

Preface

Walt Whitman's *I Dream'd in a Dream* speaks of the power of a community of citizens whose solidarities would erect a bastion impervious to any attack, moral or otherwise. The history of Latin America's cities has not always evoked images of great solidarity on the part of its residents, yet it is a history of retained supremacy throughout five hundred years of urban existence in the Western Hemisphere.

Spaniards, who in many ways had become the Romans of Europe's medieval and early modern ages, equated civilization with urban existence. Committed to notions of medieval nobility that they would appropriate in an environment safe from the certain contempt of a true European aristocracy, the early Spanish conquerors of the New World rapidly established themselves as urban lords and, in the process, sought to erect barriers between themselves and the masses of Indians that surrounded their enclaves. Thus, the Latin American city was virtually coterminous with the Columbian encounter. With its precocious establishment came the privileged attributes: the locus of political authority, the hub of ecclesiastical activity, the nerve center of commerce and finance, and the essential venue for conspicuous consumption. Ever since the colonial era, the city has remained the premier form of human association in Latin America.

The essays collected in this volume represent some of the most enduring reflections on the Latin American city by commentators who, far from being detached observers, were themselves formed in this urban milieu. Public officials and political activists, journalists, *pensadores* social commentators, and "protest writers," they comprised an important component of their contemporaries' world, in most cases as members of an intelligentsia that was not above self-criticism. Of our eleven authors, all but three are native Latin Americans, and these three either grew up in the region's cities or spent a sizable portion of their careers there. Their writings provide us with critical analyses of a broad historical experience, beginning with the conquest of the Aztecs' Tenochtitlán in the early sixteenth century, continuing with imperial Spain's Hapsburg and Bourbon periods, moving through Latin America's nineteenth-century *belle époque*, when the region's sophisticated metropolises rivaled their

western European counterparts, and ending with the "future shock" of today's megalopolises.

The novelty and importance of this collection derive from an unsettling paradox. While we have significant historical treatments of the Latin American city, the voices and accounts of the Latin American urban contemporaries themselves have rarely been gathered to be heard apart from the au courant scholars who have ably analyzed, quantified, and interpreted urban life. Moreover, academic advances have exacted a price. Modern social science and humanist scholarship has tended to be reductionist or integrationist; it has atomized familiar units into small components or else it has assured us that no unit is understandable if it is not inserted into vast global configurations.

The city has been a notable victim of analytical and interpretive de-composition at the hands of spatial ecology, location theory, interest group theory, small group theory, sectoral analysis, demographic analysis, diffusionist and dependency theories, and world systems analysis—not to mention excessive postmodern deconstruction. But to the people who live in a city, or to the planners and administrators who must cope with it, the city remains very much a "real" entity, composed of complex, interacting parts yet always more than the sum of those parts. This comprehensive view came more naturally to bygone observers of Latin American cities. At times, it comes naturally to present-day observers who turn their attention to the past. This volume assembles a series of such synoptic urban portraits, not merely for their historical interest but as therapy for our fragmented perception of the urban phenomena that currently surround us.

In preparing this anthology, we also attempt to meet a long-standing pedagogical need. The works of Bernabé Cobo, Juan Agustín García, Luis dos Santos Vilhena, Miguel Samper, Joaquín Capelo, Juan Alvarez, and Gilberto Leite de Barros are neither well known nor immediately available to students outside their countries of publication. By translating and bringing these classics together—albeit in abridged form—in a common edition, we hope they will find the wider audience they deserve.

The selections gathered here emphasize Latin American cities of the first rank: Mexico City, Lima, Buenos Aires, Salvador da Bahia, Bogotá, and São Paulo. While they display a healthy geographical distribution, they do not adequately represent regional capitals or secondary cities, nor do they include all functional types (for example, a "mining city," a "port city," and so forth). On the other hand, several—Mexico City, Lima, Buenos Aires, and São Paulo—are represented more than once. This should afford distinct advantages, permitting the reader to trace continuity and

change over long periods of time, while exposing him or her to contrasting approaches and literary styles.

Of course, it is not our purpose to catalog the entire Latin American urban spectrum. Rather, we intend to showcase a highly select collection of urban portraits, each unique yet having something in common when viewed as a group. We might regard these individual studies as "family portraits" and think in terms of a Latin American "family of cities." But the similarities that emerge in these accounts can be likened to family resemblances only if we remember, in the words of Richard Morse, that "resemblance is not identity, nor do family members live out identical careers."¹ That the careers are not identical is due to structural differences—geographic, demographic, economic, political—found in each urban situation and highlighted by our authors. Still, the reader is sure to find a haunting resemblance between Samper's stagnant, bureaucratic Bogotá of the late 1860s (Chapter 6) and the decadent Lima portrayed by Capelo several decades later (Chapter 7). Reading between the lines, one may also spot a more subtle likeness in the disparate careers of Lima (as portrayed in Chapters 3 and 7) and São Paulo (Chapter 9)—a likeness not readily evident from an examination of the respective indicators of economic change, technological capability, or social mobility, but perhaps lying in durable cultural patterns deeply embedded in the urban fabric.

The portraits in our gallery capture both the broad contours and the daily transactions of Latin American city life, from the dynamic era of the conquistadores to the deafening bustle of today's crowds. The collection provides a unique opportunity to "hear" Latin American culture in the voices of the protagonists coming out of the urban core. These voices will be subject to differing interpretations, just as the role of the city in Latin American history and society is complex and multifaceted. Nonetheless, the reader will quickly grasp that the problems of economic inequity, social and ethnic conflict, inadequate physical resources, administrative inefficiency, and inept social planning—all of which still afflict the region's cities—are of centuries-old dimensions. The historical development of the Latin American city can be ignored by more present-minded scholars and urban planners only at the risk of oversimplification and lack of understanding. It is our hope that this volume will help to minimize that risk.

¹Richard M. Morse, *Lima en 1900. Estudio crítico y antología* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1973), 42–43.

The City as Vision—The Development of Urban Culture in Latin America

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No other people have paid more attention over the ages to their urban dimensions than the Latin Americans. This preoccupation crosses nearly every genre of discourse, ranging from the self-conscious styles of academic scholars to the more freely expressed and popular forms of minstrels, street poets, folklorists, and essayists. Where Amerindian populations had held a powerful demographic presence and a significant cultural weight, their cities delineated the cultural outlines of urban Latin America. By contrast, areas that were largely devoid of indigenous societies at the time of European contact left open the physical and cultural spaces that would be filled by Europeans' perspectives on civilization. From the earliest Spanish contact with the Indies, from the time of Christopher Columbus, the frame of reference for any notion or thing considered worthy was urban in nature. Even in the realm of medieval lore, where myth and religion blended into popular belief systems, the city loomed large. Thus, we find legends, such as that of the Seven Enchanted Cities, to have been associated with the Indies. Believed to have been created by seven Portuguese bishops who had fled the Arab invasion of the Iberian peninsula, this tale of urban life appears among the first proposed examples of utopia.

The Spaniards placed particularly strong emphasis on the city, giving it an all-encompassing role that included administration, the reproduction of capital, ecclesiastical management, and responsibility for virtually all cultural activities. Of all the peoples that Rome had brought within its domain, the Iberians most closely imitated their conquerors in the significance they assigned to the city. In turn, Iberians reconstituted this prominence in the Indies, heightening it, in fact, in all matters social and cultural. In the economic realm, however, the city was limited to serving

as a marketplace for the purposes of exchange and distribution, not for production, which would remain the preserve of the countryside.

Although their goals in the Indies varied in the details, the early settlers generally came seeking wealth, attracted by tales of riches, some real, most imagined. Their hopes of realizing their aspirations were intensified by a Spain that, for many, remained inhospitable to their material well-being and indifferent to the idea of significant social mobility. Although social and economic structures in Spain did not offer citizens much hope for material improvement, their limitations did not occasion ideological deviation or religious dissidence. The fall of Muslim Granada into Christian hands in 1492 signaled the culmination of a program of cultural and religious homogeneity sponsored by the Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella. The subsequent expulsion of Jews and suppression of Muslims completed the process of establishing the widely shared consensus on political and religious tenets that united ruler and ruled. Thus, the conditions that attracted emigrants from Iberia to the Indies, or "pull factors," were material in nature and consistent with the material and nonideological "push factors."

The timing of the Spaniards' contact with the Indies had a lasting effect on subsequent cultural patterns and belief systems. Unlike the era of settlement by British dissenters in the seventeenth century, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were not periods in which the nature of government, religion, or social relations was in question. The Spaniards came with absolute certainty of both the social propriety of their ways and the religious righteousness that justified their goals and means. Furthermore, these sentiments endured centuries after the initial settlement, in effect perpetuating a European presence deep within—and spread throughout—the Western Hemisphere. Not surprisingly, it was the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset who defined the psychological condition of colonialism as a consequence of a people whose entire culture had originated elsewhere.¹

The Age of Foundations

The Spaniards could hardly hide their contempt for the Amerindians' lifestyles and value systems. Although they marveled at their major cities, such as the Aztecs' Tenochtitlán, their appreciation was limited largely to admiration of the physical grandeur. Indeed, Spaniards measured themselves against Indians on the basis of the latter's deficiencies, not their achievements. Thus, for Francisco Pizarro and his men, the conquest of the Incas was "rendered greater not because the Indians are such worthy opponents but because they are so 'bestial,'" according to Francisco de

Jerez, who was present at the battle of Cajamarca.² The Indians' traditional concerns for the land were not equally shared by the Spaniards, whose status considerations depended on other factors, many of which were urban in orientation. Thus, the early conquerors of Peru, who owned fine homes in the city and profited from productive grants of Indian labor and tribute (*encomiendas*) both there and in the countryside, had little reason to yearn for huge estates to satisfy status pretensions.³ To be sure, commercial agriculture could offer handsome profits, yet there is no evidence of land accumulation or large estates.⁴

The Spaniards marveled at the great urban centers of the most powerful Amerindian empires, those of the Aztecs and the Incas. Thus, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who chronicled his participation in the conquest of the Aztecs, led by Hernán Cortés in 1519, writes about the central marketplace of the capital city of Tenochtitlán with all the excitement of a discoverer of wondrous treasures:

We were astounded at the great number of people and the quantities of merchandise, and at the orderliness and good arrangements that prevailed, for we had never seen such a thing before. The chieftains who accompanied us pointed everything out. Every kind of merchandise was kept separate and had its fixed place . . . with the dealers in gold, silver, and precious stones, feathers, cloaks, and embroidered goods, and male and female slaves to be sold in that market.⁵

The impression left on the Spaniards was all the more striking after they saw the metropolitan expanse that served as the hub of the Aztec confederation. Standing atop one of the pyramids, which served as religious and bureaucratic nuclei, Montezuma presented his urban domain. Díaz del Castillo later recalled:

So we stood there looking . . . We saw the three causeways that led into Mexico: the causeway of Iztapalapa by which we had entered four days before, and that of Tacuba . . . and that of Tepeaquilla. We saw the fresh water which came from Chapultepec to supply the city, and the bridges that were constructed at intervals on the causeways so that the water could flow in and out from one part of the lake to another. We saw a great number of canoes, some coming with provisions and others returning with cargo and merchandise; and we saw too that one could not pass from one house to another of that great city and the other cities that were built on the water except over wooden drawbridges or by canoe. We saw *cues* [pyramids] and shrines in these cities that looked like gleaming white towers and castles: a marvelous sight.⁶

The French anthropologist Jacques Soustelle described in detail, and with a great deal of respect, the life-style and environment of Tenochtitlán's

dwellers (Chapter 2). He relied considerably on the reports that Cortés sent to Charles V, in which he richly commented upon numerous aspects of Aztec civilization. Much more the conqueror and politician than Bernal Díaz, Cortés portrayed the Aztec capital as a vast matrix of political, social, and economic development. His descriptions and analyses were portrayed in a manner that drew favorable comparisons with the development of western Europeans. Cortés wanted his king to envision the high level of sophistication and achievement of his new subjects, which was on a par with anything he might find in Europe, and thereby aggrandized the achievement of his own conquest.

In both the Aztec and the Inca empires, politics and religion fused into a seamless administrative apparatus. Political and juridical decisions were taken in accordance with astrological indications and religious representations. Indian high clergy had consultative functions and served the political nobility in an advisory capacity. In analyzing the Aztecs' junction of religion and politics within their urban space, Soustelle captured one of the basic similarities with the devoutly Christian conquerors of the early sixteenth century. Describing Tenochtitlán's major plaza, Soustelle writes: "This great central square is splendid enough today, with its cathedral and the presidential palace; but what a prodigious effect it must have had upon the beholder in the Tenochtitlán of Motecuhzoma. State and religion combined their highest manifestations in this one place. . . . The upward sweep of the temples and the long tranquility of the palaces joined there, as if to unite both the hopes of men and the divine providence in the maintenance of the established order."

The expanse of Tenochtitlán that Cortés and his men had gazed upon and marveled at contained one of the world's largest populations, matching or surpassing the populations of Paris, Venice, Milan and Naples, and far beyond what any city in Spain could offer.⁷ They sensed this enormous potential immediately, and all their Roman-Iberian traditions told them—with absolute certainty—of the still greater urban magnificence that they would construct in the form of Mexico City.

The certainty of their moves, their confidence in their strategies, and the optimism with which they envisioned their futures shaped a dramatically special moment in the expansion of Mediterranean and urban Europe. Much has been written about the characteristics of both Amerindians and Spaniards to account for the victorious outcome by handfuls of European men over Amerindian forces so vastly superior in numbers.⁸ The confidence with which they carried out their mission stands out as one of the Spaniards' special characteristics. Of greater interest to us, however, is the continuing presence of that confidence beyond the phase of military and religious conquest and its subtle demonstration throughout the

late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the formative years of the Spanish-American experience.

The Spaniards' view that all matter, including people, fits within a linear and hierarchical world, according to principles of natural law, was manifested in the physical layout of their cities. In this regard, Spanish urban centers contrasted sharply with the Indians' approach to urban design. Spanish cities were laid out according to a *traza* (plan), which was followed faithfully to the extent allowed by the local topography. Streets were laid out linearly, intersections met at right angles; the resulting grid pattern represented their sense of perfect order and the neat placement of people within a well-defined space. Charles Gibson points to the differences found within Mexico City between the Spaniards' quarters in the center and the outlying Indian neighborhoods (*barrios*) (Chapter 2):

Inside the city, the first Spaniards began by marking off the central portion, an area of some thirteen blocks in each direction, as the zone of white occupation. The region immediately surrounding this *traza* then comprised the colonial Indian communities. . . . Each of the four [communities] was L-shaped at one of the four corners of the interior *traza*, and each necessarily gave up a portion of its territory to the Spanish center. The *traza* was symmetrically laid out with streets flanking rectangular blocks. Though some modifications in its size and internal form were made, its orderly plan always contrasted with the irregular disposition of streets in the Indian wards, and its monumental public and private buildings stood in equally sharp contrast to the Indians' adobe houses.

The Spaniards' intention of keeping the races apart dissolved in the reality of daily urban contact. As Gibson points out, city life promoted contact among peoples and the resultant mixing of the races. Despite all evidence to the contrary, the Spaniards did not easily surrender their notions regarding the immutability of the world order. Thus, at the core of their belief system rested a sense of the universality of their cultural mission. Their belief in the constancy across time and space of the principles of natural law on which they rested their moral and political codes of conduct meant that the world was neatly divided into those who followed the Spaniards' ways and those who needed to be forced into submission.⁹ The Catholic kings, Ferdinand and Isabella, joined the fundamentals of morality, Christianity, and Spanish civilization into a seamless cultural complex that defined all alternatives as heretical, odious, and unacceptable. Later on, the Christian Humanism propagated by Erasmus found very little space to maneuver in Counter-Reformation Spain. Indeed, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church and Spanish society in general left only a minimal space for dissidence.¹⁰

With absolute belief in the supremacy of their ways over all others', the Spaniards constructed a cultural edifice that shut out all disallowed or inexplicable beliefs and behaviors. In principle, their politics was the politics of conformity, their religion one of subservience to authority, their view of themselves a reflection of satisfaction, and their institutions overwhelming. Thus, Spaniards of the fifteenth century did not admit to the cultural or spiritual potentialities of other peoples. Not surprisingly, they transferred their entire sweep of mental and material values to the Western Hemisphere. So much so, in fact, that some scholars would agree with Anthony Pagden that generations later—and unlike their Italian or Dutch counterparts—Spanish subjects in America "had no culture and no history fully independent of what had once been for all of them their 'mother country.'"¹¹

The Middle Period

Historians divide the period of the Spaniards' conquest of the New World into two parts: the Caribbean period and the mainland phase. The Caribbean, or Antillean, period lasted from 1492 to approximately 1520. This was an era of experimentation, blunder, and learning. One of the greatest ironies of world history is that the Spaniards—a people with relatively little overseas experience and ill equipped to carry out large-scale expeditionary waves—managed to accumulate the richest and most far-flung empire known to Europe. Without much firsthand experience overseas on which to base their expectations, the Spaniards were confident of finding great nations, large cities, and vast material cultures. All this was far beyond what they encountered in the Caribbean. In the process, they demanded labor and other services that exceeded the capacity of the islands' native peoples. In the end, the region's Indians succumbed to their mistreatment and to deadly European diseases. By the early sixteenth century, the Indians of the Caribbean had virtually disappeared.

Eager to explore further, command larger human and material resources, and establish a more meaningful empire, the Spaniards had been frequently venturing eastward from the Antilles, reconnoitering the coastal areas of Central America, the Yucatán peninsula, and further north. These probings also entailed contacts with the indigenous peoples, sometimes taking them back to the Caribbean islands as slaves, at other times learning from them about greater nations and riches some distance away. By the second decade of the sixteenth century, equipped with a generation's worth of accumulated information, part fact and part wishful thinking, the Spaniards were poised to launch themselves from the Caribbean to the mainland. By 1521 they had conquered the Aztecs and by 1532 they

had brought down the Incas. Over the next fifty years the Spaniards would fill in and expand their presence, conquering and settling areas throughout much of the Indies.

The Spaniards moved their conquest from the Caribbean to the mainland and consolidated at a remarkable speed their domination over the vast space that would become the Spanish Empire. The conquest phase was largely completed by the 1580s, and, by the start of the seventeenth century, virtually every urban settlement that would have any lasting significance had been created. Within these new spaces, habits of mind and administration persisted well into the postconquest era. The years spanning the seventeenth through much of the nineteenth centuries, known as the "middle period" of Latin American history, witnessed the reconstitution of the racial, administrative, and judicial proclivities of the conquest age, always adjusting for the shifts—often subtle ones—that took place over time.

Not long ago, historians tended to ignore or take very little notice of this period, which begins with the completion of the conquest and traverses the era of significant administrative reforms of the late eighteenth century. More recently, however, the middle period has received much greater attention. Scholars have come to realize that discernibly American patterns slowly developed during this long span of time. Recent research has reflected this understanding by focusing on the evolution of Spanish, Indian, and African interactions, the development of regional economies, the adaptation of European norms to the American reality, the role of ranching and mining, the mechanisms of commercial exchange, and other issues. Going far beyond the previous investigations of imperial politics, recent research has probed into the actual conduct of the postconquest peoples of different regions of Latin America, the overwhelming majority of whom conducted their lives without any direct contact with Europe or Europeans.¹²

We have learned much from this literature. Among the most important lessons are, first, the slow yet profound fracturing of the worldview of fifteenth-century Spaniards had instilled; and second, the regionalization of contacts and exchanges with lasting consequences for political and administrative coherence, an unimaginable concept in the sixteenth century. In the end, the perfectly structured world in which all that was known had a predefined place simply could not be sustained. From the three races familiar to the Spaniards—white, Indian, black—many racial hues were formed; from the singularity and orthodoxy of Roman Catholicism emanated multiple interpretations of Scripture and varied religious practices; from an envisioned linearity of political authority there developed numerous and conflicting political loyalties; and from a simple and direct

commerce between centers of production in Europe and the Indies, new internal markets arose for the sustenance of regional populations. By the last third of the eighteenth century, Latin America was a vastly different—and internally differentiated—place than the conquerors could have ever envisioned.

Spanish law in the Indies had originally constructed the notion of two “estates” or “republics,” one consisting of Indians and the other of whites. Such compartmentalization of peoples and races, however, could never be maintained. In the end, the circulation and contacts of both peoples resulted in the mixing of races. These mestizos, who along with whites, pure Indians, and, in some regions, blacks roamed the countryside and the cities, raised concerns among the authorities. A seemingly endless cycle of attempted control followed by failure took place: ordinances restricting contact and movement, followed by longer lists of racial categories, followed by more restrictive ordinances. Ultimately, no ordinance could counter the reality of racial mixture or the tendency for people to migrate as needed. The historian Charles Gibson describes the careful detail with which the Spaniards laid out the districts within Mexico City, built on the ruins of Tenochtitlán after its fall to the forces of Cortés (Chapter 2). The city was to consist of areas that separated the races, neighborhoods for the exclusive use of Indians, with others established for the residential segregation of the Spaniards. “The regulations spoke,” writes Gibson, “as had preceding regulations, of a separation of Indian peoples in the city for ecclesiastical and tribute purposes. But the new system, once established, did nothing further to separate Indians from other inhabitants.”

The Spaniards did not count the culture and belief systems of Indians as valuable components of their realms. Disdained as much by legislation as by neglect, the general disregard for the Amerindians can be gleaned from the sketches of the city of Lima written in the first third of the seventeenth century by Bernabé Cobo. His descriptions are striking for the relative absence of mention of the indigenous world (Chapter 3). Cobo’s depiction of a maturing Lima is characterized by pride of achievement and the ebullient optimism of an even brighter future. Cobo cannot “foresee the end or limit to Lima’s growth in the future.” But his Lima is a Christian Lima, its architecture that of a European city, and its commerce consists of a European material culture sustained by the foodstuffs of the Americas. In sum, colonial Lima epitomizes the reconstitution of the European world centered in Latin America’s cities.

Cobo was writing about Lima at the same time that Father Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa was traveling throughout the Spanish Indies, noting the diversity contained in its vastness. Vázquez de Espinosa reported

that neither the demographic density nor the concentration of material wealth found in urban centers such as Mexico City and Lima was found elsewhere in Spanish America.¹³ Thus, while the term “city” was commonly assigned to population centers, many of them would not warrant much more than the term “village” in our modern parlance. Yet, despite differences in order of magnitude, they were remarkably similar in matters of administrative domain and even in physical characteristics. They concentrated administrative, political, economic, and religious functions within their spaces.¹⁴ The cities of the Indies functioned as vessels of Spanish culture; moreover, they acted as leading edges, transmitting important elements of this culture into the rural areas.¹⁵

Cobo describes Lima’s central plaza with unrestrained enthusiasm: the seat of viceregal government forms the “largest and most luxurious structure in this kingdom.” Cobo’s comfort and his confidence in Lima is sustained in no small measure by the triumph of civil authority over a militarized and bloody past. It is not a minor point, albeit one delivered en passant, that Cobo makes when describing the presence of the gallows in the central plaza during Pizarro’s time. His mention of their removal by subsequent viceroys, intent on reestablishing peace among the Spanish factions that took up arms against each other soon after the conquest, fits well with his confident view of Lima’s destiny.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the public mind-set and the administrative philosophies emanating from Spain began to diverge. In the process, new and multiple interests and identities appeared, sometimes pitting authorities against subjects, regions against regions, officials against each other, customs against innovations. All this took place in the context of a set of material and demographic conditions that bespoke growth and development.

The Age of Reform

During the eighteenth century, the frequency and volume of movement among the peoples of Ibero-America took a sharp, upward turn. After approximately one hundred years of declining population (especially among Indians), the consequence primarily of disease, the number of people in the Indies surged in this century. The larger cities felt the results of the growing pressure on the land caused by the increase. As the demands by families who lived in rural areas for food and employment outstripped the regional resources, younger members of households sought opportunities elsewhere, especially in the greater urban centers. In the Mexican district of Celaya, for example, over one-third of the households contained no young men between the ages of 15 and 19, the result of an

out-migration pattern that was being replicated throughout much of Mexico. By 1821, Guadalajara's household sizes had been diminished as a consequence of an out-migration rate of over 50 percent by young men and women, aged 15 to 20.¹⁶ By the late eighteenth century, a great part of the population of Spanish America was on the move, and the likeliest destinations were the larger cities. The consequences for the system of social control were not necessarily violent, but always tense for the elites and the authorities, who equated unfettered mobility with anarchy. Concern with the movement of people, usually rural dwellers, Indians, mestizos, and the lower classes, was common among officials who saw it as a consequence of low moral standing and not of social and economic policies.¹⁷

In Mexico, the urban setting tended to be less violent in comparison to the countryside, even while political activity in the cities remained vibrant. It has been argued that the considerable cityward migration undetermined the propensity for collective action—at least in the short run—owing to the social atomization engendered in the urban environment.¹⁸ The process of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century migration from regions that were either poor or undergoing pauperization was widely felt in Spanish America. At the other end of the hemisphere, migration within the Río de la Plata region of Argentina moved populations from some of the stagnant provinces of the interior to the ones with greater economic potential. Thus, by 1810 significant numbers of migrants from the provinces of Catamarca, Santiago del Estero, La Rioja, and San Juan had found their way into the cities of Córdoba and Buenos Aires.¹⁹

The eighteenth century also witnessed a significant expansion in the influence wielded by intellectual and economic circles, invariably located in the cities. By the century's second half, enlightened groups of intellectuals and promoters of the material well-being of different regions were busy discussing and planning the latest ideas for modernizing everything from the economy to the educational and administrative systems. Booster associations, along the lines of those formed by the French Encyclopedists, sprang up throughout Spanish America promoting the economy, creating lending libraries, facilitating fast-evolving liberal trade policies, and, in some cases, substituting for a lethargic royal administration and enhancing the quality of life. For example, in 1792 economic liberals in the city of Havana founded the Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País. It was headed by Francisco Arango, a well-to-do and influential sugar planter. This "Economic Society," modeled after others that had been established in western Europe and Spanish America, had all the appearances of a private club yet performed with great effectiveness in influencing government policy for the benefit of the merchants and sugar planters who

were its members.²⁰ Such organizations were instrumental in advancing infrastructural projects and improving educational facilities. They expanded the information available for the region's economic development.

While renewal was in the air during the second half of the eighteenth century, the period was also accompanied by unrest. Rebellions by Indians, especially in the Andean zones, were a source of deep concern for the authorities and for the white population. Towns and cities were not immune to conflicts engendered by changes brought about by the authorities, as areas in which the lives of most people directly, such as had barely been touched, now experienced the presence of the state through tax collection and an expanded bureaucracy.²¹

Several of the movements of resistance to those late eighteenth-century measures were centered in cities. One of the era's better-known urban protest movements was the *comuneros'* revolt of 1781 in New Granada (the northwestern part of South America, comprised of the area including present-day Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador). Widespread and involving over twenty thousand insurgents at its height, the rebellion combined petty and local grievances on the part of many who felt that their *comunas* (communities) were losing autonomy. A generalized sense that fundamental change was being imposed without consultation with the populace drove many to resist policies enacted in faraway Spain. Local traditions and privileges, dating to no particular legislation but rather to customary practices under the more relaxed oversight of the Hapsburg Crown, were now under attack by efficiency-minded Bourbon technocrats. The resistance by the *comuneros* of New Granada to the Bourbon authorities did not, however, reflect a desire for independence. Far from being a radical departure in the direction of nation-building, the regional revolt represented a desire for the retention of traditional bonds between subject and Crown. Rather than a forward movement in the direction of independence, these rebels sought to put into practice a backward-looking understanding of the pact between ruler and ruled that had provided the foundation for society in Europe's late medieval era.²²

In fact, urban rebellions had begun in New Granada in the 1760s, almost two decades before the *comuneros'* revolt. It was then that the city of Quito was rocked by a series of incidents that tested the royal authorities' will and ability to impose new taxing practices and rates. The resistance that took place in 1765 became known as the "rebellion of the barrios," a name that accurately associated wide-ranging protests with a concern for the maintenance of local traditions. The rebellion coalesced different social and ethnic sectors of the community into resisting Bourbon reforms of the excise system, especially the elimination of tax farming and a more effective collection of sales taxes (*alcabala*) and duties on

locally made brandy (aguardiente). Since ecclesiastical orders also would have been forbidden to produce aguardiente, the gathering resistance also included the clerics of the region, who ultimately brokered the restoration of peace and order. In the end, the rebellion of the barrios followed the pattern of most urban disturbances during this era: it was territorially circumscribed to the issues raised by local protesters—no overarching ideologies bridged distant lands to forge a social movement.

In Brazil, the second half of the eighteenth century also brought a heightened concern with the social disorder that coincided with increased wealth and urban growth. Apprehension combined with justifiable pride comes through in Luis dos Santos Vilhena's portrait of the city of Bahia at the turn of the nineteenth century (Chapter 5). Santos Vilhena describes the "grandeur" of Bahia but worries about uncontrolled urban growth, with the "construction of buildings wherever anyone wished, without any thought for the future." By century's end, Brazilian cities were demonstrating some of the same characteristics discerned in the Spanish-American areas. The growth of population meant an increasingly complicated set of decisions for municipal authorities. Economic growth failed to eradicate extreme poverty, and this was illustrated by the opulence that marked homes and public buildings while a floating population of indigents languished in public areas. In Bahia, the social order was felt to be fragile. "I do not consider it agreeable to political and economic dictates to allow the city to fill up with the three kinds of beggars: whites, mulattoes, and Negroes," writes Santos Vilhena, consciously underplaying his own grave concerns. "Moreover, it does not appear to be a very discreet policy to tolerate crowds of Negroes of both sexes in the streets and public squares of the city."

The Bourbons' fiscal and administrative reforms benefited some areas while they presented serious challenges to others. The reforms' double-edged quality could be seen in their effects on an influential group in any major city, the merchants in control of the import-export trade. The liberalization of trade policies in the late 1770s had presented expanded opportunities for merchants in cities such as Veracruz, Santiago de Chile, and Buenos Aires that had been on the fringe of economic activities. For merchants' groups in the older, more populous viceregal capitals, such as Mexico City and Lima, the new policies had resulted in a challenge, in the form of dangerous competition. The creation of a merchants' guild (*consulado*) in the city of Veracruz meant that provincial trade routes, previously neglected or bypassed, were now increasingly used, a trend stimulated by a new network of merchants who sometimes bypassed their counterparts in Mexico City.²³ These developments had far-reaching consequences, extending beyond the colonial period. The first Mexican rail-

way, for example, which was begun in 1837, followed the route that had been designed in the 1790s by the *consulado* of Mexico City, linking the capital with the cities of Orizaba and Córdoba, until it reached its destination in Veracruz.²⁴

Similar dynamics took place in South America. The designation and expansion of new trade outlets in Chile began to erode the position held by Lima's merchants, traditionally dominant in South America's commerce. By contrast, the city of Santiago took on greater importance and expanded its regional influence.²⁵ It is important to note that these measures did not usually result from agitation originating from within mercantile circles in the colonies; on the contrary, administrative and fiscal changes were based on the economic ideas of Charles III's ministers and were decreed by the authorities in Spain, often against the wishes of the local traders.²⁶

The city of Buenos Aires, too, benefited from the Bourbon reforms, most frequently at the expense of cities in the interior, which fell into an economic malaise. One of the most poignant and representative images evoking the dead weight of past glories was drawn by the Argentine intellectual, Domingo Sarmiento. He described a ritual his mother witnessed with regularity at the end of the eighteenth century while growing up in the interior city of San Juan, lying at the foot of the Andes Mountains.

Once or twice a year an unusual chore took place at home. The large entrance doors, held up by enormous bronze bolts, were closed, and the two interior courtyards were separated from each other in order to prevent the family youngsters from viewing. And then, my mother used to tell me, the negress Rosa, Spanish-speaking and exceedingly curious, would tell her in bizarre whisperings, "today there is *sunning!*" Swiftly, she would place a hand-held ladder against a window that looked out over the patio, and lifted my then-childlike mother, who would carefully raise her head in order to see what was happening below. What a great impression is made seeing things in the flesh, my mother would tell me: the courtyard would be covered with hides on which a thick layer of blackened silver coins was laid out to remove the mildew. And later, two old slaves, custodians of the treasure, walked around from one hide to another, and removed the coins, which made loud sounds.²⁷

The decay of the interior's economic and productive systems—the "mildewing" of some of the venerable colonial cities of the Spanish-American hinterland—would be accelerated over the course of the nineteenth century. By contrast, the reforms were highly beneficial to other cities, especially those which were brought fully into the realm of free trade based on goods produced by industrial Europe.

Buenos Aires represented one of the clearest examples of cities invigorated by the transatlantic commerce of the late eighteenth century.

Designated as the capital of the new viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata in 1776, Buenos Aires became one of the most dynamic cities of South America and underwent a number of improvements. In the central square, the Recova, a long arcade that cut the plaza in half and contained all manner of merchants' stalls, was built. The Recova reflected the Bourbon era's emphasis on commercial development and the activation of investment capital. Like many other Spanish-American cities, Buenos Aires also built an *alamedas* (an extensive park with walking grounds) along the river. *Alamedas* provided testimony to the growing importance of the outdoors in the citizenry's recreational activities. Meantime, central plazas were also beautified. By the start of the nineteenth century, the city was not only the place to be but also the place to be seen.

This energetic pace of life contrasted sharply with the more languid forms of social and commercial exchange of previous times. Writing in 1900, Juan Agustín García noted that the sluggishness of pre-eighteenth-century Buenos Aires was caused by the area's meager resources, the undependable nature of contraband trade, and the capriciousness of local officials, who were impervious to ideas of progress (Chapter 4). For García, the basic ingredient of change was capital. Yet, along with greater opportunities for trade and finance, the other mainstay of the age of enlightened despotism was greater political oversight. Thus, García is correct when he points to a troublesome contradiction peculiar to the era: while Buenos Aires developed significantly in wealth and population, the political influence wielded by its *cabildo* (town council) declined in the face of newly appointed royal officials. This basic incongruity of economic development in the face of increasingly limited political autonomy raised the level of frustration among some local leaders and propelled them to contemplate new political relationships.

Thus, one of the most striking ironies of the Bourbon period was that its liberalization of trade and rationalization of administration brought to the fore a degree of dissension not previously seen. As Richard Morse has pointed out, in the context of the Spanish monarchical authoritarian tradition, the introduction of liberal ideas had a destabilizing effect in that these concepts tended to undermine the legitimacy of traditional authoritarian modes but failed to create a sufficiently accepted basis for authority.²⁸ In the case of most of Spanish America, the political and intellectual debates regarding the validity and efficacy of traditional systems as compared with innovative ones took place in the newly dynamic cities.

Urban areas had always been the repositories of intellectual accomplishments. Universities, learned circles, discussion groups, and printing

presses had all been monopolized by cities, which, in Spanish America, had always constituted the first centers for the circulation of information from Europe. It is no wonder, then, that the transmission of ideas circulating in the early nineteenth century and the political debates that ensued from such ideas would make of the cities reservoirs of doubts about continued union with Spain. The venues for such discussions were the same as before: literary societies, economic improvement associations, Encyclopedist reading and discussion groups, and university circles.

By the start of the nineteenth century, municipal governments in Spanish America had become the principal scene of local, American authority, in part as a consequence of some of the reforms introduced by the Bourbon Crown, which deliberately re-hispanized institutions through the device of political appointments. Starting in the 1760s and 1770s, the Crown embarked on a policy of appointing Spaniards to political posts. This was the consequence of discovering the extent to which creoles, or American-born individuals, had been able to dominate judicial, fiscal, and other administrative posts and councils. By the early 1800s the *audiencias* (regional political bodies responsible for a combined set of judicial, legislative, and even some executive functions) had largely been returned to *peninsulares* beholden to Spain and its royal authorities, thereby reducing the creoles' policymaking space to the *cabildos*.²⁹ Moreover, the most important and powerful *audiencias* had jurisdiction over the same districts as the most powerful *cabildos*, that is, the viceregal capitals. It was not long before political maneuverings in such areas reflected animosities between Americans and Spaniards, creoles and *peninsulares*.

As soon as Spanish-American cities received the news of the forced abdication of Ferdinand VII in 1808 and the appointment of Joseph Bonaparte to the throne by his brother Napoleon, Spanish and creole forces began devising strategies and lining up allies as they positioned themselves to fill the sudden political vacuum across the breadth of Spanish America's urban landscape. In the process, the city became the principal point of reference for political "parties," a term normally used to mean factions or personal retinues, rather than formal institutions of political allegiances. The critical mass of interest groups, along with their leaders and spokesmen, were to be found in the cities, and often only in the cities. Yet, the nominal allegiances among politicians proved insufficient to settle differences among contending parties, whose contests for domination of the political space required more than civilian negotiations. In the end, military prowess became an essential component of politics. The militarization of politics would radically alter the traditional importance of the city in the determination of political direction.

The Challenge of the Countryside and Urban Recovery

Negotiations and machinations continued among the traditional political players who debated the course of action after Napoleon's removal of Ferdinand VII. These discussions often touched on new, and for the empire, dangerous subjects, including alternative structures of government and the determination of policies closer to home and away from distant Spain.

As the news of Ferdinand's captivity spread, capital cities such as Mexico City and Buenos Aires tried to fill the perceived political vacuum by extending their direct control. Some scholars have argued that this period witnessed the rise of an urban imperialism, as major cities attempted to govern their respective hinterlands. In any event, regions were thrown into bitter battles over a protracted period of turmoil as they vied with each other to hold centralized power and dominate vital resources.³⁰

The countryside suffered much more than the city the consequences of the militarization that accompanied political crises in the nineteenth century. Ideologies were debated and plans were proposed in major urban centers, sometimes with the bitterest discourse available to intellectual antagonists. Their principal weapons were rhetorical, aided by such instruments as pasquinades, newspaper articles, editorials, and decrees. "Political society," as the term was used for the participants in the debates, was centered in the city. The countryside presented a sharp contrast.

The political discourse that originated in the cities eventually reached the rural zone. There it was circulated, interpreted by the political chiefs and brokers of the rural communities or by crude village intellectuals, and eventually translated into action as men were drafted and armies mobilized. Meeting places in rural areas often amounted to nothing more than the humble abodes of community leaders, or, frequently, ramshackle structures that may have served as combination bar and general goods stores. In Argentina, these establishments, known as *pulperías*, reflected the urban centers' loss of control over information and resources. A keen analyst of the manner in which information circulated in the countryside notes the power of these informal processes: in the late 1820s "a 'war of public opinion'—in the words of the press—broke out. It was waged mainly in the *pulperías* and small villages. The weapon of choice in this war was the word or, as the press characterized it, the 'inflammatory rumor.' The principal broadcasters were the *pulperia* owners and their 'archist' regular patrons, men of the countryside who used these establishments as their primary places to socialize and keep up with current events. In the villages, store owners were joined by residents,

including parish priests, who also 'incited rebellion' through their homilies."³¹

As the experience of shaping nations in much of Latin America involved costly military approaches, the urban gentry began to associate political restiveness with rural backwardness. Thus, José Manuel Beruti, a chronicler of urban life in Buenos Aires at the start of the nineteenth century, would characterize meetings to discuss issues of political importance as "clubs" in which individuals "of talent" and "wise men" gave speeches and exchanged views on issues related to the public welfare.³² When the armies that had been defending the interests of many of these individuals were defeated in 1820 by forces from the poorer interior provinces, Beruti entered in his diary on October 2, 1820, that "the fatherland, fragmented by contending sides [was] at risk of becoming the victim of petty, insolent, and armed plebeians wishing to bring down the decent people, ruin them and make them their equals in quality and misery."³³

The start of the nineteenth century thus saw an increasingly clearer vision of contending cultures, based on distinctions between cities and the interior. Despite experiences with urban disturbances, the countryside—largely a calm setting during most of the colonial era—came to be known as the principal region of discontent and rebelliousness.³⁴ In Mexico, for example, urban passivity coincided with widespread rural insurrection in the early 1800s; popular rebellions were based largely on rural grievances and often failed to engage the interests or sympathy of the urban classes.³⁵

Cities in Latin America, which had always attracted migrants from the interior, would, in the course of the nineteenth century, experience an acceleration of internal migratory flows. City-bound migrants generally moved from the poorer regions to those in which they expected to realize a better life. Frequently, they were people of color; virtually always they came from humble origins. They found employment in the casual labor market as servants, journeymen, and contract or ad hoc laborers, alternating between periods of unemployment and ephemeral jobs. Their condition, however, also placed them at risk of vagrancy; indeed, the very act of migrating, the physical detachment from one's area of birth, was associated with dangerous transiency and idleness.³⁶ Miguel Samper's depiction of Bogotá reflects the vision of urban anarchy by a member of the city's gentry (Chapter 6):

Parasitism is so developed here that deciding whether to answer a greeting is today a matter to ponder carefully. And paying one of those Castilian compliments, such as "I am at your service," or "Command me," constitutes a real threat to one's pocketbook. Little by little, those smiling and open countenances characteristic of our climate, our race,

and our traditional and daily habits are disappearing because each smile is a stimulus and each stimulus brings a bloodletting.

Joaquín Capelo's depiction of casual laborers illustrates the existence of this growing sector in Lima at the close of the nineteenth century and extends Samper's concerns regarding Bogotá (Chapter 7). He places the growing population of itinerant workers in the category of *servicios menores*, which he refers to as the type of employment that produced no material goods, but rather sustained the already existing sources of wealth, largely in the area of personal services. Capelo does not hide his disdain for the individuals who floated around Lima and other cities of Latin America, moving from one job to another. His frame of reference is quite narrow. "The minor services, however humble the status of the job may be," writes Capelo, "nevertheless have a positive value: *one earns a living*; the bum and the criminal steal it. The most humble servant is infinitely superior to the idler, the thief, and the murderer." The city as observed by Samper and Capelo contained some disturbing elements that sharply contrasted with earlier views of universal truths and feelings of optimistic certainty.

Cities, especially capital cities, regained their prominence in the last third of the nineteenth century. In areas where the colonial power had dissipated as different regions competed for supremacy, political authority once again found its center in the old capitals of the colonial administrative jurisdictions, particularly the viceroalties and *audiencias*. This return to an urban-predominant order was inevitable in light of the preeminent position that cities had enjoyed since the sixteenth century. The reemergence of cities, however, was expedited by the economic conditions that were developing elsewhere, particularly in Europe; technological innovations and new political environments also accelerated the urban recovery.

As political power was recentralized and its effectiveness consolidated, the results could be seen in the hinterlands as cities became the repositories of the new authority. The fear for the loss of social control that underlay the visions of Samper and Capelo were not lost on government officials in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Measures of control were applied, with special emphasis in the countryside. In Brazil, for example, the harsh drought that affected the northeast in the late 1870s aggravated the situation of thousands of *retirantes*, poverty-stricken residents of the region who were recruited to work on inefficient government-sponsored projects. Fraud and exploitation, however, made a mockery of relief efforts. Codifying sentiments long felt by elites in Latin America, the failure of these projects provided leaders with the evidence that the poor were the victims of their own moral shortcomings.

Only compulsory labor laws—to be sure, legally distinct from slavery—coupled with the inculcation of the morally virtuous aspects of work would solve the problem of indigence.³⁷

In the end, however, such methods fell far short of bringing about their intended outcomes: compulsory measures, though often accompanied by harsh treatment, seldom succeeded in binding the peasantry to the land. Despite regulations to limit geographic mobility, population movement, especially cityward migration, had been and would remain an historical reality.³⁸ Thus, the economic dimensions of the countryside and its administration bore consequences for cities, where growth was enhanced by people seeking greater opportunities. For example, Santiago, Chile's capital city, grew at an annual average rate of over 4 percent between 1885 and 1895, mainly as the result of migration within Chile, rather than natural population increase or immigration from abroad.³⁹ Chilean cityward migrants had the same incentives for their relocation as other Latin Americans. The limitations of the countryside combined with the growing industrial base of cities to offer the right combination of inducements.

The economic dimensions that underlay the growing domination of Latin American cities is illustrated in the case of São Paulo by Gilberto Leite de Barros (Chapter 9). One of the key elements in the process was an entrepreneurial spirit found among many residents, who expanded the frontiers of agricultural exploitation and trade well beyond urban confines (although they remained dependent on the urban markets for consumption). Leite de Barros notes that farming and mule trading provided unusually great opportunities for economic mobility: for the first time, "farming came to symbolize a stable profession which enhanced a man's position . . . cloth[ing] him in nobility and dignity . . . [and obliging] him to become a traditional patriarch." For his part, the mule trader significantly facilitated the circulation of capital and goods.⁴⁰

The domination of Brazil's southern region by the city of São Paulo is a further demonstration of the dynamic relationship that existed between the growing export-oriented production of the hinterlands and the expanded administrative and economic capacity of the city. That relationship became a feature of late nineteenth-century Latin America. Leite de Barros could not have put it more succinctly: "The surge of progress that took place in the middle of the nineteenth century due to the cultivation of coffee on the Paulista plateau hastened the expansion of the city of São Paulo."

Even if the wars for independence in much of Spanish America shifted the base of military—and some political—operations away from the primary cities, agricultural regions never won an outright victory. Due to

the failure to establish a durable rural order, political authorities located in central cities now became the incontestable articulators of national destinies. European diplomatic and financial observers, especially those of Great Britain and France, along with their counterparts from the United States, found the political and intellectual leaders located in the major cities to be the most approachable potential partners. They also proved to be the most amenable respondents to proposals for foreign economic projects. With the help of ample credit lines and equipped with investments of unprecedented dimensions, political and military leaders centered in the national capitals were able to acquire railroads and repeating rifles, string telegraph lines and mobilize armies, and secure capital and gain social control. By the early 1900s the upward spiral of economic growth and the centralization of authority were complete. The regional strongmen had given way to even more powerful personalities, more cohesively tied to a matrix of investors—both national and foreign—and professional military officers. Large-scale gains were reported in exports to the United States and western Europe. This was the age of Latin America's primary export boom: an industrial world, hungry for food to nourish its growing populations and for raw materials to use in its manufacturing ventures, found in Latin America bread and ore, cereals and nitrates, meats, and return on capital. And at the center of decision making and resource distribution were the Latin American cities and their elites.

Cities began to grow dramatically in size and opulence. Elites built homes of palatial dimensions, and the straight-line model of street design relaxed into imitations of Paris's undulating boulevards and designated green spaces. The use of public space increased and more people engaged in outdoor activities.⁴¹ The poor continued to live in humble structures, which now included a new residential form: the *conventillo*. As urban population densities increased, so did pressure to optimize the utilization of space. The result was the subdivision of old colonial structures and the consequent rise of the tenement. Thus, wealth and poverty continued to coexist in sharp contrast. Certainly, Latin America's population did not become primarily urban; indeed, a majority of each country's population at the end of World War I still lived in rural areas. Moreover, even the most crowded cities, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Mexico City, were not nearly as large as Paris, New York, or London.⁴² But two interrelated trends clearly had been established and would only be reinforced over the course of the twentieth century. First, capital cities far outdistanced all other locations in the concentration of demographic and financial resources. Thus, even if in the 1890s Guatemala City, with its 72,000 people, was dwarfed by Buenos Aires and its 664,000 residents, the two cities

shared a common economic and political dominance over their respective nations. Second, the capital cities' dominance by the start of the 1900s attracted streams of migrants, which have grown uninterrupted through-out this century and which were made up of people engaged in both internal and international movement. Thus, the preeminence gained during the era of the export boom paved the way for what ultimately turned into a macrocephalic condition: the concentration in one city of population, financial, and political resources out of all proportion to their distribution throughout the rest of the country. Moreover, the degree of social and economic development became closely associated with the extent of urbanization. Thus, Latin American nations with advanced economies, such as Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina, displayed the highest urban concentrations.

In the first decades of the 1900s some observers were already noting these patterns with dismay. In 1918, Juan Alvarez observed that "Buenos Aires costs the Argentine republic dearly" (Chapter 8). He commented on the inefficiency that resulted from one city dominating and demanding so much in the way of investment, infrastructure, labor, and development from the rest of the country. Some economists, too, worried about the *nature* of the commercial relationship with the countries of western Europe and the United States, seeing the dangers of an overemphasis on primary production to the exclusion of industrial development. In 1918, while Juan Alvarez worried about the costs being exerted on the nation by the city of Buenos Aires, the Argentine economist Alejandro Bunge and his colleagues sounded a warning about the prevailing model—stagnation would result from the overspecialization on cattle and crops on the pampas. Only the sponsorship of diversification by the state, especially in the industrial sector, could prevent the worst effects of a skewed economic relationship with the industrial world.⁴³ By the end of World War II, there was enough consensus on the need of the state to sustain industrial development to codify the theories into import-substitution programs that would further develop principal cities, not only as centers of consumption but also as major focal points of production.⁴⁴

The Leviathan

Nationalism combined with practical considerations, including the satisfaction of growing and diverse political constituencies in the cities, and economic development theories to create significant opportunities to build industrial programs. The roots of such development in the larger Latin American economies had been planted during the Great Depression, when the virtual absence of foreign capital investments increased

the possibilities for national entrepreneurs to gain shares in the domestic manufacturing environment. This process was accelerated during World War II, when Latin America benefited from large volumes of commodity exports at high prices. Furthermore, the war extended the period of opportunity for domestic entrepreneurs insofar as neither capital investments nor imported manufactured goods could be found easily.

As administered by state-sponsored economic planning boards, each nation's program of import substitution became the leading edge of economic development. In Mexico, for example, the government embarked on a system of direct control of imports, thereby protecting national manufacturing from foreign competition.⁴⁵ Mexico's metropolitan areas, especially Mexico City and Monterrey, were poised to take advantage of these conditions. People flocked to these areas as at no time before as industrial development encouraged the continuance of the migratory traditions of the nation's hinterland. In 1940 the city of Monterrey contained 186,000 people and Mexico City was home to 1.5 million individuals. The next two decades saw Monterrey's population grow by an astounding 91 and 95 percent, respectively. Mexico City's population grew 85 percent between 1940 and 1950 and another 70 percent between 1950 and 1960. Net internal migration accounted for the overwhelming majority of this growth: no more than 30 percent of the males living in Monterrey in the mid-1960s had been born in the city.⁴⁶ The story is repeated with varying degrees of demographic growth: Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Caracas, Bogotá, Santiago, Buenos Aires, Lima—these and other cities had grown by the 1970s into immense administrative, social, and cultural webs, internally complex and externally tied to the rest of their respective nations through the networks woven by the migrants themselves.

Sociologists and anthropologists began to discover the highly dynamic nature of Latin America's rural-urban migration process. They also began to analyze the intimate relationship between the characteristics of migration and the information flow that crisscrosses the spaces between Latin America's rural communities and metropolitan areas. Furthermore, they discovered that migrants' social relationships and structures of exchange once inside the major cities are often nothing more than the reconstitution of the linkages and exchanges that existed in their small towns of origin. These social ties within the big cities are not only expressions of the migrants' continued attachment to their communal roots but are also essential for their urban survival.⁴⁷

Cities in Latin America tell a story of dynamism and tremendous growth. Although there is nothing new about the dominance of capital cities in Latin America, or about their determination of what goes on (or fails to) in the most remote regions of their countries, the pace and chal-

lenge of their growth have increased dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century. Historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and journalists have analyzed the patterns of, and the consequences arising from, the migration that accounts for much of the urban growth of twentieth-century Latin America. Unfortunately, we have precious few accounts of the experiences of migrants written in their own words. One exception is the diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus, an impoverished Brazilian who, as a young woman, moved with her daughter from the state of Minas Gerais to the thriving metropolis of São Paulo (Chapter 10). Blessed with an unusual gift for writing, she kept a journal, which was published in 1960 and subsequently translated into several languages.⁴⁸ *Child of the Dark*, the English-language version, depicts the travails of those who, attracted by the city's presumed opportunities, barely managed their subsistence within the labyrinths of their slums. Through her descriptions of daily life in metropolitan Brazil, the reader gains insight into the difficulties of survival. The diary opened the eyes of countless Brazilians to the instances of violence, alcoholism, disease, and hunger that characterized the daily lives of thousands of people a short distance from their own neighborhoods.

Growth, complexity, and even personal struggle have also enhanced cultural richness. The Brazilian samba, a rich blend of poverty and music, is one of the most exciting sounds of the city. In the book *Samba*, Alma Guillermoprieto reveals that in Rio de Janeiro poor blacks combine musical traditions from the slave-holding days of the nineteenth century with modern survival strategies centered around samba schools, where they socialize and express their African roots.⁴⁹ Public dancing during festivals is a common feature of Latin America's urban landscape. It is also one of the most inclusive activities in societies that for so long and in subtle ways have segregated the rich from the poor. Dancing in Rio is as essential a part of urban life as it is a vibrant expression of popular culture. In this regard, the massive numbers of migrants who have settled into Latin America's cities have significantly changed the cultural landscape.

The incorporation of popular traditions into the public spheres of culture is testimony to the dynamic changes brought about by the growth of the popular sector in Latin America's cities. Gone are the days of the prohibition of milling around by the poor or the restrictions against public dancing. During the second half of the nineteenth century, carnival celebrants in the Argentine cities of Salta and Corrientes had been restricted "by unspoken convention" to the unpaved portions of the plazas. In contrast, by the midtwentieth century, workers in industrial cities in the same country used common spaces for festive behavior, deliberately

shattering the conventional boundaries, established by the elites, to regulate public behavior.⁵⁰

As metropolitan areas have turned into demographic giants, they have become increasingly difficult to administer. Perhaps the clearest example of unrestrained Latin American urban growth is Mexico City, home today to approximately twenty million people, or nearly one-quarter of the nation's population. With an average of more than five thousand people per square kilometer, Mexico City contains the greatest population density in the world. To judge by recent trends, further growth is assured: by the year 2000, nearly thirty million people will call Mexico City home. Jonathan Kandell portrayed this urban behemoth in his 1988 "biography" of the city (Chapter 11). Kandell grew up in Mexico City and covered the beat for the *New York Times* in the 1980s. His account demonstrates how people continue to arrive, despite the city's inability to absorb them. In his treatment of Roberto Jara, an ordinary migrant, one gains an appreciation of the multiple dimensions that figure in the pull of the city and the push of the countryside. The reader is given a lively tour of the Federal District since the 1940s when it grew from a charming city of 1.5 million souls—a city where "the air was clear"—to a baffling, smog-ridden megalopolis. Kandell employs personal conflicts and dramatic episodes to portray sharply contrasting images of the city—its attractions and its nightmares. Readers will have to decide which visions resonate more; quite likely, as is the case with much of Latin America, the exuberant and the adverse will meld into inextricable contradictions.

Conclusions

Latin Americans have historically imagined the city in positive ways, that is, they have recognized it as the locus of a particular type of civilization that endows its members with a more comprehensive existence. This is not a perspective shared by all cultures. The British tradition, for example, has viewed the city as a venue for corruption, a space fraught with dangers for the young and the innocent; peace and safety are found, by contrast, in the countryside. These views hold that the city erodes, rather than endows, civilized existence. We can see expressions of these notions in the literature of English writers such as Charles Dickens, beginning with the Industrial Revolution. In the United States, the city has been similarly regarded as a place where freedom and moral development are compromised.⁵¹ It is not surprising, therefore, that in both England and the United States, the university—that most comprehensive center of higher learning—was established in the pastoral purity of the country-

side. In Latin America, education, particularly higher-level education, was a privilege accorded exclusively to the city.

The positive nature assigned to the city in historical Latin America was derived as much from what the city contained as from what the countryside lacked. By denying so many of its assets to the rural areas over the centuries, the Latin American city has pulled in millions of people who found little choice in the matter. In the process, it has shattered families, traditions, and small communities, which, in turn, have had to be reconstituted in the face of considerable odds and in an incomparably more impersonal environment. In parts of Latin America today, cities are no longer held in the same high regard; the weight and power of municipal authorities have been weakened significantly in cities where crime and overcrowding have made human life a cheap—and disposable—commodity. Police have given up on many barrios in Mexico City, Bogotá, Lima, Rio de Janeiro, and elsewhere, where their own safety is not guaranteed. It is one of the supreme ironies that urban areas with concentrations of poverty-stricken folk and people of color are today effectively forbidden to public safety officers, the elites' instruments of power and authority. This represents a reversal of the conditions created in the sixteenth century by the Spaniards, who delineated the Indians' barrios in order to maintain them apart. Today these areas have become, in effect, autonomous urban regions where citizens' groups have filled the vacuum left by the authorities. As a result, self-sufficient communities have arisen from within the boundaries of major cities in a demonstration, once again, of the resilience of urban life in Latin America.⁵²

The expansion of Latin American cities into suburban regions, beyond the jurisdictional boundaries set by urban administrators, has embraced both slums and middle-class areas. If the *favelas* on the outskirts of São Paulo formed the backdrop of Carolina Maria de Jesus's existence, the districts of Copacabana, Ipanema, and Leblón absorbed the middle class's expansion out of the center of Rio de Janeiro. The same process of territorial expansion on the part of the middle class took place in other areas, such as Providencia and Tobalaba in Santiago, San Angel and Pedregal in Mexico City, Pocitos and Carrasco in Montevideo, Chapinero and Chicó in Bogotá.⁵³ At the same time, the middle class was buffeted by the highly inflationary era of the 1970s and 1980s. The exceptional growth of Latin America's foreign debt during the 1980s placed an enormous financial burden on large segments of the middle class. Its survival in many cases depended on speculation in the urban real estate market, which, in turn, spurred further construction. Today, the Latin American city provides a landscape of sharp contrasts: high-rise structures share the urban core with crumbling tenements, while rings of

American-style suburbs randomly synchronize with "towns" consisting of precariously built housing.

The city has been a feature of Latin America for over five hundred years. Even as its culture changes, indeed, *because* of its adaptability to change, its contrasts and its diversity will continue. Our own vision of the city will surely change as well. In the process, the lenses through which we analyze urban culture, social relationships, and economic exchanges will need continued adjustment, refracting the past and its actors.

Notes

1. José Ortega y Gasset, *La revolución de las masas* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1937).
2. Patricia Seed, "'Failing to Marvel': Atahualpa's Encounter with the Word," *Latin American Research Review* 26, no. 1 (1991): 15.
3. Steve J. Stern, "The Rise and Fall of Indian-White Alliances: A Regional View of 'Conquest' History," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 61 (August 1981): 472.
4. *Ibid.*, 473.
5. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The Conquest of New Spain*, trans. with an introduction by J. M. Cohen (New York: Penguin Books, 1963), 232.
6. *Ibid.*, 234–35.
7. Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 87.
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9. Peggy K. Liss, *Mexico under Spain, 1521–1556* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 4.
10. Teodoro Hampe-Martínez, "The Diffusion of Books and Ideas in Colonial Peru: A Study of Private Libraries (XVI and XVII Centuries)," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73 (May 1993): 211–33.
11. Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 91–92.
12. The titles are too numerous to list here, but a representative sample of topics would include the following works: Peter Bakewell, *Silver Entrepreneurship in Seventeenth-Century Potosí: The Life and Times of Antonio López de Quiroga* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988); Stephanie Blank, "Patrons, Clients, and Kin in Seventeenth-Century Caracas: A Methodological Essay in Colonial Spanish-American Social History," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54 (May 1974): 260–84; Richard Boyer, "Mexico in the Seventeenth Century: Transition of a Colonial Society," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 57 (August 1977): 455–78; David A. Brading, *The First America: The*

Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots, and the Liberal State, 1492–1867 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Lolita Gutiérrez Brockington, *The Leverage of Labor: Managing the Cortés Haciendas in Tehuantepec, 1588–1688* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989); Fred Bronner, "Peruvian Encomenderos in 1630: Elite Circulation and Consolidation," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 57 (November 1977): 633–59; Thomas Calvo, "The Warmth of the Hearth: Seventeenth-Century Guadalupe Families," in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 287–312; François Chevalier, *Land and Society in Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Jeffrey A. Cole, "An Abolitionism Born of Frustration: The Conde de Lemos and the Potosí Mita, 1667–1673," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 63 (May 1983): 307–33; José Cuello, "The Persistence of Indian Slavery and Encomienda in the Northeast of Colonial Mexico, 1577–1723," *Journal of Social History* 21 (Summer 1988): 683–700; Nicholas Cushner, *Jesuit Ranches and the Agrarian Development of Colonial Argentina, 1650–1767* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Brian Evans, "Migration Processes in Upper Peru in the Seventeenth Century," in *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, ed. David J. Robinson (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 62–85; Valerie Fraser, *The Architecture of Conquest: Building in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1535–1635* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990); J. I. Israel, *Race, Class, and Politics in Colonial Mexico, 1610–1670* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975); Elsa Malvido, "Migration Patterns of the Novices of the Order of San Francisco in Mexico City, 1649–1749," in *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, ed. David J. Robinson (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 181–92; Cheryl English Martin, "Popular Speech and Social Order in Northern Mexico, 1650–1830," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32 (January 1990): 305–24; Muriel Nazzari, "Parents and Daughters: Change in the Practice of Dowry in São Paulo (1600–1770)," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 70 (November 1990): 639–65; John L. Phelan, *The Kingdom of Quito in the Seventeenth Century: Bureaucratic Politics in the Spanish Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967); David J. Robinson, ed., *Migration in Colonial Spanish America* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Eduardo Saguier, "The Contradictory Nature of the Spanish American Colonial State and the Origin of Self-Government in the Río de la Plata Region: The Case of Buenos Aires in the Early Seventeenth Century," *Revista de Historia de América* 97 (1984): 23–44; Patricia Seed, *To Love, Honor, and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts Over Marriage Choice, 1574–1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Susan A. Soeiro, "The Social and Economic Role of the Convent: Women and Nuns in Colonial Bahia, 1677–1800," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54 (May 1974): 209–32; Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982); Mark D. Stuchman, ed., *The Middle Period in Latin American History: Beliefs and Attitudes, 17th–19th Centuries* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1989); Eric Van Young, "Mexican Rural History Since Chevalier: The Historiography of the Colonial Hacienda," *Latin American Research Review* 28, no. 3 (1983): 5–62; and Ann M. Wightman, *Indigenous Migration and Social Change: The Forasteros of Cuzco, 1570–1720* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990).

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29. For the effects of these changes in the affairs of the vicerealty of Peru, see John R. Fisher, "The Intendant System and the Cabildos of Peru, 1784-1810," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 49 (August 1969): 430-53; and John R. Fisher, *Government and Society in Colonial Peru* (London: Athlone Press, 1970).
30. Nettie Lee Benson, ed., *Mexico and the Spanish Cortes, 1810-1822: Eight Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), 209.
31. Pilar González Bernaldo, "Social Imagery and Its Political Implications in a Rural Conflict: The Uprising of 1828-29," in *Revolution and Restoration: The Rearrangement of Power in Argentina, 1776-1860*, ed. Mark D. Szuchman and Jonathan C. Brown (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 185. For the effectiveness of countryside gathering places, see, among others, the narrative of Colonel Prudencio Arnold, *Un soldado argentino* (Buenos Aires: EUDEBA, 1970), 26-28. The power of priests to mobilize the masses was considerable. Evidence abounds that the clergy was effective in recruiting men for armed struggles throughout Latin America. In a letter dated December 21, 1828, the Argentine political leader J. M. Díaz Vélez wrote to General Juan Lavalle advising him to replace a troublesome priest and warning him to take heed of such matters: "Do not tell me, my friend, that priests are not important, for they very much are." Archivo General de la Nación VII-1-3-6, fol. 80-81. For the Mexican case, see Hugh M. Hamill, *The Hidalgo Revolt* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966); and Wilbert H. Timmons, *Morelos: Priest, Soldier, Statesman of Mexico* (El Paso: Texas Western College Press, 1963).
32. José Manuel Beruti, *Memorias curiosas, Biblioteca de Mayo* (Buenos Aires: Senado de la Nación, 1960), IV:3784, 3822.
33. *Ibid.*, IV:3933.
34. John Tutino argues that the rural passivity of the Mexican colonial era resulted from Crown policies aimed at maintaining Indian village communities as counterweights to Spanish and Mexican landowners. See John Tutino, "Agrarian Social Change and Peasant Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Mexico: The Example of Chalco," in *Riot, Rebellion, and Revolution: Rural Social Con-*

fielt in Mexico, ed. Friedrich Katz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 95-140.

35. Eric Van Young, "Islands in the Storm," 130-55.
36. Ricardo D. Salvatore, "Labor Control and Discrimination: The Contrataista System in Mendoza, Argentina, 1880-1920," *Agricultural History* 60 (Summer 1986): 52-80.
37. Gerald Greenfield, "The Great Drought and Elite Discourse in Imperial Brazil," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 72 (August 1992): 375-400.
38. See Arnold J. Bauer, "Rural Workers in Spanish America: Problems of Peonage and Oppression," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 59 (February 1979): 34-63; Ricardo D. Salvatore and Jonathan C. Brown, "Trade and Proletarianization in the Late Colonial Banda Oriental: Evidence from the Estancia de las Vacas, 1791-1805," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 67 (August 1987): 431-59.
39. Peter DeShazo, *Urban Workers and Labor Unions in Chile, 1902-1927* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 4.
40. A similar process of entrepreneurship was under way in the Argentine coastal regions, beginning in the 1860s, when agriculture and pastoral production was increased by the incorporation of underutilized land, large-scale immigrant labor, the importation of capital, and the creation of new commercial and transportation networks. Thus, capitalist enterprise extended into areas that had not yet been active in commercialization and production and satisfied new demands; see Leandro H. Gutiérrez and Juan Suriano, "Between Rise and Fall: Self-Employed Workers in Buenos Aires, 1850-1880," in *Essays in Argentine Labour History, 1870-1930*, ed. Jeremy Adelman (London: Macmillan and Company, 1992).
41. The relationship of urban landscape in Latin America with evolving economic and political domains was explored in a series of papers presented at the Latin American Studies Association Congress in Los Angeles in September 1992. See Barbara Tannenbaum, "A Capital City by Design: Mexico City in the Porfiriato, 1876-1910"; Mark D. Szuchman, "Architecture and Political Transition in Urban Argentina: From Ancien Régime to Liberalism"; James Holton, "Regulating Labor and Domesticating Dangerous Classes: Urban Planning and Home Ownership in São Paulo"; and David Myers, "Imagining Democracy: Caracas and the Consolidation of the Punto Fijo Regime."
42. Sánchez Albornoz, *The Population of Latin America*, 180.
43. Juan Carlos Korol and Hilda Sábato, "Incomplete Industrialization: An Argentine Obsession," *Latin American Research Review* 25, no. 1 (1990): 8-9.
44. *Ibid.*, 11.
45. Jorge Balán, Harley L. Browning, and Elizabeth Jelin, *Men in a Developing Society: Geographic Mobility in Monterrey, Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 42.
46. *Ibid.*, 61-62.
47. Larissa Lomnitz, "Migration and Network in Latin America," in *Current Perspectives in Latin American Urban Research*, ed. Alejandro Portes and Harley L. Browning (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976), 133-50, shows these patterns for Mexico City. Repeated instances of migration back and forth from the hinterlands to major cities have been shown by urban sociologists; see Alejandro Portes and John Walton, *Urban Latin America: The Political Condition from Above and Below* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976).

48. For a study of the work's genesis and impact, see Robert M. Levine, "The Cautionary Tale of Carolina María de Jesús," *Latin American Research Review* 29, no. 1 (1994): 55-83.

49. Alma Guillermoprieto, *Samba* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990).

50. James R. Scobie, *Secondary Cities of Argentina: The Social History of Corrientes, Salta, and Mendoza, 1850-1910* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 83-84; and Daniel James, "October 17th and 18th, 1945: Mass Protest, Peronism, and the Argentine Working Class," *Journal of Social History* 21 (Spring 1988): 441-61. James refers to E. P. Thompson's notions of popular ridicule against symbols of authority; see Thompson, "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class," *Social History* 3, no. 2 (May 1978): 133-65.

51. For a view of the city in the American mind, see Morton White and Lucia White, *The Intellectual versus the City: From Thomas Jefferson to Frank Lloyd Wright* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

52. Robert Gay, "Neighborhood Associations and Political Change in Rio de Janeiro," *Latin American Research Review* 25, no. 1 (1990): 102-18; and Alejandro Portes, "Latin American Urbanization in the Years of the Crisis," *Latin American Research Review* 24, no. 3 (1989): 7-44.

53. José Luis Romero, *Latinoamérica: Las ciudades y las ideas* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores, 1976), 374.