, emissions from the industrial sector in the MCMA have tended to decrease, as a result of environmental measures such as shifts to less polluting fuels, the closure or relocation of some industries, and the installations of emission control devices. Large industries, which make up two percent of the industrial establishments in the MCMA, and a fraction of the medium-sized industries, are in general complying with environmental standards. Nevertheless, many medium-sized industries as well as most small and micro industries continue to emit significant amounts of pollutants.

In the commercial sector, hospitals, hotels, sports centers, laundries, paint shops, printing shops, tortilla factories, restaurants and gas stations are important sources of pollutants. The elimination of fuel oil usage at the beginning of the 1990s and the introduction of fuels with low sulfur content have significantly reduced emissions related to combustion processes in the commercial and service sectors. Nevertheless, the use of antiquated equipment that results in significant emission of pollutants still poses a serious problem.

More than five million homes generate atmospheric pollutants through daily activities such as cooking food, heating water, and using appliances and solvents. This sector consumes the majority of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) sold in the MCMA, as well as small amounts of fuel wood and a growing amount of natural gas and electricity. The MCMA authority is considering substituting LPG with natural gas for home cooking and solar energy for water heating.

Important efforts also need to be made in the informal economy sector. Out of the 7 million economically active people in the MCMA, about 40 percent were classified as being in the informal sector; most of these are selling products or services on the city's sidewalks and might contribute significantly to emission of pollutants.

METROPOLITAN COORDINATION AND CITIZENSHIP PARTICIPATION

One of the major obstacles to the implementation of anti-pollution measures in the MCMA is the lack of a powerful metropolitan institutional structure. The Metropolitan Environmental Commission (CAM)—an interagency that consists of environmental authorities from the federal government, the State of Mexico and the Federal District—was created in 1996 to coordinate the policies and programs that are implemented in the metropolitan area. However, CAM does not have a specific budget for its own operation, nor does it have a defined operational organizational structure. Furthermore, the constant change of personnel according to political winds, its lack of independent budget, and its lack of power to enforce regulations have a negative influence on the functioning of this agency. To ensure continuity in the implementation of long-term action plans, the CAM must be significantly restructured and should be empowered to carry out the planning, integration and implementation of metropolitan environmental policies.

During the design of the new air quality management program, the CAM increased its efforts to encourage public participation and stakeholder input by forming working groups consisting of representatives from academia, NGOs and industries. The Mexico City Program has implemented several activities including annual workshops and symposia, distinguished visiting faculty and scientists at MIT, air quality management courses for professionals, policy makers and environmental leaders from non-governmental organizations, media and industry. The outreach activities currently underway involve stakeholder education and participation. The awareness of the population and the active and informed participation of stakeholders are necessary to ensure public acceptance of pollution control policies.

NEXT STEPS

As the program enters a second phase, field measurement campaigns focus on updating and improving the MCMA emissions inventory, as well as increasing current knowledge of the chemistry, dispersion and transport processes of pollutants. A February 2002 exploratory field measurement campaign utilized state-of-the-art instrumentation such as an aerosol mass spectrometer, tunable diode lasers coupled to long-path absorption cells, a proton-transfer mass spectrometer, and a fine particle monitor that selectively samples soot particles. The field measurement campaign, a joint effort of the MIT Mexico
City Program and the CAM, involves the participation of many U.S. and Mexican institutions and agencies. An intensive campaign has been scheduled for Spring 2003. The data obtained from the field measurements will be fed into a regional-scale air pollution model in order to provide a firm scientific foundation for regulatory decision-making to reduce air pollution and human health impacts.

Another activity involves a pilot study of diesel exhaust exposure in the Mexico City area to investigate if the incidence of lung cancer in trucking company employees can be linked to their personal exposures to diesel exhaust. This MIT-Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) pilot study is an extension of an HSPH project being conducted in clusters of both large and small trucking terminals and related truck routes in many locations throughout the United States, as well as in some terminals in Canada.

A team led by HSPH has been developing a benefit-cost analysis for selected strategies to reduce air pollution in Mexico City. The first strategy under scrutiny is the use of particle traps and low-sulfur fuel for diesel engines, as employed in buses and possibly trucks. The team has developed an analytic framework incorporating capital and operating costs changes in emissions of important pollutants (primary particles, NOx), health effects, and valuation of those effects.

Thus, the Program brings together health, transportation, administration, and many other interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and defeating air pollution. Although we have focused on the Mexico City area, the work carried out under this Program has significance for developing nations generally. Policies to reduce air pollution must be based on the best available scientific knowledge; however, political will and capacity must transform this knowledge into action. What is learned from this Mexico City Case Study will provide insights on the challenges and opportunities facing other megacities of the world.

Luisa T. Molina is an atmospheric chemist and the Executive Director of the Integrated Program on Urban, Regional and Global Air Pollution at MIT. Mario J. Molina is Institute Professor at MIT; he received the 1995 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his scientific work on stratospheric ozone. They are the editors of Air Quality in the Mexico Megacity: An Integrated Assessment. (Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 2002). They would like to acknowledge Fideicomiso Ambiental del Valle de México, MIT/AGS Program and the US National Science Foundation for financial support of this Program.

Hysteria in Histórico
A Mexico City Neighborhood

"Muy muy ruidoso" was all we could say, in our idiomatically challenged Spanish, to describe the congestion of Histórico—the wildly lively neighborhood adjacent to the zócalo in Mexico City. Really really noisy.

The noise didn't bother us, though. It seemed to us, on our second visit there in ten years, that the noise was being produced in good-hearted earnest by the most gentle and generous people we'd ever met. The cacophony was the culmination of vendors hawking their inexpensive wares (underwear, toys, radios, pans, linens, jeans, and probably even sinks) from awnings they'd pitched on the sidewalk of every block in the surrounding square mile. It was being produced by the drivers of the ubiquitous, hecho-en México Volkswagen beetles towing their horns down streets packed with a million shoppers—and by the chatty, warm, disarmingly modest Mexican shoppers themselves, making their way in cuddly couples, ornery single-gender gangs of young people, and entire extended family units through the ever-moving crowd. Steno-steaming short-order cooks and tropical-fruit vendors cried out on every corner. Tostadas. Maiz. Papas. Mangos. Everything was for sale.

We moved in time with the crowd down 16th-century streets, past the original, monumental buildings of the neighborhood that earthquakes and air pollution haven't been able to crumble yet. Passing the courtyard-enclosing mansions that the Spanish aristocrats had their construction crews build on top of Tenochtitlan, the center of Moctezuma's Mesoamerican empire, we talked about the likelihood of Cortés appearing ahead of us, with his Aztec trophy-wife on his arm. We passed a gloomy-looking abbey where handsome priests with pointed beards and brown robes straight out of the dark Spanish paintings had wept and fasted, wept and prayed, noting how each city block resembled a self-enclosed fortress with a flat but grand façade now a bit begrimmed around its eye-like windows and mouth-like doors.

It was expensive in a sordid way to appreciate the contrast between the giddy crowd of ordinary people on the sidewalk—readers of pulp fiction, watch-wearing telenovela-watchers—and the stately, old-world solemnity of the colonial blocks where they lived and stopped. To see anything but unintentional humor, and to feel anything but a bittersweet pathos, in a card table piled a foot high in t-shirts out in front of some colonial legislator's home that practically oozed atmosphere—well, it would have been a feat. So it didn't surprise us to see some bold back brassieres displayed on hangers under a tent across the street from a church—though we did a double-take on spotting a tired-looking man in a white Boston University Terriers baseball cap offsetting his creased brown face.

The tacky, tacky, plastic-fantastic merchandise at every vendor's stand included melodramatic CDs by sultry heartthrobs of both sexes whose latest croons blared from boom boxes; cheap hip dolls bought by the boatload for next to nothing from gringo warehouses; rakes and racks of sunglasses, Walkmen, knock-offs, and pencils.

It did come as a pleasant surprise, then, when we saw an authentic Mexican culinary product—more than a dozen kinds of chiles—for sale on tables set out front of a first-floor warehouse on a side street. Some of the chiles we knew by name if not appearance: anchos, pimientos, jalapeños, serranos, pasillas, and habaneros. Dried and smoked, red and black, short and long, slender and stout—they'd all been taken from densely packed crates or burlap bags and stocked on the long tables along the sidewalk, stem-ends facing the street. Lying shoulder-to-shoulder, they looked like the casualties of some very hot battle—like the Aztecs themselves, it occurred to us later, after Cortés had gotten ahold of them.

Scott Ruescher is the Assistant to the Director at the Harvard Graduate School of Education Program.
Understanding Santiago de Chile and Latin America’s Urban Landscape

BY EDWARD L. GLAESER

To this urbanist, the cities of Latin America inspire grand passions. The cities north of the Rio Grande include old friends and occasionally disliked acquaintances. I’m very fond of Chicago; Los Angeles irks me. But I could never use such tepid terms about the great cities of South America. I enjoy Beacon Hill, but my heart stops when I think about sunset along the beach at Ipanema. San Francisco can be charming, but Buenos Aires, even during last year’s riots, is always dazzling. American ghettos are very sad, but their sadness is dwarfed by the seas of deprivation that exist in the favelas of far too many Latin American cities.

Latin American cities are enticing to students of cities because they combine great promise and great tragedy. Central Paris is beautiful, but it’s difficult to get excited about trying to fix the problems of the Place des Vosges. To an urban economist, that is the equivalent of a doctor specializing in the minor ailments of the very rich. Detroit has problems, but I have long argued that in the long run, the happiness of Detroit’s current residents will be better served by letting the city collapse, than by trying to undertake the impossible task of revitalizing a city that no longer has any economic rationale. Mexico City, Caracas, Bogotá, Lima, São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Santiago (among others) suffer from congestion, pollution, crime, and vast social inequities, but each one has achieved some measure of greatness and has the potential to be much, much better. The great cities of Latin America, to some extent, combine the social problems of Detroit with the promise of a Paris. This is what makes them so exciting to me and to many other urban economists.

My serious involvement with Latin American cities began 10 years ago during my first year as an assistant professor at Harvard University. Then, as now, many of the most brilliant of our Ph.D. students came from South and Central America. One of the students in the first Ph.D. class on urban economics that I ever taught was a Chilean, Juan Braun. Juan and his family (his father had been a student at Harvard in the 1960s) had a profound interest in the problems of Santiago, and indeed in the urban problems of Chile broadly defined. While Chile has received a remarkable amount of attention from economists over the last three decades, little of that attention has been devoted to urban issues.

The Brauns were convinced that Chile had major urban problems stemming from centralization in Santiago—they believed that congestion, pollution, and infrastructure problems were not being studied. They, and the firm Forestal Valparaíso, commissioned John Meyer (a founding father of transportation economics) and myself to lead a team of researchers to analyze Chile’s urban problems. This year, the fruits of that research were published by Harvard University Press in the form of the edited volume Chile: The Economic Development.

The book is loosely organized around the question: Is Santiago too big? This same question could be asked of many American cities which dominate their hinterlands to an extent that is almost unimaginable to a denizen of our suburbanized nation. More than one-third of Chileans live within the metropolitan area of the capital city. Buenos Aires and Montevideo are similarly dominant within their own countries. While the U.S. and Canada are nations of remarkably decentralized urban systems, Latin American countries are nations with dramatic centralization. Our book tried to understand why this pattern occurred and attempted to define the social costs and benefits of this centralization.

In addition to editing the volume, I undertook a wide-ranging study of the mega-city phenomenon. Jointly with another Ph.D. student, Alberto Aídes (from Buenos Aires), I published a paper called “Trade and Circuses: Explaining Urban Giants,” in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, which used cross-national data and urban history, back to Rome, to understand the megacity phenomenon. We found that urban centralization has more to do with politics than economics. In stable democracies, on average, 23 percent of the urban population live in the largest city. In dictatorships, the comparable number is 35 percent, and these largest cities are almost always the capitals. The great cities of Latin America, to some extent, combine the social problems of Detroit with the promise of a Paris.

Small capitals are almost uniquely a feature of former British colonies, which generally undertook large political efforts to ensure that they would not develop imperial cities, which grew large on the wealth of the hinterland. The U.S. Senate, somewhat absurdly but not irrationally, unduly empowers the empty spaces of the American west. In a world where the hinterland is not protected by artificial institutions such as this, political influence deprecates with space. The nation’s leaders care about riots in the capital but to them, agrarian revolts hundreds of miles away are far less troubling. Activists close to the corridors of power can effectively lobby in a way that people far away cannot. As a result of this greater influence, the government ends up spending more on people who live close to the capital. The bread allocations in classical Rome favored the capital city, and government spending in 1950s Mexico under the PRI did the same. As government spending favors the capital, the residents of the hinterland mobilize, fleeing rural poverty to get their share of government largesse. The outcome of this pro-capital distribution of government favors is a large capital city. This is why political factors are so powerful in explaining the presence of mega-cities: these political factors determine the extent to which there is a pro-capital bias in government policies.

Chile: The Political Economy of Urban Development tried to understand this urbanization process in one country and then asked:
what would better urban policies look like? During the era of Santiago’s greatest expansion, during the early 1970s and earlier, we found a familiar pattern: government spending was highly oriented towards the capital city. Large scale spending on infrastructure, education and social programs was all disproportionately oriented towards Santiago. But by the 1990s, this pattern had essentially disappeared. We could find little evidence (outside of higher education and the subway system) of an uneven distribution of resources. The transition of Chile into a stable democratic system had led to a spatial equity and as a result, the growth of Santiago (relative to the rest of the country) had leveled off.

Still, the legacy of a century of disproportionate growth remained with us. Even though the government now appears to be spatially neutral, the city’s dominance creates a number of major problems, which we thought necessitated reform. Our book contains essays on transportation, pollution, housing, environmental infrastructure and social services such as education. All of these essays presented specific suggestions for reform, many of which have now been implemented.

Matthew Kahn (now of Tufts) and Suzi Kerr (then a Harvard Ph.D. student, now Director of Motu Research) addressed Santiago’s pollution problem. Like Los Angeles, Santiago suffers from a thermal inversion problem, which means that the pollution generated by its businesses, households and cars doesn’t blow away, but instead creates dark, pollution covered skies, reminiscent of Victorian London or industrial Pittsburgh. While Santiago’s geography conspires to create a harmful air quality, man-made factors, such as unpaved roads, leaded gasoline and traditional fireplaces, can all be changed to make the city more livable. Indeed, there have been dramatic changes in the air quality of the Los Angeles Basin since the 1970s, which reflect the technological improvements in gasoline and the automobile. Kahn and Kerr argued for a higher gasoline tax, and policies that would update the automobile fleet (in par-
ticular the buses). Paving roads and penalizing businesses that pollute would also help to make the city more livable.

John Kain (the erstwhile ornament of Harvard's urban economics program) and his student Zhi Liu (a former Harvard Ph.D. student, now of the World Bank) focused on transportation policy. They argued that mistaken government policies had led to an imbalance of investment in rail and roads, both in Santiago and across the country. Instead of expanding Santiago's subway system, Kain and Liu argued for dedicated bus lanes and better road infrastructure. They particularly emphasized the fact that the highway system was under-developed outside of the Santiago metropolitan area, and that this contributed to the congestion in the central city. Kain and Liu also suggested that a combination of more road construction and congestion pricing (i.e. higher tolls and taxes on car usage in the central city) could be used to make the streets more user-friendly.

Amerita Daniere and José Gómez-Ibañez tackled the area of environmental infrastructure. In the early 1990s, typhoid and cholera were significant problems in Santiago and appeared to be closely linked to the failure to treat wastewater properly. It is an axiom of local public finance that producing clean water is the most critical function of city governments. Daniere and Gómez-Ibañez argued that only six percent of Chile's wastewater is appropriately treated before disposal. To them, investment in waste treatment is a clear necessity and should be the first order of business for the Santiago region.

Denise DiPasquale and Jean Cummings (of City Research) researched Chile's housing policies. Chile, like many cities, has an aggressive policy of building public housing. The development of public housing in Santiago appeared to follow the dictates of expediency rather than true social costs. As such, the housing is built far away from employment centers, creating daily commutes often upwards of two hours. Subsidized public housing appears to have pursued a false economy by trying to minimize land costs without considering the long-term costs of congestion and lost time from commuting.

Finally, I looked at the provision of health, welfare and schooling expenditures throughout Chile. While there were certainly past issues of underprovision in the hinterland, I was impressed by the degree to which Chilean policies had now managed to provide reasonable levels of primary schooling and health services throughout the country. On the other hand, Chile's massively subsidized higher education sector overwhelmingly resides in the capital. This subsidization both favors the wealthy (who are the primary users of subsidized higher education) and ensures the continued concentration of the country's elites in Santiago. I urged a balancing of government expenditures towards primary spending and greater spatial neutrality in the subsidies for higher education.

I also looked at Chile's political system and argued that it too appeared to favor the capital city. For example, while Brazil and the U.S. are marked by federal systems that leave a great deal of room for local innovation, Chile is still remarkably centralized. As a result, the growth of new cities is stunted, making it difficult for local entrepreneurs to succeed. While American city governments have a great deal of freedom to borrow and expand, Chilean cities are still dominated by central control, which invariably tends to stifle local initiative. Unsurprisingly, these observations led me to believe that political decentralization was a necessary move for urban balance in the country.

While the book is about Chile, I have tended to take its lessons and its methodology with me throughout the world. All of our lives are deeply influenced by the cities in which we live, and these cities are ultimately as much the product of government policy as of private initiative. As such, government policies throughout the developing world must better respond to the great problems of cities: pollution and congestion. Moreover, the tendency of centralized political leaders to concentrate power in their own hands is a curse to urban development outside the capital. Healthy urban hierarchies depend on a government structure that respects local initiative and protects the rights of people throughout the country, not just the residents of the capital.

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LATIN AMERICAN CITIES TODAY ARE forging civic movements concerned about large-scale urban projects. In Chile, as in many other Latin American countries, participation in urban and environmental matters was largely ignored until recently.

Triggered by increased democratization, economic growth, globalization trends, environmental and social requirements for international trade agreements, and political activism, Latin American urban citizens are speaking out. They reflect the growing worldwide public participation and environmental legislation that have spawned a change in civic attitudes towards large scale projects.

Like their outspoken counterparts in the United States in the late 1960s through the 1970s, Chilean civic activists are challenging highway construction.

Towards the end of 1995, residents in Santiago communities around the proposed urban highway began whispering that planning authorities were once again discussing the project—dormant for more than forty years. The road layout, by the time it was originally drafted, had been partial and unclear. As years went by, planning authorities completely ignored the old plans and allowed the consolidation of residential and informal settlements along the land corridor reserved for the highway's right of way. Once rumors became official press releases, the “East-West System,” better known as “Costanera Norte Highway,” began to be developed as part of the national roadways concessions program. The Chilean government had developed and successfully implemented this program as a mixed public and private model for infrastructure provisions for non-urban highways since the early '90s. “Costanera Norte” was to be the first of a new system of urban toll roads to be developed within this concession scheme in Santiago, and the government stakes were high in the matter.

Costanera Norte is a thirty-kilometer long privatized urban highway planned by the Chilean Ministry of Public Works (MOP) to increase mobility within the metropolitan region and to cope with escalating congestion problems. The projected road would inevitably bisect the city from east to west along the northern banks of the Mapocho River, running from the wealthier suburbs of the city to the poor western settlements near Santiago’s international airport. On its projected track, the road will cross more than eleven municipalities and some of the most consolidated areas of downtown Santiago. These central areas are the most sensitive to negative disruption effects given the lack of space for the road and the imminent need for expropriations, destruction and spatial segregation created by a restricted access highway. The project promoter, Ricardo Lagos, then Minister of Public Works and current president of...
Like their outspoken counterparts in the United States in the late 1960s through the 1970s, Chilean civic activists are challenging highway construction.

In order to understand the novelty of such a reaction, we must realize that during the Pinochet military regime (1973–1989), most social organizations such as advocacy groups, labor unions, NGOs, and civic activists were banned, eliminating a long-standing tradition of social participation in Chilean politics. Despite the political persecution, most of these groups enjoyed strong support from international organizations. Also, the technical and professional level of their members was remarkable, and their contribution to causes such as human rights and political reform were of paramount importance. After the return to democracy, most of these experts and activists became involved in the new government, and international support went directly to governmental initiatives. This shift in attention undermined the performance of many NGOs and civil organizations, questioning their role in the new democratic society. The case of Costanera Norte is clearly the best example of the resurrection of active civil involvement and community organization with respect to urban matters in Chile, a phenomenon that even the new democratic government never expected.

It started with the joint effort of two "juntas de vecinos," the Chilean equivalent to school districts, rapidly incorporating several business groups, environmental activists, and the strong Committee for the Defense of the Santiago Metropolitan Park, a mountain park in the middle of the city whose hill steps were to be severed by the six-lane toll road. In a matter of months, the "Coordinadora No a la Costanera Norte" became a coalition of more than 25 community organizations representing about 50,000 citizens. The novelty of this case, at least in Chilean history, is the fact that the coalition included for the first time a variety of actors and interests that bridged historical divisions such as political interests and both social and economic status. Chile is still a country where power structures are socially determined; therefore, "pobladores" or informal settlers sitting at the same table with rich homeowners, businessmen, and informal street merchants, was completely unprecedented. One of their first actions was to meet with authorities from the MOP and the Municipality of Providencia. This upper-middle class residential and commercial area of the city was in the heart of the impending disruption; the commercial area of Bellavista and the residential neighborhood of Pedro de Valdivia Norte would be especially affected, so its citizens set out to find a way to stop the project and revise the government plans. Three months after the meeting, the Coordinadora decided to sue the MOP.

Civic groups needed to develop strategies based on lessons learned from past conflicts. As recently as 1992, citizens failed to successfully oppose subway line 5, a MOP transit viaduct built without consideration of its urban impact. The coalition developed a strategy based on:

- The experience from other ongoing conflicts at the time, mostly related to a major gas pipeline crossing the Andes and several forestry- and mining-related disputes.
- Networking with international groups involved in anti-highway disputes in Toronto, Canada, the United States, and Europe.
- Identifying and engaging renowned experts and academics with the expertise in transportation, planning, urban design, and sustainability in order to reinforce the group's knowledge base and arguments.
- A detailed study of the concession and bidding process, in which they identified key moments where their action could stop the project such as the environmental impact assessment, authority decisions near electoral periods, and litigation in particular moments of the bidding that could deter the entire process.

In February 1996, the "Coordinadora" presented an alternative alignment proposing the construction of a tunnelled highway in order to protect the hillsides of Mount San Cristobal, the city's Metropolitan Park. The alternative alignment was accompanied by a new lawsuit against the current project that was almost immediately rejected by the courts. Soon after, the Coordinadora started a signature campaign and called for an open town council as a consequence of the council discussion. Afterwards, the Coordinadora established that it did not oppose the project itself but rather its projected path through a residential area. The group then began a campaign strategy that included constant litigation and legal pressure against the project and its supporters, thereby forcing the project to go through the SEIA, the Environmental Impact Assessment process recently incorporated into the 1994 Environmental Law. When the Ministry of Public Works decided to submit the project to the Environmental Impact Study, the authorities were not expecting the level of controversy that
this process would cause.

Group experts were actively involved in the few opportunities opened for participation within the SEIA process. Citizenship involvement escalated. They organized rallies and public manifestations. They applied political pressure on local representatives and officers; they conducted an aggressive communications campaign intended to discourage foreign investors to participate in the bid. They worked on getting ample media coverage of all of the group's actions. The SEIA process determined that MOP had to make radical changes in the project to reduce and mitigate environmental damage. These changes would make it too expensive for private interests to participate in the bidding process for the concession. Independent of the impact of the changes mandated by SEIA, the project went up for bid several times without any success. Despite the early opposition and defiant stand of the Coordinadora, the MOP started a massive press campaign aimed to inform the general public about the benefits of the project, organizing meetings with the eight directly involved municipalities as well as county councils and neighborhood associations. They promised amazing urban improvement programs if they endorsed the project.

Pressured by the timing and its commitment to the urban highway program, MOP decided in December 1998 to call for a definitive bid. This bid failed and was later declared void since it had only one offer submitted which had not complied with the requirements of the bid. The main reasons for the failure were the difficulties posed by the project's complexity, the high cost in terms of the required expertise. However, the number of offers submitted was low and those that were submitted were not of the expected quality. Moreover, the project was also affected by the political instability of the time.

The surprising result of the bid and the continued disruptive nature of the alignment came as a defeat to the group. Likewise, the citizen coalition's leverage began to fade away as time passed without any news from MOP or the concessionary regarding the details of the project. That silence ended in January 2001 when authorities announced the possibility of a new alignment that would be different from all other previously discussed options and would avoid disruption of the two main contested areas—Mount San Cristóbal and the historic district of Bellavista. The new alignment would run a tunnel along and under the riverbanks, presenting a creative and risky solution that reduced most of the impact on nearby neighborhoods and took into account the group's main concerns about its design. Realizing that most of their claims against the project were now obsolete and out of place, the defeated citizen coalition called an end to its fight and left its members the option to negotiate monetary compensations directly with the concessionary.

Despite the abrupt end of the conflict that gave birth to the organization, it maintained its functions. It began to focus on the urban redevelopment and community participation advocacy at a regional scale, building on their long experience in the "battleground" and recognition and financial support by international groups. The coalition decided to become an official non-governmental organization and changed its name to Ciudad Viva (Living City). The organization has participated actively in current debates around the 2003 transportation plan for Santiago as well as several other public initiatives related to urban development and the environment. Even the government and its former adversary, President Lagos, have recognized the value of the coalition, and so they have officially invited its representatives to participate on the board of a national urban reform taskforce. Along with their advocacy and policy-making activities, Ciudad Viva is currently working in training communities to defend their urban rights and to develop their own urban development plans.

Thus, what started as one of the most controversial urban conflicts of the previous decades in Chile ended up with a less disruptive road. Moreover, it paved the way for a renewed responsive civilian participation in urban policy making and development.

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The sleek red bus zooms out of the station in northern Bogotá, a futuristic symbol of an (almost) transformed city. Nearby, thousands of cyclists of all ages enjoy a sunny morning on Latin America's largest bike-path network.

The transmilenio, as the modern bus network is called, moves 750,000 passengers per weekday—almost 100,000 more than Washington D.C.'s subway system. And Bogotá's citizens are proud of their transportation, proud of their city.

That wasn't always the case. In 1988, during Colombia's first mayoral elections, a local radio station launched its own "virtual" candidate. The candidate's transport platform was simple: instead of fixing all the roads, why not remove the pavement remaining to level out potholes. Vehicles would then no longer have to "sink" into potholes—instead they would simply ride over the unpaved street.

Highlighting the deteriorated transportation infrastructure, the imaginary candidate argued that his solution would match the city's scant financial resources. The situation only grew worse. By 1993, Bogotá had become totally chaotic. The quality of life deteriorated, with few city services. One could say that the city mistreated its inhabitants, and the citizens reacted in kind. People often tossed their garbage on the street. Drivers careened their cars at pedestrians, actually speeding up as people attempted to cross the street. No one stopped for red lights.

It was not chévere to be Bogotano. Bogotá was—and is—a city of immigrants from all over Colombia. These folk always spoke kindly about their places of origin and, when visiting them, behaved well. They would never dream of throwing garbage on a sidewalk in their home town. Yet in Bogotá, fewer than ten years ago, the process was to mistreat the city. The city did not meet the expectations of the citizens and as a result, the citizens did not feel a bond with it.

Today, Bogotá is a transformed city—almost. Transportation infrastructure and policies are now so innovative that many cities in Latin America plan to follow its example. Overall service delivery by the city government is probably the best in the country. And more importantly, inhabitants love their city; it is now chévere to be Bogotano.

What happened in this short period of time? How could a city emerge from its worst crisis to become such an innovator in urban policy that its government has won several international awards and prizes? I've tried to answer these questions in this essay through the lens of Bogotá's urban transport sector, which has probably witnessed the most substantial transformation relative to other city services.

THE MONEY MAKER AND "FOUNDING FATHER"

The "founding father" of the (almost) transformed Bogotá is Jaime Castro, Bogotá's mayor between 1992 and 1994. And I say, ironically of course, that he is the "founder" because he wrote Bogotá's 1993 Charter. When I interviewed Jaime Castro for my research in November, 2001, I asked him about the process for drafting and enacting Bogotá's Charter, specifically about who had participated in the process. His response, after a short pause, was "well... me... only me... with the help of one expert in municipal finance for that part of the Charter."

Sounds authoritarian? Sure. But Bogotá was lucky enough to elect a knowledgeable, responsible mayor who could go beyond the usual authoritarianism that creates a caudillo—a leader followed blindly by the people.

Bogotá's Charter is important to the story I am telling. First, the municipal finance section of the Charter modernized the tax code of Bogotá and gave the city instruments to significantly increase its revenues. In 1994, tax collection was almost twice that in 1993. Tax revenue continued to grow rapidly until the 1999 Colombian recession. With more funds, the city was able to invest more in many areas including transportation, significantly improving road conditions.

Second, the Charter created a very strong executive, weakened the city council, and most importantly, opened the doors for civil society to participate in the decision-making process. Certainly I do not condone weakening the powers of the city council—or for that matter creating an authoritarian mayor—but introducing civil society as a legitimate political actor was very important because it democratized city government and helps explain the transformation of Bogotá.

BUILDING CITIZENSHIP

In the 1994 elections, Bogotanos elected Antanas Mockus as mayor. The liberal party candidate, Enrique Peñalosa, lost because party politicians had fallen out of favor. Mockus is to some extent the quintessential anti-politician—he was an academic, lacked a political party when first elected, his campaign cost only $3000 dollars, and he had never been elected before.

Yet he had ample experience—he had been president of the National University of Colombia and had lobbied Congress using a plastic-toy sword to defend the budget allocation for the University, which Congress was planning to reduce. Mockus, above all, believes in the power of symbols to communicate and transform—hence the plastic sword as a symbol of his will to fight for the University.
Mockus argued that Bogotanos needed to learn how to be good citizens, that lack of citizenship was why they mistreated the city, evaded taxes, and why violent crime was so high among others. His first priority was therefore to “build citizenship” through several campaigns that used symbols, many of them relating to transportation. Campaigns tried to teach people to obey basic traffic laws such as stopping at a red light, giving priority to pedestrians and taking the bus only at bus stops.

Despite these problems, Bogotanos did change their behavior noticeably. It became more common to see drivers stopping for pedestrians, and both bus drivers and riders using bus stops. Equally important, people started changing the way they viewed the city, identifying with the city in a positive fashion.

Mockus also started the planning of important initiatives in the areas of public space and transportation. He planned and slowly implemented policies to recover public space from street vendors and illegally parked cars. He also had planners design enhanced sidewalks and his administration built the first paths for the exclusive use of bicycles. In transportation, the Mockus administration carried out extensive studies for improving and expanding the “bus rapid transit” network of the city—more on this below—and discarded plans for the construction of a subway line because of excessive costs.

Despite the effort put into these initiatives, it would be Mockus’ successor (Colombia prohibits immediate reelection), Enrique Peñalosa, who would significantly improve and enhance these plans, implement them and carry out the physical part of the transformation of Bogotá. Yet Mockus had achieved a great deal. A transformation had started, the government was delivering on its promises, and people had begun to build a sense of belonging, treating the city better as a result.

(BE)-BUILDING THE CITY

Enrique Peñalosa, now as an independent candidate, was elected mayor late in 1997 on a platform that emphasized building infrastructure as a catalyst for social and economic change. Peñalosa inherited the city in good financial shape, and he was lucky enough to also benefit from significant proceeds from the City Power Company’s privatization.

This windfall allowed Peñalosa to launch the most important construction program in the history of the city to transform—almost—the face of Bogotá. This program was so enormous that graffiti sprung up declaring “promises, yes, construction, no”—an ironic critique of past mayors who promised a lot but built little and a protest of the fact that most of the city had become a construction site.

The development of city infrastructure catalyzed a social transformation because peo-
people were beginning to see a city that delivered, a city with a different, kinder, friendlier face. A city that looked well taken care of and that people would therefore find difficult to litter, to mistreat, a city where "behaving well" matched the new "look" of the city.

And this certainly worked—as it has in many other cities. The main example of Bogotá's social transformation through infrastructure is TransMilenio, a bus rapid transit project where the infrastructure and buses are modern, beautiful, and clean, and the system is respectful of the user. People respect the system, feel protected by it, and as a result they protect it from anyone trying to harm it.

The still-functioning old bus system, with its mostly decrepit and polluting vehicles, gets little respect from its users and is vandalized frequently. Even its operators barely stop to collect and drop off passengers, endangering the lives of the users and disrespecting them. Clearly, TransMilenio is the new public image of the city—people agree to meet at its stations, which have become landmarks—and people are collectively proud of its facilities and the important step forward it represents.

Building infrastructure was also expected to catalyze economic development. The line of reasoning is that if the infrastructure is sound, the city will look better and hence capital, particularly foreign, will find a good and safe city to invest in. Certainly some economic growth has been seen as a result of this huge investment in constructing city infrastructure—from sidewalks to busways, to schools and day-care centers, to wide avenues and the largest bike-path network in Latin America. Yet this assumption was not enough because of slow economic growth and the impact of the war in the countryside. As a result, poverty kept growing in Bogotá.

Overall, the most important result of the construction program was a facelift for the city. Again I use the TransMilenio bus rapid transit project as the showcase example. Bus rapid transit seeks to transfer the advantages of a metro to bus service—boarding from a station, paying when entering the station, vehicles stopping only at stations. The main objectives are to use buses to move thousands of passengers at a relatively high speed, without congestion and with comfort. To achieve this, bus rapid transit builds segregated lanes for the exclusive use of buses; cars and trucks use separate lanes. Stations are also built so that users pay when entering the station and they can board the bus as soon as station and bus doors open.

The results of TransMilenio's first stage, a total of three lines, are impressive without a doubt. The system moves 750,000 passengers per weekday—almost 100,000 more than Washington D.C.'s subway system. Yet the latter has a network of over 100 miles and TransMilenio's first stage is only 26 miles long.

MEDELLÍN
BOMBAS Y POESÍA

Legué a Medellín el día después de la bomba. Concentrada en los preparativos del viaje, no sabía lo que había pasado. Sólo cuando llegué a Medellín me enteré de todo.
La noche anterior había explotado un carro bomba en una zona muy concurrida de la ciudad, el Parque Urras. Habían muerto muchas personas y otras tantas estaban heridas. El viaje del aeropuerto a la ciudad, paradójicamente en un hermosísimo atardecer de verano, estuvo acompañado de sombrías historias del día anterior y de la presencia del ejército nacional que hacía retener a cada curva de la carretera.

Eso primero días de mi viaje transcurrían entre el placer y la tranquilidad de volver a lo conocido; y el miedo y la zozobra que se respiraban en la ciudad. Medellín era presa de rumores que vaticinaban otra explosión en cualquier momento. En medio de este caos comenzó el Festival Internacional de poesía: 113 poetas, 73 países, 140 lecturas de poetas, 11 municipios de Antioquia y 90 sedes en la ciudad celebraron la poesía por diez días a comienzos del mes de junio. Medellín era sede de uno de los más grandes eventos de poesía viva del mundo.

El Festival había tenido que derrotar dos grandes barreras: la situación de violencia y pánico de la ciudad y la idea de que el disfrute de la poesía es un ejercicio solitario e íntimo, para poder congregarse los poetas de todo el mundo sino también a un público heterogéneo y abundante. Este era el llamado que hacían sus organizadores: Lejos de ser absolutamente solitario, el combate de la poesía por recobrarlos, debe reunir energéticamente a los humanos en torno al espíritu poético, para resistir a la globalización de la desesperanza.

La entrada a todos los eventos era gratuita. Cada evento reunía a cuatro o cinco poetas de diferentes nacionalidades que leían su poesía en su lengua nativa. El público totalmente varia
do, niños, profesores, amas de casa, viajeros, estudiantes, podía disfrutar de la musicalidad y la fuerza de una lengua desconocida: árabe, griego, ruso, lenguas indígenas colombianas entre otras más. Al finalizar, un intérprete leía los poemas en español. Cada lectura duraba de una a dos horas y comenzaban desde temprano en la mañana hasta casi la medianoche. Los lugares de encuentro también variaban: había lecturas en las universidades, en los parques, en los bares, de cualquier zona de Medellín. Además, esto se complementaba con una gran cantidad de eventos relacionados: exposiciones de poesía experimental, ciclos de cine, cursos de poesía, venta de libros y transmisiones por televisión. La ciudad se unía en un trance de palabras y el Festival cumplía su objetivo: celebrar la existencia en masiva compañía, en el ejercicio de su acción poética convocar sus fuerzas, encender el fuego del alma colectiva para detener la masacre.

Y no era la primera vez. Este era el décimo primer festival que se realizaba en Medellín. El festival ha sobrevivido no sólo este caos, sino miles de otros momentos difíciles de la ciudad. O mejor dicho, ha nacido y ha podido subsistir en medio de una espiral de violencia que parece no cesar en Medellín. Por unos días, esa ciudad fragmentada y ensangrentada se puede unir en torno a la fuerza de la palabra. ¿Servirá de algo? No lo sé, pero por lo menos a mí me ayudó a reconciliarme un poco con esa ciudad que tanto amo y tanto odio. Ya estaba lista para regresar a Boston. Traía consigo las palabras de esperanza de la poeta griega, Athena Papadaki: "Lo que tengo de inmortal es la utopía."

Claudia Mejía es de Medellín, Colombia y profesora de españo

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Claudia Mejía es de Medellín, Colombia y profesora de español (lectura) en el Departamento de Lenguas Romances de Tufts University.
Buses now flow much faster than before and save time for riders. Thousands of people who usually commuted by car switched to using TransMilenio. And because the buses are environmentally friendly there is a net environmental gain. Further, the cost of TransMilenio was only a tenth of a never-built subway line with a similar alignment.

To implement these changes and projects in the short three-year mayoral term Peñalosa resorted to a team of highly qualified planners. Peñalosa argued in an interview that given the critical situation of Bogotá there was no time for debates, discussions, and consensus building proper of democratic practice, and acknowledged he had to “make a number of strategic decisions in a rather undemocratic manner.”

The preliminary results of my dissertation—TransMilenio is one of the cases—are that at least for the planning and implementation of TransMilenio’s first stage, the latter was not true. Instead, the planning team conducted many debates and discussions with relevant stakeholders and even the population at large. Planners took advantage of the enhanced participation of civil society allowed by the city Charter and were therefore able to assemble a coalition in support of the project that ultimately made the project politically feasible.

Interestingly, Peñalosa faced strong opposition precisely when he and his administration team forgot to address controversies in a “democratic” manner. For example, Peñalosa launched policies to restrict car use, including not allowing cars to park on sidewalks. These policies, contrary to the process followed for TransMilenio, were launched without much explanation of their rationale and benefits and without paying attention to people’s concerns and recommendations for improving policy design. Instead, their implementation was founded on “authority” and speedy decision-making to save time, as Peñalosa himself recognized.

The result was disastrous. Peñalosa’s approval rate fell to record lows and an effort to impeach him almost succeeded. Sheer luck saved him from this fate and he was able to finish his term successfully, after changing his style towards one more aware that elected politicians need to explain their proposals—even if the campaign is over—and gather political support for them. Further, policies need to be adapted to political reality if they are to become feasible.

Above: Waiting for the TransMilenio; below: the sign reads: “The TransMilenio is going to improve your respiratory system—and that of Bogotá.”

### BOGOTÁ: ALMOST TRANSFORMED

In 2000, Antanas Mockus was reelected as mayor and continued with reform, but at a slower pace due to a lower availability of funds. In the short time span analyzed here, Bogotá went through a significant process of successful transformation. Change was possible because of a combination of policies ranging from improving tax collection to using symbols and infrastructure to achieve social change. Leadership played a role, but equally as important was opening political space to include civil society in planning and decision-making and in making politicians accountable.

More importantly, despite all the public investment, poverty and unemployment keep growing at a fast pace.

Paradoxically enough, what used to be a middle class city could rapidly become a pauperized one. The solution probably lies in slowing the pace of building infrastructure and in designing policies that promote local economic growth, firm development, and job creation—policies that have never been part of Bogotá’s mayoral agenda. Yet citizen are clamoring for change in this direction in their almost transformed city.

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Low-Income Housing in El Salvador
Beyond Policies and Economics
BY GRACIELA FORTIN-MAGAÑA

El Salvador's tremendous housing deficit had slowly begun to improve in the late 1990s. Then devastating twin earthquakes in early 2001 literally shook the country's economic and social foundations. Three years before the earthquakes, the housing shortage still exceeded half a million units in 1999, and homes were becoming increasingly available. According to official documents, for instance, the national proportion of formal sector dwellings had increased from 40.14% to 64.50% from 1971 to 1993. Homeownership indicators had also showed significant improvements: in 1971, 29% of households owned their dwellings, 15% had mortgages and 41% rented. Whereas in 1992, 41% of households owned their dwellings, 28% had mortgages and 23% rented some form of housing.

Indeed, El Salvador was surpassing other countries in the region because of improvements in the quality of building materials and provision of services. Households with monthly incomes of $500–$600, for instance, now had access to credit and could purchase a commercially produced house by borrowing from the banking system. Whereas only 10% of Mexican households and 12% of Guatemalan houses could garner commercial financing, 23% of households in El Salvador had such an opportunity.

Such achievements were remarkable, considering that they had taken place against the backdrop of a 12-year armed conflict (1980–1992) that killed 75,000 people and displaced one million, an earthquake (1986) that left an estimated 9,000 families without shelter in the city of San Salvador alone, and Hurricane Mitch (1999) that left 59,000 residents homeless. The effects of these disasters, combined with high levels of poverty, had resigned the country to a 114th-place ranking in the worldwide Human Development Index in 1999.

El Salvador's housing success was largely the result of its nation-wide industry of private developers supplying legal, low-cost subdivisions at very large scales. Some 200 firms were reported to be active and they accounted for 50% to 70% of the annual growth in housing for low-income households. These residential enclaves or urbanizaciones became my topic of research during my course of studies at the Harvard Design School.

My feelings about urbanizaciones were mixed. On one hand I was uneasy about their unprecedented scale, the uniformity of the houses, the rigidity of their layouts, and the arid and foreign environments that they were creating. On the other hand, I couldn't help but acknowledge that the houses in these privately built developments were cost effective and represented an improvement for many families who had previously lived in substandard homes.

Setting off on a three-year study of urbanizaciones, however, I began to notice that the parts of the city where a large number of urbanizaciones were concentrated were also the parts of the city that other residents considered most dangerous. Crime and violence in El Salvador had reached alarming levels; newspaper articles and public opinion polls frequently reported that most Salvadorans were first and foremost concerned about crime. Experts and newspaper columnists usually blamed crime on poverty, unemployment and lack of opportunities. But although San Salvador has zones or urban pockets where these social ills were more common than in urbanizaciones, I talked with many people who expressed less concern about their personal safety when passing through those areas than when traveling through areas where large numbers of urbanizaciones existed. If lower incomes, unemployment and fewer opportunities were causing higher crime rates, why were the urbanizaciones—whose residents could be considered upwardly mobile low-income families—perceived to be so dangerous?

Given my long-running interest in the way physical space affects people, I began to wonder whether there was a link between the real or perceived higher levels of crime and violence in these areas and their physical characteristics.

While in the field, I encountered problems obtaining relevant data, and I realized that time constraints and safety considerations would prevent me from conducting the larger, more extensive set of in-depth interviews to explore the thoughts of residents of urbanizaciones about their physical surroundings and their neighborhoods in general, while keeping an open mind and avoiding questions specifically related to crime and violence.

This type of study required an alternative form of housing to compare to urbanizaciones. I soon learned that in El Salvador, unlike in the rest of the region, a category of "progressive" sub-divisions could be approved before any infrastructure investment. As a result, there was a legal market for plots that cost between $700 and $1,400, depending on location. Furthermore, the developers themselves provided 8–12 year loans to purchasers, who made monthly payments of $15–$25. Thus, conflictive land invasions were rare and the importance of inner city tenements had largely been reduced. These progressive sub-divisions—called lotificaciones—were quite distinct from those of urbanizaciones and hence seemed like good counterparts. In addition, I included a third category of legalized and retrofitted land inva-
The desire for efficiency in terms of engineering and economics had led to the construction of urbanizaciones on the outskirts of cities. The sizable distances from residents' places of employment resulted in long commutes to and from work and less time spent in the neighborhoods. Homes were designed for smaller nuclear or single-parent families. The more traditional structure of the extended family—which allows grandparents and aunts and other adults to supervise the young at home—could not be easily accommodated. Houses could not be easily adapted for home-based businesses—a source of passive street surveillance. Even factors such as heat-conductive building materials and the absence or the unsuitable location of social infrastructure pushed the young outside the house and farther from sight of responsible adults.

Moreover, urbanizaciones presented lower levels of social capital among their residents than their counterparts. Their residents were tied to financial obligations and a certain lifestyle that did not leave them much time to spend with their neighbors. So residents of urbanizaciones, although generally in a higher socio-economic category than the other two categories, seemed less content with their quality of life. At the other extreme, in comunidades, safety issues were the worst among the three neighborhoods studied. But in that case, residents' needs were still at the basic level of physiological requirements, so safety considerations and quality of life issues were not mentioned. They mostly complained about lack of employment. Jobs were necessary to satisfy their fundamental necessities such as food, health, and decent shelter.

Of the three groups, residents of lotificaciones seemed to be the ones who were most satisfied with their lives. The flexibility to adapt the houses according to their particular circumstances gave them a sense of pride. The ability to build their own houses slowly, as financial resources permitted, without the pressures of a long-term loan, provided them with a greater sense of achievement, less stress and stronger ties to their communities. In the end, a sense of belonging outweighed economics and politics.

Graciela Fortín-Magaña is a native of El Salvador, an architect and a recent graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Design where she received the degree of Doctor of Design and Master of Design Studies. Professors Ed Robbins and José Gómez-Ibáñez guided her in this study.

CHANGING SANTIAGO, CHANGING LIVES
EXPLORING PUBLIC POLICY AND URBAN DESIGN

Last summer, I journeyed to Santiago, Chile intending to polish my rusty Spanish and explore possibilities for a career in architecture. Instead, my internship at the Programa de Políticas Públicas at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile opened my eyes to so much more than a new language and culture. I returned to Cambridge with a sparked interest in urban planning, particularly as it relates to public policy and development.

The Programa de Políticas Públicas, a public policy program, was established by Kennedy School of Government graduate Andrés Iaco-belli last year to steer the university's academic resources towards Chile's social and economic development. Gathering and analyzing Santiago's urban indicators, I saw firsthand many urban realities that illuminated my statistical glimpse of the developing country.

A coworker and I accompanied volunteers from a charity organization passing out coffee and sandwiches to the homeless. The child who looks at you guiltily and asks for another sandwich is the worst kind of homelessness. We encountered a family on the streets with a young boy and a baby. Wearing two jackets, I was freezing in the Chilean winter night; this little boy wore only one jacket, yet enthusiastically played with a volunteer. With a rope attached to the cart containing all the family's belongings, they started a jump rope game, temporarily forgetting the chill of the streets.

Trying to change Santiago's gritty urban reality with more than sandwiches is a team of four talented, young professionals called puentes (bridges). They act as liaisons between the university and Santiago's numerous municipios, or comunas, of poor urban populations. Through these puentes, I met a service director who patiently spelled out to geography students just what fieldwork in the grey, concrete-bound streets of the Macul comuna was supposed to accomplish. I talked with an overworked doctor at a clinic in San Felipe, a suburb-like comuna whose streets teave with working-class pedestrians and whizzing cars. She found pregnant subjects for a psychology study and agreed to help carry out the experiment. I admired the dedication of these citizens who performed their jobs with such generous commitment to their city's development.

I miss that city of hills, its distinctive cerros rising gently from the urban barrios. I miss the ghostly, smog-obscured views of the cordilleras, their snow-topped peaks overlooking the city like a storyboard setting. At the Pablo Neruda house in Barrio Bellavista, the tour guide answered this when asked what his nationality was: "Chilenismo." If there is one thing I want to take away from my internship experience, it is the Chilean spirit that pervades the people and their work.

Juliana Chow is a junior in Kirkland House concentrating in English. She found social housing policy and design in Chile fascinating and hopes to merge this new interest with future studies in architecture or urban planning.
Archipelagos of Wealth and Poverty
Keeping Out “the Other” in Buenos Aires

BY MARIELA MARINO

The city is an ever-changing reality. Buenos Aires and its metropolitan area as a whole make up an evolving conglomerate. Without transformations, the modern city loses its meaning. But the city does not change capriciously, rather it is forced to do so numerous times by the circumstances arising from the context of the city itself.

The last decade’s multiple economic, political, and social changes, especially including the decreasing influence of the State in basic issues, have affected all of society, particularly the extremes on the social hierarchy: the poor and the rich.

As a result, these processes have accentuated the very lifestyles that they have changed—quantitatively and qualitatively—the demographic composition, the urban landscape, and the pre-existing function of the whole metropolitan area of Buenos Aires.

Historically, the city of Buenos Aires and its metropolitan area have been developed along the grid system. This urban model, which can be described as inclusive and infinite (well explained by Adrián Gorelik in his book La Grilla y el Parque), has responded to the city’s growth since its founding in 1580. From that time, a “city of infinite neighborhoods, of micro-worlds scattered across the interminable grid” was generated. The borders of the original city resulted in neighborhoods that ultimately attained a sense of autonomy. Beyond autonomy, there was the creation of identity: soccer in each neighborhood, cafes on the corners, daily grocery shopping, games on the sidewalks and in the plazas, and the diverse local festivities that accompanied the rise of the middle class.

This infinite and inclusive scheme no longer serves to characterize the city in its entirety. Two other urban models are evolving from two completely different lifestyles in terms of forms of socialization and access to goods and services. On one end of the spectrum, there are emergency villages. Generally speaking, these are human settlements in precarious urban environments where the people live in conditions of poverty and crowding. On the other end of the social spectrum are the closed urbanizations that create a restricted quasi-suburban atmosphere. Nevertheless, these differences can obscure the common denominator: both are extreme poles of segregation within the urban landscape, spaces of exclusion, meaning, at times, self-exclusion that is not always desired.

We want to examine these models of urban segregation both from the urbanist and social points. Both models are examples of closed environments, break with the urban scheme, privatize public spaces, discontinue surrounding areas, and alter the traditional human relations of an open city.

EMERGENCY VILLAGES: THE PAST AND PRESENT
Shortly after the disastrous 1929 economic crisis, industry began to grow in an orderly fashion, causing the relocation of many new firms, national and foreign, to the Greater Buenos Aires area.

While the industrial sector grew, the unemployment rate fell to a minimal level, and most people were employed. With a few fluctuations, industry growth continued for a few decades. Enormous masses of workers from all over the country migrated to the capital city, where the demand for labor offered them opportunities not found in
their regions of origin.

Around the 1950s, a new urban and social phenomenon appeared: the “misery villages” or “emergency villages,” a spontaneous and informal alternative to the lack of housing resulting from the rapid process of industrialization. It was those precarious and unhealthy housing developments in which the illusion of achieving improvements disappeared, giving place to a progressively degraded quality of life.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the misery villages continued to grow, more so because of the collapse of regional economies rather than the prosperity of the great city. At the same time, certain policies were put into motion to find a solution to those precarious housing developments. Certainly, the most extreme alternative was the eradication and forced relocation attempted by the military regime between 1976 and 1983.

Far from disappearing, these housing developments continued to be an increasing established reality in the Buenos Aires of the 1990s. The isolation of these marginal “islands” is even more noticeable today because they now border “archipelagos” of wealth: the private complexes, sometimes enormous in size, destined for the big winners of these years of economic growth—the middle-upper and upper classes of the population.

The urban characteristics—morphological and social—of these precarious urban housing developments have retained their essence during the last thirty years. We can cite the following general features:

- They are urban enclaves that break the urban scheme. The traditional grid, geometrically traced by the Spaniards, and continued throughout history is now interrupted.
- They are precincts, most of which occupy more than one block, appropriating, in many cases, public spaces, and generally causing a visual rupture of the neighborhood.
- The security of the development’s inhabitants depends on fragile and tacit internal codes of cohabitation. Public security is not present in those precincts.
- The houses are constructed adjacent to each other, creating a true fence or barrier, real or virtual, beyond which outsiders have almost no possibility of access. Nonetheless, the sense of belonging is not strong in all the inhabitants because many do not construct their identity there.
- The internal circulation is almost labyrinth-like, a particularity that gives them a certain touch of “exclusivity.”
- It is a degraded environment in terms of population and sanitary conditions. Nature and greenery are present but with characteristics that are totally unhealthy.
- They are inhabited by people with a homogeneous socio-economic level, but not necessarily the same cultural viewpoint. Different personal interests and perceptions of life co-exist in the same space. There you can find three types of profiles: humble but honest workers, bums or those who live by “gigs” (informal and temporary unskilled work that is poorly remunerated), and thieves or delinquents.
- They are established on government or private property, and in their beginnings, lacked the most basic elements of public services. They are presently provided with basic service and a few now have streets.

**CLOSE URBANIZATIONS: ORIGINS, EVOLUTION, TYPES**

The first antecedent of the weekend house is based in the colonial era when upper class families chose neighborhoods like Belgrano, Flores, or San Isidro to construct large houses for their retreats. A grave event—the epidemic of yellow fever in 1871—reinforced the already fashionable idea about the beneficial role of green spaces for physical and mental health of the population. Many families opted to leave their homes in the downtown district to go to zones that had more contact with nature.

By the 20th century, the creation or extension of some transportation systems gave a renewed popularity to weekend homes. For example, the construction of the North Access Highway in the 1970s helped the development of weekend homes in the...
more sparsely populated areas in the north of Great Buenos Aires for people with higher salaries.

Problems caused by growing insecurity, the need to incorporate sports into the community, the search for higher social status, and the access to progressively more exclusive services, caused the transformation of the "villa" into what was called the country club or "country"—a closed urbanization for the people of high economic standing, with multiple sports and social offerings. This country club evolved into a model based on its North American ancestor, the "gated community."

The difficult economic situation of the 1980s also had negative repercussions on the owners of the houses in the "countries." The increase in the cost of living and the loss of the currency's buying power produced by inflation made it impossible for many to economically sustain two homes at once. As such, many families opted to establish a permanent residence in the "country," abandoning their urban home. The change in the residential pattern brought greater development of commercial and administrative areas around the new areas of permanent residency.

Since the 1990s, another figure emerged from the real estate "boom": the closed neighborhood. This came to satisfy the demand of a population that was well-off but not capable of confronting the economic and social costs of a "country." They were given certain communal services, sports and cultural areas of a smaller size than those of the "countries." Another variation appeared, the "chacras clubs," feeding the fantasies of those lovers of landscape and rural life, privatizing and dividing the endless plains in enormous lots with the dimensions of small ranches.

Towards the end of this decade, "megaemprendimientos" or huge urban housing complexes emerged as a response to the demand for greater urban life made by potential residents. There, too, has the option of realizing a certain series of daily errands without leaving the limits of what is now a "pueblo" or even a private "city." Inside these "private cities," the ideal society is territorially recreated, and inhabits the imagination of those who command these housing developments (and eventually those who inhabit them). This is a society neatly divided by the buying power in distinct "barrios."

Plan for a gated community

1990 and 2000 Maps that show the growth of gated communities. Urbanizations are shaded in.
where every neighbor lives next to an income peer. The nucleus of each neighborhood is the sports club or “club house” where each person can socialize with his neighbors of his barrio but not with the people of more affluent neighborhoods. The “private city” reflects the illusion, sometimes obsessive, of the affluent classes to clearly differentiate the spaces and social environments of distinct social classes.

We will enumerate several intrinsic characteristics of these closed housing developments following the model used in the case of the emergency villages or “villas.”

- They are urban enclaves that break the traditional urban scheme.
- The majority occupy more than one block, in general, appropriating public spaces and giving place to a visual rupture of the urban landscape.
- Within them, priority is given to the safety of the development’s inhabitants, with limits clearly delineated for the entrance of visitors, and at times, for the incorporation of new neighbors. Implicitly, those that are within the barrier are winners, leaving those who are left outside as the losers.
- They have a perfectly explicit limit, materialized with walls or fences, beyond which no person is granted access. A sense of belonging is developed, which emphasizes the identity of the neighbors, and also makes the differences of others more obvious, that is, outsiders.
- The internal circulation is almost labyrinthine, which gives the place a touch of “exclusivity.” Many streets end in a “cul de sac” giving the place greater privacy.
- They have access to many services which “target” users are likely to pay for.
- They have a peculiar relation with nature, giving to this relation an importance that become synonymous with quality of life.
- They are inhabited by people with a homogeneous socio-economic level, with interests and visions of life which coincide, or are at least respected.
- They are subject to the law of the Province of Buenos Aires 8912/77 of Territorial Order and Land Usage. The majority of the housing developments have adopted the regime enunciated by the Horizontal Property Law 13.512/48. A few have adopted the division by Geodesia. The “private cities” coincide with the apparition of the so-called “master plans.” That quantity of norms conveys the absence of a common criteria applicable to these closed housing developments.

By comparing these two examples, we see that urban life permits interaction with others in innumerable aspects of social, cultural and political life. Without this interaction, we couldn’t conceive of urban culture, of this open space for the exchange of personal capacities, goods, and services. The flight of middle- and upper-class people towards the closed neighborhoods places into question the very conception of the city and its virtues.

The segmentation of the city caused by the presence of these closed environments—emergency villas and closed communities—is transformed into processes of exclusion and contrast that manifest themselves in other spheres. The limits, as we have described in the urban forms we have analyzed, are used in order to make clear who is inside and who remains outside. Those who are inside are identified as “us” and those who are outside as “the Other.” They are very real pieces of the city that are presented to us as fenced-in and separated from the rest. Behind those limits, in addition to the homes themselves, are an accumulation of spaces that would be public spaces: sidewalks, streets, plazas, parks, river banks and beaches, to name a few. Without those public spaces, there are no more opportunities for casual encounters and interactions with others. They are a different manner of community living and of living in society or, stated differently, of reinforcing a cultural identity.

But even worse, the limits that close off the inhabitants of the emergency villas exclude them from minimum services, an adequate education, indispensable health services, and the dream of creating a dignified life in the present and future. The inhabitants of the gated communities, on the other hand, have access to all types of services, nature encapsulated in prefabricated images, a relative “security” that lasts as long as there is no trespassing from outside the wall, a sense of belonging as seductive as it is fragile, and a lifestyle that is almost like an optical illusion.

Without a doubt, characteristics and feelings begin to appear among the inhabitants of both models that are interesting to analyze: those that reside in the “villa” coexist with sentiments and realities such as povery, desperation, marginalization, informalism, illegality, disability and the weakness before social contentions, violence, crime, and powerlessness, among others. Those that live inside the “closed urbanizations” intensify their own necessity for enclosure considering that those living there in an encapsulated atmosphere want to move, work, consume, and enjoy recreation in environments that are also enclosed, in environments that we now call “not places” for their lack of identity. They succeed in negating the idea of “the others”—with all the implications of differences, particularities, dangers and misery that this presents—as long as one is inside, only to feel oneself more vulnerable before the threat of violence and crime when one is outside. A moral hedonist is conceived only leaving “outside” of one’s privatized consciences all that which does not coexist with pleasure, wellbeing, or good living; sentiments of tediousness, boredom, monotony, and fear of losing the achieved status may appear as well.

We definitively believe that these models are neither sustainable nor desirable. It would be necessary to seriously re-plan many of these aspects in order to ensure a social peace, so necessary in our beloved Argentina of today.

Mariela Marino is an architect and a professor at the Universidad de Buenos Aires in History of Architecture, and Professional at ProAtlas, National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET). This article is based on the co-authored study “Enclaves urbanos atípicos en el área metropolitana de Buenos Aires: su impacto socio-territorial” (OIKOS, Buenos Aires, 2000).
Social Space in San Juan

Plaza, The Center of Everything

BY LIZ MELÉNDEZ SAN MIGUEL

My city, San Juan, is a social city. Its character and virtue are best illustrated and defined by the collective and individual memories of its people and those places where we go to spend time in idleness. It is a modern city, a metropolitan center that defies traditional paradigms, importing and assimilating diverse urban forms, reinventing them and creating unique social spaces that are the formal expressions of our traditions and patterns of social interaction.

Traditionally, our urban structure, primarily influenced by Spanish planning conventions, provided the city with a distinct order characterized by the proximity between individual dwelling space and the public spaces that nurtured social interaction. The traditional Spanish plaza was truly adopted as the public living room of the colonial city, where men played dominoes and women strolled leisurely on a Sunday afternoon. The growth and development of the city has altered those patterns. This has resulted in what many have described as an overall deterioration of the traditional way of life in the city and the social fabric of its neighborhoods. In his article “Habitable entre edificios, automóviles y pantalla,” architect Javier Bonnin explains, “the separation between the city and the inhabitable private space of the house, added to the segregation and spatial compartmentalization of the rest of our daily activities, transformed and weakened the relations between individual and society.” (inForma, 2002) Indeed, these dynamics did occur in the city, particularly during the second half of the twentieth century. However, it can also be asserted that the transformation of the relations between individual and society resulted in the redefinition of the character of social space.

Social spaces in San Juan are not confined to any conventional typologies. They are not just plazas or parks, public or private in their traditional forms.

Social spaces in San Juan are not confined to any conventional typologies. They are not just plazas or parks, public or private in their traditional forms. They are café where men gather to share political stories while sipping coffee; beauty salons where women of different social stature come together to share more than just advice on hair color; or even markets that sell the freshest meats and vegetables in town during the day and host the liveliest parties at night. Our social spaces have been transformed to represent the dichotomies that characterize a sanjuanero's life.

THE CENTER OF EVERYTHING

There is perhaps no better example of this transformation or redefinition of social space than Plaza las Americas, the largest shopping center or "mall" in the Island. Located in the geographic heart of the city, Plaza (as it is affectionately known in San Juan—the word plaza referring to the traditional Spanish square) has become the central square of the City of San Juan. The traditional Spanish square is overlaid with the "mall" to create a unique typology that is no longer "plaza" or "mall." It is a new kind of space that combines the conveniences of modern city life with the peculiarities of traditional urban living in San Juan.

When I was a child, my grandmother and I would drive my grandfather to Plaza every Friday morning. I would silently wonder what he would do all day at the shopping center, knowing that he was not going shopping, as there were no bags at the end of the day. My grandfather, like many other sanjuaneros, was not from the City. Rather, he had moved to the city in search of employment and the conveniences of modern city life. Having moved to the city suburb, he did not have a public plaza to visit, where he could share his time in idleness with friends or complete strangers. Plaza had become his plaza. Every Friday he met up with other men and sat in the central hall of the shopping center talking and playing dominoes all day, just as if they were in any other city plaza.

Plaza offered suburban dwellers the opportunity of sharing socially in a public (privately owned) space. At Plaza, they were sheltered from the harsh tropical sun and the congestion of traffic that was characteristic of other city plazas, particularly those in Old San Juan. They were encouraged to spend their days in idleness and to use the halls of the "mall" as their own public space. Since my grandfather’s days, Plaza has changed a lot. However, it is still full of the idiosyncrasies that have made it more than just the mall, "the center of everything," as the slogan used to promote the shopping center ideally illustrates. It is the City’s plaza, where young and old go to share, strolling leisurely through the halls and sharing meals in public tables at La Terraza (The Terrace—food court). During Christmas time you can still find groups of children and adults singing traditional parranda tunes in the halls. Artisans are welcome to exhibit their work and we still spend countless hours in idleness wandering the halls aimlessly just...
to take a break from the scorching heat.

The costs sanjuaneros paid for the seemingly endless expansion of the city have certainly been high. It is undoubtedly true that the carefree and convenient way of life that had been promoted by the original layout of the city has changed, leaving behind many empty plazas. In modern day San Juan, social interaction has much more to do with the car and the television than it does with the balcony and the courtyard. But this assertion cannot and should not always be equated with a degradation of social and public space. Sanjuaneros have learned to transform typologies, like the mall, to fit native tradition and create new models of social space.

My City is a city of constant social and physical change, full of places as complex and fascinating as Plaza las Americas. It is like Italo Calvin's Zaira, a city that "does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of lighting rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls." (Invisible Cities, 1972) San Juan's tradition is etched in the city plazas, cobblestone streets, wooden benches, and boisterous corner cafés. These places are not designed by planners or architects, they are constructed by sanjuaneros as we live and use our city.

Liz Meléndez San Miguel is originally from San Juan. As an urban designer she has had the opportunity to work on San Juan's Land Use Plan. Currently, she is a research associate at Harvard's Center for Urban Development Studies.

LA BOCA DEL METRO
EN DUPONT CIRCLE, WASHINGTON D.C.

Son las ocho de la tarde y acabo de llegar a la boca del metro. El calor del verano ha llegado pero las brisas frescas de la primavera todavía no se han ido. La luz tiene cierto toque romántico; el sol, que ya no se puede ver, dejó su brillo anaranjado y las farolas, recién encendidas, añaden iluminación a la calle. Oigo los motores de los coches que están buscando aparcamiento y también el claxon de los que intentan llegar a casa lo más pronto posible después de un largo día laboral. Yo veo a las chicas que tienen veinte y tantos años caminando con brío mientras hablan de sus novios, los muebles de la casa y el color del pelo de sus colegas. A la izquierda de la boca del metro hay muchos señores con traje que miran una presentación colorida de flores intentando recordar cuáles son las que prefieren sus mujeres. La gente parlotear de los mejores restaurantes del barrio y echa un vistazo con envidia a las parejas, que sentadas en las terrazas, ya están aprovechando la comida. Los olores de una mezcla gastronómica llenan el aire. En el pequeño parque, que se ubica enfrente de la boca del metro, los novios se besan y algunas personas sin hogar se sientan tranquilamente y miran pasar la vida de los demás como si fuera la suya. Aún tengo en la mano el periódico que quería leer pero, con tanto observar, se me hace imposible hacerlo. No soy la única persona que espera a un amigo en este lugar tan popular.

-Buenas tardes, Regina.- dice mi amigo, ¿Dónde quieres cenar?

Regina Jacqueline Galasso studies at the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, The Johns Hopkins University.
Kahlo: Images and Ideas

TEXT BY NEIDA JIMÉNEZ

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUILLERMO KAHLO

We set out to build a photo essay exploring the idea of urban markets and showcasing Harvard library resources. Marketplaces understood broadly as sites where not only products, but money, ideas and even people were exchanged. We ended up with churches, an unexpected but logical outcome as these structures are central to the organization of cities throughout the Americas; they are physically and economically linked to the existence of markets, and remain important convening spaces where citizens negotiate their place within the city's larger structure. This is the story of a market that became a church, a church that became a market, and a collection of works at Harvard relating to Latin America that has yet to be explored.

Lynn Shirey, Widener Library's Assistant Librarian for Latin America, Spain, and Portugal, issued a call for help through the extensive library system. Harvard's Fine Arts Library responded, inviting us to search their rich photographic archives. As we searched for markets, we stumbled across stark images of churches in Mexico City labeled "Kahlo," in this case, Guillermo Kahlo. With Frida Kahlo mania at its peak, we simply could not resist the impulse to look further and follow the trail of her father's work. Our photo essay about urban markets became a story about churches. (continued on page 50)
Below: Chapel of the Well "El Pozito," Guadalupe, Mexico; opposite, clockwise: La Profesa, Mexico City; East Tower, Mexico City Cathedral; Santa Catalina de Sema, Mexico City
(continued from page 46) The striking Guillermo Kahlo photos are part of a monumental project entitled, Photographic Inventory of Spanish Colonial Church Architecture of Mexico, commissioned by the Porfirio Díaz government to commemorate the centennial of Mexico's independence. In the tradition of architectural photography, the photos at first seem timeless and unaffected. They are painfully detailed, austere but richly textured, with solid light and shadows, and for the most part void of human presence. A closer look, however, renders a vision of Mexico City that is by no means neutral or strictly journalistic. The images expose the church as a symbol, an element within the ecumenopolis. These are not urban vistas where citizens perform everyday activities, but meticulously crafted views where perspective underscores the primacy of the church. In their contrived loftiness, ironically, the churches become a marketing tool for the Porfirian government to exalt and reclaim the colonial past while promoting a modern vision of the Mexican nation.

Spanish city planning resulted in enduring public spaces throughout the Americas that placed the church at the center of civic life. This planning tradition promoted a unitary notion of space where social, political and religious activities coexist. Churches and markets developed hand in hand. As people gathered to worship, the city squares and surroundings became a place for commerce and exchange. Many urban plazas actually developed on the site of pre-colonial trading posts or along ancient trade routes. The vantage point of the Kahlo photos—taken conventionally from above—emphasizes this tension. By attempting to diminish the environs, Kahlo makes explicit the relation between the church and the commercial surroundings. Despite his best attempts to filter out passersby, merchants and customers, vendor stalls, electric cables and posts, these remain inescapable cues of the times and the impulse for progress that was the backdrop to his work, and, as some may argue, ultimately used the church as a marketing tool.

We set out to write about markets. Along the way we had a serendipitous encounter with Guillermo Kahlo and our gaze irresistibly turned to churches. We were not steered from our subject; we just followed a different route to the ideas we set out to explore. The market place, after all, is not simply a site. Like churches and government buildings, it's a reflection of the multitude of activities performed by citizens within the larger system of symbols and values imbedded in a city. As in a city, we set off in one direction and find ourselves going in another, only to land up in the same spot. We can only imagine what another excursion to the library will bring.

Neida Jiménez is Program Manager at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, where she is also the Latino Studies Initiative Associate.
Walking the Latin American City

A Gendered Space

BY JULIETA LEMAITRE

We were waiting for the light to change to cross the street in Guadalajara. It was the middle of the day and Luisa, Julia and I had decided to have lunch outside the hotel where the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) conference was being held. It was a wide avenue, and the cars sped past. I noticed a young man selling cigarettes, also waiting for the light to change so he could offer them to cars that stopped. He was leaning against a car. I didn’t see him unzip his pants, I only saw the disgust in Luisa’s face, and then I heard her say, “He’s masturbating.” The three of us hurried back to the safety of the restaurant, and once again, I felt the familiar wave of disgust, hate, and fear.

I have been harassed on the streets of Latin America since I was ten years old, growing up in Cartagena, Colombia, and I still feel the same paralyzing fear. That first time, an old man sitting on the curbside offered to “suck” my “hairless cunt” (chuparte esa chuchita sin pelos). I didn’t know what he meant but my friends soon explained, and thus began my introduction to a female mapping of the city. “You can’t cross that corner alone” one of my friends said, “there are always men there.” (“Ahí siempre hay hombres.”)

Mapping the city as a young woman means you have to know where there are men. Men in italics, of course, not men as in my father, his friends, my schoolmates or my teachers, but men like that old man sitting on the curb or the cigarette seller in Guadalajara, men whose words leave me speechless with fear, anger, impotence and fear all over again.

Men are not everywhere, I learned. In my barrio, they stayed in certain corners, in construction sites and in parks. I found out that if you avoided those places you were safe. However, avoiding them sometimes meant going out of my way to get to where I was going—following the safe routes meant going around the park, instead of through it.

I now realize that by learning the “safe routes,” I actually learned to stay only inside the familiar places. Cynthia Bowman characterized this practice as the “informal ghettoization of women” in a 1993 Harvard Law Review Article. "Ghettoized” into my barrio, I grew up in a city I never experienced. Although men were not everywhere, any street, corner, park or barrio that was not proven to be safe was unsafe by definition. While my carefree male friends rode on their bikes and explored the city, I stayed in my barrio, my school, my home.

My mother is 53 and she still lives in Cartagena, my hometown. As far as I know, she has never wandered alone far from the same familiar streets that held me in as a child. The city she knows is only the safe one and the same is true for her mother, grandmother, and all of our female friends. We knew our city from afar, down the proven safe roads and from the window of a bus. Any new place was unsafe until proven otherwise. When I grew up and traveled to other
cities, I stuck to this same rule: any public road or park was unsafe until proven otherwise. This unwritten travel advisory had been ingrained in my body since I was ten.

Street harassment is a well-known reality and has often been theorized as one of the many forms of violence against women. It is an insidious form, one that doesn't manifest itself any more than the veiled threat, but one that keeps women in their place, walking fast, looking straight ahead, behind closed doors and in fear. At times, it makes you long for a veil, which is thought to be effective in stopping harassment. Harassment is one way in which society, through those foul-mouthed men, can exercise social control of women. This leads to a society that compels women to willingly accept traditional roles of “wife of” and “mother of” that make them feel safe.

Around the age of sixteen, I discovered two ways to walk past men and not even get a stare. To travel between my two grandmothers' houses, I either had to walk past a construction site or walk two blocks out of my way even when it was 40 degrees Celsius in the shade. So I braved the shorter path and promptly found out what made the whistles and name calling worse. If I walked proud, looked back, or if I was happy, the harassment was severe. It was like throwing meat to a hungry dog. Moreover, if I looked down, held my books to my chest, acted shy and frowning, there was much less harassment. But I hit the jackpot when I learned that if, in addition to all of the above, I limped, there was total silence. So I faked a limp, a really bad limp, for that block for months until the construction was over and the men had left. This was my introduction to feminist agency. My second strategy to avoid harassment was much simpler: ask my brother to walk me from one grandmother’s home to the other. Since I was with a man, albeit nine years old, the men stayed put.

I am not the first or the last one to find out that the city is another when walking with a man. All documents on street harassment mention this remarkable fact. With my little brother, I dared cross more corners, walk through certain parks, even go to the stores downtown. He worked like a charm. The worst remark I got was “Adios, cuñado” (bye, brother-in-law), but none of the more graphic offers.

Later I discovered boyfriends worked even better. When holding hands with a suitor, I could walk around the city and discover streets and plazas. By this time I lived not in Cartagena but in Bogotá. With boyfriends I walked most of the Centro of Bogotá, even at night, even down poorly lit streets where they did not understand why I was so scared. With a man, I could walk in wonderful places like Billares Londres in downtown Bogotá, admire the walls painted with a surreal depiction of London, and have a beer and watch men play pool without even getting half a stare.

Theorists say that harassers, by harassing women who walk the streets without an owner, are upholding the patriarchal code that states that all women must belong to a man. Unconsciously or not, men know what they are doing when they stare and hiss and grab and insult—they are keeping patriarchy alive. If you are a young woman, you are not supposed to be alone in a Latin American city except in the corridors of safety and you should always be walking briskly, eyes on the ground, books or purse held to your chest, never stopping and especially never sitting down. Stopping is only allowed in places where you pay to be protected, such as in cafés or restaurants or malls that agree to provide safety and where women who wish to be alone are welcomed, or mercifully ignored.

Harassers are simply telling us what even the police already know. In Lima, the nongovernmental organization Demus surveyed policemen about their views on sexual violence. When asked if they agreed with the phrase “men belong in the street and women in the home,” 45.5% of policemen said they did. 52.3% considered rapists to have uncontrollable sexual urges. 50% of policemen thought that women were sexually assaulted because they were wearing clothes that were attractive to the opposite sex. 47.6% of policemen thought women were sexually assaulted because they were walking alone at night; 33% because they went to nightclubs; 21.4% because they were physically attractive; and 9% because they were extroverted.

I suspected as much since the early age of ten, when I first learned how to stay safe. With the city mapping skills I learned growing up in Cartagena, I have defied men and walked along the streets of Santa Cruz, La Paz, Santiago, Cali, Medellín, Buenos Aires, Bogotá and various cities in many countries. I have chewed coca leaves in Bolivian markets, dined alone in Santiago, had beer in a Cusco bar, and ate empanadas everywhere. And yet where ever I go, in Latin America as elsewhere, harassers remind me the same rules apply.

The key is to understand how the city works. There are corridors of safety where women can walk alone and get from one place to the next. There are neighborhoods where only local women can walk alone uncathed. Stick to places where there are other women by themselves or where there are children. Never ask a man for direc-
tions, and never hold a male stranger's gaze in public. You do so at your peril. Remember: the police think you should be at home.

But these corridors of safety are not safe all day. There are certain hours, certain clothes and certain sides of the street that are not safe. The same is true in regard to public transportation; it is usually safe, but there are certain bus stops, metro stops, and certain times of day or night at which a woman is no longer safe. There are certain seats on buses where you can be sure that a man will try to rub his dick against your shoulder, and certain ways to use your bag to keep men from jacking off against your butt. You have to ask the other tourists, the concierge, and women that you meet. Ask twice, just to be sure.

In 2000, I was part of a research project on sexual violence in Bogotá. As we were reading through criminal files, we found that prosecutors routinely asked women who were sexually assaulted what they were wearing and why they were out so late or in that part of town. For example, they would ask a victim: “Why did you go to that meeting alone and in a place like Los Martires park that is so dangerous? Tell us if you have the habit of going out of your house to talk on the phone so late; why were you alone at night in that place knowing how dangerous it was?”

It must be realized that the threat implicit in the harassment I have described is, of course, the threat of rape. The fear we were raised to have because it kept us safe, the fear of what might happen to you with me as I was walking home from work. I am still afraid. He holds me, and is also scared, introduced to my world.

Am I a coward, am I exaggerating? Perhaps. As a teenager, I knew an older girl who liked walking el Centro for the compliments she got. “It boosts my self esteem,” she said, “I feel I am in control, and they all want me but can’t get me. It’s el Centro, everybody is looking, they are not going to hurt me. Que sufran.” Once a man sat beside her in the movies and started masturbating. She took off her spiked heels and hit him, right on the head of his penis. He ran out of the movies and she laughed and screamed after him, shaken but unbeatable. I remembered that story in Guadalajara when Luisa, Julia and I were scurrying back to the restaurant. I picked up an empty coke bottle off the floor and turned around, intending to throw it at the cigarette vendor, but he was gone. Who knows, maybe next time in the next city, I’ll have the courage to throw it and the luck to run away unscathed.

If you are a young woman, you are not supposed to be alone in a Latin American city except in the corridors of safety.

If you wear certain clothes, go out alone or speak to strangers. A friend of mine was raped; she ran out of gas and accepted a lift from a stranger on a motorcycle. Most women in Latin America know that you do not go out driving alone, but if you do, you do not run out of gas, but if you do, you do not ask for help from men. This you usually know even before you get your driver’s license.

However, and contrary to common sense, most women who are raped are not raped outside their homes but rather inside them. In fact, in Latin America, as elsewhere, women are hardly ever raped by strangers. In a 2000 Colombian national health survey conducted by Profamilia, 7% of the women reported they had been raped at some point in their lives, and 71.2% of these women had been raped by a person they knew. Most of the sexual violence forensic exams practiced in Colombia in 2001 were of girls younger than 14 who reported a relative as the aggressor. Available statistics show the situation is similar in Peru and Mexico.

It is clear, then, that sexual assault in the streets is not a common occurrence. Perhaps women learn to take care of themselves as they grow older. Perhaps they no longer speak of sexual assault or report it. But sexual assault, and fear of sexual assault, pervades the constitution of subjection as a young woman. The fear caused by words and gestures is the fear of the ancient, well-known humiliation and pain of rape. Easily avoided if you “take care” of yourself, walk only in the corridors, do not go out alone at night, have a man accompany you, be a good girl in the city.

Does a man see the city like this? Does he also walk knowing he has to stay in the safe corridors, knowing he shouldn’t stop, shouldn’t whistle, shouldn’t look men in the eye or even look around? Probably not. Sometimes I tell my husband the things harassers say to me. On one occasion, I come home distraught, and tell my husband of three strangers’ collective offer to have anal sex with me as I was walking home from work. I am still afraid. He holds me, and is also scared, introduced to my world.

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A VERAGE CRIME RATES IN LATIN AMERICAN CITIES ARE THE HIGHEST IN THE WORLD. HOW IS THIS PROBLEM BEING HANDLED?

Many people think that the only existing legal strategy is criminal law. Criminal law deals with violent crime by pursuing criminals through police work, trying them in the courts, and, after conviction, putting them in jail. However, I want to discuss another body of law that addresses the problem: property law. Property law deals with violent crime spatially. It operates most visibly in the creation of protected, often walled, spaces—gated residential communities, shopping malls, office parks—that confront violent crime not by reducing it but by ensuring that it takes place elsewhere.

The walls that surround privatized areas do more than relocate those identified as potential criminals, along with many others, to certain parts of the city. They have an important psychological impact on insiders. Insiders see them—and their accompanying video cameras, security guards, and alarm systems—as their primary defense against crime. But the walls derive their legal meaning from property law. Property law, simply by itself, erects walls that protect insiders from outsiders. The very essence of one’s property right can be found in the words “Keep Out.” But physical walls add two important ingredients. They enable the enforcement of property rights by the property owners themselves, instead of requiring them to call the police. In addition, they enable the property owners to assert more extensive property rights against outsiders than those that the legal system actually authorizes because outsiders rarely challenge them.

The spread of walled areas in major cities raises a legal policy issue: what is the proper nature and extent of one’s property rights? To resolve this issue, it has to be decided whether these walled areas should be understood as more like one’s own house or rather as a city as a whole. Those who live or own property inside walled enclaves generally think of the enclaves as extensions of their own homes, stores, and offices. But as they grow larger and larger, they can become not just neighborhoods (as they are now) but entire cities. The right to exclude, as exercised by property owners, seems relatively uncontroversial in the context of one’s own house. But it would be odd indeed to treat São Paulo or Mexico City as private property. Even though historically there have been walled cities in Western society, it now seems unacceptable to attempt to wall off a whole city. What is the best way to think about these parts of town?

I think that these walled enclaves should be treated more like public space than they currently are. Beginning in the nineteenth century, property law in the United States required businesses that held themselves open to the public—such as innskeepers and common carriers—to serve the public as a whole without discrimination. Railroads and inns, it was decided, should not be allowed to favor some customers at the expense of others. In more recent times, hotels, theaters, and restaurants have been required to be open without discriminating on the grounds of race, color, religion, or national origin. This history suggests that a similar kind of openness can be required of shopping centers and office parks. Strict enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnicity would help open them to a wider variety of people. In addition, individuals exercising rights of free speech (religious evangelists, war protesters) and representatives of organizations seeking to reach employees working on the premises (union organizers, health care workers) could form the beginning of a list of invited strangers that would be free to enter these kinds of spaces. Restrictions could also be placed on the power of security guards to ask groups of people such as groups of teenagers to leave the premises.

Unlike shopping centers and office parks, gated residential enclaves do not hold themselves open to the public. Even in these areas, however, the power to exclude outsiders should have its limits. The point is not to reject the idea that “one’s home is one’s castle” but to shift the location of the castle’s walls: the streets of residential communities should be open to more than just invited guests. The easiest way to begin, as the Supreme Court of the United States did in a case dealing with the company towns, would be to open these residential communities to people exercising their rights of free speech. This form of openness can readily be defended in terms of the public values that free expression represents. Simply admitting these outsiders would demonstrate to insiders and outsiders alike that walled communities cannot wall their residents off from the rest of society at will.

Would this interpretation of property rights in Latin America and elsewhere create a better world than one that allows walled enclaves to exclude anyone they choose? I think so. Low-crime and high-crime areas in every city can now be located on a map, and the areas adopting a policy of exclusion are usually the low-crime areas. As a result, no area in the city is truly "public." The excluding areas are off-limits to those treated as undesirable, and much of the rest of the city is shunned by those accustomed to exclusion. Making walled areas more public will expand the number of places where people can become accustomed to the diversity of the population in the city in which they live. This experience would help reduce the level of tension people feel when they come into contact with unfamiliar kinds of strangers. And this reduced tension would enable a crime-control strategy that is the opposite of a reliance on exclusion. The principal security system of public places is the presence of people. Everyone knows, as Jane Jacobs argued 40 years ago, that "a well-used city street is apt to be a safe street [while] a deserted city street is apt to be unsafe." These days, however, it's hard to be confident that a stranger will help if a crime occurs because his or her own fear of being attacked generates a reluctance to "get involved," even if all that is needed is a call to the police. Changing that attitude is an appropriate goal for the legal system.

Sarita lost her husband eight years ago. While he had been politically active, out late many nights at meetings and marches, she had preferred to stay home with her children. After his death, Sarita sold the couple’s small business and found herself helping to raise her five grandchildren. In the over twenty years that Sarita and her family have lived in Caballito, a lively, unassuming middle-class neighborhood in the heart of Buenos Aires, it has undergone countless transformations.

Recently, in times of economic downturn, this has meant primarily deterioration, closed businesses and increased unemployment. As her family’s economic situation steadily declined with Argentina’s suffering economy, Sarita clung to her domestic routine and rarely left the false security of her home. After years of stagnancy, she saw no possibility for change.

Stella Maris came from a family of Italian immigrants whose golden rule, “no politics, no religion” was strictly enforced, and then reinforced by the violence and repression of the 1976 to 1983 reign of a military government. Combined with neo-liberal economic practices, these political lessons created a culture of individualism. Stella Maris, like many others, confined her civic participation to voting in mandatory elections.

Then, on December 19th and 20th, 2001, the Argentine public came to a collective decision that it could not wait any longer: the severe economic recession and extreme political corruption had to be stopped. Among the tens of thousands of enraged citizens who took to the streets to demand immediate government reforms was Stella Maris, who, at 47, was experiencing for the first time the unparalleled sensation of being part of a popular mass movement for a common political goal.

Sarita, Stella Maris and a sizable group of neighbors, many of
whom had lived next door to each other for years as strangers, found
themselves gathered around the statue of Cid Campeador at a
busy intersection in Caballito. There they began to share and dis-
cuss common problems, debate ideas, and listen to each other for
the first time. This randomly assembled mélange of women, men,
and children of all ages, backgrounds, and experiences soon rea-
lized that together, as an organized whole, they formed a powerful
force that could reclaim the centrality of the “pueblo argentino”
in determining their devastated nation’s future.

They participated in “cacerolazos,” (banging of pots and pans in
the streets) that spontaneously erupted throughout Argentina to
protest President Fernando De la Rua’s declaration of a “state of
seige,” an emergency decree that effectively revoked civil liberties.
This authoritarian act evoked frightening memories of the repres-
sive military dictatorship under which such undemocratic practices
were the norm. But this time, thousands of people, who for years
had been stuck in their homes, disenchanted, disaffected or unin-
terested in politics, responded; they found their political voice
and converged on public areas to express their growing anger, fear,
frustration and desolation. In plazas, on street corners and in every
open space, people gathered by the hundreds and thousands and
discovered that they were not alone in their desperation and desire
for change. On December 20th, the multitudes came together in
the Plaza de Mayo, the historic site of popular struggle in Argenti-
a, where they successfully demanded De la Rua’s resignation.

These spontaneous public mobilizations sparked the develop-
ment of hundreds of “neighborhood assemblies” across the coun-
try, especially in the capital city. In the weeks and months fol-
lowing the events of December 19th and 20th, neighbors began
congregating weekly in their respective “barrios” to construct alter-
natives and devise solutions to a corrupt political system, a dys-
functional economy, and a severely fragmented society devoid of
faith in the possibility of change. The past twelve months have
been a period of tremendous growth and change for the assembly
movement. While each assembly maintains an independent identity
and neighborhood focus, collectively they participate in a larger poli-
tical effort to achieve the common goal, “que se vayan todos, que no
digo que no uno solo,” (that everyone one of them [politicians] goes,
not even one stays), a motto that emerged from the original mobi-
lizations on December 19th and 20th.

After the initial encounters in the streets, neighbors began to see
their own potential as a powerful tool for both social and political
transformation. As a temporary response to the urgent needs of
the thousands of men, women, and children in their neighborhoods
who live in the streets or struggle to make ends meet, many assem-
bles have started “comedores” (soup kitchens) and “merenderos”
(afternoon snacks). These activities have been facilitated by some
assemblies’ decision to “recuperate” abandoned buildings in their
neighborhoods and convert the dilapidated spaces into community
centers. In the case of the “Assembly of Cid Campeador,” where
Sarita and Stella Maris are active participants, a former bank that
had been unoccupied for over five years is now filled twenty four
hours a day with neighbors participating in social activities such
as tango classes, yoga, political meetings, and taking turns spend-
ing the night “on duty” guarding the site. With every triumph comes
a new challenge, and these “takeovers,” while serving to attract more
“asambleistas” (participants in the assembly) and achieve concrete
changes in the social and political structures of Argentina, have in
some cases resulted in complicated legal battles and have generat-
ed internal problems of a different sort as well.

Neighborhood assemblies were formed with a decidedly politi-
cal purpose in response to a severe political and economic crisis that
had been brewing in Argentina for many years, and identify them-
theselves primarily as a political space for debate and social reconstruc-
tion. However, in the absence of state-provided assistance for citizens’
basic needs, the assemblies have created temporary alternatives to
repair the wounded spirit of the “pueblo argentino” through solidarity
efforts. Asambleistas make clear their opposition to assialtinalism
of any sort and instead work with unemployed and marginalized
citizens to develop long-term solutions to problems of structural
unemployment, inadequate medical care, insufficient retirement ben-
efits and other issues linked to flawed government policies. The
construction of a large-scale popular movement is an arduous process,
and long term goals are currently being eclipsed by immediate obsta-
cles to coordinating united efforts among the assemblies. Resolving
slight differences of opinion on questions of strategy and organiza-
tion, a common growing pain in emerging political movements,
has slowed down this process. Meanwhile, through cultural events,
political debates and other outreach efforts, assemblies continue to
work on a daily basis to extend solidarity networks and encourage the
participation of neighbors who have not yet gotten on board.

For Sarita, the assembly has opened a new world of ideas and
relationships, and has become an invaluable refuge from the often
suffocating responsibilities of home. This nascent revolution restored
her belief that even after 20 years of deterioration, change is pos-
sible and can be achieved through political participation. In the case
of Stella Maris, she has not left the street since her first day of protest.
This year she discovered the passionate freedom fighter hidden with-
in, and she now leads her assembly in marches to the Plaza de Mayo,
chanting “que se vayan todos” and waving her banner without
fear or hesitation.

Carolyn Sattin graduated from Duke University in 2002 with a
degree in Public Policy and Women’s Studies. She has been living
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From Country to City: Internal Migration

Focus on Peru

BY TEÓFILO ALTAMIRANO

Throughout Latin America, cities are transforming their urban spaces through migration from the countryside. Historically, peasants, villagers, and ambitious dwellers in smaller cities have migrated to larger urban communities in search of educational and economic opportunities. Now, the urbanization of rural communities is escalating migration to the cities and transforming the countryside itself.

This trend is reflected by observing the migration patterns in Peru. Peruvians are now migrating to mid-sized cities, not just to Lima, and they are also increasingly migrating abroad. More women than ever are flocking to the cities in order to improve their lives. Migrants who moved to escape political violence are remaining in their new homes. Local organizations building bridges to the communities of origin and supporting these new city citizens, "the internal immigrants," have flourished. This new type of internal migration has created a new urban culture in Lima.

Even after the political violence in Peru ended in 1992, displaced persons and their families, trapped in involuntary migration, left their stamp on the city. Two out of every five displaced migrants (desplazados)—some 800,000 people—came to the metropolitan Lima area from the poorest parts of the country such as Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac. Many remained. They are the poorest citizens of the poorest rural communities farthest from Peru's larger cities. Their presence in the cities caused and is still causing resentment, indifference and even fear among long-time residents. These attitudes make us think that the cities are not prepared to receive these new social and cultural actors who generally reside in the most marginal and poorest zones of the city. The desplazados are invisible migrants, often confused with those who travel to the city in search of a better economic life.

Many of these migrants did go home after 1992, when relative peace came to the country, but many had established families in Lima and their worlds now span both contexts.

Differente Types of Growth

The 1993 census shows a relative decline of migration to metropolitan Lima in favor of medium-sized cities. Greater Lima is growing at a rate of 1.7% after experiencing a 3.5% growth rate during the 1970s and 1980s. One reason for this lower growth rate is the tendency toward smaller families; another is the extensive international migration, estimated to have quadrupled from 500,000 Peruvians abroad in 1980 to 1,940,000 in 1999.

In the last 20 years, medium-sized cities have exploded in population. Cuzco, Huancayo, Juliaca, Ayacucho and Abancay all grew between four and seven percent annually, although Lima continues to receive more migrants in absolute terms. The rapid growth of medium-sized cities is causing housing shortages and adversely affecting the environment. The advantage for the migrants who moved to these smaller cities is that they can keep in touch with their communities of origin and are able to return frequently.

Another change in migration is the increase in the number of female migrants. When internal migration began, women hardly ever left the countryside. Culturally, migration was the domain of men. The father or oldest son took to the road because the migratory routine was part of the public life that the family considered a masculine privilege. The trip to the city was usually made in order to find work, and women, with their lack of education, were limited in their occupational choices. Census data from 1940, 1961 and 1972 all show more women than men living in the countryside. The seasonal or temporary absence of men helped redefine the role of women, taking them out of the domestic, private realm and thrusting them into more public roles. Women began to take on political and religious roles, as well as economic tasks, in the absence of their menfolk. Then the women themselves began to migrate.

As women increasingly entered the labor market, they sought better opportunities, just like the men. Women also found good opportunities in the city both in commerce and as domestic workers. In the
countryside, women found increasing educational opportunities and changing gender roles prepared them to enter the labor market. Thus, migration allowed women to discover better horizons and even better marriage prospects. In the city, women became leaders in the defense of civil rights. Many of them went on to lead their families and become educated, sometimes even making it to the university.

The last census in Peru demonstrates that half of all migrants are women; indeed, in international migration, the number of women slightly outnumber the men. Women head one out of every four households in Greater Lima. Divorce, separation, and single motherhood are increasing the number of female-led households. Unemployment and underemployment more often affect men than women; there are already quite a few homes in which the woman works and the man stays at home to cook and take care of the children. Valuing their traditions and regional roots, women are assuming critical roles in the migrants' local organizations as well. Women have a great capacity to combine the modern and the traditional, while it is thought that men tend to favor the modern as a substitute for the old ways.

**GROWTH OF LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

With the loss of influence by political parties and unions in Peru's most populated urban barrios, many local organizations have sprung up. During the 1980s, urban political violence and increased governmental military control politically demobilized city residents. Popular organizations active in the 1970s came to a halt and still remain inactive even though political violence is currently under control.

Local groups such as block organizations, church groups, and housing committees gradually filled this vacuum. Inside these relatively safe spaces, citizens organized themselves into neighborhood associations, sports clubs, anti-delinquency groups, and prayer groups, that is, specific small and local groups with a tangible purpose. Each of these organizations, with unwritten rules about rights and obligations, practiced democracy: a democracy that was carried out independently of the influences of the central government and separately from the still existing political parties and unions. This is the new democracy of migrants and the children of migrants. In this democracy, the customs, traditions, and experiences that led up to the migration, coupled with the anxieties, hopes, desires and frustration of the migration experience itself, make up the present urban culture condensed into these small organizations. These social protagonists feel that the organizations are their own and represent their interests. Someone from the outside did not come to organize them, as had been the case with political parties, unions and the government. The rules of operation of each organization emerged from its members. Its decisions, statutes, and internal and external rules are collective creations, even though men and those with the most education generally become the leaders. These are voluntary associations, not obligatory ones, and its members are groups of families, neighbors and friends.

Clubs of migrants from the same region are some of the oldest types of these local organizations and are growing rapidly. Compared to the other types of urban organizations, these "provincial clubs" attract the greatest numbers of members. Practically every little mountain village has one or more associations representing it. The relatively apolitical nature of these associations has permitted them to bring together migrants from all walks of life who reach consensus to engage in a variety of activities.

These organizations represent not only the migrants, but their urbanized children. These experiences—which can also be found in other parts of Latin America, as well as Asia and Africa—are very locally based phenomena, not only because they are developed in an urban context, but because they are rooted in the communities of origin.
Radio and television are becoming more commonplace, and small industries such as shoemaking and bakeries can now operate in remote areas.

The radio is the most efficient means of urbanization. According to the 1993 census, 95 percent of Peruvians depend on this media. The growing rural audience has conditioned the urban radio program producers to direct their messages towards the countryside because that’s where the new consumers are. In addition, the growing presence of consumer goods in the countryside is motivating urban manufacturers to include the countryside in their target market. Every time a highway is built, manufactured products follow.

In 1993, 65% of Peruvians had a television. This figure is most likely higher now because of rural electrification. A 1991 study of Peruvian ranchhands in Wyoming, Idaho, Utah and California showed that the money they were sending back home to the Valle del Mantaro was being used for the purchase of televisions and vans, whereas previously it had been designated for religious fiestas and agricultural improvements.

The increased use of radio, television, and, to some degree, the printed media, is changing the traditions of oral communication. Shepherds bring their transistor radios to the fields, peasants rely on the radio to keep abreast of market information and local and international news. Combined with the increased geographic movement by peasants and the greater role of women, orality—or the exchange of information through face-to-face contact—is evolving.

The shift towards urbanization begins before migration. Educational programs relying on urban models to transform students into Spanish-speakers have also fostered urban values such as individualism, competitiveness and rewards for academic excellence. Parents encourage children to buy into the values of the school, to become professionals and not mere “campesinos.” The majority of rural areas now have schools that go through the primary years, but to continue education, the student must travel to a nearby city or to Lima. The student often remains in the city forever, only occasionally traveling back home.

Government development agents in the areas of education and health also help to urbanize the countryside. Rural schools have brought Spanish to Aymara and Quechua-speaking peoples and made villagers literate. Generally, this literacy and fluency in Spanish has increased migration to the cities. Local changes in food habits and dress, as well as the increased use of Spanish, are leading to the rapid and irreversible process of urbanization.

As a result, manufactured and sometimes imported products supplied by cities are replacing locally made ones, tying the rural communities to the cities through trade with the increased participation of peasants in the regional economy. Money has replaced barter systems, in part because there is less agricultural surplus due to the migration of the economically active population.

Almost every peasant community has a weekly market; socio-

NEW INTERACTIONS BETWEEN COUNTRY AND CITY

When you think about the country and the city, you might be tempted to think in terms of structural dualism. The rural is separated from the urban, the traditional from the modern, and the particular (rural) from the universal (urban). These separations, propagated by theories of development and modernization, have been rendered obsolete. Socio-demographic and cultural evidence in the last decades has shown us that the city and countryside are experiencing an intense interaction and mutual correspondence. No one can analyze cities independently of the countryside and vice-versa. There are many cultural elements found in both country and city; the question is to isolate these cultural factors to determine how much of each is found in both environments.

The traditional migration from countryside to city to find better work opportunities is giving rise to steady movements of populations in which the migrants come and go from the cities and countryside with more frequency and freedom. The temporary, seasonal, or definitive abandonment of the country by the peasant is no longer a novelty.

The small towns and capital cities of the provinces receive people from outside their communities daily. Better highways, as well as administrative links between country and city, are contributing to greater mobility of the population. Likewise, visits to family members who have relocated to towns, trips for agricultural supplies and exploration of new markets for rural zones require movement between the countryside and the cities. Many migrants to the cities return periodically to their hometowns because they maintain small businesses or farms there.

Many returning internal migrants (as well as the transnational ones) invest their savings in “combis”—a van-like form of transportation that is replacing buses. Every town, even the most remote, is now linked to small and medium-sized cities.

GROWING RURAL URBANIZATION

If more and more people are moving to the city, perhaps it is because the countryside itself is becoming more urban. The city is no longer so strange. Roads and electricity reach into the smallest hamlets.

If more and more people are moving to the city, perhaps it is because the countryside itself is becoming more urban.
economic and cultural events with great exchange among the local, regional and national economies. It is an uneven exchange because the rural agricultural products cannot compete in quality and quantity with the urban manufactured goods. The markets provide a stage for great transactions between the country and the city; however the city-dweller merchant goes to the countryside only to sell things and later returns to the city. The peasant merchant remains.

As a result of these transactions, there are more and more urban products in the peasant home. A visible example of this trend is the presence of plastics and cans in rural communities. In a quick survey of a peasant market in the highlands of the Valle del Mantaro, we found that the Friday market had more manufactured goods than local ones. This trend will certainly continue as the production of agriculture and handicrafts declines.

The growth of Protestantism has also contributed to a more effective process of urbanization because the religion stimulates material progress, innovations and the market economy. Catholic evangelism, which began simultaneously with the conquest, has been more flexible in permitting native rituals and practices. This evangelism was more of an agent of change in social practices rather than economic ones. In contrast, Protestantism came to the community with the message of prosperity for those who reject "backwards" traditions such as religious fies:as with their accompanying consumption of alcohol. Well-funded Protestant sects attracted new members in both the countryside and urban areas; since evangelists could be ordained within their home communities, they could spread the religion more aggressively than outsiders.

Urban housing practices introduced by migrants often find the younger generation living in homes built of corrugated iron or other sophisticated materials, while the older generation remains in straw huts. Streets are now part of the community. Even in the most rural areas, there are two-story houses. The urban part of such communities is growing more rapidly than the rural part.

The countryside and the city are constantly interacting and changing each other, creating urban-tinged spaces within the countryside, while families socialize and attend to their animals in rural-style migrant areas of Lima. The two spheres can no longer be seen as worlds apart.

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PORT CITY-SCAPES
A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

Ports, for a kid raised hundred of miles away from the sea, were just holiday spots where we could see fishing boats come in with their catch. On special days, my family would buy fresh fish from the boats for our dinner. Docks, quays and piers were but the promenades of sojourners eager to rest after busy mornings at the beach and the site of dramatic sunsets. There also were other ports, just as smelly and equally as puzzling to me. Huge cranes rested beside enormous ships whose functions were as mysterious to me as the flags on their masts. These ports were surprisingly placed in the very center of cities without nice sea views. They were surrounded by derelict buildings and neighborhoods that later on I would learn were actually quite picturesque.

At home, once again far from the sea, ports appeared to me in adventure books. Smugglers, pirates, and old sailors with stories aplenty resided in alluring taverns that I had never managed to find in my teenage wandering days. Bars, lodging houses, cheap hotels and old shops did not attain the charm that was described in Pio Baroja's novels. Indeed, the fish ports retained romantic traits that the port cities did not have. The port cities that I visited were generally industrial and the workers hardly resembled Stevenson's characters.

A few years ago, I was again intrigued by the thought of ports and their cities. Port cities were, according to others, non-fiction literature, spaces of cosmopolitanism, a crucible of ingenuity and a melting pot of diverse ethnic groups. Yet, as an anthropologist who dealt with society and cultures from a temporal perspective, I was struck by quite a different perception: ports could be dynamic human artifacts promoting people's interaction and ingenuity, spaces of hope and human growth, though they could simultaneously be areas of segregation and exploitation, human nests of deprivation and moral decay.

Ports not only shared other cities' qualities of a social and cultural-ly constructed urban milieu. In many cases, they were gateways to the future. In the Americas, ports were the first beach heads of colonization and where many immigrants landed, hoping for a better future. By studying the remains of port cities we can ascertain much about the lives of those people who did not make it into history books but whose stories knitted greater narratives. Ellis Island in New York, the impressive fortresses of Havana, and the Buenos Aires waterfront in the Boca neighborhood all tell us important stories.

The various aspects of ports are good to ponder for they reflect many qualities of citizenship. Their past evolution gives us a glimpse of how the most stubbornly human built structures, the ones that tended to require more planning and cunning, provide social scientists and historians great case studies to analyze.

Nowadays, Latin American ports are following the wave of port and waterfront renewal that many other decayed port marinas have experienced during the last three decades in the United States, Canada, Western Europe and South Africa. These renewals are great reflections of new ideas about how the interface of city and the old port should be: environmentally friendly and more consumer-oriented than public venues of non-structured citizen activity. The new waterfronts house aquariums, malls, exhibition halls, movie theaters and, though keeping past roots intact, are a radical departure from the way ports were. Latin American port and city authorities as well as citizens and entrepreneurs have the chance, as do many other port cities interested in their urban renewal, of showing alternative modernities and visions of postindustrial progress.

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The Price of Urbanization

The Plight of Peruvian Shepherds in the Western United States

BY ALVARO BEDOYA

When I first met Antidio Román, a 26-year-old Peruvian shepherd, he had been living in a tent for more than five months. Though he was only three miles from the nearest village, Antidio hadn’t had a single day off from work in the past two years. Instead of providing him a bathroom, his boss, a prominent local landowner, had given him a shovel with which to bury his excrement. The day I found him, Antidio was eating the remains of an old, sick ewe that he had slaughtered six days ago. Having no means to refrigerate the meat, Antidio kept it in a red burlap sack under his cot. “This way the dogs can’t get to it,” Antidio explained.

Antidio’s story sounds like the sad but familiar experience of an abused worker in the Third World. Unfortunately, I did not find Antidio in the pastures of Cusco, or anywhere near the Andes; Antidio Román worked for Derek Gibbins, a wealthy Nevada rancher, and his tent was a stone’s throw away from Interstate 395—three miles north of the bustling, all-American town of Bridgeport, California.

More than 3,000 Peruvian shepherds are currently employed by American ranchers. Spread throughout California, Colorado, Nevada, Wyoming, and a handful of other western states, these workers are brought in on three-year contracts through the U. S. Department of Labor’s “H-2A” agricultural guestworker program. While the wages these individuals earn provide precious income to their home communities in Junín, Pasco, and Lima, the conditions they are subjected to—in terms of housing, health services, and employer abuse—put a high price on their families’ prosperity.

Sheep herders’ living conditions have barely advanced since the 18th century. Most sheep herders are housed year-round in dilapidated huts, cramped old trailers or even tents. In a recent study of herders in central California, not a single worker surveyed had access to a phone, less than 5% were supplied with a toilet, and even fewer had access to running water. Salaries ranged from $650 to $800 a month, or, in other words, approximately $1 an hour, given that workers are required to be on site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. This backbreaking labor literally never ends: of the 41 workers in the survey, 90% were not given a single day off in the entire previous working year.
Ranchers justify low wages by claiming that workers receive free room and board. "Room" can consist of nothing more than a cloth tent and "board" almost unanimously consists of old lamb meat and canned vegetables. Many shepherders are not provided a means to preserve their meat; hence, herders like Antidio Román are forced to finish their seven-day allotment of meat in three or four days, before the flesh spoils. "It's particularly hard in the summer" one herder commented, "Nothing keeps in the humidity."

Neither law enforcement authorities nor the Department of Labor has made any systematic effort to help; the Western Range Association (WRA), the sheep industry's powerful lobbying group, has spent millions of dollars to ensure that the law is on the ranchers' side. Its efforts have been successful: current labor regulations are riddled with special exceptions that effectively eliminate herders' legal protections and privileges. It is legal to house a herder in a tent. It is legal to give him a shovel instead of a bathroom. It is legal to pay him two dollars an hour and force him to work continuously, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This summer, armed with a notebook, a camera and an absurdly powerful pickup truck, I set out to study the working conditions of these Peruvian pastoralists. For two whirlwind months, I logged thousands of miles on dirt roads and mountain paths, looking for the furry flock or telltale plume of dust that always trails a herder. In a full day of driving, I was lucky to encounter two or three workers; at this rate, I located and interviewed 35 shepherders—the second largest survey of its kind. This on-site research was complemented by interviews with industry representatives, labor advocates and government officials.

Conditions were substandard at best and abysmal at worst. Not a single shepherd interviewed had access to a bathroom; every one—regardless of the accessibility of his work site to roads—was simply given a shovel with which to bury his excrement. Many workers lacked access to potable water. While eight herders were provided with airtight tanks containing presumably potable water, many more drank out of reusable plastic containers or rusting metal barrels, and a sizable minority regularly drank from streams, lakes, or the nearest natural water source.

Almost all lacked access to regular or even emergency medical care, and there are reliable reports of deaths due to minor ailments or accidents—such as snakebites, choking, or exposure to sub-freezing temperatures—that a prompt visit to the emergency room could resolved. Most ranchers visit their herders once every two to three days; one herder almost cried when he met me, explaining that he hadn't seen anyone other than his employer for over four months. Incidents that merely injure or inconvenience average Americans can easily kill a herder.

Shepherders are kept from complaining about their problems through a complex combination of neglect, coercion, and physical abuse. Under the terms of the H-2A contract, shepherders are only authorized to work for the rancher that sponsored their entry; employers often use their unique relationship with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to threaten workers who may want to leave their jobs. One former worker spoke of a particularly tragic episode: his employer ignored his repeated requests to see a doctor and abandoned him at a local hotel once he could no longer work; two days later, due to the employer's information, the INS arrested the herder for being "out of status."

Given the lack of public awareness and the sheer power of the interest groups involved, it is unlikely that the shepherds will soon escape their suffering. It is my hope that my research, once completed, will begin to bridge this knowledge gap, and bring us closer to the day when workers like Antidio get the pay, housing and employer treatment that they deserve.

Alvaro Bedoya '03 first became interested in Peruvian shepherds while working with migrant farmworkers in rural Florida and central Mexico. His current research was funded by the Harvard University Committee on Human Rights Studies and a Patricia King Fellowship from Harvard Phi Beta Kappa; his findings will be presented as a senior honors thesis this spring. Bedoya plans on entering law school next fall, and hopes to pursue a career in international labor law.

Opposite: The shepherd portrayed here hadn't had a single day off in the past six months. Above: The shepherd in this picture often had to finish his week's supply of meat in just two or three days, as the meat would not keep for longer.
Rhythm Nation

The Drums of Montevideo

By George Reid Andrews

The scene is exhilarating, even intoxicating. A drum corps sixty strong, we are marching through the Montevideo night, pounding out the African rhythms of *candombe*. Tonight is the Llamadas, the annual parade of the African-inspired Carnaval *comparsas* (drum and marching corps), and one of the most characteristic and defining features of Montevidean popular culture. Twenty thousand people line the parade route in the historic Barrio Sur, clapping, cheering, and dancing to the thudding rhythms laid down by Serenata Africana, Yambo Kenia, Senegal, Elumbé, and some 30 other groups.

But amidst all the *alegría*, one cannot help noting an apparent paradox. The drums are African, the rhythms are African, the names of the groups are African, but most of the performers—drummers, dancers, flag carriers, and others—are white! Some groups are entirely white, most are majority white; only a handful are majority Afro-Uruguayan.

How can this be? How did an African-based cultural form come to be practiced and populated mainly by white people? And how has the capital of a country that has historically prided itself on its European heritage and traditions—remember when Uruguay used to bill itself as the Switzerland of South America?—come to embrace an African-based musical form, *candombe*, as a core element of its cultural identity?

In a modern urban society, in which people live ever more isolated, enclosed, and cut off from each other in apartments and suburbs, spending more time with their televisions and computers than with fellow human beings, the *comparsas* provide a way for Montevideans to reconnect to each other, to their history, and to the public life of the street.

Constructing Candombe

I arrived in Montevideo in July 2001 to research the history of the city's black political and cultural organizations. With a population that today is more than 90% white, Uruguay would not seem to be the most promising venue for such a project. But in fact the country, and Montevideo in particular, have a rich history of black mobilization, expressed in one of the most active black presses anywhere in Latin America (at least 25 titles from the 1870s to the present, including the longest-running black newspaper in Latin America: *Nuestra Raza*, 1933–48); numerous social clubs and civic organizations; the Partido Autóctono Negro (1936–44), one of only three black political parties in the region (the other two were in Brazil and Cuba); and, currently, one of the leading black civil rights organizations in Latin America, Mundo Afro, founded in 1989.

Yet another form of black organization, I knew before coming to Montevideo, were the Carnaval *comparsas*. Knowing their African names, and their historical roots in the mutual aid societies created by free and slave Africans in the early 1800s, I had simply assumed that the *comparsas* were Afro-Uruguayan in composition. Imagine my surprise, then, to learn that in fact they were majority white. Inevitably, the story of how, when, and why historically-black community organizations evolved into a racially integrated, majority-white cultural movement became a central part of my research.

Montevideo has always been defined by its relationship to the sea—or more precisely, to the chocolate-colored waters of the Río de la Plata. Especially in summer months, residents flock to the beaches and parks along the handsome Rambla, a highway and pedestrian walkway that extends from downtown Ciudad Vieja 12 miles to the eastern city limits, in the affluent suburb of Carrasco. Middle-class suburban sprawl continues 20 to 30 miles further east along the coast, through the beach communities of Shangrila, Atlántida and others.

With more than a million inhabitants, today's Montevideo bears
little resemblance to the modest (fewer than 10,000 people) imperial outpost of 1800. Despite its small size, however, colonial-period Montevideo was a significant port of destination in the Atlantic slave trade. By 1800 the population of Uruguay was an estimated one-quarter black and mulatto; and as in Buenos Aires, Havana, Cartagena and other Latin American cities, slave and free Africans living in Montevideo created mutual aid societies organized around the African ethnic origins of their members. These “African societies” or “African nations,” as they were called, provided a site for religious ceremonies, social and cultural events, and an institutional means for members to lobby national and city authorities and protest abuses by masters (in the case of slaves), employers (in the case of free Africans), the police and other oppressors.

Most of the African societies built their headquarters—small shacks or houses—near the beaches of the Barrio Sur, just outside the walls of the Ciudad Vieja. There their members would gather on religious and national holidays to play and sing the music and dance the dances of their homelands in the Congo, Angola, West Africa and Mozambique. By the mid-1800s, these various types of African music were starting to meld together to form candombe, a pan-African music specific to Montevideo (and to Buenos Aires, its neighbor across the Río de la Plata).

That process of melding was further accelerated by Uruguayan musicians, both white and black, who during the second half of the 1800s incorporated European instruments—violins, guitars, trumpets—into the music. A number of these musicians were Afro-Uruguayans who had served in military bands and who, in addition to string and wind instruments, also introduced military forms of drumming and marching into candombe.

The result, during the last decades of the 1800s, was the displacement of the African national societies (which, as their members died of old age, were gradually disappearing) by a new musical and organizational form: the Carnaval comparsa. The first comparsas—La Raza Africana, Los Negros Orientales—were established by Afro-Uruguayans in the 1860s; then in 1874, a group of upper-class young white men founded Los Negros Lubolos, a black-face comparsa named in homage to one of the African national societies. Painting their faces with burnt cork and striving to produce a simulacrum of Afro-Uruguayan candombe, Los Negros Lubolos were a smash hit at that year’s Carnaval and paved the way for the entry of Euro-Uruguayans into the world of candombe. Indeed, to this day in Montevideo a white person who takes up the drums and joins a Carnaval comparsa is known as a negro lubolo, and the comparsas are known officially as the “agrupaciones de negros y lubolos”—literally, organizations composed of blacks and of whites who parade as blacks.

Over the course of the 1900s the ranks of the negros lubolos have grown exponentially. Between 1870 and 1930 the city more than quadrupled in size, from 125,000 inhabitants to 570,000, mainly as a result of European immigration. Many of those immigrants took up residence in the working-class neighborhoods of the Barrio Sur, Palermo, and Cordón, living in crowded conventillos (tenement slums) alongside Afro-Uruguayans; and in the conventillos, as part of the process of becoming Uruguayan, they and their children learned to play candombe and formed their own new comparsas.

Unlike the upper-class white comparsas of the late 1800s, these early-twentieth-century groups were racially integrated, drawing on the racially mixed populations of the conventillos. Thus the premier comparsa of the 1900–1930 period, Esclavos de Nyanza, based in the

“The drum is music. It came from the jungle and took over the city, just like the guitar of the country campfires.” —MUNDO URUGUAYO, 1935

Left: The Drums of Montevideo
La Faca conventillo in Palermo, was mainly white but included a few black members as well. The Esclavos’ principal competitor, the Libertadores de Africa, was more thoroughly integrated, including its directors. The comparsa was founded in 1921 by Angel Genaro Huesca and Francisco Airaldi, whose names strongly suggest immigrant origins, and its drum corps was led by famed Afro-Uruguayan soccer star José Leandro Andrade. Other groups, such as Lanceros Africanos and Pobres Negros Cubanos, were also racially mixed.

Thus by the early 1900s, the racial integration characteristic of the conventillos was equally characteristic of the comparsas; and just as whites had entered the world of candombe, so had candombe entered the white world. In a process analogous to that experienced by the tango in Buenos Aires, samba in Rio de Janeiro, rumba and son in Havana, and of course jazz in Chicago and New York, by the 1920s and 30s Euro-Uruguayans were embracing candombe as one of the city’s defining cultural creations. “The drum is music,” proclaimed the mass-circulation photo magazine Mundo Uruguayo in 1935. “It came from the jungle and took over the city, just like the guitar of the country campfires. And like the guitar, we made it our national instrument.”

Almost seventy years later, in 2002, the newspaper La República reiterated the same theme. Candombe and the comparsas, once “the ancestral ritual of the black race, are today the grand ritual of an entire people, regardless of color, religion, social class, or cultural differences. Tonight [at the Llamadas] the drums will call and a whole people will come to dance and renew their commitment to a tradition rooted in the very foundations of our nationality.”

As that last quotation suggests, by the end of the 1900s Uruguayans’ attachment to candombe was perhaps deeper than ever before, as I had ample opportunity to see while living in Montevideo. During the 1990s the city had been swept by a “fever” of drumming, an “epidemic” of drumming, in the words of people I interviewed. Thousands of whites bought drums, enrolled in courses to learn how to play them, and joined comparsas. The sounds of African drum-

A capital that prides itself on European heritage beats to the pulse of African drums.

DANCE HALLS
A GLIMPSE OF UTOPIA

"Donde estás?" I asked the best Latin dancer I had ever followed around a floor. It was last summer in "centrally isolated," as the locals say, Ithaca, New York, where a friendly gay club goes Latin on Wednesday nights. Once a week we broke up the bucolic boredom that helps to make Cornell University so intellectually restless.

"Sorry, I don’t speak Spanish," said the dancer.

"Where are you from, then?" I code-switched.

"From Bosnia," he answered. "My name is Nedim."

That stopped me short. He had kept me in step through changes in rhythm, but now he lost me. Still grateful for his creative control as a dance partner who knows how to heighten the fun of following with unpredictable segues, even when the moves were familiar, I let my mind wander.

In other clubs in other cities less exotic for Latin music than Ithaca, I had found dancers like Nedim creating urban oases of sociability. A kind of utopian Zeitgeist, to use Walter Benjamin’s word, flashes through memories of dancehalls in Monterrey, Montevideo and Montreal, in Santo Domingo and San Juan (where the guy in a baseball cap and too chubby to be Elvis Crespo turned out to be the real thing when he invited us to an outdoor concert the next day, dance floors are the spaces of utopia).

I mean by utopia that everyone fits in, not by looking and acting the same, but by improvising variations on a given theme because dance is a creative art that values difference over conformity. Ernesto Laclau might describe the design of differences on the dance floor as “universal” in the contemporary sense. For the classics, universalism meant conformity so that difference looked like a deviation. But for post-moderns, universality is the space that accommodates differences (a language made up of many styles; a government sustained by divergent views). Its very name suggests how salsa depends on differences of rhythm, origin, mix.

Surely urban dance halls were an inspiration for shaping a better world. Seriously. I heard myself saying so about three years ago after an international meeting to discuss what kind of scholarship and education could promote equitable development worldwide. A day of speeches and debates left us academics clear about obstacles to the good life but mostly clueless about the goal.

“What would a better world look like?” I asked my anthropologist friend Arjun Appadurai at the end of the meeting. I teased him about not being able to say what it was that we were working towards. “Do you want a glimpse of a better world?” I went on. So the intrepid anthropologist let me lead him, looth to allow skepticism to sidetrack us from a field trip into the night of New York.

Half an hour into a taxi ride that brought us only two blocks closer to the river at 10 p.m. that Friday night was enough to make us go native and walk the rest of the way to 57 Street between 10th and 11th Avenues. There stood the Copa Cabana, of glorious memory. This legendary Latin nightclub of the late twentieth century is no more. In its wake, a rhizome of lesser locales now multiplies the points of entry to a worldly utopia in real time and space.

But on that night, the club was still marking its prominent place on the street with a long line of patrons patiently waiting to get inside. The line was something of an antechamber to heaven, like a programmed pause to prepare roughened souls for the refinement on the other side. Detained for the while, we stared at other celebrants who, like us, lagged behind the threshold and inclined toward the light and the music.

Dark people, light people, and every shade of African and Asian mixed together sometimes with white, some old ones, more young ones, maybe a mother with young girls or a modam with youngish
ming, which for most of the century had been heard mainly in the center-city working-class neighborhoods, had now spread along the coast to the middle-class areas of Pocitos, Buceo, and Malvin.

Equally striking, for the first time drumming broke through long-standing gender barriers. Though individual women had occasionally drummed in comparsas, and one ("Cuca"—I have been unable to recover her real name) had actually led a drum corps in the early 1970s, all through the 1800s and 1900s drumming was an emphatically male enterprise. Now, however, in the last ten years, women have been entering the drumming classes and learning to play. The group in which I took part was about 10 percent female; and one of the features of the 2002 Carnaval shows at the municipal Teatro del Verano was an accomplished drum corps of 30–40 young women.

Veteran candomberos were puzzled and a bit nonplussed by this surge of interest, both male and female, in drumming and candombe. Some saw it as a positive development, not least because it offered new sources of livelihood to drum makers, drumming instructors, and musicians hired to play at parties and public functions. Others worried, however, that the presence of so many novice, inexperienced drummers was lowering the quality of the music played by the city’s comparsas. The only way to learn candombe, they said, was through long apprenticeship, ideally beginning in childhood, in the world of the comparsas.

Up through the 1970s that apprenticeship took place in the conventillos. But as part of its program of urban renewal, the military dictatorship of those years tore down a number of the tenements, including some that had housed the most famous and historic comparsas: e.g., the Mediomundo conventillo, home of Morenada; the Barrio Reus complex, also known as Ansínsa, home to the Libertadores de África (1921–1940s) and then Fantasia Negra (1953–75); the Charrúa and Gaboto conventillos in Córdón; and others. Even the best of the drumming schools were no substitute for the training imparted in those cradles of candombe.

I WAS A NEGRO LUBOLO

Curious to find out why white drummers were pouring into the comparsas, I decided to become one of them. I bought a drum, enrolled in "percussion classes" at Mundo Afro, the black civil rights organization, practiced with its comparsa from November through February, and then had the unforgettable experience of parading in the 2002 Llamadas. While going through this course of training and also hanging out at the practices and parades of other comparsas, I start-

shocks that refresh perception and that the formalists called defamiliarization. This enabling preference for aesthetic play is why choreographed ballroom routines of Latin dancing can seem boring to Latin dancers.

But at the Copa, the rule was to improvise: Improvisation on the dance floor with a range of combinations repeated the spirit of unorthodox mixing and matching of races and regions of the devotees who kept coming to the club. The one feature we all had in common was love for the music and for the combinatorial art of movement. It made us almost infinitely interchangeable partners. Not that one dancer was the same as another, but that each would invent moves from the same music in a particular style cribbed and combined from others.

Almost unbelievably, men who were too old and frail to walk up to partners still managed to look fluid on the dance floor. Barely bar-age youths struck classic poses to rhythms that syncopate across generations. At one spot on the floor, a stranger might ask a master to dance (I’ve done it more than once) in order to feel the thrill of expert creative control; at another spot, a man and wife may be doing variations on the steps they have been taking together for decades. The point is that everyone is moved by the music to make signature moves.

Nedim was a master of those moves, I thought, which brought me back to the syncopated conversation.

“Did you learn to dance salsa in Bosnia?” I asked incredulously.

“No, actually, it was in Germany.”

Doris Sommer, professor of Latin American Literature at Harvard University and author of the forthcoming Bilingual Aesthetics: A New Sentimental Education, makes sure that professional meetings end with dances, for obvious ethical and philosophical motivations. Her new project for DRCIAS, to coordinate a network of academics and artists who promote Cultural Agency, can be seen as developing the theme of her piece on Latin dance: universalism as the space for creative differences.
ed to get some insight into why Euro-Uruguayans have embraced a musical and cultural form seemingly remote from their ethnic roots and traditions.

The first reason is that, as the above brief history of candombe suggests, the music is in fact not remote from Euro-Uruguayan roots and traditions. As we have seen, over the course of the 1800s and 1900s the music and dances of the African nations were extensively reworked and transformed into an African-based but emphatically Uruguayan musical form. As composers, musicians, singers, and comparsa directors, whites were full-fledged participants in that process of transformation, working alongside their black counterparts; the result is a music that “belongs” to white Montevideans as much as to black ones.

A second reason is that candombe is a music that it is easy to get excited about. As several of my informants said, “when you hear that rhythm, you can’t sit still.” And the experience of playing in a candombe drum corps is even more intense, and intensely pleasurable, than the experience of listening. Several drummers spoke to me of feeling “transported” by the waves of rhythm; and indeed that perfectly captures the feeling one has. Digging deep down into a powerful funk groove, you are simultaneously lifted high, into something approaching trance, where you catch some small glimpse of the rhythmic revelation that is at the heart of all African-based musics.

And finally the third reason: as you glimpse that revelation, and as you both generate and absorb that rhythm that fills the universe, you do so as part of a larger collective. Like the African associations of the early 1800s, the comparsas are inherently social, community-building organizations. As you train, practice, and parade with your fellow drummers, inevitably you become bonded to the larger group. And that group is in turn embraced and supported by the neighborhood it represents and to which it gives voice. Wherever in the city I went to hear practice parades, local residents always turned out to clap, to dance, to greet the drummers and dancers and, perhaps most important, to greet each other.

The comparsas use the voices of the African drums to reweave and repair an urban social fabric raveled and worn by the multiple pressures of modern urban life. Indeed, as I marched with my compañeros on Sunday afternoons through the historic streets of the Ciudad Vieja, bringing the gift of candombe to festive groups of neighbors gathered on street corners or leaning out their windows, I thought more than once of how my own neighborhood in Pittsburgh would be enriched by having a comparsa. Lonjas [Drums] de Point Breeze, anyone? Long live candombe, and long live the comparsas!

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Mexico City
Through the Lens of Violence and Utopia
BY BRUNO BOSTEELS

Mexico City is a featured star in a small “boom” in recent Mexican cinema. The award-winning Amores perros and Y tu mamá también—following in the steps of other outstanding films such as Todo el poder, Sexo, poder y lágrimas, or La ley de los herederos—have much more in common than the superficial fact of their box-office success or the presence of the up-and-coming young actor Gael García Bernal as the male lead in both films. The two movies also in similar ways talk across classes and across generations—moving back and forth between working-class hardships and mind-numbing wealth, between the worlds of adults who have grown weary too soon and oversexcited teenagers who are only barely coming of age.

Mexico’s capital appears in dramatically different guises through the lens of these two movies. A somber urban theatre of violence and persecution permeates Amores perros, whereas in Y tu mamá también the city becomes an anti-utopia, quickly left behind once two adolescent boys embark with their fantasy woman, played by Maribel Verdú, on a road trip that is supposed to lead them to an imaginary beach in Oaxaca. The first movie, directed by first-time filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu, plunges the viewer vertically into the depths of the nation’s sprawling capital, the largest and most populated in the world, coming up for air from its grungy underworld only once—in the second of three storylines—for the melodrama of an adulterous businessman and his young lover who lost her job as high-logged model after a car crash. The second movie, by contrast, turns escape by car into an entertaining road trip, tracing a playfully didactic, horizontal line of flight away from family, home, and heterosexual norms. Director Alfonso Cuarón, in a sense, returns to his motherland with this movie, only to take off immediately again in search of what can only be called a lost paradise, the promise of utopia, there where in reality it is the truth of death and separation that lies in wait.

A logic of random encounters defines the powerful intrigue of both movies. This is most visible in the initial car crash that connects the characters from the three storylines and in the wrenching violence that runs through Amores perros, but also in the guise of an unexpected coincidence of desires that brings together two pubescent boys with their too-good-to-be-true older bombshells in a series of sexual initiations and botched attempts at repressing their homosexual undercurrent in Y tu mamá también. Both set a gleefully mastered, fast-paced narrative style against a commercial soundtrack mixing the hippest rock tunes and techno-tronics with the local equivalent of trashy singer-songwriters. In mainstream press reviews, both invoke comparisons with the work of Quentin Tarantino in cult movies such as Pulp Fiction and Reservoir Dogs (even by its very title, Amores perros seems to refer coyly to this last film, while Y tu mamá también winks rather at French New Wave products such as Jules et Jim or comedies like Harold and Maude). From a political vantage point, finally, both beg to be read as symptomatic expressions of the enormous sea change that during the last couple of years swept through Mexico, especially since the end of 71 years of single-party rule with the elections of June 2000. In many other respects, though, these two movies could not be more different.

Amores perros was released around the time of the last elections, and thus can hardly be said to offer an eyewitness account of the end of the PRI’s reign of power. If anything, the movie’s predictions run counter to any premature optimism and, in retrospect, one might even say that the work was able to unmask the euphoria of change, encapsulated in the V-sign shown everywhere during Vicente Fox’s campaign and subsequent victory. Y tu mamá también, on the other hand, explicitly situates itself in the wake of this victory, commented upon by the narrator in one of his numerous voices. Appearances in both cases, however, could be deceiving: in the first, because the political reference seems to me less to the imminent collapse of the ruling party than to the radical legacy from the late sixties and early seventies, when the country saw the rise of armed revolutionary forces that would eventually turn to forms of urban guerrilla warfare, and in the second, because the voices do hardly anything to clarify the link between the film’s main story line and the political events of the past few years.

Gilles Deleuze, in one of his last essays published in Critical and Clinical, discusses the basic difference between two forms of art, which he relates to two fundamental orientations of the unconscious—one hovering around the sinister return of past traumas, with the other reaching out to the future for as yet unheard-of possibilities. The first understanding of art and the unconscious he calls “archaeological,” while the second obeys rather a “cartographic” impulse. It might be useful to compare Amores perros and Y tu mamá también in these terms. While the first movie delves into the scarred depths of violence and the antagonistic struggles that are barely hidden beneath the capital’s picture-perfect surface.

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as the peasants and fishermen emigrating to the city, the soldiers checking locals for drugs and weapons in a region historically linked to much guerrilla activity in Y tu mamá también, or the ex-professor turned armed guerrilla fighter and then cold-blooded hitman for hire who seeks to reestablish contact with his long-lost daughter by leaving an emotional speech on her answer machine at the end of Amores perros. These are some of the scenes that confront the viewer with the legacy, not just of neoliberalism today but of the earlier dreams to “put society back together” without seeking refuge in the strictly imaginary. Both movies, in the end, give an account of what is left of the sixties and seventies at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

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Tijuana
Un Refugio de Mundos

BY RICHARD MORA

Tijuana, the largest border city in Mexico, is a fusion of worlds. Located fifteen miles south of San Diego, California, the city draws migrants, tourists, and adventurers. Here, some of them cross paths with the locals, who proudly self-identify as Tijuaneños and embody the city’s lively, and seemingly chaotic rhythm. Allow me to give you a glimpse into Tijuana, or ‘T.J.’ as tourists refer to it, or ‘Tia’ as many young Tijuaneños call their home.

“TIA JUANA”

Doña Ottilia, a woman in her seventies, assured me this past summer that the city is named after a woman, Tia Juana, who was one of its early mestizo settlers. I had no reason to doubt her; after all it is what I had been told repeatedly as a child. It turns out, however, that this narrative is more cuento than fact. Historical documents record the name Tia Juana as early as 1809, but this name was that of a ranch, not a person. According to La Sociedad de Historia de Tijuana, the city’s name likely came from the semi-nomadic peoples that inhabited the region in pre-Hispanic times—the Tecuan, Teguan, Ticuan, Teguan, and Llantiguan.

Moreover, the official date of Tijuana’s founding adds to the intrigue of this city’s beginnings. The date was not decided upon until 1976, after numerous public hearings held in the early 1970s. Members of various professional organizations, including La Sociedad de Historia de Tijuana, la Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, and Instituto Tecnológico de Tijuana as well as individual community members were in attendance. Eventually, it was decided that the official founding date would be July 11, 1889, the day of the first recorded urban plan for the city.

The city shield of Tijuana bears the inscription: “Aquí empieza la Patria.” With these words, Tijuaneños affirm their patriotism. However, the plight of the migrants from other regions of Mexico that pour into the city every year leads them to Tijuana not because this is where la Patria begins, but because it is where it ends, with the United States in sight.

MIGRANT DREAMS

My grandmother recalls that when she arrived to Tijuana nearly fifty years ago that the flow of migrants from points further south was not noteworthy. She says, “antes venían contaditos.” But that is no longer true. Tijuana has grown at an astronomical pace. In 1940, there were approximately 16,000 residents. By 1950, the figure had risen dramatically to 60,000. Currently, about two million people reside in Tijuana. Many come drawn by the possibility of finding work, either across the U.S.-Mexico border, or at one of the foreign-owned maquiladoras (assembly factories) that have become fixtures of the local economy.

For some, Tijuana is a new beginning, the launching pad from which to venture into the future and escape the past. There are migrants who have decided to settle down and make a life in Tijuana over the years. Take for example Doña Ottilia. She arrived in Tijuana, having traveled by bus, days after the death of Pedro Infante, the Mexican crooner, in April of 1957. Here, she and her husband raised a family in a small house they bought after years of saving. Yet, even now, Doña Ottilia speaks nostalgically of some-day retracing her migrant path to “mi rancho,” as she often refers to her pueblo in the state of Michoacan. However, in all actuality, she will stay in Tijuana, where she buried her husband and a son within the past year.

For others, Tijuana is as close as they are able to come to the U.S. They find themselves surrounded by a border city that reminds them of their frustrated aspirations. Dreams dissipate and nightmares materialize for many migrants seeking to cross the border. Standing at the corners of some main intersections throughout Tijuana, many dif-
different souls vie for motorists' attention and money. Every day, one hears radio announcements from families desperately searching for loved ones—sons and daughters who made their way to Tijuana and have not been heard from since. Likewise, listeners are informed when migrant families seek to sell their furniture because they are heading back home, some with money and others without.

"TANTAS COLONIAS QUE UNO NI CONOCE"  
The most noticeable change that has resulted from the population growth is the dramatic increase in the number of homes. Fifty years ago, city officials were giving out parcels of hillside land to newcomers in an effort to expand the city. Now hills that were covered with wild grass, trees, and footpaths ten years ago are filled with dwellings made of everything from old, reused wood to cinder blocks. Some of the makeshift houses teeter on the edge of eroding hillsides. Others sit comfortably atop carved-out terraces.

On the same day every week, when the sobre ruedas, or street markets "on wheels," come to the colonias, residents, mostly women and children, come out to shop for meat, poultry, fruits and vegetables. As residents shop, they catch up with one another and with vendors, who bring word of what is transpiring in other colonias. In addition, a good number of the residents that live along the streets where the sobre ruedas set up, display used clothes and appliances from the U.S. in front of their homes for the passersby, in hopes of supplementing their incomes. Others sell gelatin, sweetened ice, and other treats. The practice of supplementing the family income is quite common in working class colonias, and is carried out by both the young and old.

Doña Socorro, a stern elderly woman, supports herself in part by crocheting decorative covers for water gallons. Her deceased husband did not leave her much of a pension given that he worked in the fields of California for many years. Over the last year, Doña Socorro has attended meetings along with others, hoping to gain access to the pension benefits they or their loved ones accrued decades ago while working as field laborers in the U.S. under the bracero program. Yet, unlike the famous coronel that patiently awaited his pension in Marquez's novel, El Coronel No Tiene Quien Le Escriba, Doña Socorro is not optimistic. As a matter of fact, she believes that there is no pension money for bracero and their families because the U.S. government appropriated it and spent it all.

There are so many people arriving to Tijuana that new colonias seem to appear almost overnight, making it impossible for housing inspectors and city officials to regulate the continuing expansion of the city. Moreover, the opening of a Home Depot in Tijuana this past October is not likely to help matters. However, city officials have recently taken measures—considered drastic by for would-be migrants, Tijuana is not where la Patria begins, but where it ends with the United States in sight.
tried to cross the police blockade. However, police officers quickly restrained the man, and the situation did not escalate.

Authorities claim that Puerta al Futuro was razed as a safety precaution because of the fragility of the homes vulnerable to the annual downpours. Nonetheless, in a matter of hours, the city authorities had effectively rendered several hundred people homeless. Fathers and mothers returned from work that evening to find piles of broken cinderblock, wooden studs, and drywall where their humble homes had stood.

Although the homes had been illegally erected, residents and activists were outraged by the inhumane actions of the city. They raised questions: Why were residents not given prior notice, and why had the authorities suddenly taken such a hard stance against this year-old settlement after residents had invested so much of their income to build their homes? Yet, in the end, their questions fell on deaf ears.

**TOURISM AND THE BORDER ECONOMY**

Since the time of prohibition, when businessmen, politicians, and Hollywood personalities traveled to Tijuana to drink and let loose, tourists from the U.S. have considered Tijuana a party town. The influx of dollar-wielding tourists gave rise to bars, clubs, and houses of prostitution, establishments that can still be found there. "Vienen a deshogarse," is what many Tijuanenses say about the tourists, especially the college and high school students who are attracted by the fact that the legal drinking age in Mexico is eighteen. On weekend nights, thousands of college-age men and women converge on La Avenida Revolución, a street in the heart of Tijuana lined with curio shops, bars, and strip clubs.

During the day, La Revolución, or La Revu as locals refer to it, is full of tourists who come looking to purchase "authentic" Mexican cultural items at the curios shops. Like the cab drivers and club greeters, the vendors in these shops and on the street have learned a range of phrases, such as "good price," in various languages in order to attract the international tourists that make their way down the street. For the most part, the vendors are outwardly pleasant, aware that their livelihood depends on these foreigners. Seeing many of them in action reminds me of what the sociologist Arlie Hochschild refers to as "emotional work," or the kind of pleasant decorum that workers, such as flight attendants, maintain when interacting with customers.

While many Tijuanenses are unable to cross the Mexico-U.S. border, others do and spend millions of dollars in Southern California shopping at clothing outlets and food wholesalers, among other stores. Children attending schools in Tijuana regularly take school trips to various places throughout Southern California, such as Sea World, the San Diego Zoo, Disneyland, and Magic Mountain. Families living in Tijuana travel to see the San Diego Padres, which advertises discount family packages in Tijuana newspapers.

Moreover, the ever-increasing commercial influence of U.S. firms has brought certain products into Tijuana, thereby enabling Tijuanenses to enjoy aspects of U.S. culture without having to cross the border. Throughout the city are fast food franchises, such as Burger King and McDonald's, as well as Blockbuster video stores and Smart & Final warehouses. The transactions at these establishments, like at other establishments in Tijuana, can be done either in pesos ("plata") or dollars ("oro"). The preference for U.S. currency is evident by this colloquial distinction.

**DRUGS AND VIOLENCE IN THE CITY**

Years ago, at the border, I ran into a man I know, who goes by the nickname Ratón. I was in an air-conditioned car, while the temperature outside had surpassed the 100-degree mark, with the heat and exhaust of hundreds of cars inching their way toward the United States. Ratón was weaving between the cars carrying a plastic bucket filled with sodas in water that at one point must have been ice. Sweat dripped from his face and made his thin white t-shirt translucent. When he saw me through the wind-shield, Ratón smiled and made his way toward me in the passenger's side of the car.
I rolled down the window and we greeted one another with smiles and handshakes. In the course of our conversation, I told Ratón I was heading to Los Angeles. He informed me that he was sent to the border by his drug rehabilitation center so that he would sweat the toxins out of his body.

The next time I saw Ratón was a few months later. He was not well. Like other addicts in my grandmother's colonia, he greeted me and asked me for a dollar para curarse. I gave it to him.

Unfortunately, Ratón is not an isolated case. In Tijuana, poverty, violence and drug use are rampant. The level of drug use and violence in Tijuana is unparalleled in its history, in large part because of the presence of the Arellano-Felix drug cartel. More than a decade ago, it began using the city as its base of operation, and over the years, the fledgling cartel has made its presence known with a number of brazen violent acts.

In an effort to counter the drug addiction problem in Tijuana and the surrounding region, state and city officials developed futile solutions. This past summer, for example, the government of Baja California instituted a new ordinance banning narcorrítos (ballads about the lives of drug dealers) from the airwaves. Their decision to prohibit radio stations from carrying this genre of music was, according to government officials, based on their belief that these songs promoted violence and drug use. Yet, residents and visitors of Tijuana can still hear narcorrítos by tuning their radios or car stereos to Spanish-language music stations located in nearby San Diego. Additionally, city officials have passed an ordinance prohibiting the sale of drug paraphernalia, such as ceramic pipes, which are sold mostly to tourists. The authorities warned merchants that these items would be confiscated. Nevertheless, the application of this new ordinance is anything but equitable. Law enforcement officials regularly target the wares of the impoverished Mixtec women and children lining the sidewalks frequented by tourists, ignoring the curios shops that prominently display drug paraphernalia by their front doors.

CONCLUSION

"Tijuana es tan singular como Marsella, Vladívostok, Madagascar o Rio de Janeiro. Un Refugio de Mundos." With these words, in an op-ed piece in Zeta, architect Diego Maldonado captures the essence of the city in which he resides. Like a picture of someone who looks familiar yet strangely different, Tijuana is both here and there, straddling boundaries—past and present, Mexico and the U.S.—provoking feelings of both comfort and suspicion. As such, it is a city that can easily go unseen by the refugees who visit or pass through it. On the other hand, Tijuana is a place that is lived by those who consider it more than just a pit stop. There is no doubt that Tijuana, a young urban center located along an ancient migratory pathway, will continue to grow as new arrivals build along the folds of its terrain and carve out their own worlds.

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continue performing them year after year with my in-laws and friends in Mexico.

These experiences convince me that las Posadas, like other rich cultural traditions that immigrants bring to the U.S., lie largely untapped. They've got great potential to nourish community and to promote a deeper sense of belonging and participation—both for immigrants and the U.S.-born. In Los Angeles as in many cities, people long for a deeper, or for any, sense of community. With a vast Latino population, what an excellent opportunity Los Angeles has to cultivate rich participatory, socially connecting traditions like las Posadas—already transplanted by Mexican immigrants!

Sad to say, if we ignore these precious seedlings, the assimilation process will probably bulldoze them in two generations. My family has been in this country too long (my dad's family has roots in South Texas since the early 1700s) to compare to the average second, third or fourth-generation story. But, like us, most Mexican Americans during the 1950s and 60s grew up heedless of celebrations and customs their parents and grandparents had practiced. The Catholic Church in the U.S. of my childhood forged a community of faith, but on the assimilation model, actively discouraging any indigenous, foreign-sounding or lookng rituals. Ironically, at least in the L.A. diocese today, the Church depends heavily on the participation of Mexican immigrants and has done to embrace their customs.

Forty to fifty people of all ages sit quietly in the Dolores Mission School cafeeria. At a table covered with brown paper, I stoop over a small girl. Together we paste down the final palm tree in a scene of Bethlehem replete with glue-stains and glitter while her mother rescues a small pot of paint from the fingers of a younger brother. Behind me, women and men turn out stacks of papel picado, chiseling intricate patterns into layers of colored tissue paper. Young girls assemble garlands of paper flowers by the kitchen door. I wander upstairs for fresh "East Los" air, mildly cool under the early December sun. Near the hand-painted "Free Art Workshop Today/Taller de Arte Gratuito" sign, a giant paper-maché puppet head lies almost finished. Two high school girls dip newspaper strips into a glue mix and smooth the final layer. A young man struggles with a vest harness that supports the companion puppet. I hoist him into the frame and look up. The bold face of a brown Virgin Mary gazes over me, her dark eyes scanning the adjacent soccer field.

What did I immediately notice and enjoy about las Posadas? "Regular" people preparing for and performing them. Most people who make art for a Posada presentation never call themselves "artists," although the mom-to-be with a pillow for a belly under her robes), preparing traditional foods, and stuffing piñatas full of candy for the children. The more extravagant Posadas can inspire hand-made puppets, banners, paper flowers, informal rhythm instruments, papel picado, and piñatas.

I try to stay with the group while singing, negotiating songbook pages and keeping my candle lit. A small group of the loudest singers hustle ahead and slip just inside the door of our first stop—they'll have to sing through an almost shut door to the crowd outside. The younger ones who haven't done this before, or people like me who didn't grow up doing this willumble in the candlelight for the words to the Las Posadas ballad. Meanwhile, someone at the front next to the outside of the door who knows it all from memory starts the musical story. In the imploring voice of Saint Joseph, I belt out the first verse from the songbook:

En nombre del cielo, os pido Posada, pues no puede andar mi esposa amada. (In the name of heaven we ask for shelter, because my loving wife cannot be walking around."

The cranky reply shoots through a crack in the door:

Aquí no es mesón, sigan adelante, pues no hay de abrir no sea alguien tan tarde. (This is not an inn; go on ahead because I cannot open as you might be a thief.)
The ballad begins, rich thematic territory about the experience of seeking shelter and being turned away. Some non-traditional las Posadas processions in Los Angeles use that theme as an advocacy tool. A community economic development corporation, also in East Los Angeles, sponsored a Posada involving hundreds of participants, educating and motivating the public about the need for low-income housing and safer neighborhoods. In another area of LA, a decade-long tradition of an "AIDS Posada" replays every year, organized out of a (non-Catholic) church. Started by a now-deceased Latino AIDS activist, this bilingual Posada involves a host of other Latino and non-Latino participants in a peace-march style procession to City Hall, advocating for housing and other rights for people with HIV/AIDS. A Posada doesn’t have to be traditional or owned exclusively by Latinos to be effective as a community-building tool.

While a small, neighborhood- or church-organized las Posadas nurtures traditional activities, the larger, and secular celebrations involve more people and less tradition. Traditional and non-traditional cross-fertilize, encouraging thoughtful participation on both sides. Think about how Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead evolved in the U.S. In the 1980s, Chicano activists revived Day of the Dead, a spiritual tradition almost forgotten here. The Chicano version of Day of the Dead, often politically infused and partly secular, contrasts with the intimate, relatively religious and largely non-political in-home practices by many Mexicans and Chicanos. Now, twenty years later, Día de los Muertos thrives as an annual, publicly celebrated event in many U.S. cities with large Latino populations. The private, more traditional expressions continue to exist. It’s even likely that more people create home altars now because of their exposure to the holiday from public celebrations, rather than as a personal remembrance of experience in Mexico.

I perform Posadas year after year in Tlaquilpa, Veracruz, with my in-laws and friends. Perched at the edge of a curb on a bustling brick-laid side street in Tlaquilpa, I sing despite the chill and the interminable drizzle, over truck motors and speeding scooters, pleading at another house with the “innkeepers.” They reply through the metalwork gate:

¿Eres tu José? ¿Tu esposa da María? ¿Entren peregrinos, no los conocía? (Is it you, Joseph? Is your wife Mary? Come on in, pilgrims, I did not know you!)

I enter as a joyful new melody and rhythm fills the street and the “inn”:

...aunque es pobre la morada, se las doy de corazón. (...even though the household is poor, I give it to you from the heart.)

Even if my family traditions in Los Angeles diverge from the so-called mainstream, in my childhood experience only the custom of caroling parties resemble las Posadas, a dim comparison. A Latina born and raised in the U.S., I grew up eating tamales and buñuelos and going to midnight mass at Christmastime. However, Posadas were not part of that experience. I now find refuge by practicing Posadas amidst the commercialization that assaults us all at that time of year.

What I especially like is the way a Posada can happen in complete independence of any formal institution, and how it physically and metaphorically weaves a story through streets and in homes, creating an invisible fabric between me and my neighbors and the spaces we live and move in.

Las Posadas exist as only one of many more widely known and practiced traditions in Mexican culture—many, many others are performed locally all over Latin America. In Los Angeles, I am one of the thousands so far who have adapted or adopted them. We tell stories aloud together in our city in this way, increasing the strength of the urban social fabric, one thread at a time.

The procession ends. Cold, hunger, fatigue just beneath my smile, I wander into the welcoming home longing for a place to sit. Thick wet air, warm from cooking and body heat, embraces me and my glasses. My husband’s generous niece smiles at me from across the room and vigorously gestures at a tiny but empty spot next to her on the sofa. A little girl and her younger sister skip from guest to guest, holding out a box stuffed with little paper bags, empanadas, crammed with small fruits, unshelled roasted peanuts, and a bit of candy. Somebody’s Tía shuffles around the room with steaming platters heaped with treats. Soon, I sit greedily balancing a warm panbazo (heavenly, sweet biscuits stuffed fat with meat) on one leg and a buñuelo (those messy but wonderful thin pastries dusted with cinnamon sugar) on the other, holding a cup of ponche (hot and syrupy with bits of bobbing fruit to bite while sipping) with one hand, my empanada clutched in the other. The little girls reappear with a tray of fresh corn tamales.

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Chicago
A City and A Paradox
BY FELTON EARLS

Come and show me another city with lifted head singing
So proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.

—Carl Sandburg

A CITY CAN ELEVATE OR DIMINISH LIFE.
Supplying playgrounds, restaurants, politics and museums, a city offers opportunities for growth to both the young and the old alike. Representing itself in art, architecture, transportation, and neighborhoods, cities declare what we value most in life. But are they good places to have a family, to raise children, to be educated and to develop a career? For me, Chicago became the place to explore such matters. Not because I live there; I never have. It is my profession as a social scientist that draws me to this massive “onion field,” or place of bad odors, as the Pottawattomie called it. In the 20th century, it stands out as being the most thoroughly understood city in the world. If it was London that taught us about cholera, industrialization and urban poverty in the 19th century, Chicago has been our mentor on migration, gangs and crime for the past 100 years.

Over the past decade, I have traveled to Chicago more than 150 times to conduct the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN). This project is studying children by directing special attention to the contribution that neighborhoods and schools make to children’s development. Over the course of these years, my reactions towards the city were slowly transformed. I had been warned that this big study would “blow-up in my face.” Citizens of Chicago were fed up with university professors and their graduate students asking questions, collecting data, and doing surveys. “What good does it ever bring us?” they asked. Hardly an ally during these the initial years, the City regarded me and my colleagues with great reserve, if not frank suspicion. Transparency and patience gradually changed that.

By 1997, some four years after starting the study, we discovered that the quality of life in a neighborhood does make a difference in the rates of violent crime. Through the collective agency of its residents, some communities, even poor neighborhoods, are able to maintain security while others experience notoriously high rates of homicide and robbery. Similar neighborhood characteristics are associated with reduced levels of infant mortality and favorable birth weight.

These findings are important because they support policies and actions directed to enhancing the human dimensions of urban life. However, the “color line” is deeply engrained in Chicago landscape. Segregation by race is a way of life. Because of this, there was understandable concern that neighborhood social conditions be understood apart from the composition of its residents. Poor African-American neighborhoods can have high levels of trust, reciprocity and activism despite their disadvantages just as middle class neighborhoods can have low levels of these attributes despite many having advantages. We knew less about Latino neighborhoods. We thought there might well be a “Latino line” but we knew fairly little about how rigidly defined it was.

In the mid-1990s, it started to become obvious that the large proportion of Latinos in our sample was not a statistical mistake. It was widely known that the 1990 U.S. Census produced an undercount of Latinos and African-Americans. But it was anybody's guess as to how large of an error this had been. It was at this juncture that we were selecting a representative citywide sample of all children in Chicago. By the time we had interviewed the thousands of children and parents in this sample, a startling fact emerged. Latinos had become by far the largest ethnic group and the com-
bination of Latinos and African-Americans was now a landslide majority. As my colleague Marcelo Suárez-Orozco reminded me recently, José has become the most common name given to newborn boys in Chicago.

Over the course of a century, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans had replaced the Poles and Germans. The very same neighborhoods that had been Polish were transformed into urban villages genuinely resembling the ambience of Mexico. A European-American predominance was exchanged for a preponderance of Hispanic-American culture.

All of this only gradually crystallized in my thinking. I realized that it was a chapter in the history of Chicago not yet written. Migration from rural Mexico had suddenly changed the social character of the city. Through the painting of murals and the rapid expansion of small, family run shops, the physical dimensions of neighborhoods were changing as well. An intensity of purpose prevails in these places. To be a part of this enormous City, to play a role, to earn enough money to send back to relatives in Mexico, to see one's children go to college, to buy a home, to retire with security; these are some of motives that vitalize life in the most recent Chicago.

To be a part of this enormous City, to play a role, to earn enough money to send back to relatives in Mexico, to see one's children go to college, to buy a home, to retire with security; these are some of motives that vitalize life in the most recent Chicago. Latino that protects them from the ill effects of poverty.

On closer inspection, this is not true for all Latinos but those who are recent immigrants. Since more than 80% of Mexicans in this Chicago sample were either first or second-generation immigrants, our findings are weighted towards families who are adjusting to life in a big American city. The current immigration experience, then the assumption that a "toxic" element exists in U.S. society and is responsible for the deteriorating health of immigrants across the generations is misguided.

The resolution of the paradox may be registered in the "healthy immigrant effect." The motivation, energy and determination it takes to voluntarily leave one's country of origin inherently "selects" the healthiest candidates. This first generation effect distinguishes persons who have successfully emigrated from at least three other groups: those who could have left but chose not to; those who tried to leave, but were unsuccessful; and those who made the journey but returned shortly after arriving.

Although the literature on the paradox of acculturation is growing, there exists little information on the process of selection. This is true of the Chicago study as well as many other social science projects. At the beginning of the 1990s we did not anticipate having a sample that was almost half Hispanic. Our interviews did not provide sufficient coverage of the kinds of questions that would help us understand the challenges and choices immigrants make. It was as if we were looking backwards into the demographics of the 20th century and not ahead to the 21st century.

But all is not lost. Chicago remains in a good position to mark the transition in urban life that marks the beginning of a new century. The City has a new spirit of industriousness among adult immigrants and a seriousness of purpose among many Latino children. No doubt new poets, architects, artists and politicians will come forth to redefine and redirect American optimism in Latin terms. For social scientists like me, Chicago remains the place to be. As Richard Wright once said, "Chicago is the known city: more is known about how it runs, how it kills, how it loves, steals, helps, gives, cheats and crushes than any other city in the world." How it deals with Mexican immigrants will soon be known. Scientists, artists and politicians must be prepared to capture this story.

Felton Earls is a child psychiatrist at Harvard Medical School. While anchored in Chicago, his interests in charting the well-being of children have led him to conduct research in many cities throughout the world.
ARRIVING IN BUENOS AIRES IN 1929 AT night by steamboat, Le Corbusier described Buenos Aires as "that phenomenal line of light beginning at the infinite right and escaping to the infinite left at the level of the water (...) the simple meeting of the pampa and the ocean in one line." My own recollection of my native Buenos Aires is of a city of compact built blocks, with diverse and continuous street fronts, that repeat themselves endlessly until blending into the horizon. These personal responses to Buenos Aires help us understand the city, and may illuminate documentation from other sources. Architectural archives are resources that provide us with information with which to depict cities, their places and people.

As both architect and archivist—and with the Ferrari Hardoy Archive in mind—I will focus on two different aspects: the material related to Buenos Aires included in the archive, and how Ferrari Hardoy and his contemporaries envisioned the city. The first, a general description of the archival material, reveals the diversity of documentation about the city and its transformation. The second, a brief narrative of a series of moments within this transformation, reflects the changing scene of urban proposals for Buenos Aires. There is a thread that ties some of its characters together through a series of events about the thinking on the built environment of the city. Both views provide focus on and interconnection between the objects and events documented in architectural archives and what they can tell us about a city.

Architectural drawings, the obvious backbone of most architectural archives, are mixed with scores of photographs, innumerable letters, meeting notes, aged newspaper clippings, miscellaneous legal and technical documents, research files, manuscript and typescript drafts of lectures, articles and publications. Although certain individual drawings may have significant value, they are most relevant when these items are contained within a larger collection of material that documents an architect's work. As you unravel the archival material, you begin to understand from multiple sketches and drawings how the architect explored ideas time and time again before arriving at a final solution. The accompanying clippings, correspondence and notes shed further light on an architect's references and thoughts during the design and construction process. Photographs, articles and publications may also document the cities or communities where architects develop their professional practice, adding a layer of information for interpreting their work. The Ferrari Hardoy Archive is one such case.

The Ferrari Hardoy Archive was a gift of the Ferrari Hardoy family to Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. The material in the archive is plentiful, assembled and maintained by Argentine architect Jorge Ferrari Hardoy (1914–1977) over the span of approximately forty years: from his student years in the 1930s to the late 1970s. Ferrari Hardoy graduated from the Universidad de Buenos Aires in 1939, where he received his degree in architecture. He had lived in Paris the previous year, where he worked with Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret and Juan Kurchan in the development of the Plan Director para Buenos Aires. On his return to Argentina, he became one of the most active participants in the creation of CIAM Argentina and the Grupo Austral, which had decisive roles as the most radical forums for the discussion of modern architecture in Argentina. Ferrari Hardoy is probably best known internationally for his BKF chair—the ubiquitous butterfly chair that was produced and distributed internationally—designed together with Catalan architect Antonio Bonet and fellow Argentine architect Juan Kurchan in 1939. Ferrari Hardoy, who died in Buenos Aires in 1977, remained active as a designer, architect and urban planner until the end of his life. Of evident value for architectural scholars is the forthcoming publication The Southern Nest: Works and Projects by Le Corbusier and his Disciples in Argentina by Jorge Francisco Liernur, with Pablo Pschepiuca.

The material in the archive includes documents from a multitude of organizations and individuals. Here you can find minutes of meetings of CIAM Argentina (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne), added to the richness of letters sent to and from Argentina, the United States, and Europe, putting the development of architecture in Buenos Aires into a broader international context given the interaction with Le Corbusier, Sigfried Giedion, Josep Lluís Sert, and Ernesto Rogers, as well as other CIAM members with an important role in the development of architectural modernism. Then there is the equally rich documentation from Grupo Austral, an association of Argentine architects, engineers and other professionals related to the construction industry during the late 1930s. It includes the statutes of the group with its stated mission "for the progress of architecture," a list of founding members, and

The large number of architectural drawings for about 50 apartment buildings—both built and unbuilt—reflect an image of a Buenos Aires beginning to be dotted by modern structures within the existing fabric.
in the late 1940s, and provide a wealth of information on its Buenos Aires city-planning work.

Project files contain some 2700 drawings and plans for 87 projects and competitions in furniture design, architecture and city planning. The large number of architectural drawings for about 50 apartment buildings—both built and unbuilt—reflect an image of a Buenos Aires beginning to be dotted by modern structures within the existing fabric. Distinguished among these are the files from the Los Eucaliptus building, built in 1942, and still standing at Virrey del Pino 2446 in the Belgrano neighborhood in Buenos Aires. The building, surprisingly and effectively, is pushed towards the back of the lot rather than built on the front property line and aligned with the rest of the streetscape. The O’Higgins 2319 building should not be overlooked—its innovative “flexible” design, in which sliding closets and partitions would generate different apartment layout configurations, was a novel idea at the time. As may be expected, there are gaps here as well, with only a few scattered photographs of Figueroa Alcorta 3492, another of Ferrari Hardoy’s best-known apartment buildings in Buenos Aires.

Scores of photographs, negatives, and copy negatives document Ferrari Hardoy’s architectural and urban projects, as well as fami-

ly, friends and travels, including his graduation-trip photographs of buildings and cities visited while in Europe. These are not pho-

tos of two separate worlds: rather they show how Ferrari Hardoy integrated his European experiences and visions into his cosmopolitan rendering of Buenos Aires. His visit, dur-

ing construction, to the Pavillon des Temps Nouveaux by Le Corbusier for the 1937 Paris exposition influenced his own understanding of construction materials and systems upon his return to Buenos Aires. Clippings within the archive include several fantastic centerfolds from La Nación and La Prensa with historical photographs of Buenos Aires’ great avenues, parks, plazas and public events such as the 1937 celebrations during the opening of Avenida 9 de Julio. Other cen-

terfolds offer panoramic views of Plaza San Martín, Plaza Colón, Estación Retiro, and the Riachuelo. Yet others are views of the

Puerto and Buenos Aires at night or views of Retiro from the legendary terraces of the Kavanaghs. These photographs and clippings document the physical appearance of the city, its transformations, and include opinions of the time that provide glimpses of its understanding as a product of the political and cultural context within which it was produced.

Correspondence includes hundreds of letters exchanged with the mentioned CIAM members, Victoria Ocampo—director and editor of the influential literary journal Sur—and architects Francisco Bullrich, Eduardo Sacristé, and Amancio Williams, among others. One also finds important handwritten letters to and from Le Corbusier about the publishing of the master plan for Buenos Aires, and correspondence with Edgar Kaufmann Jr. (then director of the Department of Industrial Design at the Museum of Modern Art in New York) who refers to the BKF chair as “one of the best efforts of modern chair design.” Finally, Plan Director para Buenos Aires material contains, among many other items, the 9 x 9 ft. original photomontage of the city of Buenos Aires pro-
duced in 1938 at Le Corbusier’s atelier on Rue de Sèvres. It also contains the Le Corbusier manuscript text for the publication of the plan, its typescript version, and many of the original drawings used in the 1947 publication by Arquitectura de Hoy (the Spanish version of L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui) directed at the time by André Bloc.

The Plan Director para Buenos Aires was developed by Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, Jorge Ferrari Hardoy and Juan Kurchan. Its conceptual origin may be traced to Le Corbusier’s trip to Buenos Aires in 1929, where encountered when walking the city. The urban layout of Buenos Aires was, and still is, mainly based on a grid system, adopted since the founding of the city as the basic organizational form. The urban fabric extended itself constantly and uniformly, supported by a grid that allowed for the growth of the city in all directions, toward the immensity that surrounded it. It also entailed a typical block layout, lot subdivision, and building strategy. Building structures generally occupied the width of the lot (typically 8.66 meters derived from the length of the vara commission derived from his lectures, Le Corbusier invoked his critique in a proposal specific to Buenos Aires a decade later.

It was not until the end of 1937, when Ferrari Hardoy and Kurchan knocked at Le Corbusier’s door in Paris, that Ferrari Hardoy saw an opportunity to further develop the image he had envisioned for Buenos Aires. Together they developed the Plan Director para Buenos Aires for a city that had an estimated growth of 2 to 2.5 million inhabitants between 1930 and 1940. The plan was based on a series of éléments constitutifs in which a series of centers were conceived as structural elements for the reorganization of the city. The archive includes the development of this plan—with material prepared both in Paris and later in Buenos Aires—in drawings, manuscript and typescript texts, clippings, correspondence, and so forth. While unsuccessfully lobbying for the commission to develop one of these centers—the Cité des Affaires (the proposed Business District most resembled his 1929 vision of Buenos Aires)—Le Corbusier developed together with his disciples a comprehensive version of the plan. It was finally partially published in 1947 in the journal La Arquitectura de Hoy, rather than in book format as had been Le Corbusier’s intent.

The 1947 publication—and the archival material—shows in detail the eleven centers or districts that, connected through a hierarchical system of streets, were superimposed onto the traditional urban grid with the intent of reorganizing the city. Their names clearly

Architectural archives are resources that provide us with information with which to depict cities.

he delivered ten lectures—sponsored mainly by the Asociación Amigos del Arte, although also supported by the Facultad de Ciencias Exactas of the Universidad de Buenos Aires and the Asociación Amigos de la Ciudad—and published in 1930 in Precisions on the Present State of Architecture and City Planning. Although there is no original material from this trip by Le Corbusier in the Ferrari Hardoy Archive, we can catch glimpses of his view of Buenos Aires as an endless line of light in his proposal for a Cité des Affaires, comprised of a series of towers on the river.

This image of Buenos Aires, as seen at night on arrival from the water, is far removed from the realities Le Corbusier must have used to subdivide property in colonial times, 10 varas to a lot, 10 lots to a block, and so forth) and were built up to the front property line. Public space was therefore characterized by voids left within the system: streets and plazas. By 1929 Le Corbusier was already promoting a different urban structure, a ville verte where pedestrian and automobile traffic were separated. Transportation infrastructure, based on a hierarchical system of streets and highways, liberated the ground floor for pedestrian use in the midst of apartment blocks (and hospitals, cinemas, office blocks) set back from street fronts, and no longer defining public space in terms of corridor streets and plazas. Although no actual
CITY PERSPECTIVES

indicated each function they were assigned: Government Center, Municipal Government Center, Panamerican Center, Unions Center, University Center, Hotels Center, Entertainment Center, Leisure Center, Financial Center, Housing Neighborhood, and Cité des Affaires. An architectural program and design proposal was developed for each center, with indicated locations within the federal district, and some consolidating existing areas with equal or similar use. The Government Center, for example, included the existing Congress, and was further developed with the annexation of a Panamerican Center. The Cité des Affaires, or Business District, on the other hand, was located on a platform projecting far into the river, and projects Le Corbusier's image of the city from the water, arguably represented currently by the area known as Catalinas. As documented in the correspondence to several prominent Argentines, Le Corbusier insisted on this part of the plan, hoping to receive a commission for the design. Although most of these centers occupied several blocks, contrary to widespread belief nor all began with a *tabula rasa* or ignoring existing conditions. The Entertainment Center for example, was concentrated along Calle Corrientes, and maintained its existing corridor-street aspect, recognizing the already established district along the historically lively café and theater street in Buenos Aires.

The archive also includes material related to what could have been an opportunity for the plan to become a reality: Ferrari Hardoy was appointed to the Estudio del Plan de Buenos Aires (EPBA) in late 1947, where—together with Bonet, Roca, Vivanco, and later Kuchen—he worked on urban planning for the city until 1949. The mentioned 1947 publication had spurred interest on the part of the municipal government and ended in the creation of EPBA. Although intended, however, there was no real opportunity to hire Le Corbusier as a consultant for the plan; the *elementos constitutivos* were no longer the determining components for the urban reorganization of the city, the emphasis of the administration shifting exclusively towards housing and transportation infrastructure. The project developed at EPBA, housing for 50,000 inhabitants in Bajo Belgrano, is the one that Antonio Bonet would present together with the 16 mm documentary film *La Ciudad frente al Río* in the 1949 CIAM Congress at Bergamo. Like most other projects it was displayed through the use of the CIAM Grid, a graphic representation intended as a uniﬁng system for presentations, but above all for the understanding and comparison of urban planning projects. By the time Bonet returns to Buenos Aires, the Estudio del Plan de Buenos Aires was soon dismantled by the central government, and the housing construction was stopped and later demolished. There is no further documentation in the archive related to the *Plan Director para Buenos Aires*, except for Ferrari Hardoy's personal reminiscences, which he also recorded and maintained together with the rest of his archive.

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**"BUENOS AIRES, LA REINA DEL PLATA"**

**DE CANTOS A CACEROLAZAS**

"Las tardecitas de Buenos Aires tienen ese qué se yo, víviste..." la poesía de Horacio Ferrer, animada por la música de Astor Piazzolla, nos hace soñar con su "Balada para un loco." Pero, ¿es sueño o realidad? Esta ciudad portuaria, situada casi en los confines del mundo, vivió siempre mirando allende los mares, buscando una identidad, sin saber que ya la tenía. La década del sesenta vió surgir en ella una población joven, plena de energía, de esperanza y de orgullo por lo nuestro, lo argentino. Los folcloristas del interior provinciano, que una vez al año unían sus voces en el festival de Cosquín, venían luego a Buenos Aires para seducir a los porteños con la música de "tierra adentro," y para convencerlos de bailar la zamba y la chacarera en lugar del twist y el rock and roll. Las confiterías de Buenos Aires, Ideal, Del Águila, Las Violetas, Richmond, El Molino, son las únicas en el mundo. Si bien tomaron prestado de Londres, Viena, París, Madrid, muy pronto se convirtieron en auténticas "vienas." Abycuo recuerdo la orquesta que tocaba en "La Ideal." Tenía yo cinco años y tomaba un "submarino," que consistía en un vaso de leche caliente con una barra de chocolate que flotaba hasta hundirse... sin víctimas. Las columnas que se intercalaban entre las mesas eran de mármol, una baranda de hierro forjado y lustrosa madera rodeaba a una enorme "O" central que permitía ver lo que sucedía en la planta baja; un ambiente febril, marcado por el paso apurado de los "mozos," quienes vestidos como los más elegantes de los caballeros, se afanaban por llegar rápido a la mesa de los comensales, ¡no fuera a ser que se enfriaran las tostadas! Tan convencida estaba yo de que todo el mundo iba a la confitería, que cuando mi madre me llevó a un moderno "bar americano" de jugos de fruta (donde los licuados se hacían a la vista del público), me tiré al piso y comenzé a chillar como el más furioso de los simios. Gritaba yo, "¡Aquí no hay orquesta, esto es una porquería!"

Gardel le cantó a "la reina del Plata," Borges la quiso como ninguno. La "París de Sudamérica," le decían hace muchas, muchas décadas. Con el pasar de los años, ya no podíamos reconocer ni a París ni a Barcelona en ella. Unas tras otras, las revoluciones militares, los cambios de gobierno, las revueltas populares, fueron alterando su fisomonia y su espíritu. Hoy en día la vemos en los noticieros internacionales, "cacerolazos" que expresan la frustración del pueblo, "cartoneros" que reciclan papeles y cartones usados para poder comer ese día, vecinos que hacen ollas populares todas las noches para alimentar a los que no tienen. No todo está perdido...

"No nos une el amor sino el espanto; será por eso que la quiero tanto." (Borges, Jorge Luis, poema "Buenos Aires," citado en el libro *El Buenos Aires de Borges*, Carlos Alberto Zito, Editorial Aguilar, 1999.)

*Gabriela Mellij-Romero es una porteña irreductible que extraña mucho a su ciudad natal y su gente.*

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A Biologist Looks at Cities
Coro, The Birthplace of Venezuela
BY MIRIAM DÍAZ

When architects look at cities, they see buildings; when urban planners examine cities, they envision infrastructure. As a biologist, when I look at cities, I see plants.

Coro, a Caribbean enclave in northwestern Venezuela, is surrounded by xerophytic vegetation—cacti, aloe vera and agave cocui—plants that can live in a desert environment. Coro now earns its living from tourism; many tourists enjoy the colonial architecture of this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Founded in 1527, Coro competes with Cumaná as the oldest Spanish city in the Americas. But behind the well-preserved colonial houses with thick walls of adobe and red tile roofs, there is a biologist's tale.

Indeed, the history of Coro, the colonial city where I work, is intricately tied to its vegetation. Residents of surrounding towns still earn their living from the products of *agave cocui*, a cactus-like plant known locally as cocuy and dubbed the "marvel plant" in 1567 because of its versatility.

Since pre-Columbian times, Coro's architecture and physical setting has been linked to the intensive use of its native vegetation. Houses in Coro were constructed on top of a frame made from cactus wood and magueyes. When tourists peek at the houses' colorful contrasts, from deep indigos to intense burgundies and ochre yellows, and snap pictures of the central patios and colorful gardens, they are not aware (unless they happen to be biologists) that this unique picturesque tropical gallery is rooted in plant life.

In most old houses, backyard orchards called *huertas* include coconut palms, mango, guava and lemon trees. The combination of native trees and trade winds create a microclimate much cooler than outside in the street. It appears that early settlers in Coro understood the intimate relationship of humans and plants. They realized both the utilitarian purpose of fruits and landscaping as well as the shade trees' function as moderators of temperature and alleviators of humidity.

The Caquetios and Jiraharas, the original inhabitants of Todariquiva (now Coro), treasured native plants. Their buildings, religious rituals, and food were derived from agaves, cacti and *cuji* and *dividive*, native relatives to mesquite. They used these plants, called *cucuy de penca*, to make their bedding and hammocks, as well as an alcoholic drink used in their rituals. Illustrating that biology cannot be divorced by natural glues or resins that it can last at least 500 years. In fact, the first cross ever built in Venezuela and perhaps in all of South America was constructed with mesquite wood and is still standing in the Plaza de San Clemente, next to the chapel with the same name in Coro. It is speculated that it was built in approximately 1527 for the celebration of Coro's first Catholic mass by order of Don Rodrigo de Bastidas, the first Bishop of Coro and Venezuela.

 Appropriately, Coro will always be linked to the often neglected but exuberant xerophytic vegetation that seems to have survived significant climatic changes. Even though residents of Coro may now cut down trees in a misguided attempt at cleanliness or in order to vacate space for power lines, Coro's vegetation-based history is successfully resisting multiple pressures from development and construction.

Indeed, research into the uses of agave cocui has transformed it from an extractive pasture to a cultivated product, with many possibilities for commercial utilization. One wonders if the successful use of these plant products may soon return Coro to its historical biological roots.

Miriam Díaz, former DRCLAS Cisneros Visiting Scholar, is a Professor of Ecology and Plant Physiology at Universidad Francisco de Miranda in Coro, where she is affiliated with the Center for Ecology of Arid Lands (CIEZA). She has published extensively on the ecophysiology of plants and its applications to conservation and sustainable development. She is president of INEFALCOSTA, a non-governmental organization she founded for conservation of the Montecano Biological Reserve for arid lands.
Engraving a City in Flux

Migrations and Art in La Paz, Bolivia

BY LINDSEY MCCORMACK

In La Paz, the hills that used to define the city limits overflow with improvised neighborhoods. El Alto, a sprawling satellite city, is poised to become the most populous in the nation. Millions of ex-miners and landless campesinos struggle to make a living in a city that offers precious little opportunities for upward mobility. La Paz is no longer a city of urbanites; it is a migrant center whose identity is slung somewhere between countryside and city.

The experiences of the new paceños, and the city they are helping to transform, inspire an artist who himself was part of the great migrations of the 1960s. In a market that overwhelmingly favors representations of Indians as faceless shadows or folkloric motives, Max Aruquipa Chambi’s work focuses on everyday urban experiences that are nonetheless rooted in a profound intersection of Andean culture and modern urbanism. As part of the group “Benemeritos de la Utopía,” or “Veterans of the Utopia,” Aruquipa is dedicated to inscribing the experiences of a group systematically excluded from Bolivia’s official history.

Aruquipa was born in Santiago de Huata, a village on the shores of Lake Titicaca, a few months before the national revolution of 1952. In his adolescence, he settled in La Paz with his brothers, working in a woodshop during the day and studying at night. He later graduated from the National School of Fine Arts, but was forced to survive as a day laborer during the dictatorships of the 1970s. Since 1983 he has served as a professor in the School of Fine Arts and in the art department of the Universidad Mayor de San Andres, specializing in lithograph and engraving.

This October, while supervising students in the university’s engraving workshop, he settled back on a tool bench to discuss the intersection of art and the urban migrations that are transforming La Paz. The art campus is located in an overgrown garden on the periphery of the city, and, as Aruquipa notes, its isolation and small size tends to foster a family-like familiarity between students and teachers. He speaks in the measured, ponderous Spanish which highland Bolivians, “kollas,” are known for, complementing a temperament which is at once observant, critical, and patiently philosophical. He interrupts himself occasionally to help a student, and to brush back the floppy black hair that persistently falls over his eyebrows.

L: Do you consider yourself part of any particular school or artistic tradition native to La Paz?

MA: Yes, because La Paz has an innate artistic tradition. The men and women of La Paz are naturally artists, in their manner of speaking and even celebrating. I am not saying that we are all painters or drawers, rather that the paceño is a visual artist every day. In dance, for example we have the Señor del Gran Poder (an annual religious parade involving thousands of dancers.) These visual manifestations are in themselves artistic, especially as expressions of the mestizaje that continues to shape the city. These are daily things. The imagistic world of the Aymara and the Quechua is naturally very expressive, very artistic.

Now, the historic tradition of La Paz, where does that come from? I take Arturo Borda as a reference. In literature, we have Franz...
Tamayo, also a mestizo. These two artists are the pillars of the artistic tradition in La Paz, and why not, in universal art as well.

The idea of a Bolivian nation that comes out of La Paz is very profound. As we are at the apex of all the cultures in Bolivia, our cultural expressions are the most fundamental and enduring. In the tropics, for example, their art does not have so much depth... I think this is the merit of La Paz; it is a land that is able to take in many people, everyone that comes, and there is not ethnic discrimination in that sense. Of course, there are internal prejudices that still exist, against Indians, cholos (urbanized, working-class Indians and mestizos,) etc., but this is also being eliminated through the process of mestizaje.

**L:** Your conception of mestizaje comes from the Revolution, then, as a process which defines the future of the country?

**MA:** Of course, this is obvious, I do not believe that there exists a “pure” culture or race ... Today all the nouveau riche you see in La Paz, are people with Aymara and Quechua features.

**L:** Can you tell me more about your group, "Veterans of the Utopia"?

**MA:** “Veterans of the Utopia” celebrates the 500 years that have passed since the Spanish conquest. There are five of us, right now we are rather dispersed due to various personal obligations, but soon we want to come together again to dust off this history. We have plunged directly into history precisely because in Bolivia, history has been badly written, whatever fits the interests of the leaders: the politicians, the oligarchy. Those people already have their history written, according to their own interests. But the “Veterans of the Utopia,” as we are all migrants, and we are all rebellious, we see things from a different point of view, and we review history.

One of our projects, for example, was an exhibition entitled ‘500 Años de K’unchiría,’ K’unchiría in the Aymara language means “curses.” ... We have many themes, we paint issues from the mines, and we paint the passions that exist in every human being. We have many themes to work on as a group, to make art that provokes discussion, and above all does not blindly accept the version of history we have been told...

Right now the United States has the advantage of being able to send its messages rapidly, and people who are misinformed believe everything they hear on television. And this is not right, we have to lead ourselves, we have to maintain the essence and the personality of Bolivian art. We aspire to what is our own. The goals of the Veterans have been precisely this: to rescue, to rediscover our culture, and to resist these bad influences.

**L:** Why have you focused so much of your art on the city, and on La Paz in particular?

**MA:** La Paz has its “iman,” its energy. Of course, it is also cursed (“maldita”) at the same time. Take for instance its original name (Chuquiago,) which indicated that this was a sacred place. But as time has passed, so much blood has flown, between Indians and whites, and plenty of people on both sides have died. There is a reason that we also call La Paz “The City of Tyrants”...

All these revolutions that we have been talking about, have grown out of La Paz. The miners in Oruro and Potosí always come here to protest. This is a privilege, in a way, that comes with being the national capital, so that we witness things that they never see in Santa Cruz and other cities. Here, a day does not pass where there is not some sort of march, people coming down from El Alto or one of the provinces, even the soldiers have their strikes! All of this makes La Paz different from any other city.

One of the greatest themes in La Paz is the resistance of the marginal peoples, which we explore in the group “Veterans of the Utopia.”

**L:** Who makes up the audience for your art in La Paz? How is your art interpreted and accepted in various levels of society?

**MA:** There are certain sectors of the elite that have taken over the city, especially the means of communication. I attribute to the press, a great deal of misinformation and hypocrisy. So, rarely we have expositions of drawings or engravings, these things are not in such demand from the public and of course, other techniques are more popular, for example watercolor, which attracts an audience through its pleasing color. Generally, the public is not well-educated in being able to interpret a work of art, they are not prepared. Also, the people from the Zona Sur (the wealthy section of La Paz) and foreigners, like to take their art as colorful souvenirs. People rarely are interested in interpreting engravings... Many even consider engravings as an art form of the elite, obviously that is not the case.

In La Paz, artistic production is still split into two tendencies: art with a social, often revolutionary focus; and art which is decorative and passive. This second type, this inoffensive art, is useful for decorating walls: the best example of this tendency are the colorful neo-Indian designs of Mamani Mamani. This type of art is commercial above all, without a social function, which should not be so. We should not produce art to be like musica chicha (the repetitive cumbias in vogue these days in Bolivia.) I am not achieving much commercial success with my engravings, but I do think my work has something to say about the human being.

**L:** How can you begin to observe and interpret the experience of the migrant in La Paz?

**MA:** It is rather painful to speak about this. The phenomenon of urban migration is due to lack of attention from the government, which has so many projects supposedly for the benefit of the campesinos, since the Agrarian Reform Act of 1953. Since the 1960’s there has been a great wave of migration of people from the altiplano, who also have gone to Yungas, Chapare, and Santa Cruz. Some of these migrations have been planned, others no. But what has been happening here in La Paz is that the migrations from the mines and the provinces have filled up El Alto. Of course, these migrations have also brought enrichment, not everything is negative. The cultural aspect is where there are the greatest riches, and in the ethnic and sociological aspects, since there are so many peoples living together here in the city. In this sense, the study of migrations is incredibly fertile.
But of course, there are so many limitations. There is not enough work. Every day you see in the street this sort of improvised work that manages to keep people alive from one day to another. For example there are the women who sell any little thing, and the shoeshiners. Lately we have been seeing lots of private security guards; all of these types of work that you did not see in La Paz before, are a result of the migrations.

The artists that focus on these themes, these tragedies, know that this happens every day, that in the altiplano there is no longer land, no more space, and the campesino is forced to migrate. The youth have come to the city, and so in the villages all that are left are the old people and a few toddlers. This means that there is also a loss of values: for example, in the altiplano we used to eat fifty varieties of potatoes, now we are familiar with only five varieties. An Aymara migrant who goes to the tropics completely forgets how to plant a potato or how to play his own music. This is the process of acculturation.

L: Do you try to incorporate Andean symbols in your art, especially as these symbols are translated in the city?

MA: Every place has its symbolic values. La Paz also has its native character. But we should not always identify La Paz with Illimani, llamas and the kantura (an Andean flower and Bolivia's national symbol). Rather, I have seen that working with the students is when one discovers all the possible symbols, the visible and invisible elements possessed by every human being. The wealth of La Paz lies in these young migrants who come together here in the university, here is where I discover the symbolic values that give strength to a culture. Finally, these young artists need a well-nourished culture, so that they may express themselves in their work. Education is the way to construct and reproduce culture.

I am not speaking only of visual art, but also music and dance. I have had the honor to participate in entradas folklóricas in Oruro and the provinces, and I am absolutely convinced that in these expressions lie the cultural essences of each region, and above all of La Paz. So, La Paz should not be renowned simply for Illimani, but above all for the wisdom of its people... In all the world, you cannot find a city like La Paz.

L: What is the greatest challenge for an artist in La Paz?

MA: The challenge would be that the artist may continue to produce in the spirit of the time. That the artist may speak the honest truth. What is important is to leave a testimony, and for this the artist must have a certain level of fame, so that his work spreads all over the world and makes people reflect.

Lindsey McCormack is currently completing research for a Harvard senior thesis on the ideology of Wariquta, an educational movement in 1930s Bolivia. She expresses her gratitude to the paceños who have so generously shared their interpretations of Bolivia's past and future.
Cosmic Barrio Comes to Harvard
On-line Radio Show Complements Class

BY WENDY MCDOWELL

It's a Monday morning at 10 a.m. and the beginning of David Carrasco's "Religion and Latin American Imaginations" class in the Yenching Auditorium is approaching. As students hustle in from the bitter December cold, the atmosphere in the classroom is warmed not only by the radiators but also by the energetic music coming from the speakers. The rhythms of Dr. Loco's Rockin' Jalapeño Band accompany the peeling off of layers and prying out of notebooks and pens.

Yet as soon as Carrasco starts speaking, it is clear that the songs he plays are not merely background music for a traditional course. Carrasco, Rudenstine Professor of the Study of Latin America at Harvard Divinity School, describes each piece of music in the context of the topic of the class so that the music and the lyrics themselves become one of the texts students are encouraged to explore alongside many other sources, including novels, articles, and academic texts.

For example, during the week of December 9–13, the class focused on Mexican-American/Chicano political and religious symbols and stories through John Santos' book Places Left Unfinished at the Time of Creation. Carrasco explained that the Dr. Loco music is emblematic of the "changes in consciousness and dance styles that came out of the greater Southwest." He then encouraged students to listen to the latest broadcast of the online radio show to hear a series of songs drawn from throughout the U.S.-Latin American diaspora.

That's right, a radio show.

As a complement to class, five broadcasts of music, commentary and interviews were made available on-line to class participants thanks to the talents of professional DJ Betto Arcos, who called the specially-produced show the "Cosmic Barrio."

Arcos, who has hosted the world music show "Global Village" on the Los Angeles radio station KPFK for several years, met Carrasco in 1989 when he was studying and Carrasco was teaching at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Arcos just happened to be in Cambridge for the fall while his wife was a Loeb Fellow at Harvard. When Arcos contacted Carrasco to let him know he would be in town for the semester, the two dreamed up a way to incorporate music into the class in the interest of deepening the learning experience. Arcos became one of Carrasco's teaching assistant team, a talented and diverse group that Carrasco quipped was "like a pick-up band."

Arcos noted that the HDS Office of Information Technology staff including Kathy Jones, Dan Hawkins, and Kama Lord jumped through many legal and technical hoops to make the radio show possible and accessible to students online after other broadcast possibilities fell through. Because he didn't come with his extensive music collection, Arcos had to jump through his own hoops, enlisting the help of his sister back in Los Angeles to find and send him many of the selections he wanted to include on the program.

On the Cosmic Barrio, Arcos plays and comments on a wide range of Latin, Afro Cuban, Spanish, and other world music, including both religious and secular selections. The playlist included artists as diverse as The Harp Consort (classical Spanish music), Mexican singer Lila Downs, and Cuban artists Silvio Rodriguez and Ruben Blades. Between the musical segments, Arcos interviewed students, teaching assistants, visiting lecturers, and Carrasco himself on topics related to the class including art and imagery and liberation theology. Arcos also provided Carrasco with the music and commentary he incorporated into each of his lectures.

"It was new thing for me to make music not just entertaining, but to tie it to the educational content of the class," Arcos said. "It is exciting to find new ways of using music in a meaningful way, to actually help people to understand life and have a richer experience. In that way, I've been a student and a teacher both this semester."

Students were expected to include reflections on some of these materials in their papers, and Arcos noted that many included bits from the radio broadcast. "One of the most popular ones was the lyrics from Lila Downs song "Arbol de la Vida," which includes the image of the tree of life that illustrates the pre-Hispanic aspects of religion," Arcos noted.

Many students remarked that the class was among the most (some said the) most innovative courses they've taken at Harvard.

"There were a lot more points of entry into the material than in most classes," said Laura Everett, a second-year Master of Divinity student at HDS. "There was not only fiction, artwork, music, and film clips, but even food!"

"There hasn't been a party for any other class I've been in, or a radio show," added Jeff Davido, an HDS Master of Theological Studies student. "The classroom setting has been a lot more fun than other classrooms I've been in."

For Monica Montijo, a Harvard undergrad from Tucson, Arizona, the experience in the class was more than fun and educational, but stirred her own sense of identity and belonging.

"Who I am has changed because..."
Letters to the Editor

DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA: LOOKING BACK, THINKING AHEAD
FALL 2002

Dear June,
I was reading ReVista and noticed your little piece questioning whether (Daniel) Ortega had really been a caudillo. You're right on. Indeed, throughout the 1979–90 period, the Sandinista leadership (the National Directorate) governed and made decisions in a highly collegial fashion. No single leader was allowed to dominate. The party changed a lot in the 1990s, especially after the defection of Sergio Ramirez and other moderates, so it almost certainly did become more personalistic by 2001–02. But to characterize Ortega as an old-style caudillo and the FSLN as nothing more than a personalistic party (in the same camp as, say, Alemán) is a big overstatement.

—STEVEN LEVITSKY
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Thanks, Steve; as you know, I was a reporter in Nicaragua during the 1980s. It's exciting to me when academic and journalistic interpretations of events coincide!

Dear June,
I have just today received ReVista, and I have read it all at one sitting. Many congratulations indeed—it is a quite excellent issue, and I am sure that we shall use it for teaching early next Semester. I know that I am, so to speak, parti pris by virtue of my disciplinary background, but I have to say that I spent markedly more time reading your magazine than I do many reputable scholarly journals, so keep it up!

—JAMES DUNKERLEY
DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE OF LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

I'm glad to hear that you are using ReVista as a teaching tool. We encourage that on both the university and high school level. Extra copies are available for teaching purposes on request.

Dear June,
I received this past week the latest issue of ReVista, which I thoroughly enjoyed reading. As a Nicaraguan, I was particularly interested in Ellen Schneider's article (Nicaraguan Democracy—Finding Flaws). Many thanks.

—ORLANDO A. SACASA

Dear June Erlick,
I just finished reading ReVista 2:1 and wanted to congratulate you and your staff on a fine publication. I very much appreciated the range of perspectives included under the rubric “Democracy” and I look forward to the next issue with great interest.

—DR. JEFFREY LESSER
DIRECTOR, LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES PROGRAM
EMORY UNIVERSITY

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