LATIN AMERICA: ITS CITIES AND IDEAS. 1999

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INTRODUCTION

This book is an inquiry into the role that cities have played in the historical process of Latin America. That process has been diverse to the point of appearing chaotic, but it contains nonetheless a common thread. It is certainly difficult to find that thread now, because the original commonalties across the continent began to fade, as deep-seated conflicts arose with the wars for independence. But certain constant traits suggest that such a thread may lie hidden beneath some more visible aspects of the process. Thus, for a social historian, the only road to follow in search of this common thread is the one that Latin American societies traveled— through the particular circumstances in which they took shape and through the many and often obscure incidents that ultimately made each one of these societies unique. On that road, the role of the cities—that is, of urban societies and their complex creation—seems to offer some clues to understanding a rather perplexing design.

It is true that the city has not played the same role everywhere. Brazil, for instance, is an extreme case, where society and culture were primarily shaped in rural areas during the first centuries of the colonial expansion; to a lesser extent, the same happened in other places in the Hispanic world where the presence of large *haciendas*, born out of the *encomienda*, accounted for certain predominant features. But even in those places, cities would eventually acquire the same importance they had elsewhere in the new continent since the very start of the colonial enterprise, perhaps because Latin America was, from the sixteenth century on, a projection of Europe's mercantile and bourgeois world. As bustling centers of power, the cities ensured the presence of European culture; they set the direction of the economic process and, above all, determined the profile of the regions under their immediate influence and of Latin America as a whole. This was the role played by urban societies, some from the first day of settlement, others after a process in which they took control of the rural areas and shaped their forms of life.

The fabric of Latin American history is both urban and rural. But if we are trying to find clues to understanding its development into the present day, we must search for them in the cities, in the

role that urban societies and the cultures they created played in the process; for, while the rural world remained more stable, it was the cities that ushered in change—a change triggered by external influences and by the ideologies those societies fashioned with materials from the outside as well as materials of their own. This study intends to engage in a search for those clues. It is, indeed, a work of history, but one that seeks to offer more than what is usually expected of a history.

We usually demand of a historical work only what political history can offer and give. This is an old and sad limitation not only for historians but also for those who seek answers to the enigma posed by a group of seemingly disjointed facts. But this study intends to establish and order the process of the social and cultural development of Latin American cities; and we can expect much more from this kind of history, precisely because it relates facts to one another and uncovers their deep structure. In that structure we may find the clues to understanding the history of urban societies and, in a less direct way, that of society as a whole.

In Brazil the dominant society was for quite some time the primarily rural one of the beginnings. In the Hispanic areas, in turn, what prevailed from the start was a conglomerate of urban societies; rural communities were settled as economic tools for the groups dwelling in the cities, in particular for the power elites who reaped most of the benefits from the exploitation of the land. And it was not by arbitrary design that Spain stressed this type of society; such stress found its base on a conception of the city that had a long doctrinal tradition and had gained strength with the experience of the five centuries preceding the arrival of the *conquistadores* to the new world. As Aristotle had sustained, the city—more precisely, urban society—was the highest, most perfect form that human life could attain. Friar Bartolomé de las Casas would also recall this in the mid-sixteenth century in his *Apologética Historia Sumaria* , supporting his argument with a wealth of pagan and Christian sources. The mercantile and bourgeois world, which was, increasingly, a world of cities, tended naturally towards that ideal of urban life. This is perhaps the reason why the primacy of the cities, which began in the early days of the conquest, was so pronounced in Latin America.

The world of America's native peoples was predominantly rural. Vast areas of that world knew little or no urban life. The higher cultures indeed had some major cities, like Tenochtitlán or Cuzco, and there was a great number of minor urban centers that arose the admiration of the Spaniards, Cortés and Cieza de León in particular. It was precisely on the existence of these cities that Las Casas based his claim that the Indians were rational beings. But the real lifeblood of these peoples ran through the countryside, and the distinctive traits of their cultures were also rural. The Antilles and Brazil had no urban centers. Indian towns were not bastions of defense against the invaders. If Cortés decided to destroy Tenochtitlán, it was not because he feared its defensive strength but because he understood its tremendous symbolic value: there, and nowhere else, was to be founded the capital of New Spain, of Spain of the Indies.

True, the Spaniards destroyed Tenochtitlán, but the Indians themselves destroyed Cuzco; and the other towns and cities were included in the parceling out of the land without paying much attention to them as urban centers. It was only their well-chosen location that attracted the *conquistadores*. They took up residence in the extant cities; they founded them anew and reorganized their forms of life to fit the ways of the conquest. Thus Tlaxcala, Cholula, Bogotá, Huamanga, Quito and, especially, México City and Cuzco arose as Spanish towns. The indigenous cities and villages were subsumed into the new world of the *conquistadores*.

Their design was to wipe out all traces of the old indigenous cultures, and they went about it relentlessly, perhaps because they believed it was the right thing to do with infidels. In many regions, like the Brazilian coast or the Río de la Plata, the *conquistadores* came upon only primitive cultures, but in other areas they found advanced cultures that astonished them. Yet, no matter where they went, the same unshakable assumption led them to act as if the conquered lands were empty, culturally empty, and populated only by individuals who could and should be torn off their cultural fabric in order to be assimilated into the economic system that the *conquistadores* were establishing. The Spaniards also tried to force their own cultural system on the native peoples by means of religious catechesis. The annihilation of the old cultures, primitive and advanced alike, and the deliberate disregard for their significance were essential to the basic plan of conquest, which was to build another Europe upon an empty landscape whose mountains, rivers and provinces, according to royal decree, were to be given names as if they had never had any.

Spain and Portugal conceived rather different methods to be used in colonizing the new world. Portugal entrusted the task to the gentry that had been given good farming lands, where sugar, tobacco, and cotton began to be grown and where the plantation and the sugar mill became the economic and social units on which colonial life was grounded. As administrative centers, the cities were for a long time mere trading posts for the wealth bound for Europe. It was the landed gentry that drew the first profile of colonial Brazil, while the urban population—artisans and petty bureaucrats, clerics and small traders—left no mark on it. Until the eighteenth century, it was only the rare city—Salvador de Bahia and especially Dutch Recife—that gave hint of their capacity to influence the powerful aristocrats, who loved rural life and lived in the lands they possessed.

Spain, in turn, conceived its colonial empire as a network of cities. Of course, some regions felt the strong influence of the large *haciendas*, or more precisely, of the old *encomenderos* who were gathering power in their rural domains. But unlike Portugal, Spain viewed colonization as meaning much more than mere economic exploitation. Vaguely at times, at times very clearly, Spain asserted a mission to be carried out by a small and tight group, a new society that would maintain its ties and see that its mission was fulfilled. It was a mission that went beyond individual desire for profit and

beyond the personal existence of the *encomendero*. It was a mission that everyone had to serve. And the instrument to accomplish it was the city.

Thus, since its very foundation, the city was assigned a definite role in the colonial project. The founding of a city was much more than the establishment of a physical location, it was the creation of a new society. The task of this compact, homogeneous, and militant society was precisely to shape the surrounding context and bring all its elements—natural and social, from within and from without—into conformity with a pre-established design, forcing the fit when necessary. From its creation, urban society was informed by a definite ideology and expected to defend it and impose it on a reality thought to be amorphous and inert. This was an old conception of the possibilities and promise of cities and urban societies: a notion crafted and put into practice by Alexander the Great and the *diadochi*, the Roman proconsuls, and the daring adventurers of medieval Europe who began pushing at the edges of the known world as early as the eleventh century. At the root of that conception was a definite theory of society and culture and a concrete experience that Spain made into policy.

The assumption that the ideological city had the capacity to shape reality rested on two premises. One was the belief that the preexisting reality was both amorphous and inert. The other was the decision to fashion that reality according to a preconceived plan so that it should never develop in an autonomous or spontaneous way. Planned to the last detail and translated into minute prescriptions meant to anticipate every possible contingency, Spain's social and cultural policy seemed to discount any possibility of the unexpected, as if the new society it had designed was to be completely impervious to change, completely resistant to any process of differentiation. This policy presupposed an acknowledgment that there was a risk involved, one Spain had already encountered in her contact with Muslim culture: the risk of racial mixing and acculturation. In order to prevent that risk more than the one of possible rebellions, Spain thought it best to establish a network of cities, of compact, homogeneous and militant urban societies, within the framework of a tight, rigidly hierarchical political system. This system, in turn, was built upon the solid ideological structure of the Christian monarchy as it had been fashioned, with the support of the Church, first in the battles against Islam and later in the struggles of the Counter-Reformation.

The network of cities was to create a Hispanic, European, Catholic America. Above all, however, it was| to create a colonial empire in the strictest sense of the expression: a dependent world with no identity of its own, a periphery of the metropolitan world that it was to mirror and imitate in its every action and reaction. Such an empire, fashioned in the Spanish way, had to be homogeneous and, above all, monolithic. It required that the machinery of state be uncompromising and that the doctrinal grounds of the established order be fully embraced both in their religious and their legal and political roots. It also required that the new society acknowledge its dependence and forbid

itself any spontaneous move towards differentiation; for only a hierarchical society, stable to the point of being immobile *perinde ac cadaver*, as the Ignatian formula put it, would ensure dependence and make certain that the colonies could be used to accomplish Spain's higher goals. All this, no doubt, amounted to an ideology, but an extreme one—almost a kind of delirium—that aimed to mold every aspect of reality. But the social and cultural reality of Latin America was already chaotic. And the audacity of this social and cultural experiment unleashed, from the very beginning, countless processes that proved impossible to contain and began to frustrate Spain's grand design.

Portugal's design was rather different and, for that reason, the process of Portuguese colonization was much more pragmatic. The agrarian society ran its full course and drew an area in which the landed gentry accepted the natural development of a new society and, little by little, of a new culture. That design was only altered by the increasing pressure of the mercantile bourgeois world in which Brazil, like the rest of Latin America, was included as a peripheral zone. As that pressure mounted, the cities and urban societies—with their ever stronger middle classes— attained an importance they had not had during the early colonial period. Independently of all political ties, economic development and social differentiation gave these cities an ever increasing *de facto* autonomy which produced, throughout the eighteenth century, the steady development of local middle classes. By then, the Brazilian cities ceased to be the feeble administrative centers, populated by urban societies of little means and few aspirations, they had once been. Instead, they started to grow and exert an influence of their own, until by the nineteenth century they became as important as the Hispanic cities of the new world.

Naturally, this urban process was more visible in the areas controlled by Spain. Founded and maintained to ensure that the colonial world would remain dependent and homogeneous, the cities took on their assigned ideological role. But they did more than simply be the stewards of the metropolitan ideology: they created their own new ideologies in response to situations that had spontaneously developed in each region. Little by little, these cities ceased to be imitations of Spanish cities, which they replicated even in their names, and began to lose their generic character.

Certainly, Latin American cities were still responsive to outside influences. They were obviously affected by Spain, and they were reached and affected as well by the rest of the world, which never abandoned its efforts to include Latin America in the vast domain of the mercantile system. Yet all these influences did not remain unaltered; within a short period of time the new urban societies began to find answers that no longer came from the monolithic imperial system but from a prudent assessment of the circumstances under which each city operated. Thus, cities maintained and even strengthened their ideological role, but as they played it, they provided their areas of influence with an image of the world, with an explanation for the way things were and, above all, with a project tailored to the varied expectations of each region.

The framework of the ideologies that the cities began to develop on their own were always, to some extent, shaped by outside forces: the socio-economic structure of the metropolis; the socio-economic structure of the bourgeois and mercantile world of capitalism; the new schools of thought with their diversity of ideological versions of reality, some explanatory, some projective. They were all predicated upon the image of a European America, of America as a new Europe, immersed in the system of relations created and controlled by Europe. But even within this framework, ever so slowly, the new urban ideologies began to make their own way and acquire some autonomy. And soon they would appear as spontaneous responses and concrete definitions in the face of real situations.

One of these concrete definitions was, for instance, that which referred to the actual position of each city within the vast and diverse continental domain. The formal city of the early colonial period—that of the chart and the scribe, the sword and the cross—began to discover that it was in fact a real city, small and almost always poor, with few neighbors and many risks and uncertainties. The city began to discover that it occupied a real place, in the midst of a real region, connected to other real cities by roads that cut across real rural areas, all with unique traits that eluded any dogmatic generalization. It also began to discover that this diverse reality was the actual source of both its present problems and its future possibilities.

The real city became aware that it was also a real society, not the one of the first inhabitants but of those who remained there, and there built their houses, or moved into the house of others, or had to resign themselves to the miserable dwellings that betokened their marginal existence; those who lived and worked in the city and filled its streets and public squares; those who quarreled over the small problems of daily life or over the gravest issues that would determine the city's fate; and then their descendants, and others who came to the city and were ultimately assimilated. The city became aware that it was an urban society composed of real, concrete members: Spaniards and *criollos*, Indians, *mestizos*, blacks, mulattos, and *zambos*. All of them were inextricably bound together, despite their fixed places in the social order. All were part of a process that led inexorably to their intermingling and to the uncertain adventure set off by the hazards of social mobility. Each urban society became aware of its own uniqueness, of the fact that it was different, in general, from the urban societies of Spain and, in particular, from those that developed in the other Latin American cities, regardless of how near or how far away they were; for each was tied to its own unique set of problems and was shaped by the singular and irreducible equation that governed the relations among its social groups. Each urban society also became aware that it was beginning to have a history that it could not ignore, a history whose presence was felt in every real situation and at every moment a decision had to be made: the history of an urban society made up of successive generations that were bound to the same structure and to the same kinds of circumstances. In the very process of becoming aware of its own uniqueness, each urban society devised yet another

concrete definition that would became part of its ideological frame.

Finally, the essential functions of the city had to be also defined in precise, concrete terms. Doubtless, all cities shared the same basic function that Spanish colonial policy had assigned to them: to ensure control of their regions, to be the bastions of the racial and cultural purity of the colonizers and to further the development of the surrounding areas. But each city had been assigned a specific function as well: they were ports, or military outposts, or mining centers, or trade emporiums. These were very restricted functions determined by the general way in which the colonial system operated. But a city and an urban society are never founded in vain. After a few generations, each urban society had moved beyond its assigned instrumental mission and was beginning to sketch out its real functions: the ones that the city was forced to perform, the ones that it could perform, and the ones that its urban society—one and diverse over the course of time—wanted to perform. Diverse combinations came out of these varied perspectives, and the different social groups began to show their dissimilar tendencies. Little by little, underneath the basic functions that the city was taking on, there began to appear the lifestyles of the community as a whole and of each one of its social groups. Together these lifestyles gave concrete shape to the uniqueness of each urban culture.

All these definitions entailed an interpretation of the past and a plan for the future: they were the specific ideologies with which every individual city was gradually replacing the generic ideology of colonization; and as their differences began to appear, they reshaped the landscape of the original empire—utopian in its intended homogeneity—and hinted at a new order of things to come.

The new order of things began to take shape in the last decades of the eighteenth century, when the Latin American world was hit head-on by the assault of mercantilism. It was then that the noble cities (*hidalgas*) of the Indies, established during the early period of foundations, began to diversify according to the possibilities offered by their circumstances and their social structure. Some, perpetuating the ideology of the noble city, clung to their traditional role and thus doomed themselves to the lot of all stagnant cities. Others, welcoming the bourgeois ideology, took a leap and became active mercantile cities, run by a new and ever stronger middle class with a vocation for internationalism that went well beyond the borders of the Hispanic world. This was a profound change, one marked by other circumstances that would quicken the pace of diversification: some cities, half *hidalgas*, half bourgeois, preferred to remain within the Hispanic world; other cities, more decidedly bourgeois in their make-up, became aware of the advantages of political independence.

This process was a kind of adjustment of the Hispanic world to the international, bourgeois world of mercantilism. The new social, economic and political experiment that began with independence

affected the rural areas but was felt above all in the cities. The middle-classes, which took on the challenge of bringing about a radical change in the structure of the areas controlled by the cities, surrendered in many ways their own interests to the common good; joining their ranks were the newest elites formed by the social ascent of rural groups. Together, the middle-classes and these new elites took upon themselves the mission of giving their society a political project and a sense of direction. Thus they formed a new patrician class, deeply engaged with the national destiny, even though its members would often fuse without distinction the public interests with those of their own.

By then it was becoming clear that, as Latin American cities developed, they followed a diversity of paths. The stagnant cities became even more isolated, though there were very complex social processes at work within them; and the active cities tried to adapt to the demands of the international world, while confronting, at the same time, the problems raised by the ongoing transformations of their internal structure. Precisely at this point, Latin American cities began to quicken a dual process which had begun at the time they were first founded: they tried to fit into the European model by following its lines of change, but they also underwent transformations that arose within their own internal structure and altered the functions of the city, the relations among the different social groups and the nature of the ties between city and surrounding region. This double process of development—both heteronomous (from without) and autonomous (from within)—continued throughout the period of independence, when it became even more pronounced. The groups that had been overlooked during the colonial period, especially the rural ones, burst upon the scene, trying to move up socially and demanding their share of power. These new groups became part of their urban societies, upon which they impressed their vernacular mark. Thus, the process of autonomous development was hastened and intensified. In the meantime, however, a new external force—that of industrial society—affected the active cities in the last decades of the nineteenth century and forced their heteronomous development to the point when they were fully assimilated to the economic system of capitalism, which was increasingly bent upon an imperialistic policy.

This was the beginning of a period less agitated than the previous one. The middle classes, now fully constituted and well-experienced, embraced the ideology of progress; they tried to further the heteronomous development of cities and to contain their autonomous development by exercising their considerable power. They enjoyed an immediate and unquestionable success, and the rural world was compelled to accept their project. But it was inevitable that they should fail within a few decades. In many of the active cities, new social forces began to operate among the traditional ones. Some, like migrations, were ethnic and social in nature; others were functional, like the growth of the groups engaged in tertiary activities. Urban problems became more acute with the changes in the relation between the cities and the rural areas, and they were increased by demographic growth, social differentiation and, at times, by the ideological conflicts among groups. The financial crisis of

1929 hastened these changes.

From then on, the transformation of the most important active cities into metropolitan centers bore witness to the intensity of urbanization in Latin American and, conversely, to the crisis in the rural world. Launched upon heteronomous development, the metropolitan centers acquired increasingly more power. The upper middle-classes subscribed to the ideology of a consumer society and did their best to further the heteronomous development of their metropolitan centers. But these centers themselves had brought about a far-reaching social change: to the upper middle-classes and all the other well-integrated urban groups they had added a vast multitude of marginal people who made the image of their miserable shacks inseparable from that of modern urban centers. This was an unexpected, autonomous development that revealed how diverse the functions of the cities actually were and how varied the relations between city and region. But above all, this development marked the beginning of an era of significant changes in the social, economic, and cultural structure of urban societies. Not long thereafter, significant political changes began to take place.

This book sets forth the results of an inquiry into the way urban societies were formed, into the changes they underwent and the cultures they produced—different for every city in every period and, at times of intense change, different within the same city for each of its social groups. The book intends to examine in detail the play between the so-called "heteronomous" development of cities, controlled by external forces, and the autonomous one, driven from within the cities themselves. For it is in this play that urban cultures and subcultures are fashioned and the relations between the rural and the urban world take shape. And it is in the cities that ideologies gather their utmost force and are more clearly confronted, in a dialectical motion, with the actual structures of the real.

Hacienda was the name used in Spain for the expanse of inherited land which constituted the foundation of high nobility. In the New World, *haciendas* were the usually large extensions of land granted by the Spanish crown to *conquistadores* and colonizers.

Encomienda is the colonial institution that regulated the division of Indian population among the Spanish conquerors. Indians were forced to work for their Spanish masters—the *encomenderos*—or pay them a tribute. In turn, the *encomenderos* were—according to the Laws of the Indies—under the obligation to instruct the Indians in Christian doctrine, give them some formal education and attend to their general well-being.

Conquistador—the Spanish word for "conqueror"—has come to name the Spaniards who not only

conquered but also colonized the New World. Most were from the impoverished ranks of the lesser nobility and brought to America their ambitions of acquiring land and wealth, as well as prestige and title.

Encomenderos were the Spaniards legally granted the possession of an *encomienda*. *Cf.* this same chapter, note 2 above.

The *diadochi*—literally, "the successors"—are the generals who assumed formal control of Alexander's empire after his death.

The old *Diccionario de Autoridades*—an exhaustive Thesaurus of medieval and Golden Age Spanish—defines the meaning of the term *criollo* as follows: "The one born in the Indies, from parents who are born in Spain, or in any other nation, and who are not Indian. Is a term invented by the Spanish *conquistadores* of the Indies and made current by them in Spain."

The Spanish term *mestizo* has a narrower meaning than its English equivalent: it refers only to the first generation offspring of a Spaniard and an Indian.

Zambo refers to the first generation offspring of Indian and black.

CHAPTER 1: LATIN AMERICA WITHIN THE EUROPEAN EXPANSION

By the end of the fifteenth century, the native peoples of America had developed their own cultures and were established in a self-sufficient world. But with the arrival of the Europeans, the aboriginal world was completely overtaken, and a new era began for America. The first sign of the new times was the creation of new societies made up of conquerors and of those they conquered, of Europeans and native peoples alike.

The creation of these new societies was part of the history of both the aboriginal and the European worlds. But it was the Europeans that had taken the initiative, they that had played an active role and had set to their advantage the direction of the course of events. The American adventure was

equally shared by both cultures, but Europe alone set the process into motion. The process itself was one more step in a major transformation that Europe had already undergone for centuries and whose consequences would be felt in many regions until then unrelated to the European world. This time, it was America's turn.

Even when the creation of the new societies had fully become an American problem, it continued to be, from another perspective, a European issue as well. For it was the European society that prepared the invasion, that set the goals of the undertaking, that left its imprint on the protagonists, that transplanted its old problems into the American soil. The American world and its native societies watched the invaders arrive to the continent without understanding what they were about, because there was nothing in the logic of their own world that could explain the arrival or the behavior of the Europeans: the invaders were a force that had come from the outside and obeyed its own laws. For the European societies, on the contrary, the invasion of another world was well within the logic of its own transformation.

This double perspective made the American process all the more complex. It took some time for it to become, in fact, uniquely American. By then, the process had taken root in the new continent, and its protagonists began to act according to the internal logic of their new situation. But until that happened, the process was part of the history of European societies that, compelled by forces they could not control, moved beyond their own boundaries and began an era of expansion. It is within that general European expansion that the formative process of Latin American finds its beginnings. Since that expansion was itself the result of a long series of changes, it is those changes that we need to examine if we want to understand the attitudes that shaped the formative process of the New World.

The First Expansion towards the Margins of Europe

Strictly speaking, the oceanic expansion of the fifteenth century was only a second wave that repeated, in a larger scale, another one that had started some four centuries earlier. That first wave, which lasted from the end of the eleventh century until the beginning of the fourteenth, was at the source of the early transformation of Europe and may thus reveal some of the traits that made that expansive process so unique.

Over the centuries, a series of crises had altered the configuration of the old core of Roman Europe. When that core became internally divided, the vast unity that framed the economy of the Mediterranean began to break up. First the Germanic invasions and later the Muslim dominance over

what once had been the Roman sea completed the destruction of that unity. The mercantile system broke down; cities and urban life fell into utter decay and, in a brief period of time, the entire area became an eminently rural world. After the shutdown of Mediterranean commerce in the eight century, Christian feudal society began to take shape at the very heart of what had once been Roman Europe. This new dual society of *milites et rustici* brought into order the unstable situation that so many—and such profound—changes had created. The self-sufficient feudal estate gave perfect expression to the economic structure of the new society, just as feudal monarchy gave perfect expression to its political structure in the person of a king who was *primus inter pares*. By the eleventh century, feudal society had been fully established.

Feudal Europe was weak and isolated, rooted in transcendence, and disdainful of reality. Technically powerless, it was surrounded by a menacing outside world. Muslims, Normans, Slavs, and Magyars repeatedly appeared in its outlying areas to prey upon it, sometimes to settle there and make the occasional foray into the interior. The situation began to change, however, in the eleventh century. The invaders on the periphery became less aggressive and, at the same time, large groups at the heart of feudal Europe began to try to re-establish trade.

The most spectacular change occurred perhaps in the Mediterranean. Internally divided and worn out, the Muslims began to surrender their positions. Groups from the Christian regions of Western Europe began to converge to the coastline, intent upon harassing the Muslims to the bitter end. The Crusades hastened this process and brought it to its conclusion, opening once again the Mediterranean to trade between the Levant and the West. The consequences of this change soon became visible.

Opening up the Mediterranean to the Christian kingdoms brought brisk business to its shores, based on trade in luxury products; it also gave rise to intense trade activity inside the continent, first along its main routes—most of them rivers—and then into secondary routes that reached every corner of Europe. Articles from the East no longer were the only stock in trade; the great commercial routes began to carry also the small, incipient regional trade: salt, wine, oil, textiles, skins, timber, wax, as well as foodstuffs and goods produced by small local cottage industries.

Someone had to attend to all this new activity. As early as the tenth century in some areas, but definitely in the twelfth century, a new class began to take shape: the bourgeoisie. Modest and almost insignificant at first, the new class grew increasingly prosperous as markets were organized and business became customary. Neither *milites* nor *rustici*, the burghers were a new breed of men. A new morality, a new concept of life, a new attitude towards reality would soon set them apart as a social group with entirely new traits. Their natural domain was the city, which sometimes they

brought to new life and sometimes even built from scratch to give appropriate context to their activities and their way of life.

There was a true urban explosion. Countless clusters of population, small perhaps but certainly enterprising, appeared all over the countryside, the riverbanks or the seashore, along roadsides or at crossroads, near an abbey or in the shadow of a castle wall. Many sleepy old towns awoke from their slumber, as new people moved in and started their trades and businesses. In the midst of the feudal estates, the attitude of these new urban societies was unmistakably heterodox, although it did not provoke right away the kind of confrontations that would later arise. But their business activity was in itself enough of a threat: it began to alter the ties of economic and social dependency; it opened up a host of opportunities for the new generations; it laid the ground for the rise of a monetary economy.

On the other hand, the city fulfilled certain aspirations of the new groups: it gave them some measure of security and freedom. It also began to operate a market—an open space where buyers and sellers met under the protection of some authority—and soon set into motion a market economy. Thus, the city was more than a mere context for the way of life of these emerging societies; it proved to be the most powerful agent of change within the system of economic and social relations. And it was even more. The market that brought buyers and sellers together soon became a place where the members of the new society began to engage in dialogue, to exchange opinions, to form common views as they criticized the behavior of others, to develop norms and ideas, and to draw up projects. One of those projects might have been—indeed it was—to go beyond the limits of the urban market in search of greater profits.

In fact, this kind of development stemmed from the very essence of the new economic style. The marketplace showed the forces of supply and demand at work, and it was sensitive to every opportunity available within its own domain. Increasing profits was just a matter of establishing a presence in other markets.

Increasing profits was the economic objective of the new bourgeois groups. But winning other markets could prove to be an enterprise for which they had neither the power nor the skills. It was a real conquest. And so, as early as the end of the eleventh century, an odd alliance began to take shape between the middle classes and the feudal lords, who took up the enterprise of expanding the reach of the European bourgeoisie.

The same routes that had been taken by conquering invaders began to be travelled now by these lords on their way to reconquest. Perhaps the most important among these routes were those in the

Mediterranean, because they linked regions that knew each other well and were economically compatible. The Crusades proved that the Mediterranean could be navigated once again; and centers open to European commerce were established all along the shores of the Levant. The lords were carving out kingdoms and duchies, but behind—or with them—came the merchants who were setting active trade into motion. Pisans, Genoese, Normans, Englishmen and Venetians all became strong in the new trade centers: Jaffa, Acre, Biblos, even Constantinople itself, in the wake of that most extraordinary venture of Franks and Venetians that they themselves cared to call a Crusade.

And so, the Mediterranean regained the economic role it had played for centuries. Old cities awoke from their lordly slumber to marshal their resources and, as they did so, they arose as new bourgeois societies with an irrepressible creative energy. This energy was evident in their daring projects of expansion as well as in the forms of life they adopted. It was a kind of Roman Renaissance to which the Muslim world of the African coast somehow contributed, by giving it occasion to increase and diversify its possibilities.

The resurgence of the Mediterranean was not confined to its shores. There, in their ports, began the trade routes through which products came and went; and that traffic brought prosperity to countless cities, big and small, that began to expand their own, more restricted, trade circuits. In any case, the Mediterranean was no longer the only area of interest to that world that had arisen after the Germanic invasions and was now stretching toward the Atlantic and the central and northern parts of Europe.

Countless trade centers, well connected among themselves, had sprung up, along the invasion routes of the Normans, on the North Sea, and the Atlantic coast. This area had been settled and organized during the Carolingian empire and in the period that followed its breakdown. It did not have, thus, a Roman tradition, and the production, circulation and consumption of goods within it developed strictly out of the play of the new circumstances. It did not take long for this area to stretch as far as Northern Germany and beyond, across the Baltic Sea, onto the routes that began there and carried trade into Russia and Poland. Like the Mediterranean expansion, this one was spontaneously prompted by groups of merchants. But there was also something quite methodical about it: the lords followed the economic process closely; the Germanic Hansa organized the mechanisms of international trade; and Danes, Englishmen, and Normans, who were in charge of the political unity to the area, set up a power structure within which the new economic forces could actually work. The trading network of the Hansa was, however, larger than the area the lords had managed to organize politically, perhaps because the structure of the network was more fluid. The same had happened in the Mediterranean, where no political power was able to encompass the fluid economic system of major cities like Genoa, Barcelona or Venice.

To the East, German lords and merchants began to push beyond the Elbe. Chiefs of border regions whose occupation had to be secured, these lords founded cities like Stetten, Lübeck, Rostock and Riga and won the support of the Church and of German immigrants. In those regions and in others like Bohemia and Hungary, these immigrants—merchants in many cases—settled in the cities, new and old, as traders, perhaps also as artisans, and eventually managed to acquire land. Trade became intense between the areas these groups were developing and the old German cities, thus expanding even further the vast network of the new Europe.

In the meantime, at the opposite end of the continent, Christian groups in the Iberian peninsula were pushing the Muslims back South. On the Mediterranean, groups from Catalonia were freeing most of the eastern shores. On the Atlantic, Portugal was reclaimed; and from the little Kingdom of Asturias, the valleys of the Duero and the Tajo were retaken and repopulated until finally Fernando III made his way into Andalusia and cornered the Muslims in their Kingdom of Granada. This living, solid frontier between Christians and Muslims was the only one that remained in a continent where trade had become very fluid.

The Role of the Cities in the Expansion towards the Margins of Europe

In the first European expansion, the cities played a unique role, one that had far reaching and long lasting consequences.

Both the expansive wave and the urban explosion took place at the same time; they were, in fact, two aspects of a single and rather complex course of events. Together with the growth of urban populations and their return to economic life, there was a tendency to move beyond the limits of the urban market. The lords were needed to head the military enterprise, but everyone understood that, without the cities that the bourgeoisie had brought to life, the enterprise itself would have been impossible and, worse still, pointless. Only the new economy made it possible to set up the mechanisms required by an expansion with such distant and difficult objectives; and only the new economy could sustain such undertakings and make them—as it did—extremely profitable. The expansion towards the margins of Europe was the task that the urban bourgeoisies had tacitly suggested to the feudal lords. For their shared task, these two groups, which functioned so differently, had to find some common ground. As they actually tried to find it, a feudal-bourgeois society came into being.

But the city was not simply the instrument that made the expansion possible; it was also the

instrument used to secure that expansion and to protect its gains. The lord and his warriors were the vanguard of a mixed column of combatants, merchants and clergy. That vanguard would reach its destination and complete the first part of the operation, as did Baldwin or Bohemund, Adolph of Holstein or Richard the Lionhearted, Alphonse VI or James I. Once the lands had been conquered, a vast mercantile operation would begin. In each acquired region that was depopulated, a city would arise. It would be a newly founded city, as in the case of Lübeck or Riga, or one repopulated on the remains of a previously abandoned town, as in the case of Zamora or Astorga, in order to build a military garrison and a trading post. The wall and the marketplace symbolized precisely the two functions that the city began to perform. The warrior ensured the city's military and political control of the region; the merchant structured the economy of the region around the urban market; and the city, prosperous and well supplied, guaranteed the cohesiveness and security of the conquering group. If, on the other hand, the acquired region was already populated, as in the case of Palestine, Asia Minor or Andalusia, then warriors, clergy and merchants would enter the conquered cities: the warriors would seize the bulwarks and the defenses, the clergy the temples; the merchants, in turn, would simply begin to pick up the threads of buying and selling. They would all exploit the existing infrastructure to reverse its effects, that is, to neutralize the influence of the previous lords and increase their own, so as to secure the unity, safety and gains of the group. The Crusaders did precisely this in Palestine, where they left to the Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians the business transactions of each city and whatever trade they could establish with the cities to the west. And so did the Hispanic conquerors who reclaimed Toledo, Lisbon, Seville, and Cordoba.

Those who had forgotten ancient military strategy and knew only the kind of warfare waged by feudal lords rediscovered one of its well-known principles: that cities were vanguards in conquered lands. With its castle-like walls and towers, moats and gates, the city actually became a bastion for the conquering knights. For them and for the merchants who came with them, the city was also an enclosed space that had an active market and usually a number of streets lined with stalls and shops, and perhaps the homes of the moneylenders who would finance risky but promising undertakings. For the men of the Church, the city was not simply a fortress or a marketplace; it was also—essentially—a center where they catechized the infidels and kept a watchful eye on the newly arrived Christians who, far away from their homeland and the social control it exerted over them, were always liable to falter in their faith. The city was, then, for those who controlled it, a perfect instrument of domination. And the lords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie who, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, controlled the cities they had established, repopulated or occupied on the margins of Europe were remarkably efficient because they made up a very compact group, which allowed them to concentrate their forces. Thanks to this, the first European expansion held firm; and with only slight alterations, the area that had been conquered and annexed remained as a permanent part of Europe. This lesson was never to be forgotten.

Two Casts of Mind: The Lords and the Bourgeoisie

The cooperation between the feudal lords and the bourgeoisie, which had started out so smoothly with the first European expansion, continued to improve with time. It was forged with facts, and without theories. And it existed because each group was aware of its own possibilities and limitations with that kind of clarity that comes early in a process, when issues are still simple and have not yet been clouded by ideological arguments. In order to launch the European expansion, which we now view as the first step in the development of capitalism, each class sought the other as its necessary complement, regardless of what each one represented, in an effort to make common cause out of differing, even antithetical, points of view.

Of course each class—the old as well as the new—had its own, well-defined conception of life, although by that time the views of the bourgeoisie were not yet as well or as explicitly stated as those of the feudal lords. Their conceptions were, of course, fundamentally opposed. But this fact, as often happens with this kind of opposition, became evident only under very close scrutiny and only after the analysis had reached the ultimate grounding and final consequences of each view. In the meantime, sheer pragmatism made for a good deal of common ground, and one of the defining traits of this nascent feudal-bourgeois society—and of its feudal-bourgeois culture—involved shunning, as far as possible, any close scrutiny of facts, thus preventing any confrontation over questions of principle.

The class of the feudal lords had a transcendental view of life and believed in the supernatural grounding of the entire system of relations in the world. It had not always been that way, of course, but it had come to be so during the interim between the crisis of the Carolingian empire and the eleventh century. By then, those who had the power also had possession of the land. Though it was undoubtedly a means of production, land had a meaning that went well beyond its economic function in feudal society, for the view of the feudal lords was defined precisely by the conviction that wealth in land was something that came with power, something that only power could grant. First power, then wealth: such had been their experience, since their own possession of the land was ultimately based upon the right of conquest.

The bourgeoisie, in turn, came into being with a view of life that was strictly immanent, or if you wish, naturalistic and profane. Deeply agnostic, the bourgeoisie made no effort to articulate its thoughts, although the thinkers and artists who were its conscience did so from time to time. Its attitudes, however, betrayed its view, even when it tried to conceal, with wise hypocrisy, its ultimate goals. As a class, it had not been born out of a vast adventure of conquest and power—as had the class of the lords— but within the feudal system they had created; and it had arisen by taking advantage of a

crack in the structure in order to find some escape from its total control. Although it could only create a secondary structure, still dependent on the feudal system, it showed great capacity to become independent. Its tool for emancipation was money, and the secondary structure it created was a monetary economy. And so it acquired wealth. But the distinctive feature of its view of the world was the belief in the central importance of wealth. The middle class saw power as something that came with wealth, although it never denied that power could be obtained by other means, as the feudal class had obviously demonstrated. First wealth, then power: such was the belief of the bourgeoisie, at least for its own members; and that belief was sustained by their experience in the new patrician societies.

As the feudal lords and the bourgeoisie worked together during the first European expansion, it became apparent that their differing views could coexist without much clashing. The feudal lords defined the transcendental goals of the undertaking: first, the religious mission, and then the glory that warriors hungered for. After these, they would acknowledge a more tangible aim: power, to be acquired by forming new feudal estates, which was something they could no longer do in the heart of Europe. But when the feudal lords said "power," they meant "power and wealth." And with power and wealth in mind, they established fiefdoms, took possession of lands and endeavored to reap from them all the benefits a fife should yield. They were not alone in their venture. The middle classes went along with the lofty goals the lords had proclaimed as theirs and helped them achieve those goals. They knew, however, that when the lords said "power," they meant "power and wealth." And so they hastened to define their own role: they would support the creation of feudal estates; they would assent to whatever system the lords should choose to organize the occupied lands into; they would take an active part in producing and amassing all the other kinds of wealth that were not, at least in principle, equal to power—movable goods and money; of this kind of wealth, they would yield to their allies only as much as necessary to make them feel they too had something to gain in the enterprise; but they would thoroughly exploit every single resource they had at their disposal, that is, every mechanism of the monetary economy, which at the time the bourgeoisie was assembling through a vast network of cities across the world.

This is how, in fact, capitalism was born: out of Europe's first expansion and out of the first experiment in reconciling the aims and aptitudes of the feudal class and the bourgeoisie. In time, this initial scheme would become more subtle and complex, but its fundamental structure would remain unchanged. The scheme gained solid grounding with the retrenchment that took place during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as the feudal-bourgeois societies grew stronger. By the time the second European expansion began in the fifteenth century—this time, across the oceans—, the very same scheme went back to functioning as it had four centuries earlier, ever more subtle, ever more complex, but essentially the same.

Adjustments in the Feudal-Bourgeois Society

Urban economies had a first cycle of expansion that lasted from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. It was a period of intense social and economic change. The bourgeoisie made a succession of experiments: it explored markets, chose the staples for every sector of trade, organized different types of mercantile and financial systems and, after a mixture of successes and failures, managed to produce a relatively stable economic order. In those experiments, the bourgeoisie of the different cities underwent some dramatic changes and sudden reversals. Large fortunes came crashing down and new ones were quickly made in their place. Today's big winners often became tomorrow's big losers. But, as a group, the bourgeoisie gained order and stability through those centuries of experimentation. For in that period the local patrician groups came into being, made up of those who very early on had amassed wealth and power and had consented to lead the new society in its battle against the old legal and political system. The aim of that battle was to obtain all the warranties and exemptions necessary to perform the new mercantile activities. Its immediate objectives were the commune, the local codes of law, the statutes and charters. Sometimes these objectives were pursued by means of authentic revolutions, which presupposed—and therefore revealed—a few significant facts: that the claimants had very clear ideas and enormous strength; that those against whom the claims were asserted were considerably weak; and that, in either case, there was a major crack in the traditional structure. Generally the patricians got what they wanted, either by means of confrontation, or through the gracious, if obviously self-interested, concession on the part of their lord, or even by paying a large sum of money. But as the patricians amassed their wealth and power, they acquired, virtually everywhere, the legal status that allowed them to restructure the new urban society to make sure that they would prevail.

A certain retraction of the bourgeoisie began to take place at the start of the fourteenth century. This retraction grew even more pronounced after the black plague of 1348. It became extremely hard to secure many things, and skilled labor became scarce. There were famines, epidemics and shortages all over Europe and the Mediterranean. It was at this time and in this context that the new society and its new economy entered a process of readjustment that became visible in every realm of life.

Even the monarchy experienced a severe crisis. In its effort to centralize power, it had fought the aristocracy, usually with the support of the bourgeoisie. But the situation had become complicated and the interests at stake— discordant and torn between the old and the new ideas—led to interminable conflicts: dynastic struggles, civil wars, palace intrigues. At the heart of these conflicts was the monarchy, trying to adapt itself to the new society and seeking to control all the mechanisms of power. There were inevitable tensions between the bourgeoisie and the feudal lords, and their disputes took on many different forms. There were hard-fought confrontations—like

the one between Etienne Marcel and the General Estates of Paris in 1356—that provided an early model of the modern parliamentary state. But after their sporadic head-on battles, the bourgeoisie and the feudal lords tried to restore their alliance, above all to contain the growth of social mobility. By the end of the fifteenth century, they had succeeded in their effort throughout almost all Europe, in spite of the groups that on either side refused to join the compact. Out of this process, the feudal-bourgeois society came into existence. It was this society that would attempt the second European expansion—this time across the oceans—and would sustain the modern world until the eighteenth century.

Doubtless, the patrician class continued to seek the support of the feudal lords for its vast economic enterprises whenever these raised territorial or political problems. Doubtless, the feudal groups tried to get closer to those in the bourgeoisie who had good business instincts and would discover opportunities, dream up inventive ways of doing things and have capital at their disposal. Starting with the *commenda*, every new business arrangement would bring rich men and noblemen closer together. Then came the matrimonial alliances, this or that bourgeois turned into a nobleman, this or that nobleman turned into a bourgeois. The extravagant lavishness of the newly rich patrician brought him closer to the lifestyle of the nobleman; the economic mediocrity of the impoverished aristocrat brought him down to the level of a modest bourgeois. The rungs in between on this subtle and complex scale ultimately produced a rather tenuous hierarchy within the upper classes, with the exception, perhaps, of the great aristocracy closer to the throne.

Beneath the nobility and the bourgeoisie was the vast and diverse mass of the popular groups—both urban and rural—and the lower middle class. This mass was exposed to all the social and economic ills brought about by the contraction that gave way to the realignment of European society. And it was this mass that suffered the most from pestilence and famine; this mass that paid the luxury taxes, that absorbed the losses of the entrepreneurs, that never had a voice in political life or quickly lost whatever voice it had managed to get. From time to time these classes rose and brought about large peasant uprisings or urban riots, which were invariably suppressed and served, at best, only to let a few lucky adventurers rise up socially. A distinctive trait of fourteenth and fifteenth century Europe was indeed the impotence of its middle and lower classes. That impotence also reached the lower and even the middle strata of the feudal-bourgeois group. The early stages of capitalism led to a well-defined mercantile policy inspired by the ideology of the bourgeoisie. At the core of this ideology was the conviction that no one could fight the system without some support from within. In other words, it was impossible to expand the economic frontiers and therefore increase profit without taking risks and facing problems that could only be overcome with the help of political power. When the urban bourgeoisies wanted to establish a regional market in order to broaden their opportunities, they discovered that they needed the support of a territorial lord willing to eventually go to war. And when they began to think in terms of bigger markets, a monarch or a grand duke

would be more than happy to provide protection for such lucrative venture. The bourgeoisie of the communes no longer counted; what did count was to be the bourgeoisie of the king, or more precisely, the bourgeoisie of the national market. This was a clever exchange of services: the Bardi in the fourteenth century—like the Fugger in the sixteenth—bankrolled the royalty.

The Second European Expansion

As feudal-bourgeois society became better adjusted, every effort was made to take advantage of all the opportunities offered by the economy as it had been shaped after the first expansion. But those opportunities were neither infinite nor inexhaustible. After the demographic explosion of the eleventh century, population growth came to a halt and began to shrink around the mid-fourteenth century. Societies remained at a standstill and markets were limited. The political and social crises became fierce and made the trade routes either unsafe or impassable, which caused the markets to shrink or dry up. Each local trade route intensified its commerce, but the larger routes suffered the effects of all the battles being fought to establish boundaries. Would Burgundy finally become a state? Would the Kingdom of France gain control of the entire Atlantic coast? Would England retain its influence in Flanders? Would the Baltic states be unified? Would the Empire itself achieve internal unity? Would the Kingdoms of Hungary, Bohemia and Poland survive? Would Barcelona be an independent principality? Would Castile and Aragon merge their interests? Indeed, the entire political map of Europe was a question mark. Behind it, another question was looming in sight: that of the major economic routes. At issue here was whether it would be possible to secure new areas of influence and to control certain routes. The European economy entered into a state of suspension.

At the time, the most promising possibility was that of trade in goods from the Orient. Even before the first Crusade, the Venetians had discovered that they could gain access to the eastern trading system. They had been, in fact, the forward scouts of the first Crusade. Once the Crusaders established fiefs and controlled ports, business was increased by trade in natural products—which were exotic for westerners—and in refined handicraft. Gradually, a different view of the Orient began to take shape. As far back as Roman times, the Orient was perceived, above all, as the source of luxury. Slowly, however, the West became aware that what was coming from the Orient were not just the creations of a different and refined culture, but rather the products of a radically foreign nature, yet unknown in Europe, such as sugar and spices. From the imprecise and highly suggestive notion that the Orient evoked, the image of a tropical world began to emerge.

During the thirteenth century, trade with the Orient had prospered, and the signs of its expansion

were visible all over Europe. It was, in fact, international trade on grand scale, and it was important to keep it alive and well. As news broke about the changes that had taken place on the hinterland of the Muslim world, the Venetians—as the Castilians would do later—tried to make contact with the enigmatic world of the Mongols, who might become the allies of Western Christians but were, in any case, lords of the regions where highly desired products, silk among them, were coming from. Marco Polo and his brothers followed the route of the Orient into the heart of Asia, but with meager results. Out of the upheaval in Asia came the crisis in the world of the Seijuk Turks and the increasing power of the Ottomans, who, by the first half of the fourteenth century, had taken Anatolia and finally set foot in Gallipoli, on the European coast of the Dardanelles.

That new Ottoman power upset the entire trading system of the Mediterranean. In 1360, the Ottomans vanquished the armies of the Byzantine Empire at Adrianople—today's Edirne—and there established their capital awaiting for the fall of Constantinople. The victory of Kossovo in 1389 ensured their grip over almost the entire Balkan peninsula. In 1396, at Nikopol, they vanquished the Crusaders of King Sigismund of Hungary, who had among their ranks the best of the French Knights. Only the threat of Tamerlane, who was on their backs and finally defeated them at Ankara in 1402, managed to halt their westward advance. It was then that Portugal—at the other end of Europe—conceived the idea of seeking out its own tropical world and its own orient by exploring the westerly islands and the coasts of Africa.

This move by Portugal began with the profound changes it underwent after 1380, when the progressive dynasty of the Avis came to power with the help of the bourgeoisie. In 1372, when the Castilian fleet laid siege to Lisbon, Portugal had been unable to confront it, because it lacked naval resources. But it rapidly transformed itself into a formidable maritime power, largely thanks to the persistent efforts of Prince Henry, one of the sons of the dynasty founder, who would come to be known as "the Navigator." The Prince harnessed one tendency of the new society that had gained strength with the dynastic change. From his castle of Sagres, in the Algarve, he compiled and organized whatever little experience there was with western navigation; he gathered together maps, trained crews, systematized nautical knowledge and perfected the naval industry. A successful campaign in Ceuta had made him decide to undertake this task. As he freed trade between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic from the threat of Moorish pirates, he had come in contact with the tropical lands of Guinea.

Wherever they were, the tropical lands seemed to offer limitless prospects. Having seized control of the Madeira Islands around 1420, the Portuguese already had four establishments there by the mid-fifteenth century, when the first sugar mill was set up. Large amounts of international capital—provided above all, by Jews and Flemish, and perhaps by some Genoese—were invested in developing plantations and mills. By 1456, sugar grown and processed on the Madeira Islands had

already reached the Bristol market, and soon after it reached Constantinople, Venice, Genoa and, most important of all, Antwerp, which would become the great emporium of Portugal's new wealth. Cane plantations and the sugar industry spread later to the Azores, which the Portuguese entrusted to Flemish capitalists. Then they spread to the Cape Verde Islands, and later still to Brazil. Slave trade from African began to develop in 1441; within three years, there was a slave trading company in the city of Lagos, headed by Prince Henry the Navigator. Not long thereafter, the *Casa dos Escravos* was established in Lisbon, under royal jurisdiction. At the time, Castile was exploiting slave trade on the Canary Islands.

The Portuguese continued with the advance they had begun on the African coasts. After reaching Cape Bojador in 1434, they arrived, in 1441, at Cape Blanco. South of Cape Blanco, on Arguim Bay, they built the first port in 1448, and there they began the slave trade which later became so important to the development of the plantations. They had also reached Cape Verde, in 1445, and from there the Cape Verde Islands. With the death of Prince Henry, exploration came to a temporary halt. When it eventually resumed, it headed first for the equatorial zone. Then, in 1448, under Bartolomeu Dias, the Portuguese went as far as the meridional extreme of Africa. A dazzling image of the tropical world—one that Camoens would later transmute into poetry in *Os Lusiadas*—began to take hold of the Portuguese, who were quick to link the tropics, above all, with slave trade. New fortunes were made on account of that trade; Portuguese agriculture came back to life, and large-scale colonization seemed possible in some regions on the basis of slave labor.

The Castilians had some maritime tradition in the Atlantic, since their fleet—which was far from negligible as a political and military force in Europe—generally operated out of ports in Galicia and Asturias. At the time of the Portuguese discoveries, the Castilians had managed to land on the Canary Islands, and their conquest of those islands was completed when they took Palma in 1490 and Tenerife in 1492. But they had long before ceased to compete with the Portuguese on the African coasts, as the Treaty of Alcaçovas formally stated in 1479. This is how the Castilians felt inclined to look into other projects and gave their support to the one by Columbus, which led to the discovery, in 1492, of the American continent.

In the next ten years, the Spaniards continued to explore the Caribbean coasts with minute intensity, while the Portuguese managed to navigate around the Cape of Good Hope and reached Calicut, on the Malabar coast of India, in 1498. Shortly after that, another Portuguese fleet, under the command of Pedro Álvares Cabral, took the same route that Vasco da Gama had just opened and reached the Brazilian coastline in April 1500. The markers had been laid. In a few decades, a vast economic and military undertaking would build the first two great colonial empires: the Spanish and the Portuguese.

The Societies that Created the Empires

More important for our study than the political and economic circumstances in which the empires were created is the type of society that was already emerging in each of the imperial countries. For, on the long eve of their trans-oceanic enterprise, Portugal, as well as the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, had undergone severe crises, and the rush to expand was closely related to them. These crises had occurred in the second half of the fourteenth century, and it was the process they unleashed that set the stage for the expansionist drive. Not satisfied by merely traveling familiar routes, this expansionist thrust called for the search of the unknown across the seas. It was then that social groups, economic structures, political systems, and ideologies began to take on the characteristics that, once fully developed, left their imprint upon the expansion.

The Burgundian dynasty had collapsed in Portugal in the tremendous social upheaval that began in 1383 and lasted until 1385. What had taken place then was a typical bourgeois revolution; as such, it picked up the threads of an ongoing crisis in the traditional society and weaved a new set of problems for the old and the new classes alike. Out of that upheaval rose, with John I, the Avis dynasty. Inevitably, its policies had to respond to the desire for change that had brought the Avis into power and that the dynasty itself had come to embody. The Avis was, thus, a modernizing dynasty. It was willing, no doubt, to honor the aspirations of the traditional nobility, but only within the feudal-bourgeois scheme that the new classes had proposed.

Although Portugal was flanked by Castile on the north and the east, there were still those who would try to expand eastward, exploiting the resentments left by a bitter dynastic war. After a series of failed attempts, the Treaty of Alcaçovas, signed in 1479, closed-off that possibility. In turn, the mentality of renewal that had inspired the revolution of 1383 and initiated the dynasty of the Avis was best represented by the groups that opted to explore the Atlantic routes. A close alliance, sealed with England in 1373, had been followed by improved relations between Portuguese ports and Flemish cities. But this renewed trade satisfied only those mercantile groups with little ambition. The Atlantic had much more to offer that was attractive not just to merchants, but also to ambitious noblemen, already impoverished or on the brink of poverty, and especially to the lesser nobility—the *hidalgos* —who placed their hopes in the House of Avis and its policy of renewal. These classes formed the feudal-bourgeois alliance that went on to explore the Atlantic, the western islands, and especially the African continent.

Duarte, the second king of the Avis dynasty, acknowledged the existence of a new society. There was a traditional notion—repeatedly voiced in Spain at that time—that viewed the whole of society as composed of “orators, warriors and peasants”. In contrast, the Portuguese King suggested, in *El*

leal Consejero , a much more complex division of society: orators, warriors, peasants, laborers, fishermen, officials, and artisans. The important thing in Duarte's conception was that each of the classes had taken on a new and unique identity. The old nobility, impoverished and worn out, had been replaced by a new nobility—personified by the *Condestable* of John I, Juno Alvares Pereira—avid for land, honors, and wealth. This new nobility would hold the crown in check by demanding grants and opportunities to conquer riches. There were also the young sons of the *fidalgos mancebos* (junior noblemen), who were left with no land and without a penny by the right of the first born. These young *hidalgos* were anxious not to engage in any activity that might compromise their status as noblemen; instead, they expected the crown to open new frontiers so that they could obtain the land they did not have.

By then, Portugal was experiencing a land crisis. An exodus of peasants had left the land fallow, while cities witnessed the growth not only of the bourgeoisie but also of poverty-stricken middle and lower classes. Two different policies began to take shape at the start of the fifteenth century, each proposed by one of the sons of John I: that of Prince Henry the Navigator, who wanted to push the overseas expansion—and would "bleed Portugal to death," as his critics would say; and that of Prince Peter, who, as regent of his nephew Alphonse V, did his best to increase agriculture and fishing, maritime commerce, slave trade, and trade in metals and spices. Henry's policy seemed to attract the noblemen; Peter's the bourgeoisie. But both policies eventually merged into one, as the lower ranks of the nobility moved closer to the groups of merchants—Portuguese as well as international—who advanced in the conquest and colonization of the islands and the African coasts. These parallel interests did not converge in Ceuta or in Morocco, conquered by Alphonse V, but on the Atlantic islands where the sugar plantations and refineries had been started; in Africa, where the slave trade prospered; in the vast Eastern Empire built by Gama, Almeida, and Albuquerque, where fabulous, albeit ephemeral, businesses were started; and, above all, in Brazil, where, especially after 1530, the "sugar barons"—noblemen turned into entrepreneurs—carried out a methodical exploitation that produced enormous wealth. This they did with capital supplied by the Flemish and Jewish middlemen who marketed their products.

This was not the case of Castile, which had been an Atlantic state until the thirteenth century, when it also gained access to the Mediterranean. Its fairly vigorous bourgeoisie had been growing since the eleventh century in many cities directly or indirectly affected by the renaissance in trade, which had given a start to the development of maritime traffic and commercial contact among different regions. But the strength of the old aristocracies was by far greater in Castile, and it grew even more every time the Crown was forced to rally its noblemen against the Muslim threat or every time an internal crisis—minority feud or civil war—had left them in complete control of the situation. The Castilian bourgeoisie was never able to overcome the old aristocracies, even when its ties to the monarchy grew closer; because, no matter how strong those ties might come to be, the bourgeoisie

was constrained by a royal power distrustful of their ascent and by its own internal dynamism, since many of its members would renounce mercantile adventures for the sake of propertied wealth and the eventual honors usually conferred upon the local gentry or the lesser nobility.

Still, its alliance with the monarchy increased the power of the bourgeoisie. But this was not what mattered most in the struggle between the class of merchants and the old aristocracies. The crucial problem of the bourgeoisie was that it did not have a project capable of luring the aristocracy to a Cantabrian or a Mediterranean expansion. In both areas, the Castilian bourgeoisie had arrived too late and was able to undertake only routine transactions, very different, for sure, from those that the Catalan bourgeoisie had offered the knights of Aragon when the two groups united in the first half of the twelfth century. This is why a feudal-bourgeois society rose in Catalonia long before it emerged in Castile.

In any case, the attempt to constitute such a society in Castile had some possibilities as long as balance was maintained between the bourgeoisie, supported by the Crown, and the aristocracy. But all possibilities vanished when, shortly before the progressive dynasty of Avis came to power in Portugal, a setback took place in Castile: the assassination of Peter I, in 1368, by Henry of Trastamara, his bastard brother who had allied himself with France. Peter I had pursued a vigorous anti-aristocratic policy with the support of the groups that shared with him the same enemies. The Trastamara dynasty, on the other hand, served the interests of the aristocracy and allowed the feudal system to be fully restored. New and repeated gifts to the lords depleted the royal treasury and gave over to them a number of royal cities.

This was a serious setback, because it further dislocated the political life of Castile, a kingdom that was forced to juggle two separate economies, both of them probably in crisis. The Trastamaras had no economic vision and were as out of step and myopic as the aristocracy, which did not understand the new mercantile world and refused to step aside or make room for the bourgeoisie, who, no doubt, understood it better. In 1438, at the *Cortes* of Madrigal, the bourgeoisie proved that it had a clear grasp of the situation and of the mechanisms that controlled it at the time. But stepping aside meant giving up a certain amount of power, and that was something that the aristocracy of the period was not willing to do. With the exception of the very modest venture on the Canary Islands, every possibility for such an opening was foreclosed by concerns about the Muslim presence in Granada and by conflicts among different aristocratic groups, dynastic disputes and the civil and international wars they unleashed.

In turn, the eastern states had made much progress since 1137, when Aragon had been joined with Catalonia under Ramon Berenguer IV. The community of interests of their feudal-bourgeois alliance

had encouraged the aggressive moves of the Catalan bourgeoisie in the Mediterranean, which led to major territorial and mercantile enterprises: the conquest of the Balearic Islands between 1229 and 1235, the Conquest of Valencia in 1238, the occupation of Elche and Alicante in 1266. All these were regions that offered land to the feudal lords and that became part of the ever growing area of commercial activities controlled by Barcelona. The advance of the bourgeoisie did not stop here. At the end of the thirteenth century, Peter III took possession of the Kingdom of Sicily. Shortly after that, the Almogávares moved into the Eastern Mediterranean and formed separate states to which Peter IV of Aragon granted sovereignty. While the issue of the royal occupation of Corsica and Sardinia was still being debated, Alphonse V conquered the Kingdom of Naples in 1432. A tight mercantile network expanded through the western Mediterranean. It was the golden age of Barcelona's bourgeoisie, since it was Barcelona that benefited the most from increased trade within an area under its control. As its economic power and its internal and international prestige continued to rise, the Barcelonan bourgeoisie sought to increase the autonomy it enjoyed within the political system of the Crown of Aragon. And when Alphonse V died in 1458, the bourgeoisie began to think about the independence of the Principality of Catalonia. This was, in fact, an attempt to dissolve the alliance, established by Ramon Berenguer three centuries earlier, between the maritime cities and the kingdom that constituted their hinterland, an attempt, that is, to dissolve the feudal-bourgeois alliance which was the political and economic base of society under the Crown of Aragon. Catalonia—mainly Barcelona—headed the separatist uprising of 1462. But the feudal-bourgeois society was too much a part of the entire structure—both territorial and mercantile—of the Kingdom, and it resisted the secession attempt. When the revolt was finally brought to an end in 1472, the alliance was reestablished, or better still, the alliance was now fully acknowledged as an irreversible fact in the Kingdom of Aragon. The political and economic system that the alliance made possible grew stronger at the end of the fifteenth century with Ferdinand's campaign to reunify Naples.

The union of Castile and Aragon, sealed by the marriage of Isabella and Ferdinand in 1469, promised to be the beginning of a new era. With the experience of the last civil wars in both kingdoms still very much alive, Isabella and Ferdinand managed to curb the inclination of the aristocracy to revolt. At the same time, they gave legal status to the bourgeoisies and offered them guarantees that encouraged their development. The Crown also mounted a final and decisive offensive against Granada, the last Muslim kingdom that still remained on the Iberian Peninsula. In 1492, the Muslims were vanquished and the territory of Granada was annexed to Castile. During the war, the Spanish high command had been housed in Granada at the camp of Santa Fe. The agreements that authorized Christopher Columbus to embark on his trans-Atlantic voyage were signed at that same camp. And shortly after that, in accordance with the wishes of Queen Isabella, Cardinal Cisneros began the conquest of the Maghreb with the taking of Orán.

The Castilian aristocracy that had been ruthlessly forced to give in and that had finally turned to the

court of Ferdinand and Isabella to obtain their favors was not the same aristocracy that had supported the Trastamaras and their restoration of feudalism, or that had opposed and in the end defeated the attempts by Alvaro de Luna to centralize power, or that had even resisted, at the beginning, the Catholic Monarchs. It was, to be exact, an aristocracy that had been politically defeated, but that retained still much of its social and economic power. It retained, above all, its prestige as the highest layer of society; and that prestige could not be undermined by the rise of new mercantile groups nor could it be changed by new forms of wealth. Although it was politically subjected to royal power, the aristocracy continued to prevail when the monarchy realigned the forces that supported it, precisely because it set limits to the ambitions of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, in turn, was dealt a heavy blow when the monarchy expelled the Jews and dismantled the entire system of connections between Spain and the mercantile and financial network of the rest of Europe.

The Castilian bourgeoisie had yet to contend with its rivals in Flanders and Germany, where they were protected by the alliance between the Catholic Monarchs and the Habsburg. But by then it had become perfectly clear that the bourgeoisie could not contend with the Castilian aristocracy. With its overwhelming presence, particularly enhanced by the Reconquest, this aristocracy had pushed into the rural areas vast social groups that, under different circumstances, would have been inclined to engage in mercantile and industrial activities and would have thus strengthened them. These were the groups of *caballeros villanos (*citizens knights), who had been in charge of municipal government in Castile for quite a long time. The prestige of the aristocracy trickled down to its lowest ranks—to the *hidalgos*, and also to those who managed to become *hidalgos*, and even to those who passed themselves off as *hidalgos*. This was precisely the group that seemed to find no real place or promise within the social and economic structure of Spain at the time. After the conquest of Granada, few royal favors were bestowed upon the lesser *hidalgos* of Extremadura, Castile, Leon or even Andalusia. The great noble families had set eyes on Granada with their insatiable hunger for power, which the Crown would somewhat tame by offering them wealth instead. But perhaps Queen Isabella had the lesser nobility in mind when she designed Spain's program of expansion to Maghreb, which she entrusted to Cisneros. And perhaps she also had in mind the lower urban and rural classes, which were crowded together within an economic structure that was rigid and offered no way out.

The support for the project of a trans-oceanic expedition was part of the same line of thought. The economic and social successes of the Portuguese were a serious concern for the Spanish monarchy. But the monarchy was also troubled by the social and economic problems that had arisen, especially in Castile, after the final recovery of the entire territory of Spain. It was a difficult time for the economy, both in the Atlantic area and in that of the Mediterranean. The underprivileged classes—even some of the nominally privileged—had no access to land, which was entirely under

the monopoly of the great families. Industry and commerce offered few prospects for the Spanish bourgeoisies in the Mediterranean world, which was being closed off to them, or in the world of the Atlantic, which for centuries had been regulated by ironclad rules and was then even more so. Once again, the expansion beyond its own margins seemed to be the only solution, and Spain found it, as would Portugal later on, at a crucial moment in its development.

The Latin expression—*milites et rustici* (soldiers and peasants)—was used in the Middle Ages to refer to the two rigid classes or states in which medieval societies were divided.

The term *burguesia* is more commonly used in Spanish than its English equivalent (*bourgeoisie*). The expression *middle* class is used in this translation concurrently with *bourgeoisie* whenever *burguesía* appears in the original text.

The *Almogávares* were Catalonian mercenaries who, under Roger de la Flor, joined the army of Emperor Andronicus II (1258-1332) in his fight against the Turks.

CHAPTER 2: THE CYCLE OF FOUNDATIONS

Once the Spaniards and, after them, the Portuguese had reached the American shores and surveyed the coastline, they began to settle the territory. Starting with the establishment of La Isabella on Hispaniola in 1493, the process continued through the sixteenth century with the foundation of a large number of cities. These foundations were, from the very beginning, highly formalized political acts. They all had the same institutional frame, based on a unified set of laws, on long-standing custom, and on practical prescriptions for similar if not identical situations. Initially, then, the urban experience was similar everywhere, as similar as the texts of the foundation charters or the first institutional acts parceling out plots of land or establishing local governments (*cabildos*). Indeed, one of the most important aspects of urban development in Latin America is the fact that every city and every urban process, identical to all the others at the start, became with time uniquely different. That initial similarity is fundamental to explaining the conflicts that arose between the conditions that were imposed at first and the needs and possibilities that later developed in each individual place and circumstance.

Clearly, the American territory and its peoples impressed certain characteristics first on the occupation and then on the colonization that followed. Distances, geography, the startling new flora and fauna, climatic idiosyncrasies, and, above all, the unexpected character of aboriginal cultures surprised the *conquistadores* (conquerors) and to some extent dictated their conduct: it was precisely these two sides of the process that made it so unique.

The greatest surprise for the *conquistadores* was, no doubt, the discovery of the tropics. Not all of America was tropical; neither was all of Asia or Africa. But the *conquistadores* were obsessed with the tropics, which they viewed as a world complementary to that of temperate Europe. Tropical products had reached the Mediterranean, but for a long time the Europeans had been unable to discover their source; once they stumbled upon the tropical regions of Africa, America and Asia, they identifies the colonial world with *tropicalismo*. Thus the old image of the Orient was transformed into an image of the world of the tropics. There the *conquistadores* became acquainted with a nature that was surprisingly lush and humid. But they also came into direct contact with a world made on a different scale from the one they knew. Their view of things and their reactions were shaped by the magnitude of those rivers, mountains, lakes, islands, and jungles and by the experience of the immense distances they had to travel to reach their destinations. Perhaps this is why the European colonist came into being as a new kind of man, one who carried to the extreme some of the attitudes typical of those men who had taken part in the Crusades. And for many or them, the European world began to seem too narrow and dull.

However, the process had other traits as well. Those who took on the mission of settling the territory established within it cities that would serve as points of relay. But for a long time, these first settlers had no clear idea of what their concrete aim should be. They took whatever they found within arm's reach, be it brazilwood or gold. Thus their initial attitude was vastly different from the one they had to adopt once they discovered that the real riches required organized labor: planting and then processing sugarcane, cattle-raising, or mining. For a long time, the initial attitude seemed sufficient for the adventurer who came to America with the idea of amassing a quick fortune and then returning home. It took a considerable effort to transform this attitude into that of the entrepreneur who knows he has to produce the riches he wants to take home. But it did not take too much time to make the adjustment, although the two attitudes remained obscurely mixed in the mind of the European colonist, who no longer knew with any certainty whether he was a European man or a man of the New World.

Perhaps the one thing that most confirmed his European identity for the colonist was the nature of the native American people and their culture, so profoundly alien to him. Mastering the native populations was a task that could be accomplished in more than one way, and the colonists had to choose a course of action: either subjugate them so that they would provide the labor needed to

produce wealth, or protect them and convert them; or perhaps the two courses at once, combined and justified with arguments that ultimately would seem valid. But in any case, no European ever doubted that he was a conqueror, with all the right that victory granted him. Here it was a victory over infidels, not unlike the previous ones over the Muslims. Thus the early city of the Indies was European, in the middle of a world populated by other peoples and other cultures. This is how the *conquistador* grew entirely certain that his was an all-out war. The groups of settlers who were taking possession of the land had traveled unknown routes and had severed contact with their rear guard. Since they had burned all their ships, their only possible strategy was that of a desperate fight to the end. This explains the kind of power they instituted, after the battles had been won, in the bastion that paid homage to their victories: the fortified city.

The *conquistadores* took total possession of the territory. Legal and theological foundations for the takeover were built upon a mountain of arguments, but the *conquistadores* had their own grounds which, for them, were indisputable, because those grounds had their origin in an act of will and were, in their view, sacred. They took possession of the land upon which they had actually set foot, and there they built their city. But in addition to the known territory, they took symbolic possession of all the unknown ones and divided them up before they ever saw them, indifferent to the mistakes in hundreds of leagues that they might make as they apportioned an imagined land. Thus, jurisdictions were established by law before they could possibly be set up in fact. And although the establishment was always both formal and real, the formal aspects far exceeded the real ones.

All this made the city the center of the colonizing process. From the city—already built or still merely planned—everything that had only an imaginary existence would be transformed into fact.

The Cities and Their Original Functions

Beginning with Fort Navidad and La Isabella, the many cities founded by Spanish and Portuguese *conquistadores* were centers where they concentrated all the resources needed to face their internal contests for power as well as their ethnic and cultural confrontations with the native peoples in the conquered lands and in those yet to be conquered. The cities were legal and physical structures that had been thought out in Europe and were then transplanted into the virtually unknown soil of America. Pedro Mártir of Anghiera called those cities “colonies” because they seemed to be mere Spanish outposts. At the time they were founded, the cities were given a function, or to be more precise, they were founded in order to serve a pre-established function; they all began by performing that function, even though they might later become very different from one another.

In most cases, Latin American cities began as forts. This was inevitable, because each *conquistador* had to contend not only with forbidding and unimagined natural obstacles but also with the hostility of the Indian populations and with other *conquistadores* in the struggle for the possession of certain disputed regions. At the closing of his *Cuarta Década*, Pedro Mártir somberly states, "I will say it in just a few words, because all this is so unrelentingly horrible. Since my *Décadas* were completed, there has been nothing but killing and dying, murdering and being murdered."

Thus the first cities were forts. In his letter of 1520 to the Emperor, Hernán Cortés wrote, "I left in Veracruz 150 foot soldiers and two cavalrymen, building a fortress that is now almost finished." Ulrich Schmidl spoke in similar terms about the first foundation of Buenos Aires in 1536, and so did Ruy Díaz de Guzmán about the establishment of Asunción in 1537. But the most eloquent testimony by far is that of Pedro de Valdivia in a letter written to the Emperor in 1545:

I decided to shelter an area of about 1600 square feet with a wall approximately eight feet high; the wall was made of 200,000 adobe bricks, each one yard in length and a palm in height, which Your Majesty's servants and I, our weapons on our backs, fashioned with our own hands, working from start to finish without a single break. And whenever we heard the Indians' cries, the lower ranks and bearers would run to that shelter, where the food was kept under guard. The foot soldiers would stay to defend the fortress, and the horsemen would go with me into the countryside to fight the Indians and defend our farmland.

Martín Alonso de Sousa also built forts in São Vicente and in Rio de Janeiro in 1532; in Recife, where the French had already built a fort, the Portuguese built yet another; the same was done in Olinda and in Salvador de Bahia, and later in Montevideo.

The fortified city was the first Hispanic-American experience. Behind its walls gathered a group of armed men who had to make war in order to occupy the land and extract the riches they assumed were hidden within it. They needed the Indians as mediators, both to obtain food in the midst of an unknown nature and to find the key to secret treasures: the pearls off the Venezuelan coastline, the gold and the silver which, before being discovered in large amounts, were found in amounts sufficient to whet the appetite of the *conquistadores*. But these *conquistadores* needed to keep the Indians under control, or better still, they needed to keep the Indians at once subdued and well-disposed. It was out of this duplicity that the policy of acculturation and *mestizaje* (mixing of the two races) was born; the fortified city was the first instrument of that policy. This is how all these cities came into being, first among them Fort Navidad. Next came the frontier cities like Valdivia, Concepción and La Serena in Chile, Santa Cruz and Tarija in Bolivia, and after that the outpost cities and those that followed the founding of Nueva Cádiz and Coro in Venezuela and of Barbacoa and

Bayamo in Cuba. Countless Latin American cities have a fort at their origin.

Other Latin American cities began as connecting ports. They functioned as mercantile bastions, and sometimes they served also as markets, thus becoming trade centers. As points of arrival and departure for the fleets of the mother country, these cities were built on natural ports, sometimes without considering whether the site itself could sustain a permanent population. Santo Domingo, Portobelo, Havana, Panama, Veracruz, Cartagena, Salvador de Bahia, and Recife were all founded to accommodate the fleets. The economic policy of the Crown recognized the growing importance of certain ports and gave them a crucial role in the maritime traffic with the metropolis. This was the case with Portobelo and Veracruz after the regular routes of fleets and galleons were charted. The same happened with Acapulco, which handled all the traffic with the Philippines; with Panama and El Callao, which were the two terminals for shipping along the Pacific the silver that was then to be loaded and shipped across the Atlantic; and with Salvador de Bahia and Recife, which were the shipping ports for sugar. Trade functions were concentrated only in certain ports to secure monopoly and, above all, fiscal control. The concentration of trade functions prompted the development of these ports, which were provided with a military structure of defense and gathered ship repair businesses, merchant groups, government offices, and of course all the groups of population that urban centers of that nature would always attract.

These seaports were bustling with life because they offered so many and varied activities and opportunities; they were also prosperous because of the massive wealth they gathered. It was inevitable that these cities should attract the attention of pirates and corsairs. Many cities suffered their attacks—San Juan de Puerto Rico, Panama City, Santiago de Cuba, Havana—and some were even destroyed by them. To avoid that danger, they were walled in and, in some cases, protected by the construction of a castle or *morro* (citadel). Cartagena de Indias still preserves its powerful wall and fortifications, and the citadels of Havana and San Juan de Puerto Rico are still standing. To lie in watch of the Caribbean cities, pirates created their own dens in the desert islands. For this reason, the port cities became centers of intense military activity, and, whenever they felt threatened by a possible attack, they mobilized their entire population.

Some ports acquired a rather different profile. The monopoly of trade prompted the creation of a parallel black market. After its second foundation in 1580, Buenos Aires became a lesser port, economically inferior to those authorized to receive shipments from Europe. Such shipments came to Buenos Aires only by way of Portobelo or Lima. As a consequence, there emerged an intense and very methodical system of contraband which had its centers of operation in the Portuguese colonies. Contraband made Buenos Aires survive and prosper. In fact, the city itself had come into existence because the regions in the interior of the southern part of the continent were looking for a way to the sea that would free them from their dependence on the ports on the Pacific. Buenos

Aires was a “gateway to the land,” on a direct line with Spain across the Atlantic. And as a port, Buenos Aires came in the end to perform the same function as the ports that the metropolis had established in the Caribbean and along the Pacific coast.

Some Latin American cities were originally just a station along the way, a place where people and products could be regrouped to continue their journey to more remote or dangerous regions. A typical case was Puebla de los Angeles, in México, founded in 1531. The second *Audiencia* established Puebla to serve as a safe waystation on the journey between the port of Veracruz and México City. Tlaxcala and Cholula, two major Indian cities along that same route, also served the same function. Even more significant was the case of Asunción, founded in 1537 by Juan de Salazar at a place selected—according to Ruy Díaz de Guzmán— “because it seemed to him to be a good port and station for navigating the river.” There gathered those bound from the Río de la Plata to what they imagined would be a mining region. There also came the survivors of the expedition of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, after their fabled march from the shore of the Gulf of Santa Catalina across Brazil. And in the times of Alvar Núñez and Irala, it was from Asuncion that expeditions like that of Juan de Ayolas repeatedly tried to open up a route to Perú. All these attempts failed. But the future of Asunción was decided by new settlers who gradually occupied the surrounding areas and established close relations with the Guarani Indians. And so, from a stronghold and waystation city, Asuncion eventually became a city proper in 1541, by a decision of the population that had settled there. The cities founded in what is now Argentine territory, along the north-south valleys of the Andean mountains, such as Jujuy, Salta, Londres (later called Catamarca), La Rioja, San Juan, and Mendoza, or those laid out along the way from Alto Perú to the Río de la Plata, such as Salta, Tucumán, Santiago del Estero, and Córdoba, were established in much the same way as Asunción.

The long distances and the Indian's hostility made it necessary to found these cities. Speaking about Loja in Ecuador, Cieza de León says, “The site of the city is the best and most advantageous that could be found, as it is a region inside the province; and as said before, this city was founded because the Spaniards who were traveling the royal road to Quito and elsewhere were in danger of being attacked by the Carrochamba and Chaparra Indians.” The quality of the site was measured by several factors. A high and easily defensible position in the mountainous regions—a position like those where the Incas had established their own small forts—might be selected. Yet other factors might decide which site was chosen. A ford or a bridge was a good place, as was a watershed or crossroads. At such a favorable site—which was the only appropriate site—a chapel might be erected, or an inn for getting fresh horses and refreshments. Around that small nucleus the city developed: first as a hamlet, then as a village.

In some cases, the Latin American city was built upon the site of an Indian city. A few of these were considerably large cities, and two of them—México City and Cuzco—made vivid impressions upon

the Spaniards. “It is a city as big as Seville or Cordoba,” wrote Hernán Cortés about Tenochtitlan. And he added, “it has another plaza that is twice the size of Salamanca, completely surrounded by arcades. Every day there are some 60,000 people there to buy and sell.” Although his description is full of admiration and awe, he nevertheless destroyed the city. In its place another city was built, this one in the European style. The new México City was laid out in quadrilateral form; the site chosen for the Christian church was approximately where the Indian temple had once stood. The foundation of the fort was laid; the land was divided up, and little by little the new buildings began to go up, made from the same stone used to erect the enormous Aztec buildings. Work began in 1523, on orders from Cortés.

In Perú, according to Cieza de León, “Nowhere was there a city as beautiful as Cuzco, which was the seat of the Inca Empire and of its royalty.” The opulent, Indian city astonished the *conquistadores*. “It had to have been built by a great people,” writes Cieza de León. He described it as follows:

There were splendid streets, except that they were very narrow. There were houses built of solid stone; the massive building blocks were perfectly pieced together, and the joints or couplings, which showed how old the buildings were, were beautifully done. The other houses were made of wood and straw or mud, because tile, masonry, or lime were nowhere in evidence. Located in several places in the city were residences of the Inca kings where the successor to their throne held his celebrations. There was also the magnificent temple of the sun, which they called Coricancha, one of the richest in gold and silver in the entire world.

But the city suffered the devastation wrought by war, and, as Cieza writes, “Don Francisco Pizarro, Governor and Captain General of these kingdoms in the name of Emperor Carlos, rebuilt it and refounded it in October of the year 1534.”

Unlike what happened in Tenochtitlan, Spanish Cuzco retained much of the Indian city, and as happened in México City, the traditional significance of certain places survived. The cathedral was built upon the ruins of the temple of Viracocha, out of the very blocks that had been used to construct the temple; the grounds that had once been the site of the palace of Guaina Capac were the place the Jesuits chose to build their church. Both were on the edge of the Plaza Mayor, which had been the main square of the old Inca city as well.

Besides México City and Cuzco, other Latin American cities were built upon sites of small Indian communities situated in advantageous locations; these included Cholula, Bogotá, Quito, Huamanga, Chuquisaca, Mendoza, and to some extent São Paulo in Brazil. But almost nothing remained of the former Indian village, and little by little the symmetry of the European city and its buildings would

completely cover over what had once been an indigenous community. Other places would emerge or, like Piura in Perú, carry on as indigenous suburbs. Occasionally the marketplace survived; in any case, the site retained its attraction and, with it, a certain social interdependence that helped define the city's makeup as an amalgam of Spanish, *mestizo*, and Indian communities.

The intense attraction exerted by the mining areas triggered the emergence of a Latin American city of an altogether different type. The lure of mining brought about the establishment of Taxco and Guanajuato in México and Vila Rica in Brazil. But Potosi was unquestionably the most typical of this kind of city.

Founded in 1545, shortly after the discovery of the Cerro Rico, within eighty years Potosi had "4,000 Spanish homes, and always between 4,000 and 5,000 men." Thus says the author of *Descripción del Perú*, attributed to a "Portuguese Jew" and written in the early seventeenth century. The author adds: "Some engage in mining, while others market their wares throughout the kingdom; others make and sell food and the wax candles used every day in the mines. Still others live by their wits and their gambling, and by being bold." The description continues: "Over 40,000 Indians live around the town in straw huts. The provincial governors (*corregidores*) issue the orders that force the Indians to work in the mines, and their chiefs bring them there. And thus they submit to the *mita* (forced labor in the mines), and come to work, some traveling over 150 leagues."

Shortly after the founding of the city, Cieza de León pointed out the importance of Potosi's market: the "commerce was so great that when the mines were prosperous, among Indians alone—not counting Christians—between 25,000 and 30,000 gold pesos changed hands each day; there were even days when 40,000 gold pesos in business was done; it was a strange thing, and I do not believe that there is any market in the world that can rival it for business."

The city of Vila Rica de Albuquerque, now called Ouro Preto, was another typical mining city. It was founded, in 1711, because of "the riches promised by the mines in its hills and streams promised and because these mines are important sources of trade and wealth." Three years after it was founded, the city, lead by its governor, Antonio de Albuquerque, was already able to pave its streets and build bridges, erect public buildings, and ensure a water supply. By then, Vila Rica was already contributing six *arrobas* of gold per year to the Royal Treasury.

As a rule, the growth of these mining cities paralleled the growth of the mining operations, because the only advantage of their sites was their proximity to the mines. But as the mines prospered, they helped create centers of attraction that left, as a lasting reminder, the physical structure of a large and rich city and a system of human interests that refused to fade away.

As a military and political center, the Latin American city was often an institution, that is, the physical expression of a legal and political situation. The *conquistador*, who had been given certain territorial rights in the form of a charter or grant, was required to take possession of his territory. But that territory was often unknown, and its description and even its size were purely hypothetical. Once on the land, the colonizer had to translate that hypothesis into reality. To claim the land, some event was needed; generally that event was the founding of a city. Most Latin American cities of the sixteenth century were, in some sense, founded as a necessary response to these circumstances. The first such case was Santo Domingo, established in 1496; then came other cities founded by the Spaniards on Hispaniola and Cuba in the early decades of the sixteenth century, and those established by the Portuguese along the Brazilian coast, beginning with São Vicente in 1532.

But the necessary response to circumstances was most evident in regions where jurisdictional disputes emerged. Perhaps the most typical case is that of Santa Fe de Bogotá, founded in 1538 by Jiménez de Quesada and refounded the following year in the presence of the three *conquistadores*, Quesada, Benalcázar, and Federman, who had happened to arrive on the savannah at the same time. Several cities in the interior of what is today Argentina were founded under similar circumstances. Men directly answerable to the government in Lima and those who took orders directly from Pedro de Valdivia, the governor of Chile, competed for the northwest region. The first group founded the city of Barco, but the second ordered that it be abandoned and in 1553 founded within its jurisdiction the city of Santiago del Estero. Still more remarkable was the case of Mendoza, which García Hurtado de Mendoza, Governor of Chile, ordered established in 1551 to carry on his name when he learned that he was about to be replaced by a rival. One year later, his successor, Francisco de Villagra, ordered Juan Jufré to found the city again, "since that settlement"—as the Charter of the second founding reads—"was unfit in parts for the good and increase and preservation of the dwellings and the population, because they are within a valley and do not get the winds that are necessary for the health of those who live and shall live there." The first city was just beginning to be built when the second one was baptized City of the Resurrection. Villagra ordered that:

all official documents and testaments, and all those that usually bear the day, month, and year shall show that name and none other, and anyone violating this order shall be subject to the penalty prescribed for those who put on public documents the names of cities that are not settled in the name of His Majesty or subject to his royal dominion.

This act consolidated the jurisdiction of the governor of Chile over the trans-Andean region known as Cuyo.

In some regions of Latin America, the Indian villages were as important as the European-style cities. Some of the old, native settlements were to some extent incorporated into the new colonial system. But new Indian communities began to emerge, organized from the start within the European system. This was especially true in the case of the missions and *reducciones* that the various religious orders established.

In México City, Bishop Vasco de Quiroga developed a unique plan to protect the Indian population. To prevent them from being exploited and exterminated, he organized a group of communities in Michoacan, inspired by ideas he drew from Erasmus and Thomas More and based on his own observations of the social and cultural patterns of the Indians. In the beginning, they were hospitals and shelters, but they quickly became villages. One of them, founded by Viceroy Mendoza, was the city of Valladolid, today called Morelia. Organized according to their own traditions and engaged in their particular crafts and labor, the Indians nevertheless formed urban centers that fit the colonial pattern. Their work habits did not change, but their dependency and their forced exposure to Christian teachings slowly led the Indians toward gradual integration with Spanish groups or, more precisely, toward a quiet acceptance of their subjection.

The Dominican, Capuchin, Mercedarian, and, above all, Franciscan and Jesuit missions were all similar in this respect. The Franciscan missions were the largest and best organized, with a very well-defined system of political, socio-economic, and spiritual ideas. There were major experiments in several places: México, Colombia and Venezuela, Perú and Brazil. But those founded in Moxos and Chiquitos and in Paraguay are particularly interesting. In Paraguay, thirty identical villages were established: a chessboard layout with a plaza at the center and the church, convent, cemetery, workshops, jail, and town hall all arranged around it. The inhabitants—as many as 3,000— engaged in agriculture and lived a carefully regulated life within their villages, but they also lived in complete isolation. In the meantime, the Indian *reducciones* often served as the basis for new communities. This happened in the case of Quilmes, south of Buenos Aires, which was populated by an Indian group that had been transplanted from the Calchaqui valleys in 1669, once their terrifying insurrection was suppressed. The cities of Itatí, Jesus María, Río Cuarto, and Baradero, all in Argentina, came into being in much the same way.

In Brazil, the most notable case of a mission becoming a great city was undoubtedly that of São Paulo. The mission was established in 1554 by the Jesuits, under Father Manuel de Nobrega, the Brazilian provincial headquartered in São Vicente. Father Jose de Anchieta quickly became the most prominent of the thirteen priests assigned to the mission. These priests set themselves up in the Indian village of Piratininga, and the followers of Tebiriça and Caiubi, *caciques* (chieftans) of the Guayanazi, came to live in the village. “Following the example of those two famous Indians, so many came from the interior that the village was unable to accommodate them all”.

At the center of the new mission were the Jesuit school and the church, around which the Indian huts were built. Two years after its founding, new adobe buildings were replacing the original, rudimentary school and church; some adobe houses began to appear as well, while walls and stockades were built to protect the new population. Not long thereafter, people of many types began to gravitate to São Paulo. The so-called *bandeirantes* made the city their base of operations for hunting Indians, most of whom they then sold as slaves; São Paulo thus became a major market for "red slaves." Businessmen like Jorge Moreira and the Sardinha amassed an enormous fortune from enterprises of every type. They were the ones who controlled the *Camara*, the municipal governmental body that began to function in São Paulo around 1560.

The Original Urban Groups

The physical establishment of cities was a decisive factor in the European *conquistadores*' occupation of the American territory. This was true not just for each city's immediate surroundings, but also for the entire territory, since cities formed an urban network orchestrated by the central authority in the mother country. The system of communication among these cities drew together a continent that had until then consisted of regions that were not in contact. But the settlement of the land was, of course, a consequence of the founding of cities, and this posed new problems, since a new society and a new economic project began to take shape in the land.

The socio-economic problem created by the founding of Latin American cities was attributable to two factors: the original situation of the *conquistadores*, and the emerging prospects of the new scene where the original urban group was beginning to operate. This was the crux of the new situation: if the city was the center of the territorial occupation, the original urban group was the center of city life and of the impact it would have on its surroundings. The men with whom the city founder surrounded himself were not necessarily a homogeneous group, or at least they would not have been homogeneous in their native country. But circumstances in their new environment made them a unified group, with the members bonding to cope with a common situation. Perhaps the group might behave as if it were homogeneous, but each of its members had his own history, his own tradition and, above all, a lingering notion of his place in the society from which he came.

Some texts illustrate the problem. In the late sixteenth century, the cosmographer and chronicler of the Indians Juan López de Velazco wrote in his *Geografía y descripción de las Indias* about the Spaniards who came to the Indies:

The Spaniards in those provinces could be many more than they are if all who want to go were

permitted to do so; but the problem is that most often the men who are inclined to pass to those kingdoms are the enemies of work; their spirit is bellicose; their burning desire is to get rich quickly rather than to set down roots; they are not content to have enough food and clothing, which no one, with a bit of diligence, may fail to get in those parts, whether he be a workman or a farmhand or a man without any skill. And so, forgetting who they are, they set their aim real high and roam around as idle vagabonds in search of some official post or grant; thus they are viewed as a great impediment to the peace and quiet of the land. This is why permits are issued to the least number possible, especially to go to Perú, where this kind of people have spelled serious trouble, as demonstrated by the riots and turmoil in those provinces. And so, only those who have some official post there are allowed to go, with a limited number of their servants, and also those who will engage in war or in new discoveries, as well as merchants and traders, who are licensed by the officials in Seville for a period of two or three years, and this at a considerable expense on their part. No foreigner to this kingdom is allowed to pass to the Indies, nor can the Portuguese reside or do business there, nor, from within this kingdom, are allowed to leave those who descend from Jews or Moors, nor those convicted by the Holy Inquisition, nor those who are married but would go without their wives, with the exception of merchants and men who will stay for a short time, nor those who have been friars, nor Berber or Levantine slaves, with the exception of those from Monicongo o Guinea. And, in spite of this prohibition and the zeal with which it is enforced so that no one should leave without permit, many manage to go to all those parts under the guise of merchants or seamen.

In recounting what had happened, in 1735, Antonio de Ulloa and Jorge Juan summarized their observations of the original groups in their *Noticias Secretas* (*Secret News*):

The Europeans and the inexperienced Spanish soldiers who come to those cities are, as a rule, of low birth or unknown origin in Spain, uneducated, and with little to recommend them. . . . Since legitimately white families are rare there, because only the most distinguished ones enjoy that privilege, accidental whiteness earns the place that should be reserved for the highest qualities. Just by being European and nothing more, they judge themselves worthy of the same favor and respect given to other, more distinguished people who go there with posts, whose honor should set them apart from the common lot.

These texts corroborate the image that the chroniclers give of the original urban groups. Predominant in those groups were people of humble origin: adventurers who were greedy and anxious to get rich. America was, in essence, an opportunity for those who wanted to move up economically and socially. Those with neither property nor title were looking for both in the New World, an attitude antithetical to the idea of settling down permanently and working methodically and continually. For the newly arrived, success in the American continent meant achieving a social

position analogous to that enjoyed by the lesser nobility at home, a position that had to be based on easily acquired wealth amassed by using the large, suppressed Indian population. As the process of colonization progressed, Spain and Portugal tried to dissuade adventurers of this type from going to the Indies and encouraged artisans and merchants instead. But this policy had no success; even those occupations were performed by people whose ambitions prompted them to uproot themselves from homeland. Only a handful of genuine *hidalgos* went to America. Adventurism helped shape the mentality of the original urban group.

This group was invariably small. As settlement progressed, they established themselves in one place, and began trying to reap the promised benefits of conquest. The founder had selected the members of the group with the idea that they would settle within the city limits, but only a few remained there. When the city was founded, they were given plots of land within the city which boundaries had barely been drawn. There they would build their houses, and from there they would administer their farmland or mines using the Indian work force granted to them by *encomienda*. If they received neither land nor an *encomienda*, they had to perform some public function or perhaps practice some trade or business, usually through the physical labor of the Indians.

Such were, generally speaking, the opportunities open to the new settlers. The important point is that the privileges they enjoyed had been recognized and confirmed. That group constituted the group of the *vecinos*, the ones who had all the rights. These rights and privileges referred primarily to prospects and possibilities for some kind of economic profit.

Miners, cattlemen, planters, refinery owners, slave traders, and large-scale businessmen involved in the export of local products quickly became the founding urban aristocracy. These colonial aristocrats also included members of the Church hierarchy and government officials, some of whom had been *hidalgos* and noblemen back on the Iberian Peninsula. These people were the center of a very diverse group of settlers performing other functions. Major cities like México City or Lima required many craft men or, as López de Velazco said, “mechanical trades.” Dealers or small-scale businessmen also appeared, as did middle- and lower-level public servants. Soon after, the cities incorporated Indians who came voluntarily, and those who seemed to succeed as domestics and in other modest functions of urban life.

The Foundational Act

Cities were the tools used to settle territories and create a new society within those territories. When the early Latin American cities were founded, all the formalities were observed. Later, other cities

would spontaneously appear, the product of some internally-driven process, but the first wave of foundations was externally driven by the design of the *conquistadores*. A city's founding was a political act; the formalities were repeated many times over. A small army of Spaniards or Portuguese under the command of an individual who had, at least formally, absolute authority, and was usually accompanied by some Indians, would come upon a place; after carefully choosing a site, they would establish themselves there with the idea that a group would remain permanently. It was a political act that signified the intent—an intent backed by force—to settle the land and assert the right of the conqueror. And so the political act was completed by a symbolic gesture: the *conquistador* would uproot a few handfuls of grass, strike the ground three times with his sword, and finally challenge anyone who objected to the city's founding. The political act might have another purpose: to assert a *conquistador's* eminent domain when the terms of the *capitulaciones* (royal contracts) or donations were not altogether clear. But claiming the territory and subjugating the Indian population were always the paramount objectives.

This political act was carried out in several ways. The celebration of a mass (as in the case of Bogotá or São Paulo) or the enthronement of an image (like that of San Sebastián in Río de Janeiro) added a sacred element to the founding of the city. In the meantime, the city's charter was drafted "before the undersigned notary and witnesses." It was a carefully worded document with provisions and deed-like formalities. As a rule, the charter contained the regulations for municipal government "because by law such cities were to have not only governors and *justicias mayores (*superior justices), but also *alcaldes ordinarios* (mayors) to make and enforce the law, *regidores (*city councilmen) for the business of government, and other officials." Usually mapped out in advance, the physical construction of the city began with the pillory, the symbol of justice, placed at the center of what would become the main square.

The criterion used to select the sites in Brazil was not the one used in Spanish America. In Brazil, the preference was for high places that could easily be defended, while in Spanish America the preference was generally for flat sites. Accordingly, the layout of the cities differed. And while in Brazil there was some tendency toward a geometric, or at least a symmetrical city plan, the topography of the high sites dictated its own rules. As of 1580, when Portugal was united with the Spanish Crown, the symmetry that Spain dictated for its colonies would become more of a factor. In the Spanish-American cities, the layout was generally like a chessboard: square blocks with a plaza at the approximate center of the city plan. The main square was to be the heart of the city; around it the church, the fort or palace for the seat of government, and the *cabildo (*town council) would be built. Plots of land were reserved for the churches and convents of various orders, and the rest was divided evenly among the settlers.

An urban site required that a house be built, however modest at the beginning, like the cabins built

in Bogotá by the companions of Jiménez de Quesada. But over the course of time, those modest dwellings would be improved and eventually become adobe or stone buildings. A short distance away, the settler could also have a *chacra*, which was land for farming, and further out, beyond the city limits, a country estate (*hacienda* or *estancia*). Between the city limits and the surrounding rural area, the city founders set aside some space for possible expansion and common use, called the *rossio* or *ejido*, and some more space for municipal ownership, called *termo* in Brazil and *propio* in Spanish America. Once the city was founded, it still had to become a physical reality, and the time the process took varied from city to city.

In the meantime, several circumstances could alter the original plan. Religious orders or private citizens could change plots, and the empty spaces could be used for a variety of purposes. The main variation, however, was to change the site of the city itself, as frequently happened.

In fact, the founding was almost always improvised, on the basis of a rapid assessment of certain immediate advantages that the geographic locale had to offer: coastline, altitude, rivers, and, most important of all, water, wind, pasture, and kindling. As a rule, the city was established on poorly known territory, so there was no way to anticipate the various difficulties that might eventually be encountered. The city founders may always have thought that the founding of the city did not need to be permanent. The fact is that in many cities, experience counseled a change of site, which sometimes meant a change of geographic location. The transfer or removal was a curious phenomenon, since legally speaking the city was the same, for it preserved its name and remained within the same jurisdiction. Only time would tell whether the city would be the same one that was originally founded, with its functions intact.

In some cases, such as Veracruz, the city was moved twice; in other instances, uncertainty lasted still longer. Undoubtedly the most extraordinary case was the Spanish setting in the Catamarca valley in Argentina. Founded for the first time in 1558, four years after the marriage of Philip II and Mary Tudor, the city was called Londres. But it was moved repeatedly, so many times that in the early eighteenth century the chronicler Pedro Lozano described it as the “portable city of Londres, which never ceases to be moved from one place to another.” Father Lozano had used the same phrase in reference to the city of Concepción del Bermejo, founded by Alonso de Vera in 1585. Three months after its establishment, the founder himself wrote that he had received the power from the very authorities, whom he had just appointed, “to move this city to the most convenient location.” Such authority was also invoked to change the site of the Venezuelan city of Trujillo.

Many other cities moved. For the sake of greater security, Mendes de Sá moved Río de Janeiro from its original position to what was called the Fortress. Santo Domingo, founded by Bartolomé Colón in

1496, was destroyed by a hurricane and refounded on the other side of the Ozama river by Nicolás de Ovando in 1502. Santiago de Guatemala, founded in 1524 by Pedro de Alvarado, was destroyed by a flood in 1541 and rebuilt one league away from its original site. But that city was itself destroyed when a volcano erupted in 1717; it was abandoned and rebuilt again at the place where Guatemala City now stands. In 1519, Pedrarias Dávila founded Panama City on the Pacific coast. Strictly speaking, it should be regarded as a result of the transfer of Santa María la Antigua, founded by Enciso y Balboa around 1510, for Santa María la Antigua, despite the impulse of its governor, was abandoned once the seat of government was set up in Panama City. Thirty years later, Cieza de León noted that the city was unhealthy and that the site should have been changed. "But since the houses had been built at such expense, the city was not moved, though everyone knew they suffered greatly from living at such a terrible site." Despite the impulse of its founder, Santa María la Antigua was abandoned after the pirate Morgan destroyed the city in 1671, and the seat of government was moved to its present location in Panama City. Nombre de Dios was abandoned in 1596 to find a better site, and Portobelo was established very close by. San Juan de Puerto Rico and Quito were moved, as were for various reasons La Victoria, Mariquita, Huamanga (today called Ayacucho), Arequipa, Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Mendoza, and Buenos Aires, among others. Changing the site of a city was the equivalent of founding it again, since frequently the original population changed. In the case of Buenos Aires, the population was totally new, as 44 years separated the first and second foundings. With the new foundings, life began anew.

The Founding Mentality

Standing before the chosen site, with one hand clutching the grip of a sword, their gaze fixed upon the cross and their thoughts on the riches that the adventure would bring them, the men who founded a city—one that already had a name, but had not yet been built—must have experienced a strange sensation: the anticipation of magically creating something from nothing. They were Europeans on an unknown continent, and what they planned to create was already shaped in their minds. This episode was just one more phase in that bold adventure of expansion that the Europeans had embarked upon four centuries earlier. The land upon which they now stood—real land, with rivers and plains, lakes and volcanoes—had to become an extension of the land they had left in their wake the day they had embarked upon their ships.

The attitude of the founders presupposed the unquestionable truth of the doctrine that drove Christian Europe since the time it first began its expansion: that Christian Europe was the one true world in the midst of inferior worlds steeped in darkness. This ethnocentric notion was neither unique nor original. Certainly, the Muslims had believed just as strongly that theirs was the one true world and for its sake waged their holy war. Tracing its roots to the Roman Empire and emboldened

by the Christian faith, Europe learned from the Muslim example that it was entitled to force the notion of its own superiority upon inferior and obscure worlds. From the time of the Crusades, catechesis as spiritual message—as Raimundo Lulio perceived it in the thirteenth century—was replaced by the notion of a war against infidels, always waged under the banner of St. James the Apostle, killer of the Moors, later transformed into killer of the Indians. It was an all-out war: the war of good against evil. Those who embarked upon it did so in the certainty that they represented the good. "Temples of the Devil" is how the pious Motolinía described the buildings destroyed by the *conquistadores* in México.

The founding mentality was the mentality of European expansionism: its underlying premise was that Christian Europeans alone had an absolute monopoly on the truth, one that could not be challenged. Christian truth was not just religious faith; it was the ultimate expression of a cultural world. And when the *conquistador* acted in the name of that culture, he affirmed not only its ends and purposes but also the methods and techniques that bourgeois culture had added to old Christian-feudal tradition. With those techniques, good could triumph over evil: with a well-broken horse, a crossbow, the steel of the sword, armor, and strong ships able to navigate the high seas. The founding groups represented that cross-fertilization of the feudal and bourgeois worlds that, on the Iberian Peninsula, was restructuring relations among the classes and reordering the ends and means used to achieve them.

Steeped in the certainty of its "truth," the mentality of the European expansion had conceived a plan to harness the non-Christian world for its own ends, and it became more and more self-righteous as better means enhanced its possibilities: its greater technical superiority only reinforced the belief that its ends were the only valid ones. The presence of new "infidel" invaders in central and eastern Europe may have shaken the confidence of the Europeans in Christianity's supreme destiny. But it was only a momentary doubt. The Portuguese had already subjected the peoples of Africa and Asia, and their expansion to new regions added new products to their commerce; slave trade increased, as did the use of slaves for the economy of Portugal and of its colonies. The Spaniards, for their part, had conquered the last remaining vestiges of Muslim power in their own territory and considered themselves ready to expand beyond their borders into Muslim Africa, according to their first design, and later toward America, when they perceived the enormous prospects that the new territories had opened up. After their successful Re-conquest, the Spaniards were convinced that their new adventure would succeed.

In America, however, that expansionist mentality took on a new wrinkle. From 1492 until the discovery of the Mexican cultures thirty years later, the Spaniards and Portuguese found only small, primitive populations scattered over the vast territories they explored. Thus an image of the new lands took shape that would be of decisive importance from then on. America appeared as an

empty continent, without a people and without a culture. The vacuum was not complete: the *conquistadores* certainly found native inhabitants in the new continent, but in their view those inhabitants were so few and their level of civilization so primitive that they were deemed worthless. And as for culture, the prevailing sentiment was decidedly negative. This image of an empty continent, when coupled with the image of tropicalism, became a virtually indestructible stereotype, one that would last a long time, even after the higher cultures of the plateaus and temperate and frigid zones of the hemisphere were discovered.

The stereotype was grounded in the initial experience of the Europeans in the new lands; but it was sustained by inertia and reinforced by the plans of the *conquistadores*. America continued to be a tropical continent, because tropical products were the ones the *conquistadores* entertained in their imagination, along with the fantasy of gold and silver that only chance transformed into reality. And it continued to be an empty continent because what they discovered they discounted, given the notion of European Christianity as the only valid world. When the truth presented itself to the *conquistadores*, they either denied it or destroyed it. Tenochtitlan was a symbol. Dazzled by it, Cortés ruthlessly destroyed it. When awe of the native American cultures began to spread, Charles V banned any further inquiry into them. The empty continent was to remain empty after all.

This is what was so different about the founding mentality. What it founded, it founded upon a void; upon a nature about which nothing was known, upon a society that was annihilated, upon a culture that was taken as nonexistent. Cities were European islands in the midst of nothingness, and they were entrusted with zealously guarding the ways of life of the homelands, the Christian culture and Christian religion and, above all, the projects that the Europeans had crossed the sea to realize. A single idea sums up the founding mentality: to build, upon that nothingness, a new Europe.

Nova Lusitania, Nueva España, Nueva Toledo, Nueva Galicia, Nueva Granada, Nueva Castilla were regional names that betrayed that mentality, as did the names of new cities like Valladolid, Córdoba, León, Medellín, La Rioja, Valencia, Cartagena, Trujillo, Cuenca, and those that placed the name of some saint before the old indigenous name: Santiago, San Sebastián, São Paulo, San Antonio, San Marcos, San Juan, San Miguel, San Felipe. The *conquistador* contemplated the new landscape with a certain melancholy, and he rejoiced in finding some soft and gentle corner that would remind him of his homeland, as Gonzalo Suárez Rendón was reminded of the Valley of Granada when looking through the windows of his home in Tunja. The *conquistador* tried not only to attain the dignity that he would have wished to have in his homeland but also to surround himself with everything—furniture, utensils, clothing, paintings, statues—that would remind him of it. This personal attitude faithfully reflected the official mentality. It was not just for pleasure that the founders copied what they had left behind on the peninsula. They had been instructed to recreate the European political and administrative system, the bureaucratic routine, the architecture, the

religious ways of life, and civil ceremonies so that the new city could begin to function, as soon as possible, as if it were a European one, regardless of its surroundings, indifferent to the obscure, subordinate world upon which it had forced itself.

That certainty that there was nothing—neither society nor culture—in the new continent, or rather nothing worthwhile in the New World, was undoubtedly instrumental in setting the European city upon the unknown land; from that certainty the founders inferred that everything that they established and governed was destined to endure just as they had willed it and just as they had instituted it. They would never entertain the thought that the milieu—the indigenous flora and fauna, the native society and native culture—could turn against them, or that the subsumed and ignored elements might slowly and silently begin to make their way into their world.

Initially, cities did not have the significance in Brazil that they had from the very start in Spanish America. In Brazil, an agrarian society would shape reality until the eighteenth century, when the bourgeois and brokerage functions began to gain a foothold. But in Spanish America, as in Brazil since the eighteenth century, it was the city that, from its very founding, shaped the image of the surrounding reality and the functional model by which the founding group would operate. And to some extent, both in Brazil and in Spanish America, the city won an early victory, since it established what had to be created first: the areas of influence of the cities, the relations among cities, thanks to which urban networks were formed, and finally the very map of the New World, with its continental and maritime linkages, as it had never been drawn before the conquest.

The cycle in which the cities were founded is paralleled by the mapping of a New World that became increasingly interconnected and urban. During this period, a first colonial ideology was shaped by the urban world: it denied the reality of a socio-cultural world that unequivocally existed and proposed the creation of a new one modeled after the European metropolis. If that ideology endured and took on added meaning, it was because its model was modified and adapted to the new circumstances. Between the cracks in the Christian empire a new society took shape, one divided between conqueror and conquered. The conquerors constituted a fluid group of people who aspired to ascend economically and socially. In the midst of an unprecedented situation, the founders shaped an ideology that was confusing and contradictory in appearance only. In fact, it was quite well suited to the new feudal-bourgeois society that was taking shape in the Indies, a territory that wanted to be a new Europe when in fact it was merely the frontier of the old Europe.

The *arroba* was a measure of weight equivalent to 25 pounds.

A *reducción* was an Indian village established by a religious order and administered by civil Spanish authorities. Indians were given housing and required to work on a communal piece of land and to pay taxes to the Crown; they were also given individual parcels to cultivate on their own.

CHAPTER 3: THE *HIDALGO* CITIES OF THE INDIES

After the ceremony marking its founding, a city would begin to live, and vast urban projects would begin to mingle with the immediate problems of daily life. There was a mission to be accomplished, but first it was necessary to survive the enemy, hunger, and disease. As in all crises, the uneasy link between ideology and concrete reality was put to the test. At times, the founding group increased in number, at others it decreased. Physical space began to fill with a few buildings that gave the city a certain semblance of reality; basic needs began to be satisfied in rudimentary but methodical ways; government began to function; Indian attacks began to be checked. Still, the founders had to decide what to do with the city, what function it should serve.

It was easy to transpose the lines on the blueprint onto the actual land; it was not so easy to turn ideology into policy. Each city had been set up according to some general premises and in response to some concrete circumstances. But the very fact of setting it up had created a host of new problems, both practical and ideological, that were solved at times very deliberately, at times in rather intuitive or spontaneous ways. Decisions were usually made under the weight of many things: a vague remembrance of the original purpose of the founders; the unique profile each urban society was acquiring, as it took shape, generation after generation; the possibilities that had been foreseen for its development. But the crucial element was perhaps the gradual discovery of all the new, concrete opportunities that the city and the region had to offer. Many were indeed very promising, but they required a change in attitude. For these new urban societies took little time to realize that they had a choice between two systems: that of their somewhat marginal homelands, grounded on an inflexible conception of colonial empire, and that of mercantile Europe, with its wide range of temptations, which they had been able to glimpse at through the narrow chink opened by corsairs, pirates, and smugglers.

It was the presence of pirates and corsairs, coupled with the repeated threat of Indian insurrections, that helped maintain the military character of some cities. The conquest had been accomplished at large, but locally the danger of an Indian uprising still threatened many cities and forced their residents to stand ready for war, no matter how certain they might be of their final victory. More

serious was the problem posed by the corsairs and pirates who roamed the high seas in search of opportunities to plunder galleons or to attack and loot cities. The fort-city improved its military structure, received experienced garrisons, and consolidated its defenses with major works of military engineering that reached their peak in the eighteenth century, when walls were added to the fortified castles and fortresses to protect the civilian population. But not even the fort-city was confined to this one function; urban life discovered new opportunities and created some on its own, and even the experienced captain, perhaps a hero from the wars in Italy and Flanders, would slip surreptitiously into lawful trade or smuggling, hiding behind the servants and the clientele that his rank afforded him. As activities became more numerous and diverse, the fort-city itself became simply a city.

The cities had a well-knitted political, administrative, and ecclesiastical structure that helped to develop other aspects of urban life. Yet colonial government was remarkably cumbersome for more than one reason: the homelands were extremely far away; they had developed a rather peculiar and elaborate bureaucracy; day after day the central government was plagued by the number and complexity of the problems arising in every corner of the colonial world; officials wielded an odd kind of power, because their actions were constantly monitored by other officials and no one knew, from moment to moment, who was in the crown's favor. Heaps of paper came and went amidst endless scheming and intrigue, and a world of characters of diverse station and appearance hovered around the viceroys, captains general, judges, bishops, and magistrates. It was this game of favor and intrigue that distinguished the great capitals—México City, Lima, Salvador de Bahia—from the other smaller and more provincial ones, like Bogotá, Havana, Santiago, São Paulo, or Buenos Aires. But all of them, big and small, were centers of power and therefore stood apart from the cities that only had to deal with municipal issues and with the concerns of the wealthy owners in their region. The capitals were not simply centers of power but also hubs of cultural activity, or better still, centers where ideas were shaped, some of them trivial perhaps, others significant for the life of the city. In the capitals were the archbishops and bishops, who concerned themselves with the work of conversion, and the Inquisition, which watched zealously over orthodox faith; and also the preachers, who guarded public morality as they administered the sacraments; and the priests, who pleaded for mercy for the Indians and for black slaves; and the brainy theologians, and the erudite professors who educated the sons of noblemen in colleges and universities, as well as those who trained the sons of Indian chieftains. All this activity, very limited at the beginning, increased rapidly in the capital cities, both large and small. But with time, some of its forms began to appear even in the provincial cities.

What did grow was economic activity. Like the fort-city, the emporium city—port and marketplace all at once—diversified its activities, serving at times as a military garrison, at times as a seat of government or a center of learning. But unlike the fort-city, where the first function was gradually

overtaken by other activities, the emporium city became more of an emporium as time went on, with the exception of a few isolated cases of actual decline, such as Santo Domingo; and new emporium cities emerged during the first centuries of the colonial period. The entire system of production, both in agriculture and in mining, grew and got organized around the city. But what grew, above all, was brokerage, because production was invariably funneled through the city. The volume of exports also increased, and with it the activity of port and harbor; trade expanded its network as a result of the increase in exports and in Spanish imports and smuggled goods carried through long trade routes. Domestic markets also grew, embodied in each local marketplace: that of México or Cuzco, that of Recife or Santiago, some of them direct descendants of the Indian *tianguis,* but in no way different from the one on the Zocodover in Toledo. A vast concentration of consumer goods for the city and its surrounding areas was to be found there, in the open market—a colorful scene bustling with local customers, ready to buy, and with craftsmen and rural producers, ready to sell. What was not sold in the marketplace was sold in the poky little shops squeezed together on the city square, near the gallows and the well—like the *cajones de ribera* on the Main square in Lima, or the *cajones de San Jose*, in México City—or in the more suitable shops along the major streets.

Busy urban networks kept up a flow of products tailored to suit the needs of different types of consumer. As business diversified, a financial network was also organized by money-lenders and profiteers next to the large trading companies which had enough economic power to engage exclusively in wholesale business but would never refuse a minor transaction, if their line of business should allow. This process gave shape to the different economic groups that, in the end, would hold the fate of the city in their hands.

As these diverse activities continued to develop, the older cities began to lose their primitive appearance and ceased to be the rustic villages they had once been. In order to fit their material circumstances, the cities also altered the pre-established functions that their founders had assigned to them: some functions were maintained, some were abandoned, some still were combined with new ones and, on occasion, were entirely replaced by them. It was a long, complex, at times even confusing, process of change that began when the cities were founded and lasted until the second half of the eighteenth century. In the world in which they were established, these cities were destined to be—as they ultimately became—bourgeois and mercantile centers. But for a long time they were constrained by the vision of their founders to remain on the margins of the mercantile world. Thus, against the grain, they grew as cities of *hidalgos*, because *hidalgos* wanted to be the groups that became dominant within them. And *hidalgos* they remained, as long as they could, concealing the fact that they were only too ready to give in to the temptations of the bourgeoisie.

The Forming of a Baroque Society

Over the two centuries that followed their founding, new societies took shape in the cities of the Indies. They were different from the societies that had grown in the cities of the mother country. They had their own distinctive features, which were unique but not incompatible with the social structures predominant in the homeland. These new urban societies were, in fact, the only ones that were alive and evolving. In contrast, the societies that grew in the rural or mining areas were so rigid that most of their groups had no chance to find their place within the system. All they could do was to try and find their own social order outside the system, within a frame where submission to the rural lords was their only possibility.

These lords were, in fact, urban *hidalgos*, perhaps even refined courtiers, however much they might prefer to live in the production areas, on the *hacienda* or at the mine. For it was the city —which they viewed as the court— that guaranteed the cohesiveness of the group, the preservation of custom, and the kind of aristocratic life impressed in their memory as they left behind the peculiar world of Spain and Portugal in the sixteenth century. In the cities they built their mansions, as elaborate as they could. There they lived, some all year-round, some during the months they could be away from their country estates. There they surrounded themselves with as much pomp and ostentation as their means would allow.

In the cities, the knights had a society all their own, separate from the one formed by all the other groups, most of them lesser castes along with the occasional European or *criollo* whom misconduct or misfortune had ostracized. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, the Andalusian poet Mateo Rosas de Oquendo described Lima's society as follows:

Un visorrey con treinta alabarderos;

por fanegas medidos los letrados;

rigos ordenantes y ordenados;

vagamundos, pelones caballeros.

Jugadores sin número y coimeros;

mercaderes del aire levantados;

alguaciles, ladrones muy cursados;

las esquinas tomadas de pulperos.

Poetas mil de escaso entendimiento;

cortesanas de honra a lo borrado;

de cucos y cuquillos más de un cuento.

De rebanos y coles lleno el bato,

el sol turbado, pardo el nacimiento;

aquesta es Lima y su ordinario trato.

This was, on the whole, a Baroque society, one split into those with privileges and those without, those who led an aristocratic life and those who did not, those who paraded their superiority and arrogance and those inferior ones who could barely drag along their misery. Set apart and exclusive, the *hidalgos* of the Indies were unquestioned in its superiority. "Toward the rear is a wooden grille that divides the courtroom, to prevent people of low estate from sitting with the others," wrote Cervantes de Salazar, in 1554, about the hall of the Royal Tribunal of México City. The grille may have been unnecessary, because the chasm between the two social groups was virtually impossible to bridge; but nonetheless, after the Indian uprising of 1692 in México City, an old plan was revived that would separate the neighborhoods of Spaniards from those of the Indians. Contrary to what was happening in the bourgeois cities of Europe, dual societies, with no middle groups, were taking shape in the Indies; and the most intense social process at work beneath the surface of these societies was, precisely, the silent formation of the middle and bourgeois classes that would burst upon the scene in the eighteenth century. By that time, many *hidalgos* of the Indies started to forsake their peculiar concept of society, and many of them became bourgeois, though still retaining a touch of their pride and, perhaps even, of their old convictions. But for the two centuries that followed the founding of the cities, the *hidalgos* vigorously defended their privileged status and their lifestyle. Such lifestyle was, to be sure, a fiction, since the so-called *hidalguia* was nothing but an ideological construction of the founding group, one that the *hidalgos* themselves had already

betrayed in practice, for they would readily surrender to whatever they had to in order to obtain wealth, which was their single objective and their only means of social ascent. Being a fiction, such lifestyle gave their urban societies an aristocratic air that was utterly at odds with their harsh reality. It would have been enough to take a fresh and unbiased look at the actual situation to discover that the tidy portrait of México City that Cervantes de Salazar tried to paint could barely disguise a society on the verge of exploding and contained only by the powerful structure that the conquest had set up.

In that dual urban society, the *hidalgos* of the Indies came to be a powerful oligarchy which had at its pinnacle "titled noblemen from Castile, who make it illustrious, and many gentlemen of well-known lineage, who add to its dignity," as José Agustín de Oviedo y Baños said of Caracas in 1723. However, the *hidalgos* never managed to be an entirely closed social group. The blind pursuit of wealth and power, in which all of them were engaged, never allowed the urban groups of founders to close their ranks. After receiving their official grants, many of these founders embarked upon new adventures, in search of even greater wealth, and eventually abandoned their lands. But in many cities, their descendants, especially their female descendants, founded lineages that eventually got their ancestry recognized. A few of them could have claimed to be members of the lesser nobility of Spain or Portugal, as second sons of usually impoverished houses; but in the Indies, they were all *hidalgos*, prouder of their poor crests than of their rich exploits.

It was from these roots that the first generations of *criollos* were born. These *criollos* had to endure the low regard in which they were held by those born in the Iberian Peninsula —*peninsulares*, as they were called. Like the chronicler Pedro Mariño de Lovera, these *peninsulares* believed that the plague that had struck Chile in 1590 had been kind to those born in Spain and cruel to those born in the Indies because, as was so often said, the race had declined in America. In addition, there were the *peninsulares* who kept on arriving from the homeland and were less and less adventure-seeking and more inclined to engage in trade, perhaps because, as of the mid-sixteenth century, most of them were from the cities. All of them constituted were *hidalgos* of the Indies, some by inheritance, some by royal decree. All of them were anxious to assert their position before a vast mass of dark-skinned people who, despite appeals to charity and mercy, had, in their view, no other purpose than to obey and serve the *hidalgos*. But it was only an *hidalguia de Indias*, a title that Philip II bestowed upon "those who would commit themselves to settle the new lands and who would have performed and completed that duty" and upon "their sons and legitimate heirs." Such title was to be recognized "in those settlements and in all other parts whatsoever of the Indies," but it drew only ridicule or anger in Spain, where don Bela, a character in Lope de Vega's *La Dorotea*, was perceived as the perfect incarnation of the pretentious and unreliable *indiano*.

Even so, the *hidalgos* of the Indies were not equals in every respect. They were certainly equals

when it came to making claims about their social station. But in all truth they were divided —no one ignored the risks of the New World adventure— into rich and poor. Rich were those who were granted mines and formed the aristocracies of Guanajuato and Zacatecas, Taxco and Potosí, Popayán and Cali, many of whose descendants built sumptuous homes in those cities, as well as in México City and Lima, where they preferred to live. Rich were the *senhores de engenho* ("lords of the sugar plantation") of Pernambuco and Bahia, and the *encomenderos* who knew how to exploit their lands, and the cattlemen who knew how to increase their herds and then settled down in Caracas or Bogotá. Rich were also those who discovered the possibilities of trade, whether legal or illegal, and realized that commerce could multiply their earnings more quickly and with less effort than production at the farm or at the mine. And all of them acquired the arrogance of the wealthy, which they paraded as the loftier arrogance of the nobleman. The "Portuguese Jew" has left an invaluable testimony of that society of the early seventeenth century, so Baroque and reminiscent of the one portrayed in the Spanish picaresque novel:

They are—says the chronicler—haughty braggarts; they boast of being the descendants of great noblemen and the sons of well-known houses. Such is their folly that a man who was a petty bureaucrat in Spain would entertain grandiose thoughts, as soon as he has changed hemispheres, and would deem himself, on account of his lineage, worthy of joining with the best on earth.

According to the same chronicler, the women were equally pretentious: "Since they are beautiful and brag about being wise and refined, they think themselves nobler than Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt." Whether born in Spain or daughters of *conquistadores*, women acquired as much authority as their status in the new society would grant them. Some were *encomenderas* in the countryside, and the *Quintrala* in Chile was an example of the iron will they could muster to defend their rights and properties. In the cities, surrounded with slaves and servants, they tried to reproduce the atmosphere of distinction typical of the courts and cities of Spain. Some let themselves go for the charms of courtship and love games; indeed, the famous *tapadas* ("veiled women") of Lima became the model of courtly coquetry. Some were swept away by stormy, passionate dramas like the ones that Rodriguez Freyle evokes in *El Carnero* , as he depicts the society of Bogotá in the early sixteenth century, or like those which actually took place in Santiago the Chile and whose protagonists were the women from the house of Lisperguer. And there were cases of women who assumed important political responsibilities, like the widow of Jorge Albuquerque, Governor of Bahia, or the widow of Pedro Alvarado, Governor of Guatemala. But their prescribed place was the noble household and their basic concern was to strengthen and perpetuate the new lineage formed in the Indies. The adventuresome male was always lured by new possibilities to increase his wealth or his station. By contrast, it was the woman that made urban families stable and managed to create a tradition that quickly transformed some of those families into aristocratic lineages. A house of three well-known generations was, in any Latin American city, an old line, whose *hidalguia* was beyond doubt.

The intellectual circles that were formed in many cities belonged to the ranks of the *hidalgos*. Certainly, many of their members were clergymen. Men of letters or learned scholars, clergy and lay alike, carried on the best traditions of intellectual aristocracy. They could be found in the salons and soirees. Some would shine as court poets, others would write in their shadow. But a solid education displayed in writing, conversation or teaching was the best proof of intellectual superiority and thus a confirmation of one's status as an *hidalgo*.

Among the gentry of Lima, the "Portuguese Jew" discovered those he called "the arrogant poor," *hidalgos* by royal decree, but wretched and resentful because they had never made a fortune or had lost the one they had:

There are also those arrogant poor who bark because they are no longer able to bite. They walk with their head down, looking for anything to seize upon. They subject themselves to nothing, and there is no reasoning with them. These people are called soldiers not because they are soldiers, but because they go from one place to another, always with a deck of cards in their hands so as not to miss any occasion to play with whomever they happen to bump into. If by chance they should hit upon some novice or *chapetón* not adept or well trained in their games or who does not know that they play with a stacked deck, they rob him blind, taking his money, his lands, even his horse, leaving him to walk home. There are many such types roaming about Perú. Most are enemies of the rich and are always looking for sensational news, altercations and disturbances in the Kingdom in order to steal and obtain by war and dissension what they could never get otherwise. These are people who do not wish to serve. They are all well dressed, because they never lack a black or Indian woman and several Spanish ones—and not from the humblest classes either—who will clothe them and feed them because these men are their escorts by night and their thugs by day. They are happy to enter into the service of old men, who have lost all their strength and vigor, and to escort the ladies to mass and when they go visiting. There are more vagrants in Perú than people who are settled down. And there is little work for these types, for very few gentlemen want men servants in their homes, as they clearly see what goes on everyday in the homes of others. And thus, everybody makes use of black servants. And may these Spaniards turn and tumble and make a living as well they might.

Poverty was the lot of the lesser people, but the odd coupling of poverty and high social rank gave birth to a new, particularly dramatic, breed of rogues. Ambitious and violent, the penniless *hidalgos* were a threat to the cities that were trying to build an ordered civilian society. To get rid of them, the cities encouraged them to take on new enterprises. This is what happened in Asunción with the *mancebos de la tierra* ("native sons"), *criollos* without prospects who headed south and actually helped found Santa Fe and Buenos Aires. The same happened in Lima, where every year groups of

them were sent to Chile: "They are marched out under the city's banner to fight against the Araucanians and, while still in Lima, they are given two hundred pesos to buy their outfits."

Beneath the group of *hidalgos,* rich and poor, real and virtual, was the other half of the society. It included whites, many of them Europeans, who were mostly engaged in high finance or small businesses; there were also Jews, who attained some prominence in Olinda, Salvador de Bahia, Recife, and also in Lima, Asunción and Buenos Aires. Some of the artisans were also white. But *mestizos* began to appear in the world of commerce and in the crafts and trades, helped in their ascent by their paternal family or by their outstanding skills or their talent for business. Beneath all the other groups were the castes under different forms of subjection: Indians, blacks, and lowly *mestizos* and *mulatos*. They did all kinds of jobs, including crafts and handiwork for their owners or lords. The most fortunate were those who became servants in the homes of the *hidalgos*: they benefited from the patriarchal system that usually reigned in their households, and they also enjoyed that particular position that the *criados*attained in Baroque societies, where they came to be imbued —in the eyes of their peers— with some of the traits of their lords. But most people from these lesser castes dragged their poverty through the slums and brought it occasionally to the center of the city, on market days or at the public wells, where they would try to sell something or ask for alms. The scorn of the *hidalgos* for these people did not even need to be expressed in words.

Social stratification became very evident when public offices were established in Lima. Around 1625, the "Portuguese Jew" wrote in his *Descripción:*

The city has eight infantry captains. Each has a company of one hundred and fifty men. The city also has six hundred mounted soldiers. Neither infantry nor cavalry men are paid soldiers, because the city has neither a garrison nor garrison men nor does it pay the foot soldiers, who are merchants, shoemakers, tailors and other kinds of tradesmen. The mounted soldiers are mule drivers and *chacareros*, that is, peasants who work as foremen in farms and *estancias*[7] or hold other similar jobs. They are not as good a class of people as the foot soldiers. The city has at most one hundred *caballeros*, and these are called *vecinos*, because they receive some income from the tribute the Indians pay them. There are also twenty-four *regidores* (city councilmen), who are part of the one hundred citizens, and chief among them, because they are the government of the city.

Thus, defense needs drew some of the white have-nots into the other half of the society, that of the *hidalgos* and the wealthy. There were many paths, some rather intricate, that brought the two halves of the society into contact. The *mestizos* were the greatest challenge to the formal order of the Baroque society of the Indies, one that would actually undermine the dual structure of urban societies. Sealed by its possibilities and limitations, each half of the society seemed to live confined

within its own sphere without interfering with the other. But this confinement was far from being stable. *Mestizaje* conspired against it, helped and strengthened by the opportunities available for economic ascent. These opportunities increased as the cities, against the design of the metropolis, gained ground in the mercantile world. In that process, a large group of *criollos* gained autonomy and discovered that the social structure established in the first two centuries of colonial life was both an anachronism and an obstacle to their development. Taken together, all these facts brought about the crisis that the society of *hidalgos* experienced in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The Political Process

An urban society internally so fluid and unstable and yet formally so rigid and stratified was bound to have a complicated and restive life. General agreement on the most serious issues was not enough to conceal the discord among groups and individuals. Such an agreement was secured by the decisive action of public officials, representatives of an imperial power that never lost sight of the basic problems of its colonial system. The first concern of viceroys, governors and the courts of justice was security: there was to be no recurrence of events, like the Indian uprisings, that had imperiled some cities: the siege and destruction of Cuzco in 1536, the siege of Guadalajara in 1540, or the destruction of Chilean cities south of Bío-Bío at the end of the sixteenth century. Many cities felt threatened, and when some plot was discovered among the groups under subjection—as happened in México City around 1638 or in Lima in 1750—they took extreme security measures to prevent Indians, blacks, and *mestizos* from meeting in secret or carrying arms. This inevitably increased the distrust between those in power and the groups subjected to them. Even the black nurses in charge of white children became suspect. And even when insurrections would erupt in rural areas, fear was felt in the cities, where an entire world of services, trades, and menial occupations had grown around the privileged groups.

The threat posed by pirates and corsairs had an even worse effect on the life of the cities. Enemy ships ploughed the seas in search of Spanish galleons, but the most coveted prey were the cities, where —so the belief went— treasures and countless goods were stored. In 1586, after the French had taken Santiago de Cuba and Havana, Francis Drake besieged Santo Domingo and Cartagena. He demanded and obtained one hundred and seven thousand gold ducats to spare the destruction of Cartagena, and in addition, he required all property owners to pay a fixed sum to save their houses from being burned to the ground; and so the first inventory of the city was taken. Cartagena was attacked twice again, in 1697 and 1741; in the meantime, La Guayra, Veracruz, and Portobello were besieged, as was Havana, again, in 1762. When Cape Horn became a viable route, after 1616, the ports on the Pacific coast were under the constant threat of the English and the Dutch. In 1671, one of these ports —Panama City— was occupied by Henry Morgan and his freebooters from the island

of Tortuga, who had crossed the isthmus after taking Portobello. Panama was one of the finest cities, with over one thousand buildings, excluding churches and convents. The city was razed to the ground by the Dutch and abandoned by its people in search for another site. Years earlier, the Dutch had occupied Olinda and Bahia, and also Recife, where they remained for almost twenty years.

Now, a city on the defense was also a city on the attack. While they remained on the alert for an enemy attack, these cities organized new expeditions to occupy the surrounding territory, or the areas that were under their influence or along the routes that converged upon them. Cuba was occupied by settlers who came from Santo Domingo, and from Baracoa —the first Cuban city— came the settlers who founded all the new cities on the island. The forces that conquered México came from Santiago de Cuba; those that conquered Guatemala were from México. The city was the headquarters for new expansions: there, new ventures were officially announced, captains were recruited, soldiers enlisted, and provisions rounded up. At El Tocuyo, Diego Losada worked for an entire year, in 1556, to ready the expedition he would take to the Valley of San Francisco, where he founded Caracas a year later. Almagro and later Valdivia mounted in Cuzco their expeditions to Chile. In Asunción, Garay mounted the expedition that led to the founding of Santa Fe and Buenos Aires. And from São Vicente, João Ramalho and later Father Anchieta went to what would later become São Paulo. The cities explored their surroundings and, on the ill-defined sketch that had guided the first settlements, they mapped, now with precision, their possible areas of influence. As that labor progressed, urban life grew by fits and starts, the original makeup of urban population was considerably altered and relations of interdependence among cities began to develop.

In the meantime, the authorities worked to strengthen the structure of urban life. Five years after the founding of Popayán, Benalcázar left for Spain and returned with women who would live in the city, just as Pedro de Alvarado had done in the city of Guatemala. They wanted their cities to have stable families who would lead a normal life, just as they would in any city in Spain, following their customs, dealing with the problems of daily life, observing and celebrating their holidays. And they wanted it right away, when only a few houses had been built. They brought well-seasoned officials to put together the new bureaucracy; they brought missionaries; above all, they brought every supply, tool, piece of furniture, or article they deemed necessary to set urban life into motion. There was a haste to see the new cities function as if they were old and had had a long life of their own. Public authorities set the tone by surrounding themselves with little courts, whose salons were the subject of lively conversation in everyday life; and within their scarce means, they tried to lend their cities an air of distinction so that they would quickly cease to be simple villages or the mere promise of a city.

The usual state of affairs in a city was a monotonous succession of the events of private life, interspersed with public festivities, bullfights, and processions. From time to time, that monotony would be suddenly broken by some notorious love affair or horrible crime. But it was the events of

public life that would actually shake up daily existence. Sometimes it would be the disputes between civil and religious authorities, which could end up in a crisis as serious as the one in México City, between 1621 and 1622, in which the Archbishop excommunicated the Viceroy, the Viceroy expelled the Archbishop, the Archbishop, in turn, issued an injunction on the city, which was followed by a popular uprising. Then, in 1683, there was the incident in Cartagena, when the Bishop put the city under punishable delay, as had the first Archbishop of Bogotá, Friar Juan de los Barrios done, one hundred years earlier. Other times, the disputes were between the Viceroy and the High Court, or between the bishops and the religious orders. Jurisdictional disputes, caused sometimes by social conflicts, would divide the population into warring factions prone to resort to violence. It was not uncommon to see some groups seize upon a dispute between two public officials and, under the guise of supporting one side, give vent to their antagonism, which usually had a long history and very different grounds: conflicts of interest or regional disputes, like the one that pitted the Andalusians against the Basques in Perú, in the seventeenth century.

Yet, what altered more profoundly the life of the cities were the struggles for power and privilege. The ill-defined status of Cortez brought about serious tension between him and Viceroy Mendoza. No harm came of it at the time, but it planted the seed of a crisis that would eventually grow, by 1565, into the so-called conspiracy of the sons of Cortez. This was one instance of the inevitable clash between the *conquistadores* —who had by then become *encomenderos* or mine owners— and a political authority ready to establish a system of public law. This type of conflict arose, for instance, in Nicaragua, in the city of Granada, where the Contreras took up arms and marched into Panama City, which they occupied in 1549. But conflict was at its worst in Perú, where civil wars reached large proportions. They had begun with the dispute between Pizarro and Almagro for the control of Cuzco, and they continued when Almagro's son took on the royal envoy, Vaca de Castro. Finally, the *encomenderos*, under Gonzalo Pizarro, stirred up the cities of Cuzco and Lima, where they practically became a rebel power against the Crown. They were subdued, but in 1552 they rose again, under Hernández Girón. Slowly, the *encomenderos* were brought under control, in a long process in which the rights acquired during the conquest were made to conform to the supreme right —the Law of the Crown.

Similar conflicts stirred up Asunción, beginning in 1541. There, the unrest started with the confrontation between Governor Irala and Captain-general Alvar Núñez. The residents had transformed what had once been a simple "buttressed house" into a city and were now challenging the Indian policy established by the "New Laws." However, the majority supported Irala until the Crown, finally, confirmed him as governor.

As intractable as Asunción seemed to be the newly-founded city of Santa Fe, in Argentina, where the *criollos*, headed by their "seven chiefs," rose up in 1580. The provincial calm of a number of cities

had been disrupted by the tyrant Lope de Aguirre, who, around 1564, had revolted against the authorities in Venezuela, just as Alvaro de Oyón had rebelled in Nueva Granada, attacking the city of Popayán in 1560.

A host of other reasons prompted the confrontation between opposing economic groups. The gentry of Olinda, who had not hesitated to depose Governor Mendonça Furtado in 1666, clashed with the merchants of Recife, in 1710, in what was called the "War of the *Mascates*." Local interests set off the disputes about the commercial monopoly of the companies in Rio the Janeiro, when Jerónimo Barbalho rose up against the Compañía Geral de Comercio do Brasil, in 1660, as did later on, in 1749, Captain Juan Francisco León in Caracas against the Compañía Guipuzcoana that monopolized the cacao trade.

All the cities, even the major ones, were still provincial in some aspects, but they were nonetheless the ground for important economic and political battles. Half-visible, behind these battles, were not only the immediate conflicts that had prompted them but also the plans and aspirations of each group for its own future.

Hidalguia and Lifestyle

During the two centuries that followed the founding of the cities, urban societies were under a host of different pressures and incitements, but they were still defined by the pre-eminence of the *hidalgos*, who impressed upon them their own conception of life and tried to erase all signs of the influence that other social groups were struggling to exert. The *hidalgos* cities of the Indies were the consequence of the attempt by their dominant groups to vehemently assert a social order at odds with their economic reality. That reality, which they strongly denied, was nonetheless their enduring temptation.

In the metropolis, as in the rest of Europe, cities had attained their splendor with the development of trade and the growth of the new bourgeoisie. In some cities, a singular social process had pushed class differentiation to the extreme and had transformed the upper middle classes into a kind of aristocracy. In that way were formed the Baroque cities of Spain and Portugal, especially in some regions. They were more polarized there than in other areas of Europe and less likely to solve the problems that the pressures of the mercantile world had created. But in the Indies, the conquest had drawn a social map that prefigured the situation of the not privileged groups. Those who in Europe had been socially and economically marginalized were mirrored in America by the group that the conquest had subdued and marginalized with a single blow. Actually, the colonizers found

themselves, all at once, in a situation of privilege that the patrician classes of European cities had labored to attain trough a process of becoming seigneurs in a feudo bourgeois society. The conquest imposed on the new continent an ideology that had already assigned fixed meanings to the different components of an idealized social world. Thus, it established in the Indies, from the very beginning, urban societies that mirrored those of the mother country at the time. But, in doing so, it ignored or discarded the first phase of urban development, which was inextricably tied to the mercantile system and to the attitudes of the incipient bourgeoisie that the system had created and sustained. The mercantile world was prospering, but the *hidalgos* cities of the Indies, like Spain herself, pretended to ignore that fact. A hunger to enjoy the fruits of trade was throbbing underneath that pretense, but the dominant concern of the *hidalgos* was to consolidate their privileged position. And so a Baroque society was implanted in the cities of the Indies: it was a mirror image of the Baroque societies of Spain and Portugal, altered only by the copper-colored skin of its underprivileged groups.

Before long, the cities of the Indies began to acquire individual, distinctive traits. Capital cities with a wide jurisdiction—*e.g.* México, Lima, or Bahia—became markedly different, in size and importance, from lesser capitals, like Guatemala, Bogotá, Santiago de Chile, Caracas, Havana, Buenos Aires, Santo Domingo, Olinda, or Rio de Janeiro. There were wide differences in the size of their population, their density of building, their standards of living, their economic activity, and their cultural development. More remarkable still was the difference between the cities and the municipal centers, small villages where life was dull and slow and where progress often would come to a halt.

Even among the cities that maintained or increased their importance, differences began to appear, not only in quantity but in quality as well. While some of them remained *hidalgas*, others quickly began to acquire a mercantile cast. The first were primarily the viceregal courts and the seats of local and municipal government, but also the cities where the *encomenderos* or the rich mine owners hastened to consolidate their wealth by adopting aristocratic forms of life that allowed them to show off their riches and to make the division between classes much more pronounced. Those that became more mercantile were mostly the ports and some mining cities that, like Potosí, underwent a vigorous economic development sparked by the thrill of adventure. Each type of city fashioned its own ideal forms of life and social paradigms, reflecting a distinctive cast of mind that pervaded the entire city even though it belonged exclusively to the dominant classes. These ideal forms and paradigms became valid for other cities, where *hidalgos* looked down on merchants and merchants looked down on *hidalgos*, or envied them.

The *hidalgos* cities —those where the character of urban life was dictated by strong upper classes firmly set in their position as lords and masters- were, above all, the courts that grew around the centers of power. After he married doña María de Toledo, Viceroy Diego Colín gathered around

himself a small aristocratic court that included the proud *encomenderos* against whom Friar Antín de Montesinos lashed out in 1510. Bishop Alejandro Geraldini, however, praised, in elaborate Latin words, the illustrious and noble city in which the Viceroy had built his castle. Court cities served as the trappings of viceregal power in México City, as early as the period of Antonio de Mendoza, or in Lima, during the governments of Garcia Hurtado de Mendoza and the Prince of Esquilache; and it was also a court that the Governor Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho gathered around in Olinda. Groups of rich gentlemen and ladies fond of poetry, surrounded by clergy, jurists and public officials, were intent upon displaying a lifestyle similar to that of the courts on the Iberian Peninsula, for they were anxious to make their place in society safe and secure and also had the dream to lead a noble life in their colonial exile.

Leading a noble life was the obsessive concern of those who were or claimed to be upper class *hidalgos*. Their most distinctive trait was a disdain for all kinds of manual work and a desire to keep gentlemen separate from workmen, as jurist Juan Matienzo wanted. An entire system had to be organized so that the upper classes should lead an aristocratic life and everyone else should look at that life as a display of the superiority of the privileged few. These privileged few were the great families, the ones who lived on the best streets in México City and deserved that Cervantes de Salazar mention them by name—the Mendozas, Zuñigas, Altamiranos, Estradas, and the like; they were also those who would decide, sword in hand, their disputes over a municipal post, as happened, in Santiago de Chile, with the relatives and friends of the Lisperguers and the Mendozas, on Saint Bartholomew's Day in 1604. Proud of their ancestry and zealous for their own pre-eminence, the great families would display coats of arms and recite genealogies. Well above their petty disputes, they were bound together by a strong sense of class, and they closed ranks whenever they could. They had their brotherhoods and guilds; they had festivities in which they would recognize one another and ceremonies in which only the members of their class could occupy the places of honor.

Bernardo the Balbuena praised their way of life in México in the following words:

Callo su altiva gallardía, y callo

la generosidad, suerte y grandeza

de corazón que en sus costumbres hallo.

Su cortés compostura, su nobleza,

su trato hidalgo, su apacible modo,

sin cortedad ni sombra de escaseza;

aquel pródigamente darlo todo,

sin reparar en gastos excesivos,

las perlas, oro, plata y seda a rodo;

si aqueste estilo aun vive entre los vivos,

este delgado suelo lo sustenta

y le cría en sus ánimos altivos.

This lavishness was nothing but a sign of the desire for luxury and ostentation that drove the class of *hidalgos.* At the end of the sixteenth century, Father Cardim discovered this in Olinda, where the court of Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho was so flamboyant that one "would find more vanity there than in Lisbon." Cardim went on to say, "men were dressed in velvet, damask and silk; they spent dashingly on horses whose saddles and reins were of the same silk their own garments were made of. The ladies too loved to show off their luxury; and they liked parties far better than prayer." Friar Tomás Gage made similar remarks about México City around 1625:

It was said that the number of Spaniards living in the city was close to forty thousand, all of them so rich and vain that more than half had carriages; so it was a most credible report that at the time there were more than fifteen thousand coaches in town. There is a saying that in México one would find four things that are definitely beautiful: the women, the garments, the horses, and the streets. One could add a fifth one: the retinues of the nobles, which are much more splendid and costly than those in the courts of Madrid and other kingdoms of Europe; for in México they spare neither gold, nor silver, nor precious stones, nor gold brocade, nor the exquisite silks from China in order to enrich their train.

As for Lima, Father Cobo wrote of the "vanity in the garments, galas and pomp of servants and livery;" and around the same years, the Crónica of the "Portuguese Jew" offered the following description:

They go to mass and make their calls in sedan chairs carried by blacks; they have fine carriages, and mules and horses to pull them, and black coachmen to drive them. In Lima, the gentry enjoy a paradise in this world, for the city has the best climate, since one knows today precisely what the weather will be tomorrow. If the women are beautiful and elegant, the men, in turn, are gallant and brave. All are generally well-dressed, in silks and fine wools from Segovia, with rich collars made of costly lace from Flanders. Everyone wears silk stockings. All are tactful, affable and well-mannered. All observe every rule of etiquette. They are all prodigal spenders who squander their money without rhyme or reason. They all boast about their noble lineage, and there is not one who does not consider himself a gentleman. They all go about the city on horseback, except for some who are very poor.

The desire for ostentation and luxury was evident everywhere: in the big houses that tried to parade as palaces; in all the furnishing and tableware shipped over from the Peninsula; in the paintings that adorned the private chapels and even in the ceilings and walls of the homes, in the carvings and engravings, in the books and in the jewels. But these material possessions were not enough. They had to be used elegantly, as befits people of high station. The gentlemen were liberal spenders and liked to surround themselves with the kind of people, half-proteges, half-servants, who were the customary members of a nobleman's train. These were the people who escorted them when they went hunting, like those who were with the Archbishop of Bogotá, Friar Luis Zapata de Cãrdenas, in 1590, when he died hunting, "escorted," as Rodríguez Freile recalls, "by his servants and relatives, and a number of clergy and lay people." These were also the people who attended them in their duels, or lent an ear to their poetic ambitions, or served as go-betweens in their romantic escapades, or went with them on their nocturnal sprees, as they cavorted with women and wine. That entourage was the mark of their status as noblemen, the mark, that is, of those who made of idleness and sensual sport the essential condition of aristocratic life.

The class of *hidalgos* was at home in parties and soirees. There the select few came together, practiced the fine art of courtesy and etiquette, flirted and spoke of poetry; there they also sang and danced in an atmosphere of refinement and elegance. Pity that the context for such grandiose aspirations should be so irreparably modest: if the big houses were comfortable and well-furnished, the streets were, but for a few exceptions, made of dirt, public lighting was scarce, and drainage insufficient. But in the seventeenth century, both México City and Lima got their promenade for the aristocrats, the Alameda, where the most distinguished members of society would meet. "The place for promenading is charming," wrote Bachelier, in the early eighteenth century, in reference to the

promenade in Lima. And he continued:

It is a handsome, very wide avenue, with a long, vanishing perspective; it has four rows of beautiful orange and lemon trees, two brooks of crystal-clear water that run alongside it, and at the end, on the horizon, the main front of one of the finest convents. All in all, it makes a very pleasing impression upon newcomers. Carriages and coaches come to the promenade by the hundreds in the afternoon, as this is the meeting place of all the distinguished people in the city. Young men in love court their sweethearts and take it as an honor to follow them on foot, leaning at times on the doors of their coaches.

As for the Alameda in México City, Friar Tomás Gage said in 1648:

Everyday, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, the greatest among the city's aristocrats arrive —some on horseback, some in coaches— at a delightful promenade, called the Alameda, shaded by many rows of trees. There usually are about two thousand coaches full of hidalgos, ladies, and wealthy citizens. The *hidalgos* come to see the ladies, some served by a dozen African slaves, some with a smaller train, but all with their servants dressed in costly liveries and covered with gold and silver lace and flowers, silk stockings, roses on their shoes, and the customary dress swords by their sides. The train of the Viceroy, who often visits the Alameda, is no less brilliant or splendid than the train of his master, the King of Spain.

The merry life of the *hidalgos* must have made such an impression upon the observer that Bernardo de Balbuena devoted nine tercets of his *La Grandeza Mexicana (Mexican Greatness)* to its description:

Recreaciones de gusto en que ocuparse,

de fiestas y regalos mil maneras

para engañar cuidados y engañarse;

conversaciones, juegos, burlas, veras,

convites, golosinas infinitas,

huertas, jardines, cazas, bosques, fieras;

aparatos, grandezas exquisitas,

juntas, saraos, conciertos agradables,

músicas, pasatiempos y visitas;

regocijos, holguras saludables,

carreras, rúas, bizarrías, paseos,

amigos, en el gusto y trato afables;

galas, libreas, broches, camafeos,

jaeces, telas, sedas y brocados,

pinte el antojo, pidan sus deseos.

Escarches, bordaduras, entorchados,

joyas, joyeros, perlas, pedrerías,

aljífar, oro, plata, recamados;

fiesta y comedia nuevas cada día,

de varios entremeses y primores

gusto, entretenimiento y alegría;

usos nuevos, antojos de señores,

de mujeres tocados y quimeras,

de maridos carcomas y dolores;

volantes, carzahanes, primaveras,

y para autoridad y señorío

coches, carrozas, sillas y literas.

A subtle compendium of Baroque *hidalguía* gentry, the *Grandeza Mexicana* reveals some of the secret mechanisms behind the *hidalgos*'s frivolous conception of life. But not everything was that way. There was another, not so easy, not so sterile side to the life of the *hidalgos*: some were high-ranking officials with obligations and responsibilities which were often ordinary but on occasion unexpectedly complex and demanding their full attention and even self-sacrifice; others were military officers who had to defend the city from corsairs and pirates, or wage war against the Indians. When time came to undertake these duties, their frivolous conception of life was set aside, but it persisted as a general aspiration, since a noble and idle life seemed to be the only one befitting an *hidalgo*.

Aesthetic pleasure was considered suitable for *hidalgos*, as were on occasion some forms of elevated thought. As Sor Juan did in her Mexican convent, many women wrote poetry, like Leonor de Ovando in old Santo Domingo. Convent life shared in the dignity of the upper classes, and it fostered the study of letters and the pursuit of learning. But letters and learning were not confined to the convents. Secular clergymen were also devoted to them, like Bernardo de Balbuena, Juan de Castellanos, or Francisco Cervantes de Salazar. And then there were the court circles where poetry and drama would shine: the one in México City, which had Gutierre de Cetina, Mateo Alemán, Juan de la Cueva and Francisco de Terrazas, and many other minor authors, so many in fact that one poetry contest in 1585 drew over three hundred entries; the one in Olinda, where Bento Teixeira Pinto wrote his *Prosopopia* in honor of Governor Albuquerque Coelho; or the one in Lima, where learned viceroys like Montesclaros, Esquilache and Castelldos Rius would surround themselves with poets like Juan de Miramontes y Zuázola, or humanists like Pedro de Peralta Barnuevo. The theater—which began in México City in 1597 and in Lima in 1602—was both a literary center and a

place for the fashionable gathering of *hidalgos*. These *hidalgos* were, indeed, the butt of satire: in Rodríguez Freyle's mischievous tale, which captured the gossip rampant in Bogotá, or in the witty prose of Juan del Valle Caviedes, who made fun of the women and men of Lima, or in the more severe words used by Gregorio de Mattos to criticize the Brazilian society of Bahia, where a *fidalguia no bom sangue nunca est* "nobility never had anything to do with blood or lineage." Even the universities —first, those of Santo Domingo, then those of México City and Lima, both founded in 1551, and later the ones that were established in Bogotá, Quito, Córdoba, and other cities— had an aristocratic cast, the one that Cervantes de Salazar found worthy of praise at the university of México, the same one that shows through the very founding of the Colegio del Rosario in Bogotá.

This class of *hidalgos* flourished in the seats of the viceroys, of the regional governors and the *Audiencias* (Courts of law), that is, in all the centers of power, big and small, for it gathered strength by leaning on the direct authority of those who represented the conquereur power. Wealth was always essential and decisive. But not all forms of wealth were equally acceptable during the two centuries that followed the founding of the cities. Good wealth had to have its sources not too close at hand, not too obviously visible. It had to come across the wide chasm that set the *encomendero* apart from those who worked his land, the legitimate mine owner apart from the mine ore. It had to come, that is, through some kind of ranking scale, so as to feed the illusion that it was "old wealth," like that of the nobility in the mother country, so well-rooted and long-assented to that its beneficiary should have nothing to do except sit back and take it, with no need to soil his hands. This was the illusion of the *hidalgos*, but one they held so close and hard that it was perceived as something real, masked, as it was, by a whole system of conventions that secured the distance between the *hidalgo* and those who served him, and that sanctioned his innate superiority. These were the mechanisms that gave their aristocratic character to cities like Puebla, Guanajuato, Taxco, San Luis de Potosí, Morelia, Popayán, Tunja, Arequipa, Olinda, in Brazil, or Trujillo, in Perú. A few generations were enough to root a lineage.

The class that inherited the privileges of the conquest and all the sources of wealth amassed so much social and economic power that all the other groups fell well below. Even the whites engaged in manual labor or small-scale commerce were viewed as inferior. But it was the Indians, blacks and *mestizos* that suffered most from the disdain and suspicion of the dominant class. Engaged in the humblest trades and occupations, they had few prospects and very limited opportunities. In the neighborhoods where they lived, they would form tightly knit communities around their churches or in their guilds and brotherhoods; and in their celebrations, they would stay together, either by group or caste. But they could also be seen elsewhere in the city: in the streets, as they performed their jobs, or congregated in the marketplace which was, in fact, their own kingdom. At public celebrations, where the *hidalgos* shone, they were the huddle that applauded the magnificent spectacle the wealthy offered them.

Low standards of living were the rule in the neighborhoods of the common people *(barrios de castas)*. But the cities, especially the major ones, offered some openings through which the lesser groups could escape in search of better fortunes. It was by dint of cunning that they would improve their lot and, as it happened in the Peninsula, the mere attempt turned them into rogues or *pícaros*. The Indies had their own picaresque fiction, which was the inevitable response to the conditions of a society fashioned and controlled by *hidalgos*.

Different groups, by different routes, tried to escape those conditions. Black women, alluring and apparently carefree, found their way to the *hidalgos* and used their closeness to place everyone they wanted under the protection of their own patrons. Dressed to attract attention, they added a picturesque and exciting touch to the city, not only in their own neighborhoods but also in those of the upper classes, where they rendered their services and did a variety of jobs. Black slaves could pay their masters a sum of money to buy the right to engage in some kind of trade or business of their own. If they earned enough to buy their own freedom, they could then increase their earnings and attain a position in the middle of the social scale. *Mestizos* and *mulatos* had the same possibilities, especially if they could count on the support of their white relatives. Because of their mixed race, they were often viewed as useful mediators between the masters and the blacks or Indians who worked in their service. As foremen or overseers, they had an opportunity to earn money and also get closer to the privileged classes in a kind of conspiracy against the groups subjected to servitude. But their possibilities did not end there. The economy offered many untapped opportunities which opened the way for those who dared and, in particular, those who had no other choice but to resort to heroic means in order to change their station in life. The *bandeirantes*, or *mamelucos*, as the Spaniards called them, were Brazilian *mestizos* from São Paulo who, when successful in their undertakings, would return laden with riches and attain, shortly thereafter, the same remarkable position that Alfonso Sandinha the Young had risen to in São Paulo.

Economic activity was at the center of urban life, even in the most seigneural cities, and it imposed its own rules for development, which in the end proved to be, almost everywhere, stronger than the rigid structure of baroque society. Perhaps the *hidalgos* believed that their two-tiered society was immutable, since it was sustained by the tenacity of prejudice and by the gap of opposing casts of mind. But business and trade created zones of contact where money would bring the different groups together in transactions that called for both the rich and the poor, both the *hidalgos* with influence in the courts of law and the blacks and *mestizos* who knew all the twists and turns of city life. Certainly, this new economic force was a call to realism for a society that wanted to remain unchanged, frozen in its illusory order; but it worked to the fullest of its strength in the cities that had been mercantile centers from the start.

The marketplace was the heart of the city: there, wealth was amassed and circulated, and as

prosperous as the market was, so was the city. It is interesting to note how López de Velasco explains the progressive depopulation of Santo Domingo and Santiago de Cuba. Both cities —he says— had had as much as one thousand residents, but by 1574 Santo Domingo had only five hundred and Santiago de Cuba only thirty. The explanation is the same for both cities: "because merchants do not come to this island to trade goods," or "because ships do not come here to do business." In México City there were four open markets which had —according to Vázquez de Espinosa— "merchandise in great quantity: silks, fabrics, and everything one would find in the best markets in the world." Of the largest of these markets, which was on the Main Square, López de Velazco said: "As many as one hundred thousand people can do business there; the entire square is lined by arcades with designated places for each trade and type of good; there is a great variety of merchandise and a large volume of retail." Lima's market—el Gato, as the locals would call it—was a smaller one, but still it deserved these words from Father Cobo:

All kinds of fruits and foodstuffs are sold here; the vendors are black and Indian women, and there are so many of them that the place seems a veritable ant hill. Any well-provisioned republic could live and feast upon the many and varied goods sold in this market. There are also countless little shops and stalls and Indians peddling a thousand little things. All along the Palace pavement is a string of wooden shops where hucksters sell their goods, and there are also many little vendor stands along the two sidewalks and even at the center of the marketplace; near the City Hall one can always find used clothing and furnishings for the home on sale at very low prices.

On a large or small scale, there were markets in every city, all of them similar in kind. In some cities, there were also fairs with unique traits. And yet, not all the business was done in the marketplace. There were well-established shops on the city streets, and indeed some of those streets were named after the major shop owners. On occasion, the owners were not simple merchants but artisans who sold the products of their special craft or trade. Among them, the most notable were the silversmiths, who by the late sixteenth century had already formed powerful guilds in México City and in Lima. There were also dealers who would do large-volume business with wholesalers and exporters.

This economic activity brought to the more *hidalgo* cities a way of life that had little to do with the aristocratic attitude of the upper classes. And yet a good number of the main business players were members of that class —*hidalgos*, public officials and ecclesiastics—, although they often acted through middle-men. But there were also professional businessmen who were entirely devoted to commercial transactions and had accepted their secondary role in the traditional cities of the *hidalgos*. They were at the top of a scale that had at its lowest end those engaged in shipping or retail sales. All of them certainly enjoyed a very different position in the cities with a more definite mercantile cast.

Some of the mining centers began rather quickly to look like mercantile cities. The sudden discovery of a new vein would unleash a whirlwind of bold venture that neither the prejudice of the *hidalgos*, nor their rhetorical strictures, nor their scruples were able to contain. Silver was there, within everyone's reach, and many tried to grab it. A few years after the discovery of Cerro Rico, around 1550, Cieza de León wrote the following about the attraction the place exerted on so many:

Although, at the time, Gonzalo Pizarro was waging war against the viceroy and the kingdom was in upheaval because of his rebellion, settlements began to fill the foot of the hill; many large houses were built there; the Spaniards established their principal residence in those parts, and so did the courts of justice. The town was left almost entirely deserted. So many people rushed to dig silver on the hill that the place began to look like a great city.

But perhaps the most remarkable thing was the quick growth of an extraordinarily active market where countless secondary activities were conducted. Cieza de León compares the market in Cuzco with the one in Potosí in these terms:

But neither this market not any other in the Kingdom can equal the superb one in Potosí, because business was done there on such a scale that, at the times when the mines were prosperous, between twenty-five and thirty thousand —on occasion over forty thousand— gold pesos worth of goods were sold daily among Indians alone, not including the Christians; which is an amazing thing; and I believe that no other market in the world can equal this one in its dealings. I noticed this several times: on the flat surface of the square, I saw, here, a line of baskets full of coca, which is the most abundant among the riches of these parts; there, heaps of shawls and fine shirts, both light and heavy; in another spot, mountains of corn, dried potatoes and other foodstuffs; and in addition, a lot of beef, the finest in the kingdom. Many other things, too numerous to mention here, were also for sale. The market day or fair lasted from morning to nightfall. Since silver was being mined everyday and the Indians —especially those who did business with the Spaniards— were very fond of eating and drinking, everything that was brought to the market was immediately bought or consumed, so much so that people from all over the place would bring in all sorts of provisions and supplies. This way, many Spaniards got rich here, in Potosí, just by having two or three Indian women do business for them in this market; and from every corner came large gangs of *anacondas,* that is, free Indians who may choose to serve whomever they wish; and the most beautiful Indian women of Cuzco and of the entire kingdom came to live here in Potosí. One thing I noticed in the time I spent in these parts: fraud and deceit were routine. There was so much merchandise that fine linen and fabrics were sold almost as cheap as in Spain, and I saw things on sale at such low prices that even in Seville they would be deemed inexpensive. Many men who had made big fortunes lost them all, as their insatiable greed compelled them to try to buy and sell. Some of them fled to Chile, or Tucumán, or other places, for fear of the debt collectors. And thus most of their dealings were

lawsuits and disputes with one another.

Seventy years later, "the Imperial City of Potosí —the happiest and most fortunate one among those known in the world for their riches"— had a population of "four thousand Spanish homes and between four and five thousand men at any time," as the "Portuguese Jew" says in his *Descripción*. And he goes on: "Some of these men are engaged in mining; others, who are merchants, sell their wares all across the kingdom; . . . and still others live out of gambling and bold ventures." He also adds: "Merchants trade here in large scale, and the shops are very large and brimming with goods of every kind. Potosí does a lot of business with Lima; many merchants from here go to Lima, México City and Seville to buy their supplies, and the city sends quite a number of very rich men to live in Spain."

The area of Minas Gerais held the same powerful attraction in Brazil. Once it became known that the area was rich in gold, not only the *bandeirantes* from São Paulo rushed there, but also the "bahienses" —the Northern Brazilians— as well as many Portuguese, the first ones to emigrate to Brazil by their own choice. The fierce competition between the *bandeirantes* and those they viewed as foreigners gave way to an all out war: "la guerra dos Emboabas." Together, however, all these groups produced an extraordinary display of mining wealth. Vila Rica —present-day Ouro Preto— was called "the Potosí of gold;" and there, as in Potosí and all the other mining cities in the Hispanic world, the gathering of adventurers produced the same social phenomenon. The hope of riches set aside all worries and made equals of all the whites who engaged in mining; black slaves labored and died by the hundreds in the mines, as did the Indians under Spanish control. Squandering, gambling, prostitution, orgies, and crime were the distinctive marks of life in Vila Rica; and, as in Potosí, once the gold boom was over, the urban society of this village, turned into a city in 1711, ceased to develop, and the city itself became a ghost-town.

Other cities —such as Guanajuato, Taxco, or Zacatecas— came into being thanks to the riches that the mines provided. They all began, like the other mining towns, with quite a scramble of social groups. No one there cared much about the claim of noble lineage, although the way they dressed would match the description of the inhabitants of Potosí that Arzans de Ursúa and Vela wrote in the eighteenth century. What everyone wanted was simply wealth. No one tried to show off an aristocratic way of life. The distinctive traits of these cities were gambling houses, where entire fortunes were staked, brothels of every type and, above all, every sort of reckless passion. "This ill-fated town —remarked Arzans de Ursúa in his history of Potosí— does not seem to be inhabited by Christians, but by the cruellest of barbarians;" for men and women alike were carried away by violence. But the force that defined the peculiar forms of social life in the mining cities was the ease with which enormous fortunes could be made and the opportunities for new business. The mercantile spirit was irrepressible, and in the end it triumphed over all social concerns, perhaps

because many foreigners, especially Portuguese, flocked into the Hispanic dominions and changed the old-fashioned attitude of the Spaniards so attached to their *hidalguía*. And yet, in some cities, the wealthy turned themselves into *hidalgos* at the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteen century, precisely when the very notion of *hidalguía* was beginning to be questioned.

From the very beginning, economic activity had played an essential role in port cities. It was precisely in these cities that the mercantile spirit became most pronounced and acquired a character much more akin to that of the bourgeois cities of Europe. Using figures from 1574, López de Velazco illustrates the differences in social structure from city to city, as he cites the number of Spaniards in each social group. He finds, for instance, sixteen *encomenderos* among the thirty families that reside in Popayán; among the five hundred Spaniards in Guatemala City, seventy were *encomenderos* and the rest colonists and merchants; among the thirty-six who resided in Cali, twenty-four were *encomenderos*; there were sixty-three *encomenderos* out of the eight hundred residents of Cuzco; and twenty-three out of the three hundred of Trujillo in Perú. But when López de Velazco refers to Potosí, he writes as follows: "Four hundred Spanish houses, and not a single *encomendero*: all are merchants, dealers and miners, most of them people who move around." Of the inhabitants of Veracruz he says that they were all merchants; among the two hundred and fifty residents of Cartagena, sixteen were *encomenderos* and the rest merchants and dealers.

Portobelo, Havana, Cartagena, Veracruz, La Guayra, Santo Domingo, Acapulco, Panama City, Guayaquil, El Callao, Valparaíso, Buenos Aires, São Vicente, Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Recife, all the port cities had their distinctive lifestyle. Major businesses had set up their headquarters there, so that these cities became home to the most powerful economic groups, which were a determined, pragmatic and rather efficient lot. From the beginning, the groups that did business with the mother country had a very definite social and mental profile. Soon, another profile would emerge among two new business types that became especially significant because they amassed big fortunes and came to occupy a unique position in social life: the slave-traders and the smugglers. Not unlike the groups that made up the urban societies in mining cities, these business groups had little scruples when it came down to handling their own interests, which they took in their own hands. They may have chosen these activities because they were only too determined to get rich, and to do it quickly, and had little room for social concerns. But they forged, in any case, the type of bourgeois merchant profile that would gain more and more acceptance as colonial life went on.

In Brazil, a number of unique circumstances shaped the mercantile, bourgeois model of life. Sugar exports opened up much wider prospects of the world market than the ones Spain's monopolistic policies could ever allow. These prospects improved when the Dutch established themselves in Recife, in 1630, and made it a typical bourgeois, mercantile city, patterned after far-away Amsterdam, as were other cities that they founded: New Amsterdam, today's New York, in 1624, and

Willemstad, in Curacao, in 1634. Under Maurice of Nassau, between 1637 and 1644, Recife was not simply an economic emporium but also a model of the bourgeois way of life that the Portuguese imitated and continued after they recaptured the city in 1654. When Recife was compared to Olinda, which had maintained the social traditions of the *hidalgos*, the contrast between the two types of cities was even starker. Recife showed the way that the upper classes would eventually follow, even though some vague aristocratic tendencies were kept alive.

The significance of the mercantile and bourgeois way of life increased with the establishment of the Companhia Geral do Comercio do Brasil (1649) and of the Real Compañía Guipuzcoana de Caracas (1730). Trading posts and their agents brought new economic and social attitudes to the cities where they operated. Those who saw their interests and lifestyle affected by the new trading system rose up against it. The rebellions headed by Jerónimo Barbalho in Rio de Janeiro and Captain Leín in Venezuela responded to this dual, social and economic, concern.

The cities where the *hidalgos* prevailed and those where business was preeminent fashioned two distinct styles of life, according to the tendencies of their dominant classes. The two styles did in fact coexist in every city, because the *hidalgos* did not avoid getting their hands into mercantile deals nor did the mercantile groups ever abandon their hope of attaining one day the luster of the idle rich. Aristocratic status had been everyone's overriding obsession during the first two centuries following the founding of the cities. And it was not until the mid-eighteenth century that a growing pragmatism, sustained by the ideas of the Enlightenment, made it possible for all the fortune seekers to abandon, little by little, their fantasies of showing off old family trees and coats of arms. When the simple fact of being rich seemed enough of a merit, no one tried to hide the fact that his coat of arms had been bought and paid for any longer, perhaps because the Crown itself did not hide the fact that it had set the price.

From Naked Blueprint to Actual City

The pace —fast or slow— at which cities developed was visible in the way in which their societies grew and became stable and diversified, or their economic activity progressed, or forms of life more typically urban were adopted, or new cultural concerns began to emerge. But a city's progress was most evident in the concrete, physical fact of its layout and buildings. Founding a city was a symbolic act, but it did not give the city its physical reality. The blueprint had to become a building project, and the project, in turn, an actual city, materially built. Once a site was definitely selected, the project would be slowly set into motion, as government, religious or private buildings were erected on the plots that had been previously mapped and formally awarded to the settlers or set

aside for public works.

Whenever the blueprint became a project, the actual scale and layout would reveal how the founders viewed the prospects of their new cities. Some capitals —México City, Lima, Buenos Aires— were assigned an initial urban area of over one hundred blocks. But for the vast majority of cities, the initial area assigned to them was of about twenty-five blocks. In both cases, it took a long time for cities to be compactly built outside of their downtown areas. By the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, very few cities had grown beyond that perimeter, although some scanty suburban areas were beginning to form here and there.

Urban population grew rather slowly. In the early eighteenth century, México City may have had up to forty thousand residents, Lima thirty thousand, and Bahia ten thousand. But none of the other Latin American cities could match even the last of these figures. Recife and Buenos Aires had a population of about eight thousand, São Paulo and Caracas about seven thousand, Bogotá and Asunción about five thousand. These were thus small urban societies that could not hasten construction on all their vacant lots and felt no need to do so. Besides, with the exception of the major capitals and some mining or port cities, there weren't enough resources, during this period, to raise cities out of nothing. Urban construction went on: private homes, public buildings, churches, and convents. But well into the eighteenth century, the physical development of cities was still slow, and only exceptionally did it go beyond the blueprint of the founders.

All the same, what had once been country land was parceled out and transformed into an urban space: the virtual city of plans and blueprints was progressively becoming a reality, as new churches or new houses were built and especially as an entire society was carrying its daily life in that space, filling it with its memories and aspirations. On the blueprint, the city square was an open area, vacant like all the others. The first thing to be built there was the pillory; the market came soon after: the empty space began to fill and take shape, and it took on all its functions as a square when the city hall, the church, even the jail, were built on its edge. The square became the center for social contact in the city, no matter how modest its buildings might have been or how rudimentary its public services, often limited to a water well. But it was a few steps away from the city hall, the governor's mansion or the court building; and it was there that most economic transactions took place, as did the few public celebrations held by the city. For this reason, the main square was the first area that deserved the attention of the city authorities, the hustle and bustle of the marketplace permitting. On occasion, some of the open space of the square was reduced by temporary constructions that would give roof to the merchants; but the space was of such value to everyone that it could never be permanently reduced. The main streets would always lead to the square; and this original layout was carefully maintained in almost every city. On these streets, near the square, the wealthiest citizens built their homes. Those of lesser means settled further away, frequently

around the churches —parishes at times— which began to be built on the lands that the different orders had been granted. Near these churches, smaller squares were created, each with its own water well; these minor squares became small neighborhood centers where the common people—sometimes Indians and blacks— found their meeting place.

The most important urban phenomenon was the unplanned birth of the suburbs, which initially were home for Indians, blacks, and other marginal groups. In the two centuries that followed the founding of México City, several new neighborhoods were added to the ones that Alonso García Bravo had planned in his original blueprint. Of these new neighborhoods, the most important ones were Santa Cruz and Santiago Tlatelolco. In Lima, two new neighborhoods were formed: El Cercado, a settlement of converted Indians, and San Lázaro, a slum on the banks of the Rimac river, which was settled by Indian shrimpers; a hospital for lepers was established in San Lázaro soon after its settlement. In Bahia, to the original upper city was added the *cidade baixa* (lower city) along the waterfront. Recife, which had started as a fishing village next to Olinda, became a city under the Dutch. When the Portuguese reclaimed the area, Recife became once again a suburb, and it remained as such until its residents succeeded in making the authorities recognize the importance of their town.

Cities developed slowly and sparingly, but their growth was, in fact, a steady process of creation. Everyday activities gave order and structure to urban life and made apparent some urgent needs that had to be immediately addressed, particularly in major cities. With two or three thousand residents, a city could perhaps function without regulating its own growth or organizing its services. But when their populations reached or surpassed ten thousand, it became obvious that their lack of planning was hampering urban life. The answer was, precisely, a number of attempts at urban planning. When México City was founded —literally, implanted on a lagoon— and began to grow, the natural draining system was altered, and the city soon felt the threat of flooding. The first floods occurred in 1553 and recurred several times afterwards, while the authorities found little they could do except deal with the consequences. But at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Viceroy Montesclaros began constructing the aqueduct of Chapultepec to supply water to the city, he also started work on a vast drainage system, which took longer than a century to be completed. Water supply was a common concern of all cities, and their answer was to build water wells in the main squares; but they did little to improve their sewer systems, which were just open ditches running through the streets. In the capital cities, efforts were made to pave some streets; in México City, drainage and sewer ditches were also built, as well as bridges to cross the canals. Montesclaros —who left México to become Viceroy in Perú— ordered the construction of a new bridge over the Rimac river in Lima to replace the ones that had collapsed. This new bridge, built with stone pillars and masonry arches, was completed in 1610.

Only in major cities was there some concern to improve their appearance and to pattern them after the model of the metropolitan courts. But they had to begin with the most rudimentary things. It was a big step ahead to remove the pillory from the main square and do away with the sight, not of the executions that fascinated the crowds, but of the dead bodies left on display at the very heart of town. When the authorities wanted to lend some air of dignity to the city, as one chronicler put it, they thought of creating places for recreation. México City, Old Guatemala and Lima were all proud of their promenades: from the times of Viceroy Luis de Velasco, it was customary in México City to go out for a walk to the forest of Chapultepec. But it was in Recife, under the Dutch administration of Maurice de Nassau, that a complete remodeling of the city was ever attempted, following a plan by Peter Post.

In fact, what actually changed the look of the cities, during the first two centuries of their existence, was the rise of good architecture. Describing Lima, Father Bernabé Cobo wrote in 1629:

Generally, the houses are built of adobe. The early structures were crude, covered with mats woven from reeds and rustic wood from mangrove trees. Their portals and patios were neither imposing nor beautiful, although quite large and spacious. However, almost all these early structures have since been torn down in order to build more expensive homes using solid, intricately carved wood, with strong beams and oak ceilings, and every imaginable curiosity that the beauty of art can conceive. By now, few homes are covered with matting, because of the rain. For when the rain is heavy, water runs through the matted roofs and the houses leak in many places. But few building are made from quarried stone either, because the materials are lacking. In this entire valley there is not a single good quarry from which to cut building stone. Thus, when stone is used, it has to be brought by sea from Panama, five hundred leagues away, or from Arica, two hundred leagues from here, or from other places far away.

México City did not have that problem, because it was built out of the wreckage of the temples of Tenochtitlán: “There,” wrote Friar Toribio de Benavente, “died many Indians, and it took many years to extricate their bodies; and out of that came countless stones.” With those stones, they built the noble houses on Tacuba street that in 1554 earned the admiration of Cervantes de Salazar. One character in his *Diálogos describes them as follows: “They are all magnificent and built at great expense, as befits such noble and wealthy occupants. They are so solid and secure that one would think they are not houses, but fortresses.” Among them, those that most resembled a real castle were the so-called “old homes of Cortez,” which were built in front of the main square and made up “not just a palace, but another city altogether.”*

Besides México City, stone was also in abundant supply in Cuzco and Quito. But in other cities, fine

houses were built with adobe, brick, and wood. Three hundred of them, according to González de Nájera, had been built in Santiago de Chile at the beginning of the seventeenth century; and many were "the noble homes of sons and descendants of *conquistadores*." In Tunja, adobe, brick and wood were used to build the home of its founder, Gonzalo Suárez Rendín, as well as those of Juan de Vargas, the King's notary, and other public officials and *encomenderos*. The same materials were used in Old Guatemala to build the homes of Bernal Díaz del Castillo and the judge Luis de las Infantas, as well as those along a single street that was called "Nobility" because —as Friar Tomás Gage pointed out in 1639— its residents were the best families of the city. Not even the house of the Ponces, in San Juan de Puerto Rico, was built in stone, although stone had been the material called for in the original plan.

Father Cobo wrote that in Lima "the public buildings outshine the private homes." The same could be said of other cities as well. Yet the Viceroy's palace in Lima was not a sumptuous building; and, although somewhat better, neither was the Viceroy's residence in México City, not at least until the original building burned down in 1692. The following year, construction began on the new residence. Completed four years later, that building did have a certain grandeur. The palace of the Captains General in Old Guatemala and the palaces of Recife and Bahia were quite elegant, but the seats of government in Bogotá, Caracas, Asunción or Buenos Aires were rather modest, as were, during these two centuries, the city halls, which, like the seats of government, usually faced the main square.

Most architectural interests and concerns were focused on religious buildings. The empty city of the original blueprint rapidly filled up with churches, convents, and schools, which together occupied a good portion of urban space. In the early seventeenth century, a small city like Santiago de Chile had, as Alonso González Nájera said, about three hundred houses and "four monasteries, two convents and one school." As for the most important city of the Indies, Bernardo de Balbuena devoted an entire chapter of his *Grandeza Mexicana* to the religious buildings of México City. Thus, before long, some cities would acquire that very special character still visible in places like Cholula, Bahia, Puebla, and Quito, with their many religious buildings, or that distinctive urban layout that results from setting, at the heart of the city, a large religious building, such as the convent of San Francisco in Tlaxcala, or the two fortress-like convents of El Carmen, one in Bahia, the other in Olinda; or, in Arequipa, the immense grounds of the convent, better the citadel, of Santa Catalina; or, in São Paulo, the Jesuit College, which itself was the heart of the city.

Once a city was founded, one of the first buildings to be erected was the cathedral or head church. The buttressed houses naturally came first. That is why, in 1554, when the imposing fortress-like homes of the first settlers of México City had become well-known and admired by many, one of the characters in Cervantes de Salazar's *Diálogos* could say: "It is a shame that a city, famous probably

like no other, and with so many wealthy citizens, should have such a small, humble and unadorned church in its most public place." And yet, by that time, the Archbishop had "a house with elegant doors and lintels and a roof with towers, at either extreme, much taller than the one downtown;" the structure of the house and its construction were so solid that, some would say, "not even mines shall bring it down."

As soon as the circumstances allowed, cathedrals were built; and when they tumbled down, as frequently happened, they were rebuilt, each time better than before, sturdier and with more splendor. By the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, magnificent cathedrals had been built in Santo Domingo, Guadalajara and La Paz, México City, Salvador de Bahia, Chuquisaca and Trujillo, Puebla, Lima and Cuzco, these last three with original designs by the architect Francisco Becerra. Once their towers and porticoes were completed, these cathedrals, which faced the main squares, became imposing structures that dominated their urban centers. It usually took many years to complete the decoration of a cathedral, which was, as much as the construction, the work of Spanish artisans and their native apprentices. In Quito, the Franciscans opened a school where Indians were trained to master all the arts and crafts of building.

Different religious orders entered into fierce competition to impose their influence on the cities. From the very start and in almost every city, Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, Mercedarians, and Jesuits obtained large plots of land where they would build their convents and churches. Donations and alms supported the construction work, and in the first two centuries of colonial life, the *hidalgo* cities came to have quite a conventual air about them. In Quito, the Franciscans built an architectural complex of almost thirty thousand square meters, composed of a convent and three adjacent churches: San Francisco, San Buenaventura, and a third one known as *La Cantuña.* Describing the complex that the Franciscans had built in México City, Friar Agustín de Vetancourt said:

It has almost three hundred cells, where prelates, residents, sick people and guests live alongside nearly two hundred monks; there are additional cells —in an upper floor, in a lower one, and between floors— that can accommodate many other residents. All the dwellings are well-furnished, without regard for rank or station, and they are appointed to suit the occupants position, with passages and offices as each may require.

In Tlaxcala, the Franciscans had, besides the convent, the Church of the Assumption, the open chapel of the Holy Sepulcher, the hospital and, in the enormous atrium, another chapel, the entire complex walled like a citadel. The complex in Puebla was no less grandiose, and there were important groups of religious buildings in other cities, such as La Paz, Lima, Salvador de Bahia, Cuzco, Bogotá, Sucre, and Arequipa, to name but a few.

The Dominicans also had their share of city plots, where they built their churches and convents. In Puebla, their buildings were of exceptional artistic quality, especially the Rosary Chapel. In México City, their complex opened onto the porticoed square of Santo Domingo. In Lima, Quito, Oaxaca, Cuzco, Santo Domingo, Salvador de Bahia, and so many other cities, their buildings gave proof of the wealth and influence of the order. The buildings of the other two mendicant orders —the Carmelites and the Augustinians— were less imposing, but they had nonetheless countless churches and convents; some of them, like that of El Carmen in Quito, and those of San Agustin in Lima, Quito and Bogotá, were important religious centers in the life of the cities, as well as monuments of exceptional beauty. The Mercedarians, in turn, built opulent churches in Lima, Quito, and Cuzco.

The influence of the Jesuits was also very strong, and their power was reflected in their churches and colleges. The church they built in Guanajuato was an extraordinary art display, as were those in Quito or Potosí. But it was their church in Cuzco that surpassed all the others, with its remarkable facade and its imposing structure that stood, almost defiantly, facing the cathedral.

Countless new churches were built in the cities. Each of them drew the particular devotion of some group of the faithful. As time passed, churches grew in number, and vast sums were invested in them. In his *Grandeza Mexicana*, Balbuena said the following about the wealth in land and the revenues of the religious buildings in México:

Sus fundaciones, dotación y renta¨

de qué guarismos compondrá la suma

por más letras y ceros que consienta?

The number of churches increased so much that in 1664 the council of México City requested that the King forbid the religious orders to purchase new land or found any more convents.

It was not the secular constructions but the religious buildings that left their mark upon the cities of the gentry. They embodied the significance of the church in those societies, as well as some essential traits and attitudes of their upper classes. They also embodied some important social and cultural facts, since the architectural styles responded not only to the weight of Spain's influence but also to the particular conditions of city and region. Thus, for instance, Elizabethan style was the choice for the cathedral of Santo Domingo; attempts were also made to introduce the plateresque

style; Herrera's style was the first important influence; the decisive influence was that of the Baroque. This is true not only because the Baroque produced the largest number of major architectural works but because it offered a general paradigm, for both construction and decor, able to encompass every form of expression that arose in the societies taking shape in the New World. There were, thus, quite a few forms of Baroque. Many of them were more or less faithful imitations of Iberian models. But many new ones arose freely out of the contact between the two worlds. These new forms constitute the so-called *barroco mestizo* (half-breed or hybrid Baroque): the church of San Lorenzo, in Potosí, with its statue of an Indian St. Michael, the church of La Misericordia, in Olinda, and the one of Santo Domingo, in Puebla, expressed to the utmost degree that fusion of Iberian genius and indigenous imagination.

It is fair to say that, in some way, the emergence of this hybrid style foreshadowed a certain crisis in Baroque society; for a Hispanic upper class that puts up with a dark-skinned Virgin is indeed conceding that it has assimilated some elements of the native cultures: their food, their dances and songs, their clothing, a few costumes, and perhaps even some superstitions, which are, nonetheless, ideas. Undoubtedly, this happened in many cities, and the change was helped in good measure by the flock of servants who were the background of domestic life and took part in raising and educating their lord's children, and also perhaps by the throng of women with whom the young learned the secrets of love and mature men practiced them. The experience of living side-by-side and dealing with one another ultimately taught many that the so-called "castes" were also composed of human beings and that even the Virgin and St. Michael could have copper-colored skin. But to admit this was to acknowledge an important flaw in the very conception of the Baroque society of the Indies. The Christ of Miracles in Lima, the Virgin of Guadalupe in México, and the Christ of the Earthquakes in Cuzco contributed to the crisis of this society.

The significance of the Christ of the Earthquakes and other hybrid images lay in the fact that they were endowed by popular imagination with the power to forestall all the natural forces that threatened the city: earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions. Natural disasters had destroyed many cities at one time or another, and some more than once. But few cities were ever completely abandoned. When the authorities decided to relocate Guatemala City, many chose to remain behind, in what came to be called Antigua; from then on there were two Guatemalas, though in fact there were three. There is a long list of cities that fell down only to rise up again, like Cuzco in 1650, Guatemala in 1717, or Caracas in 1641.

There was always the chance that a city might fall to an enemy attack, especially those that were ports. To escape that danger, cities began to build citadels and castles, like those in Havana, San Juan, Veracruz, Cartagena and Valparaíso. The ramparts of a military fort may well have been the first major construction of a city. Behind the ramparts, the actual city could rise out of the naked lines

of its blueprint.

From *Conquistador* to *Hidalgo*: A Shift in Mentality

There is little doubt that, under the *conquistadores,* the conquered people lived a burdensome existence. The appearance of these alien men meant for the native people their own destruction as an autonomous society, and from then on, they had to accept these outsiders as the masters of their own destiny. They were only too aware of their calamity. Witness: their mass suicides. Many of them also rebelled and fought, knowing that it was a fight to the death. But in time, all they were left with was resignation and hatred. They came to terms with their subjection, and adaptive mechanisms began to set in, especially through the *mestizos*. Surviving and even prospering were not impossible if one could find his/her way through the twists and turns that led to insertion in the new society. And in urban societies, that way was not hard to find. Yet, social insertion did not lessen their hatred. The conquered people accepted the beliefs that were imposed upon them, but they translated those beliefs into their own terms and, at the same time, created a unique symbiosis between what was theirs and what had been acquired: one day some artist would give it plastic expression; many did it with words, altering —perhaps unknowingly— the deep vein of their traditional wisdom under the weight of the teachings they received. They preserved, however, all that made up their daily life: the way they dressed, their eating habits, their pottery, utensils, adornments, remedies and cures, their farming practices, their ways of buying and selling in the marketplace, their forms of greeting each other, their family life, as much as the Spanish masters would allow. All this they kept very much alive, but with the sense of inferiority that the conquest had suddenly aroused in them. Theirs became the mentality of despair, the attitude of vanquished people who are no longer masters of their own destiny.

The *conquistadores* were indeed the masters of destiny, that of the conquered people as well as their own. They had very clear and definite ideas about what that destiny was to be: they wanted to possess —for their own benefit and on behalf of their King— the lands, properties and forced labor of the conquered people. They wanted this with a dreadful passion, with a determination that nothing could defeat. Their design was simple but so vast in scope that it encompassed a view of the world they had just come in contact with. It was a world to be possessed and controlled with complete disregard for whatever it had been before. And it had to be possessed by all of the conquerors, in every region, in every valley, and by each of them personally, so that each could be, from that very moment, the lord of his own domain. The first and most significant trait of the mentality of conquest was its epic sense of life.

But once the crucial moment of conquest had passed, it was obvious that the new domains had to be part of a stable order, one that ensured both their possession and the privileged condition of their possessors. That stable order could not be the work of a single *conquistador*, not even of all of them together, but only of the state —Spain or Portugal— as the protector of its military, economic, and cultural rear-guard. That order called for the organization of a new society.

The *conquistador*, no doubt, had received a system of ideas, some of them about society, in his mother country. He knew, for instance, that in his homeland his prospects were few, whereas the New World was opening to him a wealth of opportunities. Once he arrived in the new lands, he imagined the society that he, with his own hands, would fashion there. Unlike the nuanced society of his homeland, the one he imagined was brutally divided into two camps: conqueror and conquered belonged to juxtaposed but thoroughly separate strata, with a line between them that no one could ever cross. Thus, his society was to be, in that respect, irreducibly dual. The *conquistador* brought, *de facto*, such a society into being and, after the fact, he justified its existence by making it the law. That society was at once the necessary condition for what the *conquistador* had set out to accomplish and the irreversible consequence of what he had already done.

Soon, however, the church and the state in the homeland of the *conquistadores* began to question some aspects of that dual society. The Dominicans were the first to raise their voice. In 1510, in a sermon given in Santo Domingo on the fourth Sunday of Advent, Father Antón de Montesinos, speaking on behalf of the entire community, rebuked the *encomenderos* for their treatment of the Indians and questioned their right to force them into service:

By what right, by what law do you have these Indians in such cruel and horrible servitude? By what authority have you made such hateful wars against these peoples who used to live meekly and in peace here on their land, where you have now consumed countless of them with your unspeakable killings and ravaging? How can you keep them so oppressed and weary, not giving them any food or nursing them in their sickness. They fall ill because of the excessive labors you exact from them. And they die, or better said, you kill them, only to extract and acquire gold each day. Are these not men? Do they not have rational souls? Are you not commanded to care for them as you would for yourselves?

A lengthy debate began, with the *encomenderos* on one side and, on the other, a group of priests and theologians who ultimately won the support of the state. The Laws of Burgos of 1512, and later the New Laws of 1542, reflected the critical views of the priests. Yet these and other provisions served only to improve the personal protection of the Indians and further their conversion, but they did nothing to undermine the foundations of the dual society. Bartolomé de las Casas, Juan de

Zumárraga, Vasco de Quiroga, Lázaro Bejarano, Motolinía, Pedro Claver, Francisco Solano, Antonio Vieira, Diego de Avendaño, among many others, were the advocates and persistent defenders of the Indians and, in some cases, of the black slaves as well. They converted and educated them; they protected them against mistreatment, as far as their power and influence could reach; they ministered to them in sickness and tried to make sure that they died with some decency. Many officials fought with remarkable tenacity to enforce the laws for the protection of the Indians; but neither Church nor State was able to make the protection of the exploited more important than the dictates of economic exploitation.

In the view of the *encomenderos*, some of the State measures were excessive, although, in truth, those measures barely touched their rights and interests. True, the State provided education to the children of the Indian chieftains and gave some form of preferential treatment to some members of distinguished Indian families. But, at the same time, encouraged by Viceroy Toledo, Perúvian jurists set about trying to prove the illegitimacy of the Incas. Indian rebellions were suppressed with deliberate harshness, to set an example, while all necessary precautions were taken to ensure the survival of the new society —Indians, for instance, were legally forbidden to bear arms. The dual society was an unshakable principle, sustained by the State and strengthened by an acceptance of the obligations imposed by charity. But charity was as far as their sense of moral responsibility would go. And this was the second defining trait of the mentality of conquest.

Although fiercely wedded to their conception of a dual society, the *conquistadores* could not make it fit perfectly into the schemes they had brought from their homelands. What they had conceived was entirely original in terms of social components and, above all, more flexible. To shape their new society, the *conquistadores* believed they needed a certain degree of latitude, some margin of independence, not simply because the problems they encountered were so unique, but mostly because they were so far away from their homeland. Obviously, they had in fact a considerable margin of independence, but they were still required to account for their actions or were forcefully constrained by a power on its way to absolutism, a power also with a bent for minute detail and subtle casuistry. As if anticipating the monologue of Sigismund, the Baroque response of the *conquistadores* was: *Se acata, pero no se cumple* ("the law is obeyed but not carried out").

If the principle of a dual society was one of the essential traits of the conqueror's view of his social world, the distinction between "obeying" and "carrying out" was equally essential to his view of the political order in the New World. "Obeying" appropriately named the need to recognize the structure of authority established by the imperial powers, without which the New World could not endure. "Not carrying out the law" pointed to the persistence of an old political conception of the will of the people. This old tradition, born in the Middle Ages and invoked by the *comuneros* in the sixteenth century, gained strength with the Jesuit philosophers Suárez and Mariana and with the unique

experience of the conquest, which demanded independence and decisions suited to the circumstances. Respect for the will of the people —people here understood as the conquering group— was the third defining trait of the mentality of conquest. As the Crown had accepted the principle of a dual society, it also accepted, within certain limits, the principle of respect for its people's will.

Of course, the mother country was quick to put down, with harsh, authoritative acts, any attempt to overstep the accepted limits of independence: this was how Gonzalo Pizarro, Lope de Aguirre, or Álvaro de Oyín met their demise. But enough latitude and independence remained to accommodate the basic political process that began shortly after the land was settled and the cities founded. In that process, the world of the conquistadores was turned into a world of bureaucrats, and the epic society of bold adventurers into the baroque society of colonizers. This was the stage initiated by Mendoza y Velazco, Hurtado de Mendoza and Toledo, Tomé de Souza and Mem de Sá. This transformation became even more pronounced as the *conquistadores* began to die off and their descendants inherited their rights and privileges. The last years of Hernán Cortez in México or of Diego Losada in El Tocuyo are perhaps good symbols of the transition. After them, the society of the New World would be one of colonizers, truly submissive to the authority of colonial officials and proud of the power of their mother country.

At this point, the contempt for the American world became more pointed and visible than ever before. America was not a place to settle down: it was a stopover, a place to get rich and attain a social position that was to be enjoyed in the homeland. As early as the seventeenth century, a native of Bahia —Father Vicente del Salvador— would say in his *Hístoria del Brasil*:

And so, there are those who, however firmly their roots are planted in this soil, expect to take everything back to Portugal; they want everything there. And this is true not only of those who were born in Portugal, but also of those who were born here. For both have made good use of the land, not as lords but as exploiters; and only for the sake of profit, they leave it despoiled.

The dream of returning home was revealing not simply of the value assigned to the New World but of how little those born in the homeland were committed or attached to the lands they had come to inhabit. Those who wanted to take everything back to Spain or Portugal, wanted nothing in the New World, nothing for the new society they themselves had fashioned and of which they still were part. What each of them wanted, he wanted only for himself, as part of his personal adventure.

When the *conquistadores* turned into colonizers, the most forceful trait of their new mentality was the desire for social ascent. This desire was, in fact, an ideology, for it entailed a definite vision of

society, of man's role within it, and of the opportunities it offered to the individual. Society was to serve just one purpose: to enable the colonist to get rich and attain a respectable position so that he might ultimately be recognized as a lord. In the early eighteenth century, Father Antonil wrote about Brazil:

Being the owner of a plantation was an honor to which many aspired, because it means being served, obeyed, and respected by many people. And if the plantation owner is, as he should be, a gentleman of wealth and administrative talent, then the esteem accorded to him in Brazil is equal to the esteem that *hidalgos* in the homeland accord to the titles bestowed by the King.

The right to be respected as an *hidalgo* was the right to be in command, the right to have privileges that others did not have. These were the concrete signs of the seigneurial idea that was taking place among the colonizers. In that process, those who succeeded in their colonizing efforts would earn all at once the same respect and dignity enjoyed by *hidalgos*, in Spain and Portugal, who had five or ten generations of noble ancestry behind them. As time went on, what actually mattered was no longer the glory inherited from the founder of a lineage nor even the position his descendants enjoyed. What mattered was the power to increase and multiply themselves that the imperial order gave to all these things. That order was a social system that Spain and Portugal had created, one that rewarded a vast array of individual deeds, all part of a powerful institutionalized structure that weighed decisively on world politics.

To accept that order was to acknowledge the rigorous system that had been fashioned by Manuel I, Juan II and King Sebastian in Portugal, and the Catholic Monarchs and the first Habsburg in Spain. It was an absolutist, centralized political system in which the vassal was proud of his unconditional obedience to his sovereign, although he knew only too well that his king was at times controlled by court favorites or by elites who wielded power at their discretion. But absolute power guaranteed that the system was kept whole; no one could question it, much less those on the colonial edges of the empire. Behind that structure of power was, in fact, the ideological system of the Counter-reformation, which provided doctrinal grounds for the political and social orders, both in the mother countries and in the colonies. It was the Counter-reformation that inspired and furthered the rise of a Baroque society.

The Baroque society of the Indies, however, could not hold the ideological ground that European absolutism and the Counter-reformation had established in the homeland. In the Indies, Baroque society was a direct consequence of the conquest: it was similar in form but far from being identical to European society. Since the components of that new Baroque society were essentially different, its process of transformation was a constant threat to the formal order of things. The ideology of the

colonizers held on to that order, but the experience of everyday life revealed that the components of colonial society were moving in different directions. Within the dominant class itself, the distinction between Spaniards or Portuguese and *criollos* was a source of constant instability. The relation between a Spanish father and his son born in the New World seemed to threaten the unity of the white group: if the opposition was apparent when the father was a *conquistador*, it became even more visible and harder to reconcile when the father was a mere official or a merchant. Little by little, the *criollo*, unlike the colonist born on the peninsula, developed an intense attachment to the land, a sense of belonging that grew stronger with each generation. Within the group subjected to domination, the *mestizos* added to the sense of instability, because they became themselves a sort of concealed bridge across the divide between the two large groups that made up colonial society. And this was so not only because the *mestizos* received at times the protection of their white fathers or relatives, but also because their own condition made them the ideal mediators between the two social groups. To maintain the colonial system strong, it was necessary to hold on to form; yet it was equally necessary to remember a rather obvious fact: it was force that sustained the system.

This coupling of adherence to form and reliance on sheer power shaped the mentality of the colonists who turned into *hidalgos.* On the Iberian peninsula, nobility —*hidalguía*— was an image of man that had its roots in feudalism but had gone past the baronial stage and the age of chivalry to fashion a new model —the courtier— suited to the new concept of monarchy that began in the sixteenth century. This new model was obviously reminiscent of Italy and the Renaissance. An *hidalgo* had to live for his decorum, with honor and grace, and to attest to man's enduring dignity, as the Italian humanists and the books of chivalry had declared, as Fernán Pérez de Oliva wrote in his *Diálogo sobre la dignidad del hombre* , or as Baltasar de Castiglione would advise in the book that he entitled, precisely, *The Courtier.* Castiglione warned that these newfound dignity and decorum were no longer those of the haughty war baron, not even those of the refined lord who took pleasure in receiving knights and ladies in his castle and entertained them with troubadours and minstrels, once his peers had proven their talent in an elegant joust or a daring hunt. They were, instead, the dignity and decorum of the knight who had let go of the last vestiges of his old pride and had accepted his place in a strictly hierarchical society presided over by a monarch or a nobleman of the highest rank. In such society, respect for his honor was assured, and favor was possible. He need not be ashamed of begging meekly for that favor or giving a humble, if inflated, account of the services he had rendered. The center of that society was the court —ceremonious and enslaved to etiquette, severe in its forms but plagued by intrigue and greed, always agitated by the hope of attaining royal favor and the fear of losing it. The Portuguese Gil Vicente described that court in the sixteenth century, as did the unknown author of the *Epístola Moral* (Moral Epistle):

Fabio, las esperanzas cortesanas

prisiones son do el ambicioso muere

y donde al más astuto nacen canas.

When transplanted to the Indies, the mentality of the *hidalgos* intensified some of its traits and modified others. In Brazil, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that mentality clung to the forms of rural life, but it slowly began to move towards urban forms, like those that prevailed in Spanish America from the beginning. On the peninsula, it was still possible for a nobleman to reject the new court manners, because he could find refuge in a rural world at one with his own culture and traditions. But rural life in the Indies wasn't welcoming to those who came from their homeland, precisely because it was completely alien to their traditions and their culture. What resonance, what value would the ear of a miner or an *encomendero* find in the Arcadian nostalgia of the eclogues of Garcilaso or Sá de Miranda, or the invitation of Friar Luis de León to a peaceful retreat in the countryside, or the thoughts of Antonio de Guevara in his *Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea* ? In the late seventeenth century, Gregorio de Mattos repeated those same themes in Brazil, praising the sweet country life and loathing life at court in Bahia:

Se estando au lá, na corte, tão seguro

Do nescio impertinente, que porfía,

A deixei por un mal que era futuro:

Como estaría, vendo na Bahia

(Que das cortes do mundo, vil mentira)

Os roubos, a injusticia, e a tiranía?

If, when I was there, in court, so safe

from the impertinent fool, who insists in his folly,

I left in search of a future misfortune:

How was I to be, when I looked in Bahia

(which is a sham court, the vilest in the world)

and saw all its theft, and injustice and tyranny?

But this was not the general attitude. Even one hundred years earlier, Father Anchieta had nothing but praise for Bahia. In the fall, from April to June, he said, "the 'noble mansions' on the main streets were reopened; commerce along the waterfront came back to life, as sugar was loaded onto ships; there were bullfights in the *Terreiro*, processions marched, and everything was full of life and movement." Gradually, the gentry came to spend more and more time in their city homes.

A preference for city life had been the norm from the start in Spanish America. In fact, the accepted view held that the city was a specific tool of domination. On that view, the founders had drawn their original scheme, and experience seemed to bear it out. As it grew and became more settled, the city performed with increased efficiency its role of planning and presiding over regional expansion, and as it did so, it made rural life patently subordinate to the urban world. The city appeared more and more as an enclave of a European lifestyle to which groups of non-European origin were gradually adapting themselves. The countryside, in turn, preserved, beneath the surface, the vestiges of its original ways of life and offered an easy haven for all those who somehow sought to sidestep the colonial order.

As the colonists were turning themselves into *hidalgos*, they became increasingly inclined to reproduce, in some way, the model of the Iberian courts. No doubt, they were well aware of the harsh realities of colonial cities, which were nothing but the product of their designs and ambitions, so bitterly denounced by Balbuena:

Por todas partes la codicia a rodo,

que ya cuanto se trata y se practica

es interés de un modo o de otro modo.

Yet part of the mentality of the *hidalgos* —and not just in the Indies— was to embrace that Baroque conception of life, akin to dreaming, in which the harsh truth could be almost completely erased and covered by the vast fiction of the great theater of the world. In the Indies, the mentality of the *hidalgos* was decidedly urban; its model, however, was not that of the bourgeois or mercantile city but that of the court: a precarious court, barely discernible through the mud and pestilence of the streets, the vacant lots, the ambitious but still half-built churches, the despised lower castes. Behind that precarious appearance, however, lied a vast machinery that governed the existence of the upper classes and allowed them to lead a conventionally noble life.

The image of that illusory court, held by every city, even the humblest ones, was embellished in the descriptions of the major viceregal capitals until it became a rhetorical model. There certainly was the occasional sceptical chronicler or satiric poet who would unmask the roguishness of urban life: the "Portuguese Jew," who described the cities of the Perúvian viceroyalty, Juan del Valle y Caviedes of Lima, Gregorio de Mattos of Bahia, and even Juan Rodríguez Freyle of Santa Fe. But in their descriptions, most of the travelers as well as the chroniclers, who were generally clergymen in the service of the *hidalgos*, took great pains to emphasize the serene dignity of the noble life they saw —or believed they saw— in those modest but proud cities. They not always speak of virtues, but they do speak of the courtly splendor and the dignity and decorum with which the *hidalgos* overcame the harsh circumstances of their daily life. This idealized view is brought to an extreme in the poetry of Bernardo de Balbuena and Juan de Castellanos and in the works of the humanist Francisco Cervantes de Salazar.

Since it was so decidedly urban, the mentality of the *hidalgos* came face to face with the reality of the cities. As noblemen, the *hidalgos* despised the merchants; but there was, in turjuntos n, a vague and widespread attitude that poked fun at their inflated pretentiousness. The *hidalgo* without means was the one who had to put to the test the strength of his convictions. No matter how hard he would try to maintain the appearance of a noble way of life, he was constantly threatened by ridicule and haunted by the opportunities he would have if he were only willing to accept the real terms under which wealth was possible. Thus, another way of viewing life began to take shape and eventually became a new mindframe: unmistakably bourgeois on occasion, it was often both aristocratic and bourgeois, as business and economic activity appeared to be increasingly compatible with the forms of life that embodied the claim to old privileges.

The *tianguis* was, originally, the trading in Indian textiles; by extension, the term came to designate the open market where such trading took place.

Cajón—literally "box"—refers here to little booths made of wood with room enough for one person and some merchandise.

Hidalguia refers to the essential condition that distinguishes noblemen —*hidalgos*— from the common people: honorable ancestry, manly virtues, social high rank, wealth, and the exemption from the taxes owed to the Crown by peasants and townspeople.

The noun *indiano* was coined to refer to the Spaniard who had lived in the Indies, where —proverbially— he had amassed a large fortune. With time, the *indiano* became the stereotype of the lesser *hidalgos* with great ambitions and dubious ancestry.

Chapetón designated during the colonial period the Spaniard newly arrived in America.

Criado is not the exact equivalent of servant. It designates a person who has been brought up, cared for and educated by some patron and is considered a member of his household.

Estancia is a Spanish American term that designates a large extension of farmland mostly devoted to cattle raising.

Caballero—literally, "knight"—was the term used to refer to *hidalgos* of well-known ancestry and considerable rank.

Vecino—literally, "neighbor"—is the term that designated a permanent resident of a village, town or city, that is a "citizen."

CHAPTER 4: THE *CRIOLLO* CITIES

Although strapped within the dominion of the mother country, Latin American cities were leaning toward the mercantile world. In the second half of the eighteenth century, these cities began to turn to a freer economy, a more open and more bourgeois society, and vigorous new social and political ideas. Little by little, the walls that had kept them enclosed within the ideas and lifestyles of the mother country began to crumble. The momentum gathered by new ways of doing business

created new activities in the ports and capitals; it also created new attitudes among those who promoted and practiced those activities. Commerce was the key word for those who wanted to escape from an increasingly anachronistic stagnation: it seemed as if wealth had taken on a new form, one to which people would have to ascribe wholeheartedly if they wanted to further themselves.

"Progress" was another key word. But one that did not make its way easily into the vocabulary of the groups of *hidalgos* who controlled the baroque cities. For them, the economy was immutable, as was society. Still, the word progress was beginning to circulate among those social groups that were the connective tissue of baroque society and would come to have considerable power within a matter of decades. Enlightened Spaniards and Portuguese, or merchants who had more recently arrived, associated mercantilist freedom with progress and declared themselves to be progressive until they discovered the consequences that way of thinking could have in the colonies. There, the word progress took on a much more explosive meaning than it had in the mother countries, and those who uttered the word did so to underscore their desire for change. These were, above all, the bourgeoisie and the *criollos*; or more properly, the new *criollo* bourgeoisie whose emergence as a social group had shaken up traditional society and had left its singular imprint upon it.

Indeed, by that time Latin American society had already undergone a silent change and had started to turn *criollo*. But not all social groups took advantage of the change in the same way. The urban middle classes, more and more unmistakably *criollo*, would rapidly reach social prominence and constitute, by the end of the eighteenth century, the first native-born social elite in Latin American cities. Its members knew that they were not just transient; that their destiny was not to go back to the mother country to enjoy the wealth they had gained, but rather to remain in their cities and impose on them their own economic ambitions, their own forms of life and their way of thinking. They felt attached and committed to their city and their region and undertook with determination their role as the elite. Before long, they began to think about political independence and achieved it basically through urban revolutions that they themselves led.

With the rise of the *criollo* bourgeoisie, the system of baroque cities faded away, but there remained some vestiges that kept alive a nostalgic model of the court city. A half century before Independence, however, Latin American cities began to be unmistakably *criollo* and assumed their own social and cultural identity. Thus, they began to be authentically themselves and started their true process of steady and cohesive development, leaving behind the artificial structure of the city of *hidalgos*.

A wave of social mobility soon manifested itself. A society that had long been thought of as

immutable began to undergo rapid change. The political upheavals of Independence were but one sign and one phase of that change. The process predated and followed Independence. Depending upon the intensity of that process and the strength of the groups moving up, a new economy took shape and the cities moved forward, stagnated or regressed, according to the functions they were called upon to perform within the new system. In the end, almost all cities took on a decidedly urban look, as wealth increased enough for private houses and public buildings to be erected. The city took shape and its dwellers saw their horizons expand.

Some cities had libraries and newspapers, but the books and ideas that were shaking up Europe circulated in most of them. The *criollo* cities were born out of the Enlightenment and its philosophy. Charged with those new ideas, so precious to the bourgeoisie, the city strengthened its ideological vocation. Urban and rural life were scrutinized and subjected to various projects: some were more extreme than others, but almost all of them found staunch supporters. The city was a scene of great ideological tensions that expressed the social, economic and political leanings of unstable groups for whom power was the guarantee of considerable dominance. There were traditionalists and progressives, reformists and revolutionaries and, among the revolutionaries, moderates and Jacobeans. The cities simmered until Independence, and then became a boiling cauldron.

Old and New Economy

Important changes took place in economic life during the eighteenth century, but none of them affected the systems of production. Almost nothing changed in rural and mining areas, apart from the vicissitudes of prosperity and decline in some regions. Those who owned property or mines worked them as they had in days gone by, heedless of the laws governing Indian and black labor. When the system of the *encomienda* was abolished, Indian labor continued to be functional servitude; black slaves worked on few new plantations that were then established, like those of cacao in Venezuela and of sugar in Cuba. Both the plantations and the mines were better organized to some extent, simply because their routine had acquired a drill-like precision. And the cities felt the influence of the regulatory controls that trade and marketing had imposed. Different factors helped increase production for the urban market: first, the growth of cities and their increasing need for consumer goods, and also the introduction of new farming techniques. In ranching areas, the natural growth of herds increased the wealth of their owners. In mining areas, new veins appeared or old veins petered out, altering thus, for better or for worse, the economy of the region.

Rural economy was hard hit by the wars of Independence and the struggles through which the new political order was created. Land and mines changed hands many times over but were all hurt by

this social upheaval. War and revolution pulled the rural population into the mainstream but they also disrupted traditional patterns of production, sometimes with serious consequences. The Boves episode in Venezuela or those that later occurred in the plains, like the Rio de la Plata pampas, had a profound effect on agrarian life.

However, it was the development of mercantilism that most profoundly altered the economic order. Domestic markets grew, markedly so in the cities. And so grew the expectation of an increase in imported goods which, in turn, should have been matched by an increase in exports. But all that potential development was at odds with the monopolistic system that the mother countries enforced. Outside the colonial world, the increase in trade was very much in evidence. But in the colonies, the only visible signs of such increase were the goods that could be smuggled in. In fact, smuggling became a means not only for importing but for exporting goods as well. And all the opportunities that smuggling allowed to glimpse at sharpened the desire of the colonies to tear down the wall of restrictions imposed on them by the monopolistic system.

That desire was keenest in the port cities and in the capitals. Urban population was growing, but economic opportunities were not, or at least, not at the same pace. When the mother countries, influenced by new economic ideas, decided to liberalize the trading system, its expansion was remarkable, and the changes it brought about gave way to new and bolder prospects. In the late eighteenth century, both Portugal and Spain began adopting different measures to undo the restrictions that were thwarting the development of trade; in the early nineteenth century, business and trade groups in the colonies were already planning to expand their prospects even further by establishing direct relations with English trading centers. In the Hispanic world, that project became reality only after Independence; in Brazil, it began to take concrete shape after John VI arrived on the scene in 1808 and the ports were opened. In the principal trading centers, the Spaniards and Portuguese businessmen who had remained in the New World and the *criollos* who had gained prominence were joined by foreign businessmen who established themselves as trade agents with their respective countries. Little by little, imports and exports began to move through their hands; and they were the ones who introduced new trade flows.

Thus, a strong mercantile power consolidated itself in the cities of Latin America. Sectors associated with brokerage —trade and finance— became increasingly influential, and their members tried to get involved in production as well, so that they could pull all the strings in the economic process. From then on, the mercantile bourgeoisie stressed even more its condition as a hybrid group, half-urban, half-rural. But it was from the cities —ports and capitals— that the new economic network was managed and controlled.

A *Criollo* Society

The mercantilist impact that prompted the development of the cities was not the only factor that triggered the crisis of the Baroque city. When the crisis occurred, a true transformation of Latin American society was taking place, or better, the signs of that transformation were becoming visible. Such visibility came simply with time. For the early stages of that change were no doubt disguised or concealed by the Baroque conception of society as static and immutable. But the passage of time, linking one generation to the next, was radically changing the structure of society, which ceased to be that of colonizers and colonized to become something quite different: a society of *criollos*. As social groups changed in their make-up and number, so did their relations to each other. In his *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions*, Humboldt wrote that it was in México City, not in Madrid, that he heard criticism of the Viceroy Count of Revillagigedo for having let all of New Spain know that the capital of a country that had close to six million inhabitants had, in 1790, only 2,300 Europeans as opposed to over 50,000 Spanish-Americans who had been born there. Humboldt estimated a population of 15 million inhabitants for all of Spanish America, of which only 200,000 were Europeans; there were 3 million white *criollos*; the rest belonged to the different *castas* (non-white). This demographic distribution continued thereafter, and its consequences were important.

The groups of native-born Spaniards or Portuguese could only increase through a steady flow of immigration, but those of *criollos* were growing naturally, even among the native-born Spaniards and Portuguese who lived there. Little by little, first-generation *criollos* began to associate with those who already had several generations of ancestors in the colonies. Old and new *criollos*, increasing in number, gradually acquired a cohesiveness of their own and began to displace, by their sheer weight, the system already in place. But this was not the only group that changed as it grew, thus altering the fabric of social relations. It was unquestionably the most important group, because out of it came the new bourgeoisie, that of *criollos*, which would soon achieve preeminence. In addition, the groups of *pardos* (all crossings and mixes of castes) also grew: some by leaps and bounds, like the groups of *mulattos* and *mestizos*, with their children and grandchildren, and the more recent groups of *mestizos* and *mulattos* born of new caste crossings. They not only increased in number but, like the *criollos*, rose in social status as well. There were groups of Indians, blacks, *zambos*, and other castes that quietly made their way into the new society with that centrifugal force that comes of living together and that was capable of overpowering, however slowly, the centripetal forces that usually keep societies divided.

As those who criticized the Count of Revillagigedo no doubt observed, the small and basically weak group of native Spaniards was threatened by the increasing numbers of those born in the New

World. The latter were attached to the New World because it was theirs; it was all they had and the only place where they could improve their lot in life. The Spaniards could replenish their ranks with new immigrants from Spain or, if settling in the New World, could marry into families of *criollos*. A few of them never grew roots in the new continent, since their plan was to return to the peninsula. But more and more settled permanently in the New World and, in time, planted their roots deeply in its soil. It was precisely this kind of well-rooted society that was now beginning to replace the Baroque society and its inherent lack of roots. But that was not the only sign of the social transformation that was taking place. Baroque society purported itself to be a static structure; the new society of *criollos* was essentially mobile and, in its drive, it uncovered the fallacies of the old social order. The *conquistadores* and the first colonists had established that order as they used the notion of nobility to defend or justify their privileges. In turn, the new drive was typical of a dynamic and vibrant society, like the one that was taking shape in Latin America out of the natural growth and integration of groups that were essential to the survival of the social compact, but had been artificially kept on its margins. In the late eighteenth century, it became clear to many that the new society of *criollos* was imposing its own agenda over the artificial schemes that had been designed to ignore or contain it. The debate over the skills and talents of *criollos* as opposed to those of native-born Spaniards became as acrimonious as it was widespread. And those who were attentive to the changes underway soon learned that the new society was coming to life not only in the cities but also in the rural areas.

True, the old rural society was still alive, grounded on the exploitation of land and mines and still dependent on the old system of Indian labor, despite the all the laws and the humanitarian concerns of some groups of Church and government. But next to the old structure, a new society began to emerge: it was decidedly marginal, but little by little its presence became visible and, in time, undeniable.

The new society was disorganized and unstable, but it was definitely growing. It was the product of the imbalance between a world rigorously structured along European lines —on the *haciendas* and especially in the cities— and another world, barely populated, where anyone who chose to settle down could enjoy a freedom with no limits, except those imposed by nature or the local indigenous peoples. It was a world made out of all the regions that remained untouched by economic exploitation or that had been long abandoned by the Europeans. Border regions became particularly attractive, as they were easy to get to and not altogether isolated from the rest of the colonized world. But the entire *hinterland* of the Europeanized world was seen as providing an opportunity to avoid the system. Immigrants to those regions were a varied and assorted lot. Some had come to the colonies illegally and were unable to change their condition; some had deserted the army, fled from justice, or escaped from prison; others were Indians and black slaves who had migrated, individually or in groups, to escape their servitude. Then there were the fortune-seekers, who were

exploring mine veins or doing small business with well established entrepreneurs. But above all there were those in search of anything to trade: Indians to sell in the slave-market, like the *bandeirantes* of São Paulo; maroon cattle to sell in the cities; fugitive black slaves or even free men whom they could take to the market.

Only the groups of fugitive slaves were eventually organized as communities: and not just the *quilombos* of Palmares or Rio das Mortes en Brasil, but also countless others that were formed later, for instance, in the area of Bahia. In addition, there may have been communities formed by groups of Indians, like those that were dispersed when the Jesuits were expelled or those that joined insurgent groups in the late eighteenth century. But the ones who left their mark on this new society were the isolated immigrants, who often arrived with their wives and children and tried to eke out a rough, independent existence on their little *ranchos*, *jacales* o *bohios (*huts) far away from villages or communities. With no taste for routine work, they found ranching and grazing to be a lifestyle in which they could combine work with pleasure: they were consummate horsemen and expert herders, so much so that the names they were called often became synonymous with cattle drivers: *sertanista, bandeirante, huaso, gaucho, gauderio, llanero, vaquero, charro, morochuco*. It was a free and open activity that trod the narrow line between the licit and the illegal. That kind of distinction was meaningless in areas where a new system of norms was beginning to emerge. Every man was fighting for his own survival; what mattered were the things he needed to preserve and defend his life: a lasso with balls, a lariat, and a knife would help the bravest, or the most skillful, to impose his own will and take the wife and the property of the defeated man as his booty, sometimes his horse and the animals he had gathered or raised as well. When the occasion called for it, whites, *mestizos,* and blacks formed gangs, often working as highwaymen on a small scale, although sometimes they would mount attacks on *haciendas* or even entire villages.

In the late eighteenth century, urban societies and the organized rural world became aware of this new social formation, an unmistakably indigenous, informal society, which was *criollo* in nature. This distinctly native *criollo* society was growing unchecked and somewhat mysteriously in the interior of the legitimate world. This new formation was made of “country” folk, crude and lacking in the urbane refinements of city people. They would suddenly appear here and there, or someone would bump into them on the road and discover an entirely different culture: other norms, other ideas, other customs, and above all another language, all with vernacular roots, all unequivocally belonging to these sons of the earth. Curiosity drew attention to their customs and language, which seemed to express the personality of the group that was more firmly rooted in that society. In the final decades of the eighteenth century, they began to make their way into the cities, perhaps through the suburbs. Writers took note of their habits and forms of life, and they captured the contrast between these two societies, one rural, the other urban, often through differences in their speech. Around 1778, a ballad was published in Buenos Aires in which *un guaso* sang *en estilo campestre* (a peasant

sang country-style). The same language would appear again in the *cielitos* (popular Argentine songs and dances) of the wars of Independence. And some decades later, Fernández de Lizardi would include, in his *Periquillo Sarniento*, a fragment composed with the forms of speech of the Mexican peasants, following a literary practice that José Agustín de Castro had initiated in his plays. Around the same time, the Brazilian nativists —Da Gama, Durão— represented in their works the emotions aroused by the natural world and by the contact with native populations.

Even before the wars of Independence, different groups began to detach themselves from that natural rural society to be assimilated into urban societies. They were drawn by the ranching activities that were a link between the countryside and the city. Later on, as a result of the atmosphere created by the Independence movement, larger groups burst onto the tumultuous world that the revolution was giving rise to and became full members of that new society. *Montoneros* in the region of Río de la Plata, *llaneros* in Venezuela, and *sertanistas* in Brazil swelled the ranks of the army and worshiped their leaders, who were also men from the countryside. As Azara put it, they were "countrifying" and, above all, creolizing urban society. *Criollismo* seemed to belong only to rural societies and was used as a weapon against urban societies, which were accused of being cosmopolitan and alienating. Thus a sort of quarrel was born between countryside and city, one that would last for a long time and that seemed to express an insoluble contradiction.

That, however, was not entirely so, but simply a matter of degree, for *criollismo* had also become a part of urban societies. Naturally, the ports and capitals were home to the newly arrived Spaniards and Portuguese, who brought with them the new ideas fostered by the establishment of free trade. These cities were also home to some foreigners, especially Englishmen, who carried that new mentality to an extreme. And it was precisely these new ideas and attitudes that gave cities the atmosphere that rural groups found alienating. The new arrivals were, in the eyes of rural people, Europeanized merchants and "doctors" who either ignored or looked down on the new society. But theirs was an exaggerated claim. The cities had in fact undergone a social process not unlike the one experienced in rural areas. The only difference was that, in the cities, those who prevailed were not the common people but the members of the new bourgeoisie, who initially fashioned themselves after the European burgeoisies. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, this new middle class would begin to show its vocation to take the lead and pursue its own ends.

To be sure, the popular classes, as they grew larger, had also become more visibly *acriolladas* (creolized), and the process had been a tumultuous one. Native-born Spaniards were surrounded not just by white *criollo*s but also by what were known as the castes, a varied mixture that included black slaves and freed blacks, *mulattos,* Indians, *mestizos*, *zambos,* and other mixed groups. Peninsulars and foreigners were arriving by the hundreds; slaves were increasing by the thousands. The lower classes were exploding. In his *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba*, Humboldt noted the

following: “The white population of Havana and its environs grew by 73 percent in twenty years, while the population of free people of color increased by 171 percent".” Humboldt had the sense that he was witnessing a society in crisis. “If the laws in the Antilles,” he warned, “and the legal status of people of do noty change for the better soon, and if the authorities continue to talk without acting, political supremacy will pass into the hands of those who have the power of labor, the will to emancipate themselves, and the courage to endure long privations.”

In other cities of the Caribbean and Brazil, the number of blacks also increased. José de Silva Lisboa wrote that “in Bahia alone in 1781 there were fifty ships making the trip from Africa.” Cartagena de Indias was infamous for having been a center of the slave trade. Yet those were not the only regions in which the black population, slave and free alike, had risen. Buenos Aires had a considerable market, as did Córdoba. In *El lazarillo de ciegos caminantes*, Concolorcorvo wrote that he had seen 2,000 blacks sold, “all of them *criollo*s,” some of them with three or four generations of *criollo*s behind. In Cuzco, Indians were so large a percentage of the population that, in 1788, Ignacio de Castro wrote the following:

There are so many Indians that all trading is done with them. Accordingly, their language has become the almost universal language in the city. Everyone born in Perú speaks this language, which one must command in order to understand and be understood. So that even though the gentry speak Spanish with Spaniards, they speak the Indian language with their domestic maids and servants and with the people of the town.

Although perhaps not so extreme, the scene was very much the same in many cities. In the mid-eighteenth century, Antonio de Ulloa and Jorge Juan pointed out that, of the 4,000 families living in Santiago de Chile, half were Spaniards, that is whites from the Iberian peninsula or *criollos*; while the other half were castes, mostly of Indians. *Criollo* society was a variegated mixture of diverse social and racial groups that changed from one generation to the next, as the roots of one or the assimilation of another became more pronounced. And the best description of this multi-colored society is the one that Simón de Ayanque published in 1792 in an amusing work titled *Lima por dentro y por fuera*, which he wrote under his pen name of Esteban de Terralla.

Ayanque was from Andalusia and had settled first in México and then in Lima. He described, not without humor or biting sarcasm, the world of the market place and streets of Lima, which was the world of the middle and lower classes. Ayanque stresses how the various groups coexisted, how they integrated themselves in the daily life of the city, how they felt that Lima was their city, and how much weight that kaleidoscopic mass had on the viceregal city. Speaking to a Spanish audience —actually, to himself— Ayanque paints a picture of the Main Square and the marketplace:

What a carnival of people,

And so many animals in cages,

How difficult it is to tell

The animal from its master;

Oh, how many cooks you'll see,

And so many black women and men,

Indian women selling produce,

Old cows and young heifers;

Oh, how many mulattas you'll see,

Headed for the market,

Some to sell meat,

Others to sell themselves;

Oh, the Indian fisherwomen you'll see

Fishing for money,

Often netting much more

Than the fish they brought.

Roaming the streets, he was surprised by the mixture of races and colors:

Oh, and then, in the streets

You'll see so many types of hair:

Indians, zambas and mulattas,

Chinos, *mestizos* and black men.

Oh, you'll see Spaniards

With their arms and attire,

With rich capes of scarlet,

Watches and large hats.

But you'll see others, too,

Who though cut from the same cloth,

Wear light woolen cloaks

With greasy stains and holes.

.....

In the streets you'll see

Few whites, many dark;

The dark are the blank

Of admiration and respect.

The blacks are the masters

And the whites are the blacks;

And a day will come

When they'll be their slaves.

They wear embroidered capes

And the most elegant hats,

Stockings of the finest silk,

Lamé, wool and velvet.

In this class of people

Resides the principal commerce

Because the best mechanism

Is that of privilege.

.....

In every trade you'll find

Chinos, mulattos and blacks,

But very few Spaniards,

For they think it a disgrace.

You'll see many Indians

Who came from the highlands,

So as not to pay tribute

And become gentlemen.

As the poem goes on, Ayanque reports on what he knows about the relations among lower-class groups; he talks, above all, about their chances for social ascent and integration into the rigid structures of the society of *hidalgos*:

A mulatta and a zamba

And other short-hair types,

Wear the garb and perform the role

Of a titled noble person.

And because she was the nurse

Of his lordship *Don Estupendo*,

It is to the hardest tip

That the hardest efforts go.

That public health

Is in the hands of blacks,

Chinos, mulattos

And others of the same stripe.

.....

Grandsons of the King of the Congo

These gentlemen doctors are

Who take the pulse of little girls,

Of ladies and of gentlemen.

The public faith is

Also among Maccabees;

It is in the Scribes

And in all the Pharisees.

There are many mulattos,

And many *chinos*, too,

Who by means of bogus papers,

Want to change their own skin.

.....

You'll see dressed in the finest garbs

Women of the lowest birth,

Without distinguishing person,

Or estate, or age or sex.

You'll also see a white woman

In love with a black man,

And a white man who has put

All his love into a black woman.

You'll see the aristocrat

And the loftiest gentleman

Give to a mulatto woman

All his tender love and care.

These ordinary folk were a vital part of city life. Although from a variety of backgrounds and each with his own expectations, over the course of time they became a fairly homogeneous urban mass. They were what the "decent folk" referred to as the populace, the mob, and even included the vagrants and beggars, white and dark alike, whose Mexican brotherhood Fernández de Lizardi describes so well in *Periquillo Sarniento.*

There were white *criollo*s in the middle classes. One of them may have been that locksmith that John Luccok met in Rio de Janeiro, who wore a tricornered hat and had a black slave carry around his toolbox. And it was among these white, middle class *criollo*s that the process of interpenetration with the lower classes actually took place. Obviously, their relations were not easy. From time to time a white man would win a competition or contest because of the color of his skin. But *mestizos*, *mamelucos,* and *mulattos* persevered in holding mid-level functions and, in the end, it was more common for penniless white *criollo*s to be seeking employment in businesses run by *mestizos*, *mamelucos,* and *mulattos* than the opposite. Because they were a combination of races, *mestizos* and *mulattos* became necessary and effective intermediaries within a traditionally divided society. That role determined the functions of the middle strata in society, the only functions to which disinherited white *criollo*s could aspire. Ultimately it became increasingly clear that everyone was a *criollo*; all had roots in the land and all were wedded to the same destiny. That realization was slow in coming; but it was inevitable and became quite strong in the late eighteenth century. Unlike the upper classes, the middle and lower classes learned how to rise above their racial prejudices, without giving them up altogether.

Unlike the lower classes and the castes, *mestizos* and *mulattos* tended to identify themselves with the Spaniards: *mamelucos* and *mestizos*, in particular, were proud of their indigenous roots, but they were more and more inclined to become part of the new society. They worked as foremen, supervisors, stewards, agents, all the jobs that whites avoided to reduce frictions with the groups that had been brought to submission. But they had other jobs as well, and performed a variety of functions, always closer to the whites than to the lower castes. Manuel de Campo Verde y Choquetilla, "Spaniard on his mother's side, the descendant of legitimate *caciques* and a governor of the Indies," was appointed Oruro's master of relay stations, according to Concolorcorvo. Elsewhere he reports that "the Spaniards engage in commerce with everyone, including *mestizos* and other lower-class types that have Indian roots and that are either moving up or down." One attempt to legitimize the *mestizos*' rise was the royal edict of 1795, which permitted the dark-skinned men of Caracas to use the title "don" in exchange for a fee.

The proximity or solidarity of whites and *mestizos* is a recurring theme in the conversations that the *mestizo* Concolorcorvo creates for the visitor don Alonso Carrió in his *Lazarillo de ciegos caminantes*. An Indian who is well treated by the Spaniards, and taught how to dress and how to groom himself, passes for a *cholo*, "which is the same as being a *mestizo*. If his services are useful to the Spaniard, the latter dresses him and puts shoes on his feet. Within two months he is a *mestizo* in name also." *Mestizos* enjoyed a privileged status: they were allowed to engage in commerce with whites and to practice trades. True, *mestizos* also inspired some mistrust because of "their peccadillos and mischief" and were said to be "worse than gypsies." But this mistrust was minor, and they were able to engage in the same activities as white *criollo*s of the middle class. In fact, Concolorcorvo referred

to *mestizos* and Indians as "natural *criollo*s" and underscored the irony by stating, "we *cholos* look up to the Spaniards as children of the Sun."

Natural *criollo*s and white *criollo*s kept the middle strata of urban society in constant ferment, which allowed some to acquire wealth, while others fell into extreme poverty. As they were constantly "moving up and moving down," as Concolorcorvo put it, those *criollo*s constituted the most mingled and mobile social group and the one that most intensely experienced the transformation that brought about the new *criollo* society.

That transformation had other traits in the upper classes, which had traditionally been made up of *peninsulares* who held public offices, owned mines or *haciendas* or, in increasing numbers, engaged in trade. But already in the eighteenth century, *criollos* were unmistakably the majority of the population. They constituted a group with a varied and imprecise profile, not only in terms of their origin and social status but also in terms of their attitudes and ideology.

Humboldt made three astute observations about the upper classes on the eve of Independence. In *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions*, he pointed out that, in the colonies, the true external sign of social nobility was the color of one's skin, which was generally the dividing line between the upper classes and those in which dark-skinned people predominated, although a white *criollo* might occasionally appear. But Humboldt also described the presence of a clearly divided group of *criollos* within the upper classes, the *nobleza*. "There are," he said, "two kinds of nobility in the colonies. One is made up of *criollos* whose ancestors have until recently held very high positions in America; they base their prerogatives, in part, on the prestige they enjoy in the mother country; and they believe they can retain that prestige on the other side of the ocean, regardless of when their families settled in the colonies. The other kind of nobility has closer ties to the American soil: it is made up of the descendants of the *conquistadores*, in other words, the Spaniards who served in the armies of the original conquests." It was, therefore, a division between old and new *criollos*, one strictly based on origin.

As he goes on, Humboldt looks into the upper class of Caracas, where he distinguishes two types of men, or as he puts it, two very different generations. One, quite small in number, holds fast to the old ways, to their simple customs and moderate desires. Men in this group live in an imagined past; they view America as the property of their ancestors who conquered it; they detest the so-called Enlightenment of this century and carefully cultivate their inherited prejudices as part of their patrimony. Men in the other group of nobility are not as much concerned with the present as they are with the future; they are inclined to go for new habits and ideas, sometimes without much reflection; but when they also have a love for solid learning and let reason govern their inclination,

they do a great service to society. Humboldt's distinctions are essentially based on differences in attitude and ideology.

It is, therefore, obvious that both in the Spanish and in the Portuguese colonies a new upper class of *criollos* had taken shape. These *criollos*, born in the land and committed to it, outnumbered by far the groups of those born in the mother countries. Sure of their privileges, these *criollos* were proud and arrogant. Proud were, in Brazil, the lords of the sugar plantations and the mines; proud were, in the entire Hispanic world, the descendants of the *encomenderos* and mine owners; proud, in short, was everyone who tried to preserve an aristocratic society. But new circumstances began to have their effect on that pride and arrogance. First, these *criollos* were less than equal to the native-born Spaniards and Portuguese, who clung to their anti-colonial and anti-American prejudices to assert their occasional supremacy. Second, there began to grow, among the *criollos* of the upper classes, some bourgeois groups that shook the old structure of the society of *hidalgos* to its very foundation.

The first of these circumstances gave rise to all kinds of tension between the majority of *criollos* and the *peninsulares*, who were so far outnumbered. This was, in fact, a confrontation between a society that was taking root and the groups that were only temporarily in the colonies but still held political and economic power. The tension was constantly mounting and, more and more often, it erupted into open confrontation: as, for instance, when Juan VI came to Brazil, in 1808, accompanied by his Portuguese court, and the upper-class *criollos* challenged the court and even managed to win over don Pedro; or in the *comunero* movements of Paraguay and Colombia; or in the attempts at emancipation that failed initially but triumphed in the end. The tension also became evident in the long and complex debate about the relative merits and worth of *peninsulares* and *criollos*. Concolorcorvo captured that debate quite neatly, and Father Feijóo intervened as well. It was argued that the European race was degenerating in America; the rebuttal had its share of insulting remarks against the Spaniards and Portuguese, who, according to the *criollos*, were driven by an insatiable appetite for wealth. *Criollos* from the lower class made fun of Spanish *gachupines* or *chapetones* and of Portuguese *mascates* or *emboabas*. But in the upper classes the dispute was different, and there was perhaps no more expressive text than the speech given in Lima, shortly after 1810, by Mariano Alejo Álvarez, of the University of Charcas, entitled *Speech on the preferences that Americans should be given with respect to employment in the Americas*. As the political tension mounted, hatred became deeper and its expression acquired a bitterer tone, evident in the following poem, which circulated in Oruro, about the subversive atmosphere prevalent in 1781:

Being of the Indies is evil

But to be wealthy as well

Is a most grievous offense

Against the Crown.

.....

Proof that this is so

Is the terrible hatred

Harbored in the heart

Of the lowly European

For Oruro and all *indianos*

Because they are not of this nation.

The second circumstance was the formation of bourgeois groups of *criollos* who felt they were more harassed than others because they had "means" or who believed they had a greater claim to positions in America. These were groups influenced, directly or indirectly, by the new ideas of the eighteenth century and tempted by the opportunities that the mercantile world had to offer. Against these *criollos*, there were some groups that stressed even further their aristocratic claims; these were indeed the people that Concolorcorvo mocked with sharp irony. But despite them, the *criollo* middle classes asserted themselves and claimed their role as the new elite. Many, like the *mantuanos* of Caracas, were from so-called "noble" families; others, like the Mexican mine owners, boasted a nobility they had just acquired for a price the Crown had set without much hesitation or scruple. But not even those who had paid for their titles concealed their determination to assert themselves as the leading minority of *criollo* society, which they meant to ply to their own purposes, within the increasingly powerful ideology of mercantilism. The most attractive business seemed to be brokerage. And the cities were the centers out of which brokers would control economic activity, establish and maintain relations with major trading centers abroad and hold the public offices that regulated trade.

The growth of this group became visible once free trade had been established: in Brazil, it happened

after 1808, when the ports were opened up; in the Hispanic world, it happened after Independence. As the *criollo* bourgeoisie continued to grow, the illusion of the Baroque society began to fade. And the members of that old society were depicted by Ayanque, who subscribed to the new ideas, as a dying group:

This wasteful lot

Time will now destroy.

A new conception of life was struggling to assert itself in this new society of "natural" and white *criollos* that had taken root and had found in the *criollos* of the middle class an elite responsive to the needs and opportunities arising from the crisis of the Spanish and Portuguese empires.

The New Cityscape

The *criollo* society gradually matured and became conscious of its own identity. This coincided with a marked increase in commerce. The face of the cities was transformed accordingly. Their societies had been steadily changing, but now their physical features began to change as well: there was growth, a certain opulence and an openness to the world of commerce, both of goods and of ideas. All this began to alter the features of the Baroque city.

The streets and market places announced this change. In 1774, Frézier observed this in that there was a multitude of black people: 19 out of every 20. He often saw passing by in the streets white men riding on sedan chairs, each borne by four black men. This was the same social scene that other travelers observed in other Hispanic and Portuguese cities: the privileged and the nonprivileged differed in many respects, but above all in number. The streets, the market places, the churches, the arcades were teeming with this new multitudes of people who, no matter what their explicit rights might have been, regarded as their own right to be, as they increasingly were, an important part of urban life.

They were a complex and varied multitude. At the end of the day, each social group would go back to their neighborhood. But as long as the business of the day was in progress, all groups, even the most exclusive ones, would mingle with one another. Buying and selling were functions that brought all groups together and, for an instant, made everyone an equal. This is perhaps why so many travelers and observers noticed that women, who filled the streets and the marketplace, would

return home with something they had purchased, but also with something they had heard and learned. *Mulattas* and *mestizas* observed the dress, habits, and language of their elegant customers and tried to imitate them. Their customers, in turn, became familiar with popular usage and ended up with a taste for the lively colored dresses of the townspeople, their typical foods, the vernacular words they were introducing into Spanish, the phrases and expressions of popular coinage:

In the main square you'll see

The subtlest concepts expressed

By any whichever greengrocer,

By any butcher whatsoever.

As Ayanque observed in Lima, the people in the street,

Although with dark-skinned faces,

Have the sharpest of wits.

And if one accepted the pottery or fabric they were selling, one had to be prepared to also accept their superstitions and beliefs, their traditional remedies and their body language. Even worship became hybridized: Christianity and native religions were being fused, not just among the castes but among whites as well. And as everyone ended up worshiping *mestizo* icons, a city as conservative as Olinda would allow the *batuque*, a dance introduced by black slaves, to be performed, on festive days, in front of the main church.

Women from the upper classes were free to move in that multicolored world. In São Paulo and in Lima, the shawl or *mantilla* in which they wrapped themselves became topics of conversation. But the attire could equally conceal a marchioness or a *mulatta*, and the bold behavior of these *tapadas* (hidden by the shawl) began to blur the usual distinctions between social groups. From the small shops to the marketplace, one could see women going about until they found what they were looking for. Haggling over the quality or price made them more conversant, although the dialogue actually began at home, between the lady of the household and her female servants. In the meantime, gentlemen of the upper classes, whose occupation and business required them to have

daily contact with the castes, sought out their company in their leisure time and found it in an often steady mistress, in the places of amusement or in gaming houses.

In cities where money flowed, like Potosí or Vila Rica, gambling and wantonness were rampant. A rich mine owner might lose a fortune at the gambling table and finish off the night spending just as much on prostitutes, most of them *mulattas.* Viceroys —Amat in Lima and Solís in Bogotá, for example— could be brought down by scandal. Gambling and prostitution were important in bringing the upper classes and castes into contact with each other. Hovering around the gamblers and prostitutes was the underworld, with murderers and thieves carrying swords, carbines, or pistols, as Concolorcorvo described them, and the world of rogues and beggars that Fernández de Lizardi portrayed in *Periquillo Sarniento*, a mirror image of life in the Mexican capital on the eve of Independence. In *Coplas del ciego de la Merced*, Castillo Andraca y Tamayo, a Lima clergyman, gave his version of that city's underworld, just as Concolorcorvo did with those he found along his long journey.

Such a diverse society had no need of well-defined lifestyles. If the social groups were unstable, so were their forms of behavior. Traditional lifestyles were preserved only in provincial cities and in those that had ceased to develop. But in the cities that kept on growing and in those where a new *criollo* society, with its mix of class and caste, was rapidly taking shape, some form of anomie prevailed, which was a sign of intense social mobility. Only the upper classes knew what their place was and, consequently, what the rules were that governed them. The middle and lower classes were extremely fluid; and it was precisely this fluidity that triggered the acute crisis that followed independence. The crisis was, in the end, a fruitful one, because it produced a new social order, and it came out of the normal ebb and flow of the social process that went beyond the limits and constraints of the system the conquest had established. No one knew who was who in the middle and lower classes of a city —especially a port or capital— that was growing thanks to new activities which offered unexpected opportunities to people and groups who, until then, had had no mobility at all.

A diverse multitude, rich in shades of color, varied in customs and economic positions, poured into the city for holiday festivities, particularly bullfights and processions. Order reigned at the official center of the festivities. The notables of the city gathered on the stage for the coronation of Charles IV; notables also were those who surrounded the royal standard and those who rode in the procession to celebrate the swearing in of the new king—as they did in Bogotá in 1789 under the leadership of Lieutenant Major don Luis de Caicedo. But the streets were lined with common people watching the procession and catching the coins that marching noblemen were tossing at them. That motley society enjoyed the spectacle, the lights, anything that would break the routine of daily life. They would fight with each other over a tossed coin; they would peek in on the ceremony. But they

also enjoyed their own parties and celebrations, for which they would buy sweets and fried meat from the countless vendors who circulated among them. They drank *pulque* or *chicha*, danced and sang in their own streets and finally went home, carrying with them the sense that they were the "populace," a group entirely different from the "decent folk." It was rare for whites to attend the parties and gatherings of the castes, as Concolorcorvo attests in reference to Cuzco.

But only for the "decent folk" the so-called "populace" was a cohesive social group. Among the common people themselves, it was every man for himself. Each one knew he was part of a fluid whole and would rise or fall in social position by his own wits and with his own luck. In their daily struggle, each would try to step on whoever was under him in order to move up, and he would try to imitate those who were above him in order to become, as soon as possible, indistinguishable from them.

These were times of ferment, and some used them as an opportunity to learn how to read and write. Some even used that knowledge to read books or the occasional newspaper that by then was beginning to circulate in several capitals: the *Mercurio Volante* in México City, the *Mercurio Perúano* in Lima, the *Papel periódico de Santa Fe* in Bogotá, the *Primicias de la cultura de Quito*, in Quito, and the *Telégrafo Mercantil* in Buenos Aires. Such interest in what was happening in the world was more common in the upper classes, but news traveled and circulated in coffee-houses, which at the time were just beginning to be established in the cities; and it was in those coffee-houses that members of different classes mingled and shared their opinions. In the new theaters and sports stadiums and in public parks and promenades, this patchwork society had an opportunity to mingle with the upper classes, each wearing the clothing appropriate to the position he occupied or aspired to occupy in the social scale.

Clothing became a peculiar problem in these urban societies, where the desire to show off one's social position and the concern for social climbing were not simply a personal obsession but the visible signs of a certain philosophy of life, of an ideology. Signs of the same ideology were house and carriage, jewels and servants, everything that meant social status. On a small scale, but very dramatically, this drive to alter reality was apparent in the upper levels of the lower classes, especially among *mestizos* and mulattos, which was understandable. For each of them, it was a question of escaping the anonymity of the group in order to achieve an individual identity and bridge the chasm that kept him apart from the privileged classes. But the concern was just as great among the privileged classes themselves, because for many it was just as difficult to keep up their position as it was for others to finally achieve it, especially when wealth became easier to acquire and the process of acquisition itself became considerably faster. Tremendous effort went into trying to appear to be what one was not:

Women who are anxious to flaunt

Their luxury and glamour,

Get themselves in all kinds of binds

To keep up with their undertakings.

These women are all bedecked

In rather expensive jewels,

In skirts made out of silk,

In diamonds, in costly earrings,

In feathers, tiaras, hanging pendants,

In overlying smocks,

In fine lace and braided ribbons,

And other myriad adornments.

And believing they are theirs,

We find out, friend, rather quickly

That all these things have been rented

And they owe everything they have.

This was how Ayanque described the exertions of Lima's upper-class women to protect their position and prestige. But, in a more philosophical vein, Fernández de Lizardi had one of his characters reflect explicitly upon this obsessive preoccupation in a society that was not so much mobile as it was mobilized by the quick pace the mercantilist movement had introduced: "The poverty one sees so often in the most populated cities is made of nothing other than the inordinate opulence with which everyone tries to move beyond his own station. . . . Women with little prudence make quite a contribution to the ruin of an entire household with their importune vanity. It is not uncommon in such homes to see luxury enthroned. The wife or daughter of a physician, attorney or some such type wants to have a house, servants and a position that rivals or at least equals that of some wealthy aristocrat; such women get their fathers or husbands into debt. Sooner or later such men become debtors; what little they have is sold, their credit is lost and the family is ruined." And he concludes as follows: "So, in all truth, it is sheer madness to pay in order to appear to be what one is not, only to reveal in the end what one actually is at the price of dishonor."

In fact, this obsessive concern of the upper classes with their rank or station was a vestige of the world of *hidalgos* that had survived in a society that was changing and embracing the forms of life of the European bourgeoisie in the Age of Enlightenment. An extreme concern for decorum was the mark of the groups that constituted the "nobility" of the cities. But their nobility was dubious at best. Talking about Lima's aristocracy, Concolorcorvo wrote the following:

In this city there are many people with the title of count or marquis and an even greater number of knights of the orders of Santiago and Calatrava. With but a few exceptions, they have sufficient income to live quite luxuriously. They include the heirs to estates and gentlemen who live off their properties and other businesses that provide them a handsome living and lend some polish to the city. I am certain that in the city of their birth and in the others of this vast vice royalty, there are some illustrious families; however, when added together they do not equal the population of this city, which pays little attention to the *conquistadores*. For although some of them were from illustrious families, the number of such families increased after the conquest. And referring to the upper classes in Córdoba, Argentina, Concolorcorvo noted, not without irony, "I don't know how these farmers manage to prove the old and glorious lineages they claim to have."

The fact is that, whether they belonged to the old nobility or not, these upper classes tried to preserve a "noble form of life" with an elegant home, fine tableware, coaches, and servants. Humboldt, who visited such homes in Caracas, Bogotá, Quito, Lima, México City, and Havana in the early part of the nineteenth century, remembered their dwellers as being urbane, friendly and simple in their manners; but what struck him most was the interest that many families had in the mercantile world and in having access to an education in accord with the Age of the Enlightenment. Humboldt was a keen observer and he undoubtedly noticed the pervasive power of the new ideas

and the widespread reach of the new bourgeois attitudes, which were not at all incompatible with the desire to preserve some vestige of the old aristocratic world. Indeed, aristocratic families frequently gathered in parties and literary circles. At a salon in Buenos Aires, in 1773, Concolorcovo saw some 80 women "fashionably dressed and coifed, very adept at French and Spanish dance." Still, this evening party could not compare with the splendor of the great courts. Apart from the more mundane gatherings, literary circles became more and more popular, although by that period they tended to discuss politics, philosophy, economics, and science more than literature. At around that time, Father Juan Baltasar Maziel collected his quite respectable library in Buenos Aires; but still it was not comparable to the well-stocked libraries in other capitals. These libraries helped produce intellectuals like Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora in México or Pedro de Peralta Barnuevo and Pablo de Olavide in Lima. Later, the generation of the forerunners of Independence would prefer revolutionary political works to mere erudition; these included writings by Nariño, Torres, Santa Cruz y Espejo, Tiradentes, Egaña, Villava, Moreno, or Monteagudo. And almost unnoticed, some groups were devoting themselves to the study of the sciences, such as a circle, in Bogotá, headed by the scientist José Celestino Mutis and, after him, by Francisco José de Caldas.

The upper classes satisfied their needs with mundane activities —salons, promenades, visits, *novenas*— and intellectual life. Yet, they were not entirely idle; for many were busy trying to shore up their financial position with the opportunities offered by the opening up of ports, both before and after Independence. Little by little, cities began to be politicized. Urban populations were divided into groups along ideological lines, progressive or traditionalist, and tensions began to mount. Every decision by the authorities was either disputed or defended, depending upon whose interests were affected or how it was interpreted. What had once been discussed only in private was now the subject of passionate public debate. The battle lines were being drawn. Inside the revolutionary movements, urban groups began to coalesce, generally under the leadership of the new *criollo* middle classes, although individuals with no vested interest did sometimes take the lead. And when these middle classes came to power, the collapse of the traditional structure unleashed the forces of the new *criollo* society, not yet fully constituted and still uncertain about its aims even in victory. This new society was divided into groups with conflicting interests; and it was driven by the passionate desire of each one of its members to move up in the social ladder and improve their economic situation.

The years that followed the independence movements changed the physiognomy of cities. Many took on a Jacobean character that hastened the change in mentality among groups much larger than those originally involved in the revolution. Some cities, on the contrary, saw their more conservative groups close ranks. Even in the Jacobean cities, these conservative groups succeeded in thwarting the first emancipatory moves. But none of this happened without a struggle. The monotony of the Baroque city was followed by a constant turmoil that made visible each one of the

groups that considered itself entitled to participate in the new political process: the prominent figures in government office, the people in the main square, the conspirators in army barracks, those who had once spoken in the privacy of literary circles, the pamphleteers. This was how the new society gradually matured. Once inert, this society now sprang into action and made its mark on the *criollo* city.

Evidence of change was also apparent in the physical layout of the city. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, cities had generally grown very slowly. But in the last decades of the century, the pace of growth accelerated, especially in the cities that felt the impact of increased trade. More and better houses began to be built on what had once been vacant lots, as the city started to fill out. Urban population increased and groups that had taken root in the city began to take a more active part in its affairs. There were, of course, many cities that did not grow. By the end of the eighteenth century, important cities like Concepción and Valparaiso in Chile had only 5,000 inhabitants. Asunción and Montevideo, soon to be capitals, hovered at around 10,000, as did Córdoba, Oruro, Barquisimeto, and São Paulo. Bogotá had a population of 20,000, while Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, Caracas, and Buenos Aires had populations of 40,000. Lima's population was 60,000, and Salvador de Bahia and México City had populations of over 100,000. For the European traveler, México City was the most striking. Humboldt wrote in 1803:

México is undoubtedly one of the finest cities ever built by the Europeans in either hemisphere. With the exception of Petersburg, Berlin, Philadelphia and some quarters of Westminster, there does not exist a city of the same extent which can be compared to the capital of New Spain, for the uniform level of the ground on which it stands, for the regularity and breadth of the streets, and the extent of the public places. The architecture is generally of very pure style, and there are edifices of very beautiful structure.

This enormous creation had taken only three centuries to come into being. In time, Latin American cities had to start addressing the problems that arose from their own expansion and demographic growth. Progressive officials made note of the daily problems caused by urban disarray and some of them began to apply modern thinking to the planning of what until then had come about in a spontaneous and disorderly way. Revillagigedo in México City, Amat in Lima, Vértiz in Buenos Aires, González Torres de Navarra in Caracas, Mestre Valentín in Rio de Janeiro, and others on a lesser scale took measures to improve the general appearance of the cities and the way they functioned. Since 1753, São Paulo had a "road officer" in charge of putting order into the confusion of streets and alleys. Other cities undertook to regularize the layout of their streets, section off free space, improve public thoroughfares and walkways, and establish building codes. But the greater concern was with how the city functioned. All the groups of this heterogeneous society began to crowd the public spaces of the cities, and basic sanitation became one of the first concerns of urban authorities. Many

of the capitals improved the water supply of their public fountains as well as their sewer systems; rudimentary forms of public lighting began to be installed. Hospitals, cemeteries and hospices were created. More important still was the organization of a city police force, which until then had been unnecessary; for, indeed, this new and diverse society fostered all forms of marginal behavior that threatened the peace of the city. Murderers and thieves would hide not only in their own slums but also in gambling houses, brothels, and taverns. And it became increasingly difficult to identify these types in the mixed society that filled the market places and the streets.

Lower-class suburban neighborhoods began to appear. Beyond the twenty or thirty blocks closest to the main square, there were fewer and fewer buildings; just beyond that, depending upon the city, the urban-rural border began. Somewhere around the border separating the city from the countryside, the suburb began to appear, a wretched clutch of little farms or huts sometimes built around a tavern or a chapel, sometimes near the slaughterhouse or some out-of-town market or square where carts were parked. Here was where the poorest people lived, as well as those who were growing produce to sell in the city market, or looking for a place to practice their trade or set up their business. But the suburb was also a stopover for those who were moving from the countryside to the cities, or else fleeing the cities to go to the countryside. The result was an unstable and marginal population that at times brushed with crime.

The emergence of the suburbs was part of a process in which different neighborhoods acquired a definite identity. There were some upper-class suburbs, where the privileged kept summer homes; but the upper classes normally lived in the center of the city. The blocks next to the central square were the most prestigious ones, and some streets established the tone of an entire neighborhood: some were lined with the homes of the most distinguished families; others would gather all the retailers or craftsmen of the same trade. And the more distant parishes, where houses were constantly going up, became the lower-class neighborhoods. Few if any whites were seen in these neighborhoods, for in them their dwellers recovered the sense of belonging they had to set aside in order to deal with their customers or satisfy their employers in the daily hustle and bustle of the market place. In these neighborhoods, they celebrated their own festivals, in their own fashion, and silently imposed their own standards of living, even though their self-styled autonomy would sometimes be challenged by sheriffs and constables.

Some of the cities vulnerable to outside attacks erected new forts, using eighteenth-century techniques of military engineering. Others erected walls or reinforced the ones already existing. These were monumental constructions, like the ones of Cartagena de Indias, which would make most secular and religious architecture look rather modest by comparison. Yet this was not always the case. In the cities that were expanding, the upper classes did not hesitate to invest enormous amounts of money in order to build ornate churches and beautiful palaces. In the second half of the

eighteenth century, two wealthy Mexican mine owners, José de la Borda and Antonio de Obregón y Alcocer, built two jewels of the Baroque period: Santa Prisca in Taxco and San Cayetano de la Valenciana in Guanajuato. Wealthy *bandeirantes* populated the mining city of Vila Rica with churches, adorned by the sculptures of Aleijadinho. In cities like Bahia and Quito, already filled with churches, more were added and existing churches were given new facades or expanded, all thanks to the economic splendor of the last decades of the eighteenth century. Permanent churches went up where temporary buildings had once been. This was how the churches of San Ignacio and Nuestra Señora del Pilar came into being in Buenos Aires, as did those of Santiago, where the architect Joaquin Toesca built the cathedral in a severe neo-classic style that his disciples would replicate in Santiago and elsewhere.

Toesca's masterpiece, however, belongs to civil architecture: it is La Moneda Palace in Santiago, which represented the triumph of Neoclassicism forty years after the Governor's Palace was built in Vila Rica. In the meantime, the growth of the cities had stimulated the construction of another type of public building. The Potosi Mint was built in the mid-eighteenth century owing to all the mining activity in the area. Because of the need for grain, construction began in 1798 on the *Alhóndiga de Granaditas* (Corn Exchange) in Guanajuato. But the most important buildings were the *Cabildos* (city halls). Each city had to have its own *Cabildo*, whether modest or monumental. Where there was no building deemed worthy of preserving —like the Casas Consistoriales in Tlaxcala, a magnificent sixteenth-century construction— a new one was built, generally with arcades and a clock tower that was to be a symbol of municipal life.

Urban building improved as society and wealth grew. The rich displayed their good fortune by replacing their old homes with lavish palaces. But few could equal the palatial mansions of México City. Those along San Francisco Street or Tacuba Street were so beautiful that México City came to be called the "city of palaces." Those designed by Manuel Tolsá, an architect with neo-classical leanings like Toesca, include the Palace of Iturbide, the palace of the Marquis del Apartado, as well as the one that housed the Mining School. There were palaces in other cities as well, even if not so grand in scale: the palace of the Marquis de Torre Tagle in Lima, the palaces of Villaverde and Arana in La Paz, the palace of Joäo Rodrigues de Macedo in Vila Rica, the palace of the Marquis de Maenza in Quito, and the palace of Diego de Rul in Guanajuato, which was done by the neo-classic architect Francisco Eduardo de Treguerras. Humboldt stayed in the latter and wrote that it "would be an ornament to the finest streets of Paris or Naples."

Of course, not all Latin American cities could boast such splendor. But many benefited in some measure from the economic recovery. The few that experienced a full renaissance were, for the most part, the ports, the capitals and those cities in which good fortune triggered an explosion of wealth. Vila Rica was one such case; and the gold that flowed from the city had an impact on Rio de

Janeiro. Rio became prominent again in 1808, when it housed the Portuguese court and became the capital of the kingdom, with a port that welcomed trade with England. Something similar happened in almost all the port cities and capitals, which were invigorated first by the free trade their mother countries had sanctioned and then by actual trade with the European countries and the United States. Other capitals were added to this process of expansion when Spain introduced a new administrative system in 1788: Puebla, Valladolid, Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Mérida, Culiacán, Arequipa, Tarma, Huancavélica, Huamanga, Cuzco, Puno, Santa Marta, Cartagena, Santa Cruz de la Sierra; the seats of local government in Venezuela —Maracaibo, Guayana, Mérida, Cumaná, La Margarita— had already been added in 1777. In the process, new urban bureaucracies came into being which stressed the role these cities had already played as hub of development for their region. In the meantime, new cities appeared. In 1724, Montevideo was founded as a military base; but, little by little, the city grew both as a regional center and as a port, especially after 1791, when it became one of the centers of slave trade for the Rio de la Plata region, and for Perú and Chile. Towns became cities as they attracted more and more people from the countryside. Thus, among many others, emerged such cities as Talca and Los Andes in Chile. Others emerged on their own, as a result of some very productive business that made them strong from the start. This was the case of Vila Rica, which became an unequalled center of commerce in just a few years. A new aristocracy settled there and gave it such a strong burst of energy that a chronicler once wrote that it was the "head of all America. Its wealth makes it Brazil's most precious pearl." But Vila Rica was a restless city, with a revolutionary bent: twice it rose against the metropolis, first in 1720 and again in 1789; and twice, it was forced into submission. One of the participants in the uprising of 1789, Claudio Manoel da Costa, wrote a poem in praise of the city, entitled *Vila Rica*. Both that poem and the satiric verses of *Cartas chilenas*, which were also attributed to da Costa, describe in detail different aspects of life in the city. Something similar happened in the case of Puerto Cabello, whose spontaneous coming into being is recorded by Andrés Bello in a piece he wrote shortly before the start of the independence movement, titled *Historia de Venezuela (History of Venezuela*) for the *Calendario manual y guia universal de forasteros en Venezuela para el año 1810 (Handy Calendar and Universal Guide for Foreigners in Venezuela for the year 1810*):

Endowed by nature to accommodate and re-outfit the entire Spanish Navy, Puerto Cabello was the anchorage that the Dutch from Curaçao chose for the cacao trade. The center of this port town, which for a long time seemed more like a Dutch dependency than a Spanish territory, consisted of a handful of miserable huts used by smugglers and some cabins owned by fishermen. The Government wanted to establish some semblance of law and order in this community of men, whose character and occupation must have made public tranquility very tenuous indeed. But these were men who had engaged in crime with impunity. Their individual private interests, coupled with the general interests of the Dutch, were such that the people of Puerto Cabello stubbornly opposed the government's intentions until at last it was forced to abandon its plan to place Puerto Cabello

under its authority. Soon the town became a den of criminals and the Dutch colonies' general warehouse on the coast. With the exception of cacao, Venezuela had nothing that would attract Spanish ships to Venezuelan ports. The Dutch, however, had the cacao trade very much in hand and managed to gain a monopoly over a country whose only supply source for personal effects and agricultural provisions were the warehouses of Curaçao. Puerto Cabello was the only way it could get its agricultural commodities out and earn revenues. And so, through one of those political coincidences that is easier to marvel at than to explain, the Province of Venezuela became another monopoly as useful in its creation as it was ruinous in its abuses. Thanks to the monopoly, Venezuela's agriculture would begin to develop. With a mercantile company taking it by the hand, the country began to take the first steps toward progress. The mother country recouped a trade area that had been unfairly removed from under its authority and Puerto Cabello became one of the most important stopovers and the most respectable port on the coast.

Speaking of ports, in 1723, José Agustín de Oviedo y Baños wrote in his *Historia de la conquista y población de la Provincia de Venezuela* (*History of the Conquest and Settlement of the Province of Venezuela*) that the people of Caracas "speak the Castillian language perfectly, not the improper speech one tends to find in other ports in the Indies." And almost a century later, Fernández de Lizardi, writing about scoundrels, said the following: "I have lived in one port and have known and dealt with others." Cities were a fitting setting for the profound transformation that *criollo* society was undergoing, especially those that welcomed new ideas and abandoned all prejudices, included those about the forms of language that people used.

Reform and Revolution

Criollo society was the fruit of an internal social process within the colonial world. It was, above all, the result of a marked divergence in the demographic growth of white groups and non-white castes. Whereas non-whites mixed and mingled and multiplied themselves, native-born Spaniards and Portuguese came and went and their white *criollo* offspring became an increasingly smaller group of the population. *Criollo* society was also the product of *mestizaje* and acculturation, as the gap that originally separated the conqueror from the conquered, whites from other racial groups, became narrower and narrower despite the efforts, often more formal than effective, that the whites made to contain the process. But the expansion of *criollo* society and, more importantly, its rapid integration were the result of a set of circumstances that the reformist groups from the peninsula introduced and out of which a new elite emerged: the enlightened *criollo* bourgeoisie.

Then, the ministers of Carlos III of Spain and José I of Portugal —Aranda, Floridablanca, Pombal—

began to press for reform in the mother countries. By the mid-eighteenth century, the pressure that the mercantilist world was exerting on the peninsula was so great that the more enlightened groups headed a movement to reshape economic, social, and cultural life in the two kingdoms. It was the age of "reform," a time when structures were readjusted but not radically changed. The adjustments were based on reasoned decisions and on foreign experience, and were calculated to uproot the old biases and entrenched systems that were stifling opportunities for development and expansion.

These reforms had some impact on the political system, but they only served to heighten royal authoritarianism. There was to be no opposition to the King's decisions, since they were regarded as the embodiment of reason itself. The traditional pressure groups —aristocracy and clergy— were made to yield to a royalist policy that basically sought to curb their power. A monarchy surrounded and advised by intellectuals was the ideal of the new enlightened groups.

The reformist policy was, obviously, a child of the Enlightenment, the philosophy that would have reason rather than custom rule the world. It was an "aristocratic" philosophy that distinguished between select minorities and the vulgar masses, which included not only the ignorant lower classes but also those who, "although of noble birth, had never managed to escape the fog of ignorance," as an author who epitomized the new thinking once wrote. Government was to be in the hands of those select minorities that were informed and enlightened by reason. Since their main concern was that all spheres of society should have people like them, education became their fundamental objective.

Educational reform was to be more than just teaching the masses to read and write. More importantly, education was supposed to select the very best and instil in them the new ideas that had already begun to be codified, not only in Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, but also in the works of many authors who chose to systematize and spread those ideas rather than undertake new scientific or speculative inquiries. Colleges, institutes of higher learning, libraries, and scientific journals were preferred over the many elementary schools that taught reading and writing to people who would never advance beyond that level of instruction. The purpose of education would be to increase the ranks of the select minorities, educated in the new physical and natural sciences, sensitive to the pressing needs of an unjust and static society, and utterly committed to the new truth that Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos spelled out in his *Informe sobre el libre ejercicio de las* artes (*Report on the Free Practice of the Arts*):

The grandeur of a nation would no longer depend, as it once did, on the splendor of its victories, on the militaristic spirit of its sons, on the size of its territory or the merits of its glory, its honesty or its wisdom… All that is different now, with the new system that is reigning in Europe. Commerce and

industry, and the wealth they engender, are and probably will long be the only pillars upon which the power of a State will rest.

Thus, educational reforms took precedence over all other reforms in society and the economy, both of which had to be freed of outdated attitudes and prejudices. The equality of men was a rational principle and an indictment of the traditional system of privilege. The poor were victims of the system and it was imperative to help them. But most important of all, no one was to be idle, either among the poor who were unable to find work or among the rich who considered work dishonorable. Nothing was more backward than the prejudice that condemned all forms of manual labor as inferior and vile. Since the world was marching towards the dominance of commerce and industry, it was only fitting that mechanical trades and manual labor should be given freedom to develop and operate on their own.

The reformist mentality brought about a new conception of colonial policy. If until then the colonies had been seen merely as a source of wealth for their mother countries, it now had to be admitted that colonial societies were entitled to work for their own benefit, which would in turn benefit those mother countries. This was the reasoning of the progressive native-born Spaniards and Portuguese; this was what they preached in their books and practiced with their policies. It was inevitable that they should have disciples in the colonies.

However, as soon as it began to be applied, the reformist policy divided opinions both in Brazil and in the Hispanic world. As in the mother countries, these innovative ideas were chipping away at a very closed system whose beneficiaries saw their privileges threatened. The expulsion of the Jesuits —in 1759 in Brazil and in 1767 in the Hispanic world— revealed the reach and scope of this new way of thinking. From then on, it became obvious that the native-born Spaniards and Portuguese of the Indies were split between those who enthusiastically embraced the change and those who utterly rejected it. It was in that schism that the budding *criollo* bourgeoisie would find its niche. In the beginning, its presence was minimal. Nevertheless, it would soon define itself as a group or a class whose members associated their immediate expectations with the reformist ideology of their mother country. If the progressive native-born Spaniards and Portuguese of the Indies accepted or took advantage of the conditions created by the reformist policy, it was the new *criollo* bourgeoisie that embraced the reformist philosophy of the Enlightenment. With every day that passed, that philosophy set the *criollo* bourgeoisie apart and gave its members cohesiveness and continuity, even though some of its groups would eventually discover that, given the right circumstances, that reformist philosophy could become, at any point, a revolutionary ideology.

In the meantime, the peninsula continued to promote the reformist movement, which was spread

throughout the colonies thanks to the work of enlightened officials like Vértiz, Bucarelli, Mayorga, Revillagigedo, Gálvez, Caballero y Góngora, and Lavradio. The establishment of free trade was decisive in boosting economic life, especially in the cities. Suddenly, there was more wealth and more work. There were more hospitals and better prisons. There were theaters, printing presses, and newspapers. Brazil had a number of academies: two in Rio, the Academy of the Select founded in 1752 and the Scientific Academy of Rio de Janeiro established in 1770; one in Vila Rica, the Arcadia Academy, which opened in 1760 and eventually housed the mining school. However, the Arcadia Academy was involved in the Tiradentes plot, and the Scientific Academy in Rio de Janeiro, which had had so much influence on scientific and economic development, was abruptly dissolved in 1792 by an anti-reformist viceroy, the Count of Rezende. The Universidad de Charcas was undergoing its own renaissance, while Buenos Aires' recently established Real Convictorio Carolino and Academia Náutica were both receptive to the new ideas. In México City, a Mining School was founded, as well as the San Carlos Academy of Fine Arts and the Botanical Gardens. The work of the Spaniard José Celestino Mutis and of the *criollo* Francisco José de Caldas transformed Bogotá into an important scientific center, but even before the arrival of Mutis, Bogotá had a public library that Francisco Antonio Moreno y Escandón had founded, and it later had an astronomical observatory as well. The young people who came to these centers of modern thought had a thirst for knowledge and a vibrant desire to transform the colonial world.

Through unexpected channels, however, the reform was gradually transforming itself into revolution. The gentlemen who wore powdered wigs preferred to speak with carefully chosen words about the possible benefits of education, but some of their ideas were embraced by those who wanted to take action against the established system. A wave of anti-colonial insurrections, varying in scope, began to spread throughout the Spanish empire in 1780. While the Indian insurrection that Túpac Amaru would lead later that year was still brewing in the countryside, urban riots broke out early that year in Arequipa, Cuzco, La Paz, Charcas, Cochabamba, and in some cities and towns in Perú. England was perhaps behind this movement, but its native roots became visible in the events that took place thirty years later. The riot in Arequipa involved "all of the people of the city and those who lived outside its walls and in the suburbs, over 1,000 *mestizos*, *zambos*, blacks, and Indians, men and women alike." The rebellion in Cuzco was led by a *mestizo criollo* by the name of Lorenzo Farfán de los Godos, whose followers included Indians and the city's master silversmiths. In La Paz, the movement took a new twist when slogans appeared on the walls reading "Down with the King of Spain," a cry never before heard. These movements usually protested something tangible: new taxes and, in Arequipa's case, an attempt to put *mestizos* on the same footing with Indians and to make them pay an annual tax. *Criollo* society in all its diversity was on the move, if only at its lower levels. It appears that many of its members were entertaining separatist thoughts; some were even toying with the idea of becoming part of the British Empire. Toward the end of 1780, two movements developed in Santiago: the conspiracy of Don Juan, which was a plan to make

Chile a British protectorate, and the French conspiracy, which sought independence inspired by the example of the British colonies in North America, although neither conspiracy actually came into action.

However, in November 1780, the rebellion of Túpac Amaru erupted in Alto Perú. It was a predominantly Indian and rural movement, but it held many of the ideas advocated by the enlightened elite. This rebellion created a profound commotion. It was, for many, a revelation of an unsuspected power that, until then, had remained hidden within the new American society. The emotions aroused by that revelation were diverse and often contradictory. Groups that had been under submission for centuries believed that the time for action had finally arrived, or at least a time for hope. And those in power were shaken as they saw the worst fears of the early conquerors come true. This dramatic episode revealed to the *criollos* the ambivalence of their own position, which, from then on, they examined and re-examined in all its implications and possibilities. The movement itself, however, was brutally put down, and the fears of those in power were assuaged, but there still remained their concern for the fate of the new society, which was reaching yet another stage in its development.

Amid the upheaval of this rural insurrection, some urban movements erupted in Cochabamba and Charcas, but the most significant ones were those in Oruro and Tupiza. In February 1781, while the fate of Túpac Amaru's movement was still undecided, a rebellion broke out in Oruro. It laid bare the confusion of tension and violence among various social groups. Spaniards, *criollo*s, *mestizos,* and Indians were locked in a complex interplay of forces. Faced with the threat of an Indian uprising, the Spaniards decided to close ranks and in so doing revealed their mistrust of the *criollo*s, with whom they had long been vying for political supremacy over the city. Their thinking revealed itself in an act of far-reaching importance: they expelled two wealthy, newly-elected *criollo* mine owners from the city government. As the insurrection of the *mestizos* within the city was growing, native-born Spaniards and *criollo*s were facing off because the former feared an alliance between *criollo*s and castes. That was precisely what happened. Having taken control of the city with the help of neighboring Indians and after a violent struggle, the townspeople made a *criollo* miner, Jacinto Rodríguez, the highest ranking judge. However, in the days that followed, alliances shifted. *Mestizos* and Indians went too far in their persecution of the gentry, and *criollo*s backed off: they denounced their temporary allies and entered into a new alliance with the native-born Spaniards. Together, the two fiercely suppressed the common people who had risen up and the Indians who had supported them.

This ambivalence on the part of the wealthy *criollo*s was symptomatic of a social situation: they toyed with the idea of disassociating themselves from the native-born Spaniards and Portuguese, perhaps in order to gain independence. Yet they thought twice before taking the serious step of

rallying that motley society to their side, as they were unsure of its loyalties. Thirty years later, that process would become somewhat better defined.

The movement that erupted in March 1780 in Nueva Granada was similar in some respects. The measures of an anti-reformist inspector, Gutiérrez de Piñeres, triggered a revolt among the centers most affected by them. Distinguished *criollo*s, like the Marquis de San Jorge, led the protest, which violently started in Socorro and then spread quickly. The *comuneros* won the support of large numbers of Indians and, with such an enlarged military force, defeated the troops sent from Bogotá. In the end, an agreement was reached and a surrender was signed at Zipaquirá whereby the new taxes were to be abolished, measures to protect the Indians were to be instituted, the Spanish officials were ousted, and the authorities created by the insurrectionists recognized, all of which was a tacit acknowledgement of the *criollo*s' rights. And although the terms of the surrender were never honored, the revolutionary process had laid bare the attitude of the *criollo* groups.

Some of the later movements were more obviously oriented towards independence. In Brazil, Joaquín José da Silva Xavier, known as "Tiradentes," headed a revolutionary movement in Vila Rica in 1789. His supporters included the most distinguished personalities in the intellectual circle that had been formed in that mining emporium. Vila Rica's decadence by that time was disturbing to some of the common people, some property owners, and, above all, that enlightened minority who dreamed of a liberal republic. Kept in check by the Viscount of Barbacena, the conspiracy was aborted in the end; but the play of social and political forces and the ideologies they upheld revealed that the common people were allying themselves with the upper *criollo* classes: the leaders of the movement were the literary advocates of "nativism," which became a kind of battle cry. The conspiracy of the *alfaiates* of Bahia, in 1798, similarly joined the mulatto population with the upper-classes of the city in their desire to create a "Republic of Bahia." Similar traits were visible, in 1797, in the aborted conspiracy of Gual y España, in which Venezuelans influenced by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the preaching of the French and the English had tried to put an end to Spanish rule. Blacks, mulattos, and Indians supported the efforts of *criollo*s and enlightened Spaniards who wanted to abolish slavery and open Venezuela's ports to international commerce.

By then, however, Europe was already in the throes of its own crisis. In 1808, the Portuguese court responded to the Napoleonic threat by establishing itself in Rio de Janeiro. Native-born Portuguese and Brazilian *criollo*s fought for supremacy on all sides of the Regency. The crisis hit Spain, too. When it did, all enlightened groups in the American cities mobilized, convinced that independence was at hand. The most enlightened of all was the group that initiated the rebellion in Charcas, the city that was more of a piece with the new ideas. There, on May 25, 1809, a small difference between the Chief and the judges of the *Audiencia* became a revolutionary movement. Bernardo Monteagudo and many other scholars and university students gave ideological direction to the *criollo* movement.

It was a grassroots and a minority movement at the same time, since it drew a parallel between the ill-defined aspirations of the lower classes and the reformist ideology, which events had transformed into a revolutionary one. The men of Charcas, particularly José Antonio Medina, took the revolutionary message to La Paz in the form of a *Proclamation from the city of La Plata to the brave people of La Paz*, which was attributed to Monteagudo. And *criollo*s were all the members of the Junta Tuitiva, which was definitely in favor of independence. Everything that in 1780 had seemed premature began to take hold by 1810. When the revolutionary forces that Buenos Aires sent to Alto Perú triumphed over the Spaniards at Suipacha, Juan José Castelli, a member of the Buenos Aires Junta, gathered the Indians at the ruins of Tiahuanaco to preach to them the gospel of liberty, equality and fraternity.

By that time, movements headed by urban *criollo* aristocracies had triumphed in Buenos Aires, Asunción and Santiago. Groups committed to the reforms inspired by the Enlightenment shaped their vision of the political future of the colonies into a revolutionary ideology which carried reformist thinking to its ultimate consequences. Those groups rapidly replaced the views of the Spanish Enlightenment —moderate and constrained to monarchic ideals— with those of the French Enlightenment, which had abandoned reformism back in 1789. Jovellanos had been replaced by Rousseau, and although Napoleon signaled his intention to bring the revolutionary process to a halt, *criollo* groups restored Jacobean principles in order to accomplish a revolution that, more or less ostensibly, wanted to lead to independence. The movements in Caracas, Cartagena, and Bogotá were similar. They were inspired by the passionate teachings of Francisco de Miranda and Antonio Nariño, translator of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and The Citizen*. Symbolically enough, the movement in Bogotá began with a personal dispute between a *chapetón* and a *criollo*. In the wake of that dispute, the lower classes closed ranks behind the wealthy businessmen and enlightened ideologues who spoke words that had little meaning for them. But the words connoted something else: an identity of purpose, however fleeting, which for the lower classes at least could mean one step more along the road to integration.

These movements were essentially urban and they developed almost exclusively in the capitals. They made visible the division between native-born Spaniards and Portuguese on one side and *criollo*s on the other, as well as the cracks that would soon begin to show within the ranks of the *criollo*s themselves. Different degrees of wealth and integration gave rise, in each city, to different social strata. But the deepest fissures appeared between groups from different cities because of their competing interests and their rivalry as they struggled to attain political power. Córdoba and Montevideo clashed with Buenos Aires and resisted the movement that the *porteño* bourgeoisie had initiated. In México, a movement started by the *criollo* upper classes of Querétaro and San Miguel, with ramifications in other cities, succeeded in mobilizing the common people, especially peasants, who vented the violent anti-Spanish sentiments they shared with the provincial aristocracies. But

they clashed with the upper classes from the capital, where native-born Spaniards and *criollo*s remained united by their fear of new ideological trends and popular movements, especially among Indians. The insurrection was suppressed with the defeat of Hidalgo and Morelos, but broke out again in a number of cities under new leaders. Things changed only when the Riego revolution broke out in Spain and the liberal constitution of 1812 was restored. Native-born Spaniards in México City instituted a political process meant to perpetuate absolutism in México, but that decision only hastened the distancing between native-born Spaniards and *criollo*s. Iturbide, the leader elected as the instrument of change, reached an agreement with the rebels and began another separatist movement that, within a few years, would lay out the problem there in terms similar to those of the rest of Latin America.

Thus, in cities, two politics successively emerged out of a process of social interpenetration and differentiation, as well as reception and adaptation of ideologies. As *criollo* society began to take shape, new minority groups, whites and to some extent *mestizos*, adopted as their own political stance the reformist notions of the enlightened native-born Spaniards and Portuguese. But they moved from reformism to revolutionary politics as soon as conditions were ripe to radicalize the process. The pace of the efforts to transform ideology into reality changed, but the ideology remained the same.

The *Criollo* Bourgeoisie: Enlightenment and Change

The new groups that led first the reformist movement and later the movement for independence were members of the *criollo* bourgeoisie, who began to emerge as pretenders to power in the new society. As these groups took shape, they began to clash with the minorities, both aristocratic and monopolistic, which constituted the elite of traditional society. At first, this was a muted confrontation, a sort of tension between a strong group and a weak one; between one that is already established and another that is just beginning to emerge through a process of social differentiation; between a recognized group and one trying to conceal its ambitions; between, on the one hand, a group that exploited the passivity of consensus and based its prerogatives on its members' self-proclaimed privileged origins, and, on the other, a group that did not dare to declare the principles upon which it based its aspirations. But as time passed, as *criollo* society became better defined, and circumstances improved the chance for change, this confrontation became more intense and the old aristocratic elite no longer seemed so strong, nor the new elite so weak. The play of both internal and external forces seemed to legitimize the aspirations of the budding *criollo* bourgeoisie.

The nature of the *criollo* bourgeois groups had many distinctive traits. Compared to the traditional

elite, they seemed more rooted, less inclined to let the mother country dictate their way of life and expectations. It was as if they had cut the umbilical cord once and for all and discovered that they were alone, on their own, in a land their ancestors had conquered. They felt a profound attachment to the land, an attachment that had no alternative. In that land, their private interests were secondary, but they felt inextricably tied to its general welfare and its destiny. That land contained a vast, diverse society composed mainly of the descendants of those whom their ancestors had conquered. However, the *criollo* bourgeoisie did not look upon those descendants the same way their ancestors had looked upon the conquered. That rural society was, moreover, an altogether different one. On the eve of Independence, it was, ethnically and culturally, a mixed society that displayed a blur of different traits and shared the same life of those who had white skin. The *criollo* bourgeoisie did not look upon dark-skinned people as the conqueror would the conquered, or as something separate and distinct. They may have regarded dark-skinned people as a superior would an inferior or as the exploiter would the exploited, but they also saw them as members of the same community as themselves. These dark-skinned people were a necessary part of the world they aspired to lead. As they were committed to the land, the generally white *criollo* bourgeoisie felt committed to the dark-skinned people who formed their social context.

The bourgeoisie was essentially urban, created in the cities and adapted to the restrictions and possibilities of city life. In the Hispanic world and in some Brazilian cities, like Recife, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, they had inherited their ancestors' belief in the hegemonic role of cities as regional hubs that controlled life in the surrounding countryside. This belief became more and more entrenched as urban societies were steeped in the mercantilist mentality. The *criollo* bourgeoisie was a mercantilist class and became a well-defined social group because their members adopted that way of thinking; those who did not remained somehow peripheral to the group. Hegemonic nations, like England and France, were mercantilist and capitalist civilizations. Like their aristocratic forebears, the *criollo* bourgeoisie believed that cities were the hubs of civilization, but they began to think that the Iberian model was out of date and that another one had to be found. And they looked for that model precisely in the place where civilization displayed the splendor that had once been attributed to power and glory but that now, as Jovellanos pointed out, everyone knew only wealth could give.

And wealth, the new wealth that commercial ventures offered, was precisely what solidified the position of each member of the *criollo* bourgeoisie. It had always been that way, but that truth had been disguised by a gigantic mask. In the rationalist catharsis of the eighteenth century, all masks were removed. And that fact was no longer denied; instead, it was openly declared. Membership in the new privileged group was a function of wealth; although some of the *criollo* bourgeoisie still claimed aristocratic lineage, it became more and more explicit that wealth and the social position it brought came from engaging in the activities of the modern mercantile world.

Wealth was not the only thing, however. The *criollo* bourgeoisie clung passionately to two ideas that were certainly compatible. They believed that their position depended upon their effectiveness and that their effectiveness —and their wealth— had much to do with education. This was precisely what Enlightenment philosophy taught. Rich, effective, and educated, the American *homo faber* felt ready to master his surroundings and defeat the dandy who frequented salons, guarding the family crests that his ancestors had purchased and filled with ugly prejudices.

Impelled by those certainties, the *criollo* bourgeoisie discovered that the philosophy of the Enlightenment was their philosophy, since it had been created by similar European groups, doubtless more mature and more firmly entrenched in their own economic structures. They accepted that philosophy as an ideology, assimilating its elements and, above all, its dynamism.

The philosophy of the Enlightenment had many shades, and at the beginning the budding *criollo* bourgeoisie had accepted the peninsular shade, which was moderate and specially restricted. A pronounced predilection for the natural sciences triggered an interest in botany, since it could produce knowledge that would be useful in agriculture. The *Discurso sobre el mérito y la utilidad de la Botánica* (*A Discourse on the Merit and Usefulness of Botany*) is the title of an essay by a disciple of Mutis, the neo-Granadian Francisco Antonio Zea, who would one day be the editor of a newspaper in Bogotá called *El Semanario de agricultura* (*The Agricultural Weekly*). There were geologists, like Francisco Javier Gamboa, and physicists and mathematicians, like José Ignacio Bartolache, both Mexicans. New ideas and practical knowledge were what mattered, not just for the sake of a new and different understanding of nature but also for a new and different understanding of the fundamental problems in philosophy and in social and political life. It was in these areas that the Iberian variant of the Enlightenment was most in evidence. Religious and political matters were excluded from the debate, and agnosticism, materialism, and political liberalism were studied only surreptitiously. A royal edict of 1785 ordered that the works of Marmontel, Raynal, Montesquieu, Machiavelli, and others considered dangerous be rounded up and burned. Of course, one could talk about "bad government" in the abstract, but only if it was very clear that the criticism was leveled at the way the system operated rather than at the principles upon which it was based. If one wanted to criticize some greedy and licentious cleric, one had to do so by comparing him to a pious, humanitarian priest.

One was, however, free to criticize customs; like Father Feijóo, Montesquieu, and Voltaire, many American thinkers did just that, among them Father Servando Teresa de Mier, Esteban de Terralla y Landa, Mathias Aires Ramos da Silva de Eça, and, above all, José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, who gave his newspaper the title *El pensador mexicano* (*The Mexican Thinker*). All his works —*Periquillo Sarniento*, *Don Catrín de la Fachenda*— and his studies of customs are steeped in an urbane, civilized, rationalist atmosphere that gives his picaresque novel a tone so different from its seventeenth-

century Spanish models. The entire society of a great city —the largest city in the colony— is laid bare to be scrutinized from the standpoint of reason. In *Periquillo*, a Chinese islander who picks up a shipwreck victim and gives him shelter holds a long dialogue with him about the beliefs, habits, and customs of the Western world; mockery and criticism reveal the error of prejudice, the injustice of social standards, the uselessness of routine tasks —everything that the learned Mexican polemicist saw around him in the colonial city or learned of the world through books and newspapers. That was the prevailing sentiment among the new *criollo* bourgeoisie, which had appropriated the spirit of the Enlightenment and, inspired by it, had built a dissident, critical ideology to interpret reality, one that suggested a blueprint for change.

Sometimes that blueprint was reflected in opinions about everyday facts. At other times, it was formulated around individual, concrete cases: the claim of some businessman, or the ruling of some member of the municipal council or of a judge. From time to time, however, it was codified by some rigorous thinker bold enough to spell it out clearly and methodically, without failing to suggest somehow the ultimate consequences involved. In Bogotá, Antonio Nariño examined economic problems and possible solutions in his *Ensayo sobre un nuevo plan de administración en el Nuevo Reino de Granada* (*An Essay on a New Plan for Administration in the New Kingdom of Granada*). In Buenos Aires, Manuel José de Lavardén, a learned businessman, was the first to discuss economic problems in the speeches he delivered at the Sociedad Patriótica (Patriotic Society), which were later published under the title of *Nuevo aspecto del comercio del Río de la Plata* (*A New View of Commerce in El Río de la Plata*); later, Mariano Moreno examined economic problems in a paper known by the title *Representación de los hacendados y labradores* (*Representation of landowners and farmers*), which José da Silva Lisboa immediately translated in Rio de Janeiro, adding a prologue in which he summarized the author's arguments and applied them to his own country. Moreno also addressed social problems in his *Disertación Jurídica* (*Juridical Discourse*), which concerned the lot of the Indians. There, he continued the line of reasoning used by Victoriano de Villava, a jurist from the University of Charcas, whose *Discurso sobre la mita de Potosí* (*Discourse on Forced Labor in Potosi*) had precipitated heated debate. The *Diálogo entre Atahualpa y Fernando VII* (*Dialogue Between Atahualpa and Fernando VII*) —written anonymously but reliably attributed to Bernardo Monteagudo— was a further discussion of this issue. In Charcas, Mariano Alejo Álvarez wrote his *Discurso sobre las preferencias que deben tener los americanos en los empleos de América* (*Discourse on the Preference that the American-born Should be Granted for Employment in America*). Profound and full of energy, the *Memorial de agravios* (*A Memoir of Grievances*), written by Bogotá's Camilo Torres, made the same argument in political terms, while the *Nuevo Luciano* (*The New Lucian*), by Quito's Francisco Eugenio de Santa Cruz y Espejo, criticized the intellectual situation of the colonies. This wealth of ideas was engendered, explained, or published between 1797 and 1810, the years when the *criollo* bourgeois groups gained self-awareness and identified themselves as a social class with an ideology of their own. That ideology was immediately transformed into a project for change

nurtured both in the *Sociedades Económicas* (*Economic Societies*), founded in many cities to imitate what the native-born Spaniards and Portuguese had done, and in the periodicals and literary circles that gathered those who shared common interests and ideas.

At the outset, the project for change was a reformist plan aimed at transforming the economy and society. In the traditional concept, America was a mine of easy riches. The illusion of the first *conquistadores*, who were awed by the accumulated supply of precious metals that they seized, was rekindled by the discovery of veins in Potosí and Minas Gerais, which flooded the world with gold and silver. However, as the mineral wealth declined and became increasingly difficult to extract, the mirage gradually began to fade. In addition, vast regions of Latin America without mineral wealth were being settled, and they had to build their economies around other resources that required more work, more organization, and better marketing. The doctrines of the physiocrats would help regions that had been ignored because they had no precious metals; those who believed that they were part of the destiny of these regions clung to them fiercely.

In the late eighteenth century, the magic words of the enlightened and reformist *criollo* bourgeoisie were “agriculture” and “commerce.” What had until then seemed to be a minor, secondary source of wealth became the great hope of new sectors that, from the cities, wanted to advance the development of their region. Above all, potential wealth had to be ascertained, nature explored, and soil and climate conditions determined. Crops would have to be selected, both for their suitability to the environment and for their market potential, and then improved. Traditional techniques would have to be abandoned, and new techniques tested. And although newspapers devoted to agriculture tried to circulate advances in farming, change had to be fostered by example, because, as they said at the time, “farmers are not men who read books.” The groups of the urban bourgeoisie were confident that the more progressive farmers would apply modern methods to till their soil, replacing the spade with horse or ox-drawn ploughs, methods that would be imitated by other farmers once they saw good results. One also had to learn how to enrich the soil with artificial fertilizers, as the most progressive farmers in Spain were doing, how to plant seeds, abandoning the practice of scattering them, and then how to ensure irrigation. Thus, production could be diversified and increased. The *criollo* bourgeois groups who preached the gospel of progress were encouraged when they saw results. In Caracas, Andrés Bello praised what the visitors saw in the fields. Shortly before Independence he wrote: “For the first time Europe knows that there is something more than cacao in Venezuela when she sees the ships of the (Guipuzcoan) Company loaded with tobacco, indigo, skins, divi-divi, balsam, and other exotic goods this country offered to industry, to amusement, and to medicine in the Old World.” It was the triumph of reason over routine.

Nevertheless, growth and improvement of crops was not the only thing that the *criollo* bourgeois groups were pleased about. They were also gratified by the indirect effect of agricultural wealth on

the people's way of life, because their project was beginning to bear fruit: urban cores were growing and the major centers, which already had sizable internal markets, benefited from the increase in rural production. Excited to see how agriculture had flourished in recent times, Bello wrote:

With such favorable conditions, all of the communities that now decorate this privileged mansion of agriculture that is Venezuela emerged out of nothing. La Victoria quickly went from a tiny village inhabited by Indians, missionaries, and Spaniards who worked the Teques mines to the pleasant population it now has; just forty years ago, Maracay barely qualified to be called a village, but today has all of the appearances and advantages of a farm community, and well outside the city its surroundings are testimony to its people's inventiveness and resourcefulness. The indigo and the King's tobacco plantations in Tumero have made it one of the major communities within the Caracas district. Guacara, San Mateo, Cagua, Güigüe, and many other new communities owe their existence to a surge in agricultural ingenuity designed to protect the Aragua valleys; the banks of majestic Lake Valencia, which dominates this portion of the Venezuelan landscape, are energized by an agriculture that, renewing itself each year, provides much of the capital's food supply.

It was a period when all the colonial governments were trying to "gather families into communities" for their safety and for the security of the rural way of life.

Cities had to offer a better, more civilized life. The enthusiasm for urban development was greatest in the large cities because it was there that commerce developed and prospered. The *criollo* bourgeoisie fought valiantly for free trade and dreamed of ports filled with ships of all flags. When the mercantile companies ceased to have a monopoly on commerce, the bourgeoisie wanted trade to be opened up to foreigners as well, especially the English. In Buenos Aires, Mariano Moreno wrote that "those who believe that opening up commerce to the English under these terms is bad for the nation and for the province should be ashamed." He was convinced that such people were "most certainly ignorant of even the most basic principles of the economics of states." The *criollo* bourgeoisie, on the other hand, understood those principles very well. Convinced that commerce had to be nurtured, they supported the development not only of agriculture but also of ranching and manufacturing. At the same time, they were not opposed to importing manufactured goods, especially English commodities, because they hoped that imports would increase mercantile activity, which was their economic power base. It was an advanced reformist program that aroused hostility among the monopolistic sectors. However, *criollo* bourgeois groups were already beginning to have a very clear sense of where their interests belonged. They felt they were backed not only by the growing English pressure on Spain and Portugal but also by the spread of their principles though treatises on economics and, above all, through promotion of those works. The new economic ideas stirred so much enthusiasm that a Guatemalan poet, Simón Bergaño y Villegas, captured them in verse in his *Silva de economía política* (*Silva on Political Economy*).The *criollo* bourgeoisie were no

less passionate about the new social, educational, and political ideas. A hybrid society in the process of integration had to revise the Enlightenment theories about human equality and the condition of Indians and blacks. Although there were Spanish precedents, the ideas preached by Villava and Moreno about the plight of the Indians shared in the humanitarian and philanthropic tendencies of the Enlightenment. Also did their ideas about the poor and the beggars, even though in this case the interpretation was somewhat more complex. Speaking through a gentleman trying to protect Periquillo Sarniento when he begs by feigning blindness, Fernández de Lizardi made some transparent observations about the problem of the urban poor. The gentleman says "it's not my job to determine general economic policy," but he goes on to propose an interpretation that entails a social policy:

Were you to tell me that although they want to, many are unable to work because they can't find work, I would answer that there may be some cases where there are no jobs in agriculture, commerce, fishing, industry, etc. But there are not so many cases as one might suppose. Let's look at the multitude of vagrants who lie about the streets, drunk, congregating at street corners, hanging around pool halls, taverns, and pubs, men and women alike. Let's talk to them and find out how many of them have a job and how many of them are strong and healthy enough to work. Then let's leave them there and go about the city asking whether there are artisans who need apprentices and houses that are short of servants. If we find out that there are many such jobs, then we will have to conclude that the many vagrants and bums (including bogus beggars) owe their condition not so much to a lack of work as to their own idleness.

Love of work and education were, for the reformists, the means by which someone not born to wealth could raise himself, all the more so since the love of both was also important for the gentry. A lively debate emerged concerning the "mechanical trades;" as Simón de Ayanque said in Lima, to the aristocrat's way of thinking, it was preferable to be:

Vagabond, gambler,

Procurer and swindler

Are more honorable

Than being a good craftsman

As even the noblest of trades

Is degrading for a gentleman.

In México, Fernández de Lizardi made this the crux of the controversy concerning the education of Periquillo Sarniento. “A gentleman without a trade is better received and better treated in any decent quarter than some gentleman tailor, silversmith, or painter,” said Periquillo’s mother. However, the father’s reply echoed the Enlightenment point of view: “The tailor and even the shoemaker will be held in higher esteem everywhere than an idle, swindling gentleman, which is what I do not want my son to be.”

Education was indeed absolutely necessary; better yet the learning of modern ideas and useful things, and assimilation of Enlightenment principles in place of the prejudices of the common folk. Only in this way could one be useful and occupy a prominent place in society based on merit and virtue. And then, if one wanted to be a good servant and neighbor in the city, one had to be progressive, but within the limits that reformism dictated. When faced with abuses by a public official, one could shout: “Long live the king and down with bad government!” When faced with a debatable royal order, one could say: “It is obeyed, but not performed.” If these boundaries were crossed, then reformism became revolution.

Doubtless, the project of reform carried the seeds of a revolutionary plan. Only an auspicious set of circumstances prompted the *criollo* bourgeoisie to choose the revolutionary option. In some cities, they accepted the challenge and unleashed definitively urban revolutions through which they took irrevocable steps that rerouted them from the old road onto a new one. Yet there was no ideological change but only an extension and, perhaps, a radicalization of the ideology they had long embraced. The extension consisted of accepting some ideas from Enlightenment that were not part of its Iberian variety. Jacobeans embraced more radical political ideas, while others kept to more moderate ones. By accepting those ideas and taking practical steps, the *criollo* bourgeoisie freed themselves of the rather slow pace of change that the reformist attitude had imposed. Now they could do everything more rapidly, without restrictions, and without fear of overstepping the limits that the old traditional order had dictated, but the goals were the same as those of the reformist project. The economic, social, and educational ideas that influenced the behavior of the *criollo* bourgeoisie remained the same after those urban revolutions.

Said revolutions, political only in intent, destroyed the foundations that had held the old urban and rural structure intact and set each of its components free to find a new position. Such a dispersion was inevitable, since the cities sustained the entire system. The *criollo* society that had slowly taken shape released its energy and went beyond the traditional schemes as it began to reorder itself, and the various groups jockeyed for position. The traditionalists (and those who turned traditionalist in

the sometimes fierce open competition) saw only a struggle for power and called the crisis anarchy. But much more than power was up for grabs: it was each one's place in the economic and social structure. Although kept in check until that point, *criollo* society had unequivocally shown its disruptive capacity. And when the old colonial order broke down and its traditional structure vanished once and for all, that society would burst out.

The *criollo* bourgeoisie that unleashed and led the urban revolutionary movements tried to preserve the slow-paced and moderate reformist project as they dealt with questions of social and economic structure. However, the revolutionary climate changed the situation so quickly that their policy met with heavy resistance. The society that had to be reformed changed so fast that it left the *criollo* bourgeoisie in disarray. The old problems were left behind by new, even more serious and urgent ones. These problems had been vaguely anticipated, but certainly not enough to appreciate their challenge to the traditional order. The *criollo* bourgeoisie had to make an enormous effort to cope with the new situation. And in that effort, its groups disintegrated, and their different sectors regrouped over and over again, in unstable alliances, because the old project had to be readjusted to a new reality with entirely new problems.

The most serious was the problem of relations between the countryside and the city, between the new rural societies and the *criollo* bourgeois groups, which were entirely urban and absolutely convinced of their rights to hegemony. For them, the city meant civilization, while the rural world meant, first, ignorance and routine and then, barbarism. The duel began very quickly, from the moment when the urban bourgeoisie called on the rural population, first to form the armies that would defend the revolution and then to fight each faction contending for power. With weapons in hand, the new rural society joined the cast of characters in this drama, but their presence had not been anticipated, and it disrupted the schemes of the bourgeoisie. Given their economic function in the process of production and their ethnic and social background, the appearance of the rural populations called into question the very point of the revolution. To the *criollo* bourgeoisie, it was obvious that they had been the protagonists of a political revolution in which power had passed from one group to another. However, they also knew that they were part of the group that had been displaced. Even the urban lower classes realized what had happened and were pleased at the prospects that the shift in power offered. The emergence of the rural populations changed the picture and raised the question whether what had happened —beyond the intent of its advocates— was in fact a social revolution. No doubt, the rural groups that rallied to defend the new system were beginning to get some sense that a revolution was in the making; the *criollo* bourgeois groups saw it with absolute clarity. And they had to include this problem among a host of new ones they had not anticipated in their reformist project or in their revolutionary program. Soon after the initial euphoria died down, answers began to appear that were consistent with the ideology of Enlightenment. Whether moderates or Jacobeans, members of the *criollo* bourgeoisie set limits to the actions they

would take and decided to restrict the process to the terms of political revolution. This was the decision reached by urban societies under the leadership of their new elite. But they had to contend with a social revolution that had begun spontaneously, without any particular ideology at first but soon to be guided by an anti-Enlightenment philosophy already taking shape in Europe: romanticism, one of whose many facets valued the importance of the people and placed their authentic inspiration above the rigorous dictates of reason. Thus began a period that the "enlightened" *criollo* bourgeoisie regarded as anarchy.

Enlightenment philosophy could not anticipate this because it was created by tensions within the social and economic structure. This problem brought others with it. One, very concrete and decisive, was the source of sovereignty; another, more abstract, posed the question whether to preserve or destroy the colonial system. The first was settled by events, and it is likely that the principles of the Napoleonic Code had already influenced many minds when those events took place. The *criollo* bourgeois groups allied with one another through the *cabildos* and regarded themselves as representatives of the people. However, they had to contend with dissidents, who did not believe the *cabildo* represented them: these were the rural people or, better said, those who rallied the rural population and used them as a source of support in their battle with the urban bourgeoisie or with some of its factions. The second was an issue that needed to be reflected upon at greater length. Still, it was present in many minds, and though only an abstraction, it involved a number of major decisions concerning the scope of change and its consummation in practice. Nevertheless, the tumultuous social and political crisis that followed those urban revolutions undermined the cohesiveness both of the reformist project and of the revolutionary program, and all decisions reflected that fact.

The first and fundamental issue about the colonial order was political independence, which combined with the issue of form of government. There were any number of options: total independence within a republican or monarchical system, or some vague form of protectorate, not excluding the possibility of an English protectorate. The question boiled down to Enlightenment ideology, and each opinion group within the *criollo* bourgeoisie decided its preference on that basis. It was a choice between order and anarchy, between authoritarianism and the free play of social forces. But not all social forces had the same character for the *criollo* bourgeoisie. "Decent people" were one thing, and the populace quite another. Even among the second group, the urban masses were one thing and the peasants another. The first choice of the urban bourgeoisie was order and the "decent people." Time passed; other social forces gained strength and were channeled through certain bourgeois groups that neither rejected nor sought rural support; the urban bourgeoisie was divided into factions that, in their struggle for power, came to better understand the new social reality.

The other point, no less important, was the choice between a centralized regime and one in which the regional areas which had begun to take on a character of their own would be given some political identity. Centralism meant confirming the value of the cities and their bourgeois groups and maintaining the urban networks that converged on the capitals. It also meant perpetuating an order that ignored the real differentiation among viceregal areas and continued the uniformity that the conquest had established and that the municipal system had modified only slightly in the Hispanic world. Its antithesis was regionalism, which disregarded the principle of *uti posidetis* by affirming, purely and simply, the undeniable reality of the regions, which had finally discovered themselves; their people recognized no other realm but the one they felt was their own, regardless of any institutional framework. And, as in the case of Independence and political regimes, the enlightened *criollo* bourgeoisie first adhered to the centralist concept and then split, since competing factions struggled for power.

Some groups did not hesitate to seek the support of the new social forces unleashed by urban revolutionary movements. Their pragmatism triggered the crisis of the *criollo* bourgeoisie which, little by little, began to divide into factions. There were those who continued to cling to their ideology and refused to recognize the new social reality; there were others who recognized such reality and built upon it, some because they dismissed their ideology, others because they had never been fully convinced of its validity, and still others because, although socially part of the urban bourgeoisie, they still clung to pre-Enlightenment notions. Once divided, the *criollo* bourgeois groups ceased to be the single elite of the new society. They stepped aside to make way for another *criollo* group, one less ideological and more pragmatic: the patrician elite.

A *chino* was a *mestizo* in whom the Indian blood predominated.

CHAPTER 5: THE PATRICIAN CITIES

Once independence had been won in the early decades of the nineteenth century, a number of circumstances brought about fundamental changes in the character of *criollo* cities. The change was not so much in their physical aspect —which remained basically the same until the late nineteenth century— as in their social structure. The *criollo* bourgeoisie that had taken shape in the last decades of the eighteenth century gave way to a new patrician class that developed in the struggles to

organize the new nationalities. This patrician group became the governing class of the cities, above the urban multi-racial masses, which included increasing numbers of people moving from the countryside. Unmistakably *criollo*, the new patrician class had naturally risen out of a society in search of a new elite, and it accepted, in its own fashion, the responsibilities of the uncertain fate that awaited each new nation. Through often bitter conflict, its different groups traced the outline of what each nation would be. The cities became patrician; in them, each country took shape, as did the new ruling class, with its distinctive ways of living and thinking.

Independence gave birth to new nations, and each one immediately set itself apart, taking on its own identity and tracing a possible path into the future. But Independence also loosened the ties that had held *criollo* societies together, and thus posed the problem of which groups would decide each nation's future. The *criollo* middle classes, tied to the old schemes of the Enlightenment and hesitant as they faced the emerging society, were transformed by their contact with the new power groups that were then starting to take shape. Out of the old bourgeoisie and these new power groups the new patrician class was born, at once urban and rural, enlightened and Romantic, progressive and conservative. Its task was to set the course of the new societies within the new and still ill-defined nation states. And it was, in fact, in the process of setting the course of each nation's society that the patrician class came into being. It was not a pre-existing group nor was it homogeneous from the outset. Competing interests, opposing ideologies and the vagaries of a rather confusing social process repeatedly blurred the boundaries among the projects that time and again had been outlined by the different groups seeking to attain hegemony. Almost everywhere, Independence was followed by a long period of conflict that generally ended in protracted and bloody civil wars. *Criollo* society had finally emerged, but new social groups, ineffectual in the past, also burst into the scene, breaking the limits of the system that had sustained the order of society until then. Only one project for the future had remained intact: the one designed by the *criollo* bourgeoisies that had striven for Independence. But their project, intended for a society that had since exploded and was rapidly changing, soon became unworkable. Other options had to be found, less well defined, perhaps, but better suited to the new situation.

In the quest for those options, in the hazardous process of trying to impose one of them, the new patrician class came into existence. Some of its groups showed vision and intelligence, but most of them acted without much reflection, impelled by their immediate economic or political interests, without concern for the consistency of their actions, their legitimacy, or their ideological implications. Sheer action was what mattered to those who were just emerging from their long marginality, because out of action they hoped to gain power. From power, in turn, they hoped to attain a good bargaining position when time came to negotiate the terms of the new order. Only a few tried to envisage that order or to plan methodically for it, according to definite political, social and economic principles. The rest simply expected that order would naturally come from facts themselves.

Disputes were constant, and cities were often the stage where ideological debates would be followed by military mutinies or popular uprisings. Legislatures were the gathering places where the actors in this drama played out their roles, although the true protagonists gathered perhaps in the military garrisons. Newspapers stirred up ideas, and literary circles mixed and mingled the discussion of political doctrine with gossip about the characters in that political drama. Streets often became battlefields, with their dead, who called for revenge and kept passions running high and factional hatred hot.

Around the mid-nineteenth century, tensions eased precisely because things began to settle into place almost everywhere. Each group, each sector, each region had exposed not only its leanings but also its ability to impose them upon others. Thus, out of anarchy some kind of order began to emerge, because one group had imposed its control over the others, or because, after so many years of fighting, opposing sides were finally willing to negotiate. Social instability lent a magical quality to the constitutions that had been solemnly sanctioned. But what seemed to be the end of a conflict was sometimes the start of another. The battle over competing constitutions was ruthless, and victory sometimes meant simply imposing one of them. By 1880, however, new patrician generations —sons or grandsons of the nations' founding fathers— had become economically well-rooted, and they had defined their interests and adapted their goals to their possibilities. There was more willingness to compromise, which often led to a constitutional order widely supported by all the power groups. In other cases, this willingness to compromise meant putting a strongman in power, someone stronger than the constitution itself.

Of course, the long process that unfolded in each country between the time of Independence and the year 1880 —the approximate lifetime of patrician cities— was framed by the enormous economic changes that Europe and the United States were experiencing by then. The industrial revolution that began in England had spread to other countries, and the economic pressure on Latin America grew stronger. Pressure was exerted on the markets by financiers who negotiated loans and by businessmen who sold manufactured goods and purchased raw materials. However, there was military and political pressure, too. The great powers believed they had a right to take markets by force and occasionally blockaded ports, as in the case of Valparaiso, El Callao, or Rio de la Plata; sometimes they stirred up wars, like those in Brazil, Paraguay, or the Pacific; and still other times they imposed foreign regimes, as happened with the foolish imperialist adventure of Maximilian in México. Even an adventurer like the American William Walker believed that he could take power in Central America with complete impunity.

The industrial revolution had an impact on the countryside, as the steam engine began to make its appearance in the old sugar mills. Then steamers appeared, and railroad tracks began to be laid. But all production flowed into the cities; and it was in the cities, which already had gas lighting, where

most of the new activity took place, particularly after mid-century. Imports and exports, along with foreign banks, were the engines that propelled urban life: little by little, the descendants of the old patrician class, established in cities that tried to imitate Europe, discovered that the best option for the new countries was to latch on to the development of the major industrial powers.

The City and the Countryside

Independence loosened the ties that held *criollo* society together; both the wars for Independence and the civil wars that ensued provided the occasion for different groups to burst upon the social scene and assert their own identity, tendencies, or expectations. Against the *criollo* middle classes, the urban common people sometimes made their presence felt. However, the picture was substantially changed with the emergence of the rural society that had surfaced in the late eighteenth century and had suddenly found, in the post-revolutionary circumstances, a sense of mission and of unforeseen possibilities. Never previously marshaled, this rural society was now called upon to participate in power struggles and ideological battles; and it answered the call and claimed the role that its strength seemed to demand.

In the beginning, Latin America had been a world of cities, but the countryside suddenly emerged and overflowed those urban islands. It was the most cherished home of *criollo* society and the heart of *criollismo*. Rural society played its trump card and revealed that rural land was not only producing the wealth that would ensure everyone's survival but also acting as the forging place for a well-rooted population that could turn each colonial realm into an independent nation with a definite identity. The countryside affirmed its role as cradle of the new nations, as it sent its brave sons on horseback into battlefields and hurled their multitudes at the fearful cities. Deluding themselves, the 'enlightened' urban groups looked upon the leaders of these rural armies as ignorant men who did not know what they wanted. Nevertheless, like the men who followed them, the *hacendados* who were the self-declared colonels or generals of these peasant armies espoused the ideology of *criollismo*, a somewhat vague philosophy deeply rooted in secular, day-to-day experience and hence governed more by emotion than by doctrine. It was a spontaneous ideology, and its terms became more clearly defined when it had to face the ideology of the cities. Then it asserted itself as a way of life with a limited set of ideas and norms coined by experience. As a spontaneous ideology, *criollismo* combined a way of life with a way of thinking, but it never made its thinking altogether clear. For that reason, it was not opposed to one particular ideology among the many that prevailed in the cities, but to all of them at once: it was an anti-urban ideology, but it showed more of an affinity with urban attitudes that adhered to traditional ways of living and thinking. As the home of *criollismo*, the countryside initially laid siege to the cities with a kind of blind force that seemed at first devastating; but rural groups finally became enmeshed in the complex network of problems of

that other, equally real world of which the cities were part and that they had learned to understand by studying the vicissitudes of the mercantile world.

As a productive system that associated the cities with unscrupulous middlemen, rural society burst upon the scene with a tremendous show of power and force. However, this rural group soon realized that its goal should not be to annihilate the cities but to take control of them, expecting perhaps that they would surrender to its dictates. And this was, at least, partially true: cities became 'countrified,' but only in appearance, in some customs and norms and in their outward allegiance to certain vernacular habits. Little by little, though, rural society was once more overcome by urban schemes. After a while, even customs and norms were once again those of urban society, whether it was Páez or Rosas who wielded control of the city. In the meantime, rural society, which was the source of wealth, readjusted its mechanisms once again to the complex brokerage system that the cities skilfully handled. Rural society only exerted its influence and its power by becoming part of that system and by sharing its control with the urban groups that, after bowing to rural power, slowly regained their position through seduction of their temporary conquerors or perhaps by giving them some role in running their complex machinery.

In any case, after Independence, cities ceased to be the exclusive centers where economic and political decisions were made. They continued, of course, to be the most organized social clusters, and for that reason they gradually recovered their power, but they had to replace their old elite with others better able to deal with rural society. In turn, the countryside also became a center where decisions were made, and the cities had to accept this new bi-polarity. Nevertheless, only rarely would rural society make blind or arbitrary decisions. Rural groups accepted the role of the cities and tried to control them in order to control those who were controlling rural society. In practice, the rural elite became as much "urbanized" as the cities became "countrified" and, after a short while, it became part of urban society and was absorbed in its affairs. Vicente Pérez Rosales said the following about the capital of Chile: "The people of Santiago invariably direct and orchestrate the scene in the tragic-comic drama of public affairs." But like all urban societies of that period, something had substantially changed in the make-up of the inhabitants of Santiago. They were still in command of their region and of the entire country, but their composition as a social group had become much more representative than the old *criollo* bourgeoisie: something of rural society had managed to penetrate them.

Cities changed, but so did the countryside. Independence certainly did not modify the system of rural production: the form of ownership or of simple possession of the land was the same as in colonial times, and during several decades the right of the first born continued to be in force. Traditional forms of production and of hiring laborers also survived. Many *haciendas* remained in the hands of the same families, such as the one known as "Cañada Seca," which Guillermo Enrique

Hudson described in *Allá lejos y hace tiempo*; but others changed hands in the turmoil of revolutions and civil wars. Foreigners appeared on the scene and worked the land relentlessly, like the German whom Pal Rosti met in *El Palmar* in 1857, growing coffee in Venezuela's Aragua valley; or the Americans who ran sugar mills on Caribbean islands, or the Englishman whom Hudson recalls as being his neighbor on the Argentine Pampas. But most important of all were the new owners or tenant farmers on the old *haciendas*, many of whom used their power and influence; for someone who had national or local power nothing was easier than to ruin an *hacendado* and force him to vacate his land or give up his livestock. This was how many *nouveau riche* farmers came into being. They became stronger and more powerful thanks to their newfound wealth and the men that it enabled them to rally to their side.

The old *haciendas* continued to function as they always had. And all of the old *haciendas* that the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca described in her book *Life in México* were much like those evoked by Jorge Isaacs and Guillermo Enrique Hudson, or like the traditional Brazilian *fazendas*. Little by little, however, things began to change. Certainly, the *hacendados* changed their attitude. As in the case of Mauá and the coffee planters of São Paulo, the traditional *fazendeiro* or *hacendado* began to think more and more like a businessman. Producers understood that they had to pay attention to export mechanisms, because industrial development in Europe and the United States had created new opportunities on the international market. They also understood that they had to adopt the technical innovations that by then were marveling the entire world, especially because the crisis in the labor force was an ever-growing threat to business. In the first decades of the century, progressive producers began to introduce steam-operated machines, especially at the sugar mills in Cuba. As their experience grew and the argument over the advantages and disadvantages of technology was settled, the use of machines spread to other regions and to other areas of production. Other technical refinements began to be introduced as well, inspired by foreign models.

New farming, livestock, and mining techniques were implemented in response to an international demand for exports. Foreign markets needed more products, but they demanded quality; thus, the more alert producers made an effort to improve production, especially after the middle of the century. Ranchers tried to refine their livestock by crossbreeding them with English or French stocks; planters began to treat their crops to eliminate pests and blights, while improving irrigation and introducing new varieties in order to get a product that could compete in the international markets. Initially everything was done on a small scale, but the scale increased as the second half of the nineteenth century wore on and a certain degree of stability began to set in.

Certain products were particularly interesting because they opened up new export opportunities. While wool offered enormous opportunities for Argentina, another prospect was also opening up:

the possibility of selling fresh meat in Europe if its quality could be upgraded through the crossbreeding that had recently started. The demand for natural fertilizers was great and could not be satisfied by Europe. Thus, Perú's vast amounts of natural fertilizer became immensely valuable. In 1882, in a review of Perú's economic process during the preceding decades, Luis Esteves wrote:

The desert islands of Chincha are rich in *guano*: the depleted, sterile soil of Europe can be rejuvenated with this fertilizer. For the England of Malthus, 'whose population is increasing at a faster pace than the means of subsistence,' *guano* is a means to reduce the cost of bread and to produce meat. Shouldn't all nations of the world rejoice at this discovery and shouldn't Perú have a bright future?

Europe was thrilled, so much so that in 1863 Spain sent a squadron in an unsuccessful bid to take over the islands. Indeed, for some time, *guano* was Perú's chief export. In the meantime, European demand for saltpeter, another fertilizer, seemed to offer the prospects of enormous earnings. Perú and Chile fought over it and, in 1879, after the War of the Pacific, Chile was in control of the saltpeter of Tarapacá. Industrial metals were sought eagerly in many regions, and some began to be sold for profit. Coffee from the state of São Paulo, already the chief export by mid-century, began to be grown more extensively, especially after 1870, when the coffee plantation became a full industrial operation.

Just like Cuba's earlier sugarcane producers, the new coffee producers were the *hacendados* who showed the most obvious shift in thinking, one that would later spread to almost all sectors of the economy. They understood the world market and knew that proper management of the production process was not enough; they also had to control marketing mechanisms, since their product was basically export-bound. However, for many decades after Independence most *hacendados* and mine owners continued to run their operations in the traditional, routine ways. They were driven by other concerns, such as their position as patriarchs, like don Joaquin Gómez, whom the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca described as "monarch of all he surveys." And, above all, they were concerned with the influence they could exert, which sometimes took the form of military and political power. From time to time, these land and mine owners would live in the city, where they always had well-appointed homes; but as a rule, they resided on their land, with their own lifestyle, according to their own principles, in close contact with rural labors and watching over the new pace of production. Some, simple and somewhat primitive in their tastes, contented themselves with the old inherited mansions, which were sometimes in ruins; but then there were those like Mr. Lavalle, whose sugar mill in Perú was visited, in 1834, by Flora Tristán, who wrote:

has built for himself one of the most elegant homes. He has economized on nothing to make it

strong and beautifully embellished. This little palace is furnished in the best of taste and at great expense: English rugs, furniture, clocks, and French candelabra; Chinese etchings and curiosities; in other words, everything needed for a comfortable existence.

At that same mill, near Lima, the *hacendado* told his guest the following: "Mademoiselle, from what you say, it seems all you know about blacks is what you have heard from the elegant speeches made by your philanthropists. Unfortunately, it is all too true that the whip is the only way to make them work." He was referring to the slaves who constituted the workforce at his establishment: some four hundred men plus women and children. Elsewhere, in México for example, the labor force was Indian or *mestizo*. There were any number of establishments, especially ranches, where one found *criollo*s who were expert horsemen, some of whom were part Indian. On the plantations, slaves were branded. The discipline was severe and the punishment at times cruel. Slave women took revenge by aborting their babies, and the men by working slowly. More submissive, Indians tolerated their own lot with a kind of stoicism. Only the ranch hands retained a certain air of independence, tempered by respect for the bravery and skills of the owner, who, in turn, respected his men, even though he exercised an almost despotic authority. One Captain Andrews, an Englishman, once offered a cigarette to a *gaucho* and would later write the following about his gesture: "But though given to a farmhand of the country, it must be tendered with the chivalrous air of the old Spanish school, or it will lose half its virtue." Curiously, shortly afterwards, Darwin would write in his *Voyage of the Beagle*: "But whilst making their exceedingly graceful bow, they seem quite as ready, if occasion offered, to cut your throat."

A ranch needed few men. But no matter how they may be called (*gaucho*, *vaquero*, *huaso*, *morochuco,* or *llanero*), they were expert horsemen capable of managing large herds of cattle. There was never a shortage of men for work, including those who were steady ranch hands on an *estancia* and others who traveled about the countryside offering their services from place to place. On plantations and in the mines, however, the labor shortage became increasingly acute. The price of black slaves rose as their numbers decreased, due not only to a declining slave trade, but also to epidemics, infertility among slave women, and infant mortality. The number of free men also increased, and they did not always remain with their old establishments. Conditions on the *hacienda* became even worse when slavery was legally abolished, starting in México in 1829, followed by the other countries, and finally by Brazil in 1888. In the meantime, the personal tax that Indians had to pay was eliminated almost everywhere. Thus, the *haciendas* had to be reorganized in order to function on the basis of a free workforce.

In addition, a number of circumstances gave rural folk an opportunity to change their lot in life. Most important of all were the wars, which opened the way for these people to become part of mainstream society, since the leaders who recruited them made no race or class distinctions. Some

would proclaim the need for an immediate break with the established order. In Caracas, in 1811, an excited Coto Paúl shouted:

Anarchy! That is freedom, when she unties the ribbon and lets her hair fall in order to escape tyranny. Anarchy! While the gods of the weak, the mistrustful and the fearful curse her, I fall on my knees before her. Gentlemen! Let anarchy, with the torch of the furies in her hand, guide us to Congress, let the smoke from her torch intoxicate the rebels against order so that they follow her through the streets and the squares shouting freedom, and reawaken the 'Dead Sea' that is Congress. We are here on the high mountains of holy popular leadership. When anarchy has destroyed everything here and we see before us the bloody spectacle of the battlefields of war, freedom will rise.

Blacks, mulattos, Indians and *mestizos* answered the call and joined the armies of Independence. San Martín called his black soldiers his finest. But the civil wars would give the rural common people their greatest opportunities for social assimilation and ascent. They were recruited for vast undertakings not just by political leaders, like those who brought the *montoneras* to Buenos Aires in 1820 or to México in 1855 or to Lima in 1865, but also by others. With his army of farmhands, each *hacendado* had intervened, at one time or another, in some dispute. Those farmhands who managed to stand out in the fighting would never return to their earlier humble condition. An awareness that they were "a people at arms" was spreading; such sentiment created the rudiments of a democracy and slowly found its political voice. There was even the occasional *hacendado* who discovered that his slave was indeed a human being, such as the one portrayed in the Afro-American story of Feliciana in the novel by Jorge Isaacs.

Those armies of farmhands, under the command of the owner's lieutenant or the owner himself, did not always have to fight a rival army. The almost constant crisis of power forced each *hacendado* to organize his own defenses. Banditry was one expression, perhaps the most significant one, of the explosion of rural people and the crisis of the traditional system in the wake of Independence. Roads were full of highwaymen who robbed travelers and attacked *haciendas*. When they appeared, no one knew who they were; in fact, it was not uncommon for bandits to be confused with groups of the irregular armies who were fighting in the civil wars. Bandits and soldiers were two sides of the same coin. One might be able to identify a soldier by some piece of uniform, his cap or saber. But what difference did such 'credentials' make to someone whose home was occupied, whose animals were taken, or whose costly tableware was stolen? Bandits did the same things, although perhaps with slightly less respect for human life. But an *hacendado* recognized them by their behavior or because he might even know who they were. To respond to an attack, he armed his men and converted his home into a fortress. And knowing that he could expect nothing from the forces of the law, he received his assailants with gunfire.

Even worse was the problem of the roads. Bad enough as they were, roads became even more dangerous along winding stretches, in the highlands or in wooded areas. There, bandits hid themselves and lay in wait for the stagecoach, carts or horsemen. The element of surprise gave them the advantage; and they took everything the travelers were carrying and ruthlessly killed anyone who resisted. For such situations, the *hacendado* had his own troop, armed to the hilt and with good mounts. A foreman or steward executed the rudiments of a tactic that he had learned in the army or in hand-to-hand combat. And when the confrontation finally took place, the two opposing sides —farmhands and bandits— were fighting a long and yet undecided battle between an established society and one in open rebellion.

The Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca, a Scotswoman married to the Minister of Spain in México, who lived in that country between 1840 and 1841, explained banditry in rather simple terms:

This pestilence of robbers, which infests the republic, has never been eradicated. They are in fact the outgrowth of civil war. Sometimes in the guise of insurgents, taking an active role in the fight for Independence, they have *independently* laid waste the country and robbed all those they met. Under the pretext of expelling the Spaniards, these armed bands have infested the roads between Veracruz and the capital, they have ruined all commerce and, with no regard for political opinions, they have spread robbery and murder everywhere. In 1824, a law was proposed in Congress that would subject all armed bands to military justice in order to speed up the proceedings. Most of the bandits who had been apprehended had found some opportunity to escape while their trial was pending, and many had been imprisoned four and five times for the same offense and yet had never been brought to justice. In this law were included both robbers by profession and those bodies of insurgents who were merely extemporaneous amateurs. But whatever measures have been taken at different times to eradicate this evil, its causes remain, and the idle and the unprincipled will always take advantage of the disorganized state of the country to obtain by force what they should gain by honest labor.

These “idle and unprincipled” were doing what they could to extricate themselves from the subordination that rural people had endured for so long. War and anarchy gave them the occasion, and while their old masters were looking for power, these farmhands on horseback were making crime and robbery their livelihood and perhaps even their way to get rich. What mattered was to leave the *hacienda*, to shake their dependence and enjoy the savage freedom of the land, with no master, and with an easy wealth evoking that of the gentry.

It was perhaps in México where banditry lasted the longest and was most intense, but it did not fade quickly in other places either. In Perú, around Lima, bandits from Piedras Gordas and from Tallada de

Lurín wreaked havoc for a long time. In Colombia, they attacked the savannah from Cota, where Juan Rojas y Rodríguez became famous. In Chile, bandits operated out of Portezuela de Colina, La Dormida and other places mentioned by Pérez Rosales, threatening the capital itself just after Independence was declared. Pérez Rosales recalled that, in 1847, the Cerrillos de Teno were controlled by *pela-caras* (robbers) that hid out in the forests of Chimbarongo. Pérez Rosales fought against these bandits and in his *Recuerdos del pasado* wrote the following: "My most active inspectors were the wealthiest landowners in the area. They armed their tenants who, under the command of their respective land owners, went everywhere in pursuit of bandits..."

In México, however, civil war and anarchy lasted much longer and, as a consequence, so did banditry. The descriptions by Manuel Payno in *Los bandidos de Río Frío* (The Bandits of Río Frío) more or less coincide with the disturbing experiences recounted by the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca. The novel *El Zarco* (The Blue-Eyed One) by Ignacio Manuel Altamirano is set in the dangerous Juárez years, between 1861 and 1863, and it offers a complete portrait of a bandit whose temperament, according to the author, drove him to his life of crime. Had the character been real, there might have been other deep-rooted reasons for his conduct. But Altamirano created a symbolic figure and certainly revealed many hidden sides of banditry, among them the protection or complicity that bandits enjoyed in the most influential groups.

Perhaps those who joined the bands of highwaymen and those who joined the revolutionary armies —no matter whether the revolution be liberal or conservative— were one and the same. Sometimes they joined the regular army; but they were often members of guerrilla groups, mounted rebels whose activities were a combination of war and banditry. This was a direct consequence of the social explosion among rural people, but not among all of them. Those who found this way out were, above all, horsemen from the Pampas of Argentina and Perú, from the Venezuelan plains, from the Mexican states of Veracruz, Morelos and Guerrero, from the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul and from the Chilean valleys. In those regions, a horse was a necessity, but it was also a luxury and a sport. Horses were raised with great care. Don Gregorio Gándara, whom Guillermo Enrique Hudson recalls when describing the Argentine pampas around the mid-century, had one thousand breeding mares on his *estancia*. "At the time —says Hudson— everyone, from the poorest to the most powerful *gaucho*, who owned land and cattle believed that all his saddle horses should be of the same coat." But even those who couldn't afford that had their little troop to move about the plains, to work temporarily on some *hacienda* for a rodeo or for a cattle roundup, and, above all, to live the life of free men. These horsemen spent everything they had on their horse's saddle and would not be satisfied until they had their silver harnesses. It was not only the horse that assured their freedom: it was also their knife, and specially their determination to defend that freedom at all costs with a kind of bravery that sometimes bordered on provocation and arrogance. Just as provocative and arrogant was the *lacho guapetón* . Described by Pérez Rosales around 1880, he was recalled as follows:

This Chilean type, almost forgotten today, was, in his lifestyle, tastes and tendencies, the living incarnation of the knight-errant of the Middle Ages in poncho and boots. Like the knight errant, the *lacho guapetón* was looking for adventure; like the knight errant, he was looking for other dashing young men to conquer, wrongs to make right, rights to assert and damsels to please, sometimes by his gallantry and sometimes not, as there were those who were ill-mannered and indolent. Just as the knight never missed a tournament where he could display his gallantry and the irresistible power of his lance, the *lacho guapetón* never missed a rodeo, a horse show, or any place where there were young girls to idolize him, *chicha* to drink, *tonadas* to listen to, hearts to give away, generosity and graciousness to display, and fights over things as petty as a refusal to drink out of the same glass.

The Argentine *gaucho* and the Mexican *charro* were not much different. While such romantic personalities added color to the countryside, the vast majority of the rural population engaged in the backbreaking grind of farming.

For several decades, the explosion of the countryside would threaten to control the fate and character of the cities. Centers of power and hubs of commercial and financial activity, cities were the target of anyone who wanted to impose his authority on the restless society of the new countries emerging out of independence. The capitals attracted opposing factions. The colonial system had made those cities the seat of political power and public administration, and no insurgent movement could consider its job done until it had taken the capital. From there —from the "palace," so to speak— all the strings of public life could be pulled; within it one could parcel out government positions in a way that would tighten one's grip on the reins of authority.

Capitals —and to a lesser extent all urban centers, each one on its own scale— continued to be the focal points of economic life as well. Commerce was the fundamental activity in cities, varied in intensity depending on the city's area of influence. Thus, the collapse of strong businesses like that of Judas Tadeo Landínez in Bogotá in 1841 or that of the Viscount de Mauá, first in Montevideo in 1869 and then in Rio in 1875, had a great impact. At times, cities served only their domestic markets; for a variety of reasons, others were either regional or national distribution centers. The latter controlled the most important and profitable business: foreign trade, which had increased significantly since independence. English, French, or German products came to the ports and, after passing through foreign customs and, in some areas, several domestic customs stations, they finally arrived at urban centers. Certain goods continued to be controlled by monopolies, while others were traded on the free market. Once received by wholesalers, they were circulated among the markets, stores, and small shops that buyers patronized. National products brought from the countryside to the cities also had to pass through domestic customs stations; prices on foreign and local goods were increased by shipping problems and by the risks that the constant state of insecurity posed.

As demand rose, so did the volume of imports. The more comfortable classes had a penchant for French and English goods of all types: furnishings, rugs, china and silver, fabrics, laces, jewelry and apparel, wine, oil, and sweets. This obsession with keeping up with European fashion accounted for a significant volume of trade. Yet the need to obtain instruments, tools, and machinery was becoming increasingly important. Steam-operated machinery, originally used in mills and then gradually introduced elsewhere, like the machines that the English company installed in the Real del Monte mines in México, required heavy investments. Then came steam-driven vessels and railroads, the first of which was built in Perú in 1859. These new technologies meant that rails, locomotives, and wagons had to be imported, which increased financial obligations abroad. Those obligations grew even more when gas lighting began to spread in the 1850s. All these new needs, brought about by the encroachment of the industrial world, created a demand for capital. Even the first independent governments negotiated and obtained large loans, but the need to modernize would eventually require even more capital. The stability gradually achieved after mid-century encouraged the great powers to make that capital available.

Financial transactions were carried out through banks. The first banks established by independent governments failed because they were hard hit by political instability and economic problems. After the 1850s, however, private financiers managed to amass sufficient capital to found other banks, like Edwards in Valparaíso, Ossa in Santiago, or Mauá in Rio de Janeiro. The latter had his sights set on the capitals in Río de la Plata. But banking institutions as such did not begin to flourish until the great foreign banks set up branches in the region. The Bank of London and Brazil was founded in Rio de Janeiro in 1862, the Bank of London and the River Plate in Buenos Aires in 1863, and the Bank of London and South America in México City in 1864. Others followed soon thereafter in several cities in response to the interest of investing countries.

In México, Minister Lucas Alamán founded the Banco del Avío. A committee created in 1831 had recommended certain measures to promote industry, and the bank was to serve those purposes. A conservative minister in several governments and himself an industrialist, Alamán directed the United Mine Company and founded several businesses to manufacture cotton thread and textiles. There were others in México City, which was not the only site where such activities were growing. The Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca wrote in 1841:

Formerly, Puebla rivaled México in population and industry. The plague, which carried off 50,000 persons, was followed by the pestilence of civil war, and Puebla dwindled down into a secondary city. But we now hear a great deal about their cotton factories, already giving employment to 30,000 individuals, and about the machines, instruments and workmen brought from Europe.

The Marchioness went on to recount the vicissitudes of one of the most energetic industrialists, Don Esteban Antuñano, who struggled to get his factory, called "La Constancia Mejicana" in operation. He endured financial hardship and opposition in his effort to train his operators and to bring the necessary machinery from the United States. In the end, the factory went into production in 1835:

It is beautifully situated, and at a distance has more the air of a summer palace than a cotton industrial factory. Its order and airiness are delightful, and in the middle of the court, in front of the building, is a large fountain of the purest water. A Scotchman, who has been there for some time, says he has never seen anything to compare with it and he worked six years in the United States.

Although Puebla had an aristocratic tradition, its new bourgeoisie showed an enormous capacity for initiative and enterprise. There were cotton thread and textile factories, but there were also tile factories and, in 1860, a brewery was set up.

In the cities, the debate between protectionists and free traders became heated. The former wanted to protect local industries and cottage industries that were being threatened by the wave of foreign imports, which were blamed for their failures. But Vicente Pérez Rosales, who had put up a liquor factory around 1830 and had sustained serious setbacks, would observe many years later that improvidence and haste compromised the success of many initiatives. He then examined the industrial experiments undertaken as of then:

The pottery industry in Chile failed because we got it into our heads that we should begin with fine china, even before we got out of the quarry and before even trying crockery; the glass factory failed because rather than starting out with bottles made from common glass we had the audacity to begin with fine glassware and glass windows; the beet root sugar factory failed because the manufacturer had to be a farmer and the product, because it was Chilean, refined; the woolen factories are languishing because rather than starting out with ponchos, blankets, and mattresses, we were crazy enough to begin with fine woolens. My liquor factory failed because rather than content myself with improving the condenser tube, I tried some delicate French still; instead of making a better scotch, I got into cognac, anisette, perfect love. The sad lesson from all this is that every refined industry introduced in a country that lacks even the most rudimentary industries will invariably lead the entrepreneur down the road to ruin.

To be sure, for one reason or another, the efforts made to start up new industries faced difficulties. Even a determined, imaginative entrepreneur like the Baron of Mauá could begin any number of projects and end his career in humiliating bankruptcy. But something was learned from the effort. Little by little, the outline of an industrial city began to emerge, with its young factories, its print

shops or ironworks, or simple machine repair shops containing gas turbines, where one could see the old craftsmen mingling with the budding industrial proletariat. And although labor movements were surfacing in a few cities, by that time the new social stratum had not yet become a significant force.

Moreover, there was widespread sentiment at the time that what mattered to craftsman and worker alike was their own social ascent. In her novel *Jorge, el hijo del pueblo*, Arequipa's María Nieves y Bustamante described the lot of an artisan and his distress over the gulf that separated his class —his "sad world"— from the upper classes of which he wanted to be a part. That ambition seemed to justify any effort. Of course, not everyone made the effort, and José T. de Cuéllar amused himself in depicting the archetype of the Mexican artisan, a drunken laggard, in his *Historia de Chucho el Ninfo*. Those who struggled hard to improve their station in life tended to do so in their own city and within certain predetermined possibilities. Others took their chances with some of the new ventures that economic change had introduced, while still others moved elsewhere, dazzled by the brilliant prospects that such things as mining had to offer. In those hubs of adventure, the native mingled with the foreigner, locked in a kind of wager with destiny. Those who would fall into poverty rubbed elbows with those who would become rich. It was all a matter of luck. Pérez Rosales thus described the tense atmosphere of Copiapó around 1846:

The only thing that Copiapó had in common with Chile was the constitution —which was not always observed— and the laws —which all too often were broken—; the expression 'a ball of yarn is made from a single strand' does not fit Copiapó because the strand of Copiapó was to the ball of Chile what an egg is to a nut. It was very difficult if not impossible to find four Chileans in a casual gathering of 25 men. I say men because the opposite was true of the gentler sex Copiapó was a cosmopolitan town and very *riojano*; there were English, French, Chileans, Germans, Italians, not to speak of those from almost all the sister republics. In Copiapó, one neither could nor should have spoken of anything other than mines and just as Valparaíso is one big business firm, Copiapó was the gaping mouth of an enormous mine.

There one found people from every station in life. They all had one thing in common: they were all adventurers. The humblest of them were those who had only their hands to work with; they hoped, nonetheless, to build their future with those hands.

An enormous grassroots sector clung to routine, either because of a lack of initiative or, more often, because of the disheartenment borne of poverty. Anyone travelling through Latin America at that time was struck by the poor people, but also were the citizens who saw them every day; travel accounts, articles on customs, or engravings, watercolors and sketches capture the presence of this

group, which was the largest in any city. Perhaps the group caught the foreigner's attention most in those cities where blacks represented the largest portion of the lower classes: in Veracruz or in Cartagena, but especially in the Brazilian cities. "This black community ," said Pérez Rosales in 1825 about Rio; but he was no less surprised by the Indian or *mestiza* multitude elsewhere. Pancho Fierro, a subtle yet perceptive painter, left visual testimony of this stratum of *criollo* society in Lima. As in all cities, they could be seen in the market place and on festival days. Parish, Robertson and Hutchinson —all Englishmen— were surprised to see beggars on horseback in Buenos Aires, perhaps less wretched than the Mexican lepers, described as pathetic piles of rags who would approach the window and beg in a plaintiff falsetto, or who would sleep under the arches of the aqueduct then shake off their idleness by taking in the cool air or lying out in the sunshine. Not all such types were beggars. Convinced that they would never be anything but poor, some would stop working altogether out of discouragement. Pal Rosti, a Hungarian who traveled through Venezuela in 1857, asked a "young man with dark skin" who was leaning against a wall near the market place in Caracas why he was not working. The young man replied:

Why should I work? All the food I need hangs from the trees; I need only stretch out my hand to pluck it; if I need a blanket or a *machete* or a little liquor, I take some bananas or some other fruit to the market and I get everything I want and more. What else do I need? I wouldn't be any better off if I was as rich as Mr. X or Mr. Y., and that's how every *peón* in Venezuela thinks.

The working class engaged in a hundred different trades and occupations, but not one was sufficient to enable it to escape the kind of poverty that stifled initiative. Such poverty was the product of the very structure of society. Three revealing books were written on the subject: one by Mariano Otero, *Ensayo sobre el verdadero estado de la cuestión social y política que se agita en la República Mexicana*, published in México in 1841; one by Miguel Samper, *La miseria en Bogotá,* published in 1867; and a third by Joaquín Capelo, *Sociología de Lima*, published in 1900. Despite the opening that temporarily came about after the revolution, for many it was virtually impossible to get to the subsistence level; but it was even more difficult to try to move up socially, and economically, despite the indirect effects of the industrial revolution.

The gulf that separated the middle classes from the upper classes, on the other hand, was not as great. There was considerable tension between them, precisely because there was some fluidness, despite the best efforts of the upper classes to put themselves out of reach. Anyone from the middle classes who began to imitate the lifestyle or habits of the more genteel folk was labeled pretentious and affected. But perseverance and success began to knock down barriers once one managed to amass a respectable fortune. Occasionally, it was simply a matter of luck: a vein in a mine, an export or import commodity tapped at the right moment, a rural ranch that had done so well that its owner could move to the city, or a prosperous business that enabled the *nouveau riche*

to fight to be admitted into the most select circles. Such hope would drive the merchant or employee to persevere in his efforts, which could at least help him move higher on the middle class comfort scale even if they did not have optimal results.

That social class, which was just beginning to emerge in some cities, is portrayed in part of the literature. Within it, the alert observer would be able to discern the last vestiges of *hidalgo* society, which the new patrician class believed it was capable of restoring and whose period of greatest splendor it looked back on with nostalgia. Students of custom and habit did not overlook the subject; Chile's Jotabeche, Argentina's Alberdi, Colombia's Vergara y Vergara. Novelists, too, began to tap that vein: México's Juan Díaz Covarrubias explored it in his work *La clase media*, while the Perú's Luis Benjamín Cisneros used it as his backdrop in *Julia*. All their works were vibrant descriptions of the city, where society moved slowly, trying to break out of the traditional structure. But it was Chile's Alberto Blest Gana who left us the most thorough and incisive picture. From the middle classes, he drew characters representative of the new situation that was gradually taking shape and that would mature later. In *Martín Rivas* he deftly combined the portrait of the two parallel societies living within Santiago's social milieu. An astute observer, he highlighted the decisive role of money in a fluid society, whose uppermost strata did not have the means to make their ranks impenetrable.

Even though the middle classes made progress in some cities, they were unable to bridge the gap that separated them from the inner circles of the old aristocratic society until the late 19th century. The process was becoming more visible, but resistance from the social structure was very strong. The Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca first came in contact with a *criollo* society when she arrived in Havana in 1839. She had the following to say: "This sudden change from Yankee Land to this military, monkish, Spanish Negroland is dreamy." That dream replayed itself many times over in México, where the Scots Marchioness noted over and over again the tremendous contrast between the upper classes and the working classes: "No connecting link between the blankets and the satins," she said in a curious passage in which she was describing the multi-colored society that came together on the Paseo de la Viga in México City.

Independence was a period of crisis for the upper classes. Many ceased to belong to the upper classes, while others were added. But overall, these changes had no impact on their habits and customs. Whenever circumstances allowed, they became as arrogant and ostentatious as the colonial aristocracy had been. They tried to live that lifestyle, each according to his means. They dressed in European fashion and from Europe they brought however much they felt they needed to keep up their show. But fortune had its limits. Some had inherited their lands or mines and continued in the tradition of their colonial ancestors. One saw them in the capital cities, but they were more clearly identified with the old seigniorial cities like Popayán, Trujillo in Perú, Guadalajara, Puebla, Olinda, and Bahia. Others had made their fortunes more recently, through political power, deals or

take-overs, and others through business. Some used the profits to get the luxury that real property tended to provide. The high-ranking clergy and upper echelons of the military were part of the upper classes. Some of them were members by birth, but others because the upper classes had lured them to their ranks during unstable periods when the military represented power. But apart from the native upper classes, there were also wealthy foreign businessmen, real aristocrats. Some were English and French. Some had monetary wealth. But more important still were those in key positions to help others acquire wealth. These were the arbiters of good taste in fashion, and what they did tended to be imitated by those who dreamed about the unattainable paradise of London and Paris. Who could be more elegant than a French *modiste*? Who could be wealthier than an English importer? Each had a place in the elite salons where the discussion was basically about fashion and business. A Dreyfus or a Meiggs could go to the most elegant salons in Lima or Santiago and no one stopped to ask about his social pedigree.

Between the colonial tradition, the patrician style and the development of mercantilism, cities began to take on a new look. But as they absorbed the rural waves of migrants, they began to show a disdain for the countryside, one that was sometimes very noticeable. After the initial alarm, the new urban societies that had absorbed the many people who had left the countryside began to assert their superiority and force the rural world back into a subordinate position. The *campesino* (peasant) from the independence movement or the civil wars was by now all too accustomed to freedom and became a divisive factor. The view was that he had to be subject to the authority of the state, and even better, the authority of the *hacendados*, and that he had to be steered to his place within the production system.

There was some conflict between the rural lifestyle and the urban lifestyle during this period, perhaps because the rural world had grown in stature and, for some time at least, believed it could challenge the urban world. But it quickly lost the battle, and some mutual resentment lingered on, or perhaps a keen awareness that each represented a different lifestyle.

Rural troops frequently entered the cities and the urban people looked upon them with terror, as if these country folk were driven only by the most primitive instincts. The cities feared becoming the spoils of war of a people that they supposed hated them for their refinement and wealth: Buenos Aires trembled as the *caudillos* López and Ramírez advanced, and Lima trembled when León Escobar, a black mounted rebel, entered the city and for one day sat on the presidential seat. And if it wasn't hatred that the people from the rural areas felt, it was at least resentment against the *cachacos*, the *catrines*, the *currutacos*, all nicknames that they had given the urban gentry. Men from the countryside who had distinguished themselves in battle resented the *doctor* with whom they had to negotiate or coexist in peacetime and wartime. In the suburbs, where they lived alongside one another and remembered their treatment of one another, urban man and rural man clashed. The

latter was used to mistrusting the malicious tavern keeper or grocer who took advantage of his inexperience in the twisted machinations of business dealings.

Both *Facundo* by Sarmiento and *Martín Fierro* by José Hernández —two Argentine works particularly representative of the period— revealed the scope of the friction between countryside and city. The city wanted to recoup the role it had played during the colonial period, this time because it believed it represented civilization. Cities had become stronger as groups of *hacendados* joined urban society. This may explain why the rural common folk had such a keen sense of abandonment. All forces were marshaled against them in order to return them to their subordinate status. After 1850, the "bad *gaucho*," the rebel, played his last card against the civilization of the cities and lost again. *Martín Fierro* was his lament.

The clash became evident in the contrasting lifestyles. Bartolomé Hidalgo, an Uruguayan minstrel from around the time of the independence movement, sang of a *gaucho's* naive fascination for the *fiestas* that Buenos Aires held to celebrate the anniversary of the May revolution. Decades later, the Chilean Jotabeche would write about *El provinciano in Santiago* , and in Venezuela Daniel Mendoza would write about *El llanero en la capital* . Mendoza created a typical character, Palmarote, who personified the peasant's reactions to a world that he regarded as alien. Years later, this would be the same topic developed by Argentina's Estanislao del Campo in his *Fausto*, where the *gaucho* Anastasio el Pollo offers not just his naive version of Goethe but also his impressions about life in Buenos Aires.

Countryside and city, rural life and urban life: these were the two poles, the two extremes that would expose the eruption of *criollo* society within a colonial structure that was still intact. The city would triumph, but the price of victory would be profound changes in the physiognomy of urban society, which had to combine the strengths of the old bourgeoisie within the new patrician classes.

Bourgeoisies and Patriciates

Within a few decades of the revolution, the shift in power among the classes was evident. Describing a distinguished Mexican lady in 1840, the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca wrote:

She and her contemporaries are fast fading away, the last relics of the days of the viceroyalty. In their place has appeared a new generation whose manners and appearance have little to do with *veille cour* about them —chiefly, it is said, wives of military men, produced by the ferments of the revolutions, ignorant and full of pretension, *parvenus* who have risen by a stroke of luck and not by

merit.

The new generation that displaced the traditional aristocracies did not exhibit, however, so simple a composition. In many places, it included members of the old aristocracy, who had become —more or less— sincere republicans. Ultimately, the Scots Marchioness was not far wrong. The new military dominated, certainly; but there were also new and old bourgeois, and new and old *hacendados*. Initially disunited and at odds with one another, within a matter of decades they would merge, following a new and different formula. In the general upheaval that society had undergone after Independence, the most profound change had taken place within the ruling classes themselves.

Of course, the *criollo* middle classes retained a good part of their power. Challenged because of their desire to retain the position they had held before and immediately after Independence, they had to yield their position, deal with the new power groups that were emerging, and occasionally serve as their proxies or simply give them their backing. But as a group, whatever the fate of any single member, the bourgeoisie continued to wield economic influence and to hold both administrative and, as a rule, political positions.

Vicente Rocafuerte, a representative of Guayaquil's bourgeoisie, held a political office in Ecuador, while Valparaíso's Diego Portales, also a member of the bourgeoisie, held a political post in Chile. Dr. Borrero left the shop where he sold textiles to become Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, only to return to his shop after his term at government office was over. Nicolás de Piérola in Perú, as well as Florentino González and Manuel Murillo Toro in Colombia were, as treasury ministers, in a position to realize the plans and interests of the bourgeoisie in their own countries. But even where their members did not hold any high-profile posts, the bourgeoisie continued to pull the strings from their shop counters, their offices, their teller's windows, and so on. At times, those strings were potent, like those that the Viscount of Mauá pulled in Brazil, which were capable of controlling a country's entire economy. Still, the *criollo* middle classes had definitely lost some of their power. They recovered it only thanks to the increasing activity and influence of a new sector, one that had become part of the life of the city and added a new dimension: foreign businessmen.

Though there were many foreign businessmen, their influence was even greater than their numbers. In Buenos Aires, wrote an English resident around 1825, the British businessmen were held in high regard. Most of the country's commerce was in their hands. After listing 40 British firms in Buenos Aires, the writer added that most such establishments had branches in Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Chile, and Perú, forming a vast commercial network of some importance for British interests. In México City in 1840, the British celebrated the marriage of Queen Victoria at a ball given at the Palacio de Minería. Many of México City's most distinguished personalities were in attendance,

including its finest families and even the President of the Republic. In every city, one could find an important group that generally controlled not only the major businesses but also the retail shops.

Apart from the English, there were other foreign businessmen as well. There were French living in the cities along the Atlantic seaboard, but still more along the Pacific coastline. Flora Tristán surveys the French population of Arequipa:

Arequipa, a city in the interior, has only limited resources to offer to commerce. The number of foreigners is also very small. The only French house is that of a Mr. Le Bris. He settled in Perú ten years ago, and his businesses have flourished. Before Perú was exploited and then ruined by civil war, Mr. Le Bris had amassed a fortune of several million. But his companies in Valparaíso and Lima sustained tremendous losses through carelessness in doing business. The Central Office in Arequipa had to go to the rescue of the other two. A skilful businessman, Mr. Le Bris took control of each of his business establishments and within a matter of months had everything back in order. In all, there are only eight or ten Frenchmen in Arequipa. Apart from those I have already named, they are Mr. Poncignon de Burdeos, whose shop is the most elegant in the city, and Mr. and Mrs. Cerf, Jews from Brest who sell all types of objects in their shop. Many other French people have their official address in Arequipa but do not live there for the better part of the year. The brokerage businesses, in particular, require that they travel all around Perú.

Americans and Germans could be found in all the cities of the Caribbean. People of all nationalities settled in the Río de la Plata, including Italians and Portuguese. Many were of humble origin, but in general, all shared an adventuresome spirit. Describing Dreyfus, who cornered the *guano* market in Perú under the administration of President Balta, a Perúvian wrote shortly thereafter: “Like so many others who no doubt never manage to satisfy their immense drive for money in their own country and leave in order to become quick and easy millionaires in some foreign country, Mr. Dreyfus came to Perú to improvise the fortune he was unable to find in Europe.” Apart from daring businessmen, there were people of another sort as well, especially those who got into the railway business: Meiggs in Perú and Chile, Wheelright in Chile and Argentina, or Buschental who was part of Urquiza’s inner circle in Paraná, capital of the Argentine Confederation and who would engage in just about any type of business. The capitals naturally attracted the more ambitious foreigners, especially those who wanted to be close to power. Even in the lesser cities, such as Arequipa or Veracruz, the hub of foreign businessmen was “the heart of the community,” as the French traveler Eugène de Sartiges said about Arequipa.

Nonetheless, as de Sartiges pointed out, there were problems as well. “Often petitions were introduced in the Perúvian legislature to have foreign businessmen expelled from the country as a

means to stem the exodus of capital; the same request is repeated each time there is some kind of political disturbance." A traveler who signed himself "an Englishman" said something similar in reference to Buenos Aires:

At times, the *criollos* show some jealousy at the English; they assume that we have a monopoly on business and take currency out of the country. These poor students of political economy do not understand that, in trade, obligations are mutual, and that for our goods we buy their raw materials, often at ruinous prices.

In any case, the prestige and influence of foreign businessmen gave considerable strength to the commercial sector as a whole, and relations between groups were sometimes smooth and mutually beneficial. At the beginning of his autobiography, titled *Exposição do Visconde de Mauá aos credores de Mauá and C*. (Rio de Janeiro, 1878), this brilliant Brazilian entrepreneur wrote:

By the springtime of my life, I had already amassed, through tireless and honest labor, a fortune that assured me complete independence. One of the finest men, an English businessman (Richard Carruthers), a completely honest man, typical of the old school of positive morality, after having sufficient evidence of my performance in his service, selected me as a managing partner of his firm, even though I was still a very young man. At that very young age, he set me on the road to a career in business with the idea that I could develop or groom those talents that I had within me.

His was not a unique case; with time, the *criollo*s and the foreigners came to see eye-to-eye on many things.

Caught up in administration, deft at the subtle negotiations of economics and politics, the urban middle classes, which had been reborn with social and economic change, conquered the fears aroused by disorder and civil war. Those who won power by force turned to the bourgeoisie for counsel and support, to wield their power effectively, and to carry out their own plans and serve their own interests. In that give-and-take, the bourgeoisie and the new power groups joined each other to form a new patrician elite. They combined in other ways as well: pragmatic and concerned with daily matters, rich bankers and powerful merchants inspired and underwrote revolutions, trying to impose their own views or, if their viewpoints were not viable, to modify them enough to coincide with those who seemed closer to power. Certainly, some won and some lost; but the bourgeoisie never gave up and it never left the playing field.

Pragmatism also got the better of the *hacendados*, rich and influential landowners who were called

to battle and often developed a taste for being in command. They, too, had to try to survive in the midst of the crisis of authority that the civil wars had created. In one of his novels, the liberal author Altamirano has one of his characters address the following remarks to President Benito Juárez:

Don't trust those landowners, Mr. President, because they receive a share of the stolen property and get rich that way. There is a certain gentleman who wears a blond wig and uses a golden snuffbox. Every month he receives a large salary from the bandits. He provides the *hacendados* with passes so that their shipments of sugar and liquor can get through without a problem. In return, they have to pay a hefty sum.

Hacendados, *montoneros*, and bandits formed a very fluid social network for many decades; during that time, the *hacendados* raised private armies whose members could, occasionally or permanently, break away to form their own gangs and conduct pillaging operations.

There were, of course, *hacendados* who steered clear of politics and confined themselves to their farms or their city homes. Thus, they condemned themselves to a form of marginality from which only their wealth could rescue them. Others, however, decided to participate in social and political changes, from which they stood to gain much. Generally, they headed up the regional or federalist movements, although once in power they might return to a more centralist position, while still making their own interests and those of their region the centerpiece of policy. That was why they were so intent upon controlling the capitals; all power radiated from the city to cover the entire nation. The entrances that the *montoneros* made in the cities were symbolic but effective gestures, although perhaps not so dramatic and colorful as the awesome sight of hordes of peasants running through the city streets.

The newest *hacendados* were the most politically active —specifically those who had become *hacendados* through politics, either appropriating the farms of their adversaries, or even purchasing *haciendas* with the fortunes they had amassed in their equivocal campaigns. Since the groups of *montoneros* sometimes slid into outright banditry, more than once their leaders yielded to the temptation of other's property, whether land or cattle. This was their reward for their ascendancy over the rural workers, the very people they rallied to their side and their trump card on the political gambling table.

In the aftermath of independence, a policy not backed by force was unthinkable. Witness the fact that many civilians became military men. Manuel Belgrano was an example of how a typical bourgeois intellectual from Buenos Aires could transform himself into the general of a regular army. However, as the process moved forward and civil strife began, the distinction between regular

troops and irregular troops became increasingly blurred. An army of civilians often maintained its hybrid character. Military rank was achieved in the fields —through the exercise of effective leadership, according to the spontaneous rules of the armed faction and, in many cases, by the self-definition of the one promoted. Describing a *gaucho* from the Río de la Plata, Xavier Marmier, a French traveler, wrote in 1850:

Once he has mastered his horse, once he has swum a raging river, once he has handled in cold blood the lasso and the knife, then and only then is he a complete man. His existence is assured, and as little as his ambitions may be, his abilities as a *gaucho* may thrust leadership upon him. This is how the colonels and the generals in the Argentine Confederation got their start. Immortal heroes, as Rosas calls them. The great Rosas himself revealed his genius to the peoples of El Plata in this way.

Almost all the *montoneros* chiefs had more or less the same background; many of them ended up in high-ranking government positions. Don Jacobo Baca, who joined the revolution in México and whose rise was recounted with exquisite irony by José T. de Cuéllar in *Ensalada de pollo* (1869), ended up a colonel.

Only the political power of the moment could bestow the rank of general, but no one hesitated to declare himself a colonel if he had 500 well-mounted men behind him. And any political chief who had the wherewithal to exert his arbitrary authority with military force was, by right, a colonel. The period of the civil wars was the era of the military-politicians because one could hardly pull any weight in politics unless he met that double condition. Eugène de Sartiges visited Arequipa's authorities and wrote: "The prefect, whom President Gamarra had just promoted to the rank of general, repeated merrily that the best government was government by the sword." In a society reminded daily that such was its government, the dominant class consisted of colonels and generals. And thus the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca, not without irony, quite correctly observed that the new generation that she saw in control of México consisted of "wives of military men" and, naturally, military men, "*parvenus* who have risen by a stroke of luck..."

With weapons in hand, each leader sought the backing that he thought would be in his best interests. Some showed conservative leanings, others were more liberal; still, they might switch sides at any time if they thought it in their best interests. There were those who looked for support among the popular masses, both rural and urban, such as Belzú in Bolivia; others, like his assassin Melgarejo, preferred to serve the propertied classes and foreign interests. However, they all had to turn to the urban bourgeoisie to put their government together and consolidate their hold on power. Out of this crossing came the patrician class, half-urban and half-rural, that dominated political life in the long half century that followed independence.

This new leading class, unlike anything before it, was the natural outgrowth of a new society and adapted itself to that society. All social contradictions were reflected in the new patrician elite, as were all aspirations and ambitions. While the new elite ardently desired power and wealth, it was just as eager to lead the new society. Since no ideology adequately represented political reality, the new elite did not espouse any definite philosophy. Instead, it operated on the basis of practical and immediate concerns. For a short time, the situations themselves created the options. The choice of any option spawned factional disputes and struggles in which personal interests and ambitions became confused with radical views on vital issues. In the confrontation of opinions, political lines were silently drawn, and those political lines, influenced to some extent by ideology, ultimately carved out positions. The names of such positions —or the groups who advocated them— echoed the complex, multi-faceted, at times almost indescribable features of their milieu. In every country, every region, every city, one had either to embrace or to reject it.

Thus, whatever its members' virtues or vices, the new governing elite was an authentic patrician class. Linked to the collective destiny, it was no more or less virtuous than other patrician classes. What mattered was that the new society regarded it as its aristocracy, its elite. Its members felt that they were the elite. The groups within the patrician class were both urban and rural, both aristocratic and bourgeois. Rural in the countryside and urban in the city, little by little it began also to be rural in the cities and urban in the countryside.

Over time, the patrician elite began to consolidate itself thanks to its continuity across successive generations, inherited fortune and power, simultaneous action in various sectors of society, and matrimonial or economic alliances. Now "old wealth," it began to think of itself and to be thought of as an aristocracy that, like all aristocracies, guarded or idealized its origins. True dynasties were founded with pre-established places for heirs and collaterals whose power increased if they succeeded in marrying a member of the colonial aristocracy with a family crest. Resistance to the colonial past gradually began to decline in some quarters of the new upper class, but enthusiasm for the egalitarian sentiments that Jacobean orators conveyed evaporated even more quickly. The new lineages reclaimed the privileges of the old ones and arrogantly asserted their alleged excellence. A family that managed to produce a president or an archbishop —like the Errázuriz family in Chile or the Mosquera family in Colombia— was assured universal respect and the best places for even its lesser members. A chronicler of the city of Cauca wrote the following: "This Mosquera family has noblemen with well-earned titles in its history. In Popayán, it was a star of the first magnitude." In Arequipa, the two most distinguished families, the Goyeneche and the Tristán, were related in a line that produced not only a bishop but also the abbesses of the aristocratic convents of Santa Rosa and Santa Catalina. And in every city, these new republican lineages exerted their authority and surrounded themselves with the kind of opulence that they believed befitted their rank. Observing the ceremony and formality that attended the lives of these great families, the

single conclusion one could draw was summed up in 1840 by the wife of the Minister Plenipotentiary of Spain in México, who said the ceremony inaugurating Congress was "as anti-republican looking an assembly as I have ever beheld."

Out of these new dynasties also came most of the jurists in high positions within the legal system, the authors of the constitutions, the laws, and the codes, the advisers to government on the most serious problems, and frequently the counsellors to foreigners who were granting loans or negotiating concessions for public works. These dynasties almost invariably produced the most eminent writers and distinguished poets —often dilettantes who dabbled in the fine arts, politics, and sometimes even war, as in the case of Colombia's Julio Arboleda. The patrician class was the cream of the new society not only in large cities, but also in small ones, where the colonial atmosphere remained virtually intact.

The Struggle over Ideologies

Leading this new society entailed devising and setting policies into motion. However, the actual experience of change required conceptualizing a radically new social reality in order to design policies that were responsive to real situations, in both the short and long terms. Thus, each person's image of society took on uncommon significance. Apart from the occasional struggles for power, one of the greatest challenges that Latin America's new patriciate had to face was articulating such an image of society. Describing them in Buenos Aires around 1850, Lucio V. López said that it consisted of "landowners and shopkeepers," with the sole addition of the military men who organized the forces that would work to serve the two groups. Having a conceptualization of society was, therefore, as important as having policies, or even more so. In some instances, this conceptualization was intuitive, while in some other cases it was methodically developed according to well-crafted criteria. Yet, even when it seemed purely intuitive, conveyed by the words or deeds of some charismatic *caudillo*, one could still detect the influence of certain ideological principles prevalent in the world at that time.

The Enlightenment vision of society, which the liberal movement had inherited, endured in many people's minds, with slight variations and changes over the course of time. Society was a collection of rational, free and equal individuals who together constituted an organic whole. Each individual used his intelligence and exercised his will to establish and maintain the social contract that bound him to the rest of society. In that organic whole, national sovereignty resided; therefore, popular sovereignty was the source of all power. "Nothing is made in the Americas —wrote Venezuelan Antonio Leocadio Guzmán— of divine right, which is the basis of all power and jurisdiction in some

regions; nothing of ancestral right and privilege, which legitimize the king's authority over others; nothing of aristocratic alliances and balances, except incendiary bombs. Our continent has taken all these Old World rights and privileges and replaced them with the vote of the majority, expressed in accordance with the constitution."

Under that social contract, the individual had very strict obligations to the social organism. The first of those obligations was not to destroy the system of rules upon which it was based. But stricter still were the obligations that civil society had —especially those to whom power had been delegated— towards the individuals who formed the political body: the system of individual rights and freedoms had to be jealously guarded because, according to this interpretation of society, the individual was all-important, and nobody's rights or freedoms were to be more restricted than the rights and freedoms of anybody else.

The practical problem for the new *criollo* society was to determine who, in fact, were the members of the civil organism. In colonial society, no one had any doubt, since the law dictated who would and who would not participate. But in post-Independence society, a disparity developed between theory and practice. In theory, all people were equal members of society, while in practice membership was limited only to some, although social mobility could loosen some of the boundaries. According to the liberal view of society, the system of individual rights and freedoms worked only for the individual who was intelligent and free; in practical terms, this meant that the only ones entitled to rights and freedoms were those who had property, i.e., those who were economically free, who had some education, and who had reasons to be interested in preserving the order established by the social contract and to be responsible for their obligations to that order. The liberal view of society was not egalitarian in fact, even though it was egalitarian in theory. The occasional use of the rhetoric of equality by the more radical sectors of the liberal movement was obviously an effort to increase by some small measure the number of those who were equal.

Unpleasant vestiges of the aristocratic view lingered in liberal thought, which replaced the distinction among classes based on origins with one based on property and education. Like the slave and the Indian before him, the "ignorant *gaucho*" was on the fringes of society; actually, he was part of another, lower society whose rebelliousness was invariably subversive. The "decent folk" constituted the only true society.

The social upheaval that began in the eighteenth century and culminated with Independence framed the issue in new terms. People who belonged to "the other society" attached themselves to the egalitarian theory that was at the heart of the emancipation mentality; in their own fashion, they demanded the position that they believed was rightfully theirs. And so arose a conflict between two

interpretations of society. It was a dispute over the meaning of the word "people" in the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Did "people" mean all society or just a portion of it? Once again, the enlightened liberal interpretation of society found itself trapped in a contradiction between theory and practice.

Intuitively, the response of the "other society" and its spokesmen was that society consisted of all people and must, therefore, be egalitarian. It was a deeply felt, natural conviction that gradually became clearer and armed itself with arguments. Society began to be construed not as the sum total of intelligent and free individuals who constituted a community founded upon some contract, but as a whole itself, which was far more important than the individuals who made it up. Thus, the whole was unstable and fluid, and the individuals within it coexisted on an equal basis, regardless of their circumstance: "haves" and "have-nots," literate and illiterate, responsible and irresponsible, "decent people" and riff-raff. A common soul stirred within that whole, revealing itself not through reason, but through feelings and the will. José Artigas of Uruguay wrote in 1811:

Those who moved into action were not just the idle countrymen or those who owed their existence to their day's work or a salary. Real established folk, people of good fortune and people who enjoyed the comforts that this land provided, suddenly became soldiers, setting aside their interests, their homes, their families and exposing themselves, for the first time, to the perils of war, marching away to the cries of their women and children. These men, deaf to those voices, answered only to the voice of their homeland.

Such shared experience planted in many minds a holistic interpretation of society.

In addition, for every vision of society, there was a sense of how it should express itself. For the liberal, society spoke through each of its members, whose reasoned opinions and decisions were passed on to a small number of representatives, also capable of functioning rationally. But for the romantic, what mattered was not the opinion and reasoned decision of each member of the community, but rather his sentiments, profound though inarticulate. He needed someone to interpret them, someone who would reason them through and act upon them. Thus, representative democracy was pitted against the personalist concept of the *caudillo*. Thomas Carlyle, quick to discover this tendency in Latin American political life, explained it in his study on the Paraguayan dictator José Gaspar Francia.

Many of the observations and analyses about Latin American society conducted in this period, in fact, concerned the type of power wielded by charismatic *caudillos*. Two Argentines, Juan Bautista Alberdi and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, did in-depth studies of this issue, Alberdi in *Fragmento preliminar al estudio del derecho*, published in 1837, and Sarmiento in *Facundo*, published in 1845. To

them, it was obvious that *caudillos* were representative of the new society, which they believed was in urgent need of change; their analyses were profound, their descriptions accurate. There were other commentaries. Some came from liberals, influenced in a way by the social ideas of romanticism; others came from conservatives, and still others from the *caudillos*' apologists. They all acknowledged that these charismatic chiefs somehow represented the rural and urban masses that they were polarizing. The excesses of autocracy ended up disheartening the romantic vision of society, or rather, leading it down the road to liberal romanticism. This was a compromise that ultimately led to formal acceptance of the representative system; to the more radical circles, it meant a potentially rapid assimilation into society of the newly emerged groups. Despite occasional missteps, this was the vision that continued to guide the destinies of both region and nation. At the forefront, or returning to the forefront, were the urban societies.

In Latin America, the liberal and the romantic views of society, despite the radical contradiction between them, had something in common: they were like two sides of the same coin, minted in the heat of a change that both views had perceived and acknowledged. However, the old view that preceded them did not disappear altogether. Born of the conquest, it was the basis of the society of *hidalgos*. The change triggered by the rise of mercantilism had been an important one; the change brought on by the liberation of social forces following Independence was no less so. Yet, the system of ownership for land and mines continued to be the same, even though property and mines had changed hands. This older view of society would inevitably survive, kept alive by those who, although conscious of the change, were unwilling to acknowledge it. Some tried to forestall it, but many were confident that they would be able to restore things to the way they had been before.

Three ideologies, therefore, intersected in the minds of the new patrician class. At times, each of these ideologies operated in a pure, unadulterated form; at other times, they combined into an amalgam. Cities, especially the capitals, were the battleground of these ideological wars, because it was in them that the diverse groups biding for power took shape, and it was in them that the movements that would accelerate or thwart the consolidation of power were formed. Some came to power with a very clear agenda; but others, having reached positions of power, had no idea what to do with it. Transactions among groups were as frequent as ideological transactions. And in this venture, the complex and equivocal context of the city served as the stage on which any player had to appear in order to seal the terms of the contract.

Slowly, the cities were absorbing the impact of rural incursions, seducing and converting their leaders and spokesmen. Juan Facundo Quiroga, *el tigre de los LLanos (*tiger of the plains)— bought the home of the wealthy Lezicas in Buenos Aires and set himself up there with his family. In the sumptuous salons of "Viñeta," the house where General José Antonio Páez lived in Caracas, his wife, doña Barbarita, hosted splendid literary gatherings. In that milieu, a modernized version of the old

urban idea of despotism for the sake of freedom —the "enlightened despotism" of the eighteenth century— was revived. Of course, not everyone was in favor of this. Many of the more reactionary conservative elements desired to preserve the tradition of the *encomendero*, with its sense of privileged superiority. On the other hand, the notion of enlightened despotism was accepted by those who called themselves liberals as well as those old or new property owners who had sought and obtained popular support and identified themselves as liberal conservatives. Pragmatic decisions on immediate, everyday problems still filtered through the tissue of ideologies. Every decision, however, had a purpose, albeit obscure at times. Nevertheless, one could detect behind each decision, an intention, a tendency, an attitude that revealed the weight of each ideology in the complex amalgam of opinions that were slowly taking shape in the mentality of the new patrician elite.

Once change had been unleashed, for every decision that had to be made, one fundamental question remained: whether to preserve or transform the socio-economic structure of the colonial world. This issue was not altogether clear to everyone at the outset, nor were all the immediate problems contemplated in the principles being used. But the facts spoke for themselves. Preserving the *Mayorazgo (*primogeniture system) or the *estanco (*monopoly regime) meant preserving the colonial socio-economic structure, and the fight for or against those institutions polarized conservatives and liberals. Chile's liberal Constitution of 1828 abolished *Mayorazgo*, but it was reinstated by the conservative Constitution of 1833 after the 1830 revolution; Minister Portales poured all of his efforts into maintaining the colonial socio-economic structure, just as Rosas did in Argentina. In the midst of a serious general upheaval and a heated debate, the *Mayorazgo* system was suspended in Brazil in 1835, a terrible blow to the landowning aristocracy that had supported Pedro I. The Colombian Law of 1848 that opened up tobacco farming put an end to a monopoly that conservatives had fiercely defended. The reforms proposed in México by Gomez Farías in 1833, and passionately supported by the liberals, were abolished the following year by Santa Anna; it was not until the liberal Constitution of 1857 and the Reform Laws were passed that those reforms were restored, though they triggered civil war and foreign intervention.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the continued survival of the old structure was the problem of the labor force. Even though the governments that emerged out of the revolution were theoretically willing to liberate the rural Indian from servitude and take the first steps toward abolishing slavery, the debate that would ultimately lead to the laws ending slavery was long and heated. It was not without opposition or hesitation that President Castilla of Perú ordered the manumission of the slaves and abolition of the tribute that Indians had had to pay. México's 1857 Constitution also ordered the freedom of the rural serfs; the debate surrounding this issue was a heated one, and owners organized protests to defend their interests. In Chile, when the 1823 Constitution that abolished slavery was discussed, slave-owners not only defended their rights but they also rallied

slaves to declare, before Congress, that they did not want their status changed. Certainly, it was the urban bourgeoisie, unaffected by these measures, that most diligently worked to win the victories which would liberalize the labor market.

The anti-liberal conservatives lost this battle. However, all the conservatives, and many liberals as well, continued to harbor a strong prejudice against relations between the classes. In the mid-1800s, an unpleasant *hidalgo* vestige was evident, one that established a gulf between the propertied upper classes and the working people. Among the latter, large sectors accepted that vision of social relations. In countries like Chile and Colombia, artisans managed to organize into guilds and they even took part in politics, but they could never conquer their sense of inferiority. The urban middle classes countered the traditional concept of society with an alternative inspired by an ideology of upward social mobility. It did not challenge the separation between the classes; instead, it argued that anyone who had achieved a certain position had a right to be accepted in the higher classes. Criticism of the so-called aristocratic groups because of their resistance to accepting people on their merits or fortune by asserting —either explicitly or implicitly— some kind of birthright, became a theme of the realist school of literature and the novels of social manners. Suffrage would later move the equality issue into the political arena.

The battle of ideologies was nowhere more in evidence than on political realms. First and most profound was the issue of nationality. Except for the case of Brazil, new nationalities emerged out of a random division of colonial territories; they were formed without a sufficiently vigorous base. In the decades following Independence, it was difficult to determine the specific and distinctive features of each new country. Two tendencies made it harder for national identities to emerge. One favored forming large political units, as Bolívar attempted with Gran Colombia, Morazán with Central America, and Santa Cruz with the Perúvian-Bolivian Confederation. The other was the desire of certain regions to become separate nations.

The efforts of those who wanted to create large political units failed. To counter Bolívar's theory, men like Páez, Santander, and Flórez stirred up nationalist sentiments and interests. Their movements had strong backing, strong enough to assert the political identity of what would eventually become new countries: Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. The Central American regions destroyed Morazán's project, while the two countries unified by Santa Cruz quickly separated in the face of resistance from large internal groups and under pressure from Chile.

Before, during, and after this centralization, there were those who wanted to make certain regional areas stronger by means of alliances and even foreign protectorates. The response was strong nationalist movements that regarded foreign alliances as treasonous. Some of those who fought for

their regions' emancipation and triumphed ultimately gave their region a national image. This was true of Artigas in Uruguay and Francia in Paraguay; to some extent, it was initially true in the Central American countries and in Bolivia. However, there were many who failed or who lowered their nationalist aspirations to federalist formulas. Perhaps the most dramatic case was that of Brazil following the abdication of Emperor Pedro I. Since 1831, regional insurrections had imperilled the unity of the Spanish Empire. In every region and major city, opinion was divided. Almost invariably, it was liberals and federalists on one side and conservatives and centralists on the other. The problem repeated itself over and over again in many countries. Centralists and regionalists were the protagonists in a long ideological debate that paralleled the political tensions and civil wars that rocked Argentina and Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela, and México. Very different regions —the Yucatán, Cauca, Texas, Coro, Apure, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Sul— with clear local interests, which at times were at odds with the interests of the capital, asserted their right to some measure of autonomy, although without necessarily denying the basic canon of nationality.

The nationalist ideology was so strong that some historians set about tracing the genetic formation of a nationality to prove that it had pre-existed regional sentiment. It was an effort to proclaim, perhaps to demonstrate, or even to perfect, the idea of a singular national identity that encompassed all regions in a given area by delving into the colonial past and into the enterprise of Independence. This was the basic underlying argument in works by México's Lucas Alamán and José María Luis Mora, Cuba's José Antonio Saco, Venezuela's Rafael María Baralt and Juan Vicente González, Colombia's José Manuel Restrepo, Bolivia's Mariano Paz Soldán, Argentina's Bartolomé Mitre and Vicente Fidel López, and Chile's Diego Barros Arana and Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna —a long list that bespeaks the strong influence on Latin America of the romantic view of history, the ultimate purpose of which was to identify, in each case, the lines of a national destiny.

Although property owners participated in and headed up the regionalist and federalist movements, they were nonetheless popular movements as well. A typical case was the *farroupilha* revolution that Bento Gonçalves led in Rio Grande do Sul in 1835. They all emphasized what regional populations had in common, as opposed to the centralist ambitions of the capitals and their bourgeoisie, whom the regionalists and federalists regarded as arrogant and greedy. While they did not always have a clear agenda beyond autonomy, they had an obvious preference for provincial lifestyle and local tradition over the lifestyle of the big cities where European influence was tangible.

From a political point of view, the regionalist movement wanted decentralized government, but the tradition of strong, centralized government was very much alive; it seemed to many to be the only solution for unstable societies. Rosas, García Moreno, Páez, Monagas, Latorre, and, of course, the emperors Pedro II and Maximilian exerted authoritarian power. They represented the thinking of vast conservative groups, comprising not just members of the upper class who saw in them the

defenders of order —and of the existing "order of things"— but also working class groups with a paternalistic notion of power. Liberals, on the other hand, including liberal conservatives, passionately rejected personalism or tyranny, as in the case of Sarmiento or Montalvo; the urban bourgeoisie supported republican and representative democracy, while their adversaries looked upon republican and representative democratic government as just a trick invented by the *doctores (*educated people) to hold power and retain privilege.

Much of the ideological struggle was fought in the efforts to draft constitutions. Rosas, for instance, believed that his country was not ready for constitutional government, given the failures his adversaries had experienced when trying to impose constitutions that the provinces rejected. Like Francia in Paraguay, he thought of himself as the faithful spokesman for what the people wanted; after all, only a charismatic personality, a personal voice, modulated to the feelings of the community, could articulate the somewhat ill-defined leanings of these politically naive people. In most countries and in most situations, however, it was agreed that there had to be a constitution, since that was the political model proposed by thinkers of the new democracies. First, the dispute was between those who wanted a constitution to change the social reality and the customary law system, in order to accommodate a rationalist model, and those who argued that the constitution should simply codify the existing situation, which, of course, consisted of a system of privileges for the old propertied classes. Later, the landscape of difference became much richer, because some wanted those constitutions to contain emerging responses to new problems. People battled for a constitution that was resolutely liberal or conservative, or sometimes for the triumph of a compromise text. Some wanted a system in which congress would have liberal powers, whereas others wanted a constitution that ensured ample executive authority. There were also those who wanted the constitution to settle specific questions about customs and duties, navigation of rivers, the economic system, and the condition of the subordinate classes. In addition, there was much debate over how to regulate the relations between church and state, the economic power of the church, and the condition of the clergy. While the 1863 Río Negro Convention gave Colombia a constitution that eliminated the traditional reference to God, in 1869 García Moreno gave Ecuador a theocratic constitution. Conservatives and liberals were no longer the only labels that defined political groups, as reactionary and radicalized groups began to surface everywhere.

Vague opinions and diffuse feelings were often the catalysts of action. In such restless and fluid social situation, in the passionate encounters of the struggle for power, someone would take up a banner and carry it to the death, without asking himself why, and without stopping to consider what the final implications of his actions might be. Yet those vague opinions and intense feelings, by one route or another, were channeled into well-established frames of ideas and principles that functioned as models. Capturing these somewhat vague sentiments and opinions in a clear set of ideas was a long process, one that took place in the cities. The urban bourgeois knew what they

wanted, and they went about building up the political experience and knowledge of principles and theory to grasp the significance of each spontaneous act, of each somewhat vague opinion, of each diffuse feeling. The conservatives knew what they wanted to preserve, how far they should go to preserve it, and how quickly they should accept change in other realms. The liberals knew what they wanted to change, what they did not want to change, and at what pace they would prefer that the change be effected. Yet not all liberals and not all conservatives agreed among themselves: the differences that separated them were sometimes profound and sometimes subtle, although they always agreed on certain fundamental principles. Based on those, some basic tenets were established; those who adopted an opinion or even risked their lives turned to these principles in times of crisis, alarmed by the whirlwind of events and fearful that their vague objectives would be exceeded or never achieved.

This formative process took place in the cities. It happened slowly, as is inevitable in a social and political situation in which the bold daring of the impetuous often contrasted with the calculated prudence of the cautious. Ideologues corrected their schemes to add new content contributed by those who operated on the basis of impulse, vague ideas, and feelings that had not yet jelled; the more spontaneous learned to temper their feelings and to operate within a framework that would reduce risk and increase the advantage that they hoped to gain.

In this process of give and take, the opinions held by various groups progressively acquired greater precision; the groups themselves gradually moved towards political parties. As the limited number of opinions elicited by each problem gradually unfolded, the problems themselves were sorted out. Political experience and theoretical analysis were used to show the implications of an opinion, its potential, and its ultimate consequences. The liberal conservatives separated themselves from the ultra-reactionary conservatives, heirs of the conquest ideology. Liberals adjusted and readjusted their own doctrine in an effort to harmonize the problems they had to face with the principles they drew from European thinkers, from the Scots and Yorkist branches of Masonry, and from the theorists of another revolution that was just being glimpsed in Latin America but had played itself out in Europe in 1848. So, while moderate liberals were different from radical liberals, both were beginning to consider a policy of autonomy for the popular classes.

The two major parties —liberals and conservatives— began to coalesce and to include ideas that had emerged spontaneously from practice; they also began to include the men who preached those ideas. The patrician elite was divided into liberals and conservatives, but at the same time, each party was divided into different ideological wings that formed alliances in response to real situations. It was not uncommon to see doctrinal conversions; practical conversions were even more usual. Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera in Colombia and José Tadeo Monagas in Venezuela went from conservatives to liberals, while in Colombia, they all united when General Melo tried to capitalize

upon popular unrest in 1851.

Melo's was, of course, the classic military attempt. Although the military fought him, they were manipulated by civilians. The role of the military in Latin America at this time was so palpable that, from time to time, the antinomy between liberals and conservatives was replaced by an antinomy between militarists and advocates of civilian government. Nevertheless, a civilian dictatorship could be as strong as a military one. Despite the interplay among political parties and the existence of valid constitutions, ideological struggle nurtured a natural tendency —or perhaps a kind of need within these unstable societies— toward *de facto* power. It was the urban bourgeoisie who concerned themselves with cloaking *de facto* power in the mantle of formal legitimacy, in a kind of compromise between their theoretical ideals and the tremendous need to harness the liberated rural masses to the productive system, and to curb the social mobility that threatened to overrun the privileged classes.

A View of the City

The many European visitors who came to Latin American cities in this period —some on business, others to escape political adversity, and still others motivated by a romantic spirit of adventure— discovered that those cities had a colonial character, or even a somewhat aging look about them. From the cities, which they viewed as the last redoubt of civilization, they were surprised to find a world not entirely alien to them. That world was a sort of little Europe, more primitive perhaps, that displayed a dose of exoticism moderate enough to make it bearable. The natural world they found was extravagant to excess, and the cities somewhat rudimentary. Someone from one of the great capitals of the world might smile with a certain naive smugness. In 1850, hotels in Mendoza or Veracruz were not as fine as the ones in Paris. But the spectacle was an interesting one for travelers. Some wrote down their impressions, and those who knew how to write well, or how to paint, would find a suitable vantage point and sketch a view of the city.

Despite their slightly contemptuous attitude, many travelers, temporarily turned into writers and painters, carefully observed the cities of Latin America during the half century that followed Independence. Above all, their attention was caught by the stark contrasts they found within each city. No doubt, they were observing them at a rather unique moment in their development, when their societies were undergoing profound changes while the cities themselves showed no parallel change in their physical appearance. Their layout and architecture were predominantly colonial, but the urban societies were *criollo* and in full ferment. A newly-arrived would rarely be able to discern the intensity of the change underway in the life of the cities, and his observations could only capture

one moment in the process. What these observations recorded in their memoirs or in their drawings was an everlasting impression of urban architecture and atmosphere in those cities: the churches, the ironwork and balconies on the old mansions, the calm that surrounded the main square.

No doubt, for the foreign traveler, these cities had to be an intriguing spectacle; for, regardless of their particular traits, they functioned like the cities they had known in their homelands. Natives also saw their cities as architectural and social centers that played a unique role not only in the life of the country but also in the life of the world, as links in the complex urban network that mercantilist economy had created and that were now beginning to serve the economy of industrialism. It was a role that did not go unnoticed to novelists won over by Realism, to sociologists astonished at a thoroughly unexpected reality, or to historians concerned with the course of change. Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna wrote methodically about Valparaíso and Santiago, and many others compiled materials or recorded what they knew about their city's development.

At the time, cities were an object of interest and study. European cities were growing, spurred on by economic changes, and industrialization was altering customs as well as the conditions in which people lived and the objects they used. As the pace of technological change quickened, contrasts became deeper. And both the foreign observer and the native who had visited Europe were analyzing and judging these cities according to certain patterns that revealed stagnation or progress. Cities were, in fact, the gauge of change, and everyone looked to them in order to find out whether the society each belonged to had become part of the process unleashed in Europe.

In Latin America, however, many of the cities that had begun to change at the end of the eighteenth century saw their incipient development arrested, first by the process of Independence and later by the civil wars. Trade routes were interrupted, and relations between the urban centers and the surrounding regions changed, as the cities were occupied time and again by opposing groups, and their manufactured and consumer goods were destroyed or confiscated. This slight movement, which had only recently started, was brought to a halt. Things were different, however, in cities that were important economic hubs: those that received and distributed foreign imports and those where products were gathered for export. Things were also different in several capitals benefited by the presence of political power. But only in a handful of cities did the continuation or resumption of economic development translate into a physical change that would impress any traveler who lingered long enough to take a look at the place or to describe it. A very perceptive geographer, Agustín Codazzi, after describing the progress of the Venezuelan city of Barinas from 1787 to 1810, explained the reasons for its decay:

As already noted, the war destroyed it; burning and lootings prevented it from recovering as quickly

as other places had. The wealthy and talented men of Barinas either abandoned their homes in flight or perished there, or the war scattered them near and far and the few who returned remained destitute. The money had been used up, the livestock had died, and farming had been completely abandoned. Barinas was a ghost town, its plains a desert, its fields barren, its *haciendas* reclaimed by nature, and its houses swept away. A new era began, the era of liberty and freedom. Each one, believing himself to be free as indeed he was, considered himself to be the master of his own actions and did not want to answer to anyone.

The same process repeated itself in many cities, to a greater or lesser degree. The Argentine Sarmiento, in *Recuerdos de provincia*, described the fate of San Juan, while in *Facundo* he described the fate of other cities. The Brazilian Joäo Lisboa described the listlessness of San Luis de Marañon. The Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca said, "There is no city which has fallen off so much since independence as Morelia." No less significant, however, was what happened to the port of Veracruz: victim of the misfortunes of war, it lost its old vibrancy and seemed to be at a standstill. Other major ports during the colonial era, like El Callao, Panama City, and Cartagena, suffered a similar decline.

There were many cities that had not yet experienced any real development; added to those that had declined, they completed a picture of widespread stagnation. What kind of image could cities like Cuzco, Quito, Ouro Preto, Tacna, Cochabamba, Monterrey, Asunción, Guatemala City, and Valdivia project? The eighteenth century was still very much alive in those cities, which had the same square, the same fountain, the same church, the same streets, lined by the same houses. Anyone reading an old description of the city would conclude that nothing had changed.

Spurred by the new economy, new cities would be created or old villages would become cities: Bahia Blanca and Rosario in Argentina, Tampico in México, Colón in Panama, Barranquilla in Colombia. "She is the natural fruit of trade," said Miguel Samper about Barranquilla's bustling development around 1872: "Barranquilla has more foreigners than the rest of the country combined; one hears English spoken in offices, on the docks, on the train, on the steamers. It contrasts with the quiet one finds in the cities on the Altiplano."

However, the physical appearance of these flourishing cities was still very primitive. The layout was irregular; there were more straw huts than masonry houses; what few masonry houses existed were very small and looked like an attempt to solve the immediate problem of a roof over one's head. There were vacant lots in the center of the city, and activity tended to occur around two or three streets or in an area around the port or the railroad station. Something similar happened in border cities and towns, or those that cropped up along railway lines, starting with the first primitive business establishment set up in front of the local railroad station.

The impetus of the new economy and the new social situations drove progress in those cities which more radically changed their physical appearance in the long half century after Independence. It was in some political capitals, in some ports, and in some cities where regional economies were centralized. Capitals that were also ports, like Buenos Aires, Montevideo, or Rio de Janeiro, had all the advantages. Economic activity was linked to political influence, and the concentration of wealth was linked, on accession, to the modernizing tendencies of certain groups. Ports experienced increased traffic. In 1855, Panama City began to get back on its feet when a railroad connected it to the Atlantic port of Colon; very soon thereafter, it acquired a new look altogether when a large contingent of people from the United States settled there. Guayaquil and El Callao grew slowly, although by 1851 El Callao was connected by rail to Lima.

The Pacific port that grew thenmost and that transformed itself into a modern city most quickly was Valparaíso. It reaped the fruit of the economic activity that picked up in the area when gold was discovered in California and Australia. On the whole, it was surpassed by Santiago, which made no attempt to hide its envy of the port that aimed "to be more important and to be held in higher regard than the capital of the Republic," as Blest Gana put it. As the mountainous amphitheater surrounding the bay started to become populated, the atmosphere of Valparaíso became more and more lively and picturesque. The views of the city done by Wood, Fisquet, and Lafond de Lurcy capture that one aspect above all. The earliest photographs, however, show a city on the road to modernization, with its luxurious Hotel Aubry on Aduana Street, almost as elegant as the Pharoux Hotel in Rio. In 1856, Valparaíso's population was 52,000; twenty years later, it was 97,000. Many people were engaged in the city's busy commercial activities. "The customs plaza, which is open on one side to the sea," wrote Max Radiguet in 1847, "is alive with the hustle and bustle created by so many important commercial transactions: the place is filled with mountains of tied and wrapped bundles, barrels of all sizes and shapes, large, colorfully-painted boxes covered with labels and lettering, the laborious work of some Chinese painter." And yet Valparaíso was just starting. Exports of wheat, especially to California, had boosted its commerce; its imports grew as well, so much so that its customs revenues multiplied five times over between 1841 and 1870. The traffic in the harbor increased, as did domestic traffic, which became heavier and faster with the 1863 inauguration of the railroad connecting Valparaíso with Santiago. This economic splendor was accompanied by a significant urban transformation. The harbor area blended into the suburb of Almendral, creating a continuous waterfront. New buildings changed the look of the center, as Almendral became a neighborhood of beautiful residences, most belonging to foreign businessmen. Hotels, businesses, and banks were lined up along the narrow Aduana's Street —today called Prat— around which a few traces of the old colonial city remained intact.

Rio de Janeiro was the first Latin American city whose physical appearance changed significantly, beginning as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century. The surprise arrival in 1808 of the

Portuguese regent Juan VI, a fugitive from the French protected by the British fleet, suddenly transformed the sleepy viceregal capital into a court city. Accommodating the royal family and the 15,000 people in its retinue was a difficult problem that was solved by functionally transforming the center of the city. With only minimal changes, the viceregal palace, the Carmelite convent, and the jail were taken over to house the court. But from that moment, everything began to gradually change. The Portuguese noblemen wanted to satisfy their own needs and thus hastened the change. However, the British and French traders who made themselves available to meet those needs by taking advantage of the opening of the ports contributed even more to the transformation that Rio underwent. Within a short time, the Rua do Ouvidor became a rich and varied showcase of imported products, where the elegant gathered in improvised sidewalk salons.

Very soon, Rio's architectural look began to change. The regent moved to a luxurious manor house outside the city that had been a gift to him. He called it *Boa Vista* and ordered that the street leading to it be improved. The name of the road, *Aterrado*, became the name of the neighborhood. Little by little, it began to fill up with new houses, which were valuable because of their proximity to the Royal Palace. It was the *Cidade Nova,* and with it the perimeter of the city was extended as far as San Cristóbal. But that was not the only expansion. A snuff factory went up near Rodrigo de Freitas lagoon and the botanical garden that the regent had installed around it created another hub of expansion that gradually underwent urban development, giving rise to the neighborhoods of Lagoa and Gávea. New districts were created by newly-arrived foreign diplomats and businessmen, some along the coastline, like Gloria, Flamengo, and Botafogo, and others in the valley, like Laranjeiras or Tijuca.

Through the imperial period, Rio de Janeiro achieved a certain splendor. Its growth was natural, but in some respects, its transformation was the work of two French urban planners: Auguste Grandjean de Montigny and Auguste Glaziou. They either opened up or remodeled streets, plazas, and gardens; there was even some thought —by this time influenced by the work of Baron Haussmann in Paris— of razing every colonial structure in the city. Some work had already been done. The Plaza del Mercado, completed in 1841, gave the area around it a new look. Construction was in progress on the waterfront. The Plaza de la Aclamación, formerly Campo de Santa Ana, was transformed into a French garden. Many buildings went up during the Empire years. Some were public buildings like the First Royal Theater in Tiradentes Square and then the Teatro Lirico, the Church of the Candelaria and the Casa de la Moneda; other buildings were private, like those that were put up along the *Aterrado* near *Boa Vista* Palace, especially the home of the royal mistress, the Marchioness de Santos, or the sumptuous palaces of Itamarati and Catete, which were built by rich *hacendados*, the first in 1854 and the second in 1866.

An imperial capital and a port at the same time, Rio de Janeiro housed extensive commercial activity.

Viscount Mauá started a number of businesses and is credited with installing gas street lamps and the first railroad in 1854. He saw Rio for the humble, provincial city it was, a city portrayed with some melancholy by Machado de Asis in *Don Casmurro* and in the scenes of the city done by the Austrian J. Varrone and by the French Jean Baptiste Debret. He dreamed of building a railroad that would reach the productive areas in the country's inner regions, which he believed would bring a burst of activity to the city: "That is when Rio de Janeiro will become a center of trade, industry and wealth, and power, and it will have nothing to envy in any other place in the world," he said when he inaugurated the first stretch in the presence of Emperor Pedro II.

México City, too, was for a few years an imperial capital, when Maximilian and Charlotte sat on the throne, but it was an unsteady throne, threatened by the armed resistance of the Mexicans who saw it only as a symbol of invasion. This was not the time to concern oneself with giving the city the dazzle of an imperial capital, so only the drive that connected the old city with Chapultepec Castle was paid any attention. Nevertheless, that drive, then called Paseo del Emperador and one day to be Paseo de la Reforma, established the direction in which this city would grow.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the physical appearance of other capitals had begun to change. Greater political stability and some prosperity afforded the upper classes and those in government an opportunity to give cities a new look, one consistent with their importance and, above all, with their Paris-inspired pretensions to opulence. Indeed, Paris had by now become something of an obsession in terms of the model to imitate. There was no major remodeling of the existing city, but in upper-class neighborhoods, wealthy businessmen, *hacendados,* and mine owners began to build residences that looked more like palaces. The revivalist trend underway in some European countries left its mark on Latin American cities as well, in the form of Neo-Gothic and Moorish palaces. But overall, a kind of French eclecticism was the most prominent trend in architecture, reflecting France's heavy influence on fashion and custom.

With the prosperity that Chile enjoyed between 1840 and 1870, Santiago's wealthy class achieved considerable splendor; its most powerful members had put up mansions or *petit-hotels*. The Ossa family decided to build a home in the style of the Alhambra. Henry Meiggs, the American businessman who had made his fortune by securing public works contracts, wanted to have his Bostonian house. But most drew from the French influence, as did the Blanco Encalada family, the Larraín Zañartu family, the Concha y Toro family, the Subercaseaux family, and the Cousiño family. Old streets were lined with a novel architecture. A new residential area was opening up along the Alameda, which was already home to the Amunátegui family; to the south of that new residential area were the new *rancherías* (slums), perhaps more ugly than those on the other bank of the Mapocho. In the heart of the city, Cousiño Park was patterned after a French garden, and Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, historian and mayor of Santiago, transformed Santa Lucia hill into a beautiful

public promenade.

It was only after 1870 that other cities slowly began to change. Some of them adopted gas lighting, introduced horse-drawn trolleys, improved their water supply systems, paved some streets, and improved security services. As the population increased, the old suburbs grew and new ones appeared. Like ports, train stations became unique centers of urban development, and the sinister world of gambling and prostitution began to stake out its own territory. Markets and slaughterhouses attracted a variety of people; not far from them, the boundary between the urban and the rural began to be drawn. In 1858, the Chilean José Antonio Torres described that little world in his novel *Los misterios de Santiago*, which was an imitation of Eugène Sue's *The Mysteries of Paris*.

In some cities, the pace of transformation quickened. During the time of Guzmán Blanco, Caracas changed in appearance when the Capitol was built, a Neo-Gothic facade was added to the university, and Bolívar Square was remodeled. Sarmiento added Palermo Park to Buenos Aires, laid out on the property that had once been the residence of Rosas. At about the same time, São Paulo, too, began to undergo rapid change. Around 1860, the French traveler Auguste Emile Zaluar pointed out the contradictions of the city, where the Law School and the student world seemed to capture its spirit despite the burgeoning commercial activity arising from the region's coffee wealth. "Take away São Paulo's Academy and the center will die. Having no work and no large-scale industries, the capital of the province would no longer be the same and would cease to exist." After 1870, São Paulo ceased to be a student town and became instead a coffee capital. Contrary to what some had thought, the railroad line that joined São Paulo with Rio de Janeiro and the port of Santos strengthened its position. The textile industry emerged in 1872, and rich *hacendados* from the inner regions settled in the city, building fine homes there. The face of streets and squares began to change, so much so that that people could talk about a second founding of the city. In contrast to what happened in Caracas, the process of change was in full swing —there was no stopping it.

In 1878, the French traveler Edmond Cotteau wrote: "The walls of Lima have recently been demolished and replaced with new streets. But all these neighborhoods are being built slowly. The business and monetary crisis that Perú is experiencing is paralyzing any spirit of enterprise." Between 1869 and 1871, stimulated by the initiatives of U.S. entrepreneur Henry Meiggs, President Balta's impulse to modernize was to knock down the city walls and build a steel bridge over the Rimac river. However, there were no immediate opportunities for expansion, fewer still after the war and the occupation of the city by Chilean troops. Something similar had occurred earlier in Montevideo. When the city walls began to go down in 1829, the so-called new city was added to the old one; a square for the marketplace and a main street —18 de Julio— formed a chessboard, planned in 1836, that covered the city's common. Within a few years, a number of buildings went up in the area. Yet, the outbreak of war and the seizure of the city in 1843 transformed it into a battlefield until 1851 and,

in the process, arrested its development. Other urban clusters emerged in the meantime in the outlying areas: the community of Cerro, called Cosmópolis; the community of Restauración, later called La Unión; el Cerrito de la Victoria, and Buceo. After the peace of 1851, these and other centers began to establish relations and to grow, thanks to their immigrant population. There were any number of ambitious buildings, such as the Teatro Solís, built in 1856, and the Mercado de la Abundancia, built in 1859. Nevertheless, even when political unrest was part of the past, urban growth continued to be slow; the views of the city painted by Théodore Fisquet in 1836 and Adolphe D'Hastrel in 1840 showed that it still retained its traditional character.

Open to foreign influences, Latin American cities began to be transformed when social and political processes became stable to some extent, and wealth began to mount up. One of the basic concerns of the patrician elite was to project itself as a legitimate, landed aristocracy that was part of European civilization. Everything was imitated: from architecture to the custom of drinking tea. And yet, the forms of communal life were predominantly *acriolladas* during the long half century that followed Independence. By the time European customs were finally embraced by the upper classes, the old patrician group had ceded its place to a new generation and a new class.

An *acriollado* Social Life

As centers of projection of their mother countries, Latin American cities reproduced Spanish and Portuguese ways of life during the colonial period, and altered them as society changed. Almost imperceptibly, these lifestyles were *acriollados* in the cities under the indirect influence of the surrounding milieu. The conventions of the *hidalgos*, their habits and formalities survived. Yet many things altered the artificial status of the privileged classes when circumstances removed some of them from their redoubt and brought them into contact with a new society. This contact came, above all, through dealing with slaves and servants; it was far more frequent in the countryside than in the cities. When Independence undermined the traditional structure of society, urban groups began to be "countrified" to some extent. It was inevitable that city lifestyles should acquire a kind of *criollo* air, the legacy of those rural groups that had become part of urban society.

The "countrification" (*ruralización*) process was not equally strong, nor did it move at the same pace everywhere. From very early on, provincial cities had been surrounded by a rural world, so that they hardly noticed when rural influence became deeper after Independence. It was noticeable, however, in those cities where the urban and Iberian tradition remained alive and those where, after Independence, newly arrived English and French businessmen joined the rural people brought by political upheaval. These rural people touched urban society at top and bottom; some were part of

the power structure of the new lords, many of them would climb to important political positions and become wealthy. Yet, most of them joined the ranks of the popular classes, adding some traits not present in the old subordinate groups of Indians, *mestizos,* and black slaves. These changes were quite evident in Caracas, during the Páez and Monagas period, in Montevideo, in México City, and in Veracruz. But they were most palpable in Buenos Aires, whose atmosphere during the Rosas period was described by José Mármol in his novel *Amalia*. Although politically biased, *Amalia* nevertheless accurately portrays its setting. The dominant classes were *criollo* and countrified, yet drawn to the charm of European customs. This strange contrast was thus captured by traveler Xavier Marmier in 1850:

To help me explain some of these day-to-day images, the reader should imagine himself accompanying me for a short stroll through the streets of the city. We are turning onto Perú Street; to the right and to the left, the luxury and industry of France are showcased in the furnishings, jewels, and wig shops; in the silks just arrived from Lyon and the ribbons from Saint-Etienne; and in the latest fashion in dress and hats. Behind a grillwork window, a young girl is arranging artificial flowers that would be perfect in a salon in the Saint-Germain quarter of Paris. In his window, a tailor is placing the new sketch from the *Journal des Modes* that just arrived by packet boat from Le Havre and that will be attracting the attention of the dandies. The owner of a bookshop is carefully arranging a collection of books on the shelves. He will be puzzled if someone asks him for the works of Garcilaso de la Vega or some other old Spanish historian, but he always has on hand the novels by Dumas and Sandeau and the poetry of Alfred de Musset. One might liken it to a corner of Paris. One might say it is a copy of the Rue Vivienne, for that is what it is. Yet it is a copy wearing a scarlet waistcoat, like those worn in Paris after our famous February revolution.

We walk a little more and go by the English businesses and by the shop of Favier, who has the same delicate touch for oil paintings and daguerreotypes. Then we come to the City Hall and the Buenos Aires Police Station and jail. The scene changes abruptly. Whereas we were in Europe before, we now find ourselves in the primitive Americas, in the Pampas region. Beneath the arcades, the soldiers sit on horseback. They in no way resemble Europeans. There are white soldiers and black soldiers, soldiers in uniform and soldiers without uniforms. One soldier is wearing an Indian poncho and another the narrow cut of an English jacket. Some have their heads covered with a scarf, others with a cap, and still others with a brown hat. In that respect, there is complete freedom. If I am not mistaken, there is only one piece of apparel that is required: pants that are fringed along the bottom. Soldiers are barefoot. It occurs to me that in Rosas' troops rank can be distinguished by the lower extremities: soldiers go barefoot, sergeants wear ankle boots, an officer wears boots of common leather, while generals wear patent leather boots. It is a more practical way of recognizing military rank than our own, for to know the rank of a superior officer a subordinate must keep his eyes down.

It is amusing to see how slowly and lazily these defenders of the city mount guard and carry their rifles. As I watch them, I hear the sound of horseshoes on the pavement, and a horse gallops up and stops under the rider's masterful hand as if the hoofs were nailed to the ground. It is an *estancia* horse, ridden by a *gaucho*. This is South America's true soldier, the son of the Pampas in all his masculine beauty.

After carefully describing the *gaucho's* dress and customs, the traveler describes the unique ambience of the wagon trains and portrays the wagon driver as being enclosed within his conception of life, immersed in his rural atmosphere, although he may be on the fringe of the city without a thought of ever seeing "the obelisk in Victory Plaza or the magnificence of Perú Street." He ends by saying, "Wagon drivers and *gauchos:* this is the most picturesque part of Buenos Aires' population. Let us look, however, at other aspects. The city has some 120,000 inhabitants, half of whom are foreigners from various nations." That was the Buenos Aires of Rosas —half-European and half-rural, an extreme example of the change that revolution had brought to several Latin American cities.

As the traditional forms of social life were abandoned, a strange conjunction of rural and Anglo-French influences followed. Each influence had its adherents, some of whom were aggressive and even fanatical; some, who accepted both the rural and the Anglo-French influences, produced curious combinations that astonished the observer and never failed to elicit irony. But that was the direction life was laboriously taking in the big capitals and the ports, while the countrified Iberian tradition predominated in cities that were beyond the reach of Anglo-French influence.

In describing the Mexicans' careless way of dressing, the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca said:

This indolence is certainly going out of fashion, especially among the younger members of society, owing perhaps to their more frequent dealings with foreigners, though it will probably be a long time before morning at home ceases to be considered the time and place for being half dressed. Yet I have made many visits where I have found an entire family very well and neatly dressed; but I have recognized that in those cases the fathers and, more significantly, the mothers had traveled to Europe and established a new order of things on their return.

For many in the new upper classes, it seemed important to preserve the *criollo* tradition in dress, food, devotions, and festivals. It seemed necessary to preserve the tradition of the *jarochos* in Veracruz or of the *gauchos* in Buenos Aires, so that the new nationalities could define their own profile. As he described meals around 1840, the Argentine Santiago Calzadilla said that everything was "*criollo*," and "no one even knew the word menu at the time." He also said that, in those days,

"we were not walking as the French do, but rather in *criollo* style," a habit that one of Machado de Asís' characters in *Don Casmurro* criticized in Rio de Janeiro. However, Calzadilla also liked to fancy the southern quarter as a kind of Saint-Germain; and elsewhere wrote: "Of course I like *mate*; but I prefer cognac, as it settles the stomach after we eat an roast ox, as we usually do here."

This contradiction was not overcome until the last decades of the century, when foreign practices displaced those of the *criollo* tradition, transforming them into some faint and quaint reminiscence of the past. Nevertheless, from Independence through the end of the century, new societies lived in permanent contradiction, creating one combination of influences after another. In Bogotá, there was a clear distinction between those who wore *ruanas* and those who wore frock coats, two social classes, no doubt, but also the epitomes of two lifestyles. The contradiction was even more obvious among the more elegant people, some of whom had worn a *ruana* until very recently. While the nativist ideology prompted them to preserve and even extol whatever was part of their *criollo* tradition, their upper-class status induced them to adopt foreign fashion and custom. In the 1840s, the arrival in Bogotá of Madame Gautron, the first French *modiste*, was an important event that had already occurred in many other cities after the first French fashion houses were established in Rio, on the Rua do Ouvidor. The Argentine thinker Juan Bautista Alberdi did not consider fashion beneath him (a newspaper that he inspired was called *La Moda);* in fact, under the pen name Figarillo, he publicized the Paris fashions that he wanted Montevideo and Buenos Aires to embrace.

Ornate residences, some the work of French architects, were home to families that wanted to show off their wealth. They were showcases of luxury that people noticed and moralists passionately criticized. But for a long time, such luxury was an exception among traditional families. Around 1860, Lima's novelist Benjamín Cisneros would write a condemnation of it, though it was only beginning to appear. Up until then, the rule had been the *criollo* lifestyle that Cisneros so described in his novel *Julia*:

Among us, the speed with which individuals and even entire families form close friendships and boundless trust is a quality inherent in the character of the country. That is why strangers who come to our door are immediately received with such affection, kindness and courtesy. That quality also accounts for the charming idiosyncrasies of our social way of life. I speak of those things that set our private life apart, in other words, relations between families, between persons. The expansiveness, the instinctive empathy, the improvised and sincere affection, the naive and reciprocal confidences, the tender solicitude, the general desire to do good, the spirit of charity in the family —all this together constitutes, among us, a certain realm of the heart that is perhaps not to be found in other countries on earth. Those of us who were born in our society and then one day were uprooted and transplanted to the enormous turbulence of the big modern cities have seen the emptiness that in those societies replaces intimate feeling; an emptiness lived in a solitude that lacks any selfless

affections, where the heart feels like a desert. We are the only ones who can appreciate all the sweetness and magic of our life of emotions.

Yet the patrician cities began to experience not only the temptation of foreign fashion and foreign objects, but also a new way of understanding life.

Writers concerned with local color found a wealth of material to ponder in these societies searching for their identity between the new and the old, between *criollo* and foreign. In *Las tres tazas* , José Maria Vergara y Vergara provides the dates for insignificant yet revealing changes in Bogotá's literary salons: chocolate was introduced in 1813, coffee in 1848, tea in 1865. The salon was a traditional expression of Latin American culture, but it was also the cradle of new customs and everything they implied. Figarillo described the lifestyle of Buenos Aires and Montevideo in general terms; but few novelists from the period could resist the temptation to portray in detail the salons in their cities, with their characters in step with current norms: Cisneros depicted Lima's salons, Cuéllar those of México City, María Nieves those of Arequipa, and Blest Gana those of Santiago, which were class-based. The novel of manners highlighted the small details of the setting, the dress, the drinks, and the *hors d'oeuvres* that were offered. The same kind of detail was involved in the description of parties. In *Amalia*, the Argentine José Mármol emphasized the characteristics of the society gathered for a dance hosted by Governor Rosas:

People were dancing in silence. The new-age military men were bursting from their buttoned dress uniforms, their hands aching from their tight gloves, perspiring with the pain caused by the boots they had just put on. They thought the only way to behave at a dance was to be very stiff and serious. Products of the new social hierarchy introduced by the Restorer of the Law, these young citizens thought in all good faith that there was nothing more elegant or courtly than to go about giving sweets and cakes to young ladies. Finally, there were the ladies: some, the *unitarias*, were there at their husbands' request; others, the *federales*, were there, angry to find themselves in the company of people of their own society only. They were all in a bad mood: the former were condescending and patronizing, and the latter envious.

The Colombian Cordovez Moure recalled a dance hosted in Popayán for Bolívar by José María Mosquera, "the patriarch of the city," where the Liberator demanded that a young patrician lady dance with a Colonel Carvajal, a black man from the plains dressed in the uniform of a Polish hussar. Mosquera also recalled a dance, hosted in 1852 by several gentlemen from Bogotá, which Mosquera said was the first "to introduce the custom of arranging musicians as spare partners for ladies who might need them;" the President of the Republic was in attendance, and the dance was so splendid that a Mr. Goschen, a member of the British Parliament on a visit, said that "he felt as if he were at a

court ball given by his own sovereign." Cordovez Moure added that this observation had been made "with the honesty peculiar to the English."

English gentlemen hosted the dance given in 1840 at the Palacio de Minería, which the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca attended "in jewels no foreign ladies could attempt to compete with those of the country." But she added: "Many dresses looked overloaded, a common fault in México; and many of the dresses, though rich, were old-fashioned." It was a United States citizen living in Chile, the bold entrepreneur Henry Meiggs, who in 1866 hosted a magnificent dance at his luxurious mansion on the Alameda in Santiago, surrounded by gardens. On that occasion, Benjamin Vicuña Mackenna saw an immaculate society, quite different to be sure from the one that Blest Gana had portrayed a few years earlier at the dances that he described in *El ideal de un calavera* (*The Ideal of a Gay Dog*) and in *Martín Rivas.* In this event were the "serious fools," the "*chinchosos",* and above all, the "dandies" whom "few women can resist; they speak only in thousands of pesos, nothing less! They either have gone or are planning to go to Europe and keep up an endless chatter of nonsense," because, as his fictional observer says, "wherever people gather together, there are always some who are stranger than anything one could possibly see in a zoo."

Theaters and fashionable summer spots —like Chorrillos for the inhabitants of Lima— were another place where the upper classes went to be seen. As in salons and dances, the theater began to exhibit the same quality observed by novelists: the increasing tendency toward luxury. It was not a natural tendency for *criollo* society, but rather an imitation of the styles that were beginning to emerge in Europe with industrial development and the formation of the first great cities, particularly the styles that arose among the new Paris bourgeoisie during the reign of Louis Philippe and took definite shape under Napoleon III. But not every luxury was of the same kind. By mid-century, Latin America still preserved its colonial opulence, displayed by many more or less aristocratic families, the kind observed by Flora Tristán at the Convent of Santa Catalina in Arequipa. This colonial opulence was the source of the *criollo* luxury that followed revolutions, although more moderate and a bit coarse, trascending in the habits and customs of patriarchs accustomed to life on the *hacienda*. However, the new patrician elite made a deliberate effort to present themselves and their new luxury as part of the extravagant world of the new European bourgeoisie, reflected by the Parisian model. Some habits and fashions were imitated, but a long time would pass before the quality of the *criollo* way of life, fashioned after Independence, would actually change. It was thus an opulence without grace, incoherently displayed in a way of life that had its own style and that —in its dominance— betrayed the imposition of a foreign veneer.

In some cities, elderly *nouveau riche*, elegant young men, and equivocal ladies were part of the new frivolous society beginning to show through the fabric of traditional society. They were, as José T. Cuéllar wrote in *Ensalada de Pollos*, "the children of pleasure." He was speaking of those who would

begin or end a night's spree at Fulcheri's, the Mexican café where a meal looked like "one of those almost-Pompeian dinners at the English Café in Paris." The Mexican *pollo*, like Bogotá's *cachaco* or the elegant men of any city who had traveled to Europe and could never overcome the impact of the lights of Paris, were linked —for the traditionalists— to the image of all young men who fall for the overwhelming temptation of luxury, just as "the Paris prostitute falls from the palace to the hospice," as Cuéllar put it. Looking for explanations, he spoke of the "torrent of Paris corruption" and of "the social upheaval in this transition period we are experiencing." In 1860, ten years before these words were written, Cisneros examined, in his novel *Julia*, the causes for the decadence that threatened traditional society: "Luxury is the golden serpent in this society. It has wrapped itself around society's heart and will devour it. Luxury is no longer just a question of habit: it is a passion, a vice of our families. Luxury dazzles and attracts; it produces vertigo and fever. The society in which we live has come to that point." And he went on to say: "Lima is gripped not so much by a passion for opulent style as by a passion for everything foreign."

Despite the self-righteous indignation of moralists, the threat was barely perceptible at that time. Society continued to be *acriollada* even when this trend —which would ultimately triumph several decades later— was first surfacing among the wealthy classes in a few cities. "The *rebozo*," said Cuéllar, "is the most intimate companion of a lady in México. French customs generally go by the wayside when it comes to this essential item of clothing, this reassertion of nationality, this *rebozo* of such strange suppleness, so typically Mexican." *Criollismo* and Europeanism were engaged in an all-out war to determine which custom would prevail.

Although on a lesser scale, the middle classes were also drawn to European-style luxury. The *criollo* way of life could withstand the onslaught of European influences largely because of the strength it still had among the middle classes and the common people. But an open society, where the vicissitudes of politics or fortune allowed the *nouveau riche* to emerge, place its middle classes in a stage of upward social mobility that raised certain expectations and, to a moderate extent, satisfied them. In Chile, it was precisely the *siútico* (pseudo-refined) who typified this situation. Blest Gana described the type in detail in *Martin Rivas*. Almost everyone was a *siútico* —affected and pretentious, one might say— at the rather dubious salon on Colegio street where Blest Gana sends his character, for they all had that "*je ne se quoi* with which a good Santiagan distinguishes *gente de medio pelo* (questionable people)." A keen observer, Blest Gana combined in his description elements of the *criollo* way of life with the imported elements which that family, modest in circumstance but pretentious, copied from others who were more worldly and wealthy. Describing the end of the party when the refreshments at this vulgar little gathering were over, he comments:

And after the stiffness with which they had mimicked the customs of high society at the beginning of the festivities came this mixture of intimacy and forced courtesy that is so typical of this type of

gathering. The people that we call de *medio pelo* find themselves caught between the democracy, whom they despise, and the good families, whom they envy and want to imitate. The result is a curious combination in which the customs and habits of the working classes are adulterated by vanity, and those of the upper social groups are exaggerated to the point of caricature under a veneer of wealth and good manners.

Only a few years would separate that party from the one that Cuéllar describes in *Baile y cochino* , at the Colonel and Doña Bartolita's home. Describing the scene, Cuéllar noted that it was not of his choosing: "Unfortunately it exists; worse still, it is spreading in México, to the detriment of morals and good manners. The growing invasion of luxury in the middle class is causing more and more collapses." He then describes the dance at the Colonel and Doña Bartolita's, attended by snobbish young girls like the Machuca sisters and elegant dandies who wanted to amuse themselves and get drunk. But luxury could not disguise the old customs, which resurfaced as the conventional and trained starchiness wore off. It was not without reason that the author, at the beginning of the piece, noted that the lady of the house was "very simple and very provincial." Her husband was a colonel who had just "made a quite profitable business deal." They had cognac, but one of their guests thought that the water was *pulque*.

At public festivals, whether they were patriotic or religious in nature, everyone came together; Independence Day in México, July 20 in Colombia, September 7 in Brazil, and May 25 in Argentina; then there were the feasts of Corpus Christi, Our Lord of the Miracles, and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Describing the crowd who gathered to celebrate September 18 in Santiago, Blest Gana wrote: "Old customs and modern ways rub elbows everywhere; they look upon each other as sisters, tolerate each other's respective weaknesses, and join in singing anthems to country and freedom." However, these were exceptional occasions. The old aristocratic families and the upper middle classes usually avoided contact with the common people: the *léperos* in México City, the *atorrantes* in Buenos Aires, the *rotos* in Santiago. Common people lived in their own neighborhoods and preserved their own practices, which reflected the strength of the *criollo* tradition. Those who considered themselves superior saw ignorance, vulgarity, and poverty in the common people. Yet they never ceased to cherish what the lower classes had preserved of their native heritage, including their regional foods, their colorful dress, their ancient crafts, and their proverbs that captured a lifetime of experience. Everyone went to their festivals on the outskirts of the city to hear their songs and see their dances. Although no one with any social aspirations would have dared to include such songs and dances in their own parties, they sensed in them a power lacking in the fashionable arias from Italian opera or the polkas and waltzes popular in the salons. Perhaps some vestige of Spanish and Portuguese tradition was the bridge between that living past and the attraction to European countries other than Spain and Portugal.

In the cities, the common people traded rural poverty for urban poverty, especially in those with growing population and wealth. They were confined to marginal, poverty-stricken neighborhoods, an altogether different world from the center of the city. In Buenos Aires, one needed to be bold to venture into the Tambor district, which was a predominantly black neighborhood. On her way to the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Marchioness de Calderón de la Barca passed through México City's suburbs, which she described as "poor, ruined, dirty, and with such a mixture of bad odors that it could only be overcome by a dose of cologne." To the south, in São Paulo and La Palma, the situation was the same. The suburbs of Malambo, in Lima, and Chimba, in Santiago, were a collection of primitive, dirty shacks, where the monotonous misery was broken only by the cheer one found at the brothels or the sleazy gambling houses. And in Arequipa's suburb, called Otra Banda, or in Las Nieves, one of the districts of Bogotá, the poor lived in a closed and separate world. The lower classes of Valparaíso built their houses in its ravines, and in imperial Rio de Janeiro the *cortiços* or tenement houses were built atop one another in Botafogo. One of these *cortiços* was described by Aluizio de Azevedo in the novel titled *O Cortiço*: "This enormous tenement consisted of 95 hovels. Once it was completed, Juan Roman built a high wall out front, topped with crushed glass and bottle bottoms, with a main entrance in the center, where he hung a colored crystal lantern on a panel that read: San Roman Tenement District. Shacks and bath tubs to rent." Azevedo went on to describe the first stirrings in the morning: "And on that swampy, wet earth, in that warm and muddy dampness, a world began to stir, just like an ant hill, bubbling and growing, a living thing that seemed to erupt right there, from that quagmire, and multiply like larvae in a manure pile." Italians and Portuguese intermarried with Brazilians who had escaped from the *fazendas*, forming hybrid families that were a confusing combination of the most varied traditions, habits and customs. What happened in Rio also happened elsewhere in Brazil and other countries: in Barranquilla, in Colón, in Panama City, in Veracruz. La Boca in Buenos Aires was a very special case where almost the entire population was from Genoa, and they preserved their customs and traditions for a long time.

Even the poorest could be seen in the downtown district of the cities. They could be found alongside distinguished people at public festivals, bullfights, and cockfights. But they gathered together in the taverns —*chicherías, picanterías, pulperías*— that dotted the city, including its downtown area, to accommodate the lower classes who worked in the city center. However, their kingdom was the marketplace and its surroundings. They came from as far away as the suburbs, carrying their produce and wares for sale. Open-air markets, or some enclosed ones, such as the Concepción in Lima, completed in 1854, or the Abundancia in Montevideo, completed in 1859, were the meccas of produce. The selling was done in traditional fashion: Indian women sat with their legs crossed, their fruits and vegetables, meats and fish, and especially country-style prepared foods (a combination of Indian and *criollo* ingredients) stretched out on a piece of fabric. As fond as the upper classes were of foreign cuisine, almost no one could resist the traditional fare, washed down by the local traditional beverage. A multi-colored little world surrounded the market and spilled over into

the neighboring streets, which were lined with shops and vendors hawking their wares on the sidewalk. In the area surrounding Lima's Concepción Market was the Chinese district. In 1876, a German traveler, Ernst Wilhelm Middendorf, wrote:

Amid elegant shops selling oriental wares, one finds greasy, narrow little shops selling every imaginable type of unpalatable food, with pale, squalid men crouching on the floor; the unpleasant odor of opium fills the entire area. The little restaurants in this part of the market are run only by Chinese, and all the dishes are prepared Chinese style and served in the same fashion.

Less exotic but no less colorful were the areas around the Volador and Merced markets in México City, or the markets in the provincial cities of Oaxaca, Toluca, or Veracruz, Puerto Cabello or Barquisimeto, Colón, Bahia, or Copiapó.

The outskirts were dens of urban crime, where no one knew who anyone was and no one asked the newly arrived about his past. Gradually, police forces were organized in major cities, but the lack of security was great. Larceny, robbery, and assaults were alarming to citizens. Criminals who made incursions into the downtown area had their hideouts in the outskirts or even further out. In the fringes, they combined their criminal activities with others like gambling, pimping, or cockfighting. Santiago de Marfil, a suburb of Guanajuato, became legendary, as did other mining towns. In the city itself, the occasional "gentleman bandit" would organize a gang of professional thieves to conduct large-scale operations under his intelligent supervision. Such was the case with a Bogotá attorney by the name of José Raimundo Russi, whose gangs terrorized the city in 1851: "Every house in the city became a fortress," recalled Cordovez Moure in recounting the feats and the end of this gentleman bandit.

Houses tended to become fortresses for other reasons as well. Political centers above all, cities were the stages for power struggles, and often they were nothing but stages, since most of the population did not participate in such struggles, knowing that the dispute was between armed groups who each backed pretenders to the presidency. The capitals knew that they were the spoils of war, and their anguish translated itself into a kind of accommodating apathy. The Perúvian Felipe Pardo y Aliaga described people's spontaneous reaction in the face of danger:

Sensing they are the spoils of war,

Citizens shout: "Shut the doors!"

And right away streets and squares are,

As if by electric shock, deserted.

Is it strange, then, that the aspirant

To rule should find the gates

To power open, if,

after he announces his criminal intent,

Each citizen closes only his own doors?

That was what Pardo y Aliaga had to say about Lima's political sensibility. A few years earlier, in 1846, the Venezuelan Juan Vicente González, thinking that the republic was lost, cursed Caracas "because it corrupts the ways of youth, weakens itself by vice, creates and promotes fictitious needs that will devour poor people, and —as a new Sybaris— grows lethargic, sleeps, and is annoyed by a fall of a rose petal, when it should be an example of frugality, love of work, and active, committed patriotism." Denouncing the city's political indifference, he concludes, "when will you have your share of misfortune, selfish Caracas?". Shortly thereafter, recalling the final episode in the Mexican civil war of 1860, in his *Evolución política del pueblo mexicano* (Political Evolution of the Mexican People)] Justo Sierra wrote:

From its balconies and rooftops, México City, a city of reactions, clerical city par excellence, applauded all the victories of Miramón and Márquez; at every irreverent festival of the civil war, México City poured into the downtown streets to carry the victor on its shoulders, to shout and whistle with enthusiasm, and to steal handkerchiefs and watches; waving rifle stocks and flags, dragging the artisans and the poor from their slums and out of the colossal shadow of the convents, México City greeted the entrance of the reformist army of González Ortega with a kind of delirium. And this was so because México was not a clerical, but a plainly Catholic city, and the civil war had made everyone indifferent to everything except peace. One's meager earnings were by this time no longer requested but rather literally stolen by the treasury agent; the honest man was taken from his home and workshop and put on the barricades and in the slaughterhouse of the battlefield. Everyone clamored for peace, the common folk in the city square and the bourgeoisie from their balconies and roofs.

Indeed, while cities were the setting of the struggles for power, very few people had an active role to play; the others were mere spectators.

Only small groups were involved in these power struggles. Sometimes they were organized as political parties, but for the most part, they were simply interest groups or opinion groups that supported certain leaders of recognized standing. They were either politicians or military men, and the difference between the one and the other was not always clear. Civilians were tempted by military rank because they knew that could be decisive in politics. But the military themselves, trained to act and with an authoritarian frame of mind, understood that they had to accept the rules of political play if they were to consolidate their own power and stabilize the position of the group supporting them. Political decisions were made in the cities, through either elections or uprisings. Even Brazil, with its imperial rule, could not escape this fate; and when Pedro I abdicated, Brazil not only had to endure the threat of national disintegration but it also had to face successive revolutions in Recife and Bahia. In other countries, military uprisings, including the revolutions, disrupted the city life with dramatic regularity. Arequipa and Lima went through several of them. La Paz saw "revolutionary" governments come and go. From time to time, Guayaquil would make a bid for the power wielded by Quito's aristocracy. The phenomenon was so widespread that recounting its details would be tantamount to writing a history of each country and of its cities.

Two kinds of revolutions could be distinguished: there were simple military coups, like the one that brought Santa Ana to power, of which the Marchioness of Calderón de la Barca left a written account; and there were also uprisings that polarized public opinion and disturbed society in the cities where they broke out. Of this second kind, Blest Gana described one that took place in Santiago; María Nieves y Bustamante described another in Arequipa. Whether engaged or indifferent, urban societies came out of the experience diminished and disappointed, almost always frustrated in their hopes, because victory never brought about that "rebirth" to which they aspired: one power group would replace another, without ever establishing a consensual and consistent political program.

Blest Gana perceived that the struggle for power between dominant groups was not the only element at play in the revolution that he described in Santiago. Cordovez Moure was even more explicit in his description of the political conflicts that took place in Bogotá between 1851 and 1853. The struggle for power was sharpened by a class confrontation when the *cachacos*, from bourgeois families, challenged the tradesmen, organized in popular societies that had somehow captured the revolutionary wave of 1848. The district of Las Nieves was the scene of an all-out battle; shortly thereafter, General José María Melo staged his popular revolution, which was subsequently thwarted by the alliance of all the political and military forces in the country.

Cordovez Moure also recounted an exemplary election on March 7, 1849, in which the Legislative Chambers, meeting in Bogotá's Church of Santo Domingo, were to choose between General José Hilario López, the candidate of the people, and Dr. Rufino Cuervo, the candidate of the conservative party, supported by Dr. José Joaquín de Gori. Tensions were running high in the city, and for a time it seemed that the election would end in tragedy. But the process went on without incident, and General López won the election. "News of the election of General López," wrote Cordovez Moure, "was enthusiastically received by the people outside the church. The shouting was deafening. Squeezed together inside the multitude, some would hug each other, even at the risk of being asphyxiated. Others would toss their hats in the air. The deputies who supported General Lopez were cheered as they left the church, arm in arm with the congressmen. The fireworks and the pealing of the cathedral bells announced to the city that a president had been elected, and supporters of the victorious candidate swarmed through the streets preceded by the military band of Battalion No. 5 and of the National Guard, shouting 'Long live López!,' 'Long live the sovereign people!' ".

Had it been an election for congressmen, the list might have been put together as it was during the gathering described by Lucio V. López in *La gran aldea* . There, the author says, "my aunt's party" introduced candidates who nominated themselves in a family gathering. It was in Buenos Aires, around 1860.

To be fair, and above all to be accurate, most of the bourgeoisie of Buenos Aires were members of my aunt's party; the decent and wealthy families; the families with the traditional surnames, that kind of Buenos Aires aristocracy that was clean, illiterate, dumb, proud, boring, provincial, honorable, rich and fat; there were social and political reasons for the existence of that party. Born as a legitimate party when Rosas fell from power, its members had endured Rosas' domination and control for twenty years and had, unwittingly, absorbed all the vices of that era. With all their great and enthusiastic ideas about freedom, they had broken the chains without breaking away from their political inheritance. Thus, the party did not transform the moral stance of its children; it made them ranchers and shopkeepers in 1850. It looked with distrust at the university and regarded the daring talent of new men, who were capable but poor, as a threat to its existence; it created and raised its families in luxurious places, with all the unconscious pretensions to the big life, to elegance and social standing. Unwittingly, unintentionally, perhaps, unavoidably, the party kept its historical character intact, a character that was honorable and virtuous, but also routine-bound and dull.

These were political groups rather than well-organized parties. Perhaps they simply were power groups that only circumstantially adopted an electoral strategy and an ideological label. But it was hard to determine, in those unstable and constantly changing societies, the degree of consensus that each group could legitimately claim, as it was hard to find a definite ideological response to

immediate problems that had never been anticipated in standard political doctrines. As a result, power was always pragmatic, and it was only vaguely based on theory.

Power had its real foundations on might: first, on the might of arms, and second, on the might that power itself creates. This is why national and provincial capitals were so important, because those cities were the centers where power was wielded and controlled. Ultimately, power was always personal, and the physical presence of the person in power or of those who acted directly on his behalf was a magnet and a source of influence. The "palace" or "fortress" or "government house" was in some cases sumptuous —like the imperial courts of *Boa Vista* or Chapultepec— and, in some others, modest. But it was always seen as an enclosure where secret schemes were constantly plotted, so secret that only their later effects would ever be known or felt. There, to palace, had to go anyone who wanted to obtain something, especially if it was something that power could bestow, even if the seeker was not legitimately entitled to it, such as a lesser degree of power or, above all, easy wealth with official blessings. Relatives, friends, and political allies wandered through waiting rooms and hallways. Whenever they could, they moved their homes closer to the seats of power, especially if power was in the hands of some *criollo* autocrat, laden with epaulets and medals and anxious to be courted.

Every capital city had its moment of high drama arising from the overwhelming presence of power. In 1868, the Chilean José Victorino Lastarria explained how pressure from an authoritarian government had altered Santiago's social landscape:

An omnipotent and repressive government has been in control for thirty-six years, its base of support being the interests of a narrow, small oligarchy, in other words a few genteel men and families that have encircled and sustained it. That all-powerful government has always had its way; it has always taken the initiative, claimed sole right to decide what was good and what was bad, what was just and what unjust. Any citizen who has had the audacity not to submit to it, to criticize and oppose it, has been scorned and persecuted by the official power and by the wealthy and mighty oligarchy that supports it.

Lastarria also pointed out the effects of such an abuse of power:

Thirty years ago, Santiago was not what it is today. We who are now old knew Santiago when it was happy, gay, jovial and sincere. It is curious to see how the nature and the inclinations of Santiago's people have changed in the last thirty years and how they have acquired their present habits of deceit, apathy, and of quiet sadness, striking not only to foreigners but also to the people from other provinces.

Quito under the rule of García Moreno was described exactly the same way, as was Buenos Aires under Rosas, and La Paz under Melgarejo. Even worse could have been said about provincial authorities when chance and circumstances helped them become local satraps.

In countries with a republican system of government, the opposition could express its views through Congress assemblies, which were thus another focus of political life in the cities. Congressional debates often turned out to be rhetorical contests, and speeches became influential thanks to the newspapers that published and commented on them. There were memorable debates in all the assemblies; in some cases, what made them memorable were the doctrines invoked in the debates and the ways in which those doctrines were presented; in other cases, it was reach and importance of the questions being discussed; still in others, it was the play of dramatic tensions that surrounded each session. Since all political persuasions were housed under the same congressional roof, legislatures were sometimes the scene of tragic episodes that rocked the entire city. The President of the Lower House of Buenos Aires was assassinated in his office in 1839 when a conspiracy headed by his own son was uncovered; in Caracas, on January 24, 1848, mobs stormed Congress, killing or wounding several lawmakers. Assemblies that were to draft constitutions sometimes met in provincial cities: deputies from all over the country would travel to some quiet spot, away from the passions of the capital city and the entire country. The Ecuadorian Constitution of 1835 was signed in Ambato; Argentina's Constitution was signed in Santa Fe in 1853; Venezuela's 1858 Constitution was signed in Valencia; and Colombia's 1863 Constitution was signed in Río Negro. Once the constitutions had been signed, these conventions were dissolved and peace returned to provincial communities.

The life and peace of many cities was also disrupted by foreign siege and occupation. Besieged by Castilla, Arequipa called itself "Sebastopol," while Montevideo, besieged by Oribe, was called "the New Troy." Foreign ships blockaded the Río de la Plata and bombarded the port of Valparaíso. Forces from the United States and France occupied Veracruz, while Chilean forces occupied Lima. National armies occupied cities during the civil wars and at times behaved more cruelly and ruthlessly than foreign ones. Each time, cities were called to make sacrifices, and the cohesiveness of urban societies was put to the test.

Side by side with the development of the political city, the intellectual city came to life. The old colonial universities, like the University of Santo Domingo, the universities in México and Lima, in Guatemala, Quito, Charcas, or Córdoba, languished in the midst of the political upheavals and of new intellectual aspirations. Some of them were reborn, like the one in Santiago under the guidance of the Venezuelan Andrés Bello. New universities emerged, like the University of Buenos Aires and the University of Arequipa. São Paulo's law school had such an intense intellectual life that for a long time it defined São Paulo as a university town, a sort of American Coimbra. Students were the city's

most identifiable social group, even though they came from very different places in Brazil, including Rio, which had a medical school. In old high schools, such as Bogotá's Rosario, and in old academies, such as those in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, intellectual battles were waged to replace old ideas with new ones, heavily influenced by French thought.

In order to encourage the study of his nation's history, Brazil's Emperor Pedro II had established his Brazilian Institute of History and Geography in Rio de Janeiro in 1838. Andrés Lamas founded the Institute of History and Geography of Uruguay in Montevideo in 1843, and Bartolomé Mitre founded the Río de la Plata Institute of History and Geography in 1854 in Buenos Aires. In México, Lucas Alamán, a historian and politician, founded the Museum of Antiquities and Natural History in 1823, and José María Vergara y Vergara promoted the establishment of the Colombian Academy in Bogotá. In many other cities, new learned societies and new publications —historical, literary or philosophical journals and newspapers designed to disseminate ideas— gave proof of the persistent, and often ephemeral, attempts to bring together intellectual resources. Then there were the salons, where books and ideas were discussed, like the one that Vergara himself founded in Bogotá, called "El Mosaico."

However, the chief instruments of intellectual and political life were newspapers. Poets, like the Argentine Juan Cruz Varela, the Ecuadorian José Joaquín de Olmedo and the Colombian Julio Arboleda, as well as writers of narrative and essayists, all participated in political struggles and dedicated long hours to journalism. Most cities of any importance had one or more publications devoted to the dissemination of ideas. Newspapers circulated among the active, enlightened groups of the bourgeoisie, and their contributing writers included liberal intellectuals and staunch conservatives, as well as the occasional supporter of some cause or project or of some local chieftain. Almost daily, the best pens in Latin America wrote for militant newspapers with an unmistakable bias. And the enlightened groups of the bourgeoisie, who were the readers of these newspapers, took the ideas they had read about to the salons, cafes, squares, and atriums, and passed them on to others with their own personal comments, summaries and elaborations, until those ideas became the shared patrimony of everyone across all layers of society. Trends of thought and opinion were thus formed and even deformed in the urban world, where the writer-journalist, who voiced the concerns of small urban communities, was known to everyone and was expected to comment on or argue for or against the burning issues of the day. The busiest street in every capital city had a bookstore filled with the foreign books most popular among the curious and the snobs. Bookstores also housed literary circles gathering people who read the same books and faithfully followed the same authors. These were the same people who also met at the theater, in newspaper offices, and in Congress. Politics and literature were inseparable in the patrician city.

In Argentina, during the long internal struggle that followed Independence, two political parties emerged: the *unitarios*, who favored a strongly centralized form of government and the *federales*, who favored a larger degree of autonomy for the individual states that constituted the new nation.

CHAPTER 6: THE BOURGEOIS CITIES

As of 1880, many Latin American cities began to experience new changes, not only in social structure but in their actual make-up as well. Their population increased and diversified, activities flourished, the urban landscape was altered as were traditional custom and ways of thinking. Urban societies themselves sensed the scope of these changes, dizzy as they were with the whirl of progress. European travelers were astonished by these transformations, which in just two decades would make a city virtually unrecognizable. And it was precisely the pace and depth of these changes that lent Latin America an image of irresistible and unending adventure.

Closer scrutiny would have revealed this image as not altogether accurate. There was much that was not changing in Latin America, particularly in vast rural areas, but also in many urban centers. This process was closely tied to a substantial transformation in the economic structure of almost every Latin American country, with a particularly strong impact on the capitals, on the ports, and on cities to and from which some of the most sought-after products on the world market were shipped. This market showed a very definite preference for countries that were producers of raw materials and consumers of manufactured goods. That preference drove more and more people toward certain cities and created within them new sources of employment and new lifestyles. This movement, in turn, triggered a kind of activity, rare until then, that hastened the tendency to erase the colonial past in order to establish modern ways of life in its place.

At the time, industrialized countries —those in Europe, the United States and later Japan— were reaching their zenith. They had amassed enormous capital; moving at full steam, their industries spawned newer industries that offered untold prospects. These countries needed both abundant raw materials and markets for their manufactures. Their cities were also growing disproportionately and their populations needed more food than they could produce. The demands of the great world capitals and of the burgeoning industries as well as the needs of the new urban centers had an indirect effect on pre-industrial countries, which in some cases became direct. Beginning in 1898,

the United States gradually imposed itself on the countries of Central America and the Caribbean, it occupied territories, and it obtained full rights to a strip of land in a small country that it succeeded in separating from Colombia, where it built the Panama Canal. It was the era of "manifest destiny" and "big stick" diplomacy, the United States' own version of an imperialist trend also evident in Europe, including Germany, which owned a good portion of the Venezuelan economy and did not hesitate to demand payment of their accounts by firing upon Puerto Cabello in 1902.

An occupying force or an arrogant ambassador were forms of direct action. However, indirect action was no less effective in rearranging the ties between the Latin American economy and the economies of the industrialized countries. The ruling classes in all Latin American countries naturally acquiesced, because they perceived the industrialized countries as symbols of progress. But trade networks were controlled by the major economic centers abroad, which dictated what role was to be played by each sector of the periphery that the industrialized world was beginning to organize. Indirect action came in the form of promoting certain types of products: in the rural areas of Latin America, an entrepreneurial criterion was used to stimulate work so that one country would produce more coffee, while others would produce more sugarcane, more metals, more grains, wool or beef, more rubber, or more saltpeter. Companies were usually run with foreign capital, and their executives, engineers and managers —sometimes even their supervisors— were usually foreigners; the work force, on the other hand, was local, as was the small world of middlemen that production and marketing had given rise to.

That small world grew in the cities, which began to fill with banks —more foreign than national— and offices where commercial and financial agents conducted their affairs, some buying or selling, others investing capital, others speculating in every sector in the still unexplored economy of every country. The cities also filled with wholesale and retail businesses. Their streets, cafes, and more humble neighborhoods were bursting with people who lived on what they could manage to glean from the enormous wealth concentrated in the once-colonial center.

The old families, who viewed themselves as the embodiment of the city's traditions, were joined by heterogeneous groups they regarded as upstarts. Over the course of time, their contact brought changes in daily habits, among them an increasing tendency to imitate the predominant lifestyles of major European cities. The colonial, patrician past was confined to the provinces; only occasionally did the perfume of that past drift back to the big cities, conjuring up memories of a lost tranquility. But the capitals and the cities that had grown wealthier were not looking for that kind of peace and quiet. What they wanted instead was the hustle and bustle of businesses that created wealth and ultimately luxury.

For the snobs, the proper setting for luxury seemed to be Paris' *Faubourg Saint Germain*, its *Rue de la Paix* and boulevards. The old colonial centers of the Latin American cities, however, did not resemble Paris. The example that Baron Haussmann had set, with his drive to demolish, emboldened the new bourgeoisie who wanted to erase the past. And thus some cityscapes began to change: an elegant avenue, a park, a carriage promenade, a luxurious theater, modern architecture, were evidence of that determination, even though they did not always succeed in erasing the ghost of the old city. Then again, the bourgeoisie could entertain their grandiose dreams by enclosing themselves in the sophisticated ambiance of an exclusive club or fancy restaurant. There began the process that would transform the "big village" into a modern metropolis.

Transformation or Stagnation

The change in relationship between the Latin American economy and the major industrialized countries had an impact on the cities, but it was not felt in all the cities at the same time or with the same degree of intensity. Some regions were unable to respond to the call, and their cities remained outside the new economic circuits; they stopped growing and seemed even more stagnant when compared to the cities that were rapidly beginning to prosper and were attracting all the attention. Import and export businesses, financial transactions and their subsidiary activities multiplied the hustle and bustle of the cities that attracted all the commerce and investment. It was in these cities that money changed hands; there, financial speculation occupied the minds of almost everyone, from heavy investors to people with small savings; and the hope to make a quick fortune tacitly nursed the hope for social ascent. In the midst of an excited atmosphere of adventure, these cities prospered in a tumultuous way and developed a rather unique profile.

Travelers were deeply astonished by these new cities, and their comments on them ranged from exalted praise to condemnations that sounded like the old diatribes against Babylon. These were reactions shared by all local groups in the cities that were undergoing this transformation. Rubén Darío often spoke of the "splendor" of Buenos Aires, but the Mexican Federico Gamboa saw in the protagonist of his novel *Santa*, who was a prostitute, a symbol of the "corrupted city." Everyone realized that a new Latin American lifestyle was been forged in the cities, one obviously marked by foreign influences but also entirely original, if only in ways that were hard to define; as original, in fact, as the social and cultural process that was unfolding in those cities. Everything in them seemed, at first sight, to be a mere imitation, but each city had its own distinctive quality, one that would take time to become entirely manifest.

The new prosperity and the changes in social make-up, customs, and architecture were more

readily visible in the capitals that were also ports: Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Panama City, Havana, San Juan in Puerto Rico. They were all maritime ports in direct contact with the outside world; their intense economic activity took place along with their political and administrative functions as capitals and, therefore, as centers of economic decision-making. This same structure was evident even in cities like Caracas and Lima, which were in the interior, but had their neighboring ports of La Guayra and El Callao. A vigorous economy, boosted by foreign trade, was coupled now with the traditional activities required by the exercise of political power, by the influential bureaucracy, and by the many sorts of pressure exerted to obtain some benefit or advantage. After the years of civil unrest were over, México City, a capital in the interior, had a brilliant period of activity and growing prosperity under Porfirio Díaz, who presided over its development from the heights of Chapultepec Castle.

Of course, not all the capital cities achieved the same degree of development or success. Rio de Janeiro, whose transformation began during the imperial era, accelerated the process during the republican period, as its population grew. Rio's population of 550,000 at the turn of the century had increased to over 1,000,000 by 1920, and its outlying districts grew so much that Olavo Bilac wrote in 1908 that Rio had become "a conglomeration of several cities, each gradually distinguishing itself from the others because of some special feature or a certain degree of material and spiritual autonomy." México City grew in another way. The middle and upper-classes were the ones who moved to the new neighborhoods—the *colonias*—that sprang up in the area around Chapultepec, while the old downtown city became home to more and more working class people, who transformed the old houses and palaces into tenements. In 1900 México City had a population of 390,000, but its population had grown to over 1,000,000 by 1930, when the deep crisis unleashed by the revolution of 1910 had began to stabilize. Buenos Aires, the most heavily populated of all, already had 677,000 inhabitants by 1895, and was nearing 2,000,000 by 1930. It was undoubtedly the city whose growth most impressed the Europeans; indeed, the European continent was the source of the immigrant flow that was transforming the city. In fact, Buenos Aires became almost legendary. One Frenchman, H. D. Sisson, wrote in 1909 that Buenos Aires was "a new city that has grown as fast as a mushroom on the empty pampas." Although his facts were wrong, his fascination with Buenos Aires was obvious in his description: "This city of Buenos Aires is a phenomenon that has to be seen. Whereas in 1875 it had a population of 60,000, by 1906 it had a population of 1,250,000 and occupied an area larger than Paris, two thirds of which were fully developed and built. And this very fact is more wondrous than the sight of the greatest city in the United States."

Although these figures for Buenos Aires may be exaggerated, almost all the Latin American capitals saw their population either double or triple in size in the fifty years following 1880, and they multiplied their activities accordingly. Growing national wealth produced increased tax revenues and public spending for the capitals, which also had the advantage of being the most important

domestic markets. In different ways, under different forms of institutional order, the combination of economic and political powers, which had always existed, got consolidated everywhere, as the volume of financial and commercial transactions continued to grow. Big brokers, bankers, exporters, financiers, stock market barons, all conducted their business in the capitals. And the ruling bourgeoisie tried to make the architectural profile of the cities reflect the image of a prosperous and modern country.

But, in fact, wealth was coming in and out of the ports, which had already grown and prospered in the last decades. Some ports, like Buenaventura or Esmeraldas, never acquired a high profile, but others became vigorous business emporiums and gathered a mercantile bourgeoisie that had solid resources, although they did not always show the same concern for the opulence of many capitals that imitated the old courts. Valparaiso had won the battle against its rivals on the Pacific and shone as the busiest and most prosperous port. Its population of 100,000 in 1880 had doubled by 1930; by then, its facilities were being modernized, the number of ships that pulled into its docks had considerably increased and customs revenues were up sharply. After Valparaiso came the major ports of Perú and Ecuador. El Callao, which had suffered the effects of the war with Chile and was occupied until 1883, recovered slowly, in step with the country's economic recovery. Its population of 35,000 before the war had grown to 50,000 by 1930; by then it had already experienced ten years of bustling activity. But El Callao was nothing more than Lima's suburb, squeezed against its colonial fortress. The old city, with its narrow streets and asymmetrical layout, watched as another new city developed alongside it, laid out in a chessboard pattern that extended as far as La Punta. Guayaquil, on the other hand, was Ecuador's principal trading center. There the mercantile bourgeoisie had made its home and repeatedly vied with the capital for control of the country on the strength of being the key to Ecuador's import/export economy. Located on the estuary of the Guayas River, with arcades along its streets providing shade from the equatorial sun, Guayaquil had, in 1880, a population of 40,000, which almost tripled in the next fifty years.

While the Colombian ports of Santa Marta and Cartagena also prospered, their prosperity was nothing when compared to that of Barranquilla, which emerged in 1872 at the mouth of the Magdalena River, 27 kilometers from the sea. Within fifty years the port of Barranquilla had more activity and a larger population than its neighbors, and by 1930 it had almost 150,000 inhabitants, while Cartagena had only 100,000 and Santa Marta 30,000. Barranquilla took over more and more of the international traffic and was the key to navigation on the Magdalena River. Both its unusual growth and the rather haphazard look of its architecture were somewhat tempered by the new, cosmopolitan bourgeoisie that promoted its development. There was nothing in Barranquilla that could have evoked the colonial past as Cartagena's walls did.

But Cartagena began to come back to life, as did other old colonial ports that had been affected by

the new economic circumstances. Belem also grew to some extent with the rubber boom, as did Recife and Bahia when sugar production experienced a new boom during World War I. Puerto Cabello also came back to life, as did Maracaibo with the growth of the petroleum industry, which helped its population reach 100,000 by 1930. Old Veracruz went from a population of 24,000 at the turn of the century to 70,000 by 1930. The traditional port for trading with Europe, Old Veracruz had to share its business with the more modern Tampico, which was equal in size, and with Matamoros, whose population outstripped the other two, reaching 100,000 by 1930 because of its middleman role in the trade with the United States. Iquique and Antofagasta, mining ports in Chile; Matanzas and Cienfuegos, Cuban centers of sugar exporting; Rosario and Bahia Blanca, ports from which Argentina's grain was shipped; Santos, Brazil's coffee-exporting emporium; and even the small ports in Central America, countries from which coffee and fruits were shipped, were invigorated by the increase in trade and changed in appearance to some extent thanks to the rise of the so-called "port bourgeoisie" and to all the subsidiary activities that port life stimulated. Immigrants, mainly from Europe but also from the United States and Asia, especially along the Pacific, combined with the large Indian, *mestizo* and black populations to give port societies an unusual, multi-ethnic look and to frame their styles of life in ways that stressed their differences with the traditional ways of the patrician cities. Ports were the hubs of commercial activity, but traditional groups only saw them as agents for the dissolution of national identity. Among these groups, some pushed their conservatism even further, asserting that port societies were too high a price to pay for prosperity.

But it was not just the capitals and ports that prospered. Some cities in the interior also became production centers for regions that were undergoing expansion. At times, it was an ostentatious development, like the one that pushed the growth of Ribeirao Preto, in the heart of the coffee region, starting in 1870; others experienced an ephemeral explosion, as in the case of Manaus. In the heart of the Amazon Basin, Manaus became Brazil's rubber capital. After visiting it in 1865, William Scully wrote, "With a population of around 5,000, the city has some 350 houses." But soon, the exploitation of rubber brought people of every origin and condition to Manaus. Adventurers from ten countries and workers from Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Perú gathered for the great adventure, which culminated around 1910 thanks to very high international rubber prices. By that time, the city had a population of 50,000. Rich magnates, led by the German Waldemar Scholz, transformed a small village into a sumptuous city, with luxurious private residences, beautiful avenues, shops with an unparalleled variety of European products, fine restaurants, and above all, an opera house that left all visitors awe-struck. A modern port on the Negro River, Manaus received hundreds of ships to be loaded with rubber that they would transport to maritime ports. Manaus had a cosmopolitan and daring society, where fortunes were made and lost at a dizzying pace and where ties and alliances were only as strong as the common interests that had created them. But as rubber production in Asia began to increase, rubber prices suddenly fell on the international market. The enchanted city that had sprung in the midst of the jungle went quickly into decline at an even faster pace than the

one at which it had grown. Climbing plants grew from the cracks in the once beautiful homes and building, while the layout of streets and squares vanished as weeds filled their traces when the city was abandoned. People began to disappear, each following his own destiny, until the city was once again a quiet provincial town.

São Paulo's growth was steadier. Its leap from provincial town to modern metropolis began around 1872, when it became the "coffee capital," home to rich *fazendeiros* ready to transform it into a city worthy of their wealth. A heavy influx of foreign immigrants contributed to the change. From the 70,000 of 1890, it reached approximately 1,000,000 by 1930. There were Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Germans, but there were also Brazilians from other states that arrived to share in the economic splendor the city was enjoying. New neighborhoods sprang up, the layout changed, and all the services appropriate to a modern city appeared. This steady growth gave the city's bourgeoisie considerable national strength, and within a few generations a new aristocracy gave the city a complexity that would soon make it not only an important cultural center but also a booming hub of industrial development.

On a lesser scale, Rosario, in Argentina, experienced a similar kind of development. It, too, attracted immigrants, most of them Italian. From a population of 100,000 at the turn of the century, Rosario came to have 500,000 by 1930, thanks to the feverish activity in its grain-exporting port and to the development of a number of industries, especially flour processing. Because it was an excellent port with a central location on the railway system, Rosario played an important role within the national economy. Its society, formed by people from all over the country, quickly acquired the cohesion to profit by its advantages and to give the city a stylish urban ambience.

In Colombia, what grew was the old city of Medellin, founded in 1675. An industrial developer, Pedro Nel Ospina, started a textile plant which, when coupled with others established later—a brewery, glass, chocolate, and tile factories—got the city bustling again. From a population of 37,000 in 1880, it had reached 100,000 by 1930, and would continue to increase at an even faster pace. Just as impressive was the growth of Manizales, a new city founded in 1848. Although it originally lived off its production of cacao and cheese, the new society in Manizales—for the most part migrants from elsewhere in Colombia—quickly discovered that the surrounding land could be used to grow coffee, which was very much in demand on the world market. Large tracts of land were planted with coffee trees, although the city strictly controlled production because coffee was an export whose marketing was as important as its production. By 1905, Manizales was already a coffee emporium and remained so until 1930, when international coffee prices fell off sharply. But, by then, it was a strong commercial center, with a vigorous and enterprising bourgeoisie. While the first fortunes were built upon cacao and cheese, the new fortunes were basically built on coffee. After the crisis—around 1930, when the city reached a population of 30,000—the accumulated capital

enabled Manizales, like São Paulo, to embark upon a new phase of economic development by establishing new industries.

Many new cities, originally little towns, appeared during this period. Some, like La Plata in Argentina, developed quickly. Founded in 1882 as the capital of the Province of Buenos Aires, La Plata experienced considerable development both in trade and as a port thanks to the efforts of a predominantly immigrant urban population. The growth of Belo Horizonte in Brazil was similar: founded in 1897 as the new capital of the state of Minas Gerais, it had a population of 100,000 by 1930. Countless other towns and cities in Argentina also grew, albeit at a different pace, created by the continual expansion of agriculture and ranching in the country: Resistencia and Sáenz Peña, Santa Rosa and Venado Tuerto, among many others. Born of the process of economic expansion, the societies in these communities tailored their lifestyle to that expansion, completely freed from any tradition.

Antofagasta was a new Chilean city that began to grow around 1870 thanks to exports of saltpeter. And in fact Punta Arenas was also a new city. Prior to 1875 it had been a tiny hamlet whose population reached 1,000 by the turn of the century. Then it began to experience enormous growth, and by 1930 had a population of 30,000, primarily because it became an important center of the Patagonian economy thanks to the perseverance of José Menéndez, a Spanish businessman who proved to be a remarkably enterprising pioneer. With intensifying regional production, especially sheep, the city's nascent mercantile activity grew stronger, and within a short time the city became a strange oasis in the lands of the south. As in Manaus, streets and avenues appeared, good and even luxurious homes, and the inevitable opera house so typical of cities anxious to show their aspiration to well-being and prosperity. An active society and the low-cost labor that the region afforded to a dramatic degree consolidated the functions of this city in an area where there had been none.

Rapid industrial development promoted prosperity in some Mexican cities. By the early part of the century, Monterrey came to be the most important, as its population exceeded 60,000, and that figure would increase in the decades that followed, as the iron and steel industry developed. But Guadalajara, Puebla, and Orizaba also grew. In fact, Orizaba was baptized the "Manchester of México" because of its textiles, although it also had beer and paper industries. Two novels by Rafael Delgado, *Los parientes ricos* and *Historia vulgar* , describe the strange ways in which provincial ambience was altered by economic change.

At the same time, the cities that were left on the margins of modernization retained their provincial atmosphere. Because they did not change as others were changing, they seemed stagnant. Many of them managed, however, to keep up the rhythm of their own mercantile activity, at least within their

own sphere of influence, but they also maintained their traditional way of life however, without accelerating its pace. The streets and squares maintained their peace and quiet, the architecture remained traditional, and communal life kept its customary forms. Certainly, such cities did not seem to offer much in the way of prospects; other cities offered opportunities for adventure, for easy wealth, and for upward social mobility. By contrast, cities that were not experiencing explosive modernization might have appear to be more dormant than they actually were. There was a curious downward hierarchy of stagnation over the course of the years: there were cities stagnant in the 18th century, like Villa de Leyva or Antigua Guatemala, that saw cities that had once surpassed them brought down to their level.

The contrast provoked strong feelings, which many expressed as testimony to a contradiction. The Venezuelan Rafael Pocaterra described the atmosphere of Valencia in *El doctor Bebé* , and that of Maracaibo in *Tierra del sol amada* . With a tone between irony and nostalgia, Pocaterra evoked the provincial social club, the quiet nights when one saw “neither dog nor the last pathetic carriage. Between the groves of palms in Bolívar square, two cats chased each other, howling incessantly.” And the protagonist, nostalgic for Paris or even Caracas, asks himself: “Where do I go?” The quiet of the sleepy Ecuadorian capital moved Jorge Reyes to write *Quito, arrabal del cielo* . The Argentine Manuel Gálvez portrayed the tranquility of Catamarca in *La maestra normal* and the weight of colonial tradition in Córdoba in *La sombra del convento* . In a melancholy recollection of his childhood, the Perúvian Victor Andrés Belaúnde described Arequipa as a “democracy of *hidalgos*.” The Venezuelan Mariano Picón Salas recalled placid Mérida with equal nostalgia.

There was always someone who grasped the provincial quiet underneath the modernizing energy of the cities: in *Las mal calladas* , the Argentine Benito Lynch described that persistent provincial tranquility in La Plata, that was only fifty years old, and the Mexican Rafael Delgado described it in his novels set in Orizaba and Córdoba. But these were weak contrasts that slowly vanished just as did the quiet in those cities that had languished.

Certainly, the example that the bustling cities set was beginning to have a strong effect that became even stronger as communications became easier. In the provincial cities there was a longing for the bright lights, for the opulence of those modern cities that were imitating Paris. People also longed for the more worldly ways they read about in novels and newspapers and for that anonymity, so typical of life in the big city, thanks to which life seemed freer and the possibility of adventure greater. Faced with that model, provincial quiet seemed more unbearable to someone tempted by metropolitan adventure. It might be the young woman of good family, bored with her narrow circle of friends; but more frequently it was the ambitious man, bored with the routine of a job or business that did not seem to offer any prospects for wealth or higher social position. Strictly speaking, the metropolis on the horizon of those burdened by provincial life—whether big or small—offered above

all things the attraction of upward social mobility. These metropolitan centers already had typical bourgeois societies, with all the traits of their models in the industrialized world, or perhaps with those traits that, engendered by imitation, are always more emphatic than the original ones. Provincial people longed for those opportunities that bourgeois society offered. And that sentiment intensified the real differences between stagnant cities and those undergoing transformation.

Mobility in Urban Societies

What was most typical of the stagnant cities was not so much that their urban plan and architecture remained intact; it was more that their societies endured. In fact, the old lineages and the lower classes were preserved just as they had been as far back as the colonial era or the patrician era. Little or nothing had changed; there was certainly nothing to trigger any shift in the structure of the dominant classes or the formation of new middle classes or any diversification of the lower classes.

Quite the opposite happened in the cities that, either directly or indirectly, were part of the new economic system. There, old societies began to transform themselves. Their ranks swelled with new people who had moved to the city, some from the countryside and others from abroad. But very quickly this influx—coupled with the normal population growth—altered the old demographic structure qualitatively as well, as new job opportunities offered unusual chances for social mobility. The results were quickly apparent, and the traditional system of social relations began to change. Whereas before there had been a place for everyone, there was now a tide of candidates for every slot that opened up. It was not just the new arrivals looking for adventure who destroyed the harmony of the traditional, stable society; there were also those who had always been so poor that they had lived on the fringes of society, without truly participating in it. Many of them now began to enter into society because they had skills and found the occasion to use them. The *nouveau riche*, the small businessman who had a stroke of luck, the enterprising employee, the talented artisan, the hard worker, and all those who discovered within the intricate network of commercial activities a vein that they could mine, began to penetrate into the chinks of the social scaffolding and ended up dislocating it.

That was not their purpose, of course. Anyone who moved up wanted to make his way into traditional society, to be one of “them,” to enjoy the privileges that came with being one of its members, just like those who had belonged to traditional society from time immemorial. But the structure was unable to withstand so many invasions and began to buckle. All of a sudden, the old patrician class discovered, before anyone else, that its city, *la gran Aldea*, was becoming a mixed, confusing conglomerate, where society was beginning to lose its ability to control its individual

members, as the old one-on-one direct relations among them were vanishing.

In rural areas and in small, or medium-sized cities, the old patrician class had grown very deep roots and become a strong and homogeneous aristocracy. It constituted that "democracy of *hidalgos*" that was talked about in Arequipa as well as Tunja, Trujillo, Salta, or Popayán. There were no groups in those cities that suggested any trend toward diversification, nor did the lower-and middle-class groups refuse to acquiesce in the authority of the aristocracy. In these cities, therefore, the aristocracy most successfully resisted the onslaught of modern times. In the capitals, the ports and the cities undergoing change, however, circumstances began to undermine the structure and strength of the patrician class, even though it may have been well established and in full exercise of its powers. Natives of a city lived alongside the more cosmopolitan, less prejudiced people who had come from various parts of the country. Some had power, some were looking for power; some had fortunes, others were in search of fortune. These were the cities where foreign groups became more important, more influential, and more prestigious. The interplay of so many and such diverse groups threatened the position of the patrician class and made it easier for some of its groups to open themselves to new attitudes that would end up compromising the situation of the entire class.

Some within the patrician class looked at the new economic prospects created in the final decades of the century and seemed more willing to modify their principles and tendencies planning to take advantage of the opportunities that presented themselves. Others, by contrast, either would not or could not do this, as they had grown too accustomed to older ways of life to involve themselves in pursuits that required conditions for which they were not prepared. They began to take a step backward that would make them the kind of arrogant elite that was as passive as it was peripheral.

By the final decades of the nineteenth century, the republican patrician class that took shape following Independence had already been established for several generations. Those of the old colonial vintage and those who had moved up following independence or the civil wars were a class known as "old wealth." Certainly they were the aristocrats of that society. In Brazil (where the imperial era coincided with the patrician era in the rest of Latin America) there were self-proclaimed racists like Oliveira Viana who regarded the imperial aristocracy as a superior race: it was white, and its "Germanic ancestry" gave it the strength to push "into the backlands in search of gold or Indians." But in his book *Evolução do Povo Brasileiro* , Oliveira Viana had his own explanation for what happened next: "The triumph of the republican revolution breaks down the old political and party structures that fifty years of the old regime slowly developed; the instability of the nation, taken by surprise, is exacerbated by the victorious new ideals. The social strata are being undermined, inverted and intermingled. Astounded, the nation is witnessing the emergence, alongside the great figures of the republican movement, of a gang of impostors without the credentials to back up their rise, battling boldly and relentlessly to take power and lead the country. The elements of society are

in disarray, like molecules agitated by conflicting forces. In that interplay of indescribable actions and reactions, the structure of society acquires incredible plasticity under the pressure of such conflicting interests."

Most significant, perhaps, was the lordly air that the wealthy and politically hegemonic class had started to adopt, not just in Brazil—where the empire had generously handed out aristocratic titles—but in the more modest and more austere republics as well. By this time, several generations had often passed since a family first rose in social status. Just as the first generations were known for their tenacity in conquering fortune and power, the later generations ceased to be so demanding of themselves. Many of their ranks became idle gentlemen, leaving subordinates in charge of their affairs and abandoning any concern for moving the country in the direction that they thought best.

The idleness of the new generations of the old classes manifested itself in various ways in the emerging society where productive activity was the rule. At times, the tendency was to seek the peace and quiet of some remote *hacienda*, fleeing the mercantile bourgeois city, so full of demands and upstarts ready and willing to satisfy those demands. This was one of the favorite subjects of the naturalist novel in which authors like Gamboa, Pocaterra, and Cambaceres examined the reaction of these so-called urban *hidalgos* to the changes in society. The countryside, in fact, seemed to be a fitting context for the seigneurs, and asserting one's seigneurity in itself constituted a spiteful, almost vengeful response towards a society that was beginning to embrace other values. Idleness at times took the form of an elegant and skeptical indolence, an open disdain for asserting one's will in the day-to-day struggles of society. Sometimes it was an aesthetic indolence that placed a higher premium on personal experiences gained through study, reading, or leading a certain kind of life, somewhat in the style of Oscar Wilde, where simply admiring the beauty of a painting, a piece of porcelain or furniture had a sense of purpose. Or it might be a rather costly tendency to assert one's status by maintaining a circle of parasites. At times, the decline of seigneurity into the *señorito*'svulgarity which often ended up in vice and depravity.

A nostalgic image of the past used to sustain the melancholy marginality of these patricians of the Empire, of the "old nation, of the *gran Aldea*, in the new nation and in the changing cities. By sheer inertia, they managed to preserve not only their wealth but some kind of power: the Senate seat that no one dared challenge because it was held by the heir of an old family, the high judicial office, and on occasion even the office of chief magistrate, sometimes offered by friends, other times offered by friends and enemies alike if the situation was serious enough to call for a "patrician" believed to be above passion and party. But in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, it became increasingly apparent that men with a patrician mentality were not cut out for the new times. They retained their prestige and even their authority in areas where they owned property and where they constituted what was mistakenly called the "feudal" oligarchy. They also retained them in the

provincial cities, in more or less the same way and without their dwindling influence on the life of the nation becoming too apparent, particularly if the province and the city were also becoming less and less influential as the new economic system took over. But the realm of national affairs was geared toward fully exploiting the new opportunities that the world market had to offer; in that realm, people with a different mentality and temperament began to take control. As they emerged, they formed a new social group to respond to the new challenge; these were the "impostors" of whom the Brazilian Oliveira Viana spoke as he expressed the old patrician's resentment at being displaced.

As circumstances changed, the new bourgeoisie was preparing to replace the old patrician class. Business picked up quickly as demand from international markets increased. Those who controlled the market articulated the demand for certain things, and it had to be met not only by adjusting the production system but also by creating the necessary infrastructure. There was buying and selling everywhere, but there were also those hoping to make huge profits from small investments or with foreign money. The speculating was reckless, undertaken with a kind of blind faith that the volume of wealth and business would increase indefinitely, without the traditional fiscal system that had until then controlled agriculture and business and without the moral scruples that were central to both *hidalgo* and bourgeois honor. A new style had taken over: that of the great bourgeoisie of the industrial world, depersonalized and anonymous in affairs of business; a bold, sweeping style that supplanted the more cautious traditional one, in which—whatever the volume of business or the margin of risk—the prejudices of the *hidalgo* and the petit bourgeoisie still raised their heads.

The new bourgeois groups were made up of those who had the aptitudes needed to cope with the new circumstances, abandoning forever the limitations imposed by traditional habits and opting instead for other forms of behavior. But who were they, and where did they come from? Doubtless, some were old patricians, heirs of fortune and surname who had abandoned their own class to embrace "progress" and modernization. They took advantage of their social connections, their position, and their experience to reap the first and surest benefits of the change. In the eyes of many, they were the models of the new behavior: they had abandoned the easy life, the routine, the indolence, perhaps even the debauchery of many of their kind to make themselves part of the new wave of work and progress. And with that prestige, they took the lead in concrete modernization programs in their private businesses. Most of them were mine owners or *hacendados* of old families who had abandoned their holdings and now renovated them, introducing new methods and modern industrial equipment, thereby increasing their earnings. They frequently formed partnerships with foreign companies, and many took a decisive step by involving themselves in the world of finance and stock exchanges. A railroad increased the value of their land, and as the cities grew they got back into the urban real estate and development business, founding new neighborhoods and communities along the railroad tracks.

But the truly active group within the new middle classes were people with fewer ties to the past. They were people seeking with some sense of urgency to move up quickly, both socially and economically, with some sense of urgency and with little money, but with an uncanny ability to discover some hidden opportunity. The group came into being through a process of natural selection: they were those best suited to the new situation, those who discovered not only the basic businesses—production and marketing—but also the countless spin-offs that surfaced within the vast brokerage network and even in high finance and speculation. Businessmen were the seigneurs of the new society, with their imagination inflamed by dreams of overnight wealth through a stock market killing, through land speculation, through a development deal or through some industrial enterprise. But there were also opportunities in less significant occupations, such as cornering the market for a product, obtaining some privileged concession, solving a transportation, packaging, or storage problem, or simply making arrangements that brought in a hefty commission. Agents working on commission were the middlemen between producers and exporters, wholesalers, government officials, attorneys, foreign businesses. Together they constituted a mysterious kindom that one could enter poor and come out rich, because it extended over the entire machinery of brokerage. Capital was not a necessity. All one needed was an office, and sometimes not even that. Deals could be made in clubs, social events, the waiting rooms of some minister of state, or the halls of congress.

Although the members of these new middle classes were usually natives of the country, sometimes they were foreigners with diverse backgrounds. The latter played a very important role because frequently they brought with them a wealth of experience in the intricate network of international business. Perhaps with a more or less honest failure behind him, the new arrival on the scene made his approach, sounding out the possibilities of the country and the real or potential businesses that presented themselves. He would approach the more influential groups where he was generally well received, as a foreigner, if he was well mannered and able to strike a spark at the aristocratic parties or the clubs where gentlemen met. He then began to frequent the offices of ministers of state, perhaps looking for concessions and privileges, arranging investments and charging the corresponding commissions, or simply collecting information with a view to speculation. Fortune could make him a winner; but if he lost, compromising his new-found friends in the process, he might disappear, leaving behind dramas such as the Argentine Julián Martel recounted in *La bolsa* , the novel in which he described the business world of Buenos Aires around 1890. When the catastrophe occurs, Martel's character Fouchez, a French adventurer, gives the following explicit if somewhat ingenuous soliloquy:

I don't deny that duty demands that I pay my creditors; but I did not come to America to do my duty, but rather to make my fortune. Who knows me here? Who knows that I am the Marquis de Charompfeux? True, I feel some gratitude to this land because it was here that I found work and

made my fortune.... Did I say gratitude? How foolish of me! Should I be grateful to a country that, after making me rich, wants to leave me poorer than when I came? What a way to get rich! And, while it has given me money, I have given it my labors, I have worked for its aggrandizement.... No, the matter is settled. I shall escape to Paris without paying anyone.... What does it matter to me if I leave this little American republic, when, with what I have, I can live a glorious life in Paris, like the most elegant dandy of the *Faubourg Saint-Germain*?.... Argentina is not the center of my universe.... I miss Paris, the only city in the world where life is bearable. I'm going back.

There were many Fouchez in Latin America in those decades, perhaps even more cynical than the character depicted by Martel. But there were also many foreigners, some of them distinguished personalities, who simply applied their inventiveness and entrepreneurial skills in their chosen country. With very strong ties to capitalist groups in their countries of origin, William Russell Grace and John Thomas North were active in the pacific coast countries. Grace, who was from the United States, was active in Perú, especially in the maritime transportation businesses; North, an Englishman, was active in Chile and ended up as the owner of countless businesses and the "arbiter of the future," as he himself said, in the saltpeter and railway industries. In Manaus, the German Waldemar Scholz controlled rubber extraction and marketing. The Spaniard José Menéndez managed to make Punta Arenas an economic hub serving southern Chilean and Argentine Patagonia. In México, the Englishman Weetman Pearson developed the textile industry and railroads, while the Frenchmen Henri Tron, Honoré Reynaud, and, especially, Ernest Pugibet, controlled a vast portion of the textile and tobacco production. A Catalán by the name of Emilio Reus was a promoter of economic development in Montevideo and left behind an important legacy. All of them, and many others of varying talents, founded companies, united capitals and people, made cities the bustling command posts from which the immediate and long-range destiny of countries was planned. Men of experience, they not only opened up unknown avenues to the local bourgoisies but also shared their experience of the international world and a practical knowledge of how to run a business. In each city, the relation between émigré entrepreneurs and the middle classes became increasingly closer, and it certainly strengthened the dependence of the national on the great centers of the industrialized world. But that relation also gave the urban bourgeoisie a cosmopolitan air. The rich who visited London or Paris returned to their native cities in Latin America dazzled by what they had seen and able to shake off the feeling of provincialism that had tormented them. They were now a modern group who knew how to keep in step with the times.

Such status was the aspiration of many in the urban middle classes, to whom, from their many and diverse activities, the last benefits of the accelerated circulation of money filtered down. Wholesalers and retailers, professionals or average savers who had a certain amount of money, tried to become part of the great adventure. And those who succeeded were catapulted to the highest point on the pyramid, leaving those who failed in similar adventures to ponder their business

acumen or their luck. This is precisely why the new bourgeoisie came to be regarded as risk-takers or adventurers. Strictly speaking, not all of them had those personal qualities. Countless numbers of them were enterprising and hard-working men who, once they learned of some promising prospect or of something that had to be built, applied themselves and were extremely effective. But adventure was at the heart of the system, which was changing precisely because it opened up new prospects that required imagination to discover and sometimes a certain lack of prejudice to undertake, seeking whatever support was needed. These aptitudes and attitudes combined configured this social group which, knowingly or not, was changing the face of its city and its country.

Effectiveness was all-important for these new urban bourgeois. Despite their ill-concealed exclusivist sentiments, the premium they placed on effectiveness forced them to remain open and receptive to any and all aspirations for upward social mobility that people in the middle and working classes entertained. Urban society as a whole became more fluid, and the channels for moving from one stratum to another more varied and passable. One only needed to be effective—and of course lucky—to overcome the obstacles and reach the peak of the little Olympus of all México City, all Rio de Janeiro, or all Buenos Aires. Once there, one could enjoy the delights that easy wealth and a diffuse power could provide.

The members of the new bourgeoisie, especially in the capitals, were able to simultaneously control the world of business and the world of politics, and from both worlds, they first set in motion and then took advantage of the process of change. They managed the centers of economic decision-making by establishing or controlling banks, sometimes by devious means, or by controlling the stock market insofar as they were able, working through low-profile agents to form partnerships with the foreign capital operating in the country. They also controlled the import and export mechanisms by regulating quotations, fixing prices, and plotting schemes to surprise and defeat the competition; from the governments they put into operation well-assembled devices which had an effect on trade and ultimately on production. Everyone knew the limits of the game, imposed by those who controlled the world market. But there was some margin left for action that allowed them to feel somewhat powerful. A world of agents, attorneys, deal-makers, and commission agents was there to grease the wheels of the machinery when necessary, while the master controls were in the hands of the political power.

But the very same people, or those they had selected to represent them wielded political power. Members of the new bourgeoisie gradually came to control the centers of political decision-making. They or their representatives were ministers of state, high-ranking officials in major government agencies, members of congress or of the judiciary. The law, the decree, the statute that a given policy required was studied and drafted by the very same groups that used it to achieve their

personal ends. The political parties in power defended the ideas behind the laws, whether they were the traditional parties or the party of the moment. The influence of bourgeois groups was evident in party leadership. That unity of action and cohesiveness reflected the internal consistency that the new bourgeoisie was achieving. Although made up of men and groups from different backgrounds, the bourgeois were of one mind about the kind of response they believed appropriate to meet the challenge from the major economic and financial centers in Europe and the United States.

Their cohesiveness was the result of a plan devised for the international economic situation, a plan advocated by the individuals and groups that constituted the governing class in those Latin American cities where local decisions were made. Individuals and groups were attached to the project largely for the sake of their particular interests. Something in their notion of economic liberalism weakened their sense of public goals. At base, the group consisted not so much of those who shared a risk, but more as of those who joined in a promising venture. And so the new bourgeoisie—unlike the old patrician class—had very little internal solidarity. They did not have the family ties and close understanding of each other that the patrician class had. Quite the contrary, the new bourgeoisie was formed through commercial partnerships, each one betting everything he had, in a ruthless competitive race in which triumph or defeat—which is to say fortune or poverty—would be the last act in the drama.

The repeated financial crises brought out these features. The euphoria of the economic risk-takers was followed by irresponsible and overly ambitious projects, above all by wild investments and mishandled loans. Speculation undermined the scaffolding, and when the structure fell it dragged down all those who had overreached. Fraudulent bankruptcies, suicides, plummeting descents from the highest peaks of wealth to the depths of poverty were material for the naturalist novels of the era—among others Martel's *La bolsa*, and Carlos María Ocantos *Quilito*. These novels depicted a society whose law seemed to be the social ascent founded upon the rapid acquisition of wealth, an expectation that has always characterized societies of great mobility. Fortune was always fickle: those congratulated for success today might be scorned for failure tomorrow.

It was the chance and hope for social ascent that drove immigration: from abroad to the various Latin American countries, and from within, from poor regions to rich ones, from the countryside to the cities. The intense geographic mobility mirrored the obsession with social mobility. Although a few thousand new arrivals moved directly into the middle or upper classes, the vast majority swelled the ranks of the common people. The old *criollo*s were somewhat taken aback by a society that was becoming increasingly cosmopolitan; they were struck by the middle-class foreigners, who in some cities had a virtual monopoly on commerce (like the Germans in Maracaibo or the Spaniards in Veracruz) and seemed to feel like they owned the city. Even more striking was the racial intermarriage among the working classes, especially in the big cities. More than one city was called

a modern-day Babel. Immigrants were drawn to the big cities precisely because that was where they hoped to find the widest array of opportunities to try their fortunes.

Transformed by the presence of many immigrant groups, or with their traditional profile almost unchanged, the urban working classes acquired a new importance. New sources of employment developed, some spontaneously, others created by hustlers well versed in the secrets of urban life. Those who had only the strength of their arms could guarantee themselves a daily wage working in the ports, in construction, or in public works. They could also find regular work as employees and laborers in businesses and workshops. But a city that was growing offered new opportunities. One could be the doorman at a public office building, a waiter in a cafe or restaurant, an usher in a theater or movie house, a bus driver, cabby, or chauffeur, a messenger or a shoe-shiner, a vendor of lottery tickets or countless other jobs. Household work absorbed a considerable number of people, as did the public services and urban transportation systems. The opportunities for modest employment that opened up not only served as outlets for the expectations of the new working classes, but also shook up the more indolent elements of the traditional groups that had once been content with their lot in life but now watched their more imaginative neighbors prosper. Immigrants were exemplars of small savers. But by steady sacrifice, an employee or a street vendor could get together enough capital to set himself up in business. From then on, the move up to the middle class was almost a certainty. One generation later the family of a shopkeeper could boast a doctor or a son with a university degree. The move from the subsidiary services of urban life to small business was one of the typical avenues of social mobility among the working classes of growing cities. As new districts cropped up, a kind of pioneer mentality developed: there, everyone was embarking upon a new kind of life; old prejudices no longer served any purpose, and questions about people's past no longer made sense. The haberdashery or the general store that the enterprising immigrant opened up became the hub of the new district, which had only a few houses. Within a short space of time, the enterprising immigrant had profited by the growth of the district and perhaps amassed a small fortune. This was the beginning of a new phase in an unending dream of aspirations.

For others, the daily job was in the new plants and industries that began to be established. There was work in the railroad workshops, in the factories making textiles, cigarettes, glass, sandals, and various articles that the manufacturer believed could compete with imported goods. Little by little, a new sector of the working classes appeared: the industrial proletariat, not very big but with a very definite social identity.

In some countries entrepreneurs preferred to recruit among foreign immigrants, although in others the new industrial proletariat included national workers as well, generally *mestizos*, blacks, and mulattos who rapidly adjusted to the system. At times they were city people who simply changed

jobs. Many, however, came from the countryside or rural villages, lured by the high salaries they hoped to earn. In industry, everyone had to conform to an unusual discipline: the one that the business impersonally imposed through its middle-level teams. In the process, the working-class group began to organize and to direct its actions and reactions towards the defense of its interests.

Members of the new industrial proletariat could not enjoy the happy-go-lucky spirit of the street vendor or of the trolley conductor who always had a moment for some friendly, idle conversation. Little by little they became a combative class, discontent and capable of rising in revolt. In the cities, the working class groups that gradually began to appear abandoned the patriarchal system. Their relationship to employers was not that of servants to their lords or of restaurant waiters to the gentlemen they served. Like the factories, the big cities were depersonalizing social relations and creating tensions that had been unknown until then.

Depersonalized social relations altered the face of the marginal classes. These classes grew in number but, above all, they changed their make-up. The number of beggars increased, but it was very difficult for a charitable lady to continue to have "her poor": the number of the resigned and even philosophical poor decreased while the number of the aggressive ones went up. The nature of crime also changed; it became more subtle and better organized, even to the level of international conspiracies. First gambling and later drug trafficking had their international criminal conspiracies, but the biggest was the white slave trade. Houses of prostitution in prosperous cities undergoing change were taken over by clever European managers who recruited blonde prostitutes to seduce a copper-colored clientele. In the increasing anonymity of the big cities, vice and poverty were both becoming rougher and more cruel.

Those who squeezed together in the cities hoping for a day's work, or for some charity that would make up for the lack of work, and those earning salaries too low to live on were really no less marginal than those who lived a life of crime. Until they raised above certain levels and got on the road to upward mobility, these people did not really participate in the life of a society that loved luxury and measured the significance of a group or an individual in monetary terms. Beneath those levels were the *atorrantes* ("vagabonds") of Buenos Aires, who found shelter in the pipes that were stacked along the streets waiting to be laid for the sewer systems. In Santiago they were the *rotos.* The novelist Joaquín Edwards Bello described the poverty in his own milieu: the poor neighborhoods, like those that formed around the Alameda Station. There people crowded into tenements, like those who lived in Tepito in México City, or in the *callejones (*alleys) of Lima, the *cortiços* of Rio, or the *conventillos* (slums) of Buenos Aires. Those who took refuge in these slums endured subhuman conditions of life. They were at risk; for there lived those who struggled to move up together with those who had resigned themselves to their marginality and had drifted into prostitution and crime. And that contact was enough to take away any possibility to reach the point

at which one could at least entertain the aspiration to enter that paradise called the middle class.

What were most surprising and significant in the cities affected by economic change were their growth and a kind of transformation in the middle classes. Certainly, they had been there all along. They were made up of people engaged in commerce or in the liberal professions, of bureaucrats, military men, clergymen, and civil servants. But in all these sectors there was quite an expansion that opened up new possibilities and raised new expectations. Cities were, essentially, brokerage centers, and its demands increased the need production. More bureaucracy, more services, more civil servants, more military, more police were needed all the time. Those who belonged to the old middle class and were native to the city had a better chance of getting those jobs. But those who came to the city and started at the bottom usually moved up slowly, by dint of sheer determination and at the price of countless humiliations; working efficiently and setting aside savings, they would manage to live with the modest dignity that the middle class required. As a rule, only then could they make their fortunes or become members of the political clientele of some influential person or a power group.

The transition from the lower classes to the middle class was frequent and sometimes happened very fast. The usual ways of access were commerce, the professions practiced by the sons of those who had taken the first step, the association with businesses that put a premium on the loyalty and efficiency of their employees, and politics. At the other extreme, the chances of moving up through the layers of the middle class increased with the development of business and the broadening of opportunities in the new societies. Social ascent required perhaps some wealth, amassed over a very long period of time and then cautiously invested; but the protection of someone in power, or an advantageous marriage might do as well. Mobility was the golden rule of these middle classes, whose magnitude and particular profile characterized the transformation of the cities; this was so not just because they reflected the unique social process at work but also because their members chose to renew their way of life. They bought the newspapers, discussed their opinions in cafes, brought Paris fashion to the new stores, lined the streets outside the stock exchange and the banks, and ran the businesses and offices. They also began to think that they, too, were entitled to their share of power and so joined the new political parties that challenged the power of the old oligarchies to create a more inclusive democracy.

Within a few years, twenty or thirty Latin American cities, to varying degrees, saw their societies transformed and the lifestyles and mentality of the traditional classes marginalized. In their place, the new societies slowly put together the rudiments of a different urban culture that would begin to develop in cities whose landscape would soon be completely altered.

The Haussman Example

A society that was renewing itself required a renewed habitat as well. As the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, many Latin American cities began to alter their appearance. As the population grew, new areas had to be taken over for housing; developing business and industry required large tracts of land and could not be accommodated in the downtown area. New neighborhoods were springing up along access roads, around existing nuclei, and in the vicinity of magnet areas like railway stations and manufacturing zone. This natural growth very quickly became permanent, once certain services were available—water and transportation, sewer systems, street lighting—all improved living conditions for the urban pioneers.

Together with this spontaneous growth, some Latin American cities underwent a deliberate change that drew its inspiration from far away. While cities expanded and outlying areas were settled, the old center of the city had retained its traditional look. Often the center's old beauty had faded, and people of modest means now lived in its old, rundown mansions. The new bourgeois were embarrassed by the shabbiness of whatever colonial atmosphere the center of the city still had; where they could, they tried to change it. In some cases, they did not hesitate to demolish some of the sectors laden with tradition. Demolition of the old to make room for the new was an extreme to which only a few cities resorted, but to epitomize the supreme triumph of progress. Where demolition was neither viable nor acceptable, those in charge to organize the development of areas adjacent to the traditional center, and of the new neighborhoods, according to modern principles of urban planning. The model of the transformation of Paris, conceived by Napoleon III and carried out by Baron Haussmann, had a decisive influence on the new bourgeoisie.

The bold principle of modernization of the cities was to begin by breaking up the old core, both in order to widen its streets and to establish communication with the areas that had had sprung up. A baroque leaning—a bourgeois baroque—revealed itself in a preference for monumental public buildings with broad vistas, for monuments situated in squares in prominent places, and for sumptuous private buildings with a rather lordly air. Large parks, wide avenues, and modern and efficient public services were to "leave the traveler astonished," a phrase heard repeatedly in the early twentieth century.

Travelers were astonished, but everyone recognized the obvious influence that the Haussmann concept had on the remodeling of the cities. The Baron de Rio Branco referred to Francisco Pereira Passos, the mayor of Rio after 1902, as "the Brazilian Haussmann;" when Montevideo's General Public Works Board recommended adoption of the urban remodeling plan that architect Norberto Maillart had presented in 1887, it based its recommendation on the fact that the plan followed the

Haussmann concept. Starting in 1880, the first mayor of Buenos Aires, Torcuato de Alvear, and his successors followed the same concept, as did the mayors of São Paulo, Antonio Prado and Raimundo Duprat, who began working on the city's urban planning in 1898. Others did the same elsewhere, but on a much smaller scale, since their intention was not to change the old city core but to organize the surrounding space.

Buenos Aires decided in favor of demolition when it became the federal capital in 1880. Torcuato de Alvear was appointed mayor shortly thereafter and began the demolition. The old market place that had once divided in two what is now the Plaza de Mayo was razed, as was much of the old colonial *Cabildo*, to make way for an avenue that would connect that plaza, where the old fort had stood and where the presidential residence would now be built, with the another square on which the enormous congressional building would be constructed. Within a short time, the Avenida de Mayo opened up and very quickly was completely flanked by modern buildings, in a variety of styles, including some daring examples of *art nouveau*. From then on it became the heart of Buenos Aires. A few years later, Latin America's first subway began to run below the Avenida de Mayo and Rivadavia Street. Not long thereafter two major diagonals were planned that would start at the Plaza de Mayo. A wide north-south avenue, today called Nueve de Julio, was also planned. Hundreds of houses were leveled in order to execute these plans.

In Rio, 700 houses had to be demolished in order to build the Avenida Central, later named Rio Branco, which ran from the Mauá Square to the Obelisk. The entire city core changed; two hills were leveled to make way for broad esplanades. From then on, the *Largo da Carioca* became the nerve center of the city, as the newly opened avenue, with its view of Sugar Loaf Mountain, was lined with new buildings. But other works also contributed to the change: Trece de Mayo Street was widened; Beira-Mar, Rodriguez Alves, Francisco Bicalho, Mem de Sá, and Salvador de Sá were all new avenues that opened up. The scale of the city, still reminiscent of the *Rua do Ouvidor*, changed significantly in the downtown area, just as it changed in the new outlying urban developments.

Describing the capital of the state of São Paulo in 1912, Roberto Capri wrote, "It is an almost European city, filled with magnificent, Italian-style buildings. It is crisscrossed by streets and avenues and has factories everywhere, its public buildings are opulent and it has an expansive and intense life." The old center, known as the "triangle", remained intact, although one could now go from there to the outlying districts via San Juan Rangel Pestana and Tiradentes avenues. Both Higienópolis and Paulista avenues began to be flanked by opulent buildings as they became main thoroughfares. On a more modest scale, Montevideo's development was apparent in the improvements made to the roads leading out of the city, in the plan drawn for the first sections of the Rambla (a waterfront promenade running from the port to Pocitos) and in the planning and execution of Agraciada Avenue, which ran from 18 de Julio Avenue to the Legislative Palace, with its

commanding view of the city.

Cities that were building new avenues could soon be proud of the many buildings, classical or French in style that displayed some ostentation and a certain taste for the monumental. The legislative buildings in Montevideo and Buenos Aires, the Palace of Fine Arts in México City, the Colón Opera House in Buenos Aires, or the Municipal Building in Rio revealed the wealth and the particular taste of the bourgeois classes in the cities that were being transformed. They loved their French gardens and wide avenues. Yet even in cities that had changed little, promenades and avenues appeared: Paseo de Colón and then Avenida Arequipa in Lima, Avenida Bolivar in Caracas, Avenida Colón in Bogotá. The carriage drive was virtually a social ritual. It had been the custom for some time in the Palermo Gardens of Buenos Aires, along the Alameda in Lima and Santiago, on the Paseo de la Reforma in México City. It gradually became the custom elsewhere: along Montevideo's El Prado, in México City's Chapultepec Park, and along the Paseo de Colón in Lima. The number of squares, big and small alike, increased. Those in the upper-class neighborhoods were carefully tended. Monuments to heroes were erected in the more important squares; some were imposing, like the equestrian statues of San Martín and Bolivar in any number of cities, the equestrian statute of Alvear that Buenos Aires commissioned from Bourdelle, and the equestrian statue of Artigas in Montevideo. Other monuments had a different look, like those of Tiradentes in Rio, Sarmiento in Buenos Aires, Juárez in México City, or Santander in Bogotá.

The fate of the old core varied from one city to the other. It continued to be the administrative and business center in almost all cities, but only in a few—Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires in particular—was architecture modernized and prestige maintained. Most succumbed to the demographic displacements. Upper-class families—those called "the families on the square"—began to move out of the city's center, while the working classes moved in and occupied the old residences, transforming them into tenements or slums. Those leaving the neighborhoods around the main square gravitated to the new neighborhoods away from the downtown area. In Santiago, the Alameda and then the developments that sprang up along the Avenida Providencia attracted the upper classes, as happened along El Prado in Montevideo and then in Ramírez and Pocitos; Barrio Norte in Buenos Aires; Catete and Laranjeiras in Rio de Janeiro as well as the precincts that sprang up along the waterfront drives; Roma, Juárez and then Lomas de Chapultepec in México City; Chapinero in Bogotá; and in Caracas Sabana Grande with its tendency to overflow into the Country Club and El Paraiso; Miraflores in Lima; and Higiénopolis in São Paulo. Social position was conveyed in the choice of architecture. At times, old outlying towns or cities were incorporated, thus becoming part of the larger city. The railroads and avenues and highways shortened distances, but the outlying areas continued to be thought of as separate nuclei, often with their own businesses and services. Solid architecture, often executed in good taste, gave an air of elegance to these residential; a racetrack or a fashionable tennis or golf club might be built nearby.

Sometimes these districts developed when some old country property was divided up. If there were old trees on the property, an effort was made to preserve them. But by a similar movement, middle-sized properties also began to be divided up for the average-income buyer or even those of little economic means. In many cities numerous development sprung up, populated by those who had purchased their lots in monthly installments and then worked hard to build a room and a kitchen in order to begin to live in what by then had become their "own home." The land sales sometimes looked like public festivals, organized by imaginative auctioneers who were at the same time agents working on commission, entrepreneurs, and urban developers. These men knew how to exploit the desire of the working classes to move out of the slums in the center of the city and have their own homes, however modest they might be. Some auctioneers, like Piria in Montevideo, became famous. They would round up those who had managed to save some money and transport them to the site of the auction to the strains of raucous guitar music; while the children played in the field, he used his verbal artistry to transform the subdivision plan into a reality. He pointed out where the school, the church, and the police station would be, listing the advantages of the site and of each particular lot. It was an adventure, this expansion, as outlying rural areas became part of the city. There was no set pattern to prices. Those who wanted to own lots fell prey to speculators, because those who had not bought at the beginning got excited when they saw the first houses or grocery store go up. That was when someone who had bought land for speculative purposes made his killing. In the process, the value of land in the new subdivisions went up, just as it did in the central districts and in the new residential neighborhoods.

In the working class neighborhoods, the architecture was quite rudimentary. The cost of the land and the construction were always beyond the immediate means of someone who embarked on this venture, doubtless confident of his future ability to earn and save. These purchases focused only in the future: what mattered was getting out of the tenement to stop paying rent. The immediate priority was to put up the first four walls and a roof. These were neighborhoods without style, except for the occasional masonry or master builder's work: a certain balance, the arrangement of doors and windows, perhaps a simple cornice might occasionally reveal the craftsmanship and taste of the one who did the work. But such detail was not the rule. Pressed for time, the property owner might build his house with his own hands, sometimes in the style of the rural farmhouse or local suburban house. And then the whole will display its hybrid and elemental quality.

The hand of a master builder, and perhaps certain pretensions on the part of the owner, might occasionally be apparent in some middle-class houses. A concern for taste might be evident in the facade, the carefully chosen interior wallpaper, the trinkets, or the curtains. As one went higher up the economic and social ladder, everything got slightly better, or perhaps somewhat more conventional and more consistent with what the better stores had to offer.

From the street, the social standing of the residents of a house was easily discernible; the observer could doubtless make such an assessment based on his own experience. A concern for style was essential in the upper-middle or upper-class neighborhoods, which required good houses, the kind that demanded an architect—preferably a foreign one—who would discuss first the style and then the floor plan. It was almost a given that the French style would be preferred, unless the owner had fallen under the influence of some revivalist movement: Gothic, Moorish, or something still more exotic. The so-called French style, which was relatively pure and always an exact imitation, was used for the fine houses of the upper bourgeoisie and especially for the lavish residences—the *petits-hotels* or "palaces"—of those who had reached the highest economic levels and aspired to the almost sublime position that ostentation appeared to offer. Orthodox and traditional, the French style seemed to canonize the social stature of one that cared intensely about forms. That canonization was the most sought by the bourgeois who had acquired wealth too quickly to feel secure in the upper reaches of society,

There were, however, those who preferred other styles, perhaps because they were not properly advised about what was most suitable. Some joined in the enthusiasm for *art nouveau*, whose French or Catalan models seemed to express not just the novelty of the moment, but also a certain tendency toward affected opulence which was visible in the wealthy classes. Pinnacles in tortured shapes and imposing statues combined with bold cornices to create something unreal, something that seemed to defy the classical rules of architecture and conventional taste. Well executed little faces or big flowers aroused the ecstasy of the connoisseur; but it was the total effect of superfluous decoration that attracted the interest and the admiration of the majority. By contrast, the palaces for exhibitions or the railroad stations that were built in the fashion of London's Victoria Station exposed their iron structures as if they were monuments to progress and industry.

In the meantime, many cities significantly improved their infrastructure. Many ports were remodeled; breakwaters, docks, warehouses, cranes, rail lines were built or expanded. To combat waterborne epidemics, health services were established. Osvaldo Cruz waged a tremendous battle against yellow fever in Rio de Janeiro. Preventive medical measures were all that was needed to complete the sanitation of the major cities. Construction of sewer systems works and waterworks got underway. Rivers and streams began to be encased in pipelines; some had major avenues running over them, like Jiménez de Quesada in Bogotá or Juan B. Justo in Buenos Aires.

Gas street lamps astonished those who were accustomed to oil lamps. But spectators were even more amazed by electric lighting on the day the first bulbs were lit. Horse-drawn trolleys were replaced by electric ones; buses would come later. Some cities had airfields. As the use of the telegraph and telephone spread, antennae and receivers began to go up. All these changes happened just as quickly as they did in Europe, since technical innovations were almost immediately

transplanted to Latin America. Society embraced all the advances of progress, hastening to modernize itself and its cities in order to equip them with all the modern conveniences that urban planners had conceived since the Haussmann period to cope with the problems created by urban sprawl.

But how many cities followed the Haussmann example? Only a few experienced spectacular development. In others, some of them major, only some parts of a theoretical plan for the entire city were applied, but the plan as a whole did not seem to be a matter of urgency. In most cities, the colonial urban structure was preserved virtually intact. This continuity had decisive importance, because the pattern of urban growth mirrored the features of overall socioeconomic development. The handful of truly splendid cities stood in sharp contrast to the meager, slow development elsewhere, in cities on the margins of the economic system. In 1910, H. D. Sisson, a French writer who lived many years in Argentina, published a book that had some curious observations on this subject. After describing the city of Buenos Aires at length and highlighting its rapid modernization, Sisson devoted the next chapter to "the provinces" and began it, "After the capital, the provinces are like a journey back into colonial times." Similar statements could have been made about the other Latin American countries whose capitals had taken a spectacular leap forward. Sisson elaborated upon this thought, which doubtless came from keen observation:

Since 1880 Buenos Aires has made tremendous material progress; the progress it has made in social culture is readily apparent. This, coupled with wealth, creates a desire to imitate the more refined and more civilized countries. The cosmopolitan capital, carried away by flux of comforts and pleasures, and influenced by sentiment that social exhibitionism arouses, has quickly abandoned the old customs of austerity, authority, and quiet solidity with which tradition resists seduction. The vast fortunes amassed in a few short years have enabled the people of Buenos Aires to travel abroad and even to spend some time there, and as a result they have lost their ties to their land and to the wholesome customs of the old families.

The provinces, whose capitals are anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000 kilometers from Buenos Aires, are as they were before, and will be so, at least until modern communications draw them closer to the nation's capital; this has happened very slowly, considering the vast distances that separate them and that even prevent the exploitation of the riches that they contain. This explains why the psychological distancing between the capital and the provinces grew rapidly and will disappear very slowly.

Sisson's observations apply with equal force to the rest of Latin America. The economic expansion generated from abroad was reflected in those centers that were constantly exposed to foreign

influences; it accentuated the differences that already existed between them and the provincial cities. There were two worlds moving apart, one modern and the other colonial, but they coexisted. The last faint echoes of the Haussmann model were still infiltrating the provincial world in the form of some enormous square or a boulevard with little squares leading to the center of the city and to the new railroad station. In some places these faint echoes of the Haussmann model appeared when the economic expansion had already passed—or even when it had not yet arrived. But the Haussmann model lingered on, like some vague desire to give each provincial city something that would enable it to think of itself as a metropolis. Other urban resources and other planning models came and went, but the Haussmann ideal was still the master of all others, because it was, after all, the irreplaceable example of Paris.

Europe Imitated in Everyday Life

When Pierre D'Espagnat was in Colombia in 1897, Bogotá was still a very colonial city. The French traveler thought he was repaying the warm welcome that the good families of Bogotá had given him when he gave them this advice, in his *Souvenirs de la Nouvelle Grenade* (Memories of New Granada):

The only fear I have is that the people of Bogotá might give in to the modern style of dress. That would be so out of place in a setting like Bogotá, which is so unique, so passionate, and so very Catholic. Whatever the universal tyranny of Paris fashion might dictate, the dress best suited to the women of South America, the one most in harmony with that world of passion and faith, is and will always be the mantilla, an article of clothing that gives the women of South America a style of their own.

Almost everyone who scrutinized the Latin American situation dwelled upon the risk and the importance of the shift away from the traditional, entrenched way of life, in favor of one that, in the end, consisted of a set of foreign prescriptions and formulas for changing just the appearance of usage and customs. But that shift did not happen everywhere. Many cities preserved their colonial air, which the gradual introduction of new techniques did very little to change. "Colonial", in fact, meant "provincial"; it connoted above all a resistance to adopting those foreign prescriptions and formulas. The "provincial" mentality came not from location in any particular city but from inexperience with modernization and the phenomena that transformed cities, such as rapid demographic growth or the formation of new bourgeois classes. Alfredo Pareja Días-Canseco dated the beginning of his novelistic cycle *Los nuevos años* (*The New Years*) just at the moment he sensed those changes in Ecuador:

They are really several stories, a different one for each book. They begin in 1925, when new forms of human coexistence start to take root in our country. That was when the agony of the patriarch began. There is little doubt that a new country wants to replace the old one; it is organizing quickly to achieve what other places already have and to breathe the great atmosphere of the world. That is when our new years begin.

The old patrician classes kept their grip on cities that were not part of the transformation, and their norms protected the other classes as well. Unless something happened, usually coming from far away, the provincial or colonial city preserved its tranquility, which only the snob from the capital city would condemned as inimical to progress.

The most significant aspect of the transformation in the cities was, as always, the change that their social structure underwent. The old strata took on a new look and new strata appeared. Vast middle classes surfaced, and the new bourgeoisie quickly rose to the top of society. They introduced a new lifestyle that tried to be cosmopolitan by rejecting the provincial and previously dominant ways of life.

Two European models had particular resonance in Latin America: Victorian England and France under Napoleon III. The new Latin American bourgeois classes developed under the almost tyrannical influence of these two models. As they translated those models, they articulated their own ways of life, combining something that was foreign with something of their own. The new bourgeois were most at home in the capitals and ports, where the mail from Paris or London arrived first, where foreigners who had that European prestige about them lived, and where the branches of foreign banks and business establishments were set up. And in those cities appeared the obsession with creating a cosmopolitan, or to be more precise, a European lifestyle.

The main preoccupation of the new Latin American bourgeoisie—as that of the rest of the world—was to try out and then confirm a mode of life that would reflect unequivocally their position at the top of the social pyramid, through clear signals that revealed their wealth. Exaggerated displays of wealth and sophisticated ostentation were their way of giving individuals and families dignity, of gaining acknowledgement of their superiority, a superiority that had until then been reserved for the old patrician class. So it was not just material objects that concerned the new bourgeois; it was rather the function those objects filled for this vague bourgeois baroque style.

It was this mode of life—baroque, bourgeois, and *rastaquoere*(parvenu), or perhaps simply *rastaquoere,* which might define the bourgeois baroque— that nurtured the creation of Latin American naturalist novels by the Chilean Luis Orrego Luco, the Mexican Federico Gamboa, the

Perúvian Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera, the Venezuelan José Rafael Pocaterra, the Argentine Julián Martel, and the Brazilian Julio Ribeiro, among so many others. And it was this mode of life, idealized, that served as the framework for the poetry of Modernism. Each novelist selected the features that he or she believed best exemplified the workings of these new bourgeois who, as the months passed in those crazy years of speculation between 1880 and World War I, took on aristocratic airs and managed to convince themselves that they had some kind of "ancestry" or lineage.

English-style clubs began to become fashionable in certain Latin American cities. These clubs had sitting rooms furnished with comfortable chairs, reading rooms with few books but many newspapers and magazines (the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, in particular), elegantly appointed salons for parties, a dining room open until late at night, and, best of all, a staff of experienced waiters and faithful valets who knew each member by name and each one's weaknesses and preferences. The redoubts of the new bourgeois, these clubs usually included members from the old patrician class as well.

Clubs served several purposes. Club members gathered to seek the sanctuary of their "circle," where everyone knew one another; they discussed the economic and political news of the day and exchanged social gossip; they established the contacts and informal talks that would have been inappropriate in a government agency or financial offices; they ate and drank among trusted friends. Clubs were retreats for the man on a spree and for the bored gambler. Some of the most fashionable parties, attended by high society, were held at the clubs.

Club membership was for a relatively small, closed group that intended to remain as restrictive as possible. Wealth was the only ticket that could get one inside. The club was thus a clear signal that the new bourgeoisie intended to become a tight-knit oligarchy as quickly as possible. It was less important to keep the number members from increasing than to keep the number of *nouveaux riches* from increasing too much. The dominant group's exclusivity had to be made public in a place that made plain that only this class—and no one else—was allowed there. The club was the place from which social life was controlled, and to some extent economic and political life, too.

The idea of forming a "circle," a closed group at the highest level of an open society, was typical of, even an obsession with, the new bourgeois, perhaps because they were not the original, traditional established class. Their members undoubtedly followed the example of the patrician class, but their exclusivity was more pronounced not only because their financial deals might be somewhat sordid, but also because of the personal insecurity of many who had barely, and laboriously, reached the upper levels of society. Though the new bourgeois classes were, in effect, open groups, they tried,

like the patrician class before them, to close ranks.

The Jockey Club, the Club del Progreso, the National, and the Unión fulfilled the function that was also served by other conventional meeting places. At any given time, there might be a restaurant that was "the place" where everyone in the "circle" knew that he could find friends. These were imitations of Paris restaurants, both in their decor and in their cuisine and etiquette. One drank champagne as one talked politics, business, the theater, or women. What mattered was to be where one could see and be seen. The theater was another absolutely essential place to see and be seen, especially the opera house, if there was one. No fashionable gentleman or lady could miss the theater. People who had season boxes or orchestra seats met between acts, made their presence known, noticed who else was there, and engaged in the small talk that kept one abreast of the smallest flutterings in politics or business. It was the place to show off a fine dress brought from Europe or an exotic jewel. And everyone took note, if only to adjust their assessment of that individual if the outfit or the jewel justified it. Society could also be seen on carriage drives. As the coaches passed one another, in an instant one saw who was inside and what toilette the women were wearing. Some gentlemen rode their beautiful horses along the promenade. They would pull up alongside their friends' carriages and share a moment of conversation. The same thing happened at weddings and baptisms, on the church steps at the end of high mass, at the seaside resorts that were becoming fashionable imitations of Trouville, and at the racetrack.

In the constant comings-and-goings, a party given by a good family was a special occasion. They were luxurious parties, carefully organized, sometimes making a display of good taste, but always boasting their wealth. The Argentine Julian Martel in *La Bolsa* and Venezuelan José Rafael Pocaterra in *La casa de los Abila* offered two similar versions of this ritual, which brought together the most distinguished people of Buenos Aires or Caracas: the same social climbers, the same obvious concern for immediate wealth or easy success, the same odd mixture of personalities, consumed by trivialities. A banker, the Papal nuncio, a minister of state, and perhaps even the president of the republic made the party so important that the host seemed, for that day at least, to be a triumphant hero. Regardless of appearances, everyone was there on business: to see and be seen, to confirm their places as important members of "the" group, to underscore what the whole society was compelled to recognize—that they and they alone were the new class in power.

In their patterns of living, the new bourgeoisie showed a strong attachment to their European models; it was inevitable that those models should play the same role in the social realm as they did in economic life. This imitation was apparent in the desire to replace each old patrician mansion, practically colonial, with a modern residence, preferably in the French style, decorated and furnished to fit the owner's station, with the kind of paintings, sculptures, and ornaments that were fashionable among the snobs of the moment. An almost religious respect for European fashion and

dress accompanied the introduction of foreign customs and habits. They invariably clashed with traditional customs and habits, which seemed increasingly provincial and outdated. In sports, fencing, tennis, and hockey began to attract elegant young people for whom the excitement of a brisk carriage ride was not enough. The automobile would arrive shortly thereafter, as would team sports practiced in virtually private clubs.

Looking outside, concerned with being the class in power and recognized as such, the new bourgeoisie, at least formally, had very strict standards. Among their youngest and more cynical members, these rules encouraged a kind of escapism, which was considered no less elegant since it, too, was a Parisian tradition. The night club, the cabaret or just the brothel was an outlet for dissipated youth. There they had contact with prostitutes, card sharks, racehorse grooms, sometimes even white slavers dealers or criminals. The world of bullfighting, racing, and gambling helped to establish those dangerous associations and earned the dissipated bourgeois the title of madcap. That term never had an entirely pejorative meaning; there was even an element of praise in it. The madcap transgressed the norms of the new bourgeoisie but did not deny them, and there was always a hope—almost a certainty—that he would abandon the slippery slope of vice, come to his senses, and even become the staunchest defender not only of the established moral norms but also of the more conventional external forms.

The lifestyle of the new bourgeoisie began to change after World War I. The *belle époque* was coming to an end in Latin America, and among the many things that were forgotten was the rhetoric of the *nouveaux riches*. Suddenly a sporty and casual conception of life emerged, one that first attracted youth, with the rest of society slowly following their lead. The influence of new ways from the United States, emphasized by the movies, conspired to undermine some traditions: the shimmy and the charleston soon replaced the waltz.

For some groups in the new bourgeoisie, the development of a certain aesthetic taste, an interest in art or literature, seemed to be a necessary complement to a modernization that should culminate in personal refinement. Some, of course, were born with a sense of good taste, which they endeavored to satisfy in genuine ways. For the most part, however, the goal was to *appear* refined: to be up to date with the “latest from Paris,” to comment on the work of the writer who was most in vogue, to admire what ought to be admired, to be perceived as someone who was very much a part of the new world and of the age of progress. It was one more display of social superiority.

Of course, there were genuine intellectuals, writers, and artists within the new bourgeoisie. They reflected the intensity of the upheaval that Latin American societies had experienced. For some the fundamental issue was politics; others broadened their interests, inspired by the sociology being

studied everywhere in England and France at that time. Many began to grasp the profound sociological conflicts behind political change, mirrored not only in the class structure but also in the conflicting attitudes among the various sectors of a society that was resisting the pressure exerted both by the old patrician class and by the new bourgeoisie. The sociologists—the Perúvian Francisco García Calderón, the Venezuelan César Zumeta, the Colombian Carlos A. Torres, the Argentine José Ingenieros, among many others—witnessed and analyzed change. Along with them were those who devoted themselves to philosophy—and sometimes they were the same people. They were attracted by the philosophy of positivism: the French school that developed from the work of Auguste Comte, and the Anglo-Saxon version in which John Stuart Mill, William James, and Herbert Spencer figured prominently. The philosophers included the Perúvian Alejandro Deustúa, the Cuban Enrique Varona, the Mexican Gabino Barreda, and the Argentine José Ingenieros. Latin American philosophical thought examined profound theoretical problems that had important practical implications, especially in the area of education. It provided, above all, the philosophical justification for a "progressive" society, focused on material progress, and was driven by an ideology of success—such was the society over which the new bourgeoisie presided.

The poets, writers, and artists might occasionally appear somewhat peripheral, but that was only an appearance. The bohemian cafes, the literary and scientific societies and salons scorned the generally accepted values and ideas, but they were still headed in one of the several directions in which the new bourgeois classes were moving. The naturalist genre in fiction, which tried to penetrate the secrets of a society consumed by the temptation of easy fortune and rapid social rise, condemned what it believed to be inhumane and cruel in that new society, but it nevertheless embraced what one might call its more wholesome principles. The modernist poets-the Mexican Gutiérrez Nájera, the Cuban Julián del Casal, the Uruguayan Julio Herrera y Reissig, the Argentine Leopoldo Lugones, and especially the Nicaraguan Rubén Darío—captured and articulated the sensibility of men of refinement. But it was the refinement of the powerful, who were seduced by the refined world of luxury and sometimes by the refined luxury of power. It was not so much nonconformity as a rejection of vulgarity, which was easily confused with the quickly acquired elitism of the new bourgeoisie. In the end, sensitive refinement could help justify the rise of the new aristocracy of money.

Bold and stubborn, the new bourgeoisie needed and wanted to take on the battle for power. It was not easy. Power had its owners, and for them, the new bourgeois groups were just one more factor to contend with, certainly not the only one among the many ready and willing to challenge the dominant powers. Strange alliances formed in which it was unclear who was serving whom. These alliances gradually changed the form and the content of politics. The new bourgeois groups could not or would not always wield power themselves, perhaps because they did not always have the commanding figure that was needed in such unsettled societies. But they were the power behind

the throne; better said, they were the power behind *el señor presidente*. The socioeconomic process that saw the rise of the new bourgeoisie, followed quickly by the middle classes and the popular classes, had roots altogether different from those of the political process. Consequently, one process did not seriously interfere with the other. Instead, the social process began to penetrate the political process and then gradually distorted it. In the capitals, representatives of old power groups were not the only ones to exercise political functions, both direct and indirect. New elements, emerging in every city undergoing change, would vie with the established leaders for power. The latter were, for the most part, the old patrician lineages, the military and ecclesiastical groups, and the political cronies whom they had long supported and who had supported them in return. To a lesser degree, they were also the old economic groups, composed of wealthy businessmen and property owners, and the intelligentsia, who warranted special attention. The new elements, on the other hand, represented the rising economic power. Their strength lay in the discovery by the political leadership that they needed them. Thus began the tight alliance between old *caudillos* and lucky generals, on the one hand, with unscrupulous groups of no particular nationality, a combination of foreign investors and businessmen and native representatives and agents. It was inevitable. *

Faced with the challenge of the international economy and the need for domestic development, the political leaders threw themselves into modernizing the country and exploiting its natural resources more heavily and more methodically. When they discovered that they needed capital, they went looking for it or simply accepted the capital offered them. In return the investor and the businessman sought privileges and guarantees, and they solicited such benefits from the political leadership that was trying to attract them. In that give-and-take, the number of brokers, agents and people working on commission in the newly created sectors increased. Many easily became wealthy. All those who were associated with foreign capital acquired uncommon prominence and favor in government circles. Privileges and guarantees were embodied in laws that managers or agents proposed, ministers and other public officials studied, deputies and senators voted on, and bureaucrats implemented. The bond was established, and little by little political power found itself snared in a net, from which it did not necessarily wish to extricate itself.

The chief power players were, or so it appeared, the political parties. Some were traditional parties with outdated agenda, but even within those traditional parties groups formed that adapted themselves to the new circumstances; the theory of progress was sometimes a shield that concealed their aspirations. Except for some groups who kept alive a traditional image of productive activity, both liberals and conservatives tried to take advantage of the new circumstances. After the economic transformation was unleashed, however, a new twist developed. The new middle classes and certain sectors of the working classes began to organize politically and to assert their right to participate in each country's political life. Either within the old parties or through parties that were

trying to establish themselves, these new urban masses began to demand real democracy. The cities became increasingly unsettled. There, new political groups—*avant-garde* liberals, radicals, socialists—soon began to organize. Their membership and their behavior disrupted the peace maintained by previous gentlemen's agreements. Now the struggle for power took on a different character. Gatherings of several thousand people in a public square, an impassioned speaker, inflammatory reformist rhetoric, or revolutionary slogans disrupted the cities and took politics out of the drawing rooms and salons where it had traditionally been practiced with prudent discretion. Labor demonstrators seemed ominous to the wealthy classes, because they foretold a social revolution, called strikes, and sang the incendiary verses of the *Internationale*. There were "popular revolts," so named when in reality they were driven by the middle classes although they sometimes had the support of the more humble sectors. The new political progressive and revolutionary newspapers increased their press runs, circulated either publicly or clandestinely, and shaped the opinions of the new groups that were joining the struggle for power.

Political life was even more agitated in the cities undergoing change, and the exercise of power had to follow different rules. Until then, power had rested in the hands of a few dozen or a few hundred families, around whom swirled a political clientele that was easily manipulated. The emergence of new forces, however, changed everything. For power to remain in the hands of a few families, or not slip through the fingers of new power groups that were forming, it had to be wielded with greater harshness, even to the point of methodical and severe dictatorship. Oligarchies and dictatorships, either in pure form or in some combination, were the typical forms of governments practiced from the national capitals.

In those cities, *el señor presidente* -to use the expression coined by Miguel Angel Asturias with the Guatemalan government of Manuel Estrada Cabrera in mind- reigned supreme. Among the many others who exercised similar power were Rafael Núñez and Rafael Reyes in Bogotá, Porfirio Díaz in México City, Gerardo Machado in Havana, Eloy Alfaro in Quito, Cipriano Castro and Juan Vicente Gómez in Caracas, Augusto Leguía in Lima, and Hernando Siles in La Paz. They were autocrats with a governing style bordering on personalism, described by one observer as a "democratic caesarism," but in fact a vicious distortion of the kind of power that the oligarchies wanted from the one to whom they had entrusted their interests, either expressly or tacitly. At other times, when the oligarchies remained more united as a class and more active as a political group, the power wielded by *el señor presidente* had its limits; this was the case in Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago, Asunción, La Paz, Bogotá, and Lima.

El señor presidente had enormous powers, and the nation's capital was his court, where every one had to go to have any problem solved, although his representatives also had their own courts in the provincial cities. But, in fact, the court was "the palace." At times it ran according to a somewhat

exaggerated protocol: chests generously covered with medals and other decorations were everywhere, as were servants in livery and short pants. What predominated was the spirit of the new bourgeoisie, bewitched by the luxury of the salons, by the beauty of the gardens, by the champagne and the European aristocracies of the *belle époque*, who were, by the way, bourgeois like themselves. At times *el señor presidente* had a style all his own, and he could even be austere like Porfirio Díaz who lived secluded in Chapultepec Castle. The important thing was never to let the reins of power drop for even a moment, and his lieutenants counted on that. *El señor presidente* was surrounded by his small circle of unconditionally loyal elite, a small court that placed itself between him and the rest of the world. He had his ministers, who stayed in touch with what was being said in the streets, his officials, his favorite friends, whom he invited to "the palace" and who occasionally took the liberty of introducing him to some aspiring courtier. He had his generals, his police chief, his henchmen and spies, all lured by the favors of *el señor presidente*, richer by the day, more and more powerful by the day, and more and more a prisoner of his court. The capital was transforming itself by widening its avenues and promenades, building beautiful public edifices, installing gas electric lighting. *El señor presidente* was increasingly a captive of the very power groups to whom he gave orders, which they awaited and were eager to carry out.

El señor presidente would usually come to power through elections—generally rigged—after long deliberations among the prominent figures, one of whom was often a banker for whom some flattering comments were reserved. Agreements could always be worked out in a club, a hotel whose salons the initiates frequented, or a newspaper office. The election itself would put the candidate in office, and then the machinery of state would take over. But the middle classes increased in number, in power, and in the clarity of their ideas, and large sector of the working class supported them, although some still had their own objectives. Politics were becoming more complicated. It was no longer just a matter of imprisoning the leading opposition figures. Instead, one had to resort more and more to crude election fraud, and occasionally to call out the police or the army to put down the demonstrators who poured into the streets and were forever congregating under the balcony of *el señor presidente.* These new urban multitudes had aspirations to participate in political life. In composition at least, they were a reflection of the change that had taken place in many cities. Now it was not just the traditional families and an indiscriminate mass of indifferent people. These were new working classes and out of their midst progressive groups would form: some could be socialists or anarchists, capable of reading Marx or Bakunin. The number of those who wanted to participate in civic life was increasing daily. The new middle classes had their own political aspirations, and because of their education and the functions they performed in the life of the city, their importance could no longer be denied. The middle classes were the machinery of commerce and held important jobs. They read newspapers, used the trolley, chatted in the cafes or in the political clubs, and went to the cinema. In the meantime, there had been a triumphant revolution in México and another in Russia. Neither *el señor presidente* nor the circles he represented

could fool themselves about the influences behind these groups. Never before had such multitudes gathered to demand “democracy” or “social justice.” Although they were a mixed lot, the most enlightened representatives of the new middle classes headed those groups.

One characteristic of these classes was their determination to improve their educational and cultural background. Many began to read books not to amuse themselves, as was the habit among the upper classes, but to learn, to acquire “useful knowledge,” and to steep themselves in the “modern ideas” of science, society and politics. Because the phenomenon was widespread in Europe, there was no shortage of books like those published by the Spanish publishing house *Sempere,* inexpensive volumes that flooded the public libraries organized by the municipal governments, mutual aid societies, and labor syndicates. Yet they were also the basis of countless small private collections assembled by people of modest means who were proud of their collection even though the books were not bound in Russian leather. Other collections of inexpensive books appeared around that time, and many made their way into Latin American cities.

To feed the insatiable appetite of those who were curious for the first time, there were magazines, newspapers put out by socialist and anarchist groups, and magazines for the general public with science articles and literary pieces. The middle classes and the better prepared sectors of the working classes gleaned a considerable amount of information and knowledge, sufficient to discuss matters until they defined their own positions on the problems of the world. It was an intellectual position very much shaped by a particular ideology, which made their relations with the upper classes and working classes more difficult, the both of which had a more natural and immediate understanding of the world.

Out of the midst of those middle classes came the new professionals: physicians, engineers, attorneys. Yet many that became members of the middle classes were originally from more modest social levels. A new man of letters would also join that middle rank of society. Unlike the distinguished and refined gentleman who whiled away his time with literature, these new writers were less aesthetically inclined, more interested in political causes and as a rule more utopian. They could be seen together with painters and sculptors in bohemian cafes like the one in Buenos Aires cafe that Manuel Gálvez describes in *El mal metafísico* , in the literary and artistic salons, at the openings of dramatic plays or one-act farces written by colleagues, or at the exhibits or studios where their friends worked. And so a different type of cultural activity took shape in cities undergoing change. It was more militant, less academic. The traditional culture survived and had its own place, where it fortified itself against the onslaught of that other brand of culture which it regarded as middle-class and somewhat uncouth. These bastions of traditional culture were the academies, the learned societies, the universities, and the elite literary salons, refined and somewhat purist, held in the drawing rooms or libraries of prominent social figures, where the elegant carved

woodworking encased richly bound books. The contrast was obvious and, like the new political and social struggles, it unsettled daily life in the cities. There were debates, clashes between groups, rivalries between journals that espoused different aesthetic or ideological creeds. Frequently the problems and groups overlapped, making it difficult to distinguish the proponents of one position from those of another.

Important literary and political salons—perhaps like the one described in *De sobremesa* by José Asunción Silva—had been held in Lima since 1885, first in its *Ateneo*, then in its *Círculo Literario,* and after 1887 around Clorinda Matto de Turner. The radical politics, the indigenismand other burning issues were intermingled with strictly literary concerns. At the turn of the century, Buenos Aires had important salons—Cafe La Brasileña first and then Los Inmortales. In México City the *Ateneo de la Juventud* was important around 1910; later, others were formed. The one in Lima was centered around of Victor Andrés Belaúnde and his writings in the *Mercurio Perúano*. Then came all those cafes forged in the crucible of the aesthetic revolution that followed World War I: the one promoted by the modernist movement in São Paulo, the *Martín Fierro* group in Buenos Aires, the group involved in the magazine *Contemporánea* in México City, and in Havana the group that revolved around *Revista de Avance*. Most people in these groups were from the middle classes and earned their living in a variety of ways, although there was always the occasional son of some rich coffee plantation owner or powerful *estanciero*. They all had the sense of being, in some way, a minority that had achieved a certain degree of refinement. They were, however, also reacting to the new social problems cropping up everywhere. Many who regarded themselves in the minority began to cater to the majorities whom they started to refer to as the "masses." They wrote in newspapers and magazines. In fact, the number of urban newspapers and magazines in circulation increased as more and more people learned to read. Not only were there more people but more people could read and, more importantly, wanted to read. They wanted to learn about the problems of the world in which they lived. People went to the movies to learn and be entertained. In the early decades of the century, the movies attracted a vast public from all social classes. While the elite's devotion to fencing and tennis persisted, popular sports like soccer began to draw crowds to the sports stadiums, which were becoming bigger by the day. On days when they were crowded because of some big event, one could see and sense the new attitudes emerging among these people. Like some political movements, they were expressions of a mass movement that was gradually taking shape.

The cinema and sports were the most typical signs of the transformation of the cities. The working classes that could be found there were very different from the traditional popular class. Now it was not just the procession of Our Lord of the Miracles or the pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe that drew crowds; a boxing match or the final game in a soccer championship could also draw thousands of people who obviously wanted to escape their work routine and enjoy life, vent

their emotions and their views, and perhaps even give rein, for that one Sunday, to a hidden reserve of rebelliousness. Later, in suburban taverns or on neighborhood street corners, each one defended the mass opinion as if it were his personal opinion. Latent in the changes that the cities' transformation brought about was a growing tendency on the part of the working classes to integrate and an obvious determination on each one's part to assert his or her identity.

In most cities, the daily lives of the working classes gradually changed. They began to enjoy some of the new conveniences like running water, electricity, and indoor plumbing. This was not universally the case, however, for urban sprawl and the high cost of city property were forever displacing the low-income groups to areas where such services were not available. Education for children was more readily available because there were more schools; care for the sick was also more readily available, because the number of hospitals increased, and the care they provided improved. The most serious problem was housing. The slums proliferated, and the crowding became so overwhelming that many took the chance of building a modest room on a lot being purchased in monthly installments. That room provided a glimpse of popular culture: with its picture of the Virgin, the photograph of a boxer, and perhaps some flowers, it carried all the sentimental hopes and aspirations of the working classes. In cities like Montevideo and Buenos Aires, the working classes found a new melody to express their feelings: the *tango*, which came from the heart of the countryside but spoke with a foreign accent. The clash between those two influences was voiced in the *sainete*, a theatrical genre filled with new content in the cities on the Río de la Plata.

Then there was the change in the lifestyle of the middle classes. If they were characterized by anything, it was their ardent desire to climb the social ladder and, above all, to preserve their decorum and improve their appearance. That made the middle classes a prime target for advertising, whose underlying message was that they should be more and more concerned with possessions. Advertising was becoming increasingly effective as the number of media outlets increased. Together with possessions, the middle classes embraced the customs and conventions that owning and using those possessions them involved, each to the extent that he could, or rather beyond what he could. What changed most profoundly was not home life but the life of men outside the home, because the desire for participation in commercial culture was even greater than it was among the popular classes. To satisfy that desire, one had to partake of everything, and the street became more important than the home. Everyone noticed that life was becoming more and more vertiginous, and they wanted to be part of that vertigo because they suspected that otherwise they would move backward rather than forward. The street meant the cafes and the restaurants, the theaters and the cinema. But it also meant the offices, the clubs, and the political centers. If the family wanted to get ahead, the man of the family had to cultivate his connections and try to expand them. And "getting ahead" was an unwritten law for the growing middle classes in cities undergoing change.

This was not so true of the lower middle classes, so often burdened by their obligations. Neither the shop employee nor the petty bureaucrat had many expectations, because the world belonged to those who had the initiative to seek adventure. Day-to-day pressure tended to stifle initiative, as there was no room to break out of the routine. Perhaps it was because they did not see much hope for moving up personally, they placed all their hopes and expectations in the political movements that offered them the chance of immediate improvements and above all a new career. Someone who did not have the chance to set up a small business or enterprise might have the ability to work in a political club in his or her neighborhood and could end up being its *caudillo* or its election boss. The urban lower middle classes were the base of support for the renewal movements led by Gonzalez Prada and Piérola in Perú, Alem and Yrigoyen in Argentina, Alfaro in Ecuador, Batlle y Ordóñez in Uruguay, Alessandri in Chile. The working classes who felt no attraction to class politics, rallied behind these figures. The increasing political awareness of enormous sectors of the urban population was a major change in their lives. The upper classes realized that the cities no longer belonged to them.

Tension and Confrontation

The increasing politicization of the cities merely heightened their influence over the regions and the country of which they were part. It was in the cities where decisions were made as to how, and how much, each area was to be exploited, where the living conditions of the different classes were indirectly determined, and where the horizon either expanded or narrowed, depending upon the interests of the increasingly impersonal decision-making groups. Once those decisions were made, they gradually reached into every corner of the nation, where their consequences were sharply felt, although no one there really knew who the decision-makers were. The city, center of anonymous decisions, became more and more inaccessible, a kind of dreaded monster; anyone who dared question the city was destined to do battle with mere shadows.

Subjected to new and disproportionate taxes, in 1886 the Indians of Huaraz rebelled when the Perúvian Government jailed and hanged the mayor of Huaraz, Pedro Pablo Atusparia, who had asked that the taxes be repealed. To put down the rebellion, the government sent a warship, deployed several regiments and, most importantly, called up the city guard in which “the most select youth occupied the first places.” The city focused its efforts on ensuring that the rural world operated under the conditions most advantageous to the economic system that the city itself controlled. In Argentina, the “desert campaign” led by General Roca in 1879 was organized for the purpose of repressing and expelling Indians. Similarly, in México, during the Porfirio Díaz era, the indigenous peoples of Sonora were subdues in 1901 and those of the Yucatán in 1905. In 1893, driven by an impassioned desire to resist the ever-increasing power of a middle-level city, the people of

the Brazilian backlands began to organize under Antonio Conselheiro in a remote corner called Canudos. An enormous multitude gathered there, composed of blacks, *mestizos*, former bandits and old landowners, all united by the same desire to build a world of their own, separate from the civilization of the cities, held together by a vigorous primitivism in their cults and creeds and hostile to the lay and liberal republic that had recently been established in Brazil. They were ready to live their own lives and, if necessary, to die defending themselves from the attacks of the urban, civilizing power. In a profound and disturbing book titled *Os sertôes*, Euclides da Cunha describes that peculiar social universe that existed far from the cities and that gathered around a remote village and a leader, in a confusing amalgam of ancestral feelings and a hatred of civilization. He then recounts the relentless repression that by 1897 ended that uprising of the rural world against the cities. A similar movement would surface 15 years later, led by Juan María, *El Monje* , in the states of Santa Catalina and Paraná. This one was put down in 1916.

The rural explosions that took place around that same time in Venezuela and Uruguay were different in nature. Aparicio Saravia, a powerful *hacienda* owner from the department of Cerro Largo, rose up against the government in 1897, together with several hundred poorly armed countrymen, in an effort to defend their autonomy. That autonomy had been cleverly curtailed from Montevideo by a system that forced the rich landowners to abide by the dictates of the market place. A chronicler of the revolution—and then Saravia's successor in the leadership of the National Party—Luis Alberto de Herrera described the characters in this confrontation: "From whence," he asked, "did that rebel with the soft hat and rustic *poncho* come, that improvised general of a bizarre movement? Perhaps the bourgeois classes from the capital did not know about him, busy in their enormous beehive, concerned only for their own interest, knowing no horizon beyond the edge of their office rug. Yet for those who heard occasional echoes of the splendid campaign and followed the tragic episodes of the Rio Grande revolution, he was a tireless guerrilla warrior, already the target of envy and of growing admiration."

Defeated in 1897, Aparicio Saravia rose up again in 1904 and was killed in the Battle of Masoller. His nostalgic ideal died with him: José Batlle y Ordóñez was the one who organized the modern Uruguay, a small country that was almost identical with Montevideo, the nation's capital. On the other hand, Cipriano Castro, the chief of the *Andinos* of Venezuela, had more success. In 1899, from his mountain hideout, Castro threatened the president in Caracas: "You will learn how the tigers of the Andes roar as they descend on Caracas!" And descend they did, but when they entered Caracas, these tigers of the Andes learned the subtle interplay of economics and politics. The only vestiges of their rural ways that remained were the bad manners that time would be slow to correct.

In México, too, the voice of the rural world was raised against the cities, against civilization, against the economic system, when the revolution against Porfirio Díaz broke out in 1910. That voice was a

roar that ended in a whimper, drowned out by the methodical effort of those who defended the urban system. The revolution began as a political movement to stop the re-election of Díaz and was headed by a liberal politician, Francisco I. Madero. But from the outset, and even more after the first tragic incidents, rural popular movements began to surface. In Chihuahua, armed groups under the command of Abraham González Pascual Orozco, José de la Luz Blanco, and Francisco Villa raised in open rebellion; in Morelos, Torres Burgos and the Zapata brothers joined the battle. The fighting began after Madero's assassination. Under the direction of Venustiano Carranza, the agrarian movement started to take on a separate existence of its own, divorcing itself from the political movement. Land was distributed, sometimes on the basis of a social philosophy, sometimes not. There was banditry, too. Finally, in the midst of the revolution, the two movements clashed. Emiliano Zapata and Francisco Villa fought against the institutional line represented by Venustiano Carranza; both ended up defeated and killed. In the meantime, the revolutionary process was beginning to stabilize with passage of a constitution. Little by little the more politicized sectors closed ranks behind Venustiano Carranza and Alvaro Obregón to rebuild the economic system, a process that President Plutarco Elías Calles would ultimately head up. Although it was less spectacular, the decision by the Nicaraguan Augusto César Sandino was just as telling. After long years of struggle, conservatives and liberals had reached a political agreement under pressure from the United States armed forces and guaranteed by those forces. But Sandino, who headed a small army of farmers, decided to ignore the pact and launched guerrilla warfare from his hideout in San Rafael del Norte. Harassed by occupation forces, the rural movement was finally wiped out by the system that controlled the country's agrarian wealth.

These spontaneous, popular movements failed in their struggle against the distant causes of the problems. Every obstacle and mechanism in a cleverly mounted system was employed; operating out of the city, the system depersonalized relations and concealed the centers of decision-making. Something similar happened with the big strikes, especially in the mining regions of México and Chile, in the textile regions in the state of Veracruz, in the Argentine Patagonia, and in the fruit-growing region of Colombia. In the cities, in the meantime, several movements revealed serious tensions and disagreements among the urban power groups. But there, the game played itself out according to agreed upon rules, among people who knew what the mechanisms were and had the ability to set them into motion.

The capitals in particular were scenes of power struggles among the various groups in the governing classes. Although they agreed on the fundamentals, each group and each person fought to impose their authority. At times the fighting was out in the open, with arguments and counter-arguments hurled back and forth. But on other occasions the fighting was a muted wrestling that took place behind the scenes. The presidential palace and the congress, as well as clubs, restaurants, and private drawing rooms received those who were hatching plans and tying the

strings together. Rio, Santiago, Buenos Aires, and Bogotá were great centers of gossip where influential groups covertly argued over candidacies and appointments. Changing situations required that one be careful not to break the rules of the game, and the loser had an obligation to know how to lose gracefully.

The game was different in places where the person in power was strong and where the source of power was a strong personal dictatorship. In these cases the capital was the center of a gigantic effort to bring together the kinds of influence capable of swaying the dictator. There were conservative dictators like the Mexican Porfirio Díaz, the Guatemalan Manuel Estrada Cabrera, the Venezuelan Juan Vicente Gómez, and the Colombian Rafael Núñez. There were liberal ones as well, like the Nicaraguan José Santos Zelaya, the Guatemalan José María Reina Barrios, and the Ecuadorian Eloy Alfaro. Whether liberal or conservative, they all had their own personal ways of exercising power, that even those closest to them respected and that imposed certain rules on those who wanted to benefit from it. Generally fond of flattery, dictators had their courts to which one had to have access in order to win, if at all, the president's favor: waiting rooms were the scene of struggles for delegated power, which was also a struggle for mercy, honor, and profit.

In any case, the dictator was not an isolated product of politics. Whatever his capacity for command and his personal authority, he had come to power as the leader or exponent of some group. Generally he would assume a power that the dominant group as a whole was not able to exercise. The dictator contributed then his authority and his ability to impose order in general and also within the group that supported him. The exercise of power put more and more opportunities in his hands, but the dictator was aware that he belonged to one class or one group whose interests he consistently served. He could hurt individuals by his scorn or rejection, but not the interests of the group that supported him. And if that group began to disintegrate, the dictatorship was condemned to fall.

While waiting rooms were the scenes of squabbles for scraps of power, conspiracy was afoot elsewhere. If a certain economic and political group constituted the dictatorship's fundamental backing, the dictatorship's ability to remain in power relied on military strength. The army knew its power and was amply rewarded for its loyalty. But there were also generals and colonels. And if the slightest crack were to appear in the scaffolding of a dictator's politics, the ambitions of those who could move power in one direction or another were stirred, and from then on the garrison became another waiting room of power. At times, no conspiracy was necessary: General Cipriano Castro left Caracas for treatment of an illnesses and in his absence his right-hand man, General Juan Vicente Gómez, declared himself president.

But it was not always so easy to overthrow a dictator. He was well protected by the network of interests that he had cleverly woven and by the defense system that he had mounted. But with the passage of time social structures changed, and political relations were altered. In the cities, new ideas circulated and influenced partisan currents already established, especially among the liberal parties, whose ranks began to splinter under the pressure exerted by those who wanted to pull them toward more popular positions. A kind of radicalism broke out in the urban milieu, stirred up by new social conditions and new ideas. One wave of radicalism followed another, each more extreme and more eloquent than the previous one. This had already happened in Chile in 1854; it happened in Argentina and Perú around 1890, in Ecuador in 1895, and in Uruguay in 1903. The movements that Madero headed in México in 1910 and Alessandri in Chile in 1920 were part of the same trend.

Politics changed from then on. It ceased to be the exclusive turf of some small clique whose members settled their problems in drawing rooms and waiting rooms. It became something tumultuous that played itself out on the streets and in the squares. Multitudes, or at least large, impassioned crowds, shouted and even sang their opinions, sometimes centered around a burning issue, other times personified in a candidate whose name they yelled at meetings and demonstrations. Supporters might get carried away; their opponents might arrive; the police might step in to break up the meeting or perhaps even to punish the enemies of the government. But politics had already taken on a new dimension: it was now the government against the opposition.

Revolutions also took on a new dimension in the cities. A group of armed citizens, supported by some military men, managed to occupy Artillery Park in Buenos Aires and from there to proclaim the revolution on July 28, 1890. It was the Unión Cívica, a popular movement that challenged the oligarchy and that, for the moment at least, would be defeated. But some 26 years later, it would win the election, and the very same city that had seen fighting in its streets, saw the apotheosis of the popular *caudillo* Hipólito Yrigoyen, taken to the *Casa Rosada*—the President's mansion—in a coach drawn by a crowd that had unhitched the team of horses to do the job itself. With strong, carefully organized, popular backing, Nicolás de Piérola entered Lima on March 17, 1895. There was street fighting, but in the end the last great military *caudillo*, General Cáceres, was defeated at the hands of the new civilian *caudillo*. Piérola was a man of modern thinking who provided Lima with important services and, more significantly, new sources of employment for the urban population. Two revolutions unleashed by the liberals disrupted the calm in Asunción: the failed revolution of 1891, and the victorious one of 1904. Another liberal revolution, this one supported by the indigenous peoples, assured La Paz its status as the capital of Bolivia in 1891, when the silver mining to the south was on the decline and the tin mining to the north was on the rise. La Paz remained the nation's capital even after the 1920 victory of the anti-liberal revolution. In October 1905, Santiago was rocked when an enormous mob made a futile protest to President Germán Riesco over the high cost of living. A menacing mob of some 30,000 people had gathered on the Alameda and marched to La

Moneda Palace. A massive array of forces had to be deployed to contain this popular outburst. A similar outburst had occurred three years earlier in Valparaiso, and others would follow in the years ahead in Antofagasta and Iquique. Eloy Alfaro's entrance into Guayaquil on June 4, 1895, put an end to the conservative era, once he established himself in Quito three months later, he initiated a liberal regime that stimulated urban life and mercantile activities. The military revolution that ended the Brazilian empire was a peaceful one: the population of Rio de Janeiro did not know what had happened and the imperial family itself was unaware of Marshall Deodoro de Fonseca's indoctrination of the military garrison. Mexico instead gathered in its streets 100,000 people to receive on June 7, 1911, Francisco I. Madero, chief of the triumphant revolution against Porfirio Díaz. But the same joy did not reign in other episodes that followed. When in February 1913 three generals rose up against Madero and had the capital in turmoil for ten days, until Madero was imprisoned and killed. Or when the northern and southern divisions commanded by Villa and Zapata entered the capital in December 1914. Ever fearful of becoming the spoils of war, cities knew just how attractive they were to these new lords who were tasting power for the first time.

In reality, cities functioned like complex social systems. The victory of one group stimulated enthusiasm and public demonstrations in a related group. When the city itself was the decisive factor in winning a political victory for new majorities, its social and cultural landscape changed: some groups retreated to the background as others stepped forward.

The coming together of the working class in strikes and meetings was alarming for the urban middle and upper classes. In those days there were some tense moments when the confrontations became very palpable, independently of any revolutionary theory. This is what happened in Santiago in 1905, in Buenos Aires at the time of the Centennial and even more so during the *Semana Trágica* in 1919 (evoked with dramatic irony by Arturo Cancela in *Una semana de holgorio* , and in Guayaquil in 1922. Retreating to their homes, with their doors and windows barred, the affluent classes waited impatiently for the State to deploy the police or military to correct the problem. The intervention of the police or the military invariably left scores of people dead or injured among those who had seemed, at least momentarily, to be a political force capable of taking control.

Less disquieting were the student conflicts. From 1918, many cities that had universities experienced disturbances caused by student movements. The city of Córdoba, in Argentina, set the paradigm. Controlling the university grounds and some of the streets and squares around the university, the students resorted to some use of force in their immediate surroundings: they barred access to the university to certain authorities or professors whom they did not approve of; they pulled down statues, tore paintings from the walls, threw furniture through the window, and barricaded adjacent streets. But everyone could discover in the episode a good dose of humor and enough self-control that one didn't have to worry about things going too far. In fact, only rarely would student uprisings

coincide with labor or political movements; and when they did, some unidentified sources would issue a confidential warning revealing what each movement was exactly involved in. Taken together, however, these experiences were the training ground for the social and political groups that would one day be strong enough to challenge the power structures. Lima witnessed the disruption of the peace of the “cloisters” at San Marcos University; and in his novel *Fiebre* , the Venezuelan Miguel Otero Silva recalls the student uprisings in Caracas in 1928, during which the vanguard that fought against Juan Vicente Gómez began to take shape.

The Height of Bourgeois Mentality

The period between 1880 and 1930 had a definite and unmistakable physiognomy mainly because the ruling classes of the cities that imposed their views on the development of cities and countries possessed a highly organized mentality, mounted on a few unshakables principles that enjoyed extensive consent. These ideas were very elaborated and discussed in the world, very adjusted to the socioeconomic and political reality, and with them the European bourgeoisie, in its time of greatest splendor, had elaborated a form of mentality that entailed an interpretation of the past and a project for the future and a whole framework of norms and values. Triumphant, the great industrial bourgeoisie offered the spectacle of the apogee of its triumphant mentality. It was inevitable that, among so many things, the Latin American bourgeoisies would also accept a model of thought of proven efficacy. Many nuances were introduced into it; but its core was received intact and faithfully preserved until circumstances showed that it was beginning to be a thing of the past.

This process -which was that of the great industrial expansion- rested on the widespread conviction of not only being correct but also necessary: more than necessary, obligatory for moral reasons; and it was obligatory for the white man, inventor of science and technology, whose benefits had to reach everyone at any cost. It was "the white man's burden", as Rudyard Kipling would say, to accomplish this process. Regardless their skin color, Latin America's new bourgeoisie felt themselves as " white men".

As time went by, also the rising middle classes were more inclined to liberal ideas, widening in this way their supporting surface. Controversies between supporters of secularism and defenders of the Church's traditional influence shook the peace of many cities, in whose forums the pro-men discussed with chains of arguments that, on each side, had been rehearsed everywhere for a long time. But in those changing cities a growing religious tolerance could be noted, and it was easy to see a significant decrease in the number of men attending temples. Gradually, traditionalism was also looked upon with ironic disdain by growing sectors of the middle classes, as an obstacle to

progress. A similar thing happened among popular classes. Vernacular sectors in marginal areas remained attached to their old ideas and beliefs; but migratory groups, mainly those from outside, felt not only alienated from traditionalism's contents but also easily dragged by the ideas feeding the economic current that had attracted them to the cities, especially as they served to justify the intense mobility characteristic of urban life.

It was among the new bourgeoisies where the philosophy of progress became paramount and part of the dominant forms of a novel mentality. Those new groups felt like daughters of progress and vestals of its flame. During the eighteenth century the old idea of progress had been developed by new philosophers and new social groups into a theory of history and a philosophy of life. In its old version, progress was mainly a continuous and persistent conquest of rationality. In the second half of the nineteenth century it became part of industrial societies ideologies. It became a continuous conquest of nature, a way to produce goods, wealth and well-being. A way of putting nature at the service of humanity.

Such an image of progress was inseparable from the high degree of progress achieved by sciences and techniques applied to industry, as well as the prestige achieved by the industrial world. There was the prevailing image in Victorian England, in French Second Empire and Third Republic, in imperial Germany. But in Latin America there was nothing like that. It was a model, or better, a mirror. And from then on it seemed essential to join that trend by importing the products from progress, first, and then setting up the systems to enable that incorporation on a solid and definitive basis.

Heterodox and non-conformist groups could meanwhile raise their voices in favor of the subjugated and exploited indigenous people. Peruvian writer Clorinda Matto de Turner triggered in 1899, with her novel *Aves sin nido*, an indigenous movement that would later have vast repercussions; it would vibrate in the Mexican revolution of 1910, claim its presence in Diego Rivera's frescoes and took a definite shape in the political platform of the APRA inspired by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre. But immediately the sectors that represented progressivism and bourgeois mentality reacted. It was manifested in military campaigns like the one in Argentina led by General Roca, or those promoted by Porfirio Díaz in Sonora and Yucatán, or that which ended with the Canudos War in Brazil. Everything that opposed the linear and accelerated development of the urban and Europeanized world was condemnable, constituted a hindrance and deserved to be eliminated. Judicious sociologists agreed that nothing could be obtained from the degraded aboriginal populations. In *Nuestra América*, the Argentinean Carlos Octavio Bunge ended up blessing alcoholism, smallpox and tuberculosis which decimated the indigenous and African populations; and the Bolivian Alcides Arguedas declared in *Pueblo enfermo* that the Indian "today, ignorant, degraded, miserable, is the object of general exploitation and general antipathy, and hearing his soul full of hatred, he vents his passions and steals, kills, murders with atrocious fury". Only the society economically integrated in

the urban and civilized world constituted the scope to be promoted. This was because the changes in it unchained new changes, in an incessant process that brought not only the well-being of humanity but also the advancement of the best ones

To the new bourgeoisie, the changing Latin American society was, above all, a society of opportunities. Whatever its structure, whatever the origin and peculiarity of its groups and their members, the important thing for the bourgeoisies was discovering that the society was facing an external challenge pregnant of promise, and its members had the opportunity to accept it and to try out some of the opportunities. They were certain that, if they succeeded, they would escape the old structure's determinations and place themselves at its highest levels. Progress, manifested in the development of science and technology and, consequently, of production, worked indirectly on the social structure since it led to forming new groups. But in the reality, the challenge was not posed as a problem of groups but as a problem of individuals, capable or not of accepting the new chances of economic success. And the answer was a deeply individualistic conception of both society and success. This did not exclude the faith in some profane providence that operated over the whole and regulated social advancement according to the principle of natural selection.

Consequently, this profane providence could not know charity. The inert society sectors -middle and popular sectors, but also high ones of traditional classes- unable to accept the challenge and to play decisively and boldly the card of economic triumph and social promotion, were despicable for the new bourgeoisies, whose mentality was based on the conviction that success was a deserved prize. For the capable and the fortunate it was legitimate to manipulate the inert sectors, because stagnation or failure also seemed deserved.

Thus it embodied the bourgeois mentality in an ideology of economic success and social advancement. The winners constituted an aristocracy. Possibly in other times their laurels would have been questioned, perhaps because of hypocrisy, but the moral atmosphere of the 19th and early 20th centuries had dissipated that traditional hypocrisy, justifying fortune in its double meaning of accumulated capital and random success. It was, therefore, a legitimate aristocracy, sustained by the consensus of vast sectors. The criticism did not come from the victims of its plundering. They were formulated by the representatives of the former patriciate and the traditional middle classes, scandalized by the spectacle of the groups that climbed to power and wealth, insensitive to the norms of the old morality, no doubt already outdated. This aristocracy of economic success and social advancement swept away the formerly dominant groups and imposed its principles on a society that preserved them for several decades and would take a long time to elaborate other norms, even if they were only an expression of dissent and disconformity.

It was characteristic of this aristocracy of economic success and social advancement that, despite being constituted by people who recognized their singular origin, very soon manifested an oligarchic vocation, that is, a premature tendency to close their ranks. It was perhaps because its members monopolized business and decided - as in the times of the Venetian oligarchy - to secure all the benefits without letting others, newcomers, get access to the same enriching process they were beneficiaries of. But it was also because they wanted to monopolize political and social power, the latter exercised in a diffuse way thanks to the force that money gave them, and the former by occupying key positions or participating in the aulic councils of power.

There were theorists of the superiority of the new oligarchies. Around 1930 the Brazilian Oliveira Vianna was able to attempt an almost delirious eulogy about the country's white groups superiority. In his book *Evoluçao do Povo Brasileiro* he wrote: "Another fact that seems also to reinforce the presumption of the presence of blond dolichocephalous, with Celts and Iberians in the mass of our primitive population, is the superb eugenicism of many families of our rural aristocracy. The Cavalcanti in the north, the Lemos, the Buenos in the south, are examples of exceptional houses, which have given Brazil, for almost three hundred years, a copious lineage of authentic great men, notable for the vigor of their intelligence, for the superiority of their character, for their audacity and the energy of their will". It was a delirium of a defender of the old patriciate, which Gilberto Freyre could call "almost mystical Aryanism". But this sector was no longer the important one.For that reason, more significant were the words with which the Chilean Enrique Mac-Iver defended the new oligarchy, those new bourgeoisies that were being constituted in the process of socio-economic change and that decisively led the new society. "The oligarchy" -he said in a parliamentary debate in 1880- that which we are so seriously talking about, lives in a representative parliamentary country, which has universal or almost universal suffrage, where all citizens have an equal right to be admitted to the performance of all public jobs and where education, even superior and professional education, is free. Let us add that there are no economic privileges or civil inequalities in the property right and you will agree with me, my honorable colleagues, that a country with such institutions and with an oligarchy is very extraordinary, so extraordinary that it is truly inconceivable. I am very much afraid that the Honourable Members who made this oligarchy known to us have suffered from a blurring of vision, thus confusing with an oligarchy what is distinction and the social and political influences of many, born of public services, the virtue of knowledge, talent, work, wealth and even family background. Oligarchies like these are common and exist in the freest and most popularly governed countries. Honorable Representatives will find such oligarchies in England and even in the United States of America. These oligarchies, which are unshakable foundations of the social and political edifice, are condemned only by the anarchists and the improvised".

These oligarchies - or rather, these new bourgeoisies - knew that they represented the fundamental process of the new society, and disdained the marginalised social groups. They also knew that

power belonged to them, but they were willing to delegate it if the social confrontations involved a hard struggle. And they tended to support the dictator who offered them order and social stability, even at the cost of certain limitations in exercising their own freedoms, perhaps because, having taken advantage of the momentum of an upward social mobility process, they hoped that this momentum would be contained after they had reached a pre-eminent position. At that time the dictator consolidated the established situation and the new bourgeoisies granted him their support based on the recognition of representing social peace.

Generally the relationship between the dictator and the new bourgeoisies was fluid, as if they knew they were mutually dependent. But social mobility began to introduce unexpected and unsuspected variants in these relationships. If the dictator discovered a rising social group could offer him some support that would enhance his personal authority, he was hardly able to resist the temptation of shaking off his dependence from the group that had elevated him. The dictator ceased to consider himself the personification of a class and of that class' politics, and assumed the role of representing a new society -a new avatar of the changing society. In it the urban, depoliticized, and needy masses were becoming increasingly important to such an extent that it was possible to summon, protect, and use them without paying a political price. The old dictators were transformed into a new species, which was insinuated in the first decades of the 20th century and whose theory expressed in unequivocal terms the Venezuelan Laureano Valenilla Lanz when he justified in 1919 the type of power of Juan Vicente Gómez in his book *Cesarismo Democrático*: "In all countries and in all times," he said, "it has been proven that above all institutional mechanisms established today, there is always, as a fatal necessity, the elective or hereditary gendarme with a keen eye, an iron hand, who in fact inspires fear and who through fear maintains peace. Thus, it is evident that in almost all those nations of Latin America, condemned by complex causes to a turbulent life, the caudillo has constituted the only force of social conservation. So, the phenomenon that men of science point out in the first stages of integration of societies continued to take place; chiefs are not chosen but imposed".

It was a new way of understanding society, of romantic tradition and with a link to incipient social phenomena. And it was a new way of understanding political power. But the new bourgeoisies had too much internalized the basic principles of individualistic liberalism. They preferred them without hesitation to those of authoritarianism. Only if a certain authoritarianism left a liberal system in place for them, while it was fully exercised for the other classes, were they willing to compromise.

Strictly speaking, the new bourgeoisies believed above all in the principles of economic liberalism, then in force in the dominant centers of the industrial world at that time, because they suited their interests. Above all, they believed in competition. In the ability and willingness to impose the designs of each one in that tremendous "struggle for life" that Darwin had described as the fundamental

scheme of biological beings' behavior, including man. Economic liberalism conveyed the idea of the struggle for life into the struggle for wealth and social advancement. In thay way it justified the studied strategies, the sordid tactics of those who competed in the market, under the argument that one had to choose between adapting or dying. With this philosophy, let's call it that, the new bourgeoisie supported its basic attitudes, expressed in the ideology of economic success and social advancement.

By the end of the 19th century, some groups adopted other positions. On the edges of the new bourgeoisie appeared those who thought that, while maintaining the same basic conceptions, the time had come to abandon restrictive attitudes. They believed convenient to offer broad participation to those people that, in successive movements, achieved economic success. These "democratic positions" seemed suicidal to some -who feared losing out on the deal- and prudent to others, who preferred to graciously concede what they feared losing by force. More than "democratic", these positions were considered "radical", and perhaps rightly so, simply an extension to new groups of what had previously been appropriate to concede those who first set out on the new ways of life.

This democratic and progressive liberalism took root above all in the middle and popular classes, at least until more progressive formulas appeared. In Lima, Manuel González Prada gave a famous speech in 1888 at the Politeama Theater; he held a bold revolutionary slogan: "The old to the grave, the young to the work". His efforts crystallized in forming the Partido Unión Nacional, quite similar to the Unión Cívica Radical organized in Buenos Aires by Leandro N. Alem. These popular parties offered political representation to the new majorities, preferably urban, without clearly defining their final objectives.

Also in other cities, such as Montevideo and Santiago de Chile, majority politicization was important. But some sectors preferred more concrete solutions: in Buenos Aires a Socialist Party was formed under the inspiration of Juan B. Justo; and from its ranks came Alfredo L. Palacios, who won a seat in 1904, in the popular neighborhood of La Boca. He was the first Latin American socialist to arrive at the Parliament. Emilio Frugoni in Montevideo and Luis Emilio Recabarren in the mining areas and in Santiago de Chile struggled to form socialist parties; they achieved a certain electoral and political strength. The anarchists and trade unionists fought alongside them; meanwhile the Catholics tried to oppose them through a non-revolutionary force; they formed the first Catholic Workers' Circles, following the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. There were struggles for ideas. But since the socialist and anarchist workers' movement launched major strikes, it was seen as subversive and suffered merciless repression. The big cities seemed to escape all control and some considered it imprudent to keep the liberal order and individual liberties in force. In many minds, it began to embody the idea of dictatorship. In Lima, at the celebration for the centenary of the Battle of Ayacucho in 1924, the

Argentinean poet Leopoldo Lugones proclaimed the arrival of "the time for the sword". And some sectors joined the ideological stream of Italian fascism.

In the course of half a century, growing wealth, the social ascent of vast groups and population growth -especially due to external migration- had changed societies' physiognomy. After World War I, a new parameter for understanding the transformations was missing. Cities were the screen which best showed social changes, and where it was most evident the crisis of the old interpretative system of the new reality. It was clear that the new urban reality was incomprehensible. Since it was not possible to grasp the new and differentiated social set, emphasis was placed on each of its groups. It was discovered that the city was not an integrated social whole but rather a juxtaposition of groups in different mentalities. The image of Babel returned -once again- to symbolize the typical confusion of the great growing cities, with incorporated external groups and integrated internal groups. The urban society beginning to be multitudinous was causing the collapse of the old common system of norms and values without any other replacement. Each group returned to its basic normative system, and the whole began to offer a typical picture of anomie.

Only a few Latin American cities gave that impression on the eve of 1930. There were several in which the whole picture was seen, and in many others at least some of its features appeared. There was a sharpening of aggressiveness, a more irrational disregard for the rules of the game, a certain more primitive drive to fight for the most immediate ends in the groups that had recently joined the race for social advancement. It was the beginning of the degradation of the ideology of social advancement, which certainly continued to degrade. A vague certainty appeared in certain groups that the community as a whole -or perhaps the state- had to promote and support the process of upward mobility of marginals and newcomers, leaving aside the traditional competition rules. Many remained confident in their personal advancement, but others began to think that the group, the sector or the class should be promoted as a whole, through the support of a new state. It was a real questioning of social advancement ideology.

Meanwhile, in the integrated and benefited sectors of the system began to emerge unusual doctrines conspiring against its stability. Some questioned the legitimacy of profit and the morality of free competition. The validity of the family, of traditional educational forms, of social and economic relations began to be questioned. For many, the old customs - those of the last thirty years - began to seem ridiculous and were condemned as "prejudices". It was a definitive word on the lips of younger generations of the new bourgeoisie, who, besides, were already beginning to be old. What some called their parents' "Victorian morality" seemed like a set of ridiculous prejudices. They preferred freer and looser attitudes to real situations. These, in truth, on the eve of 1930 had changed a great deal, and the need to revise the system of rules was evident. Not much had changed in post-Victorian England, even after the First War. But they changed in other European

countries and in the United States, taken as an example by those who, in the 1920s, began to transform the conventional existence of Latin American cities. Gradually a shake-up of the outdated system of ideas about woman's role in society began, and along that path the whole of society slid into a change of norms.

No one could have found coherence in the new political, social, aesthetic, or moral attitudes that appeared on the eve of the 1930 crisis. But many realized that bourgeois mentality had passed its peak. Hardly anyone knew for what it could be replaced; but few of those who perceived that Latin American cities had metamorphosed doubted that alternative ways of interpreting reality and life projects were silently developing in those heating urban societies.

CHAPTER 7: THE CITIES OF THE MASSES

The crisis of 1930 visibly unified the direction of Latin America. Every country had to adjust its relations with the countries from whom it bought and to whom it sold, and to accept the conditions imposed by the international economy: a depressed market in which even the most powerful were fighting like tigers to salvage what they could, even at the cost of sink in the mood yesterday's friends. An era of scarcity began that would soon become visible both in the cities and in the rural areas. Scarcity could mean hunger and even death, but it was also the engine that drove dramatic and varied changes. Suddenly it seemed as if there were many more people, that they were more on the move, that they were clamoring for more, that they had more initiative; more people that abandoned idleness and showed a readiness to participate in collective life in whatever way they could. And in fact there *were* more people. Within a short time a new force was shaped, one that grew like a torrent, with a deafening voice. It was an explosion of people who had no way of knowing how many they were, or how many they needed in order to be certain they were heard. Once again, as on the eve of independence, many people of obscure origins began to make their way through the cracks in the structure of society. Once they had made their way in, they made it a new society. When this new society first made its presence felt in certain cities, it had qualities never before seen. These cities were beginning to be taken over by the masses.

It all began in the decade following World War I. The European countries and the United States laboriously rebuilt their economies, partly to heal their wounds and partly to poise themselves in the most advantageous position for the future. But it was an arduous task, and in 1929 the complex financial and monetary structure of the victors of World War I was violently torn asunder. The

collapse of the New York Stock Exchange undid the entire system and almost instantaneously dragged down its lesser components. Shortly thereafter, the secondary effects of the catastrophe began to be felt.

The Latin American protagonists in this drama resolved to take drastic measures to save themselves. One of the most important steps they took was to adjust relations with the countries on their borders, where they sold products and purchased raw materials. Sales shrank, and prices plummeted. Panic heightened the effects of the new strategy, and the crisis began to exact a social and political cost as well as an economic one.

It was inevitable that Latin America's wealthy should repeat the maneuvers of which they themselves had been the victims. Forced to accept the terms of the international market, they tried to adjust domestic life in each of their countries so that they would not have to be the only ones to pay for the damage, or better still so that others would pay the entire price. There were coups d'etat, economic policy changes, complete overhauls of the financial and monetary machinery, and corrections in the relation between capital and labor, effected often and, when necessary, though an energetically repressive policy toward the working classes. For them there was no pity, not even the consolation of advice. Enormous sectors of the population fell into poverty and searched desperately for some escape.

For many, migration to the cities seemed to be an alternative. At that moment, some industries were beginning to develop in certain cities, either because foreign capital had begun to establish industries, or because, with the excitement of those initial incentives, local capitalists were tempted to make investments in industry, sometimes to substitute for imports. Thus, high-paying jobs began to appear in the city, arousing the imagination of many of the rural unemployed. There was a snowball effect, with bitter consequences. While there was urban development, there was also urban unemployment and poverty, for there were always more people looking for jobs than there were jobs. The situation improved somewhat beginning in 1940, when World War II triggered activity in businesses that were supplying provisions for the warring parties; within a short time, unexpected sources of employment appeared. But the demand for jobs was always greater than the number of vacant positions.

In the years that followed World War II, it was easy to see that in almost all the Latin American countries the old socio-economic structure that was weakened in 1930 had not recovered; a spontaneous and unforeseeable change was at work within it. Isolated facts pointed to the opening of new avenues, but a new system within which they could operate was barely perceptible. People were becoming aware of the phenomenon; armed with new understanding and new opportunities,

they were beginning to work on projects to organize economic development to correct in a new direction the old structure. In the 1940s multiple opportunities seemed to open throughout Latin America.

The situation subsequently deteriorated somewhat, but certain prospects still remained available to many Latin American countries: only the old schemes could not be repeated. Although there was risk involved in choosing a new system and exploring its actual possibilities, that risk had to be taken. This was an era of guesswork, yet not finished, when multiple ways of dealing with the problems of a society in upheaval were being sounded out. But as happened with the social explosion in the late eighteenth century, the one that followed the 1930 crisis consisted mainly of a rural offensive on the city, resulting in an urban explosion that transformed Latin America's prospects. There were, of course, many cities whose growth rate did not change, and many that remained at a standstill. Yet Latin America did see a certain number of its cities take off: some became metropolises very quickly; others were just then beginning to develop, but under such auspicious conditions that they soon demonstrated what they would become before long. They all became important hubs within their respective regions and countries and had a decisive impact on society and culture. The great cities, either real or potential, became the centers around which regions and countries would revolve, even more than before. Each one became a unique socio-cultural hub with facets of life never before seen.

The Latin American phenomenon closely followed what was happening in the European countries and in the United States, but its socio-cultural characteristics differed. In some cities, clearly defined social groups that were not part of the traditional mainstream structure, which were labeled "the masses," began to form. And where they appeared, the entire urban society began to take on "mass" qualities. The cityscape of the habitat changed; there were mass lifestyles and mass mentalities. While this was happening, some cities undergoing intense and rapid growth began to see a change in their urban physical features: they ceased to be just cities and became a combination of separate and anomic ghettoes. Anomie began to be a characteristic. It began silently with the 1930 crisis and continues even today, perhaps even more so. By now it is one of the defining features of contemporary Latin America.

The Urban Explosion

In the first decades of the 20th century, a demographic and social explosion occurred in almost all the Latin American countries, with varying degrees of intensity. While its effects quickly became apparent, it would be a long time before the phenomenon was pinpointed and even longer before

the strictly demographic aspect would be distinguished from the social aspect. The increase in the population was obvious, and it tended to sustain itself or even accelerate. But the enormous rural exodus brought the largest numbers of people to the city and transformed the massive demographic migration into an urban explosion. This was what the problem looked like in the decades leading up to the 1930 crisis.

In México, the 1910 revolution uprooted people who by 1920 were marching in droves on the cities: the phenomenon is documented in the literary genre known as the novel of the revolution, beginning with *Los de abajo* , written by Mariano Azuela and published in 1916, and *La sombra del caudillo* , written by Martín Luis Guzmán and published in 1929. In Perú in the 1920s, highlanders began to come down from the hills and the mountains, heading for Lima by the road that had been opened from Puquio. As José María Arguedas recounts in *Yawar Fiesta*: "The highlanders from the north, south, and the center of the country began to descend upon the capital city at the same time, travelling by all the new roads." The saltpeter crisis drove thousands of unemployed into Chile's cities; the agricultural crisis on the Argentine Pampas drove the unemployed to Argentina's cities; the coffee crisis and the drought in the Brazilian backlands drove the people to its cities. The same phenomena were occurring almost everywhere. Demographic explosion and rural exodus combined to make a complex phenomenon: an uncanny combination of quantitative and qualitative factors that would play themselves out in the cities to which these desperate yet hopeful immigrants would flee.

Migrants to the cities would continue to have the same large families they had always had. Where they settled they became just one piece in the mosaic of traditional society. Once established, they continued to increase in number, and these large families crowded together in the old poor neighborhoods or in marginal areas of the city. People from the same town or the same region might settle in the same area. And as the group grew in size, its presence became more and more visible, evidence of the demographic phenomenon that was occurring. If migrants ventured out of their ghetto and appeared in another neighborhood, the traditional society took note and had a special name for them: in México City they were the *peladitos* ("plucked dry"); in Buenos Aires they were *cabecitas negras* ("little black heads"). The city was being flooded; the numbers of new arrivals from outside the city continued to grow faster than the rate at which they could achieve even minimal levels of integration.

Internal migrants brought with them vivid memories of home: the depressed rural areas, or the villages and impoverished small cities. In his novel *Gabriela, cravo e canela* , the Brazilian Jorge Amado painted a vivid portrait of those fugitive migrants fleeing the drought in the backlands. Many peasants, wanting to continue being peasants, tried their hand at growing crops whose prices were on the rise. Other peasants, however, could see the opportunities offered at the city; those who

knew some trade, or who decided to learn one, settled in the cities. This was how Ilheus, Bahia, Recife, and São Paulo grew: they attracted those who beginning to feel the effects of the coffee crisis and to those who migrated from the northeast.

But not all of the immigrants came from the countryside. Many moved from small or middle-sized cities that were going rapidly downhill: Ayacucho and Cajamarca in Perú, the towns on the savannah in Colombia, San Carlos de Salta or Moisesville in Argentina. They created the image of the abandoned city, like the city on the Venezuelan flatlands that Miguel Otero Silva called Ortiz in his novel *Casas muertas* , or Comala which is the scene of Juan Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo*, or the fantasy city of Macondo that Gabriel García Márquez invented for his *Cien años de soledad* . Poverty and despair drove away young people, determined not to let themselves be buried alive in a dying city, and also those reluctant to bury themselves alive in a dying city. The old city was dying fast, with most of its housing abandoned and in ruins, inhabited only by old people chipping away at their work and whiling away their last days.

Thus, there were towns and cities of various sizes that never managed to ride the wave of the urban explosion and that gained nothing from the socio-economic movement it produced. Quite the contrary, such cities and towns were victims of the urban explosion. Other towns emerged out of a wilderness where new source of wealth that fired the imagination had been found. A character in *Casas muertas* explained it as follows: "I have heard tell that while Ortiz and Parapara are dying, towns are springing up elsewhere." These towns became part of the urban explosion, but at the cost of other towns' demise. The latter were dying because their old inhabitants were powerless, unable to understand who were pulling the strings of their lives.

Yet there were times when a city was not completely destroyed. Those who did not migrate tended to find some means to eke out a living that kept at least part of the town alive. Theirs was a tiny economy. But new times would open up new opportunities to many such towns: the route of some highway might set them on the road to development, or someone might discover that the sleepy little town was a hidden treasure that could attract tourists. In fact, tourism was a sign of the times. It increased in the big cities and spilled over into those small corners where some trace of the past, irretrievably lost in the big cities, was still preserved. The prodigious organization of this new tourism gave direction to curiosity, invented the indescribable charm of some place, or suddenly infused new life into an old city that seemed dead. A carefully designed pamphlet with enticing photographs rediscovered some spot: its quiet square, its ancient church, its old mansions, some of which held precious memories of a nation's history. Caravans of tourists, foreigners, and nationals alike, began to breathe artificial life into some cities. Some were quite rightly designated "museum cities," like Taxco or Guanajuato in México, Antigua Guatemala, Villa de Leyva in Colombia, and Cuzco in Perú. Unlike the "hotel cities," these places were uninhabited by night but bustled with activity by day, with tourist

buses and cars coming and going, groups milling about taking pictures or buying souvenirs. Cities left empty by emigration were not the only ones whose dormancy was disguised in this fashion, as many cities that had long been bogged down in their own inertia suddenly became tourism attractions.

Yet countless other cities, founded during the colonial era at some other auspicious moment in the region's history, were obviously floundering; there was no longer anything to stimulate the growth of these cities. Too numerous to mention, their numbers far exceeded the number of cities that were growing—and it would be senseless to list them, because their names mean nothing outside their own country. Perhaps the most significant on the eve of the urban explosion were the following: Popayán, San Cristóbal, Ouro Preto, Maldonado, Concepción of Uruguay, Loja, Sucre, León. The urban explosion did not hit them, or many others like them, because the migratory movements and attendant phenomena could only happen where there was some gravitational pull and the possibility, fleeting or enduring, of development.

As gold and later rubber once had, petroleum awakened new hopes during these years. It was the dream of oil that the Venezuelan immigrants in *Casas muertas* were pursuing, that "orient" beyond which Ciudad Bolivar lie. Whereas in the 1930s its population was less than 20,000, it would quadruple by 1970. Even more spectacular was the growth of Venezuela's oil emporium, Maracaibo, with just 100,000 inhabitants in the 1930s, then 235,000 in 1950, 420,000 in 1960 and 660,000 in 1970. The city of Comodoro Rivadavia, on the oil-bearing desert of Patagonia, went from a population of 5,000 in the 1930s to almost 90,000 by 1970.

But the most powerful attraction for those wanting to leave the countryside or dying cities was the metropolis, the great city whose reputation was enhanced by the exaggerated accounts given by anyone who knew anything about it, then compounded by the mass media: newspapers, magazines, radio, and especially movies and television, whose living images of the urban landscape elicited awe and astonishment. There was tremendous tertiary activity in the great city, with lighting, services of all kind, businesses big and small, many people of good position who might need domestic help or the many services that urban life involved. The attraction was even greater if the city had taken a leap toward industrialization, which was perceived as a positive sign. Those who were beginning to plan factories were looking for a favorable infrastructure, a good supply of energy and water, good transport and communication systems. They were looking for an efficient marketing apparatus and perhaps they aspired to participate in the privileges granted to certain areas for industrial location, and to benefit of proximity to major financial, administrative and political centers. The big city was the preferred choice. There, an immigrant might find "city work:" in the services, in business, in industry. One might even find a high-paying job if one had the qualifications to be classified as a skilled worker.

But the great urban center had even more to offer. Someone who worked in the city did so in the company of others, working together to get a job done and then exchanging views and reactions, and perhaps even jointly negotiating disputes with management through unions that also offered an opportunity for a vigorous social life. The worker was living in an urban, compact, enticing milieu. By day the streets were full of people, and just seeing them was a spectacle; by night the streets were lit up, as were the stores, movie houses, theaters, and cafes. There were places to go. On Sundays, popular amusements drew crowds taking advantage of the holiday to forget the daily grind. Perhaps the most difficult problem was just to secure shelter; but in the end everyone found a place, good or bad. And having a place to live, primitive perhaps but urban nonetheless, seemed to grant the right to demand all the benefits of urban life, the same benefits that someone already established and assimilated would enjoy. Even consumerism seemed possible: a radio, a refrigerator, perhaps even a television one day. The big city seemed to offer all this to the immigrant, who approached it with great hope.

The problem was to get to the city, and immediately thereafter to integrate oneself into the mysterious social fabric of the city. It was difficult to find a home, a job, someone familiar with the city who could initiate the new arrival into its secrets. But little by little this was accomplished, sometimes in the poor neighborhoods of the city, other times in the outlying areas. And when it was accomplished, the immigrant mass was added to the traditional working classes, increasing their number and exponentially increasing the numerical ratio between the working classes and the other classes. Many had the sensation that the city might explode at any moment, because the vegetative working classes growth rate was so high. Social tensions heightened because the disproportionate growth of the urban population triggered a vicious circle: the more a city grew, the more expectations it created, whereupon it attracted still more people. Although it might seem able to absorb the repeated influx of new arrivals, the number of those who actually became part of the urban structure was always greater than the structure could bear. It was inevitable that the urban explosion, born of a sociodemographic explosion, would in turn trigger serious social explosions within the cities.

Migration and high birth rate combined to trigger the quantitative growth of the cities. Other factors also combined to produce a qualitative change in the new social structure of the growing cities, a change that would alter the features of the urban explosion. But the most visible feature was the numerical increase in the population. In 1900, only around 10 cities had populations over 100,000. But by 1940, four cities—Buenos Aires, México City, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo—had over a million inhabitants. Buenos Aires had two-and-a-half million and was one of the biggest cities in the world. By that year, five other cities had populations of over a half million: Lima, Rosario, Havana, Montevideo, and Santiago. In fact, Santiago had already reached the one million mark. Eleven cities had populations of over 200,000: three in Brazil—Recife, Salvador, and Porto Alegre; three in

Argentina—Avellaneda, Córdoba, and La Plata; one in México—Guadalajara; one in Bolivia—La Paz; one in Colombia— Bogotá; one in Venezuela—Caracas; and another in Chile— Valparaiso.

Over the next 30 years the situation changed rapidly. Some eight capitals passed the one-million mark and sprawled over vast metropolitan areas whose total population was comparable to that of the largest cities in the world: two of them, México City and Buenos Aires, had over 8.5 million inhabitants. Four capitals—Santiago, Lima, Bogotá, and Caracas—experienced a dizzying rate of growth. Santiago, which was close to one million in 1940, had a population of 2,600,000 thirty years later; but in that same time, Lima went from 600,000 to 2,900,000; Bogotá from 360,000 to 2,540,000, and Caracas from 250,000 to 2,118,000. The growth was so astronomical that what Antonio Gómez Restrepo wrote of Bogotá at the very start of this process could be said of them all:

We Bogotános are becoming an ever smaller colony in our native land; and while the super-abundance of people has helped to create new residential neighborhoods and other very well-planned and developed neighborhoods for employees and lower echelon civil servants, it has also left a confusing mass of people in the suburbs who have gone there seeking shelter in a collection of miserable hovels lacking any form of hygiene and sanitation.

The migrations outnumbered the capital's traditional social groups; they infiltrated them or surrounded them. This phenomenon was less noticeable in the capital cities that had not yet achieved populations of 2 million: Montevideo and Havana.

In the meantime, cities that were not capitals had also experienced considerable growth. Rio de Janeiro, which ceased to be Brazil's capital in 1960, had gone from 1,800,000 inhabitants in 1940 to 6,700,000 in the metropolitan area by 1970. But its growth was not as intense as São Paulo's, whose prodigious development had all the ingredients of the Latin American urbanization process. With a population of 1,326,000 in 1940, the industrial city was spread over a large suburban area and even spilled over those limits. Metropolitan São Paulo had a combined population of 7,750,000 by 1970. Other Brazilian cities also experienced considerable growth. From 1940 to 1970, Recife went from 250,000 to 1,200,000, Porto Alegre from 350,000 to over 1 million, and Salvador de Bahia from 350,000 to 1 million.

By 1970 the population of two Colombian cities in the Cauca Valley, Cali and Medellín, had exceeded one million. Both were business and industrial centers in very prosperous areas. The rural populations in the area opted for emigration; between 1938 and 1968, more than 400,000 peasants moved to Medellín to settle in the city's "pirate neighborhoods." Two Mexican cities had populations of nearly 2 million by 1970: Guadalajara, the old capital of the state of Jalisco and traditionally the

country's second largest city, went from 229,000 in 1940 to 1.5 million by 1970 and even higher if one includes its metropolitan area; Monterrey, the new industrial metropolis at the foot of Cerro de la Silla, had only 150,000 inhabitants in 1940, but grew to 1,200,000 by 1970.

No less important on a national and regional scale was the growth of other cities that by 1970 had close to a half million inhabitants, like Guayaquil in Ecuador or Barranquilla in Colombia, and others that hovered around a half million, like Maracaibo in Venezuela, Puebla in México, or Rosario and Córdoba in Argentina. These urban hubs were an option when the crisis struck the rural areas; on its own scale, each provoked migrations, population settlements, and urban explosions. But even more telling were the many smaller urban explosions that had the same effect. Dozens and dozens of cities with populations of between 20,000 and 40,000 around 1930 saw their populations triple, quadruple, or even more in the space of 40 years. Albeit on a smaller scale, they experienced the same social phenomena that were occurring in the megacities. Cities with populations of 200,000 were overwhelmed by the masses, and their infrastructure was unable to tolerate the population increase. Cities that were even smaller, but growing rapidly, experienced the same kinds of difficulties.

The urban explosion changed cities physical features. One began to hear complaints from those previously enjoying a city of relative peace and quiet, with an suitable infrastructure for the population. The invaders disfigured their cities and made them into social monsters with the inhuman characteristics that technical development introduced. Someone even said that by now the cities were "invisible." The Perúvian Sebastián Salazar Bondy compiled his own observations of his city in a book that he titled *Lima, la horrible* . In 1962, in reference to the urban explosion and mass formation of the city, he wrote:

Some time ago, Lima ceased to be . . . the quiet city that ran by the timetable of matins and the Angelus, and that France's Radiguet found so moving. It has become a world of two million people, pushing and shoving amid the din of honking horns, uncivilized radios, human congestion, and other forms of modern-day madness in order to survive. Two million inhabitants forcing their way through the beasts that massive underdevelopment makes of men. Chaos, born of the insatiable appetite for urban life that spreads with the speed of some cancerous disease, has become, thanks to the dizzying pace of life in the capital, an ideal: the entire country wants to kneel at its feet and, by their presence, fan the holocaust of the spirit. The bottleneck of vehicles in the city center and on its avenues, the rude competition of peddlers and beggars, the tiresome lines for the inadequate transportation services, the housing crisis, the disasters caused by pipes that break, the imperfect telephone system: all this is the work of the improvisation and cunning that, with the hypnotic eyes of a serpent, seduce and take advantage of provincial innocence, only to kill that innocence with its dirty dealings. Lima's convent-like tranquility, which nineteenth-century and even early twentieth-

century travelers described as conducive to meditation, was wiped out by the demographic explosion. But that mutation was only quantitative and superficial. The urban uproar has muted but not suppressed the nostalgia of the people of Lima, who yearn more and more for rustic colonial charm.

Such were the effects of the demographic explosion. Yet no one wanted to leave the city. Living in the city became a kind of right, as Henri Lefebvre described it: the right to enjoy the benefits of civilization, to well-being and consumerism, even the right to share a certain sense of alienation. The cities were growing, public services were becoming more and more inadequate, distances longer, air more polluted, noises more deafening; yet no one, or almost no one, wanted or wants to leave the city. Cities seemed to be the focus of all energy and exerted more and more influence on the region and the country. The urban masses, so characteristic of the cities since the explosion occurred, gained more and more influence. Certainly the urban explosion unleashed a latent and barely perceptible revolution. Or perhaps that explosion was the form in which a blind revolution, born of the social process, manifested itself. But from the start the city, faithful to its vocation, shaped that blind revolution, opened its eyes. Gradually, began tempting it with the bittersweet fruit of ideology.

A Split Society

In those cities where immigrant groups settled, the upheaval was profound. It quickly became apparent that the presence of more people was not only a quantitative phenomenon but a qualitative change as well in which a compact, unified society was replaced by a divided one where two worlds were at odds with each other. For an unforeseeable period of time, the city would contain two coexistent and juxtaposed societies, living in a long, permanent confrontation, and at the same tine, a slow, laborious, conflictive and non-consummated interpenetration.

One world was the traditional society, composed of well-defined classes whose tensions and lifestyles went on within an agreed upon system of rules: a regulated society. The other was the immigrant group, consisting of isolated people who converged upon a city and only by that coincidence built a first link in it and. As a group they had no links, and therefore no system of rules. It was an animic society, without norms, without standards, teetering alongside the other like a marginal group.

When the immigrant group appeared in the Latin American cities after World War I, before undergoing the complex social process that would convert it into the basic core of the urban mass, it

looked like a mixed collection of humanity: families, single men, and single women, all taking the risk upon which their new lives depended. They came from rural areas—generally nearby, sometimes far away—or from small cities abandoned because they held no opportunities. These immigrants reached the edge of the cities that were their final destinations. In Lima, José María Arguedas recounts, those who arrived first managed to find domestic work in the homes of wealthy people from the same town who had also moved to the capital. Once familiar with the city, these early immigrants took in those who arrived in successive waves. In *Yawar Fiesta*, Arguedas writes:

And without anyone organizing it, arrivals, like those from the highlands, were handled in orderly fashion: the 'chalos' helped the 'chalos,' . . . the 'mistis' helped the 'mistis,' . . . introducing them into their company of friends. . . . Students were also helped in the same way, depending upon their parents' money; the poor looked for small rooms near the university or the engineering school. They took rooms originally set aside for servants, in attics, under staircases, or in old stately mansions that, because they were on the verge of collapse, were now leased out to workers and poor people.

In some cities, there were preset places where immigrants camped, as the Brazilian Jorge Amado recounts in *Gabriela, cravo e canela* when describing the immigrant encampment in Ilheus. "To get there, one had to leave downtown, go beyond the market place where the stalls were being dismantled and the merchandise collected, and then between the railroad buildings". Amado continues: "At the foot of Conquista Hill where the migrants camped while waiting for work. Someone had once referred to the place as the 'slave market' and the name had stuck; now no one ever called it anything else." That was where the backlanders camped. These were people who had fled the drought, the poorest of the many whom had left their homes and their land to answer the call of the cacao. In other cities the arrival was even more formal. In Argentina, the emigration was by train, and the arrival was at the railway stations. There dozens of strange-looking families laden with tattered luggage descended from each convoy, hoping to find whoever had come to receive them, perhaps someone who had migrated earlier and had some accommodations planned. Elsewhere rural buses unloaded the same cargo. And from the platform the pilgrimage began, sometimes in the direction of the old, poor neighborhoods of the city, like Tepito in México City, other times to the unpopulated edge of the city, a no-man's-land where one could set himself up provided he was willing to forego services: the hills surrounding Caracas or Lima, the low-lying areas outside Buenos Aires, the trash dumps outside Monterrey, or the salty earth of dried-up Lake Texcoco in México City. A tiny shack, perhaps assembled overnight, assured the immigrant's place. But starting the next day, it would begin the difficult job of becoming part of mainstream society, a process that could take more than a generation.

The immigrant group was not yet a society and could not compare one system with another. By contrast to mainstream society, the immigrant's world was a defenseless human conglomerate,

without ties to keep it together, without the rules and standards that give society homogeneity, without any real reason to control its instincts or to combat the desperate urge to satisfy its own needs in whatever way it could. It was a conglomerate of human beings that were struggling to put roofs over their heads and simply survive. Yet they were also struggling to live, however high the price. And both struggles meant that one had to find his niche in the structure of established, normalized society, without authorization, perhaps in violation of some rule or the rights of those belonging to that society and looked upon the intrusion with surprise.

The other society could offer a roof and a job to the intruder; it could extend the hand of charity to care for his health and educate his children. But it would be a long time—no one could say how long—before immigrants would discover and accept that everything about the structure of mainstream society belonged to them as well. In the meantime, they functioned as if everything belonged to someone else: the water tap, the sidewalk bench, the hospital bed. Nothing was theirs; someone else always had a greater claim to what was there.

Established society looked upon the immigrant conglomerate that was filtering through its cracks as a uniform whole. In its eyes, they constituted the "other society," whose existence they had heard about but from whose presence they fled. When any member of that other world appeared outside his ghetto, normalized society looked upon him with curiosity, recognized him as being different from the established working class, and basically ignored him. But it was different when the "other society" seemed to be coalescing into a group. By then, immigrants had managed to strengthen certain ties that were beginning to bind them together. Perhaps they were starting to realize they could bring something to bear on the established structure more persuasive than their individual expectations: their group strength, much greater because it was exercised without having to adhere to rules, in an irrational way. It was the strength of one feeling alien to that which he is attacking and has no means to put a halt to his actions. One saw in the streets of México City, Bogotá, and Buenos Aires compact groups, alien to the rules of urban life, trampling upon the system upon which others had agreed and taking over or destroying what belonged to "the others" in normalized society.

Naturally, the emergence of a mass society without rules had a profound effect on established, normalized society, precisely because the new group's target of attack was the system of norms that were in force. Established society regarded the new arrivals not only as upstarts but as enemies as well. As resistance grew, society close down not only the avenues that immigrant groups needed in order to move closer to, and ultimately be assimilated into, its ranks but also its own capacity to understand the strange social phenomenon right before their eyes. Among the factors that shaped this attitude was the increasing numbers of the anomic society and the overwhelming impression that their numbers and their aggressiveness made. That anomic society was decisively shaped by its confrontation with normalized society, which they viewed both as their target and as their model.

The conflict was resolved as established society slowly and steadily coaxed the other one into agreeing to abide by certain basic rules and then offered them the means for the assimilation that, after a period of time, was inevitable. And with that, the two societies unwillingly found themselves in a silent process of integration, the possibilities of which were, and continue to be, manifest in daily existence and in the social and political life of those Latin American cities flooded by the tide of immigrants.

Mutual integration began when the immigrant got a roof over his head and, above all, a job. With the job came needs and obligations that forced contact and familiarization. One had to learn how to take the bus, where the streets were, how to reach the soccer stadium; perhaps one had to arrange for identification papers or go to a police station one day. It was undoubtedly an important phase when immigrant groups established contacts among themselves, strengthened the ties that united those from the same town or from the same region, and acquired the sense of solidarity that would give them confidence and strength in the difficult job of trying to break into the structure. But it was the next phase that was decisive, when contact was established with those who belonged to traditional society and were in a position to initiate them into its secrets. The first groups, within normalized society, to yield to the pressure exerted by the new arrivals and to begin communication with them were naturally the working classes. Yet there were also groups in the lower middle class—as depressed as the working class, if not more so, and in some sense marginal as well—that showed some kindness and ultimately some sense of solidarity with immigrant groups.

Naturally, not everyone felt this way. There was envy, fear of competition, and above all, that sense of superiority that city people tend to assume over rural people. Here and there, however, cracks began to develop through which the new group could make its way, sink roots, and begin to marry or build friendships with people who were already well established. Adversity brought these groups even closer. Although immigrants were unemployed, the traditional working classes also had their unemployed. When poverty became widespread, people began to move from the inner city to find shelter in some small shack along its outskirts. There a new arrival could meet someone with established roots, just as he could in the employment lines that formed, as in casual jobs that both of them got. The two might even meet in the soup kitchens that some government or charitable institution opened for the poorest of them all. Women tended to be less reticent than men and were quicker to establish bonds or friendships that men would not form until later.

It was this blend of immigrant groups, the working class, and the lower middle class of traditional society that formed the masses in the Latin American cities starting around World War I. The name “masses”, which became more common than that of “multitude,” acquired a narrow and precise meaning. The masses were that diverse assortment of humanity that lived on the fringe of established society and that appeared to abide by no rules. They formed an urban group, although

by varying degrees, since some had lived in the city for years, while others came from rural backgrounds and were just beginning to be "citified." But they quickly acquired a distinctly urban look and behavior: they formed a huddled, compact group and, no matter the city, they were invariably at odds with the compact society that was already there. Thus the new urban society was a divided one: a new, rejuvenated baroque society.

The urban mass was not only anomic but fundamentally unstable as well. It comprised, in principle, immigrants and some well-rooted groups that, for one reason or another, were beginning to pull apart from traditional society whose values and principles they had embraced until just recently. This heightened the sense of anomie, which was perhaps further exacerbated by each new generation in all the sectors of the mass. Each of these generations created a new index for integration, new expectations with respect to the structure of traditional society, new strategies for taking on the monster that they feared less than their predecessors did. The game was becoming a vicious one, because the greater the degree of assimilation, the greater the anomie. Yet the urban mass began to acquire a radical homogeneity and soon to gain clarity about its objectives. It became self-evident that the mass did not want to destroy the structure that it had set out to become part of; on the contrary, it had a respect for that structure and for the principles upon which it was based. Its plan was not to change society in any substantive way, as certain established groups thought, but rather to embrace it and to adjust it only insofar as necessary for it to open up. The ultimate objective of the mass was for each of its members to be incorporated into that structure so that it might enjoy its benefits and then climb its ladder. As simple as those objectives were, they were not easily achieved. Since those who did succeed in accomplishing those objectives quickly divorced themselves from the mass, a hostility toward the structure and the established society that controlled it gradually grew within the mass, and the original desire for inclusion began to cool off. As the hostility of the mass became more and more pronounced, traditional society, now on the defensive, renewed its old hostilities. Many policies were hatched to break what seemed to be a vicious circle.

In the cities of Latin America, the formation of the urban masses coincided with industrialization and bore a special relation to employment. Many people, especially women, believed their only hope for making it into the established structure and prospering within it was to work for someone who was part of mainstream society. That was the hope nurtured by Gabriela in Jorge Amado's novel: "I'm goin' to stay in Ilhéus. I'm goin' to hire me out as a cook or a washerwoman or a housemaid." Then she added, as a happy memory: "I used to work for rich folks. I learned how to cook." One had a house, meals, wages; most important of all, however, one had a tutor, someone from whom one could learn how the system operated, someone whose help would enable one to build upon that first relationship established within the structure. From that one relationship, a vast network of relatives and an endless line of friends and *paisanos* could take advantage of the crack in the

structure.

Men, however, especially the more ambitious types, were not lured by that prospect. Many were seduced by the high industrial wages, and did not care whether or not they had the conditions to achieve them. Men who had a capacity and a willingness to learn became members of the new elite of the working class: they were the industrial proletariat. Others were not very clear about what they wanted, or perhaps did not have sufficient wherewithal to define their goals. Many were content to find unskilled employment, in public works or in construction—an obsession of governments besieged by these new and growing urban masses who were seeking work—or perhaps in the municipal services that were spreading as the urban population grew. Many tried, with varying success, the petty street trade, which could be started up with almost no capital. Others learned some trade or craft to earn their daily wage. But there were also those who succumbed to abject poverty, some of whom eventually drifted into criminal activities—drug trafficking, prostitution, robbery, and gambling— especially in cities where population growth increased their chances of evading the law.

Such a wide range of possibilities did not offer much security to the members of the new society forming in the cities: neither to immigrants, nor to the established working-class groups who joined them in this desperate search for social advancement. The game continued to be a vicious circle: the greater was the demand for opportunities claimed by the already established, the early immigrants and those adding in successive waves. The city continued to grow, and competition became tougher and tougher. As keen as competition was within established society, it was ruthless among the urban masses that had no standards or conventions to follow. That competitive sense, an “every man for himself” attitude, conspired against the solidarity of the masses. Every day there were “winners” who managed to get a firm foothold in the established structure and immediately separated themselves from the mass.

Thus it became evident that the mass was not a class at all, but rather a seedbed. Those who managed to move up left the mass in their wake. Those who remained were the ones who had not managed to move up. They would become a permanent fixture in the working-class sector and might even drop down a rung on the social ladder.

The mass, therefore, was unstable. Its members never considered themselves part of a common class, except when it came to enemies. Its members never wanted to form "another" society but to join this one, in which they had inserted themselves so laboriously, the one they admired and envied, the one that nevertheless rejected them and which, out of disdain, they attacked. It was a love-hate relationship that individuals understand very well but societies rarely consciously

perceive.

While the personal ambitions of each member of the mass tore at its social fabric, the sense of failure shared by those trapped within it occasionally gave them a sense of solidarity. Established society—conventional, fearful, and unable to understand the magnitude of the social phenomenon that was playing itself out before their very eyes—saw the mass as an enemy. They watched the mass on downtown streets on holidays, perhaps from a balcony or from an automobile, and regarded it as some kind of monster with a thousand heads. They saw the masses in the soccer stadiums, in a frenzy of excitement. There may have been times when members of established society saw the masses in its own milieu, the slums and encampments: an abstract mass, an anguished body of human beings overwhelmed by poverty and despair, impotent in the face of the monster that held them down, whose designs they never managed to understand.

If the masses ever expressed their feelings, it was when they functioned as a group, new arrivals united with those who had already become integrated and who joined with them to voice their protests. This happened in certain cities, triggering unusual phenomena that exposed the depth of the transformations which the emergence of an anomic mass society was capable of bringing about within a city controlled, until recently, by a normalized society. Once it resorted to violence, the mass showed the power it was capable of marshaling when it managed to galvanize itself; but it also exposed the weaknesses and cracks in the structure of traditional society. This is what happened in Buenos Aires on October 17, 1945, and in Bogotá on April 9, 1948. Both cities had grown rapidly as a result of internal migration. In both, working-class neighborhoods formed a ring around the traditional city; the new mass—a combination of immigrant groups, the working class, and the small middle class that had suffered most from the economic crisis and recession—united against traditional society.

At the time of the uprising to demand the release of Colonel Juan Perón, the power structure, then in the hands of Perón's followers, threw its support behind the masses in the form of the army and the police; the General Confederation of Labor, whose membership included established labor as well as new arrivals, also took part by going on strike. But the masses that filled the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires on October 17 came in large part from the working-class districts in the southern part of the capital: Avellaneda, an important industrial center; Berisso, the center of the meat-packing industry; Lanús, Llavallol, and other lesser centers, all populated by the very humble classes and by newly formed industrial groups. But they also came from the city itself, from the working-class and lower middle-class neighborhoods. The color was perhaps a little darker than one might have found in downtown Buenos Aires, and undoubtedly darker that the predominant color in traditional society. Whereas traditional society identified the mass by the color of its skin, calling its members *cabecitas negras*, the popular *caudillo* called them *descamisados* ("shirtless ones") in an allusion to their

marginal situation. The crowd in Plaza de Mayo threatened violence, and traditional society feared looting. Yet there was no violence. The only act of what might be called civil disobedience was a symbolic one for traditional society: washing their tired feet in the fountains of the Plaza. The mass was not entirely certain what it wanted. But because of a split in its ranks, traditional society was able to offer the mass something: power was lodged in the hands of the single individual in whom they placed their hopes.

In Bogotá, the mass that swept through the city in a desperate response to the murder of its *caudillo*, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, left traditional society in a state of shock, stunned not just by its numbers but by its attitude as well. Unlike the crowd in Buenos Aires, Bogotá's mass already had little to hope for, since the individual in whom they had invested their aspirations was dead. The mass did not come out to defend him but rather to avenge him, and the violence was much greater. Bogotá's established society was very much aware of its traditional components: there were, as it was said in 19th century, either gentlemen in frock coats, or men in *ruanas*. The two groups had clashed often, ultimately fueling a civil war in the classic terms of a patrician or bourgeois society. But in 1948, traditional society discovered that the mob filling the streets on the *Bogotazo*'s day were not just men in *ruanas*—established members, however marginal, of a society governed by rules and norms—but a different multitude with many new arrivals, immigrants from rural areas who still had no sense of attachment to the city. Their numbers increased the strength of the established marginal groups, thus giving the new mass a distinct style of social behavior characterized by indiscriminate aggression against the city that all its members, established or newly arrived, now regarded as something alien, something that belonged to the "other society."

When J. A. Osorio Lizarazo, in his book *Gaitán*, describes the forces that together constituted the *Bogotazo* multitude, he does not stress the presence of the immigrant group, although it surely figured in several factors that he enumerates. He does, however, describe the combination of minority groups joining that multitude and brought with them their radical ideas and facile slogans.

The anonymous molecules that comprise the people were swept up in a whirlwind. They came from everywhere. It was the middle-class man, condemned to live in the most unspeakable state of anguish, in a struggle between the lie that his life had become, silent hunger, and the need to feign a social position by some pathetic game; his will had been weakened and his soul corrupted by the cruelty of the struggle. It was the ingenuous, loquacious worker seeking some empty compensation for his misery. It was the sullen laborer of dark passion, emboldened by the alcohol that the State had given him to subvert morality with the instrument of bureaucratic recompense. It was the thug, involved in crime because he had no education to guide his instincts, who had suffered terrible persecution since childhood, never able to find anyone to defend him, acquainted only with the dark

and ugly side of life. It was a jumbled mass, made up of many types, a monstrous mob burning with revenge, hatred, and destruction.

Ever-changing and enormous in number, the new urban mass would gradually lose its hostility and aggressiveness in the decades that followed. As a result, the process of industrialization became more pronounced, and job opportunities increased. If not all, certainly many members of that unstable and misdirected mass were finding avenues to pursue or strengthening their insertion into the social fabric. Three decades is too short a time for such a process to complete itself, so that in the '70s it was still in progress, constantly changing, with features that, if less dramatic, were no less disturbing. The masses are virtual social formations, and almost any circumstance can become their unifying force. It is clear that both the lower middle-class and the working class have retained their capacity to become a mass, especially in those urban societies becoming so large that they are no longer able to exert much social control over the individual. The masses virtually make the mega-cities. Even though something resembling mob behavior may occur from time to time, however, individually the members of the mass are more and more inclined to weave themselves into the fabric of society.

Both the lower middle classes and the working classes were obviously dislocated after their first experiences with mass-formation. There was doubt as to whether the economically deprived individual would be able to improve his lot by his own effort, as the ideology of upward mobility had promised; instead, he might have to resort to collective pressure. That doubt had an influence on ideologies and behaviors. The entire social structure, moreover, felt the effects of mass-formation. For some groups, perhaps even for the majority, it ironically served to increase their appetite for individual economic success and upward mobility, stimulated by industrialization and economic recovery. The boundaries between the working classes and the lower middle classes, however, became more and more fluid and blurred. Advertising promoted greater consumerism and served to erase those boundaries altogether, as objects that had once been status symbols were, in one way or another, put within many people's reach.

Migration from the countryside to the cities did not stop altogether, and that kept the urban working classes unstable. In the meantime, however, immigrants and members of more settled groups had together produced a new generation within the masses. Many were born and raised amid protest, as the class structure became better defined. Since so many were being born, many young people, once they reached a certain age, naturally began to look for work in an economic structure that was growing, but never enough to satisfy the demand fully. With so much unemployment among the young, gangs of juvenile delinquents began to form, like Bogotá's *gamines* ("street urchins"), who were cunning and fearless as they worked Seventh Street. There was adult unemployment as well; more serious still was the increasing underemployment that left thousands of families uncertain

about their next meal.

Without an adequate and steady income, living in run-down housing that generally lacked the essential services, and with no way to keep a family together, large sectors of society—the lowest strata of the mass—formed a world that was marginal in two respects: first, they lived on the urban fringes; second, they were not part of mainstream society and its lifestyle. The anomie of that marginal world —the world of the *rancherías* and other districts— was exposed for everyone to see. It was not exactly a working class, although there were workers within it; and even though women and children worked too, this was a social conglomerate that lived below subsistence level. For established society, this group was the "other society," irreconcilable and unsalvageable. Thus, a physically split society, a baroque society, came into being. In some cities, from their shacks on the hillsides, thousands of human beings in the anomic society contemplated the spectacle of wealth —an opulence similar to that of the baroque courts— that established society offered up. Initial aggressiveness was followed by a certain tamed resignation. But at the same time, as in the Parisian "court of miracles," no one could enter those encampments without protection.

The "other," anomic society might have also included some middle-level workers —laborers and unskilled temporary hands who never fully belonged to the system and tended to move down rather than up. But the ones who certainly did not belong to that "other society" were those who held down the new, well-remunerated industrial jobs. In many cities, a relatively large industrial proletariat took shape within a matter of decades. They became the working-class elite, with aspirations of moving out of the working class. With high income levels, considerable purchasing power, and a certain degree of unionization, the industrial proletariat could achieve a status to which other working class groups could never aspire. Within a short time, the industrial working class had transformed itself into a major power factor capable of winning considerable benefits for itself. Housing plans, with long-term financing provided either by the State or by the unions, assured many their own separate apartments in good neighborhoods, within areas that had undergone urban development, in stark contrast with the encampments that sprang up on the hillsides, in areas subject to frequent flooding, or in garbage dumps. Health care services, clinics with excellent facilities, insurance, and vacations at affordable prices in good hotels at the shore or in the mountains, gave the unionized industrial proletariat a lifestyle that put an enormous gulf between them and the rest of the working class. The shift of its members into the ranks of the lower middle class became even more pronounced once they were able to offer their children a secondary-school education and eventually even to send them to the university. This was how the industrial proletariat consolidated its position within normalized society and gradually divorced itself from the rest of the working classes.

The tertiary sector was a shortcut for crossing the boundaries between the working classes and the

middle class. Traditionally, the tertiary sector was the domain of the middle middle class. But as secondary education became more widespread, many young people from the working classes were able to move into mercantile or administrative activities. The relations between employers and employees were an expression of the blurred boundaries between the working classes and the middle middle class. Ability was undoubtedly important, but even so, the transition was not an easy one. Style of dress, speech, and manners betrayed a person's origins and would often make the difference when a decision had to be made between two people who were virtual equals. Middle-class people had that obnoxious superiority that comes from an educated family rooted for several generations within established society.

Moreover, industrial development and greater economic activity increased the opportunities for the middle middle class: its numbers increased, and so did the volume of tertiary activity in almost all cities. Someone with family backing or important connections could be confident that he would have a job or begin his professional career without too much worry. Little by little, however, the competition became tougher. The number of people in the middle middle class continued to increase and eventually was more than the structure could absorb. Middle-class people were not the only ones vying for the positions that had traditionally belonged to the them. People with middle-class expectations, both from above and below, were also competing for those jobs. It might be the son of some industrial worker or some upper-class youth who had fewer possibilities and had lowered his expectations. Thus the middle middle was becoming part of the masses just as it was becoming narrower and losing its traditional freedom of movement.

Unlike what had happened two generations earlier, the sons of good families without any other claim to fame did not automatically find jobs. The State and businesses knew that they could be more selective and began to demand certain studies for any job: an elementary education at the beginning, then a secondary education, and even in many cases a university education. The professions began to close up as well. Apart from the fact that universities were graduating thousands, professional practice became more difficult. Mutual aid and union sponsored clinics set limits to the individual practice of physicians and dentists; industrialization of medical products narrowed the field for pharmacists; big law firms restricted the opportunities of independent lawyers and big construction companies those of architects. It was not long before talk of a professional proletariat became a commonplace. Even mercantile activity, ranging from the supermarket to the boutique, became massive and depersonalized. For people of daring and imagination, the only areas that were steadily growing and offered real opportunities were brokerage (work on commission, insurance and real estate businesses) and the new activities that were developing in the cities (modeling, advertising, radio, television, and film production). Opportunities were also growing for those who joined the ranks of the developing technocracy. Public and private entrepreneurial organizations adopted new methods that improved their operations and increased their need for

technicians, ranging from those who operated electronic computers—the masterpieces of the new technocracy—to the specialist in studies of costs, feasibility, or management organization. The big corporations wanted engineers, physicists, economists, statisticians, sociologists, and psychologists to form teams that would plan and execute the complex tasks that industrial development called for. There was also a growing demand for professional services in the fields of health, social work, and education. Professionals in these fields rapidly grew in numbers and became more narrowly specialized in response to the new problems posed by an ever more complex social reality. The whole of society was becoming massive and depersonalized, as were the functions that society required: social services, a new concern that would emerge in the mass world; medical care not just for the working classes but also, gradually, for the other classes as well; most of all, education, where growth in numbers seemed to condemn it to decline in quality, especially in the university, which had once been restricted to the elite but gradually became an institution for the masses, especially in the big cities.

It was therefore understandable that those who engaged in all these activities and professions should not have—or not concern themselves with having—the conventional distinction of the old fashioned salesman in a luxury shop, or the old-style family notary, or the reassuring family doctor, or the prestigious attorney. In the middle middle class of professionals and employees no one had any time to waste, since almost everyone had to hold two jobs in order to be able to survive. Husband and wife both worked and still found it difficult to maintain a certain lifestyle. But the formation of a mass culture brought about a radical change in traditional schemes. The middle middle classes began to scorn the prudish concern for appearances that had been their most distinctive feature only two generations before. As they became increasingly depersonalized, these middle-class groups freed themselves of many prejudices; like London's middle middle classes, they decided to abandon the white collar.

What the middle class did not surrender was its desire to move up both economically and socially. As in any hierarchical institution, one had to move on to the next level. Out of some desperate effort could come the long-desired promotion to the upper middle class, which was almost—albeit not quite—the upper class. To the upper middle class belonged all those who had succeeded in their chosen profession, in business, or in commerce and therefore had amassed the kind of fortune that allowed them to free themselves from everyday work and to slip, ever so timidly, into a life of leisure. Being able to play golf on a work day, or to take three weeks to vacation in the Bahamas at a time of year not normally set aside for vacation, were triumphs over routine that only those who had reached the highest level of the structure could enjoy. In the meantime, others who had just reached that level, were still trying to consolidate their position and could not yet begin to think about idleness and leisure. High-ranking executives, a sector that grew considerably from the 1940s to the 1970s, were known for their zealous dedication to work, which they tended to overdo, making

themselves premature victims of heart attacks. It was demanding work, because it added to the intellectual task of defining a direction all the worries that come with making important, irreversible decisions. It also involved all the paraphernalia of public relations, including the necessary entertainment—dinners and banquets, nightclub meetings, cocktails, theater engagements—required to set big businesses against a backdrop very much akin to the leisure life of the upper class. But these executives were carrying on business after office hours, at a time when they had already exhausted their strength in discussing some contract or plan for a major operation. An almost delirious pursuit of premonitory status signs of the aspired to situation coupled the commitments and concerns of social life with those of private life. One had to live in an exclusive neighborhood, be a member of exclusive clubs, frequent certain places, and have everything that was considered indispensable, because a high-level executive who wanted to consolidate his position was in fact also aspiring to move up the social ladder and become a member of the upper class.

It was a somewhat difficult but not impossible project. The upper classes, too, had suffered the effects of mass-formation and were in crisis. The first sign of it was the loss of the elite role of the entire society that it had played until a few decades earlier. It was no longer as united as it had once been; one could become a member of the upper class more easily, provided certain requirements were met. Of course, a traditional high class, one that desperately defended its position and privilege, continued to exist in many cities. But by now social privilege simply meant that the upper class opened its ranks as little as possible, stressed its aloofness, and preserved the cult of ancestry and surname. Many of its members abandoned it for the new upper classes, and became entrepreneurs and industrialists in order to save family fortunes. Thus, a path was opened that connected the old upper classes with the new ones, both equally disconcerted by the new mass society, which they wanted to lead but at the same watched in fear and astonishment. Being pragmatic, these upper middle classes opted to control the areas they best understood—mainly the economic and political processes—and to remain watchful for the social problems that from time to time would erupt along the surface of daily life and alter their plans. They never managed to become the elite of the entire divided society; instead they were the elite only of the establishment. Their attitude toward the other society was a defensive one, calculated to keep them in control when circumstances told them that forceful measures were needed or when the enemy might be placated with certain well-chosen and opportune concessions.

In the industrialized, mass consumption society, opportunities for enrichment increased. Great fortunes were amassed, and their owners, without hesitation, set themselves up in the upper class, regardless of their own backgrounds. Within a short time, they were familiar with all of the status symbols. Even the traditional upper classes —which the conservative newspapers continued to call the aristocracy—succumbed in the face of their economic power. Lineages were disappearing,

giving way to economic clans in which fortunes of varied origin commingled, as attested to by the names on the boards of directors of banks and big enterprises: a surname that carried social prestige was appropriate for the office of chairman; behind him came other surnames representing various lines of social ascendance. But even the upper classes were undergoing the conversion to mass society. Wealth did not make its owner impervious to the hustle and bustle of the streets or spare him or her from having to wait in elevator lines. Travelling first class on an airline involved almost as many inconveniences as traveling tourist class. And if the trappings of privilege failed, then one could not be certain of finding a cab, or a table in an exclusive restaurant, or getting a telephone line.

It was inevitable that the emergence of a mass, diverse and in a constant state of flux should have an impact on the rest of urban society. The original masses became a marginal and anomic society that lived alongside, and up against, the established one. Both societies suffered the impact of industrialization, but the presence and the nature of the masses also affected the establishment. The established society did not acquire the characteristics of mass, but massified itself qualitatively. Perhaps it was a preliminary process of integration, occurring in an unpredictable time frame.

Metropolis and *Rancherías*

Within a short time, the social structure of those cities in which a split society had taken shape began to appear in their physical contours. In order to accommodate a bourgeois society, these cities, originally built on a modest scale, had expanded and developed a modern infrastructure tailored to the growth of the population. But the urban explosion had changed the population size, and the physical city was again threatening to burst at the seems.

When the first shock was felt, the sheer number of new arrivals altered the character of the city and drew attention to to something which was changing. There were more people in the streets. It was difficult to find a house or an apartment. Shacks began to appear on vacant lots that very quickly mushroomed into neighborhoods. Trolleys and buses became more and more crowded. But behavior began to change, too: on the streets, on public transportation, in shops. In the past, there had been in the streets some semblance of courtesy. Now one had to push and shove to defend one's place. One had to stand in line even to go to the cinema. All those mannerisms that had previously made someone "urbane," those rules and conventions of an educated people accustomed to city life, were abandoned.

Numbers changed the way that people moved within the city. The narrow streets in the old

downtown district were unable to hold the growing numbers of people. How could one stop and chat with a friend in the financial district of the city? Even the traditional streets for promenading, from Florida in Buenos Aires to Conde's street in Santo Domingo, began to have a frantic pace. Little by little one discovered that they were surrounded by strangers. Urban transportation could no longer absorb the growing population. The number of automobiles increased; trolleys were replaced by more agile busses. At all hours of the day, especially during rush hours, getting out of the downtown area in a car would be a time-consuming ordeal, though the wait at the bus stop could be worse. Subways became a necessity: following Buenos Aires' lead in 1914, México City was the second city to install one. After World War II, officials of various other capitals began to make plans for subways. In the meantime, although costly highway networks, like those of Caracas or the beltway around México City, were built to handle traffic problems, they were unable to avoid seriously interfering with the traditional circulation pattern that was part of the old way of life. Some streets were widened, others were repaved, and traffic signals were installed, all in an effort to alleviate the serious problems created, especially by the ever-increasing number of automobiles. Bottlenecks began to be part of the urban landscape in the Latin American metropolis. Where to park the car generally became a more important issue than what one intended to do when one set out in the car.

Numbers altered population density in the cities. The traditional, rather flat city skyline was transformed as more and more apartment buildings went up, first downtown and then in the residential neighborhoods. The architectural mass of *El Silencio* would appear on Caracas' skyline and the *Torre Latinoamericana* on México City's, as if challenging the colonial cities at their feet. They were monuments to the power of the State, the power of the banks, insurance companies, big foreign companies. These were soon followed by apartment buildings that created a new kind of neighborhood, attracting those who wanted to get out of the old mansions, with their courtyards, many rooms, and a small army of domestic help. For every two or three houses razed, an eight or ten-story building went up, with twenty or thirty apartments that were home to as many families. The apartment buildings were not just a kind of neighborhood but also a form of architecture. Their height blocked the sunlight from reaching the streets and spelled doom for the trees on the sidewalks. The streets seemed narrower, and then they became even narrower as more and more people parked their cars along them. The city began to take on a monumental air that, with the tall prisms of cement, became a sign of modern times.

At the same time, numbers increased the value of urban property. With demand on the rise, the large properties were subdivided. Further out, old country estates, swallowed up in the urban sprawl, were divided into lots. Property values rose sharply, especially when the prospect of inflation made investment in real estate a wise move. Then values became speculative. A certain neighborhood or street, or even one particular block on a street, might become fashionable and

have a certain snob appeal for "social climbers." Property values skyrocketed, partly because demand was on the rise, and partly because they were focal points of speculation. Apart from the cost of the urban and suburban property—divided up into lots and advertised as the Promised Land—one also had to charge for lot preparation, the expenses of advertising, and sales promotion. But most of all, when a property went on the market for the first time, its sellers expected the first buyer to pay a premium, anticipating the profits that initial buyer would make once the property was resold. Middle and low-income people who just wanted a place to live had to move further and further out where prices had not yet been caught up in the speculative spiral.

Finally, numbers raised once again the problem of public services. Planned and installed to serve a certain radius with a stable population density, usually at a time when costs were relatively low, public services were challenged daily by the expansion of the built-up areas and the increase in population density. Pushed to the maximum with the emergence and growth of industrial centers that drew heavily upon them, water supply, drainage, and power services soon became inadequate. Since every city had a metropolitan area growing around it, steps had to be taken to renew and expand the networks on a non-stop, almost limitless basis. The same thing happened with trash collection, a metropolitan nightmare since two days of strikes or holidays could leave mountains of trash even in the most central and well-tended parts of the city. The mail system suffered from chronic delays; telephones were saturated with calls despite technical improvements in equipment; fire fighters were powerless to fulfill both their original functions and the new roles they were called upon to perform in a complex metropolis. The police were overpowered not just by the increase in common crime but also by the increase in new dangers from which society wanted to be protected: drug trafficking, juvenile gangs, urban guerrillas. Neither schools nor hospitals were able to keep pace. Even cemeteries were filled, with no space available for those who died each day.

So many and such profound changes did not equally affect all sectors of the metropolis, already vast and complex before they began. They had a particular impact on the old town center. At times the administrative, commercial, and financial center moved out quickly, and the old downtown area began to deteriorate and decline in status. It might one day regain a certain dignity, protected by those who discovered that it was worth restoring, perhaps as a tourist attraction. In the meantime, however, businesses declined in standing, the old homes were left semi-abandoned or transformed into tenements, and the streets, once tranquil havens of the aristocracies, became the noisy territory of gangs of young men who played soccer or carried out their dangerous activities nearby. The bank buildings and a handful of wholesale businesses, perhaps even some government offices or the government house itself, tended to remain near the cathedral or the old city hall —provided that melancholy reminder of the colonial city was still standing. At the end of the work day, however, the area was deserted.

There were some big cities in which the old center never lost either its function or its dignity and was in fact improved to keep pace with the progress of the more advanced neighborhoods. Such was the case with Santiago, with the area north of the center of Buenos Aires, and to some extent with the old downtown area of Rio de Janeiro. Some of the good hotels (although perhaps not the best) stayed on, as did the old tourist attractions; new apartment buildings and public buildings were added. A certain continuity was preserved between the modernized old downtown and the new areas of the city.

Progress was also visible in those neighborhoods that, near the old city center, had long since been populated with well integrated lower middle-class and working-class families. There the homes of average or low-income families alternated with tenement houses and modest businesses. These transition areas had at one time been suburbs and had benefited from the fact that urban development moved radically for the sake of good communications. But the important thing about their development was the influence that their long-standing integration exerted. If from the standpoint of urban development such areas ensured the continuity of an outwardly-expanding city, socially they were home to the initial wave of migrants who, in the more depressed areas, had their first taste of integration in these neighborhoods. “La Casa Grande,” that enormous tenement house that Oscar Lewis describes in his *Five Families*, was in such a neighborhood in México City, near Tepito.

The tenants of the *Casa Grande* come from twenty-four of the thirty-two states of the Mexican nation. Some come from as far south as Oaxaca and Yucatán and some from the northern states of Chihuahua and Sinaloa. Most of the families have lived in the neighborhood for fifteen to twenty years, some as long as thirty years. Over a third of the households have blood relatives within the neighborhood, and about a fourth are related by marriage and *compadrazgo*. These ties, plus the low, fixed rentals and the housing shortage in the city, make for stability. Some families with higher incomes, their small apartments jammed with good furniture and electrical equipment, are waiting for a chance to move to better quarters, but the majority are contented with, indeed proud of, living in the *Casa Grande*. The sense of community is strong, particularly among the young people who belong to the same gangs, form lifelong friendships, attend the same schools, meet at the same dances held in the patios, and frequently marry within the neighborhood. Adults also have friends whom they visit, go out with, and borrow from. Groups of neighbors organize raffles and *tandas* (informal mutual savings and credit plans), participate in religious pilgrimages together, and together celebrate the festivals of the neighborhood patron saints, the Christmas *Posadas*, and other holidays.

Precisely because of those experiments in integration such neighborhoods were regarded as part of the “other society.” They were mass neighborhoods, enclaves of the anomic. Established society stayed away, avoiding any contact with groups that to them seemed alien. In their flight, they formed

new upper-class residential districts where unspoken rules kept socially inferior people out. For a long time high social standing was determined not simply by level of income, but by family history within the city and by previous social accomplishment.

This class-based demographic distribution was typical of the development of cities with a split society. It was not a new phenomenon, yet it had never been so obvious. In Rio, it led to the development of Copacabana, Ipanema, Leblón, Gavea, and Tijuca; in Santiago, it created Providencia and Tobalaba; in Caracas, Sabana Grande, Chacaito, and the neighborhoods that sprang up beyond the Country Club; in Bogotá, it led to the creation of Chapinero and Chicó; in Montevideo, it brought Pocitos and Carrasco; in Buenos Aires, it created the Barrio Norte and San Isidro; in Lima, Miraflores and Monte Rico; in México City, San Angel and Pedregal. The residential suburb led to another novelty: the fashionable shopping center. Although the people who called these residential suburbs home said they were looking for peace and quiet, it was obvious that they were looking for exclusivity and relying on the fact that distance and the price of the land would keep out "undesirables." A car was a necessity for those who lived so far from their places of work; before long, the family would need not just one car but two or three. High-level businesses, luxury boutiques, bars, and more sophisticated restaurants would emerge, as would members-only nightclubs and still more exclusive golf or tennis clubs: everything necessary for the residential suburbs to become a high-class ghetto with its own conventions and norms—what one had to have, what one had to say, what one had to think. These suburbs were always worried by the appearance of an outsider, someone who was not, as they say, "one of us." These were the districts inhabited by the elite of established society.

Without a doubt, middle-class neighborhoods were part of established society. Some cities had old, traditional middle-class neighborhoods like Colonia Roma in México City, El Cordón in Montevideo, Belgrano or Flores in Buenos Aires, or other suburban neighborhoods. As property values increased, those neighborhoods assured the position of their inhabitants; in them there soon appeared apartment buildings with certain pretensions that proclaimed the rising status of those who were buying horizontal property. But as the middle classes developed, housing became a problem for new groups, especially the middle-income ones. A salaried employee or average professional, even though prosperous, could not cover the cost of a home in one of the preferred neighborhoods. Although they were members of established society, they had to settle for more modest solutions and set their sights on suburban neighborhoods. At times, the State implemented a relatively effective housing policy, building homes generally described as "for employees"—just another way of saying that they were not for workers or the lower classes. Lending and long-term credit systems allowed a few to obtain the home of their dreams. At other times, imaginative businesses planned lots or developments for the middle class—generally the middle middle class—with a modicum of the conveniences and isolation that their clientele were seeking. As a rule they were one-family

bungalows or large, multi-family apartment buildings; monotonous perhaps, but outfitted with conveniences and built in green areas so that they were sometimes called “garden cities.” When a company undertook a large-scale project, generally with heavy State investment, the result was something resembling a complete city, a separate world all its own, like the Ciudad Satélite in México City or Ciudad Kennedy in Bogotá.

Not all the members of the industrial proletariat settled in specifically industrial suburbs, since the neighborhoods built by the unions were set up according to other criteria. But many preferred the proximity of the factories; in any case, the ever-present and recurring housing problems caused housing developments to spring up nearby. The industrial plants needed the urban infrastructure and therefore developed in certain parts of the city or even in the suburbs, away from the downtown area but not entirely detached from it. The decision to move a factory to more open areas came only when the city’s growth made it difficult for the factory either to remain within the inner city or to expand. And so in some cities, specific industrial zones developed. Sometimes they formed a ring around the city, as in the case of Buenos Aires. At other times they stretched in a particular direction, as in São Paulo where they lined the route to Santos. But other cities sprang up with the industry itself, grew alongside it, and created tight complexes of factories and housing that replicated the pattern of the old industrial neighborhoods in the large cities. Only in those places where pre-established sites were selected for an “industrial park” was any sophistication maintained.

In any event, it was inevitable that housing developments should go up in industrial areas, both within the city and in its outlying areas. Those that developed spontaneously were very different from those that the State or the unions planned and developed. The former were slums where people lived in tight and sordid quarters, but also in communal solidarity. These were the *conventillos* (poor tenement houses) described by the Chilean Nicomedes Guzmán in *Los hombres oscuros* and *La sangre y la esperanza* . In these neighborhoods, more than anywhere else, air was polluted, streets dirty, living space scarce. The planned developments, by contrast, were built in green areas and already had all the features of modern and hygienic housing. They were, for all intents and purposes, neighborhoods of the lower middle class, with playgrounds for children and a center for the arts. Even in prosperous cities, however, the supply of this type of housing was always much smaller than demand, and many industrial workers had to continue to live in depressed areas, since even their high salaries were unable to keep pace with the speculative land prices.

But established society was increasingly assimilating to its ranks a sizeable percentage of the industrial workers, with solid professional skills, stable jobs, good salaries, and powerful union organizations that helped them and provided them with social services. Only housing continued to be an insurmountable obstacle, as if the physical city were refusing to legitimize their newly acquired standing. The situation was similar for other high-income workers, as it was for those who

managed to leave behind their salaried jobs to become their own boss: truckers who bought their own trucks, mechanics who set up a small shop, painters or bricklayers who succeeded in finding independent jobs and ended up forming small construction companies. All these became part of the established city in the middle-level, diffuse area that separated the working class from the petit bourgeois, hoping one day to resolve the problem of finding housing suited to their new status.

Those who were ostensibly not a part of established society were the people in the slums, those suburban settlements that, although not altogether new, grew rapidly after the crisis of 1930. They grew even more rapidly after 1940 until they finally became one of the poles of the physical layout of many cities, which reflected thus their social structure. In each country these settlements were called with a different name: *callampas* in Chile, *villas miseria*, and then simply *villas* in Argentina, *barriadas* in Perú, *favelas* in Brazil, *cantegriles* in Uruguay, *ciudades perdidas* in México City, *pueblos piratas* in Colombia. But everywhere their generic names were "invasions," "overnight settlements," and above all *rancheríos* (encampments). Their name almost always had some curious, meaningful implication: some ironic twist or a pugnacious affirmation of something that until then would have been a source of shame—an attitude typical of the inner-city poor, who avoided words like *callejón* (blind alley), *corralón* (vacant lot) or *conventillo* (tenement house). But with the development of the new suburban neighborhoods, one could see a shift in attitudes among the invaders themselves.

It was not just the big cities that had slums, although theirs—more numerous and more heavily populated—had greater social significance. But slums could be found in many other cities of a different type. In México, they proliferated at luxury beach resorts like Acapulco; from the hillsides their inhabitants, watching the parade of wealth below, slipped through the cracks in the structure of that idle society to gain whatever advantage they could. Slums also grew in Culiacán, the capital of the state of Sinaloa, a city surrounded by a rich agricultural region with no industrial development. The poverty belt that grew very quickly around it was a combination of over twelve neighborhoods of immigrants, made up of slums that lacked basic sanitary conditions and had no public services. There people speculated with drinking water and pirated electricity from public power lines. Slums also spread in Monterrey, a city of 1,300,000 and home to over 9,000 industries. A crowded net of poverty-stricken neighborhoods pressed in around its metropolitan area that increased by an estimated 40,000 people each year. Hovels built of cardboard or old plastic bags were home to a burgeoning population that lacked any kind of services, especially at the five neighborhoods built on trash dumps. In the 1970s estimates were that 40% of Monterrey's population lived like this, and that 70% lacked at least some services.

The slums of many other cities could be described in much the same way. As in Monterrey, the explosive development of industry triggered settlements in Argentina, in Rosario and Córdoba, and in smaller cities like Zárate and San Nicolás, with populations of around 50,000. In México, the slums

of Puebla, built atop garbage dumps on the edge of the city, were home to 100,000 people who had no water supply. Slums also appeared in the Venezuelan cities of Maracaibo and Santo Tomé de Guayana, the latter a budding emporium receiving an estimated 1000 people every month that soon brought its population to over 150,000; in the Colombian cities of Medellín (which received half a million new inhabitants between 1938 and 1970), Manizales (where one-sixth of its half-million population lived in slums on hillsides, in constant danger of mud slides), Barranquilla, and Cartagena; in the Brazilian cities of Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte, which like São Paulo were invaded by migrants from the surrounding region and from the depressed northeastern region of the country; in the Perúvian city of Chimbote, where the metal industry began in 1958 and soon saw 20% of the population live in slums.

Cities undergoing industrialization, however, were not the only ones where slums developed. Migrations targeted important, middle-sized cities. There, although the business of the city might be basically administrative or commercial in nature, the mere fact of being an active center made it a likely place to find work and better living conditions; the result was the formation of poverty belts. Slum settlements developed in the Perúvian cities of Piura, Chiclayo, Huacho, Ica, Tacna, and particularly Arequipa, where in the 1970s some 10% of its 120,000 people lived in emergency neighborhoods; in Guadalajara, México, an eminently commercial city despite the push from the suburb of Tlaquepaque; in Esmeraldas, Ecuador, a port whose population rose from 15,000 in 1951 to over 50,000 in 1972 and whose poor neighborhoods—El Malecón, Vida Suave, Pampón—housed almost 1,000 families living in subhuman conditions; in Recife, Brazil, whose *mocambos*—huts made of mud, branches, and sheet metal and built atop the river's mangrove swamps—housed over 100,000 people who, as Josué de Castro describes it, lived on crayfish from the sewage-polluted mud of the river.

But the most numerous, the most populated, and the most representative were (and still are) the slums that formed in the big cities. In Buenos Aires, a 1966 census put the population in the *villas miseria* of the metropolitan area at 700,000. In each one the same conditions were present: run-down housing, several families living under one roof, subhuman overcrowding, a lack of basic services. In those *villas miseria* settled some 35% of immigrants, people from the interior of the country and from neighboring countries, especially Bolivia and Paraguay. Located in outlying areas except for one near the port, these slums were barely visible to the average *porteño*, who could go years without ever seeing them and without even giving them a thought. The tourist was even less likely to see them. When they sprang up near the highway leading to the Ezeiza International Airport, a wall was discretely built to hide them.

México City's *ciudades perdidas* were not in plain view of the average citizen or tourist either. Someone should warn the relaxed tourist who is heading to admire the beauties of Puebla that, as

he drives along the Zaragoza road, he leaves on his left the colonies of Netzahalcóyotl. Once Lake Texcoco was drained, some 6,500 hectares of salty land began to be settled by migrants from the country's interior and by people who had to leave their homes in the more central city neighborhoods . Netzahualcóyotl's slums became home to a million people for whom the idea of having a water supply, electric power, sewerage, or telephone services became a repeatedly frustrated obsession. There, Oscar Lewis observed the family of Jesús Sánchez, a migrant from Veracruz who had purchased a lot in a *colonia* (land development) to build "a house in a clutch of five or six, in the midst of the barren plain, some distance from a dusty road". In time, the buildings would close in on each other until they became compact neighborhoods, some of which began to have some services.

But Netzahualcóyotl is not, of course, México City's only *ciudad perdida*: by the 1970s there were some 452, housing nearly two million people, all living under similar conditions. They spread because the number of inhabitants increased as more and more people flowed in from the country's interior, while others left the downtown area to settle in the outlying areas, beyond the city's official borders, pushing the perimeter of the metropolitan area outward. Perhaps the most surprising projection in this process was the formation of the 39 *colonias* at Ecatepec, spread over an area of 2,000 hectares, with a population of 180,000. They had all the same problems of other slum encampments, but they also had one more: in the rainy season, the waters flooded the homes to a depth of half a meter.

In other cities like Santiago, São Paulo, and Guayaquil, the slum encampments are not easily seen; one must look with some attention or go purposely where they are installed. In some metropolis, however, they are more visible because they sit on the surrounding hillsides; the anomic city forms a kind of amphitheater around the established city. It is pleasant to have cocktails at the Hotel Tamanaco in Caracas, but the individual who thinks to be an observer is in fact being observed by hundreds of thousands of eyes from the hillside. As night falls, the lights that burn on the hillside may be picturesque, but the visitor must not forget the slums that they illuminate and the urban landscape of which they are a part.

The picture in Lima is similar, dominated by San Cristobal Hill. The *barriadas* began to creep up the side of that hill and others nearby, then spread into the sandy areas of the Rimac valley as well. All this was the work of the rural migrants who came to the capital, sometimes gently and slowly, at other times aggressively and in massive proportions. Since 1945, but especially since 1950, the movement has become increasingly intense. In 1945 a group created the San Cosme *barriada*, a squatter encampment on a hillside that immigrants occupied without the proper authorization. In his *Message to Perú*, President José Luis Bustamante y Rivero expressed the shock that everyone felt at this development: "This social phenomenon, which the authorities have been unable to stop, is

basically due . . . to an abnormal increase in the population of the capital, caused by the influx of people from the provinces. . . . The most recent outbreak of this demographic disease occurred when over 15,000 people from a small town called Atacongo founded the so-called 'Ciudad de Dios.'" Although these remarks were made in the late 1940's, the "disease" continued to spread: as much as 10% of Lima's population lives in *barriadas*.

Lima's slum settlements are perhaps those that organized more rapidly, and their population may be the one who has shown more determination to become integrated. "When a specific area is overtaken," writes José Matos Mar, "the first thing people do is to divide up the land into lots of various sizes; once families have registered, those lots are distributed. Each family immediately proceeds to build its house on the received lot and will use all kinds of construction materials in the process, as if its only presence gave it some kind of right or claim to the lot. Life in the slums begins in this relatively organized process that repeats itself over and over. A citizens' association is founded which at the outset is comprised of those promoting the takeover, who are generally urban *mestizos*. Once settled in, they will elect their own authorities."

That capacity to organize was based on the movement of entire communities from their towns in the highlands to the capital. There they preserved not only their social structure but their customs as well. People from these slums go downtown to earn their living, but their instinct is to remain together. As a whole, they constitute the "other society," the spectacle of which saddens and depresses Lima's affluent classes.

A large area in southern Bogotá, below east-west Street 1 A, underwent tremendous expansion, especially after 1945. The *rancherías* occupied both the slope of the hills and the flatland and continued to expand, as they did everywhere else: precarious housing with no public services. Almost half of Bogotá's population lives in slums. But the average citizen of Bogotá, however, has no need to go beyond Street 1 A to southward. His life takes place elsewhere. And if he is a member of the affluent upper class, he is moving gradually northward: toward 57th street, if he lives in Chapinero, and toward 92th street, if he lives in Chicó. Many streets separate him from that southern expanse of the city.

São Paulo's *favelas* are not very obvious either. As an industrial city, São Paulo attracted a considerable flow of migrants both from the surrounding region and from the northeast, especially the state of Ceará. But not all the migrants found work in the factories, and industrial wages were not high enough to keep pace with the speculative price of land. The city grew in all directions: toward Santo Amaro, toward Santo André, beyond Agua Branca Avenue, beyond Guaicurús Street and, above all, beyond Tieté, trying to creep up Cantareira mountain in the Tremembé and Guarulhos

neighborhoods. Hundreds of thousands of people are lodged in poor housing.

In Rio, on the other hand, the hillsides had long been the preferred areas for migrants' settling. Veterans of the Canudos War, seeking find a place to settle, established themselves on Providencia Hill, where the word *favela* was first coined. The *favelas* spread rapidly after 1930, accounting for at least 20% of the city's population. They covered the hillsides, but also a number of flat areas both within and outside the city limits. The people of the *favelas* introduced rural-style housing in the cities, and brought with them other elements of their rural culture—customs and beliefs, as strong as the cult of St. George or spiritualism—and vestiges of African cultures as well. All this makes the society in the *favelas* even more homogeneous than that of Lima's slums, whose links are predominantly social in nature. In both cases, their cultural homogeneity makes for a contrast with established society.

The two societies confront each other in almost all the cities and metropolitan areas where a mass of dual origin, internal and external, has formed. Their confrontation finds material expression in the physical structure of urban space. The actual metropolis belongs to established society, while the slums belong to the anomic groups. But at the core, the two worlds are integrated, and one could not live without the other. They are two hostile brothers forced to live with each other, like the societies that inhabit them. But the road from confrontation to integration is a long one, and much time is needed to go the distance.

Massification and Lifestyle

Whether the physical appearance of many Latin American cities suggested that they housed a split society, a wide variety of lifestyles were readily displayed. To be sure, 19th century visitors came away with a very different impression, as they described homogeneous cities, inhabited by compact societies, regardless of the degrees of social differentiation that characterized them. But the outsiders who observed the cities hardest hit by the effects of the crisis of the 1930s saw great differences and real social gaps.

The migrations, and the social polarization they produced, transformed cities into a jumble of ghettos, into urban areas that were poorly connected with one another or had only very superficial and conventional contacts; in each area, people's lives were shaped in uniquely different ways. The difference was not simply the one between those who lived in the aristocratic suburbs and those who inhabited the slums: within each group one could find stark differences that were often camouflaged by the things its members seemed to share in common. Anyone who took a close look

at Lima's slums would quickly learn to distinguish the ones formed with people from Ayacucho from those where people from Cajamarca had settled; in México City, one could distinguish those that gathered people from Tepoztlán from those populated by people from Oaxaca or Veracruz; in Buenos Aires, the *villas miseria* formed by Bolivians or Paraguayans from those inhabited by people from Santiago or Corrientes. The observer would perceive not only the differences produced by geographic origin but also those created by social background, by the ability to adjust to an urban lifestyle and to the technological world, by the degree of literacy or proclivity for delinquency. By the same token, the observer of the various groups that constituted established society would notice that there were "exclusive" neighborhoods that differed from one another not just in terms of standard of living but also in lifestyle. Upper-class, middle-class or working-class groups might have certain external features in common, but their expectations were markedly different, as were their degree of cosmopolitanism, their attachment to tradition, and their readiness to accept change. Many lived as they wanted to, but many others lived as best they could, constantly contrasting their traditions with the circumstances that change had brought about.

In any case, the basic opposition between the social establishment and the anomic society was evident. The differences between the two groups were so profound that the spectacle of their proximity could seem explosive. The attitudes of each group, taken as a whole, were so different that an observer could take them for two adjacent but separate worlds rather than two sectors of a single society living together. Behind those attitudes were views of life and of the world so different as to seem irreconcilable. The situation was indeed complex. Established society had very cohesive views and ways of life. Inherited and traditional, its ways were sustained by daily experience with certain unalterable norms and with slow, well assimilated changes that gave the establishment both flexibility and strength. As legacy of the old bourgeoisie that had become gentrified over the course of time, these ways of life were cohesive enough to cope with changes—which were now coming very rapidly—and give hope that their cohesiveness would not be lost. The legacy was strong, but the changes—too rapid and profound—called certain attitudes into question and showed that they were untenable in the new reality. Doubt began to penetrate this normalized, established society, which would have preferred to defend its lifestyle to the last, but understood that it had to adapt to the new circumstances.

This crisis forced established society, weakened and doubting itself, to open its ranks to new groups with other lifestyles. The inclusion of groups with such diverse attitudes ended up weakening the establishment, which saw the mass that was taking shape as an expression of an alien world. It would be no exaggeration to say that the initial reaction was an odd mixture of distaste and scorn. Those in the habit of stepping aside to let someone else by were startled by those who pushed and shoved to get where they wanted; those who bathed every day were repulsed by those who seemed indifferent to their own uncleanliness. Established society was slow to adjust to the idea

that the structure that had once been its exclusive domain now included a different group that, for the moment at least, seemed irreconcilably different in terms of its basic attitudes and the standards it lived by.

The mass did not have a coherent system of attitudes or a balanced set of standards. Each group had its own, and it was established society that attributed to them a unity they did not have. This is precisely why the mass was an anomic society: it did not have a lifestyle of its own, but rather many ways of life without style. This anomie was perhaps what compromised most of the interplay of reciprocal influences. In the 40 years that followed the crisis of the 1930s, the two subsocieties that together formed the split society did not make much progress toward integration.

There was, nonetheless, some progress, albeit by very strange avenues. However paradoxical it might seem, every day more and more members of the mass felt called upon to participate and to come face-to-face with established society. The exchange sometimes began with insults and challenges, but it started nevertheless, and it did not stop. The two groups identified mutual interests and, above all, those places in the system where the mass could make inroads. The anomic society consisted of separate groups, each of which had an originary culture that it gradually stripped down until the only standards and norms left were those that matched the ones of established society. Moreover, necessity was a compelling force. Many began to imitate the behavior of established society: the standards of courtesy, the respect for the principles of the pecking order, and the rules of the game for certain types of relations. What they imitated the most was how to hold a glass or a fork, how to put a tablecloth on the table, or how to dress a child. Many even learned how to behave toward the State and its agents, and when and how to claim their rights. They may have imitated even more how to judge certain actions, how to choose among several options, and how to think about certain issues that involved some commitment. But such mimicry did not mean they had internalized the premises upon which the system was based. It was a superficial imitation of attitudes that the borrower had observed and found to be useful and advantageous. Imitation was a typical defense for someone timidly shifting to the offensive. This is how the integration began: in fits and starts, a cautious adaptation to the basic demands of the structure of established society.

However different these two subsocieties were, they still had something in common: both were radically transforming their expectations. The newly arrived migrant and the top executive were alike in that both wanted to cease to be what they were. That was what triggered the crisis: the ultimate triumph of the philosophy of comfort and well-being, ultimate most of all because the disciples of this creed included people who until only recently would never have dared hope to break out of the vicious circle of poverty. Yet once in the city, even at the bottom of the most impoverished sector of society, economic success and social ascendance seemed to be a

legitimate aspiration. Someone who had not yet gotten his first job wanted a better salary, because he knew how the first money he got his hands on will be spent: a bed, clothing, a ring, and then perhaps a radio, maybe an electric mixer, and even a refrigerator. For his part, the business executive wanted a higher income because he knew all too well how to spend it: an apartment in a higher-class neighborhood, a second car for his wife, a yacht, a weekend home with a swimming pool, two valets with striped vests and impeccable white jackets. There was no limit to one's plans once expectations had been revolutionized. That was the common ground that the anomic society and the established society shared.

There were certain traits shared in common by all sectors of established society. Regardless of their stratum, they all believed they had a preexisting claim not just to their own possessions but to the structure as a whole. They had made their mark upon that structure and had accustomed themselves to using it according to an accepted system of norms. There was one way to travel along the Seventh *Carrera* in Bogotá, and everyone knew who could stop and chat at Altozano, just as there was one way to stroll along Florida or to behave at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; and there was one way to behave in the Acho bullring in Lima or at the independence festivities in the Zócalo in México City. Each one believed his place was secure and knew what rules he had to follow to enjoy that place and keep it. In the social upheaval that followed the crisis of the 1930s, however, those who considered themselves the the structure's beneficial owners, regardless of their stratum, found themselves up against an unexpected social group claiming its place within the structure, even though it seemed to have no more rights than the common highwayman or purse-snatcher. Established society's first reaction, at all strata, was to reject those regarded as intruders. It closed ranks forcefully to defend a traditional lifestyle, producing in the process some odd multi-class political alliances.

The disconcerting impact of the new mass had a variety of contradictory effects, perhaps because it happened in the midst of a crisis in which many other things had to be re-examined. While most rallied to the defense of the old order, others—perhaps from the younger generations—discovered other vital options in the new situation. Whereas before the lifestyle of established society had been questioned by outsiders, it was now being questioned from within as well. The exploration of its lifestyle illuminated what was already outdated beyond retrieving and detracted from the authority and arguments of those who defended it. Within established society, some people—youngsters as a rule—disavowed the ways of life that their parents had worked so hard to preserve. They were the rebels within whom the clamor of the anomic society indirectly resonated.

As some members of the establishment began to regard certain norms as passé and hopelessly outmoded, it was not surprising that they should begin to show tolerance for those who violated those rules or were ignorant of them. These rebels from within the establishment became outside

allies of the anomic masses. But some went to more radical extremes. They became internal allies of the "other" society as they were seduced by anomie, which seemed like an escape from a society that had become narrower and more rigid, as its fears and defensiveness increased. Perhaps the sense of anomie, especially in the younger generations, released the more primitive impulses and irrational desires that every society effectively curbs. With the structure called into question, even in jeopardy, some thought the proper course of action was to seek their own personal salvation by giving free rein to feelings previously held in check, to the impulses of a will that was determined not to be constrained.

The crisis brought about a critical view of society, and nonconformism became widespread. Since social conditions in Latin American replicated those of European countries after World War I, many responses to the new situations were borrowed from Europe before the situations even presented themselves in Latin America. But there were also some original reactions to the crisis. Perhaps the most notorious, in the turbulent Latin America of the 1930s and 1940s, was a growing skepticism among the young generations. Nonconformism would spread later, when the effect of the upheaval was apparent in the cities and the retreat of traditional society became more pronounced. It was then that the lure of a life with no restrictions began to spread among the new generations of established society in the form of an exaggerated version of that traditional nonconformity, the bohemian lifestyle of the artist, writer, and student. In cities, the number of those who practiced the "do as you please" rule increased, and women were liberated from old prejudices. The number of women who pursued university degrees increased, as did those who had jobs or were professionals, those who frequented cafes and restaurants with male and female friends and came home late, those who had dressed with unusual boldness. When pants and mini-skirts were introduced, young girls from every social class followed the new fashion. And in middle- or upper-class families, it began to seem normal for young people of either sex to want to leave the family home and move into an apartment which, they hoped, would have the atmosphere of an artist's studio. Why sacrifice one's freedom, one's vocation, or even one's natural inclinations for the sake of some rule or standard, when everything was being held up to question, and few seemed to be able to resist the onslaught of mass formation? Then came the hippies. The number of drug addicts congregating in bars, discotheques, and nightclubs began to increase.

Another manifestation of nonconformism was the lack of any concern for what elders and more conservative people might define as a "normal" future. Many young people saw no reason to pursue a degree with which they could eventually earn a living; they chose instead to study psychology or sociology. Many wanted to be in the movies, play the guitar, or do nothing at all except live the life of a minstrel. Many families began to tolerate a mixed life, half domestic and half minstrel, that silenced scruples and encouraged some nonconformity among the more cautious.

The more daring often slipped into dangerous nonconformity. The old structure was doubtless in question; it could not sustain a traditional lifestyle or even the pre-eminence of traditional norms. But it was not altogether dead. As the voices of those who wanted to argue for it became weaker, the defense mechanism for protecting the last vestiges of the system became stronger. A challenge to the system itself automatically triggered that mechanism. The structure tolerated violations of its norms but would not allow its fundamental principles to be attacked. The nonconformist who dared to challenge them usually paid dearly for his boldness: flagrant or silent rejection, which meant becoming an outcast. No less high, perhaps even higher, was the price paid by someone who drifted into radical politics. If the nonconformist adopted the life of a revolutionary activist, the defense mechanism was triggered; he was not only ostracized from established society but also persecuted and harshly punished by the State.

The upper and middle classes were the most ardent defenders of the last bastions of the structure, but not all sectors of the middle and upper classes defended the traditional lifestyle with the same zeal. Perhaps the most conservative were those with the oldest lineage, who regarded themselves as the custodians of a legacy that embodied their aristocratic position. Closed within a circle that became narrower and narrower, they guarded the prestige of their names and preserved what they could of the customs and forms of life that they inherited from their elders. In the old clubs or in the charitable societies, at concerts and parties, a faintly musty odor seemed to linger in the air around those who refused to yield to the pressure of change.

The nontraditional sectors of the upper and middle classes, on the other hand, showed themselves to be more agile, partly because many of their members joined their ranks very recently and therefore some of them tried to assimilate what they could of the more conservative groups' forms of life. But they were all too anxious to assert and consolidate their control over what seemed to be a new structure, yet was in fact a metamorphosis of the old one. They did ultimately won, and their victory affected their adopted lifestyle, investing it with the prestige that their pre-eminence and, above all, their power gave them. It was a style befitting a cosmopolitan culture, the creation of that layer of society—common to many metropolises in Latin America's new urban world—whose main ties were with the United States.

All these metropolises had their cosmopolitan groups, able to speak several languages from which they borrowed words in daily conversation, dressing in the fashion of the great capitals of the world, or engaging in business that gave them more of a presence in world affairs than in the affairs of their particular country or city. It was a culture in which friendship and conversation were being replaced by the conventions of public relations and in which spontaneity seemed as inappropriate and dangerous as it had once been in the baroque court. It was a culture of executive secretaries, of cocktail parties, of high-level meetings held in some room in which an acrylic mobile added to the

sterile atmosphere, of crammed appointment books, and of decisions taken with the friendly computer complicity. That was the culture of the metropolis, though not specific to any city in particular. It was the creation of all the metropolises, patterned after the model developed in the great cities of the United States. It immersed and entrapped its creators, at once its victims and users: the great entrepreneurs, influential attorneys, scientists racing to complete a paper to present at some congress just in order to be invited to the next one, the manipulative executives of the big multinationals, successful performers, the promoters of advertising paraphernalia, organizers of big events, beauty queens who wanted to be international models, and anyone desperate to be an international personality before they were anyone at all. An entire court of imitators and those who wanted to join their ranks nurtured that culture, spread by the mass media, which embodied the growing prestige of social power. It was, perhaps, the appropriate culture for the industrial world, especially the in the technological era, but it did not attach much value to private life and spontaneity. Typical of a split, baroque society, the elite had consented to offer themselves up as a spectacle for the others to contemplate.

Modern towers—glass and aluminum, if possible—became the bulwarks of this cosmopolitan, multinational culture. Just as the economy had become multinational, so did the peculiar culture created largely by those who manipulated it and by the believers in that new faith, a modern-day but relatively unchanged version of the old nineteenth-century belief in progress. The Sheraton and Hilton international hotel chains stood as symbols of that new culture. Those who lived in these homogenized towers of glass and aluminum moved from one to another, perhaps without even knowing whether they were in México City, São Paulo, or Buenos Aires, because distinctions were blurred in the cosmopolitan and international atmosphere. Only the profile and skin-color of the service personnel might plant some seed of doubt; the traveler might never suspect that the housekeeper who cleaned his room so meticulously returned to some outlying slum settlement at the end of her day.

This lifestyle was firmly based on dependency of a demanding society. People who chose extroversion had renounced to an inner life-style. A price had to be paid for success. A conventional culture was invented to numb the pain of having forsaken one's inner life. It was the culture of the bestsellers, of the performances one had to see, of the exhibits one had to visit. A conventional way to use leisure time was even invented: golf became a kind of rite, as did travel to "all the right places." It was an exterior and alienating, but it was basically a culture, perhaps the only one suited to the style of life of an alienated elite. Perhaps its clearest expression was concern for status and for the possession of status symbols. The objects lost intrinsic value; owning them was what mattered. They became symbols, and the thrill of ownership was precisely the satisfaction one got from having things and from savoring the envy of the "have-nots."

There was only one cloud overshadowing the sense of power that the new eliteexperienced: their inevitable and unstoppable becoming part of the crowd. Their members were no doubt the privileged of the new society, but there were many such privileged. Someone might have a private airplane, even a private jet enabling him to make intercontinental trips. Yet at some time he would still have to concede to the cosmic rigors of the waiting line. Nothing better epitomized the new society for the privileged classes than the waiting line. Even in the most exclusive places, managed by the elite themselves, one saw self-service installed in elegant restaurants with the privileged were seen queuing up to serve themselves from a tempting cold buffet. It was a painful discovery to find that there were many more privileged people than there were seats in the semi-pornographic theatrical reviews or at a boxing match ringside. It was a sad thing for a big businessman to have to confess to his guest that he had not managed to find seats, despite the intervention of all the officious types that pull the strings of a great city. But his failure would come as no surprise: in the "mass formation" of a big city, there comes a time when there are neither strings to pull nor those to pull them, summoning up the specter of Babel once again.

Thus the upper classes and the upper middle classes—the new elite—introduced a new style of life in Latin American cities, gradually replacing the European influence with that of the United States. For the remainder of the middle class and the working class, on the other hand, traditional ways of life seemed to hold some appeal, perhaps because they reconfirmed membership in established society. These classes were inevitably conservative, not so much in the political sense as in their respect for certain age-old values. One might be liberal, socialist, or communist and still cling to those values: the conservatism was in the preservation of that traditional lifestyle. A fear of slipping into the void or of jeopardizing one's rise—an ascent made at such cost, or at least a cost high enough not to throw it away for nothing—counseled moderation. The home continued to be what it had always been, although the piano may have been replaced by the record player or stereo. Upward mobility was still an obsession, any risk that could jeopardize what one already had was not worth running. And if the temptation of consumerism increased, rarely did a family's monthly payments exceed its budget.

Faced with the grand illusions of the upper classes and the upper middle classes, faced with the humble conditions of the recently established popular classes and with the unchanneled force of the new masses, the middle middle classes became the most stable social group. They renewed the bourgeois style of life, combining the old and the new with a certain common sense that did not entirely stifle a certain display of audacity. Because they were bourgeois in origin, they looked solid and stable. Their conduct was premised on the fact that work and leisure were not incompatible in any society—neither the old mercantile society, nor the new industrial and technological one. With neither any possibility nor any tendency to disdain work, their philosophy was still intended to achieve a culture of leisure or, even better, a private, interior life as a redoubt against being

overwhelmed by the mass. In that style of life arouse a new system of rules, flexible yet firm, and above all a set of norms for individual lives that restored some old values: moral, aesthetic, and intellectual ones. Consumers like everyone else, the middle middle classes made consumption of cultural products, and concern for quality of life, were parts of their lifestyle.

To be sure, the working classes were conservative in their own fashion. They followed the rules of established society and thus clung to their traditional ways of life. Apart from becoming members of the consumer society, little changed in their attitudes, indicative of the influence of the middle class to which they aspired and which they tried to emulate with a precipitate haste to adopt their behavior and mentality. Everyone expected his own ascent to materialize in his income level, enabling him to transform his expectations into reality. Yet these working classes were the most vulnerable and defenseless in new situations, and they rapidly experienced the process of mass formation. Accepting it was for them a matter of survival—apart from the fact that they really had no choice. They swelled the ranks of the labor unions and, with that support, were able to satisfy at least some of their needs. They had little to lose and much to gain by giving in to massification. The middle middle classes, however, were another story. For them, massification was a painful experience. Precisely, it attacked the yearning for interiority characteristic of its members, jealous of their individuality and their status as distinct persons. It was difficult for the petit bourgeois that had carefully cultivated their private world to adjust to the new and bitter collective living conditions. To be just one of many, or at the end of a line, seemed an insult to one's dignity.

United by the process of change they were all experiencing, the various strata of established society maintained a certain homogeneity, evident from the many ways their lifestyles were alike. The anomic society that took shape in the presence of established society did not have those mutual understandings or shared values—in other words, all those things that could pull various groups together. It was, therefore, unlikely that the anomic groups would ever display a defined style of life. Each group had its own ways, but in every city the distinctive feature of mass society as a whole was its mosaic quality and, lastly, its anomie.

Indeed, the very combination of these subsocieties had an anomic quality, because of their haphazard juxtaposition in urban space that they happen to share. Each group had a definite culture, the product of old traditions, including the long-standing urban working classes that quickly succumbed to the pressure exerted by immigrants. The new atmosphere in the cities and the difficult conditions created as more and more groups arrived, rapidly dissolved those cultures, homogenizing them and destroying their internal harmony. Within each group a set of their traditional habits and beliefs, norms and attitudes survived. But the basic precepts were broken by the adoption of other, very different principles, which those who faced the difficulty of moving and were forced to adapt to new situations could not do without.

At a deeper level the migrant might secretly or unconsciously have preferred the ways of the society he had decided to join. When he abandoned the countryside for the city, he was also abandoning his traditional style of life to seize the opportunities that the city could offer him. But that choice was not a conscious one, since the reasons for his departure were very practical, in most cases related to the harsh reality of survival. He therefore preserved what he could of his cultural baggage, dropped what he could not carry, and picked up what he needed to survive. Still, there was a decision and an inclination to become part of the urban world.

The attitude of the migrant groups toward established society and the structure that they were joining was a contradiction. Objectively, that structure was the chosen system, the best of all possible options, a goal so important that one would uproot oneself from one's ancestral home to achieve it. Migrant groups embraced that system much more easily when they shared its social, political, and religious principles. They did not come to destroy or even to change the system, but simply to become part of it and partake of the benefits that it had to offer, sharing them with the others who were part of the structure. That kind of sharing, however, was not so easy to achieve. Those who were part of the structure were distrustful and aloof, and the new arrivals sensed the rebuff and discovered the strength of the resistance mounted against them. Their response was hatred, but not of the structure itself. When the resistance seemed insurmountable, there were sudden outbursts of uncontainable destructive rage that seemed to be acts of deep hostility. But perhaps they were acts of frustration and despair, and for that reason of secret attachment. The tactic that migrant groups and the sectors they initially joined used toward the established society and the system was one of asking and waiting: it was the fruitless waiting that triggered their irritation and outbursts.

Doubtless the anomie so characteristic of the mass permitted temperamental outbursts by its most violent elements. People became accustomed to violence, stimulated perhaps by the feeling that violence was the only way to persuade the stubborn custodians of the system to accede to their demands. But the public violence was unpremeditated, and the private violence was no more than one might expect of an urban society that was quickly turning into a mass. In day-to-day life, the new mass worked quietly to win a place in the structure; each one competed with his equals to find a job and a roof, and to put food on the table everyday.

In that day-to-day existence, the new mass developed a way of life amid the most grinding poverty. Theirs was the worst of all poverty, since it occurred in the midst of cities controlled by a powerful plutocracy whose world view included a showy and determined display of wealth. Certainly, without that wealth there would have been no culture of poverty, since poverty existed because of the leftovers of an opulent society. It was awesome to see everything that could be created with the worthless debris of an industrial society, everything that could be obtained with even a modicum of

acquisitiveness, everything that could be snatched from these consumer societies by wisely exploiting the guilt complexes that pervaded them. Living on almost nothing in a society that measured everything in terms of monetary value was one of the extraordinary talents of this new mass. A material culture was virtually invented from castoffs. Houses, furniture, utensils: everything came from other people's refuse. In that scenario, families were established, children were raised, and adolescents grew up, always comparing what they lacked with what others had left over or, worse still, with that undefined world of industrial products that filled trash cans with plastic bags, pieces of wood, useless scraps of metal, assorted cans, rags or clothing, and succulent leftovers that might come from the tables of the finest restaurants.

There was a way of material life, derived from the waste of the industrial world. But there was also a way of moral life derived from of the consumer society. Everywhere there was an army of beggars, like México City's "Marías," who specialized in appealing to the rich; doubtless there were many other beggars, too. These were the unmistakable manifestation of a divided society. Desperation produced a morality of poverty whose golden rule was that necessity justified anything: refined methods of deception; that deft, exquisite cleverness for sorting out problems that seemed insurmountable; stealing one's neighbor's property; selling oneself if need be.

At times, the system itself struck out at the victims of poverty in the form of sordid blackmail by public officials or police who took advantage of their victims' sense of insecurity to force them into a life of crime or to keep them there. A growing skepticism about one's chances of escaping poverty forced the unwilling victim into a life of crime: it drove young girls into prostitution, young men into juvenile delinquency, and disillusioned men and women to drink. All this became part of the anomic society's way of life.

But crime was not everything. As the integration process took hold, some individuals and groups succeeded in escaping the vicious circle of utter poverty. Rather than being destitute, they were now simply poor. Even with low wages, they managed to improve their housing and their living conditions. Some began to be conscious of their situation and to form opinions. Those who had embarked upon a new life slowly began to establish their personal identity and, in the process, divorced themselves from the mass.

Some even came to have political opinions and, in their own way, became activists of a sort. Rarely did they have autonomy and clarity about their own objectives; usually they became the political clients of those who saw in them a potential force that could be launched in a society which was questioning the traditional systems of representation. In that role, they took one more step into the existing structure, entering by way of one of its cracks and led by those who were actually jarring

the cracks open.

The anomic society never developed its own style of life. But along the tortuous path to integration, it began to glimpse the set of notions endorsed by its protectors, by those who adulated the mass or those who promoting new attitudes. In its muddled contacts with the system—as happens with all beginnings—some obscure tendencies began to take shape, and with them a new style of life began to be elaborated. That new style seems to concur with attitudes that had acquired some currency in established society.

Massification and Ideology

Mass formation did more than precipitate change in the lifestyles of all groups within the divided society. It also triggered a profound and subtle renaissance of philosophies that could explain the new situations and suggest ways for dealing with the forces at work in social, economic, and political life. Nobody was excluded from the tremors that shook traditional opinions. The crisis immediately aroused the intellectual curiosity of those anxious to understand what it all meant—its secrets and its implications for the future. Like all crises, it weighed more and more heavily on the public mind. One interpretation followed another; explanations became more and more simplistic and invariably ended up as banal cliches. The keen awareness produced by the crisis unleashed a torrent of words, sometimes repeated as catch phrases, other times as arguments, and often as buzz words used to identify friend and foe. Sometimes they were vulgarisms carrying a special significance. At other times, however, they were the technical jargon of political science or the language of economics or sociology, impoverished and debased in content. Many ideas drowned in the sea of words brought forth by the malignant form of consciousness stimulated by a crisis that was hard to understand.

Mass formation resurrected the problem of relationships between the individual and society. Latin America had not experienced a similar social and ideological crisis since *criollo* society first burst upon the scene. When the crisis recurred, the debate revived the same old arguments. That was no correct, for while the situations may have looked similar, the protagonists of the social process were profoundly different. It would be difficult to make anything other than a superficial analogy between the *criollo* groups that emerged with Independence, some of whom were mounted bands of rebels, and the new urban masses. The fact is that the new masses forced a rethinking of the relationship between the individual and society, and those thoughts crystallized into the opinions held by established society and those held by anomic society.

Naturally, the idea of examining the relationship between the individual and society came from the

establishment, specifically from those groups most concerned with politics and economics. The emergence of the masses questioned the ideology of these groups, and as a consequence they rushed to re-examine it, some in order to defend it to the last, others to determine whether it needed correction to adapt it to new circumstances. This kind of reassessment had not been undertaken with so much passion since Independence. The anomic mass whose formation had triggered these reactions, meanwhile, was entirely left out of the excited concern for interpreting social situations and defining its role. Each sector of the lower classes had its rudimentary world view but was unable to adapt it to real circumstances or to examine it critically; a set of heterogeneous notions and prejudices formed the confused scheme that the emerging mass employed to face the gloomy urban world. A few positive experiences in arriving at a more profound understanding between migrant groups and some sectors of traditional society, however, permitted the synthesis of an ideology responsive not just to the needs and desires of the masses, but also to the ability of established society and the structure in general to respond to those needs and desires. The anomic mass began to learn the difficult art of alternating between requests and demands precisely because it gradually began to sense that its greatest strength would lie not so much in its sheer numbers as in a belief slowly taking hold in established society about the rights of the masses and the legitimacy of their expectations. That conviction would weaken ideological unity within established society, but it did not take hold quickly. Even after the presence of the new mass was accepted, the old ideology endured in established society.

Except for a few sharp minds—who heeded the experience of post-war Europe—most of established society was slow to imagine, much less foresee, the magnitude of the impact that the presence of the mass would have. But as that impact was felt by individual sectors of the structure, various elite groups began to revise their positions. Little by little, important sectors of public opinion began to reshape their attitudes and plans; ultimately, they put together a new ideological framework in which the traditional agenda was displaced to make room for the one created by the social transformation set in motion by the presence of the masses. There were two types of attitudes: the attitude of those who refused to recognize the importance of the masses and underestimated them, and the attitude of those who decided to acknowledge that their emergence was an irreversible fact.

Those who underestimated the new social development reacted according to whether they were conformists or nonconformists. Eager to keep the system intact, conformists were contemptuous of the masses, closed ranks, refused any type of concession, and went on the defensive, not considering any other strategy. These were the classic conservatives: liberals originally, but more and more inclined to defend their own privileges without making any concessions. In response, the traditional nonconformists, advocates of a change in the structure according to what they considered to be immutable rules of the industrial world, identified the masses as a rootless *lumpen*

proletariat, with no class consciousness or willingness to struggle. They concluded that, in the final analysis, the masses were a potential ally of the existing structure; in that sense, they concurred with the classic conservatives and shared a certain contempt for the masses. These nonconformists were the progressives, the reformists and revolutionaries whose ideological schemes were built upon principles of radicalism or Marxism in which the infrangible vestiges of Enlightenment thinking and philosophical liberalism were very much alive.

Those who, on the other hand, accepted the new social reality began to review their strategy, their interpretation of society, and their future projects. They were attentive to the smallest details, in order to catch the general direction and sense of the process that was unfolding before their eyes. They sharpened their senses and their wits, helped by the experience of post-World-War-I European social trends. Yet many looked mainly at what was unique and local about the phenomenon, and they managed to outline the fundamentals of a new ideology to steer the eruptive tendencies of the masses within rules ensuring the intact preservation of the essentials of the structure. Coinciding with the non-conformists, they sensed that the masses were objectively a potential ally of the structure. Thus they put together not only a strategy to keep the masses attached to the structure but also an unusual ideology with a valid interpretation of real situations, one that could win a consensus among those whom they were proponing a change: it was populism.

The strategy proposed was in line to spontaneous social change, with groups or individuals in the masses being slowly integrated into established society. At times the proposed change consisted merely of facilitating or hastening that natural tendency. But the truly important was that the new ideology required change to be realized along fundamental lines developing the system in accordance to clear objectives. To ensure that goal, change had to be managed from within the structure, by its most notorious and loyal defenders. These defenders constituted the State, conceived as an abstract entity whose social affiliation was left undefined. The State appeared as the pilot of change in the program of the Bolivian Revolutionary Nationalist Movement, which proposed “building a nation upon a system of authentic Bolivian social justice, upon State-determined economic and political bases.” An authoritarian regime would guarantee the kind of guardianship that Colombian General Rojas Pinilla described as true democracy:

Democracy is the best interpretation of the sovereign will of the people; democracy is an opportunity for everyone to work honorably and peacefully; democracy is the granting of guarantees, without any form of discrimination; democracy is government by the armed forces. Who can listen to the voices that speak of a despotic government and of omnipotent powers? You will tell us now whether you prefer the democracy of loud parliamentarians and an irresponsible press, unlawful strikes, premature and bloody elections, and a partisan bureaucracy, or the democracy that the resentful call dictatorship, tranquility, a peaceful citizenry, works that are good for the nation, job

guarantees, good and honest government, and ample room for real freedom and the initiative that requires muscle and intelligence.

These were the terms that the new ideology of populism proposed for the social structure, in order to hasten the moderate change to which those who wanted to become part of the structure aspired. As part of the new urban masses, they seemed, in principle at least, to want only a helping hand to achieve a subsistence standard of living and security, regardless of the conditions imposed. The new ideology, however, wanted more than just resigned acquiescence. It was looking for consensus from those to whom it proposed change, and it pursued that consensus by making the masses aware of the very legitimate causes of their resentment toward the established structure. It was a combative ideology, and its principles made very plain who the adversaries and enemies were. The program of Bolivia's 1941 Revolutionary Nationalist Movement listed them as follows: "We denounce as anti-national any possible relations between international political parties and the maneuvers of Judaism, among the liberal democratic system, secret organizations, and the invocation of socialism as an argument to allow foreigners to interfere in our internal or international policy or in any activity prejudicial to the Bolivian people." Jews, Masons and, above all, liberals and socialists were singled out as being the enemy of the new ideology, which effectively declared itself to be anti-liberal and anti-socialist. Indeed it declared itself the enemy of those who refused to accept the new social reality, conformist as well as nonconformist.

The ideology of populism was relentless where Marxism was concerned, precisely because Marxism proposed a different model of change, one intended to develop a new structure according to its own, quite different, system of objectives. Against Liberalism it was almost, but not quite, as relentless. The battle was fought more in words than in practice. Jorge González von Marées, founder of the Chilean National Socialist Movement, praised Italian fascism, which he said was a worldwide movement that "represents the triumph of the 'grand politics'—in other words a politics crafted and directed by a handful of superior men in each generation—over the mediocrity that is liberalism's mainstay; it also represents the victory of blood and race over economic materialism and internationalism." Cautious and realistic, the Brazilian Getulio Vargas alluded to the need to temper liberalism, but did not condemn it altogether. In 1932 he said, "The excessive individualism typical of the last century needed to be curbed and corrected . . . which was an overriding concern for the social interest."

For those who instituted and cultivated the ideology of populism, the presence of the urban mass was an unforgettable experience. Its potential, and presumably unconstrainable strength prompted populists to seek masses' consensus; while it was important to identify enemies, it was also important to extol the traditional values that members of the urban masses preserved in their own ideas and beliefs. Migrant groups and the established working class groups that intermingled with

those migrants, retained their cultural heritage virtually intact and needed very little to reinvigorate it. Appealing to the roots of their teluric culture, to the basic qualities of native groups and, above all, to a *criollismo* that was very much alive seemed to be an effective way to convert large numbers to the new ideology, and indeed it was. In a city where everything was alien to them, their culture and their world, which had until recently been scorned, were now celebrated. Bolivian philosopher Roberto Prudencio put it this way: "Culture is simply an expression of one's relation to the earth." Another Bolivian, Jaime Mendoza, said the following: "When one speaks of the Indian, one is implicitly alluding to the earth." Such remarks may have stirred the consciousness and will of many who yearned for their homes and felt powerless in the face of the monster that had both attracted and rejected them, and may have moved them to tears. A very definite paternalism—sincere, natural, and sentimental in some, but calculated and artful in others—was seen as the only effective way to hasten the marginal people's assimilation into the system. The protective figure loomed large in the eyes of the defenseless. Trusting in God and in the charismatic *caudillo* who seemed to understand their poverty, those who were already irreversibly immersed in the industrial world were seduced, not knowing the diabolical secrets hidden from them. Populism earned consent.

The promise of inevitable, well-deserved success was what populist nationalism represented. All the Latin American countries (some more than others) had experienced the onslaught of international capital, and the *gringo* was a figure in popular mythology. Populism turned against the *gringo* and extolled the sense of fatherland. Although sometimes pure rhetoric, it always elicited a dual response: it reawakened the natural and profound sense of belonging among native peoples who loved their traditions, while among the new arrivals and their children it awakened a desire to assert that they, too, were one with the heritage that nationality represented. A fervent allegiance to the fatherland impregnated the new urban masses, seduced by the unexpected revelation that those who had heretofore scorned them now regarded them as equals in the fraternal union of the nation, which everyone wanted to win back from the conquerors, from the foreign exploiters, from the agents of imperialism and multinational capital. Those who a half century earlier had believed that the Latin American countries' only salvation from ignorance and poverty could only be achieved by accepting the role of satellites of the industrial world were censured and labeled *cipayos* (sepoys). There was a new appreciation of the principles of *criollismo*, of the *caudillos* who had adopted and defended those principles in the period following Independence, and of their cultural traditions; the calculated revival of folklore revealed how much there was of polemics in that cult of nationalism, which seemed to identify itself with policies intended to control the masses whose very presence could threaten the structure. The Argentine nationalists had already said it: "In all countries, nationalist movements are arising to return to the traditional political principles and the classic idea of government and to abandon the mistaken principles of democratic doctrinairism, whose disastrous consequences these movements denounce. They answer the ephemeral myths woven by the demagogues with the fundamental truths that are the very life and grandeur of nations: order,

authority, and hierarchy".

Some may have believed that, to ensure the victory of the new ideology, one had to forsake the entire system of traditional democracy embodied in the constitutions of almost all the Latin American countries when the crisis began. But only Brazil, with the *Estado Novo* imposed by Getulio Vargas after the 1937 *coup d'état*, ever made any attempt to give the new ideology substance and form, though it was short-lived. The strength of the capitalist structure, and the influence of the liberal and neoliberal schemes upon which the world system thrived, prevented anyone from going too far in finding ways to implement populism. The collapse of the Nazi and fascist countries in 1945 discouraged any further experimentation. All that remained was what the new ideology had never denied: the old philosophy of social ascent basically presupposed the liberal concept of society just re-introduced by the new ideologues, reinforced perhaps by the decision of populism to strengthen and modernize the capitalist system. About his own philosophy Getulio Vargas wrote: "There is nothing in that thinking to suggest any hostility toward capital; quite the contrary, capital has to be attracted, protected, and guaranteed by the public power. The best way to guarantee it, however, is to transform the proletariat into an organized force that cooperates with the State, rather than let it drift away into lawlessness, destruction, and disruption, bereft of any sense of country and family." The argument was clear and similar to the one that the Argentine Juan Perón would use: "We defend the workers and believe that the advantages of the capitalist system, as opposed to collectivist systems, can only be realized by vastly improving the well-being of the workers and increasing both their participation in the State and the State's intervention in labor relations."

Something did, however, weaken the ideology of social ascent. Whereas populism invited each member of the masses to try to move up, their sheer numbers, the competition created, and the rigidity of the system made that invitation impractical for many. In the meantime, the needs of the urban masses were becoming greater, and more and more immediate all the time. Those needs finally came to pose a threat and triggered multiple and aggressive reactions. But they posed a specific political threat: a disillusioned urban mass could drift toward revolutionary trends and doctrines. To neutralize that threat, populism proclaimed that society was obligated to cover the basic needs of those who lacked resources, and to protect them from being further exploited by a system that had already victimized them. This was the language of an ideology of social justice, to be implemented by a paternalistic and benefactor State: its objective was social welfare. But once it was articulated, the philosophy of social ascent was called into question. How far did the obligation of a society that aspired to social justice go? Should it offer everything to which the individual struggling for social ascent aspired? The question was like a pendulum between the two ideologies, liberal and populist. It was not an either/or question, as between the liberal ideology and the Marxist ideology; it simply created a kind of unsteady equilibrium between two poorly defined concepts that appeared to be compatible. Social justice was in favor of supporting those who did not achieve

social ascent, or perhaps it was for improving the lot of those who were beginning to move up. The problem was that more and more could be demanded of the populist notion of social justice each time, while an unfettered capitalist system and a consumer society invited each one to embark upon the adventure of social ascent. For many people, the populist notion of social justice was merely a trampoline for ascent, while for others it was a trampoline for trying to go beyond populism's acceptable boundaries.

What were those boundaries? The response from populism was unequivocal. The boundaries were those that separated its theory of social justice from the theory supported by Marxism, based on the radical principle of the socialization of the means of production. Advocates of the populist ideology knew that they were walking a razor's edge, and they carefully monitored themselves. For them it was imperative that the ideology of social justice not imperil the ideology of social ascent embodied in a liberal society and a capitalist system.

Proclaimed by the system itself—whose symbol might well be the balcony of the executive mansion— and defended by intelligent sectors of the economy, the Church, and the armed forces, populism was at heart a transactional combination, a compromise between both ideologies of social advancement and social justice. It was greeted with wild enthusiasm by the anomic mass. In many cities, frenzied crowds demonstrated their support in public squares, and in almost all cities people were surprised to find themselves nurturing a kind of hope. The dream of the destitute migrant—or of anyone who had lived in poverty in the city for years, eking out a subsistence living—had been this: immediate help to meet their needs, an opportunity to become part of the structure, and assistance in moving up within the structure. Thus the anomic society began to develop its own ideology. It was still slightly ambivalent, for it was based simultaneously on an individualist and competitive concept of society—a liberal concept in the final analysis—and on a community or collective concept that thought more in justice than in success, one that traced its roots to social romanticism. These two concepts were fundamentally incompatible. But their incompatibility was based on principle; thus it was deeply conceptual and difficult to perceive without scrutiny. It was not, therefore, immediately discovered. The ideology of social justice was seen simply as a new form of charity and beneficence, especially when it was used to support a demagogic policy and when the benefactor himself was owed thanks. In the name of social justice, the masses received what they wanted: better salaries, social benefits, perhaps even housing for some. Yet each one of them continued to believe that his real objective was to become part of the system and to move up within it.

That sentiment informed everyone's actions, although one might occasionally join collective actions to voice one's reaction and express one's desires, perhaps because the crow atmosphere created in some cities made such demonstrations possible. Secretly, however, every member of the masses

wanted to cease being part of them; their dreams did not stop at the level of the working-class, but reached as far as the petit bourgeois. The individual no doubt loved and admired the system especially if he heard a voice from within the structure calling to him to carry a heavier share of its responsibilities and receive a bigger share of its rewards, if he heard his own once-despised ideas and beliefs defended, or if he discovered that being a *mestizo* or simply being poor was no disgrace.

That love and admiration of the system were articulated in the form of praise for one's country. Whereas praise on the lips of the poor and downtrodden would earlier have been unseemly because, after all, their country had scorned them, it now seemed fitting because the country openly counted them among its sons and daughters. How could one not love and admire a system whose ardent defenders declared that they, once labeled incapable of being part of the modernization process, were in fact its bulwark and the essential architects of its grandeur? The program of the Bolivian Nationalist Revolutionary Movement put it this way: "We affirm our faith in the power of the Indo-mestizo race, in the unity of the Bolivian people in defending the collective interest and the common good before the individual interest or the individual good, and in a renaissance of the native traditions, in order to mold Bolivian culture." A vigorous nationalism pervaded the new ideology of the anomic masses, for whom patriotism represented the hope of achieving a fair country and, above all, acknowledgment that they were not peripheral, but rather integral parts of the system. Once part of the system, each one could try to move up, just as the earlier participants in the system had.

But the anomic masses' attachment to the system was neither passive nor steady, perhaps because the cities were becoming heavily politicized. The accession depended on whether the populists could keep its promises, and whether their line would become more pronounced. An awareness grew in the mass that other ideological sectors opposed the populist line, factions that, if in control, would restore the system to its previous state. It was, therefore, a conditional attachment; its terms changed not only as reality changed, but also as political insights became clearer, thanks to contacts with other urban groups of differing political persuasions, especially in cities undergoing industrialization. The ideological ambivalence became increasingly apparent, and with time more and more people discovered the contradiction: the old ideology of social ascent and the new ideology of social justice were neither concurrent nor compatible.

Populism had been a confusing combination of the two ideologies that were now beginning to clash. When carried to their ultimate consequences, one reinforced the system, while the other weakened it more than—even for strategic reasons—its own proponents could condone. After a certain point, that weakening posed the threat of revolutionary destruction. Defenders of the system began to think that they might have gone too far. In the anomic mass, however, others began to think quite the opposite: that the ideology of social justice had to be carried to its ultimate consequences, well

beyond the limits to which populism was prepared to go.

The clash would be inevitable. Those who opted to carry the ideology of social justice to its ultimate extreme began to dissociate themselves from the ranks of the anomic mass and to gravitate toward the nonconformist groups of established society. This happened in Brazil after 1961 and in Bolivia after 1964. Oscillating social alliances and changing ideological positions proved the magnitude and depth of the impact of the urban massification.

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