

C E P A L

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UNITED NATIONS

29

# CEPAL

## Review

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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#### Notes and explanation of symbols

The following symbols are used in tables in the *Review*:

Three dots (...) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

A dash (—) indicates that the amount is nil or negligible.

A blank space in a table means that the item in question is not applicable.

A minus sign (-) indicates a deficit or decrease, unless otherwise specified.

A point (.) is used to indicate decimals.

A slash (/) indicates a crop year or fiscal year, e.g., 1970/1971.

Use of a hyphen (-) between years, eg., 1971-1973, indicates reference to the complete number of calendar years involved, including the beginning and end years.

Reference to "tons" mean metric tons, and to "dollars", United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.

Unless otherwise stated, references to annual rates of growth or variation signify compound annual rates.

Individual figures and percentages in tables do not necessarily add up to corresponding totals, because of rounding.

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# CEPAL

## Review

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## Note

On 29 April 1986 Raúl Prebisch died at his home in Las Vertientes, near Santiago, Chile. *CEPAL Review* lost its founder and Director; the institution, its most distinguished intellectual; and the Third World, a profound expert on its problems and stout defender of its interests. The sense of loss that his death has brought to all who knew him is on the same outstanding scale as his vital energy, his fraternal friendliness and his gift for creating ideas and organizations. In homage to his memory, *CEPAL Review* felt it appropriate that Aníbal Pinto, his colleague and friend for so many years, should write the words of farewell. These are followed by the text of the speech delivered by Raúl Prebisch at the twenty-first session of ECLAC, only a few days before his death. The rest of this issue—the last directed by him—is devoted to youth, its problems and aspirations. This is what he would have wished, since he was convinced that it is the young who reflect with crystal clearness the urgent dilemmas of our time.

The Technical Secretary



## Raúl Prebisch

(1901-1986)

Of one thing we can be absolutely sure: the death of Dr. Prebisch will not mean that his ideas are forgotten or eclipsed. They will not, of course, remain unscathed or permanently topical with the passage of time, but they will certainly constitute decisive testimony of the evolution of Latin America in the last half century. No-one reconstructing the region's history will be able to ignore the constant flow of hypotheses and propositions that sprang from his endeavour to decipher the course of events and conceive solutions to our economic and social problems. For he belonged, without doubt, to those who set themselves the task of both interpreting and transforming the current world; his legacy spread out and took root in wide areas far beyond the academic or institutional spheres. Naturally, the enduring quality of his ideas will not imply absolution on the part of those who criticized them from right and left. Possibly the opposite will occur: their critical scrutiny will be heightened. But the truth is that this will be yet another testimony to their importance: to the fact that it is and will be very difficult to analyse this period without taking into consideration his main appraisals.

The outstanding significance of his ideas, of his intellectual activity, goes hand in hand with a paradoxical circumstance: namely, their relative impersonality. Contrary to usual practice, his contribution was never personalized. If we look at his works, especially his contributions to conferences or seminars, we will never find a reference to "I think this or that". He was always an institutionalist; a man bent on transcending his individual dimension to place himself in a sphere of social witness —of "organic intellectual" — as a Gramsci sympathizer might venture to put it. That is why those who knew him well often remarked to him, half in earnest and half in jest, that he was like the archetype of the missionary, despite his tranquil agnosticism. Of course, the real reason for this characterization was his possession of that rare gift, modesty, deeply rooted and spontaneous, which went along with his great personality and imposing aura of authority, so that they never eclipsed his natural good-fellowship and sense of humour.

From another angle, the fact that his unceasing contributions have been institutionalized and have become part of ECLAC's thinking, enriching the efforts of the organization he created and the work of other economists and sociologists of like mind, implies a great responsibility for those who follow in his footsteps, who will assume the duty of maintaining and renewing his legacy, continuing to break new ground in the future.

Dr. Prebisch was a man of many worlds: first and foremost, because his ideas and proposals went far beyond the frontiers of his country and the region. Not only was he one of the great intellectual figures of Latin America in this century; he was also considered one of themselves by the representatives of the periphery, while he won respect and attention in the centres, whether capitalist or socialist, even though they might differ from his standpoint.

In looking back on his long and fruitful life it is possible to identify a succession of periods or cycles, defined by his arrival and establishment in different settings and the extensive renovation of his stock of ideas, which in each phase achieved new dimensions without ever losing sight of their guiding threads. At the close of his work, almost as a predestined end or ever-present desire, he returned to his country of origin, though without sacrificing his other ties and identities.

The first stage in his long career was his Argentine period: decisive crucible for his later development. After graduating (1923) and being appointed lecturer in Political Economy at the University of Buenos Aires (1925-1948), he entered the conservative world of banking and finance: a phase which culminated with his designation as first Director of the influential Central Bank of his country (1935-1943).

From this vantage point he faced the transition from years of outstanding prosperity to the vicissitudes of the great depression, which, though not so painful as in other countries of the area, shook the social and political structure together with the orthodox ideology prevailing in the economic field.



Those testing years indubitably marked the parting of the ways between those who clung to the principle that the best policy was to have no policy and to wait for a spontaneous change of wind and those who came to the conclusion —through the force of events and the ensuing reflection— that something should and could be done to counteract their effects. In the Master's own words, "The formation of ideas in those years was greatly influenced by the world depression. Urged on them by the need to tackle the very adverse effects of that phenomenon, I gradually had to throw overboard neoclassical theories that had nourished me in my university youth" (Prebisch, 1981).

Argentina does not seem to have been one of the economies that veered most sharply towards heterodox expedients and objectives —as happened in Brazil and Chile, for example. Nonetheless, particularly in the banking and financial field, its policy was aligned with those that sought to reanimate the domestic market in order to counteract the restraints of the external crisis (Díaz Alejandro, 1983). As someone already remarked in this respect, they too were Keynesians before Keynes. Although we do not know of any documented evidence on the influence of the great English economist on Prebisch, there can be little doubt that Keynes became one of the sources of his new heterodoxy: so much so that he wrote one of the first studies on the subject in Latin America (Prebisch, 1947).

Be that as it may, this source of inspiration seems secondary in the body of theory that he was to construct in the light of his analysis and policies on the great crisis, both in the Central Bank and later in his activity as an academic and consultant. During these years, he was opening up the way towards his Latin American period. He entered this with a long-term outlook because he did not stop at the reactivating expedients already referred to, but continued to examine the respective roles that had been played by those wild fluctuations in the economies of the centres and the periphery, in which the former were the dynamic agents and the latter their indirect victims. And from there, progressively, he went on disentangling the historical and structural elements that sustained this state of affairs and had their central root in what he called the "outworn scheme" of the international division of labour implanted by the Pax Britannica under the theoretical and ideological mantle of the classical economists, particularly Ricardo.

On taking up the post of Executive Secretary of ECLAC (1949-1963), he was able not only to continue his work, but even to devote himself entirely to this research, gathering around him a group of young economists who supported his efforts and, later, made their own contributions to the formation of ECLAC's thinking.

The scrutiny of the aforesaid historical mould and of its negative results for the periphery —deterioration of the terms of trade, concentration of the fruits of technical progress in the centres, different patterns of dependence for the periphery, etc.— which are today so patent, led logically to positive proposals. These were summed up in the theory of comprehensive industrialization —going beyond the purely sectoral approach— conceived as an instrumental of structural diversification designed to foster the growth of labour productivity, the expansion of employment opportunities and the establishment of new forms of insertion into the international economy capable of transcending mere specialization in exports of primary commodities.

We cannot enlarge on these topics here, but it is important to recall that these analyses found attentive ears in other parts of the periphery, besides radically renewing the traditional store of ideas on the morphology of dependence. It is not surprising, therefore, that this opened up a third cycle for the Master which took him to UNCTAD and converted him into the most eloquent and influential spokesman of the Third World.

Even so, he never severed his ties with Latin America. He remained bound to it through ILPES: a leading instrument in the development of ideas and techniques on planning and in the training of personnel qualified to carry them out. After all this, with seventy-five years behind him, he came back to ECLAC on a full-time basis to set afoot yet another of his ventures, *CEPAL Review*, in which he embarked on a bold intellectual expedition: an exhaustive investigation of the nature of what he termed "peripheral capitalism".

Here he sought unreserved, though with his usual critical judgement to associate economic analysis with social and political variables, always keeping in view the need to reconcile material development aims with the requisites of equity and democratic co-existence. His comprehensive and acute analysis laid bare vital issues. And while he did not stint his censure of the "privileged-consumer society" and its incapacity to put the economic surplus—real or potential—to socially beneficial use, neither did he fail to condemn populist aberrations, the deception and threat behind the illusory attractions of inflation, or the sterile bloating of the State machinery. Some objected to the radicalism of his articles on the social use of the surplus, while others disagreed with his mistrust of the immoderate extension of public ownership and the consequent abolition of private property. Some saw him as a revolutionary, others as a reformist.

In fact, he was neither the one nor the other, but could rather be placed in the category of the great reformers, for whom change goes hand in hand with continuity, with the accent being placed at different times on different aspects. From this standpoint, there can be little doubt that the Master saw the present time as a period in which the accent should be placed on change.

In the end, he completed the long cycle of his voyage through life by returning with his ideas and preoccupations to his own country, where he collaborated generously and wholeheartedly in the democratic enterprise of President Alfonsín.

An admirable history of achievement. And just as we are convinced, as we said at the outset, that his ideas will continue to be indispensable for the understanding of Latin American history in this century, it is no less certain in our mind that for those who knew him time will never erase the memory of his great human qualities.

Anibal Pinto

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## Address delivered by Dr. Raúl Prebisch at the twenty-first session of ECLAC

(Mexico City, 24 April 1986)

Mr. President, Mr. Executive Secretary, officers of the Session and participants in this Conference: Yesterday we listened to a memorable speech by the President of Mexico in which he referred in unequivocal terms to the need for a renovation of ECLAC's thinking: a suggestion which is of course stimulating to those of us within ECLAC who are of the same mind.

In the face of the tremendous problems—all of them highly complex—which Latin America and the Caribbean are having to face today, an overhauling of ideas becomes an inescapable necessity. Nor has it been a matter of concern only in recent years, but has long been claiming attention. The dramatic character of current events, however, demands that the task recommended to ECLAC by the President of Mexico should be embarked upon with special vigour. What are the reasons for this? There are many. From the internal standpoint, the most important relates to the implications of the radical changes that have taken place in the structure of society and in the power relations that so strongly influence income distribution and, in the last analysis, capital accumulation.

To put it briefly—since this is not the occasion for academic disquisitions—I would say that the form of accumulation of reproductive capital—that is to say, of the capital that multiplies income, employment and productivity—is out of step with the structural changes that have occurred in our societies. The fruits of the considerable technical progress that has been achieved in recent decades have been largely concentrated in privileged strata whose dynamic mission should be (as it has been in the history of capitalism in the centres) capital accumulation. The primary source of capital accumulation ought to lie, according to the system, precisely in those privileged strata.

But what has happened in our countries in these decades of which I am speaking? There has been frenzied imitation of the patterns of consumption of the centres. With a much lower level of productivity, we are racing to copy the consumption patterns of the centres, where capital accumulation and productivity have been developing for a very long time indeed. In other words, the mission of the privileged strata has been fulfilled only in part, because another part of the fruits of technical progress has been allotted to the privileged consumer society. I think we must recognize this fundamental fact: in some countries to a greater, in others to a lesser degree, the imitative consumption of the upper strata has militated against capital accumulation and, in consequence, has limited the productive absorption of manpower, which has largely been left to drag along at the bottom of the social structure. Unemployment and underemployment are ever-present witnesses of these facts.

The time has gone by, however, when the labour force of Latin America and the Caribbean submitted meekly to the market laws, and when the State maintained a *laissez-faire* attitude in respect of income distribution. This is manifest everywhere, although in different degrees. What is happening, then? As these new situations are brought about, new forms of private and social consumption on the part of the labour force emerge, not at the expense of the privileged consumption of the well-to-do strata, but superimposed upon it, just as the sometimes hypertrophic development of the State, which increases public spending, generally does so over and above privileged consumption rather than to its detriment. I am referring not only to civil expenditure but also to military expenditure, which in some instances has soared to impressive figures.

Accordingly, there has been a superimposition of forms of expenditure whose aggregate increase tends to outstrip the growth rate of productivity; and inflationary phenomena then supervene that are different from those we have seen in the past and that cannot be dealt with by what were once effective methods. A restrictive monetary policy was efficacious in former times,

under our countries' bygone type of capitalism, in controlling or correcting inflation; today it is so no longer. I am not criticizing central banks and governments which have had to resort to that instrument, for the simple reason that they have hitherto had no other at their disposal. The system as it stands affords no other way of combating the trend towards dynamic imbalance between expenditure and reproductive capital accumulation. But this does not mean that the effects of monetarism are not serious. They are in fact grave to the extreme, since in essence the philosophy of monetarism, though not always clearly expressed, is that of bringing about a contraction of the economy, with consequent unemployment, until the trade unions resign themselves to accepting lower real wages and to the impossibility of recouping the other burdens laid upon the workers.

Perhaps this sacrifice would be excusable if it permitted the fundamental solution of the problem, but that is not so, and this decisive fact must be recognized. An adjustment which leads to unemployment and a fall in real wages cannot be kept up as a permanent situation, for increasingly powerful economic and social forces exist that are fighting for the recovery of employment and wages. It is inconceivable that the labour force should renounce its claims; on the contrary, it will reassert them, and a new inflationary spiral will be triggered off. What does all this mean? That as the system stands, the brunt of an adjustment to control inflation has to be borne by the weakest elements of that system, who are compelled to retrace the forward steps they had taken, so as to provide means of covering the State expenditure that has proved impossible to curtail, and the privileged consumption of the well-to-do strata. Herein lies the element of social inequality, of inequity, which is due, in the last analysis, to the *modus operandi* of the system. I make these observations because I am convinced that in stabilization and capital accumulation policies, a renovation of ideas is called for.

The manifest crises we are witnessing fully justify such a renovation process in these fields. But not only there, Mr. President. In ECLAC from the very outset we have dissented strongly from certain opinions of the International Monetary Fund. The Fund has always counselled our countries to adopt external adjustment policies which also fall most heavily upon the weakest elements in the system. If there is a balance-of-payments deficit, we are recommended to cope with it by means of a contraction of the economy, until the relation between exports and imports recovers its balance. In ECLAC we have systematically attacked this aberrant method of restoring external equilibrium. It seems to have reared its head again, however, over the problem of the debt. What does this mean? Once again the burden of adjustment is laid on the weakest elements of the international system, namely, our countries. They have to adjust their balance of payments, compress their economy, restrict their imports, in order to generate a surplus for the purpose of servicing the debt. Herein there is an unacceptable asymmetry. While the international commercial bankers have continued to enjoy enormous profits, the adjustment has to be borne by the weakest links in the chain.

On this problem of the debt, the most burning question at the present session, I am only going to make the following remark. One of the reasons —very laudable, no doubt— that governments adduce for not taking unilateral measures is that they would have long-term effects on the foreign investment which our countries need, above all during periods of very low capital accumulation. It is understandable, therefore, that this far-sighted caution, combined with other well-known considerations, should prompt us to make a sustained effort to continue negotiations. For how long? That is unpredictable. But implicit in this situation there is an enormous risk, for if negotiations of this type drag on while the reanimation of the economy has to be deferred in order to generate resources with which to cover service payments, no foreign capital will arrive: it will not come to economies that are not growing or are declining and that are subject to increasing social pressures.

This is a dilemma which must be clearly seen; no solution for it will be reached in the absence of a political decision on the part of the governments of the creditor countries. Why a political decision? Because the origin of this problem is political. The Eurodollar market was born of a political position on the part of the larger countries, especially the United States. Leaving the Eurodollar market unregulated, despite the warning voices that were raised at the time, was a political decision. Covering the fiscal deficit of the United States, not in the traditional and orthodox fashion through

an increase in taxes and a reduction of expenditure, but by absorbing domestic saving and gigantic quantities of saving from the rest of the world through astronomically high interest rates, is a political decision. How then can we do other than maintain that the debt problem is essentially political? Because of the nature and origin of this situation, and because of the serious consequences that its persistence will imply for all the countries affected and, in the last resort, for the industrial centres, too, it calls for a forward-looking approach and for understanding of the dangerous threat to the world economy that it involves, since it is not only the problem of the debt that is at issue, but also, as has been said over and over again at the present session, other problems which are superimposed upon it.

I should also like to comment —since we are talking of the renovation of ideas, of ideas that lag behind events— on the foreign trade policy of the Latin American countries. When did import substitution begin in Latin America? During the great world depression, when the monetary policy of the United States and the enormous rise in customs duties shattered the whole system of bilateral trade and payments that had been working very well. The slump in our countries' exports was formidable, and import substitution was the only way out. I had an active part to play at that time, and I do not remember that in the prevailing situation there was anyone crazy enough to say "The thing is not to substitute domestic production for imports but to export manufactures". Export manufactures where? To a world that was out of joint and where protectionism was a normal way of safeguarding economies? Import substitution was the only solution possible. It was not a doctrinaire imposition. It was imposed by force of circumstances. Then came the difficulties of the postwar period, until at last, with Europe reconstructed and the world economy set on its feet again, the opportunity and the need to export manufactures did arise.

Some Latin American countries seized the opportunity and very intelligently turned it to account. Others, through inertia, continued to pursue import substitution policy alone, came late to exporting manufactures and generally did so intermittently, with no firmness of purpose. However, when the countries in the former group had gained considerable competitive capacity through the acquisition of new technologies, they found themselves faced with increasing protectionist measures: a great contradiction between expectations and reality. An additional handicap was the slow growth rate of the centres. All this, too, confronted us with the need to reconsider our ideas: not to engage exclusively either in import substitution or in exports, but to combine the two. It is somewhat encouraging that the World Bank is at last recognizing this need to combine import substitution and exports of manufactures. It has been reluctant to see things in this light, but it is doing so today.

Incidentally, I should like to recall that a quarter of a century ago, in 1961, ECLAC pointed out, in the studies it presented to the governments, that industrialization policy in Latin America had been asymmetrical, since it had encouraged import substitution (that is, industrial production for the domestic market) but had not provided equivalent incentives for the export of manufactures. It therefore recommended combining the two measures. That is what we said then, and what has been reiterated in the latest issue of *CEPAL Review*, which has just come out; but it is still often alleged that ECLAC is responsible for the continuance of a unilateral policy in this respect.

This is not a question of doctrinaire preferences. The extent to which our countries should go on combining import substitution with exports depends upon the receptive capacity of the centres. If the growth rate of the centres remains far below what it was in the past and protectionist measures continue to proliferate, the need for import substitution will be much greater than if thriving developed economies throw open their doors to exports not only of manufactures but also of primary products from the developing countries. As I said, everything ultimately depends on the receptive capacity of the centres; the need to export is not a whim of the developing countries, but a requirement of their growth. And if some day, as I hope, we manage to attain growth rates which allow us at least to absorb the increment of the labour force, a much greater foreign trade effort than any that is being made at present will be indispensable. Furthermore, import substitution (which will have to be continued although, as I indicated, to an extent in accordance with international

circumstances) will provide a very broad field for the transfer of technology and for competition on the part of foreign firms, either alone or in combination with national enterprise, whether public or private. That would open up a vast area for international co-operation. It is the centres, therefore, that will determine the intensity of substitution policy, which has to be concerted between two or more countries, for well-known reasons.

As if these phenomena did not provide sufficient matter for deep concern on the part of the Latin American countries and were not among the problems that call for new ideas in accordance with the initiative of the President of Mexico, there are still others that can only be mentioned in passing in this rapid review of the problems that take up our thoughts. I should like to refer, for example, to international monetary reform: a topic which comes to the fore from time to time and which now ought to engage our attention much more closely, if we are not to find ourselves in the position that Keynes described in a confidential note to his government during the deliberations at Bretton Woods, in which he complained that the presence of the developing countries might turn the meetings into a "monkey house". The truth is that I think there must needs be such a "monkey house" if, in the future, the reform of the international monetary system is mooted.

Gentlemen, I have seen at first hand and suffered in my own country the effects of the gold standard: the extreme vulnerability that the gold standard signified for our economies. But the gold standard, which did have elements of containment of the arbitrary creation of international currency, was abandoned, and its place has been taken by the dollar standard, with the result that the creation of money no longer depends upon world requirements, but upon the internal needs of the country in which this privilege of creating currency is invested. I greatly fear that many of the phenomena we have seen in the last fifteen or twenty years are imputable to this switch from the gold standard to the dollar standard. There have been two phases in the monetary policy of the United States: one of euphoria, in which the creation of money overflowed the bounds of that country and generated seeming worldwide prosperity, until that very prosperity began to have increasingly inflationary effects; and another, in which inflation finally compelled the United States to control it, but this was done by means of monetary restriction and by raising interest rates. First, worldwide monetary expansion, then the siphoning-off of resources from the rest of the world. A serious state of affairs for our countries, and one with respect to which our ideas must likewise be overhauled.

Nobody is in possession of the revealed truth today, gentlemen, neither in the North nor in the South. We all catch glimpses of the truth, we have carried out analyses, some of which are promising, but we cannot accept what the North thinks as the revealed truth. I have every respect for the ideas of the North, but they must not necessarily be taken at their face value. It is essential that some day all of us, those of the North and those of the South together, set ourselves to explore the nature of our problems, discarding dogmas and preconceived ideas, until we reach a measure of common ground. For I am convinced that, once their industrialization has been achieved, the developing countries could play a meaningful dynamic role in the development of the economies of the northern hemisphere. We are wasting this opportunity. We must arrive at formulas which are not those of the past: formulas of understanding on the questions to which I have referred and on many other matters, such as capital accumulation and foreign investment policy. That is all, gentlemen. Thank you.

## Latin American youth between development and crisis

*Germán W. Rama\**

The cycle of structural transformation and the intensive policies of modernization and social participation through education brought about a number of changes in social structures which worked to the benefit of the young generations.

The opportunities for upward social mobility were not the same for the different socio-occupational categories. However, despite these differences of opportunity, the children of lower-income families were able to find employment to a certain degree in higher posts.

The power structures tried to limit the effects of this social irruption by establishing different levels of quality in education or allocating higher-level jobs unequally, according to social origin.

The crisis accentuates the tendency for the processes of upward mobility to slow down and go into reverse. The young groups without education are displaced from the jobs market; those of low social origin who have acquired education are pushed in the direction of social exclusion; income and especially university attendance depend to a large extent on elevated social origin and are the best protection against the crisis; and lastly, instead of upward occupational mobility, jobs are beginning to be passed on from one generation to another. In some countries it is even becoming difficult for the children of manual workers to take over their parents' jobs, despite their better education; those who remain in the category are proportionately fewer than those who move into marginal occupations.

The author concludes that the crisis has accentuated the polarization of societies, for as the consequences of the exhaustion of the cycle of structural change grow worse, a situation arises in which the social relations are being established among comparatively solidified groups. The problem of youth as a whole is transformed, even more clearly than before, into the problems of young people in different and stratified social groups.

\*Director of ECLAC's Social Development Division.

## Introduction

Today's Latin American youth has features which distinguish it from the youth of other regions and indeed from the Latin American youth of the past. It is standing at the confluence of two big historical processes: one is the cycle of structural transformation of Latin American societies, which began to change in the postwar period at different speeds and with different intensity; the other is the economic crisis of the 1980s, which has underlined the shortcomings of existing models of development. Youth has a crucial role in both processes. Because of its enormous weight in the region's age structure it was the first group to be incorporated in the modern forms of social organization; then, when the recession slowed or disrupted modernization, youth became an age group particularly affected by exclusion.

There has also been a great change in its own role. During the stage of structural transformation, of societies in flux, it had an important role among the political protagonists. Human settlements, cultural patterns and the forms of production and social organization underwent various changes which also created different or unequal opportunities of incorporation in society as well as in some of the social and political processes which sought to build some model of an alternative society. It is no coincidence that the period has been characterized by very great political instability and violent discords and that in all cases there has been considerable political participation by youth sectors.

In the majority of the Latin American societies the crisis arrives at a moment when change has already created a new social structure and future changes are not based on processes of incorporation but on processes of inter-relationship among the social groups and on productive change within the logic of a modern industrial economy. For the majority of the societies "forward retreat", as a mechanism of incorporation and postponement of conflicts, has run out of steam, and they have reached stages of organization, rationalization and agreement among different interests and groups which do not facilitate action by young people as



such: the inter-relationship is among groups in which youth participates through older people.

This process—in which stability and democratic recovery are paradigmatic—coincides with the economic crisis in a period fraught with risks. In the case of youth this means a double exclusion: on the one hand, it cannot take its place in society by finding employment and setting up a family; on the other hand, its participation is deferred, for the adjustment policies imply a great concentration of decision-making and policy implementation and they exclude for the moment the use of social mobility as a driving force in the search for new forms of social and political organization.

The picture has other complications associated with the effects of the external

debt—a considerable legacy from the older generation to the younger—and with the reduction of the margins of independence of the Latin American States, subjected as they are to conditions imposed by their creditors with which the States must comply in their respective national societies.

There is no doubt, in view of the inequalities of development and the varied nature of the problems, that the situation differs in some areas where the national constitution is still embryonic, as is certainly the case in Central America. The reduction of independence then takes the form of foreign intervention, or else the central problem remains the continuation of an authoritarian model of social and political imposition.

## I

### Change, crystallization and recession in social structures

In Latin America change has come about through the expansion of social structures and not—with exceptions—through a revolutionary process which altered the relative positions of the groups within a pre-existing social structure. Unlike European societies, which changed from a basis of culturally very integrated peasant and craft structures, in Latin America the whole of society was set in motion from a basis of fragmented situations towards new undefined social structures, with respect both to planning and to possible concrete action, owing to the very instability of a growth process in peripheral economies and to the lack of coherence between political and social goals.

The move was not from the traditional to the modern but rather—in politics, education and economics—from the local or subordinate-group subculture to the culture of the mass communication media, and from family or parochial institutions to all-embracing national ones. In this kind of change the dynamic prevailed over the static; social mobility over

social reproduction; the role of the State as director of the process over the role of social classes as proponents of plans; and the processes of incorporation through socio-cultural modernization over the processes of incorporation through production, which defines relations among groups in terms of work and the dispute as to what direction development should take and how distribution should be defined (Touraine, 1976).

The process is building new institutions, new social groups with new interrelationships, and it is consolidating them, thus setting limits on possible changes: the interests of the internal groups and the interrelationship with the international economic system mean that not all that is possible is probable, except at a very high social and cultural cost. Only those changes which arise from what already exists are probable.

The cycle of social fluidity led to a consolidation which echoed earlier oligarchical social structures or to consolidation of a social

order typical of the bourgeois European economy of the first half of the century, or lastly to some kind of social organization capable of progressive change which included the differentiation of social protagonists and a system of balance and conflict, either between groups occupying different positions in the production process or between groups defined more by culture and opinion than by their work or income status.

In either case, the groups and classes became consolidated. The capitalist business class was created as a result of action taken by the State, which provided the framework and instruments for its development. Once established, it became a social agent participating in alliances in some cases and confronting the State in others, while in yet other instances it tended to control the State. The proletariat had in the past been swollen by a continual and massive influx of recent entrants into industrial activity, which made it difficult for the proletariat to shape an identity as the basis for its social action; it then became, in its most modern part, a category linked to advanced technological production, with increasingly standardized and improved levels of education. Its growth became irregular and even began to decline, both as a percentage of the EAP and in absolute numbers in some countries (Delich, 1986; Lagos and Tokman, 1983). It was reconstituted to a large extent by the children of the proletariat itself, and this developed into a tradition of belonging to the working-class group. The situation was not entirely different among professionals and technicians. The rapid expansion of university rolls in the 1960s and 1970s went hand in hand with the increase in jobs which provided professionals with relatively high incomes; in the next decade the advance was slower. The rolls and jobs or incomes marked time or retreated. In the societies which began to modernize earlier, university students usually come from professional families which themselves have university education, or from strata culturally allied to the university class (Klubitschko, 1980).

As the cycle of expansion by means of the structural transformation of societies came to an end, this kind of mobility ran out of steam in the already modernized countries (ECLAC, 1986).

The number of posts in the middle and upper-middle ranges only increased, in the best of cases, in step with the population increase or the increase of the product. For example, once basic schooling had been provided for an already urbanized population, the increase in the category of teachers could not be higher than the increase in the school-age population. The demand for new workers was increasingly conditioned by technological change, which meant a relative reduction in the mere performance of tasks, together with an expansion in jobs requiring better educational or technical qualifications.

The cycle of structural change took place in the majority of cases within a framework of tension between processes which created and reproduced social inequality (ECLAC, 1985c) and others which aimed at social democratization. The contradictory effects of this situation became more evident in the crisis of the 1980s.

A marked concentration of income persisted (Altimir, 1979; Di Filippo, 1984). In some cases it increased; in others it permitted a degree of access for some strata in the middle and lower-middle income range. As it became integrated in a productive industrial structure, this concentration acquired greater rigidity. Less than the whole of society was served by mechanisms of tertiary income distribution through universal social policies of standardized application (for example, pre-school and school services with food programmes and equalization of standards, national health insurance, or payments to meet the cost of the biological and social survival of families, waged or not). This type of benefits was enjoyed only by certain categories which obtained them by means of the corporative mechanisms which characterized social development (Mesa Lago, 1985). The process of concentration took different forms, depending on whether it was a question of rural or urban zones, or backward regions or growth poles (Cordero and Tello, 1984), so that there were different population groups whose inter-relationships with the development process were compartmentalized and whose avenues of mobility resembled parallel circuits; they not only had different points of departure and arrival but frequently no possibility of transfer from a lower to a higher level.

As the idea of a society in flux gained ground, so the notion of limits on expectations of individual or group mobility was disappearing from the collective consciousness of the lower social groups (Rama, 1964). This was followed by a genuine revolution in expectations. The power systems could control the distribution of incomes but could not set limits on the nation's aspirations for integration or on social modernization; as a result, some institutional systems—such as politics or education—underwent a substantial expansion of participation. (The countries which until more recent date denied the electoral franchise to illiterates or excluded the lower sectors from political expression through lack of inclination or authoritarianism were also the countries with the weakest education policies.) Furthermore, the increases in secondary and higher education were much greater than those recorded in developed countries at a similar stage; however, primary schooling had not yet been made truly universal, a fact which shows the degree of exclusion implicit in the social policies (Rama, 1983).

The imbalance between the processes of concentration and those of distribution worked to the detriment of the latter: for example, education was extended to lower social groups, but its standards were lowered (Tedesco, 1984). In addition, the periodic reversions to authoritarianism caused many disruptions of the democratic political mechanisms which threatened the concentration of power and income. These contradictions in the evolution of national societies in the 1960s and 1970s can be seen clearly in the indicators of structural change on the one hand, and on the other in the reappearance of authoritarian régimes, be they conservative or populist. There are comparatively few examples of democratic institutional continuity in full-participation societies.

The structural changes, which included the incorporation of youth in the period 1950 to 1980, can be seen from the following indicators (Rama, 1984):

a) *Population*: the population doubled in numbers and its density increased, with extensive settlement in the towns (the proportion of urban dwellers increased from 40

to 63%). The towns grew at a rate of about 5% a year. This provided an opportunity for greater social interaction involving young people, whose share in the total population increased, especially in the towns.

b) *Education*: the period's most marked changes were found in education. The illiteracy affecting almost half the population aged 15 and over declined and became residual among the young generations (except in Brazil and some countries of Central America). Entry into primary school began to become universal, but only a little over half of the age group completed their primary education. Secondary education, formerly reserved for élites, massive explosion, as can be seen from the jump in the growth rate of attendance: in 1950 there were two graduates for every 100 young people aged 20 to 24; in 1980 it was one for every six young people<sup>1</sup> (Ibarrola, 1986; Tovar and Negretti, 1986).

c) *Employment*: the economically active population doubled (index 218). Primary-sector employment fell by 33.7% (losing 20 percentage points); in the secondary sector employment rose from 17 to 24.5%, and in the tertiary sector from 29.3 to 41.8% of the total active population. Not only did the employed population cease to be predominantly rural, but there was a regular increase in the proportion of non-manual workers in urban activities. The information for the 1980s (available for only a few countries) shows a minimum ratio of 63 and a maximum of 109 non-manual workers to every 100 manual workers. This situation is even clearer in the case of wage-earners. The ratio of non-manual workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors to manual wage-earners in the secondary sector or, to put it another way, of white-collar to blue-collar workers, varies, according to country, between 1:1 and 1.6:1. To sum up, Latin American societies not only ceased to be rural, they also ceased to be manual working-class.

d) *Formalization of employment*: the percentage increase in modern jobs in industry

<sup>1</sup>In Mexico there were 29 895 graduates from higher education in 1950 and this figure reached 1 218 667 in 1984, increasing by a factor of 40 over that period. In Venezuela the number of graduates increased from 24 907 in 1961 to 307 133 in 1981, increasing by a factor of 12 in little more than 20 years.

and services boosted the proportion of waged activities. Own-account activities and unpaid family helpers declined as a percentage of total EAP; there was a percentage reduction (and in some countries an absolute one) in the active rural population, where own-account employment predominated, and the growth in the informal urban sector did not compensate for this decline. The category of wage-earners has become the biggest in the region's EAP, except in the countries where agriculture still dominates and modernization is in its early stages. The increase in the number of waged jobs implies in turn better educational qualifications and an increasing correlation between these qualifications and levels of job status.

e) *Income growth and distribution*: the per capita gross domestic product (GDP) doubled in the period 1950-1980, despite the substantial rate of population growth. The differences between groups of countries are very large. The agrarian countries in the early stages of modernization (Bolivia, Haiti and Central America except Costa Rica) had a growth index below 150. The countries of early and advanced modernization in the Southern Hemisphere had an index in the order of 150; it must be remembered that they started from the highest levels in the region. The indices oscillated between 150 and 250 in the countries of rapid and unbalanced or partial modernization, which include (in ascending order) Peru, Paraguay, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Mexico. The same index of 250 is found in Costa Rica and Panama, whose societies modernized themselves in a very short space of time; the situation was similar in Venezuela, but with a lower index of per capita GDP increase (185). Brazil stands out among all the other countries, for its per capita GDP in the period 1950-1980 increased in step with an index of 350.

The type of income distribution structure was more homogeneous than the increases, maintaining a high degree of concentration in the top 10% and a state of impoverishment at least in the bottom 20%. The ECLAC studies (1985c) tend to indicate a reduction in the percentage of the population below the poverty line, although this reduction is smaller than might have been expected if the increase in incomes had been proportional. The situation in

the middle ranges is more complicated. In some countries —especially those of early modernization and some of rapid modernization— the strata immediately above the bottom 20% showed improvements in their share of income, thus establishing a mesocratic type of income distribution (Graciarena, 1979), owing to the increase in jobs in the modern sectors, the consequent social power of the workers in those sectors and the policies of expanding the market for industrial consumer durables and semi-durables. In many countries the middle strata in the scale, although showing no great change in their share in monetary terms, benefitted from the tertiary distribution of incomes resulting from the development of free or semi-free social services provided by the State (Tironi, 1982). Lastly, in the 1970s the countries which pursued policies of short-term neoliberal adjustment experienced sizeable declines in real wages and employment, which affected working and middle-class sectors.

It can be asserted as a general trend that the real increase in average, low and very low incomes did not depend on a change in the structure of income distribution, but fundamentally on the rate of increase in per capita GDP and also on the redistribution through tertiary incomes which had been brought about by the social policies of the State.

f) *Processes of incorporation*: in the urban employment markets there is a simultaneous integration of young people, rural migrants and women, a phenomenon which has no precedent in today's developed countries (Durstun, 1986). This process explains the explosive growth of the urban labour force, which —as Víctor Tokman (1984) has indeed pointed out— was similar to the growth recorded in the United States in the period 1870-1903, in Sweden at the beginning of the century or in Japan between the two wars. However, in this case the EAP had a growing proportion of women and a very young average age and, most important, there was an enormous discrepancy between the education levels of the young and adult populations (Boucher, 1982; Vogel, 1979).

These factors helped to bring about the lower cost of labour and the exploitation to which workers were subjected. In the specific case of young people, they had access to non-

manual and manual jobs of average status and requiring educational qualifications, but the increase was made up largely of women in lower-level non-manual jobs (ECLAC, 1986).

At the beginning of the present decade the cycle of social change through structural transformation was showing signs of exhaustion. In the Southern Hemisphere countries of early modernization and in the countries of rapid modernization accompanied by social integration (Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela) the population engaged in rural activities already represented a very small percentage; although migration to the towns continued, its input could no longer be significant in the formation of the lower urban stratas and the relative upward displacement of the next higher strata. In countries of rapid and unbalanced modernization —such as Brazil— the rural population had already stabilized in absolute terms between 1970 and 1980. Lastly, in countries of rapid modernization where urbanization prevailed over industrialization —for example, Peru— the marked informality of all productive activities denied the migrants the possibility of social participation at levels higher than those of the countryside.

In the urban employment structure of some countries —for example, Argentina and Uruguay— a comparison of censuses in the last decade tends to indicate "crystallization" of the employment structure: the distribution of jobs tends to be roughly the same 10 years later and the only change is in the higher average level of education of the strata (Arriagada, 1984; ECLAC, 1985a; Silvestri, 1986). Similar observations on the slow rate of incorporation of young people in middle- and high-status jobs are put forward as an example of frustrated modernization in Colombia (Parra, 1985). In countries such as Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela which underwent a virtual "social mutation" (Durston and Rosenbluth, 1984; Durston, 1985; Tovar and Negretti, 1986) it would seem difficult to maintain the intense growth of jobs in the modern services sector, especially in community and social services provided by the State. Lastly, Mexico and especially Brazil (Katzman, 1983) remained paradigmatic exceptions, with rapid growth of modern jobs in industry and in the modern services which support production.

Because of the growth rates of their economies, and especially of the industrial product, and in view of their sizeable rural and urban populations with minimum education during the initial stages of their development, these countries experienced a continuous process of incorporation in productive activities accompanied by a sharp polarization of the incomes of persons employed in low-status and high-status jobs. In Brazil this incorporation even exceeded the educational expansion, and this led to a reduction in the average level of education in many employment categories (Madeira, 1985). In Chile the double effect of the ending of change through structural modification and of the application of a neoliberal model with extreme economic openness encouraged a peculiar socio-occupational structure in which there was a decline in industrial manual-workers jobs and in middle-range technical and administrative State posts, and the incomes of the civil categories of public employees fell. At the same time, there was an increase, unusual in the region, of independent non-manual jobs (Martínez and Tironi, 1983).

Lastly, in the countries of agrarian structure and incipient modernization there was rapid urbanization and development of the modern apparatus of the State, without corresponding industrial development and with serious structural problems in agriculture. The countryside suffered the effects of capitalist forms of production for export, with a very concentrated ownership structure and a mass of peasants (indigenous in some countries); this fuelled a process of peasant impoverishment without the alternative of migration to urban jobs and it created explosive social conditions in the countryside (Torres Rivas, 1981; Rosenbluth, 1986).

The cycle of structural transformation, to the extent that it encouraged mobility throughout society and therefore some degree of satisfaction for each group, generated intra-generational and even inter-generational change with powerful elements of national integration and also of social conformity. In the countries of early modernization, in which the groups were already incorporated in societies incapable of generating a new stage of development, the

dispute over distribution and the development model occupied the political scene (Filgueira, 1983).

The crisis of the 1980s occurred at a time when the cycle of structural transformation was coming to an end. The mechanisms of incorporation in modernization (urbanization and education, for example) had been used to excess; however, no changes had been produced in the structure of production, ownership, technology and knowledge which would have made it possible for the region to be incorporated in the cycle of changes in science and technology and in the organization of

societies and cultures which was taking place in the developed countries (CEPII, 1984; CEC, 1983).

The crisis, caused by a cycle in which the over-abundance of capital flows "doped" the system with consumerism, struck societies which, save the exceptions mentioned above, had already exhausted the easy mechanisms of incorporation, and whose young people were being trained in accordance with a model of social-structure expansion which had ceased to be relevant. Furthermore, the expectations of these young people for incorporation in society corresponded to that model.

## II

### The forms of incorporation of youth

The decades between 1960 and 1980 saw changes in the conditions of incorporation of young people in society. On the one hand, their distribution among types of jobs changed, and gaps were created which could not be filled by the adult generations. In some cases these generations were unwilling to move from the countryside to the town or to change to new jobs. In other cases, although the willingness to change may have been there, they lacked the necessary educational qualifications and cultural baggage. Up to 1970, according to census figures, 49.8% of the rural EAP in 16 countries had not completed one year of schooling, and barely 2.3% had seven or more years. In these same countries the percentages of EAP in the national capitals were 8.1 and 39.6. Consequently, in the hypothetical case of a massive and total migration of the rural EAP, the majority of the people involved would be unemployable, given the education requirements of urban jobs (Terra, 1981).

On the other hand, the young people did have the education needed for the new jobs and, what is more, their education and their access to the mass communication media had conditioned them to participate in the social and symbolic

relationships entailed by their jobs and the associated social situations. The traditional education system of Latin America had been modelled on the system existing years earlier in the developed countries and it had been conceived for students of the upper-middle socio-cultural level (Tedesco, 1984). When it was extended to the whole population and embraced groups from different subcultures, it proved incapable, from the teaching standpoint, of transmitting knowledge; but it was very effective in the provision of prior social conditioning for symbolic integration in the modern world. The rural families understood it in this way: they had no interest in the school as long as their children's destiny was to remain in the countryside: but, when the situation changed and they were able to communicate with the urban world and came to see migration as a possible future for their children, they changed their attitude, especially with respect to their daughters, who migrated to the towns in greater numbers.

The special relationship of young people with the world of work in a time of change produced several different effects, which are analysed in the following sections.

### 1. *The de-ruralization of youth*

Table 1 presents data from countries considered representative of various categories of modernization. Argentina represents early and rapid modernization: by 1960 only 12.3% of its youth worked in agriculture, and only a very small percentage could transfer to urban jobs. Chile, in the same category, still had a considerable proportion of rural population: one in four young people worked in agriculture in 1960, but in 1980 the figure was only one in 10. Panama represents modernization through adoption of a services economy: the number of rural workers in the total of young people in the EAP declined from four to two in 10. The next category is made up of countries with rapid and unbalanced modernization and is represented by

Brazil. In 1960 almost half (44.4%) of Brazil's young people worked in agriculture; in 1980 this proportion had declined to two in 10. Ecuador represents the situation which has been called rapid and partial modernization; as in the previous case, not only did it have groups excluded from modernization, but its dynamism was also heavily concentrated in tertiary activities and in particular in the State, without equivalent changes in the secondary sector. This is clearly the most remarkable case with respect to the reduction of the proportion of rural workers in the young EAP: in 20 years 30% of the young people transferred to the urban world. Lastly, the data for Honduras represent a category of incipient modernization, starting from an even greater rural preponderance than in the two previous countries; although this

Table 1

## LATIN AMERICA (SIX COUNTRIES): CHANGES IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

(Percentages)

	Argentina		Brazil		Chile		Ecuador		Honduras		Panama	
	1960 (25-34) <sup>a</sup>	1980	1960 (25-34)	1980	1960 (25-29)	1980 <sup>b</sup>	1962 (25-29)	1982	1960 (25-34)	1974	1960 (25-29)	1980
EAP with 7 and more years schooling	28.3	66.5	15.6	35.2	29.6	70.6	12.0	37.0	18.5	35.6	28.6	50.0
EAP with 6 or less years schooling	71.7	33.5	84.4	64.8	70.4	29.4	88.0	63.0	81.5	64.4	71.4	50.0
Jobs in non-manual urban and primary sectors	36.5	44.6	17.9	30.4	22.1	37.8	16.0	31.9	12.8	26.4	24.9	38.5
Urban manual jobs	42.7	44.3	32.9	40.8	48.9	38.5	28.9	32.2	21.8	26.6	25.1	33.7
Jobs in primary activities	12.3	8.3	44.4	22.6	24.0	11.5	52.0	22.9	66.0	44.8	39.8	19.2
Others	8.5	2.8	4.9	6.2	5.0	12.2	3.1	13.0	5.4	2.2	10.2	8.6

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of census data.

<sup>a</sup>For Chile, Panama and Ecuador the age-range considered is 25-29; for Argentina, Brazil and Honduras it is 25-34. This difference is due to the way the information is organized and does not affect the comparability of the figures.

<sup>b</sup>Data from the National Household Survey of October-December 1980 (National Statistical Institute).

proportion declined, it still stood at 44.8% of young people in rural jobs in 1974 (the same percentage as Brazil in 1960). This percentage has probably been maintained, despite the expulsion of people from the rural world, for lack of urban centres and activities capable of absorbing a larger flow of migrants.

## 2. *The world of urban manual workers*

This heading includes industrial workers, manual own-account workers—including street vendors—and service workers both on a personal and on an institutional basis.

The urban social world, which in the nineteenth century in France was seen as a world of "the working classes, the dangerous classes" (Chevalier, 1978), leading to Friedrich Engels' analysis of "The Condition of the Working Class in England" and to the historical constructions of E.J. Hobsbawm (1968), was perceived in Latin America in a way which linked urbanization with "the inevitable exclusion of increasing sectors of the urban population", for what was defined as dependent industrialization made it "impossible for the increasing migratory flows and the new working-class generations, born in the towns themselves, to find a stable and consistent place in the structure of roles and occupations in the new urban society which emerges with industrialization" (Quijano, 1970).

The processes of incorporation of young people in manual and non-manual jobs show that, far from fulfilling the prediction of increasing exclusion, the period from 1960 to 1980 saw an unexpected development of non-manual jobs—among vendors, professionals, and administrative and technical staff, all of which expanded very rapidly; and the manual EAP in secondary and tertiary activities including marginal activities, did not come to dominate the urban world. Moreover, with the exception of Brazil, in 1980 all the countries considered had virtually the same numbers of manual and non-manual jobs in the towns.

Another aspect of this phenomenon is that the world of urban manual workers did not manage at any point to incorporate as much as half of the young generation in question. The highest numbers of manual workers were found

in the early-industrialization countries, where the production pattern was based on small enterprises and labour-intensive technology. Up to 1960 Chile was in this situation, with 48.9% of its young people in this category. This figure indicates the weight of a proletariat, or urban working class, which certainly influenced political behaviour in this country in the following decades. In another early-industrialization country, Argentina, 42.7% of the young people were in this category and this figure reached 44.3% in 1980, possibly the highest level in the country's history. The big difference between these two countries is that in Chile in 1960 there were twice as many young manual as young non-manual workers; in Argentina the gap was much smaller. In both countries in 1980 the numbers of young manual and non-manual workers had reached parity.<sup>2</sup>

Other more recent industrialization processes show technological patterns with low labour input. Development itself is at a very low level in Ecuador, Honduras and Panama. The case of Brazil is instructive in several ways. Despite the great increase in total GDP and industrial GDP in the period 1960-1980, the urban manual EAP (including services) increased by only eight percentage points.

In both Brazil and Panama there was a decline of more than 20 percentage points in employment in primary activities in the period between the censuses and the category of manual urban workers increased by barely eight points. In Ecuador the gap was even greater, with a drop of 30 points in primary jobs and an increase of only four points in urban manual jobs; these figures would still be extremely significant even if it is assumed that the bulk of the weighty category of "others" in 1982 was accounted for by omissions in the registration of urban manual workers.

To sum up, the process of incorporation of young people illustrates the trends in the work market, both past and future. It is clear that there was not a steady increase in exclusion and in informal work, and that the towns of Latin

<sup>2</sup>The 1980 figures for Chile are distorted by the high percentage in the "others" category, which includes a large amount of unemployment.



America did not become "workers' worlds". It is also clear that they will be even less so in the future, whatever the industrial growth rate.

### 3. *The world of non-manual urban workers*

This heading includes white-collar workers, managers, dependent and independent professional and technical staff, office workers, sales people and own-account workers in trade (excluding street traders). All the persons included in this group have the common feature of being non-manual workers, even though the differences within the group are significant in terms of status and remuneration. The higher proportion of women in the subcategories of office workers and sales people, and to a lesser extent among professional and technical staff, depresses the average remuneration in these subcategories (ECLAC, 1986).

However, as in industrial societies (Lipset and Bendix, 1963), non-manual jobs in Latin America have enjoyed greater prestige than manual jobs, probably as a result of the recent urbanization and the prestige attached to office work in the status hierarchy of the oligarchical societies of the recent past. These jobs require a higher level of education, which is considered to be a very valuable asset in the region, as the social demand for it testifies (Filgueira, 1978). In general, their level of monetary remuneration seems to have increased (note must be taken of the region's characteristic association of higher income from work and higher levels of education; these occupations certainly provided greater job stability and social security than in the case of manual workers, especially rural manual workers (Mesa Lago, 1986). Lastly, the few available surveys indicate a strong tendency for the holders of these jobs to identify themselves as members of the middle classes, even though objectively they did not always meet the requirements of that status (Solari, 1964).

Up to 1960 the proportion of young people who obtained non-manual jobs was between one-eighth and one-sixth in Honduras, Ecuador and Brazil, and a little under one-quarter in Chile and Panama; only in Argentina was the proportion higher than one-third. Up to 1980 the countries tended towards uniformity, with a proportion of approximately one-third non-

manual workers (with the exception of Honduras, which had less than a quarter, and Argentina, which attained the remarkable figure of 44.6%).

This enormous expansion was influenced by both economic and social factors. The economic factors include the role of modern services —financial, administrative and technical— as an indispensable support for production in a capitalist system. The second factors include the development of social and community services, requiring a large contingent of professional and technical staff, the expansion of which has been linked to the national efforts to promote integration and the establishment of social rights of citizenship (Ecuador is a prime example of this).

An expansion of this magnitude in such a short space of time poses the question of whether this development amounts to upward mobility. Those who say "no" observe that the bulk of the growth is found in the subcategories of lower status and income and that even among professional and technical staff there is a strong increase in the numbers of women, which is connected with the category's low status and income (in the case of teachers, for example). Those who say "yes" point to the connection between non-manual jobs and higher income from work, the formalization of work demonstrated by inclusion in social security systems, the seniority rosters, which open the way for promotions not available to manual workers, the less arduous everyday working conditions and, lastly, the social prestige which is still attached to this type of work.

Without going into the details of the topic, it is clear that in the initial stage of this expansion the fact of crossing the divide between manual and non-manual work constituted in itself a form of upward mobility, and that subsequently, as this mobility spread, internal differences acquired decisive importance; entry into the lowest non-manual subcategories could not therefore be seen as a social advance. However, for the generation which had crossed the divide for the first time in their family history, the change was certainly perceived, from the symbolic standpoint, as upward mobility.

#### *4. Uses and benefits of education*

The education data for the six countries chosen as representative of different categories of modernization show that in all the countries in the period 1960-1980 the percentage of the young EAP with post-primary education doubled, except in Ecuador where it tripled.

Table 2 presents the categories with seven years and more of education in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Panama; five years and more for Brazil and four years and more for Honduras. The differences in the number of years of education used in defining the significant categories correspond to differences in educational development among the countries of the region. They also illustrate the difficulty of correlating the education indicators with the indicators of economic growth: in two countries of rapid modernization and economic growth (Ecuador and Brazil) the achievements are very different; and Chile, despite its relative stagnation, has achieved education levels much higher than those of Brazil, despite this country's rapid economic growth.

The first and well-documented use of education was to facilitate migration by persons who had completed their schooling and abandoned their manual agricultural activities, whether waged or unwaged.

In both 1960 and 1980 the proportion of young people with seven and more years of schooling occupying manual jobs in primary activities was a very small percentage of the young EAP, and its increase from one generation to another was tiny. The expectation that the coming of mechanization and technology to the countryside would produce a supply of new jobs suitable for educated young people was disappointed; on the other hand, the supply of education for longer than six school years did not expand in the countryside itself, except in Chile, so that in the other countries such jobs would have been available only to young people who studied in urban centres but continued to live in the countryside.

The second use of education was to facilitate the incorporation of the category of non-manual workers. This category has very high growth rates and demands post-primary

education; except in Honduras, persons without such education are gradually being eliminated from this kind of job. In Argentina, for example, young people with incomplete primary schooling holding non-manual jobs made up 18.4% of the EAP in 1960, a figure which had fallen to 4.6% in 1980, despite the strong growth in the category.

Non-manual jobs are becoming more complicated, for one thing; for another, the supply of educated young persons exceeds the demand, and employers are thus able to insist on higher formal levels of education for the same work. It should be noted in this connection that the spread and prolongation of schooling tended to reduce grade standards. Lastly, the gradual acquisition of wages status by non-manual workers establishes a formal relationship between the education level and the requirements imposed by organizations for certain jobs. All this explains the cycle of "forward retreat" in the education systems of Latin America. Lower social groups are required to obtain levels of education formerly reserved for the higher groups, which in turn move up to a still higher level. This demand process is similar to the one found in developed and centrally planned societies. However, unlike them, it does not differentiate clearly between compulsory school courses and higher courses based on selectivity through the regular assessment of knowledge and admission tests for non-compulsory courses.

The third use of education was to facilitate the incorporation of the category of waged manual workers. This category receives higher incomes than the category of own-account manual workers, especially in the case of young people, who do not have a capital of knowledge and experience in the activity concerned. As in the case of non-manual jobs, employment in organizations at a certain level is accompanied by items of social protection (holidays, pension rights, health services).

As far as the young people of Argentina and Chile are concerned (early-modernization countries), the category of waged manual workers is smaller in percentage terms: there is an increase in the share of EAP of the non-manual category, and at the same time the

Table 2

**LATIN AMERICA (SIX COUNTRIES): YOUTH EDUCATION LEVELS  
AND JOB CATEGORIES, 1960 AND 1980**

(Percentages)

	Argentina		Brazil <sup>a</sup>		Chile		Ecuador		Honduras <sup>b</sup>		Panama	
	1960 (25-34)	1980 (25-34)	1960 (25-34)	1980 (25-34)	1960 (25-29)	1980 <sup>c</sup> (25-29)	1962 (25-29)	1982 (25-29)	1960 (25-34)	1974 (25-34)	1960 (25-29)	1980 (25-29)
EAP 25-34	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>7 and more years of education</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>66.5</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>70.6</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>37.0</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>50.0</b>
Non-manual	16.6	39.3	10.5	24.2	14.9	33.4	7.7	24.9	9.1	18.3	19.8	33.9
Waged manual	3.7	20.1	3.4	8.5	9.8	22.0	2.5	8.2	6.5	11.9	7.0	14.0
Waged manual in primary activities	(0.2)	(1.3)	(0.2)	(0.3)	(0.8)	(2.2)	(0.4)	(0.8)	(1.4)	(2.6)	(0.3)	(1.0)
Non-waged manual	0.8	7.1	1.7	2.5	2.7	5.3	1.8	3.9	2.9	5.4	1.8	2.9
Non-waged manual in primary activities	(0.1)	(1.4)	(0.6)	(0.5)	(0.6)	(1.5)	(0.5)	(0.4)	(1.7)	(3.1)	(0.2)	(0.7)
<b>0-6 years of education<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>84.4</b>	<b>64.8</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>88.0</b>	<b>63.0</b>	<b>81.5</b>	<b>64.4</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>50.0</b>
Non-manual	18.4	4.6	7.3	6.1	7.2	4.4	7.7	5.3	3.5	7.7	5.1	4.3
Waged manual	41.5	19.5	34.6	33.3	51.0	17.5	38.7	23.1	30.2	24.5	21.9	23.1
Waged manual in primary activities	(8.0)	(3.8)	(13.2)	(8.9)	(17.5)	(5.0)	(23.5)	(9.7)	(17.6)	(13.3)	(8.1)	(7.4)
Non-waged manual	7.6	5.5	37.2	19.1	9.4	5.2	37.4	17.4	39.9	29.0	34.0	12.8
Non-waged manual in primary activities	(3.7)	(1.8)	(30.1)	(12.8)	(5.1)	(2.8)	(27.6)	(10.9)	(37.4)	(25.4)	(31.2)	(10.0)

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of census data.

<sup>a</sup>The figures for Brazil are for 5 years and more and 0-4 years of education respectively.

<sup>b</sup>The figures for Honduras are for 4 years and more and 0-3 years of education respectively.

<sup>c</sup>Data from the National Household Survey of October-December 1980 (National Statistical Institute).

<sup>d</sup>Excluding the category of persons on whose status no information is available.

proportion of manual waged workers stabilizes or declines, with major reductions in youth employment. In the other countries, in contrast, the situation is varied: there is a very steep decline in the category of young people employed in agriculture, and increases in the categories of non-manual and manual waged workers in the total young EAP. However, common to all the countries is the increase in the proportion of better educated persons in the category of manual waged workers; in Argentina and Chile they are already more numerous than the less educated.

The future trends of youth employment—assuming that the crisis is overcome—underline the exhaustion of the cycle of structural mobility.

The category of non-manual workers, which has expanded rapidly, will not be able to continue to grow at the same rate. Within the category, there will be a greater polarization between jobs of high and low status, partly because of the expansion of the category and partly because of the increasingly technical nature of the tasks. This polarization will be linked with requirements not only for post-primary education but for post-secondary or post-university as well.

The size of the waged manual category indicates that there will be a bottleneck in structural mobility affecting the new generations coming from rural families and from families of manual urban own-account workers. Furthermore, the effect of technologies that require less labour could be very great in this sector, and this would produce a percentage reduction and an increase in selectivity based on education level.

Faced with the crystallization of the employment structure, the reply of Latin American societies, sharply stratified by income and power, has been to seek ways of controlling mobility which does not yet amount to a structural transition.

Some mechanisms have emerged as a response to the "excessive" expectations of upward mobility through education. One of them, historically, was to keep the rural population on the margins of education.

Another, ancient in some countries and presented as "modernization" in others, is to transfer the costs of primary education to local institutions, whose resources are proportionate to the incomes of the local residents; the quality of education thus differs according to locality, and is lower in the poorest. Yet another mechanism has been to prevent the standardization of the quality of education in the basic course and to create relatively excellent academic routes which operate from the pre-school to the university levels, quite separate from an education, usually provided by the State, considered to be "education of the poor".

However, even if the education systems were standardized and offset the relative disadvantages of the pupils with fewer socio-cultural resources, there would still have to be selection all the way from the basic levels, which would correspond to some extent to the technical nature and therefore to the status of jobs in a differentiated society, be it capitalist, socialist, or modelled on some kind of utopia.<sup>3</sup> Once the structural change has been completed, the aspirations and expectations will necessarily cease to be those of job mobility for all. Theoretically they could be, on the one hand, those of standardization of basic services and resources—food, health, education—which would provide similar training and opportunities for all in each new generation; and, on the other hand, changes in income distribution so that people in the lowest categories will have enough to meet personal needs, including culture, changes which would probably substantially reduce the incomes and power of the highest categories.

<sup>3</sup>It is significant that the studies of upward mobility and education deny that the latter does not provide opportunities of the former—taken to mean access to high-status jobs. The argument would assume that the top posts should expand at the same rate as the levels of higher education, university for example, which would mean an impossibility, unless, paradoxically, there was a reduction in the expansion of education. The argument still focuses on expectations of undefined structural change and assessment of the value of education not in terms of culture and learning but as a passport to posts with higher income and intellectual status, all of which can form part of the mesocratic illusion of social mobility.

### III

## The manifestations of the youth crisis

The exhaustion —or at least the "easy" stage— of the structural transformation coincided in the region with the recession resulting from external debt and the economic policies pursued to counter the recession.

The position of young people in relation to the work market underwent a sharp reversal. Having been the main beneficiaries of the earlier model of expansion, they became the group most seriously harmed by the recession. This phenomenon had the following characteristics:

a) The State cut expenditure sharply —especially social expenditure— halting the policy of expanding employment in the social and community services which were one of the foundations of the expansion of the tertiary sector.

b) Productive and service enterprises were faced with a reduced demand and stopped taking on new staff. Moreover, when they began to expand their production in 1985 —in some countries or sectors— they did so with their existing workforce, whose distribution and efficiency has had to improve to cope with the crisis.

c) The expansion of education which might have formed part of the policy to combat recession did not come about, owing to the necessary reduction of fiscal expenditure. However, the education system with its pre-existing structures and with impaired efficiency did accept an increasing volume of young people who prolonged their studies because of the difficulty of finding work.

As a result of this situation, young people under 25 account in many countries for approximately half of open urban unemployment, and first-time job seekers are coming to represent one-quarter of unemployed persons, as is happening for example in Uruguay (ECLAC, 1985a).

In the countryside, various indicators seem to suggest that the opportunities of migration to the towns have declined and that there is an increase in the numbers of young people with

decent education engaged in farming activities. These activities increased their production as a result of the crisis, but they did not undergo significant structural or technological changes which would have furnished better employment opportunities for the more educated young people who remained in the countryside.

The information on one country, Chile, is illustrative of this, for the cycle of transformation had been completed in Chilean society; the efforts to modernize through education had been among the most intensive in the region, yet the unemployment figures, already high before the crisis, were pushed by it to the highest levels in the region.

Data for 1980 and 1984<sup>4</sup> show that the already high proportion of students in the group increased still further, from 66.8 to 71.7% for the 15-19 age range, and from 18.7 to 19.6% for the next age range, aged 20 to 24 (table 3). This increase was in step with a percentage reduction in the category of active persons aged 15 to 19, which declined to 14.9% from an already low level of 18.3%. This strengthens the mechanism of reducing the pressure exerted on the work market by a young generation which represents a very high proportion of the total working-age population.

The status of student in 1980 (table 4) was already relatively accessible for the various socio-occupational categories in the 15-19 age range (50.4% of children of domestic employees and 85% of children of employers). Faced with a smaller jobs market, the collective demand for study increased: practically all the categories increased their participation in education (69% of children of domestic employees and 95% of children of employers in 1984).

<sup>4</sup>The tabulations on which this section is based use data for 21 of the country's main towns and were prepared by the consultant Arturo León as part of a study sponsored by the Unit for the Integration of Women in Development of ECLAC's Social Development Division.

Table 3

## CHILE: TYPE OF YOUTH ACTIVITY, 1980 AND 1984

(Percentages)

	1980						1984					
	Both sexes		Men		Women		Both sexes		Men		Women	
	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24
Students	66.8	18.7	68.1	20.4	65.6	17.0	71.7	19.6	74.7	22.6	68.6	16.6
Domestic helpers	8.5	18.7	0.6	0.3	16.2	36.1	7.9	17.7	1.0	0.6	14.9	34.2
Retired and inactive	6.4	4.1	7.6	5.4	5.3	3.0	5.5	4.8	6.8	6.0	4.3	3.6
Active	18.3	58.5	23.7	73.9	12.9	43.9	14.9	57.9	17.5	70.8	12.2	45.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the National Statistical Institute (INE), National Household Survey October-December 1980 and 1984.

In 1984 the continuation of studies in the 20-24 age range was determined more by social origin. Two upper categories —non-agricultural employers and middle-range wage sectors— kept more than 40% of their children in that age group in education; another three categories —middle-range independent sectors, traditional craftsmen, and persons active in the primary sector— did so for some 20% of their children; the upper level of the working-class category kept 15% in education. The lowest-status jobs —lower working-class level, marginal workers, seasonal workers and those employed in programmes of the PEM/POJH kind— kept less than 10% in education. The lowest figure (1.8%) was for domestic employees.

In 1984 education opportunities increased for the employers and middle-range sectors, which had the common feature of receiving non-waged incomes, and for the working-class and sub-working-class categories. The sharpest decline was in the middle-range waged sectors. These apparently contradictory developments can be understood when it is remembered that the lower socio-occupational categories have high proportions of their children in these age groups in free secondary education. The children from the higher categories have already

completed their secondary schooling, and their higher education is paid for; consequently, the middle-range waged sectors, which suffered large declines in their incomes, had difficulty in financing the cost of education.

In 1980 the social integration of young people aged 20 to 24 was already showing signs of exclusion, as is pointed out in the study by Javier Martínez in this issue of the *CEPAL Review*. The proportion of unemployed and first-time work seekers was 12.7%; when marginal employment is included —PEM and POJH jobs and domestic work— the total for all active and inactive young people was 20.5% (table 5).

The situation deteriorated sharply as a result of the economic policies introduced to combat the crisis. Unemployment increased to 18%; when marginal employment is included it totalled 28.2% of young people. This increase was due to the reduction in the number of employed persons (own-account workers, manual workers, white-collar workers and employers) which declined from its former 38.1% to 29.8%; while inactive young persons (students or domestic helpers) held their share at slightly above 40%. To put it another way, in

Table 4

## CHILE: SOCIAL ORIGIN OF STUDENTS, 1980 AND 1984

*(Absolute numbers and percentages)*

Occupation of head of household	Total	Non-agricultural employers	Middle-range waged sectors	Middle-range independent sectors	Traditional craftsmen	Working class (upper level)	Other working class	Marginal workers	Domestic employees	PEM POJH	Agricultural EAP
15-19	493 819 (70.7)	12 781 (85.0)	97 971 (82.8)	57 196 (70.3)	32 677 (67.4)	106 970 (69.5)	51 113 (62.5)	18 759 (53.0)	8 647 (50.4)	9 881 (64.7)	10 749 (62.2)
1980											
20-24	108 793 (24.1)	5 865 (45.2)	41 322 (40.9)	11 604 (21.3)	7 458 (21.8)	13 491 (15.1)	4 462 (9.1)	973 (6.1)	103 (1.8)	1 089 (9.6)	2 049 (19.2)
15-19	460 006 (74.7)	21 561 (90.5)	85 632 (82.2)	44 293 (81.2)	28 585 (74.9)	78 928 (71.8)	45 357 (71.7)	21 480 (62.2)	11 145 (69.0)	28 334 (65.2)	11 078 (62.8)
1984											
20-24	131 289 (23.2)	8 970 (48.8)	38 962 (35.5)	16 783 (29.8)	4 324 (14.7)	15 439 (16.7)	6 263 (12.3)	2 773 (9.0)	1 449 (9.2)	2 574 (6.8)	2 680 (14.3)

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the National Statistical Institute (INE), National Household Survey, October-December 1980 and 1984.

Table 5

**CHILE: SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 20 TO 24,  
1980 AND 1984**

(Percentages)

	Both sexes		Men		Women	
	1980	1984	1980	1984	1980	1984
Unemployed	7.9	11.0	10.9	13.4	5.1	8.7
First-time job seekers	4.8	7.0	5.5	7.5	4.2	6.5
PEM/POJH	2.6	5.5	3.2	8.7	2.0	2.4
Female domestic employees	5.2	4.7	0.3	0.3	9.7	9.0
Own-account workers and unpaid family members	5.4	5.1	8.5	8.1	2.5	2.3
Manual workers	15.0	11.4	26.7	19.6	4.0	3.5
White-collar workers	17.1	13.0	18.2	12.9	16.1	13.0
Businessmen, professional and technical staff	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.3
Students	18.7	19.6	20.4	22.6	17.0	16.6
Domestic helpers and inactive	22.8	22.5	5.6	6.6	39.1	37.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source:* ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the National Statistical Institute (INE), National Household Survey, October-December 1980 and 1984.

1984 out of every 10 young persons aged 20 to 24 two were studying and two performing household chores, three were employed in relatively formal activities and three remained unemployed and found only marginal access to the work market.

The lower the educational level of young people, the higher their rate of exclusion (table 6). In 1984, 33.7% of those with no more than basic schooling were unemployed or employed in marginal jobs; the proportion declined slightly for those with secondary education (31.8%) and fell sharply for those with higher education (7.8%). Between 1980 and 1984 the exclusion of this last group increased by 1.7%, while the exclusion of young

people with secondary education (who account for three-quarters of the age group and were the most seriously affected by the crisis) increased by 9.4%.

The members of the higher-education category protect themselves against the crisis by continuing their studies (73.2%). Those with primary and to a lesser extent those with secondary education (31.7 and 24% respectively) remain largely excluded from education and the work market, occupying themselves with domestic tasks which facilitate the social survival of the families and the employment of other members of the household. Only one-tenth of this group manages to continue in the education system.



Table 6  
**CHILE: EDUCATION LEVELS AND SOCIAL CATEGORIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE  
 AGED 20 TO 24, 1980-1984**

(Percentages)

	1980			1984		
	Primary (1)	Secondary (2)	Higher (3)	Primary (1)	Secondary (2)	Higher (3)
Unemployed	7.9	9.2	1.9	10.6	12.7	2.1
First-time job seekers	1.5	5.7	4.0	4.1	7.8	5.0
PEM/POJH and public manual workers	3.3	3.0	0.2	8.0	6.0	0.6
Domestic employees	13.4	4.5	-	11.0	4.5	0.1
Own-account workers and unpaid family members	7.2	5.7	2.3	7.7	5.5	1.1
Private manual workers	20.4	16.8	1.2	11.4	13.4	0.3
Public and private white-collar workers	5.5	19.4	17.6	2.0	15.1	10.6
Employers, professional and technical staff	-	0.4	1.3	-	0.2	0.6
Students	4.6	11.4	66.7	13.6	10.6	73.2
Domestic helpers and inactive	36.1	23.9	4.6	31.7	24.0	6.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Column distribution	14.9	70.1	14.9	11.5	74.8	13.7

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the National Statistical Institute (INE), National Household Survey, October-December 1980 and 1984.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the non-marginal employment of the education categories is the reduced access to manual work of young people with primary education (from two to one in 10) and the reduced access of those with secondary education to white-collar and manual jobs. In 1984 it is practically impossible for young people with only primary education to become manual workers; with such limited recruitment and such an ample labour supply, it is necessary to have something more than basic education to become a manual worker.

The last aspect of this picture is obtained by studying the social integration of young people according to the socio-occupational categories of the heads of family (table 7), i.e., studying upward and downward mobility in the new

generations faced with an employment structure which rejects them.

Analysis of the occupations of the heads of the families of excluded young people (table 8) shows the systematic correlation between exclusion and social origin. In the lower part of the scale, unemployed heads of family or those working in emergency work programmes (PEM/POJH) have almost half of their children socially excluded and only 12.5% in education; in the upper part, the employers have exactly the inverse distribution. In the middle ranges, exclusion declines and continued education increases, in accordance with a very clear pattern of social stratification: the categories of marginal workers and poorest manual workers have a third of their children excluded, and the

Table 7  
CHILE: SOCIAL CATEGORIES OF PARENTS AND OF CHILDREN AGED 20 TO 24, 1984

(Percentages)

Child categories	Parent categories								
	Total	Unem- ployed first-time job-seekers PEM/POJH	Domes- tic em- ployees, marginal workers	Other working- class	Manual workers	Tra- ditional crafts- men	Middle- range independ- ent sector	Middle- range waged sectors	Non- agricul- tural em- ployers
Unemployed	12.6 71 417	23.9 24 196	11.0 5 131	15.2 7 741	12.9 11 905	8.1 2 370	14.3 8 037	7.9 8 692	6.2 1 131
First-time job seekers	8.5 47 861	10.2 10 389	7.4 3 463	11.9 6 056	5.6 5 202	7.5 2 201	8.9 5 000	7.9 8 630	4.1 753
PEM/POJH	5.8 32 848	13.6 13 812	7.5 3 491	6.8 3 475	6.0 5 596	6.0 1 752	1.3 737	3.0 3 300	- -
Domestic employees	1.8 10 571	1.4 1 382	8.4 3 925	1.8 892	1.5 1 405	3.1 905	1.5 839	0.4 487	1.7 306
Own-account workers and unpaid family members	4.6 25 900	2.8 2 813	15.3 7 121	1.3 655	2.6 2 420	5.8 1 713	9.0 5 066	1.5 1 661	8.5 1 556
Manual workers	12.6 71 013	10.4 10 554	14.4 6 724	21.2 10 774	24.6 22 771	18.4 5 424	6.9 3 892	4.8 5 214	1.0 176
Businessmen, technical staff, public and private white- collar workers	13.9 78 815	9.7 9 830	5.7 2 646	12.1 6 146	11.0 10 204	19.8 5 828	13.9 7 852	26.9 29 473	18.0 3 247
Students	23.2 131 289	12.5 12 744	9.0 4 222	12.3 6 263	16.7 15 439	14.7 4 324	29.8 16 783	35.5 38 962	48.8 8 970
Domestic helpers and inactive	16.8 95 354	15.4 15 658	21.3 9 922	17.3 8 831	19.0 17 572	16.7 4 891	14.2 8 023	12.0 13 166	11.9 826
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Column distribution	100.0	18.0	8.3	9.0	16.4	5.2	10.0	19.4	3.3
Absolute values	(565 068)	(101 378)	(46 692)	(50 834)	(92 513)	(29 408)	(56 226)	(109 614)	(18 376)

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the National Statistical Institute (INE), National Household Survey, October-December 1984.

categories of higher-status manual workers and craftsmen a quarter; the middle-range independent sectors —underlining the polarization within the category— also have a quarter excluded, but at the same time they keep almost a third of their young people in education. Lastly, the middle-range waged sectors keep their children in the education system in order to save them from exclusion, train them for a very competitive work market and delay the moment of confrontation with the realities of employment.

Two clear facts emerge concerning exclusion and they are also related to social stratification. The first is that the higher the position of the heads of family in the status scale, the lower the proportion of their children in marginal occupation. The second is that the majority of those in such occupations come from families of the unemployed and first-time job seekers.

The social effects of the economic policies introduced to combat the crisis, in conjunction with the exhaustion of the cycle of structural change and the tendency for a status hierarchy to

be re-established in the relations between social groups, show a continuation of social stratification and an accentuation of its polarization. If it is remembered that the three lowest categories of heads of family represent more than a third of the total, it can be understood that a large proportion of the new generations will form part, not of a low social stratum, but of a separate stratum of society. At the other end of the scale, the categories of heads of family whose children remain relatively protected against the crisis represent little more than a fifth of the total. Exclusion also affects seriously the middle-range categories of manual and independent workers, and it is therefore difficult to avoid the feeling that the crisis affects *youth* as such. However, and as has been shown, the crisis arrives at the culmination of a process of recomposition of social stratification and polarity.

Of course, this is not the situation throughout the region, with respect either to the level of unemployment or to the intensity with which the effects of the crisis are concentrated in the lower group. In situations of full participation these latter groups receive a

Table 8

## CHILE: SOCIAL ORIGIN OF EXCLUDED YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS, 1984

Children aged 20 to 24	Heads of family	Unemployed PEM/POJH	Marginal workers	Lower-level manual	Upper-level manual	Craftsmen	Middle-range independent sectors	Middle-range wages sectors	Employers
Unemployed and first-time job seekers		34.1	18.4	27.2	18.5	15.6	23.2	15.8	10.3
PEM/POJH and domestic employees		15.0	15.9	8.6	7.5	9.1	2.8	3.4	1.7
Subtotal excluded		49.1	34.3	35.7	26.0	24.7	26.0	19.2	12.0
Students		12.5	9.0	12.3	16.7	14.7	29.7	35.5	48.8

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the National Statistical Institute (INE), National Household Survey, October-December 1984.

relatively more equitable share of expenditure. However, it must be assumed that in the various countries social position has become more decisive with respect to the destiny of each

category of young people; this leads to the conclusion that in the present context it may be more accurate to speak of different classes of youth rather than of a generational unit.

## IV

### Some final thoughts

Just as the process of economic growth in earlier decades was dominated by expansion of the productive and urban consumer markets, the decisive element in the social processes affecting youth was incorporation in the modern employment system, and in urban education and culture. In both cases the crucial factor was the growth rate: economically, this did not produce any great changes in income distribution, while socially there were changes in the distribution of cultural capital. This imbalance was possible within the framework of change in the structures of production, employment and satisfaction of social needs fed by urbanization and modernization and by the need to legitimize power systems affected by the permanent integration of new sectors in the social system.

The economic and social processes were conditioned by the structural transformation which began in the region in the immediate post-war period. This transformation created mobile societies, in which young people were the particular beneficiaries both of changes in the production structure—with new jobs available only to the better educated—and of the deliberate and spontaneous processes of social modernization and national integration.

This change was not governed by considerations of equality of opportunity or the creation of social homogeneity; those objectives, when they did guide social policy, came into conflict with the former power structures and the type of economic development based more on growth than distribution. However, the majority of the youth group did receive some satisfaction, for all of them, in some way or

another, shifted their positions in the social universe.

Up to the 1980s, in contrast, societies were already crystallized in some countries; in others, the "easy" transformation had run its course, and in still others the structural change had been very weak, owing to economic and social constraints.

The possibilities of future development became linked, economically, to the capacity to expand markets through changes in income distribution in accordance with the model of the developed countries, and socially, to the formation of new generations with basically standardized levels of physical, health and educational development capable of meeting the complex technical and cultural requirements of the new forms of production and society which already characterized the developed countries.

It was at this stage that the region's economic crisis occurred, slowing the process of structural change and crystallizing the social stratification emerging from a transformation not governed by considerations of equity.

The young generations suffer the effects of the crisis not only in the shortage of jobs and the deterioration of social services: as the recession imposes itself on the dynamics of the situation, it is no longer defined by age group but by social origin, which in turn is heavily polarized by the concentration of income and power in the previous period.

The democratic political systems which consolidated themselves or emerged as a means of responding to this concentration must grapple with the problem of how to change the

distribution and lay the foundations for the social rights of citizenship against a background of crisis. One of the main challenges, no doubt, is how to initiate a new style of development, beginning with youth policies and capable of

establishing a new legitimacy for democracy. This is the dilemma expressed in the reply of a young person to an opinion pollster in a Latin American country: "I am for democracy, but is democracy for me?"

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## Youth in Argentina: between the legacy of the past and the construction of the future

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The situation and prospects of young people have changed a great deal in Argentina in recent decades because economic growth has been meagre, political problems have become more acute and social mobility has decreased. Against this background, the author examines different factors in the reality of youth in Argentina, such as demographic evolution, regional inequalities, the special conditions of young women, the role of the family in the socialization of young people, the positive and negative effects of educational expansion and participation in the world of work.

In these circumstances, there are considerable differences between adult generations and the young generation, particularly in the challenges they must face. Present-day youth finds itself in a poor country whose process of stagnation is very difficult to reverse because of the fall in the prices of traditional Argentine exports; the loss of traditional markets, which has not yet been offset by gaining new ones; inflationary processes that were, until quite recently, uncontrolled, with consequent loss of confidence in a productive economy; and the search of social groups and classes for solutions. This new poor country also has approximately 40% more people than it had 20 years ago and a foreign debt of US\$ 48 billion, which previously did not exist. Young people are the principal heirs of this poverty, but also one of the potential social actors for surmounting it.

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## I

### The situation of contemporary Argentine youth

It is well known that Argentina is one of the Latin American countries whose society went through a process of capitalist modernization at an early date. It preceded other countries of the region in achieving urbanization, industrialization, secularization of important aspects of social life, electoral participation of the population as a whole and access to primary education, as well as to other goods and services to meet both basic needs and needs that arose through modernization itself (Germani, 1965). It is less well known that present-day Argentine young people were born, raised and now live in a "crystallized" social scenario, that is, a society in which the spaces available to youth are almost the same as in 1960.

This crystallization of the social structure was basically caused by two factors. In the first place, a relation of dependence on the most industrialized countries was accentuated and, in the long term, had a negative impact on modernizing processes. In the second place, the political system was unable to promote qualitative progress towards bigger and better self-sustaining production, which would have expanded the spaces linked to such production and would also have redistributed its benefits with growing equity. Such inability of the political system stemmed from its power groups' lack of interest in achieving such goals, from persistent instability, from some groups' successive blocking of other groups' attempts to mobilize, and from social disturbances triggered by the demands of extremely numerous groups of the population who could find no channels to remodel the political system and initiate the changes required. From 1953 to 1983, civil and military governments alternated and were unable ever to keep together for more than three consecutive years a government team with medium and long-term strategies capable of generating dynamic social progress equal to that of preceding periods (Cavarozzi, 1983).



Although it may be said that the social structure of Argentina began to crystallize approximately 25 years ago, that was not the case with the system of relations among individuals and groups and particularly with styles of interpersonal and group relation. Between 1958 and 1983, ties of solidarity were broken, eminently competitive behaviour founded on individualistic bases spread and distrust and fear of society, and especially the State, developed.

Because of the crystallization of the social structure, young people become integrated into it in a manner quite similar to that of their parents, or at least with far fewer differences from adults than in the other countries of Latin America. The predominant trend in Argentine society is for the young generation to reproduce trends and differences that already existed in the intermediate generation (25 to 30 years of age)

and even many of the trends and differences that were evident in their parents' generation (45 to 55 years of age). This may be noted precisely in the existence among present-day young people of groups that are at least as different or distant from each other as those that existed twenty years ago. Moving somewhat ahead in what will be shown in the present article, the hypothesis may be formulated that, in terms of their social involvement, these groups of young people are quite similar to the groups of young people who were to become their parents and even quite similar to the different groups that may be distinguished among their parents. Naturally, the tendency for patterns of social involvement that already existed—and still persist—in adult generations to be reproduced in the young generation does not imply unchangeability or paralysis of social dynamics.

## II

### Number and distribution of youth in Argentina

#### 1. *Number and national origin of Argentine youth*

The youth population of Argentina is approximately one-sixth of the total population of the country (table 1), and amounted to 4 553 104 persons in 1980: i.e., much more than the total population of several Latin American countries. Slightly more than half of these young people are between 15 and 19 years of age, and slightly fewer than half are between 20 and 24 years of age. The former are more closely involved in their studies and have been greatly affected by the processes of the political freeze and social deterioration (particularly in education) over the past ten years. Nevertheless, they have greater possibilities of finding channels to compensate for the different losses of possibilities to which they were subjected. The latter are more autonomous, more closely connected to the world of work and have been

more affected by medium-term demographic processes and short-term economic processes. In Argentina, the youth population is on the increase, although with ups and downs and much more slowly than in the other countries of the region, while the population of elderly persons is increasing more rapidly. This demographic structure, together with some characteristics of the occupational, wage and social benefit structure of the country, indicates that the young people of today must not only be able to meet their own needs but must also be responsible for meeting a growing proportion of the needs of an increasing group of non-economically active adults. This can probably only be accomplished through a process of national capitalization, scientific development and consequent independent technological modernization, reactivation of production, administrative rationalization and changes in the social structure.

Table 1

**ARGENTINA: PERCENTAGES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE TOTAL  
POPULATION, BY SEX AND AGE, 1960, 1970 AND 1980**

Age Groups	1960			1970			1980		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
15 to 24	16.1	15.09	16.3	17.1	16.6	17.6	16.3	16.5	16.1
15 to 19 <sup>a</sup>	8.4	8.3	8.5	9.0	9.1	8.8	8.4	8.5	8.2
20 to 24 <sup>a</sup>	7.6	7.5	7.7	8.2	7.5	8.8	7.9	8.0	7.9

*Source:* Dirección Nacional de Estadística y Censos, *Censo nacional de población, 1960*; Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC), *Censo nacional de población, familias y vivienda, 1970* and *Censo nacional de población y vivienda, 1980*.

<sup>a</sup>The 1970 results were obtained through sampling.

A potential advantage that the young population has over previous generations in confronting this situation is that it is more homogeneous in origin. In contrast to the situation at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one, the vast majority of young people residing in Argentina are now second, third or fourth generation Argentines. Only 177 921 young people were foreigners in 1980 and, although from that date to the present time numerous Uruguayans, Chileans, Paraguayans, Koreans and young people of other origins have come to live in the country, the youth profile cannot have changed substantially in regard to national origin.

## *2. Regional inequalities and youth*

One of the main objectives of Argentine society and State at the end of the past century was to make a population of extremely diverse national origins more homogenous. This objective has now been achieved. It is curious, however, that the young generation has not been able to take advantage of this achievement in order also to make its possibilities for social participation more homogeneous. The structure of regional differences tends to be as crystallized as that of social differences, so that it prevents young people from certain regions of the country from having possibilities for proper participation in national reactivation and, what is more, from

sharing in the benefits of such reactivation on even a halfway equitable basis.

The traditionally unequal and unintegrated development of the different regions of the country —made worse by the enormous distances, which have not been shortened sufficiently by agricultural settlements or proper road and rail infrastructure suitable for interregional communication— counteract the advantages of shared nationality and represent obstacles to shared identity.

The young people of the North-West (Catamarca, La Rioja, Tucumán, Salta, Jujuy and Santiago del Estero) share the problems of Andean peoples, such as the avidity of the climate and the land and great distances between towns in an isolated mountain atmosphere. Young people of the North-East, particularly those in the regions that border on Brazil, confront situations characteristic of areas sharing a border with a country that is developing more rapidly, producing more cheaply and penetrating culturally. Young people who live in many cities in Patagonia participate in modernizing trends that the other young people are completely unaware of. Those in Córdoba, Greater Buenos Aires and the Central Cordillera or Cuyana Area are the most affected by economic decay: the former by disindustrialization, the latter by the destructive processes affecting the regional economies. The young people of Córdoba and Buenos Aires may be distinguished, however, by their possibilities

Table 2  
**ARGENTINA: INDICATORS OF THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE,  
 BY REGIONS AND PROVINCES, 1980**

	Total population	Youth (15-24) in the total popula- tion	Rural youth (15-24) in the total youth popula- tion	Young women devoted to household duties (14-24)	Youth with insuf- ficient educa- tion <sup>a</sup> (15-24)	Youth in the EAP <sup>b</sup> (14-24)	Youth who study (15-24)
	<i>Percentages</i>						
<i>Whole country</i>	27 947 446	16.3	17.0	31.2	19.7	47.4	30.9
Metropolitan Region	9 766 030	15.2	6.8	20.5	10.2	51.9	32.5
Federal Capital	2 922 829	14.4	-	12.7	6.2	48.8	39.5
Greater Buenos Aires	6 843 201	16.1	6.8	28.4	14.2	55.0	25.6
Pampa Region	8 012 080	16.0	21.6	33.2	19.3	49.7	27.9
Rest of Buenos Aires							
Province	4 022 207	15.4	0.3	29.4	14.0	51.6	31.4
Santa Fe	2 465 546	15.6	18.3	32.2	18.2	49.5	27.0
Entre Rios	908 313	17.0	32.0	37.4	25.6	45.3	27.5
Córdoba	2 407 754	16.6	23.8	30.4	17.1	48.6	31.2
La Pampa	208 260	15.8	33.7	36.9	21.7	53.7	22.5
Cuyo	1 876 620	16.9	30.4	35.0	21.7	45.2	31.2
Mendoza	1 196 228	16.6	32.9	35.8	21.6	49.5	28.1
San Juan	465 976	17.2	29.9	36.1	19.2	43.0	33.5
San Luis	214 416	17.0	28.5	33.1	24.4	43.2	32.1
North-East	2 247 710	18.6	39.2	42.3	40.1	44.4	26.8
Corrientes	661 454	18.7	32.8	36.5	38.1	40.5	30.5
Chaco	701 392	18.8	37.1	45.6	43.3	46.5	26.6
Formosa	295 887	18.2	40.6	44.5	36.8	42.9	26.1
Misiones	588 977	18.9	46.5	42.6	42.2	47.9	24.0
North-West	3 012 387	17.0	32.4	36.2	28.2	40.2	33.2
Catamarca	207 717	16.2	39.0	35.4	24.5	38.7	34.8
La Rioja	164 217	17.0	34.2	35.5	22.1	39.7	34.2
Tucumán	972 655	18.1	28.0	35.7	25.6	41.8	32.8
Salta	662 870	17.5	24.9	35.0	29.0	42.5	33.2
Jujuy	410 008	17.1	23.8	34.5	29.6	38.8	37.6
Santiago del Estero	594 920	16.4	44.6	41.6	38.8	40.1	26.8
Patagonia	1 032 619	18.9	17.2	35.6	24.3	53.4	23.6
Neuquén	243 850	18.7	22.6	37.2	32.1	52.8	22.9
Río Negro	383 354	17.2	26.7	37.2	32.1	51.6	24.7
Chubut	263 116	17.7	16.2	34.4	23.6	52.2	23.2
Santa Cruz	114 941	18.5	10.3	33.8	18.5	51.7	23.8
Tierra del Fuego	27 358	22.6	10.3	34.1	15.4	59.0	23.2

*Source:* Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, *Censo nacional de población y vivienda, 1980.*

<sup>a</sup> Without education or with incomplete primary schooling.

<sup>b</sup> Percentage of the young population incorporated into the EAP, with or without a job.

of receiving a heritage of greater participation and also opposition to participation: a fact which could provide useful lessons for overcoming the effects of decay.

Within the framework of the enormous regional differences, two facts affect youth in particular. The first is that although, in the country as a whole, only two out of every ten young people live in rural areas, in more than one-third of the 23 Argentine provinces (and particularly in all the provinces of the North-East) between one-third and half of the young people continue to be rural. The poorest provinces tend to have more rural youth, whose possibilities of education and work are, in fact, inferior and who must make greater integration efforts if they decide to participate in the search for other horizons (table 2).

This search for new horizons naturally takes place in different forms, according to the province of origin and the image that young people form concerning what is occurring in regions other than their own. It continues to be directed principally towards the Federal Capital,

Greater Buenos Aires and the large city of Córdoba, which all had positive youth migration figures between 1975 and 1980. Such migration is, however, probably prompted by an outdated image of the possibilities of social absorption offered by these cities. The latest thing in youth migration is the orientation towards Patagonia, consisting of the five southernmost provinces of the country (Río Negro, Chubut, Neuquén, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego), which have rich mineral and tourism resources and greater political stability than the rest of Argentina, based in some cases on the leadership of provincial caudillos committed to local modernization projects. Patagonia was and is the target of national policies for regional promotion (exemption from taxes for new industries, increased zone allowances for civil servants, and so forth) which have made it a true pole of attraction for the population, although it has not yet surmounted its previous backwardness nor surpassed the greater attraction of some other regions of the country.

### III

## The situation of young Argentine women

As well as the regional differences already indicated, there are pronounced differences in the social participation of the two sexes in Argentina. Sex-linked differentiation, however, lies above regional differences, since it is reproduced even in the regions that may be considered the most advanced.

The most important difference between young women and young men in Argentina is that 762 690 young women remain in a situation where they are exclusively in the home (Braslavsky, 1985b and 1985c), which means that the only social participation of all those women is within the family, where they are involved, to different degrees, in attending the other members of the family.

In 1980, more than three of every ten women from 15 to 24 years of age neither studied nor worked. Among them, a great many young women had no family obligations to occupy them in the home during the day, since they were neither married nor mothers. It is difficult to assume that all of them took care of younger brothers or sisters or of their parents. It is more likely that they were simply waiting to get married, as their only prospect of personal fulfilment.

Conservative concepts regarding the social place of women, transmitted through formal education (particularly through the family stereotypes disseminated in school books (Wainerman and Berck, 1984; Wainerman,

1983)) and through the values sustained by the most influential groups within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, are some of the ideological factors that inhibit the creative participation of young women in appropriate strategies to confront the challenges facing their generation. The percentage of such young women is very high for a country like Argentina. In addition to these ideological factors, there are certainly also structural difficulties in offering young women educational or work options, especially in the poorest provinces.

Both ideological and structural factors are frequently linked to the perpetuation of life styles typical of the concentration of power in strong local conservative oligarchies that sometimes revolve around influential provincial political parties. In other cases, such oligarchies are organized around sectors of the most important political parties in Argentina, which sometimes also maintain firm ties with local ecclesiastical hierarchies. Under such circumstances, religious instruction is still given in public schools, which have been under the administration of the provincial governments since 1978, while the content of curricula in non-religious subjects has not yet been secularized. These practices facilitate the penetration of concepts and values that indicate the home as the

only suitable place for female participation, apart from religious and educational institutions.

The chains of factors and the dynamics of politics that exist in some Argentine provinces make the percentage of young women who state that they dedicate themselves to housework one of the most valid, though least used, indicators of the differences among provinces. While only 6.1% of the girls from 14 to 19 years of age and 14.3% of those from 20 to 24 years of age in the Federal Capital stated that their occupation was housework, the respective percentages reached 35.2% and 60.1% in El Chaco, which is a province with high percentages of rural and Indian population, negative youth migration figures, frankly makeshift industrial development and the worst levels of schooling and education of the adult population in Argentina (table 2).

Undoubtedly, other factors also contribute to the transmission and acceptance of traditional values in the socialization of young Argentine women. One of them is the withdrawal of the population into private spheres, such as the family and religious groups, during periods in which public spheres have become aggressive and dangerous.

## IV

### Family and youth

The present-day youth of Argentina were born between 1955 and 1965. They grew up and became socialized in homes subject to intense changes, including notably: a) the shift of entire families or some of their members from rural to urban areas; b) the growing incorporation of women into the world of work; and c) the effects of increasing violence, particularly that of the State, and the consequent withdrawal of families into themselves as a result of daily life becoming more private.

Although, separately, all of these changes are common to one or another country of Latin America, their combination in Argentina resulted in some changes being contradicted by others, which produced a distinct and quite unique situation. Shifts from the countryside to the city and the growing participation of mothers in public life, either through work or in other forms (political parties, development associations, foundations, and so forth), may have helped to widen the gap between

generations, owing basically to the reduction in the time available to the adult generations for organizing joint activities, the decrease in shared social spaces and the participation of each generation in quite different spheres of socialization. In fact, in the parents' generation the weight of patterns of rural life was, for many, much more important than that of urban life patterns, whereas the socialization of young people took place mainly in accordance with urban patterns, even in the case of rural youth. Expansion of schooling, conceived in accordance with the characteristics of urban life, and of the mass media, where the countryside has almost no representation, contributed to urban socialization, which in many cases had its effect in advance: it facilitated the incorporation of nearly half a million young migrants into the cities at lower emotional and social costs (Cunha, 1986). The capacity of Argentine families to socialize the young generations was not reduced, however, and in recent years there have been no generational conflicts with broad social impact.

The absence of serious generational conflicts and the conservation and even reinforcement of the family's capacity to socialize young people is basically the result of daily life becoming more private between 1976 and 1983. This increased privacy was a social response to the increase in violence in public spheres and, particularly, to the increase in violence on the part of the State.

Violence was a constant in Argentine society from the end of the 1960s up to the early 1980s. It cannot be said to have eventually disappeared during this period: rather, the ways in which it was manifested changed. During the first stages, violence formed part of a social rebellion, or had the nature of a radical revolutionary youth manifestation with messianic components. Many justified different types of aggression on the basis of deep questioning of the dependent capitalistic nature of Argentine society, without however proposing clear alternatives shared by all those involved in such questioning. Gradually, this youth violence, with its revolutionary and messianic components, was defeated by the reactionary violence of para-State groups and the State itself, which further embroiled the general state of affairs by beginning the war of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). Undoubtedly, each of the different

manifestations of violence that have upset society over the past 20 years has been different and should be analysed with different parameters. Nevertheless, all have at least two common traits that have direct consequences on families, young people and the relations between young people and their families. The first is that young people were the great leaders and the second is that, among families, violence helped to produce a climate of fear concerning the participation of young people in public life and growing apathy among young people themselves. The manifestations of youth violence that persist are of an individual nature or involve small groups and are associated precisely with such apathy. State violence also helped to reinforce young people's lack of confidence in State institutions as valid interlocutors. These processes lay at the roots of the greater privacy in daily life and the relative strengthening of family ties in comparison to other social ties.

The increase in the privacy of daily life was stronger than other processes that could have made young people more distant from their parents and could have caused the family to lose ground as a socializing agent. The family consequently played a leading role in the socialization of present-day young Argentines. It helped to save democratic social awareness and the cultural heritage from the advance of authoritarianism and obscurantism in public spheres, to orient some (extremely protected) forms of socialization outside the family in clubs and community and religious organizations, and to compensate in some way for the lack of social concern about the future job placement of young people. Although these processes of conserving democracy took place at the expense of also preserving certain prejudices and taboos, their main effect was that the few young people who were able to avoid the growing decadence of the educational system, to gain access to relatively privileged jobs in a context of growing unemployment and a breakdown in the labour hierarchy, and to assume leading political roles in the democratic transition process that began in 1963, did so thanks to their comparative family advantages, which allowed them to confront various situations in better conditions than other members of their generation.

## V

## Educational levels of young people

Present-day youth directly received both the benefits and the negative effects of the expansion of the educational system, which speeded up as from 1950, with priority given to primary education up to 1960, to pre-school and secondary education in the following decade and to higher or university education since 1970. During the last years of the military government, youth was also affected by the limitations imposed on some levels and key areas of the system, particularly the elimination of adult primary education, less expansion at the middle level, the closing of industrial colleges, and the policies of limiting university activities (Tedesco, *et al.*, 1984).

The expansion of the formal educational system was not accompanied by an equivalent improvement in performance. School drop-out rates at the primary and middle levels of the formal educational system continued to be very high, particularly in poor provinces and in rural areas. Thus, the school drop-out rate for the cohort of young people born in 1955 was 51.2%, rising to more than 70% in most of the provinces of the North-East and North-West, as well as in some of the provinces of Patagonia. Nine years later—that is, for the younger segment of today's youth—the drop-out rate had decreased, but the national average was still 47.8% and it reached more than 60% in all rural areas, except in some provinces of the Pampa region.

Throughout the time that this cohort was passing through the educational system, the quality of education deteriorated continuously. As early as 1972, primary school curricula, particularly in the Province of Buenos Aires, began to be restricted to the teaching of reading and writing in the first grades. This situation became critical some years later, when teaching more than 13 letters of the alphabet in the first grade was prohibited (Municipalidad de Buenos Aires, 1984). The results of this and other curriculum decisions became evident in the performance of 74 114 primary school leavers in the entrance examinations for secondary schools

throughout the country in December 1981 (these adolescents are now 17 years of age). On average, these results showed that they only had 60% of the language requirements and 29% of the required knowledge of mathematics. The tests were based on the curricula of fourth and fifth grades and not on those of seventh grade (*La Nación*, 1982). At the secondary level, the deterioration was even worse. The programmes in operation and the most commonly used textbooks were prepared in the 1960s. Computing, informatics, social history, economics and nuclear physics, for example, were only taught in the "best" public and private schools; some of these subjects were not even taught in universities either.

Young people who remained within the educational system for the same number of years were not necessarily equally affected by the decline in its quality. Because of the establishment of educational circuits or segments with different conditions for learning through different educational models, there were young people who formally reached levels of higher education, although this did not increase their possibilities of access to abstract thinking or to modern and advanced fields of knowledge.

A fact that is clear to researchers, but is disguised by everyday appearances, is that the segments that offer the best conditions for learning and that promote an educational model in which the acquisition of scientific knowledge and the practice of abstract thinking occupy a central position select their students in accordance with the latter's socio-occupational and educational origin. Through complex mechanisms that have been studied in detail in recent investigations, however, an apparent system of merit has been constructed in the education system which makes all those who go through the system believe that their progress depends on personal qualities, particularly intelligence and dedication (Braslavsky, 1985a; Filmus, 1986).

Deterioration in the quality of teaching through backwardness or stagnation in the content selected, when compared to the advance in overall knowledge elsewhere, finds its expression in the authoritarian ritual of school life. School work became acting "as if" the children were learning, whereas actually they were only fulfilling a set of standard rites (Vecino, *et al.*, 1979). Authority was used to impose authoritarianism, the only way to maintain order among big groups of adolescents and young people in institutions which they were attending, for the most part, only to obtain a required credential, with no interest in the content being offered (Coleman, 1968).

Many of the processes described are now being modified. The expansion of some levels and key areas of the educational system has been revitalized; primary school curricula have been revised in several places in the country, and authoritarian practices in secondary schools and universities are changing. Argentine youth, however, has a profile and educational level that basically corresponds to what education was during the ten years prior to 1983.

The results of the educational model applied prior to 1983 are of two types: those of an objective nature and those that are linked to the creation of social awareness.

The most important five objective results are: an increase in the level of formal education of the young generation in comparison to previous generations (table 3); standardization of formal educational levels for both young men and young women and, in recent years, an upward trend in the level of women's education; a lack of correspondence between the average number of years spent in the educational system and the quantity and quality of knowledge acquired; inequality of education of young people

of different jurisdictions, geographic areas and social groups, even when their level of formal education is identical; and the persistence of insufficient education in significant groups of young people.

As regards the creation of social awareness, it may be said that young people who could not finish primary school, did not reach the secondary level or could not manage to enrol in the university are, for the most part, convinced that they have failed because they really are less capable. The selection of young people for access to successive levels within the formal educational system, as well as for remaining in each of these levels or for attending better or inferior establishments has functioned in such a way that it has played a strong legitimizing role: it has helped to produce attitudes of self-sufficiency or of mere conformism in many young people, depending on whether their passing through the educational system provided them with greater or fewer benefits than those of their peers. Differential formation of self-esteem began in this manner in primary school and continued throughout the entire educational system, which seemed to put those who were successful on one side and those who were not, on the other. In actual practice, it left only young people from low-income sectors on the side of the unsuccessful, although it allowed for the incorporation of a few of them into the other group.

The relation between the regional, social and educational situation of the population and the use of school opportunities was concealed from most young people by concentrating on school performance. On the basis of this distorted view of the educational possibilities offered by the society, many young people likewise justify the differences in their job opportunities.



Table 3  
**ARGENTINA: EDUCATIONAL LEVEL BY SEX AND AGE GROUP, ACCORDING  
 TO THE 1960, 1970 AND 1980 CENSUSES**  
 (Percentages)

Age Group	Census	Sex	Educational Level					Total
			No education	Primary	Secondary	Higher or university	No specialization	
5-9	1960	Male	30.6	69.4	-	-	-	100
		Female	29.7	70.3	-	-	-	100
	1970	Male	23.4	69.9	-	-	6.7	100
		Female	22.5	70.3	-	-	7.2	100
	1980	Male	12.3	87.7	-	-	-	100
		Female	11.8	88.2	-	-	-	100
10-14	1960	Male	4.9	84.8	10.3	-	0.1	100
		Female	4.7	84.6	10.7	-	0.1	100
	1970	Male	1.9	83.3	8.5	-	6.3	100
		Female	1.9	83.1	0.8	-	6.2	100
	1980	Male	1.2	83.5	15.3	-	-	100
		Female	1.1	81.9	17.0	-	-	100
15-19	1960	Male	5.2	63.4	28.7	2.5	0.2	100
		Female	4.9	63.7	29.4	1.9	0.2	100
	1970	Male	2.4	58.1	33.3	2.0	4.2	100
		Female	2.9	54.6	35.8	2.1	4.6	100
	1980	Male	1.6	46.0	48.6	2.9	-	100
		Female	1.5	42.7	50.9	4.9	-	100
20-24	1960	Male	5.1	67.0	20.3	7.4	0.2	100
		Female	5.7	69.1	20.9	4.0	0.3	100
	1970	Male	3.0	60.0	26.1	9.9	1.0	100
		Female	3.2	58.8	28.0	8.9	1.1	100
	1980	Male	2.2	49.5	35.3	13.0	-	100
		Female	2.2	46.5	35.8	15.6	-	100
25-29	1960	Male	5.6	71.1	16.9	6.0	0.4	100
		Female	6.4	74.7	15.5	3.0	0.4	100
	1970	Male	3.6	63.9	23.0	9.0	0.5	100
		Female	4.1	64.7	24.4	6.1	0.7	100
	1980	Male	2.7	54.4	29.3	13.6	-	100
		Female	2.7	51.9	31.3	14.0	-	100
30 and above	1960	Male	11.3	72.4	11.7	4.0	0.6	100
		Female	14.7	75.5	9.6	1.5	0.7	100
	1970	Male	7.5	71.9	14.8	4.8	0.9	100
		Female	10.3	73.8	12.9	1.9	1.1	100
	1980	Male	5.7	67.6	19.4	7.2	-	100
		Female	7.4	69.8	18.3	4.5	-	100

Source: a) Dirección Nacional de Estadística y Censos, *Censo nacional de población, 1960*. Volume I, *Total del país*, tables 10, 13 and 14. b) 1970: INDEC, *Censo nacional de población, familias y vivienda, 1970*. Results obtained by sampling, table 9. c) INDEC, *Censo nacional de población y vivienda, 1980*. Volume I, *Total del país*, tables 4, 7 and 8. Taken from Braslavsky, C. and C. Bersotti, *Proceso histórico de la superación de las desigualdades educativas de los jóvenes y mujeres en la Argentina*, paper presented at the Regional Technical Meeting on Overcoming Educational Inequalities of Young People and Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama, July 1983.

## VI

## Work and young people

In 1869, when the First National Population Census was held, 89.8% of the males between 15 and 19 years of age and 95.3% of those between 20 and 24 years of age participated in economic activities, while 64.2% and 65.9%, respectively of females were economically active (Recchini de Lattes and Lattes, 1975). Thus, the most widespread activity among young people of both sexes and both age groups was paid work outside of the home. As a result of expansion of the formal educational system and of transformation of the agro-export economy into an economy with an incipient and later heterogeneous industrial sector (which required a smaller labour force, but partly of a higher educational level), as well as changes in the social images of what were desirable activities for young people of each sex and each age group, there was a progressive redistribution of young people between economic activities (or work), study and staying at home. This redistribution should not be overestimated, however.

Most young people work. The proportions of men and women who do so are different, since many young women (although fewer than in past generations) tend to stay at home taking care of the house.

The most characteristic traits of the work of young people are as follows: the majority of young people, just like adults, are in a relation of dependence on a private employer or the State; they have also been affected by the tertiarization processes of the economy and expansion of own-account work; they are over-represented in jobs with fewer possibilities for personal fulfilment, union affiliation and wage prospects, and, within industrial jobs, they are not concentrated in any particular sector, but rather reproduce the distribution pattern of generations that came before them.

In 1980, 74% of the young people from 15 to 24 years of age worked in a dependent relationship, compared with a figure of 66% for the entire economically active population. The difference occurs because of the incidence of domestic employment, which constitutes 12%

of the employment of young people between 15 and 24 years of age and more than 30% of young women's jobs in this age group. The proportion of younger youth in a relationship of dependence was 71.5% and that of older youth, 76.3%. Data from permanent household surveys of 31 urban conglomerates show that 67.4% of the young people who worked were wage-earners in 1984.

In 1984, 11% of the young people in the 31 cities included in the surveys worked on their own account or worked without pay in some dependent relationship (probably a family relationship). Many young people did not answer those taking the survey precisely, which implies that their situation was uncertain. Most of the young people who worked on their own account or without wages and did not know how to define their work situation precisely, as well as many of those who did receive wages, were in occupation groups that could be considered critical, as had already occurred in 1980.

The earlier young people are incorporated into the labour force, the greater the possibility of their joining occupational groups with no future. Owing particularly to the low educational level with which they begin to work, their jobs are limited to working as domestic staff, labourers, apprentices, factory hands, juniors or other unskilled activities. In 1980, young people occupied in these activities accounted for almost 24% of the economically active youth population, although the total number of workers in these activities accounted for only 8% of the total economically active population. Of the young people in these jobs, 50% had no formal education or had not completed primary school.

In spite of the progress in trends towards tertiarization of the economy and the large number of young people performing unskilled jobs, the most numerous youth occupation group is that of skilled industrial workers, accounting for more than half a million young people of both sexes. The distribution of young people among the different industrial sectors is almost the same as that of adults. For example, 22.5% of

young skilled workers were employed in the metalworking industry in 1980, as against 21.5% of total workers. In the textile industry, the respective percentages were 4.2% and 3.2%. A comparison of the distribution of skilled workers in the different industrial sectors by age groups shows that there is no relation between differences in industrial employment and generational differences. This reflects at least three processes: a) industries hire workers according to criteria other than age; b) generations of workers are renewed within each sector; and c) the trend towards greater social mobility of the members of some sectors, for example the metalworking sector, is not necessarily linked to the presence of greater numbers of young people. Crystallization of the social structure, which was already mentioned, is also clearly evident, and socialization processes related to such crystallization may be inferred, particularly the existence of differentiated labour socialization mechanisms: parents in each industrial sector seem to overcome difficulties their children might encounter entering the industrial sector by transmitting work techniques and information concerning matters such as the operational, hiring and promotion mechanisms within the labour market sector to which they belong.

In addition to the general trends pointed out, the student worker or worker student category is growing among young people; unemployment is increasing and wages are deteriorating. Already in 1981, 65% of the students of the National University of Buenos Aires were working, and in 1982, 68% of the students of the National Technological University had jobs. The situation seems to be the same in the other tertiary and higher-level institutions. In 1984, youth unemployment in 31 urban conglomerates reached the record figure of almost 11% of the economically active population in this age group. Between March 1980 and March 1984, the proportion of young people within the group receiving the lowest wages increased considerably. In the Federal Capital in March 1980, 2.5% of the young workers earned up to 60% of the minimum wage and 8%, more than four times the minimum wage, but in 1984, 14.5% earned up to 67% of the minimum wage and only 1.7% perceived more than four minimum wages. This trend occurred in many other cities as well (INDEC, 1985).

The labour situation of young people is only a reflection of the labour situation of the population as a whole; it is no better and no worse and it is just one of the dimensions of the poverty now afflicting Argentina.

## VII

### Youth between the past and the future

In the introduction it was stated that Argentine youth now finds itself in a poor country. Its poverty is both material and political (Demo, 1985). Not only are resources insufficient to meet material needs, but political practices and concepts have also remained partially crystallized. Only after 1982, following the crisis of the Falklands (Malvinas) war, did some political parties, intermediate organizations and social groups begin to rethink what Argentina was. In this regard, the Partido Radical (Radical Party) appeared to young people to be the bearer

of an attractive response which was oriented towards non-violent social dynamics to settle social conflicts, towards support for the strengthening of ties of solidarity and the modernization of the economy, as well as towards changes in certain policies that affected young people in particular. In this last sense, it included the elimination of obligatory military service and of university entrance examinations in its 1982 pre-election platform.

After the Radical Party came to power, measures coherent with some of its proposals

were taken. In the case of those specifically directed towards youth, obligatory military service was reduced in several ways (although not eliminated) and free access to universities and to the degree programmes that each young person wished to study was granted. At the same time, the State promoted a proposal of "modernization", whose content has not yet been fully defined. In principle, it seems to consist of creating favourable conditions for productive investment, promoting exports and supporting reforms that will contribute to increased productivity in certain branches of industry, as well as for rationalizing the tertiary sector and particular public employment. Briefly summarizing the government proposal, it may be said that it will attempt to surmount material poverty through production modernization and political poverty through non-violent participation in institutions that have been persecuted for many years, especially the youth groups of political parties and student centres. It will also indirectly favour the participation of young people in the organized labour movement, through the unions.

There is a risk that the form taken by modernization will not contribute sufficiently to the generation of conditions favouring a type of national development that is less dependent on large economic units and corporations. In this regard, it seems particularly necessary to produce a firm scientific and technological structure that can serve as a half-way point between the advanced technology of the highly industrialized countries and that of Argentina, and to go more deeply into the search for independent avenues of scientific and technological development. Likewise, it also seems necessary to increase all the measures to keep capital in the country.

The participation proposal has undoubtedly been accepted by a significant proportion of young people. During the years immediately prior to 1983, the most widespread form of youth participation was through music. By attending festivals of "Argentine rock" held in enclosed areas, songs prohibited on mass media could be heard; increasingly, themes of protest were accompanied, and sometimes replaced, by themes of love for life, solidarity, hope and peace (Vila, 1985). Since 1982, many young people

have begun to participate in the political parties. Today, their presence is significant in the two large traditional parties, the Partido Radical and the Partido Justicialista, in other minor parties and also in two new parties which seem to suggest that the present particularly attractive options for growing groups of young people because of their clear and homogeneous ideological lines: the Unión de Centro Democrática, where there is a strong influence from the "new right", and the Partido Intransigente, which appears as an option for the anti-imperialist left, although it is more closely linked to previously existing styles and concepts.

In the context of the deep segmentation affecting Argentine youth, the trends referred to above could lead to sectoral modernization which would only benefit youth groups of specific industrial and services sectors. The process of direct entrance into the universities also presents some problems: it was introduced without the parallel creation of job sources with sufficient wages and on-the-job training possibilities, which would have provided an alternative to young people, in a situation where working conditions (and particularly wages) of university researchers and teachers were deteriorating: a teacher in charge of a course, for example, receives between US\$ 60 and US\$ 250 a month. These circumstances make it impossible to be optimistic about the processes of restoring scientific and technological capacity. The persistence of a strong outflow of capital also precludes any expectation of significant capital accumulation in Argentina.

Youth can become an important actor in tackling future tasks, in participating in social dynamics and in helping to prevent a type of modernization that would involve the risks pointed out above. For this purpose, young people need to change and to overcome some of the legacies of the past (Rama and Faletto, 1985). In principle, these legacies are: the weakness of young people's common identity; their lack of confidence in public spheres, whether social or political, which is reflected in the participation of very few young people in student centres, political parties, development associations, union commissions, and so forth; the small amount of knowledge acquired and its

obsolescence; the predominance in some groups of practices that foster competition for individual advancement or confrontation in the political struggle, rather than espousing solidarity and co-operation; the penetration of harmful and conservative concepts in some groups, particularly among young women; and the lack of the training needed to solve some problems independently, together with a certain tendency to make excessive demands on those whose roles complement their own (teachers, for example). Young people have a significant background attesting to their capacity for change, such as, for example, the activities of the Political Youth Movement (Movimiento de Juventudes Políticas), which has striven, ever since it was formed, to surmount political practices of mutual opposition and to produce constructive and consensual forms of settling conflicts; volunteer participation in activities such as adult literacy programmes and assistance in running free clinics, at different times in the country's history; solidary actions undertaken within the framework of "Priority: Youth" (Prioridad, Juventud) in the church; values spread by some currents of the "Argentine rock" movement; the organization of parallel academic activities when those existing were considered deficient; and clear preference for

academic quality on the part of young people who have participated in selecting personnel to fill university teaching posts, when statutes call for their participation.

Finally, it should be added that this process cannot replace special government policies for youth aimed at solving precisely those problems that young people, and particularly those with limited material and educational resources, cannot solve for themselves. Before formulating any other type of policy aimed at youth, government agencies should consequently give priority to addressing the problem of growing unemployment among young people (which is of course not unrelated to the rising unemployment of adults) in conjunction with private enterprise, whose companies employ the highest percentage of young workers.

The problem of unemployment, and particularly of youth unemployment, is new in Argentina. It may be only a passing phase, or it may become chronic. In the latter case, Argentina will have divided its youth even more deeply and the dividing line will be between the generation of modernization, on the one hand, and the generation of the unemployed, on the other. The impact that such a situation would have on democratic stability is unpredictable.

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## Youth in Brazil: old assumptions and new approaches

*Felicia Reicher Madeira\**

The author examines the situation of young people within the framework of the deep changes that have occurred in Brazil in recent decades. There are three aspects that interest her most. First, she addresses employment and, in this context, the evolution of employment and wages and the effect the crisis has on them. In this regard, the most outstanding observation is that the urban economically active population has become younger since the 1970s as a result of the increased rate of young people's participation, contrary to conventional assumptions that modernization will have the opposite effect. Second, she examines education and stresses that educational levels in Brazil are lagging well behind the observed economic progress. In fact, the proportion of young people with no instruction or only a few years of schooling is very large, particularly in rural or relatively less-developed areas, such as the North-East. Finally, she deals with the family, which has been greatly affected by changes in other spheres of society, and with young people's relations with their families, which has given rise to a complex interplay of solidarity and conflict.

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## Introduction

Over the past 30 years, drastic changes have occurred in Brazil, as in the rest of Latin America, and have brought about deep quantitative and qualitative transformations in the geographic, demographic and social structure of the country. Some basic trends include the predominance of paid jobs, increased mercantilization of trade relations, monetization of labour relations, progressive increases in urban jobs, a tendency towards growing concentration of income, the appearance of great regional imbalances, and progress in educational opportunities.

The 1970s saw the acceleration of such trends and the emergence of others, including particularly the increase in the numbers of young people and women in the economically active population of the cities, the intense penetration of the mass media and new consumption patterns spread through such media, and the greater general availability of consumer credit. Beginning in the 1980s, however, Brazil entered into a period of recession generally characterized by greater unemployment in the dynamic sectors, increased underemployment and deterioration in the working class' standard of living.

A significant number of studies have already been conducted to try to understand how these new conditions came about. Such studies have made use of official statistics, referring to a set of "classical" socio-economic variables, covering such factors as income, employment, place of residence and educational level.

Within this set of "classical" variables, most of these studies do not take into account the specific place occupied by such biological and demographic groups as young men, young women and adult women, who, each in their own way, have helped to create the new social order.

Without speculating too much on the reasons why such aspects are considered secondary or marginal (the arguments would certainly be different for adult women than for young people of both sexes), a common explanation may be found for this lack of attention: the scant importance given to the family in determining the population's living conditions.

In fact, family relations were for many years only dealt with in the most conservative studies, and the main analysis was consequently limited to their ideological functions. On the progressive side, concern for family relations was considered typical of researchers contaminated by bourgeois ideology, since problems formulated in such terms ended up concealing the reality of the class struggle.

As secondary information, fundamental importance was attached to the parameters of the situation of adult males, since they were generally the head of the family and responsible for the family's biological survival or its standard of living, when this was above mere subsistence.

Through a number of paths that eventually crossed, a new perspective on the family was gained, and it became an important field of study when emphasis began to be placed on the "joint economic activity" of its members in maintaining and reproducing family living conditions. After being thus legitimated, solidarity and harmony among the different family members eventually became important in analyses. In recognizing the economic value of household work, this perspective also favoured the development of a fruitful debate on the links between capitalist productive space and the family as a sphere of production (including procreation and household work).

Although this new form of viewing the family legitimated studies on the economic significance of the wife's activities, the question of the activities of the children and young people of the family is still practically unexplored. An analysis of the family from this approach gives rise to a whole gamut of questions. For example, if the family is analysed as the main place of organization of the "family survival strategy" or from the standpoint of the woman's contribution, what is most evident is the solidarity aspect; if viewed from the standpoint of young people, however, what is outstanding is the conflict or the relation between conflict and solidarity. If discussion of women immediately leads to consideration of the relation between productive and unproductive work, discussion of young people almost inevitably refers to the future, to the democratization of schooling and, hence, to social mobility, the manipulation of aspirations, frustrations, and so forth.

The lack of studies that take into account young people would, in itself, justify a study on what has happened in Brazil over the past ten years as regards the participation of this segment of the economically active population. Such a study may also be considered opportune, because the patterns that have arisen over the last ten years and have basic implications for the future path to be taken by Brazilian society particularly affect young people of both sexes.

Furthermore, the most recent investigations bring out two needs. The first is to place less emphasis in analyses of the place of children and young people in the labour market, on the most common approach, which tends to underline marginalization and poverty, and to begin instead to think analytically (as was done with the work of women) about the work of people in these categories as an integral and structural part of the social production process. The second need is to approach labour relations and the significance of schooling not only from the standpoint of capital, as is generally done, but also from the viewpoint of the specific actor involved, that is, the young person.

The present study was designed to perform two basic and complementary tasks: first, to demonstrate how young people were conditioned to participate in labour market trends during the period in question and thereby to assist in shaping the new profiles of Brazilian society, and, second, to see how these changes ultimately put into operation mechanisms that expanded or provided access to young people's identity.

To that end, the concept of young people's identity is first of all analysed in order to highlight the young population's specific behaviour within labour market trends during the last decade.

Data organization is based on official statistics of the 1970-1980 population censuses and the National Home Sample Survey (Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios, PNAD). The information presented always refers to the country as a whole and to two poles: one, the State of São Paulo, which is the most dynamic in the country, and the other, the State of Pernambuco which is the area afflicted by the most harmful effects of the development style that prevailed in Brazil during the 1970s.

Frequently, information is used from studies on work-school integration in the daily activities of young people in São Paulo, based on qualitative empirical references.

Whenever possible, information is broken down by sex, because of the different impact that the main changes have had on each sex. It was also decided to subdivide age groups, so that

those between 10 and 14 years of age are considered children, those between 15 and 19 years of age, adolescents, and those between 20 and 24 years of age, young people, in accordance with the subdivision of the censuses. This division reflects important differences in the work, school, leisure, and related responsibilities of each of these age groups in recent years.

## I

### What is a "young person"?

These statements made by the mass media, political parties and the organized sectors of society in relation to the International Youth Year are of two types: either they refer to Brazilian youth in general or they insist on the enormous differences among young people. In the later case, the positions taken are naturally more controversial.

"That is why we understand that it is impossible to talk about youth in general, since we must characterize youth on the basis of its living and working conditions and the class to which it belongs. The young worker, then, is a young person who belongs to the working class and shares its living and working conditions."<sup>1</sup>

For some time, one of the television channels presented short interviews with the most diverse types of young people (workers, vendors, *bóias-frias*,<sup>2</sup> and preachers of sects) and adults on what a young person is or what it means to be young. In spite of the enormous diversity of those interviewed, their answers showed that being young meant, above all, taking advantage of a transitory period of less responsibility, either in relation to work or the family, and enjoying leisure to the full, frequently including "curtir um som",<sup>3</sup> going out with members of the opposite sex, practicing a

sport, living it up with friends, and so forth. In essence, the set of testimonies demonstrated a relatively clear and generalized social perception of what it means to be young, in spite of enormous differences in the forms of participation in society.

Braslavsky (1985) successfully translates the meaning of the set of testimonies as a whole when she depicts youth on the basis of two criteria. The first criterion distinguishes the stages that human beings pass through according to their greater or lesser degree of autonomy. In this regard, what characterizes young people is a margin of autonomy that is greater than that of children but more limited than that of adults. This makes young people oscillate between two types of behaviour. On the one hand, they perceive themselves as being capable of performing specific tasks and of confronting certain social challenges: a feeling that frequently takes the form of personal and social "omnipotence". On the other hand, they sometimes express worries, reflecting the internal and external limits imposed by the family and society. In practice, young people often end up making even their most regulated activities, school and work, "intermittent"; they come and go, as is typical of people who do not have to be fully responsible. These distinctive traits of youth certainly lie at the roots of another factor that inevitably appears in the discourse characteristic of youth: conflict with the adult world.

<sup>1</sup> From "Quem somos", a document prepared by the *Jornal Juventude Operária* for the International Youth Year.

<sup>2</sup> Rural wage earners who live in urban areas.

<sup>3</sup> Young people's expression that means to enjoy loud, modern music.



A second criterion sees youth as a stage of transition between childhood and adult life: a transition that does not take place in only one form, but almost always involves a number of parallel or consecutive changes that vary both historically and culturally. Scientific publications have identified five forms of transition, which appear most frequently in the testimonies and in the light of common-sense considerations: i) leaving school; ii) entering the labour force; iii) leaving the family of origin; iv) marrying; and v) establishing a new home.

The task of preparing a profile of young people goes far beyond pure theoretical or academic interest. Young people's specific problems need to be made visible and be socially recognized so that consideration may be given to formulating public policies especially aimed at this sector of the population. Furthermore, it is essential to bear this set of traits in mind in order to interpret the qualitative and quantitative results of research, particularly because such results are, ultimately, of valuable assistance in formulating public policies in two decisive social spheres: education and the labour market. The special characteristics of these members of society must be kept in mind, even when analysing official data such as those of population censuses. In fact, the normative and motivational criteria that are implicit in census categories, such as unemployment and inactivity, become evident when these concepts are borne in mind, as demonstrated in the present study. The bias of official data is a fact already widely denounced in studies on women; analysing such data from the standpoint of youth discloses other facets of them.

Similarities between the question of youth and the question of women do not end there. Neither the State nor employers ever forget that autonomy that is only relative and a lower level of responsibility are characteristic traits of young people. They are rated as workers who make a secondary contribution to the family and are treated quite differently from adult social agents in the same social sector, which in practice means attributing lower market value to work of greater comparative value.

One sector of the population in Brazil may now be said to possess a certain degree of homogeneity because of the relative autonomy it is aware of and enjoys. In other words, it is possible to talk about a certain youth identity common to Brazilian society as a whole. This does not, however, mean that it is possible to speak generically about "Brazilian youth", just as we cannot speak about Brazilian children or Brazilian women in a generic manner. Young people are just as segmented as Brazilian society as a whole. They are divided by sex; they are rural, urban or metropolitan; they are rich, middle-income or poor; they are integrated or marginalized; they come from the North or the South-East; they are young girls, young mothers, workers, students or worker/students. Naturally, each of the specific situations in which young people live limits their capacity, their aspirations, their field of action, as determined by written and unwritten social codes, their level of conflict, and their degree of responsibility.

From the standpoint of identity versus differences among Brazilian youth, by way of a brief summary and as a foreglimpse of conclusions, we could say that a significant part of the young population was able to participate in society through work, school or leisure in a more "modern" manner during the 1970s. This does not mean that the relative and objective distances between young people have diminished, but the changes registered during that period have reinforced the identity of young people and even spread it to a wider sector of society. Expansion of opportunities for paid work and formal employment strengthen ambitions and also the sense of omnipotence, and the conflicts between generations become markedly more explicit. More democratic educational opportunities, while stimulating aspirations, also make up for deficiencies in sociability, particularly in the case of female youth; the mass media create clear and visible symbols of youth's identity; and the consumer society makes such symbols available either through inferior quality, cheapening of products or systems of credit.

## II

### Work: the activity of many young Brazilians

#### 1. *Employment*

According to the theory of modernization, urbanization and industrialization are expected to bring about a decrease in both the participation and the proportion of children, adolescents and youth in the economically active population (EAP) as a whole. The reason is simple. The greater the proportion of the population in the primary sector, the greater the utilization of young and elderly labour. As modernization continues, the availability of such labour decreases because with increasing urbanization schooling is longer, labour legislation is introduced and the social security system is improved.

In general, this expectation was fulfilled in Brazil up to 1970. The surprise in the 1970s was that some of these trends reversed; it could even be said that one of the characteristics of that time was that the urban EAP became younger.

This fact alone disproves the paradigm of the theory of modernization: the evolution of the labour process and the school system during the 1970s has encouraged rather than hindered the hiring of minors. In absolute figures, the number of minors from 10 to 17 years of age who worked increased by 41% between 1970 and 1980. Although this percentage is lower than the total growth in the contingent of workers, which increased 48%, the relative increase occurred in spite of the great reduction in the rural labour force, in which the proportion of minors is quite large. If the urban labour market is considered by itself, it may be seen that its capacity to absorb child, adolescent and youth labour grew 94%, while the absorption of adult labour increased 85%.

The relevant data are presented in table 1. Before proceeding to analyse the figures, two general considerations should be noted. The first is related to the differences between men and women in all of the age groups and shows that these become apparent at a very early age. The second refers to expectations of participating in

the labour market among the different subgroups in these categories, which are very similar throughout the country and also present differences by sex.

As far as males are concerned, for example, it may be said that the economically active population included nearly one-fifth of the children, slightly more than half the adolescents (between 15 and 17 years of age) and three-fourths of those who had reached the age of legal majority.<sup>4</sup>

Grouped together in this manner, however, these figures conceal significant differences between polar situations that exist between urban and rural areas and between São Paulo and the North-East. The participation rates of children are nearly five times greater in rural areas than in urban areas. They are also greater in Pernambuco, although rates increased at both poles during the decade. In São Paulo, the figure rose from 28.3% to 30.7%, and in Pernambuco from 37.6% to 42%.

Urban rates, although lower, refer to greater absolute numbers and their percentage increases were more significant. Thus, in São Paulo, they rose from 8.8% to 13.4%, and, in Pernambuco, from 4.3% to 11.7%.

Adolescent workers are not only much more numerous than child workers but also work under very different conditions. Their proportion is greater in São Paulo than in Pernambuco, and it is also greater in urban areas, where the growth rate is faster.

Male adolescents increased their participation in urban areas: in São Paulo, they increased from 53.0% to 63.0% and in Pernambuco from 35.6% to 49.4%. In the rural area of São Paulo, the corresponding figures only matched population growth and in Pernambuco they even decreased.

It was interesting to distinguish between adolescents above or below 18 years of age (the

<sup>4</sup>There are various different legal provisions in this respect in Brazil. The age of legal majority in election and labour laws, for example, is 18; but in civil law, it is 21.

Table 1

## BRAZIL: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RATES BY SEX AND LOCATION, 1970 AND 1980

Location	Children		Adolescents				Young people		Total	
			15-17		18-19					
	1970	1980	1970	1980	1970	1980	1970	1980	1970	1980
<b>Males</b>										
Brazil										
Total	19.5	20.0	54.9	57.7	73.5	76.9	87.7	90.5	71.9	72.4
Urban areas	6.6	11.3	38.8	50.4	61.4	73.3	82.2	89.0	65.5	70.3
Rural areas	33.4	35.6	73.4	72.2	87.0	85.0	94.6	90.0	80.1	78.8
Sao Paulo										
Total	13.1	15.6	57.9	64.4	74.7	82.8	88.8	93.0	72.3	75.3
Urban areas	8.8	13.4	53.0	63.0	70.6	81.8	87.3	92.5	70.3	75.0
Rural areas	28.3	30.7	74.0	74.7	88.9	90.1	94.7	97.0	80.0	79.5
Pernambuco										
15-19 <sup>a</sup>										
Total	20.1	24.4	57.3	60.4	-	-	86.2	87.9	71.0	69.7
Urban areas	4.3	11.7	35.6	49.4	-	-	77.2	85.2	58.1	64.5
Rural areas	37.6	42.2	81.7	78.8	-	-	96.9	93.5	75.3	78.2
<b>Females</b>										
Brazil										
Total	6.5	8.4	21.4	27.4	27.3	37.1	27.7	38.5	18.2	26.6
Urban areas	5.6	7.1	25.0	30.1	34.6	43.4	36.3	45.7	22.3	30.8
Rural areas	7.6	10.8	16.5	22.8	17.0	22.4	15.0	20.3	12.3	17.6
São Paulo										
Total	9.0	10.0	37.2	43.4	42.3	53.6	38.8	48.8	23.0	32.6
Urban areas	9.1	9.2	39.3	43.9	46.9	57.0	43.4	51.5	25.5	34.2
Rural areas	9.0	14.7	28.1	39.3	21.8	30.5	15.6	25.0	11.3	20.6
Pernambuco										
15-19 <sup>a</sup>										
Total	5.0	8.9	18.8	24.7	-	-	24.2	34.9	17.0	25.4
Urban areas	3.9	5.9	22.3	23.9	-	-	33.2	39.3	25.0	26.8
Rural areas	6.4	13.6	14.0	26.0	-	-	12.7	25.5	12.2	22.7

Source: 1970, special tabulation: IBGE, *Perfil estatístico de mães e filhos*; Pernambuco, 1970, IBGE, *VIII Recenseamento Geral - 1970. Regional Series. Vol. 1, Section X. Population census. Pernambuco*; IBGE, *IX Recenseamento Geral do Brasil - 1980. Population census.*

<sup>a</sup>Separate data for the 15-17 and 18-19 age groups are not available.

legal age for working), and it was noted that those over 18 increased their participation. In this regard, it should be noted that it is very difficult for those between 17 and 18 years of age to find a job, since companies reject young people of this age because of military service commitments. Young people also have the right to a number of labour benefits and employers prefer to avoid such protective laws.

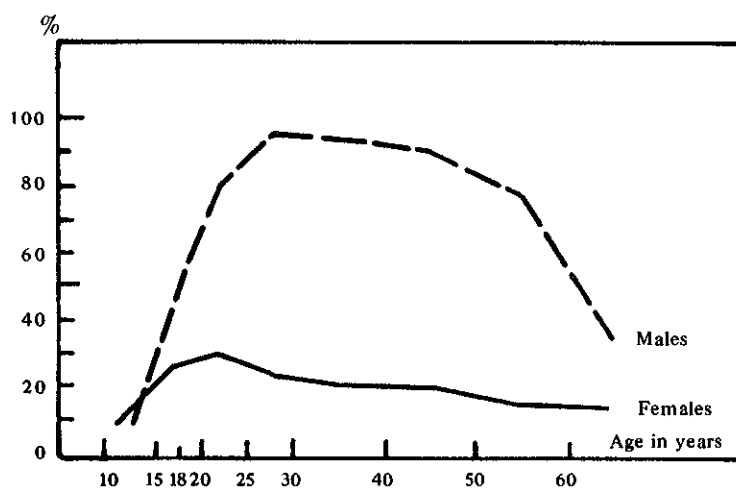
Young males, in general, followed the trends of adult males and labour market participation indicators remained relatively stable in the country as a whole and in the different regions. The figures on the participation of these age categories in the total contingent of workers seem to contradict the experience in the developed countries, whose modernization paradigm postulates a systematic downward trend in the participation of children, adolescents and young people in the labour force as development progresses. In this regard, the participation of children and adolescents in the total economically active population decreased percentagewise in the country as a whole; the drop was less accentuated among adolescents and the proportion remained practically stable

among youth. If the rural and urban population are taken separately, a stable or slightly downward trend may be noted in rural areas in the participation of children (which went from 8.2% to 8.5%), adolescents (9.2% to 9.5%) and young people (14.8% to 14.4%). In urban areas, participation rose in all groups: children rose from 1.8% to 2.6%; adolescents, from 5.4% to 6.7%; and young people, from 15.5% to 17.3%.

To understand the trends among female children, adolescents and young people, it must be borne in mind, first of all, that the situation among women is quite diverse, as shown in figure 1, in which male and female participation curves are compared according to age. While the male curve drops only when advancing age suggests the proximity of retirement, female participation rates usually drop after 25 years of age (possibly because of marriage and motherhood). In contrast to what happens in more developed countries, women in Brazil do not reintegrate themselves into economic activities, once their children have grown up.

The figure shows that female participation rates are highest in the group from 20 to 24 years of age and then decrease. This pattern is valid for

Figure 1  
BRAZIL: ACTIVITY RATES OF MALES AND FEMALES,  
BY AGE, 1970



Source: Bruschini (1985), with data from the 1970 Population Census and from the *Perfil Estatístico de Crianças e Maes no Brasil*, UNICEF, 1982.

the country as a whole and for urban areas, but not for the countryside, thus reflecting both the structure of the employment available to the women in each region, as well as their possibilities of gaining access to the market, in view of their responsibilities in bearing and raising children. The more formal structure of the non-agricultural economic sectors, with standard working days and a clear separation between family space and production space, is an obstacle to making the different activities of women compatible and causes a reduction in their participation rates when they are fulfilling child-bearing and rearing responsibilities. Furthermore, the labour market is more favourable for young and single women, partially because of the prejudices of employers. In rural areas, the age profile of female participation is more irregular and suggests that the nature of work performed there allows for greater compatibility between the innumerable responsibilities of women. More than a few investigations have highlighted the combination of productive and reproductive activities that women perform in the house, in the yard and in small gardens. Performing several jobs at the same time frequently leads women to classify themselves as unemployed and causes data to suffer from underestimation, as observed further on (Bruschini, 1985).

It should be noted first of all that the data in table 1 indicate that during the 1970s the total young female participation rate grew substantially from one-fifth in 1970 to one-fourth in 1980, while the male rate for the same age groups was far lower. Examination of the relation between sex and age shows that the most pronounced differences among children occur in rural areas, where the participation of girls is only one-third that of boys. More than half of the male adolescents (15 to 17 years of age) worked, while the proportion of female adolescents was not even one-fourth (21.4% in 1970 and 27.4% in 1980). In the case of female adolescents, the differences between the most developed and the least developed areas are enormous. In São Paulo, almost 40% of female adolescents had some paid employment in 1970, while in Pernambuco the proportion did not even reach 20%. This distance between the two poles tends to remain very pronounced: in 1980,

43.4% of female adolescents in the São Paulo area were already working, in comparison to only 24.7% in the Pernambuco area. Among young women, differences between rural and urban areas and between the most developed and least developed poles are likewise maintained.

Participation rates of young men remained stable during the 1970s; in contrast, young women increased their participation in the labour market in general, both in rural and urban areas.

If trends in the development of women's participation are examined within the framework of the total contingent of workers, the results reinforce what was observed in relation to men: in urban zones and the most developed areas, the labour force incorporated a larger proportion of young people and women. The data show that the dynamic industrial economy, which was in full expansion in the 1970s, rapidly incorporated adolescents of both sexes and married women, while the male labour force grew very slowly during that same period of time.

To gain a more accurate idea of the factors that played a role in this percentage increase of young workers and adult females, consideration should be given to two aspects stemming from the economic model implemented in Brazil during the last decade. One involves the "artificial" increase in workers and the other, the "real" increase.

In the first case, the monetization of labour relations, in which wage earning became the predominant and most common form of work in the countryside and the city, increased the number of people registered as workers. The development of the domestic market in Brazil, together with greater social division of labour, has gradually eliminated the possibilities of producing for self-subsistence or for the local community and has forced workers to devote themselves to wage-earning activities as a means of survival. Consequently, during the 1970s there was a great increase in the number of wage-earners and the monetization of income.

It is widely recognized that unpaid work tends to be underestimated in censuses and particularly in population censuses. On comparing the differences between sexes, it may be seen that such underestimation is much

greater for women than it is for men. In this sense, the increased activity rates of children, young people and women in rural areas may be partially due merely to the monetization of labour relations.

The data clearly indicate that between 1970 and 1980 there was a decrease of four percentage points (from 16.7% to 12.6%) in the proportion of men who were in the Brazilian labour force, but did not receive related monetary compensation. Among women, the decrease was even greater (from 47.2% to 38.9%). Since the proportion of unpaid workers tends to be concentrated in the child and youth population, decreases were greatest in these sectors. Naturally, in São Paulo, where antiquated forms of production were eliminated by the much stronger capitalism, the reduction in the proportion of unpaid workers was also more pronounced, as shown by a comparison of the 1970 and 1980 census results. In the urban sector of the economy, the participation of unpaid workers was already of minor importance in 1970 and had practically disappeared by 1980. Interviews conducted during field surveys showed that even family workers, such as children of small shopkeepers, of vendors at travelling fairs, etc., demanded payment for the assistance they gave, whether this was permanent or sporadic.

Although it is pertinent to bear in mind this "artificial" increase in the participation levels of so-called secondary workers, the "real" increase, based on the dynamic growth of the industrial economy, which was in full expansion during the 1970s, was undoubtedly of great importance. This experience was different from that of Latin America as a whole, and the most generally accepted explanation of it is as follows: "Contrary to what happened in many other countries, the growth of the Brazilian economy did not stop after the first oil crisis in 1973. Although there was a considerable decrease in expansion rates, particularly if compared with the industrial growth rates of 15% to 20% reached at the time of the "economic miracle", the government's policy of increasing the foreign debt in order to finance large industrial and development projects made it possible to maintain industrial growth up to the end of the decade. The difficulties began to become

enormous as of the second oil crisis in 1979, however, when the government adopted an "orthodox" policy restricting credit and public spending in order to confront problems of inflation and balance of payments" (Humphrey and Hirata, 1984).

Although it is true that the dynamic growth of industry and services created hundreds of thousands of new jobs in the most active sectors, it did not completely absorb the great surplus of manpower forced out of rural regions. Every day, this surplus further swells the contingent of the underemployed linked to personal consumption and small business services, to small manufacturing and repair activities of low productivity, and to non-monopolistic construction sectors.

Various indicators show that young people participate in both types of employment generated by this process, which contradicts the common idea that economic development is accompanied by a continuous and systematic process of using child and youth labour as a form of limited participation in the so-called underemployment of the informal sector.

If the evolution of the structure is taken as the basis, it is immediately observed in the distribution of employment by sectors of the economy between 1970 and 1980 that there was a factor that strongly affected the relocation of all workers, regardless of sex, age and place of residence: the primary sector's decreased importance in absorbing manpower. This generalized decrease certainly reflects the intense urbanization process experienced in the country during the present decade. In fact, in spite of all the attempts to keep the population in the countryside, Brazil, in the late 1980s is defined as an eminently urban country.

The shift of the population from the countryside to the city stems from a number of interrelated factors. "The fencing off of land in regions where agricultural frontiers were still in expansion prevented more intense occupation of these areas and, at the same time, expelled the remaining subsistence populations. In a parallel manner, the concentration of land ownership and the modernization of rural activities both for the internal market and the external market favoured great shifts of people to the cities" (Patarra and Médici, 1983). This process has

been continuous since the 1950s, but it reached its peak in the 1970s. During that period, changes in labour relations in the rural areas of Brazil were so drastic that they even required the reorganization of census categories. The counterpart of this substantial fall in the population employed in the agricultural sector is the relative expansion of the economically active population employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors.

In addition to this general observation, consideration should also be given to topics such as the differences in job distribution by region, sex and age.

In the country as a whole, after the relative loss of 13 percentage points in the share of rural workers which took place in the 1970s, the male working population was distributed among the three sectors in a balanced manner. In Sao Paulo, the share of the agricultural sector was much less (13.8%) and the remaining labour force was divided almost equally (around 40% for each sector), with a somewhat greater percentage of workers in the secondary sector. In Pernambuco, which represents the North-East—the region most harmed by the development model imposed—the situation was quite different. Almost half of the economically active population was concentrated in agriculture, followed by the tertiary sector. Furthermore, the proportion of own-account workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors was much greater.

It is a widely recognized fact that specific historic conditions resulted in different levels and patterns of development in the different regions of the country. Already in 1940 the regional differences were pronounced and they became even more marked as benefits became concentrated in the South-East region (especially in Sao Paulo); in the North-East, in contrast, the deformations in Brazilian development are evident.

At both poles, the participation of children, and particularly of adolescents and youth, during the 1970s was principally in the secondary sector of the economy and, within this sector, as wage-earners. In Sao Paulo, the share of children rose from 17.6% in 1970 to 27.4% in 1980; of adolescents, from 32.0% to 45.2%; and of youth, from 40.0% to 51.0%. In Pernambuco, there was also significant percentage growth from

2.8% to 6.9%, from 10.5% to 20.6%, and from 18.7% to 30.7%, respectively.

Spindel (1985), analysing only registered adolescent workers, concludes that "when calculations are made on the basis of data for the Law of 2/3 and the "RAIS" (annual report on wages)—that is, only on the basis of registered minors—much more rapid growth is revealed. In the most capitalized sector, the incorporation of minors over the past ten years took place much faster than in the labour market as a whole. The growth rate of jobs for minors in the 12 to 17 age group was of the order of 250%. It can therefore be concluded that, in addition to the "Rejuvenation" of the urban labour force, that force also became more "formal." The great surprise in the 1970s, however, was not only the increase in the proportion of married women and young people of both sexes in the economically active population, but also the "formalization" of female employment in specific sectors. A careful examination of the employment structure over the past 30 years shows that the services sector, consisting mainly of female teachers and domestic workers, became less important and its weight in the creation of jobs for women decreased from more than 50% to less than 30% in the 1970s. The contribution of social activities in the creation of jobs also dropped in the 1970s; in contrast, there was a significant increase in the employment of women in commerce and manufacturing.

The trend was even more evident in São Paulo. Except in the services sector, women increased more than the general mean in all urban activity sectors. The most significant increase took place in manufacturing (clothing, footwear, textiles, electrical equipment, food products and plastic and metal goods).

Although there was also an increase in the number of women holding office jobs, Hirata and Humphrey (1984) point out that such jobs did not constitute the majority among the women employed in the industries of São Paulo: women constituted 29.4% of the total in establishments with more than 50 employees, but only held 28.9% of the administrative positions. They occupied few technical positions or skilled manual jobs, except as seamstresses or operators of overlock machines in the textile industries; a great many of them occupied semi-

skilled positions. They made up 38.8% of the semi-skilled labour force in industry in São Paulo and three of every four of the total women employed were, in one way or another, linked to manual production jobs. The same authors also suggest that job vacancies in industry were above all for very young women. Already in 1970, the labour force in industry was very young and it became even younger in the State of São Paulo during the past decade. Activity rates for young women also increased significantly and there are clear indications that there was a shift of young women from the services sector to industrial jobs. Older and married women, for their part, moved over to jobs for day workers.

To understand the preference of employers for young women, it should be noted, on the one hand, that the socialization of young women has favoured obedience to standards and patterns of behaviour, which is certainly an advantage in the eyes of employers. On the other hand, these behavioural factors take on new value in modern industry, since they are important variables for good relations between the worker and the machine. As Spindel indicates, "What employers consider good experience in the work of girls or young women many times consists of what is known as home skills: sewing for the garment industry, or embroidering or knitting skills, which provide highly-valued evidence of capacity in the electrical and electronic industry, not only because of the manual dexterity they involve, but also because practice in memorizing stitches is valuable in the assembly processes".

The above data show how limiting it is to approach problems of child or young workers, as has traditionally been done, by focusing on the evident factors of marginalization and poverty. Analytical consideration must also be directed towards the work of children and adolescents as an integral and structural part of the social production process, as has been done with the work of women.

## 2. Wages

The proportion of people who received less than the legal minimum wage decreased in all sectors of the economy during the 1970s. Some preliminary studies (Médici, 1983) warn against drawing overly optimistic conclusions from this

and point out that there was no deconcentration of income during the 1970s, but only a less pronounced concentration than during the previous decade. Nor can the wage increase be considered an improvement in the quality of life, in view of the drop in the real value of wages during this period of time and the differences between one area and another. Even with figures that have not been broken down to provide a clear understanding of such differences, however, wages are still the most concrete indicator for evaluating the general working conditions of children, adolescents and young people in particular.

During the last ten years, low-income groups continued to constitute the majority of the population. No less than 64% of Brazilians receive an income equivalent to not more than twice the legal minimum wage. There are factors of structural change that could affect the figures, such as, for example, the partial elimination of unpaid workers, who now receive wages, but extremely low ones. Furthermore, the economically active population now includes a greater proportion of young people and women who, as is generally known, are paid less. Possibly in this way the base of the individual wage pyramid is growing, whereas that of the family-income pyramid is decreasing.

This is not the appropriate place for an exhaustive analysis of the reasons and interests for maintaining this wage hierarchy for women. It is sufficient to mention some factors that have widely been accepted as having an influence: less access of women to positions of leadership and supervision, the narrow range of job opportunities, their reduced power for lodging claims (a direct consequence of a form of socialization that attempts to make them docile and submissive), and less political and union tradition in the tertiary activities in which women are concentrated in comparison with those in manufacturing. As regards young people, the lower wages paid to them are socially justified on the basis that the earnings of young men's work are less important for the family than those of adult men, and that the wages of young women are less important than those of adult women. Thus, a certain pattern of type of family division of labour by sex and age, and contribution to the family budget is



universalized, although it does not always represent the actual situation. Although the question can only be posed, and not answered here, it is worth asking up to what point the possibility of other members of the family participating in the labour market has had an influence in maintaining low wages in Brazil. This possibility enables the level of family consumption to be maintained or even improved in spite of low wages.

At all events, the big differences in wages are the most concrete and tangible manifestation of the relations of domination and exploitation involved in the polarization between men/women, adults/youth and developed poles/underdeveloped poles, as can be clearly seen in table 2.

There can be no doubt that the most unacceptable relation of domination/exploitation is that established between the North-East and South-East. More than half the male economically active population of the North-East receives less than the minimum wage. This figure rises to 76.6% for women, which represents a difference of 22.6% between the two sexes. In comparison, the situation in São Paulo is substantially better, since 13.6% of the men received up to one minimum wage, while the figure was 35.0% for women. It should be noted, however, that the percentage difference between the sexes remains the same at both poles. Such inequalities occur in different regions and in different age groups. In summarizing the overall results, it could be said that adolescents receive twice the wages of children, while young people receive twice the wages of adolescents. It can also be concluded that, in general, the wages of women tend to be half those of men.

One of the most frequent arguments for justifying wage differences is the number of hours worked, since it is assumed that women and young people work fewer hours. Background data on average wages, age groups and hours worked make it evident that this argument is false, however (Madeira, 1985). The vast majority of children, adolescents and young people are not underemployed, if hours worked are taken as an indicator; from the standpoint of wage level, however, practically all of them count as underemployed. In fact, children and

adolescents continue to receive extremely low wages and the vast majority are concentrated in the groups that receive only up to one minimum wage.

From the standpoint of comparison between sexes, the smallest differences occur in the adolescent group, which indicates that marriage is probably one of the factors forcing women to accept lower-paying jobs.

### 3. Youth and the crisis

The period of recession in Brazil, which began in 1978, has resulted in contraction in the supply of jobs for both sexes in industry, especially in São Paulo. Hirata and Humphrey (1984) indicate that this has particularly affected manufacturing and, within this, the durable consumer goods sector. "In the automobile assembly plants there were strikes and movements against mass layoffs in 1981 and overall employment in this branch fell by more than 20%. In two electrical equipment companies and one automobile parts company in São Paulo studied in 1982, hourly-paid labour was reduced by more than 50% at mid-1981, and although personnel were rehired at the end of that year, the number of workers continued to be smaller than at the end of 1980."

Several reports at that time showed how the unemployed were confronting the crisis: "After seeking work for some time without finding it, the unemployed get along any way they can. They try to register themselves legally as own-account workers. They become door-to-door vendors selling pastries, clothing and trinkets in general; they set up their stands in fairs or in city centres' (*Caderno de Economia*, *Folha de São Paulo*, 24 February 1985).

The figures for 1983 show an increase in the percentages of workers in the commerce and services sectors, which include "bicos" (casual jobs) and other occupations that do not have typical capitalist links with the labour market: the workers seek such jobs simply in order to cope with unemployment. In fact, the data of the National Home Sample Survey (Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios — PNAD) indicate that the number of independent or own-account workers increased from 9 million in 1976 to almost 11 million in 1983 and that the number of own-account workers in the State of

Table 2  
**BRAZIL: BREAKDOWN OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION  
 BY MONTHLY INCOME, 1980**

Average monthly income	Males				Females			
	Total	Children	Adolescents	Young people	Total	Children	Adolescents	Young people
<b>Brazil</b>								
Up to 1/4 of minimum wage	2.4	29.8	5.5	1.6	9.2	48.2	16.4	7.3
1/4 - 1/2	8.3	30.6	15.2	5.3	18.5	25.8	21.0	11.2
More than 1/2 - 1	21.1	27.4	37.9	22.1	24.8	16.4	29.2	24.9
More than 1 - 2	29.1	10.4	34.3	39.3	25.5	7.2	28.1	35.9
More than 2 - 5	25.1	0.8	6.1	26.3	15.0	0.4	4.1	17.7
More than 5	13.2	0.07	0.4	4.8	5.9	0.05	0.2	2.3
Not declared	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3
Receiving income	73.9	11.6	53.0	84.1	32.3	6.8	28.6	38.0
Not receiving income	25.7	88.2	46.6	15.4	67.4	93.1	71.1	61.7
<b>São Paulo</b>								
Up to 1/4 of minimum wage	0.9	22.0	1.9	0.3	3.6	30.5	4.0	1.9
1/4 - 1/2	2.9	23.9	5.5	0.7	9.6	27.6	11.4	4.2
More than 1/2 - 1	9.8	33.2	25.9	6.7	22.0	26.1	29.7	17.3
More than 1 - 2	28.7	19.1	53.8	40.0	33.7	14.7	46.5	43.6
More than 2 - 5	36.2	1.1	11.8	43.4	21.9	0.6	7.8	28.9
More than 5	20.9	1.0	0.6	8.2	8.4	0.05	0.2	3.7
Not declared	0.4	0.05	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.04	0.2	0.2
Receiving income	80.7	14.7	66.8	89.6	39.8	10.7	46.3	49.8
Not receiving income	18.9	85.3	32.9	9.9	59.9	89.3	53.5	50.0
<b>Pernambuco</b>								
Up to 1/4 of minimum wage	4.5	35.9	10.2	3.1	15.9	66.5	34.8	15.1
1/4 - 1/2	16.2	42.7	30.5	11.9	30.8	24.7	31.9	21.5
More than 1/2 - 1	33.3	18.7	44.3	39.9	26.9	7.4	24.4	33.1
More than 1 - 2	24.1	2.2	12.9	31.0	14.5	1.0	7.7	21.4
More than 2 - 5	14.9	0.3	1.8	11.9	8.2	0.1	1.1	7.8
More than 5	6.8	0.05	0.2	2.1	3.5	0.08	0.06	0.9
Not declared	0.3	0.1	2.9	0.5	0.3	0.08	0.2	0.2
Receiving income	70.1	12.7	45.8	81.2	30.2	5.4	20.1	32.5
Not receiving income	29.6	87.1	51.4	18.3	69.5	94.5	79.7	67.3

Source: 1980 Census.

São Paulo increased 51.2% during the same period, or twice as fast as in the country as a whole, which shows that when the crisis makes it necessary to seek informal jobs, they are more easily found in the most developed pole of the country.

There are no employment data broken down by sex and age for 1983, which makes it impossible to verify whether this phenomenon was more intense among children, adolescents, youth or female workers. The different effects of the economic crisis on the two sexes and different age groups have really not yet been sufficiently clarified. There are those who believe that the discriminatory conditions under which women and young people are incorporated into the labour force may, in a certain manner, work to their advantage. Hirata and Humphrey (1984) believe that the sexual division of labour can, up to a certain point, protect women (regardless of whether they are young or not) against the effects of the economic crisis: "The concentration of women in certain sectors of economic activity and in predominantly female jobs limits the possibility of discrimination, since they cannot readily be replaced by men". Spindel, who interviewed adolescents in the formal sector of the economy, including some who worked in the sectors most affected by the crisis, maintains that the simple fact that young people remained in their jobs, in spite of the mass lay-offs that took place during the time the survey was taken, implies that they were highly valued in the market. In contrast, Hirata and Humphrey found that companies justify laying off women and adolescents first, because they supposedly do not make a basic contribution to the home budget.

#### 4. *Youth: unemployment, inactivity or intermittence?*

Youth unemployment, as such, is similar in Brazil to that in the rest of Latin America, if conventional indicators are taken into account. Open unemployment rates are traditionally very low. It is widely recognized, however, that these data have very little to do with the real availability or desire of the young Brazilian population to obtain permanent paid jobs. The great majority of young people are in a situation

of disguised unemployment, either because they have precarious jobs, commonly known as "bicos", or because they are unemployed and discouraged: they have stopped looking for work because of the lack of stimulus in the market.

It is also well known that, when concrete possibilities of finding work increase, as occurred in Brazil during the past decade, unemployment among young people reaches extremely high levels and generally accounts for more than half of the total unemployed population.

To evaluate this phenomenon, however, appropriate methodology needs to be used, as was done, for example, in the case of the Survey on Employment and Unemployment in the Metropolitan Area of São Paulo (Pesquisa de Emprego-Desemprego na Grande São Paulo), conducted by the State Data Analysis System Foundation (Fundação Sistema Estadual de Análise de Dados — SEADE) and the Inter-Union Department of Socio-Economic Statistics and Studies (Departamento Intersindical de Estatísticas e Estudos Sócio-Econômicos — DIEESE), as shown in table 3. In this survey, an unemployed individual was defined as a person in one of the following situations:

- a) Open unemployment: work has actually been sought in the 30 days prior to the day of the interview and no other occupation has been performed during the last seven days.
- b) Unemployment hidden by precarious work: some work, either paid or unpaid, is performed in an isolated manner by assisting in the businesses of relatives; work is being sought.
- c) Unemployment hidden by discouragement: no job is held, nor has one been sought in the past 30 days because of lack of stimulus in the labour market or because of accidental circumstances, although work was sought at some time during the last year.

The data show that both open and hidden unemployment are particularly acute among young people. It should also be noted that this is not only the case with regard to child and adolescent unemployment, but such unemployment is also extremely high among young people between 20 and 24 years of age, where it is equivalent to almost half the unemployment of children and adolescents.

Table 3  
 SAO PAULO: RATES OF OPEN AND  
 HIDDEN UNEMPLOYMENT, 1984

	Total	Open	Hidden
<b>Sex:</b>			
Female	15.5	10.1	5.4
Male	10.4	5.6	4.8
<b>Age:</b>			
10 - 14	39.7	24.0	13.0
15 - 17	34.8	22.3	
18 - 24	16.2	10.4	5.9
25 - 39	8.2	4.5	3.8
40 and above	6.0	2.9	3.1

*Source:* Departamento Intersindical de Estatísticas e Estudos Sócio-Econômicos (DIEESE), São Paulo, October to December 1984.

Although the data are not broken down by sex and age, the general trend gives grounds for assuming that unemployment affects young women in particular. This finding is not only a reason for pessimism, however. The simple fact that young women openly assume the need to work also means that employment opportunities have, in fact, been opened up to them and that they are willing to take advantage of such opportunities. Consequently, they no longer form part of hidden unemployment.

In another survey (Madeira, 1985a), it was found that in low-income sectors of the metropolitan area of São Paulo, the mere fact of having reached the age of 15 places the young person, in his own eyes and those of his family, in a situation of availability and intense desire to work. In the same survey, the use of a qualitative supplementary technique with a small group revealed interesting factors concerning this high level of unemployment among young people. The group was composed of young people who were finishing their secondary education and belonged to families which had a family income of up to five times the minimum wage, so the population involved could be considered poor. Practically all of them stated that they were

unemployed, not because of difficulty in finding a job, but because they were unable to find one that met their expectations. In the case of young females whose option was domestic service, for example, both the family and the young women preferred the mother to work (generally by the day or in cleaning companies), with the daughter replacing her at home.

The most interesting finding in the data was the enormous amount of intermittence in the activities of young people. Although the nature of the survey makes it impossible to generalize, it did suggest that the behaviour of a significant number of young people, particularly girls and adolescents, represented a rapid transition from dual activity (school and work) to a single activity (school or work) or to complete inactivity. This does not necessarily mean that the nature of the work was unstable: on the contrary, the activity itself was frequently quite formal, but it was often considered transitory and sometimes was undertaken only to acquire some article such as a bicycle or audio equipment. Some young people shifted so often and so rapidly from one situation to another that it seemed that they could fit into any category—dual occupation, student, worker or idle—depending on the moment.

Such changeableness certainly demonstrates that their sense of responsibility is only relative. It also poses a question: are the rigid categories of activity/inactivity or employment/unemployment appropriate for defining the specific situation of the child or the adolescent? As a final consideration, the importance of the inferences made on the basis of the categories of activity/inactivity should be underlined. The problems of drugs and delinquency are frequently associated with inactivity; in view of the intermittency of occupation to which reference has been made, however, there are young people (and even children) involved in the consumption and trafficking of drugs both among those who are "integrated into an activity" and among those who have recently experienced a period of idleness.

## III

## School: an activity for few young people

The state of the Brazilian educational system is not in keeping with the level of growth and modernization of the basic sectors of the economy, which have placed Brazil in a relatively outstanding position on the periphery of the capitalist system. In fact, considered solely from the standpoint of the indicators regarding education, the social situation in Brazil is critical and the proportion of children, adolescents and young people who still lack education is extremely large.

If Brazil is compared with Latin America as a whole, the relative magnitude of its levels of illiteracy can be better understood (table 4).

Table 4

**LATIN AMERICA (SIX COUNTRIES):  
ILLITERACY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE  
BETWEEN 15 AND 24 YEARS  
OF AGE, 1980**

Country	Total	Percentages
Argentina	85 559	1.9
Brazil	3 917 520	15.7
Chile	43 065	1.8
Mexico	905 091	6.5
Panama	17 106	4.7
Peru	217 524	6.3

Source: UNESCO (1984).

If we examine the past ten years, an enormous difference between plans and accomplishments is evident. The First Sectoral Plan for Education and Culture (1971-1974) was intended to eradicate illiteracy by the end of the century and established a goal of only 10% illiteracy by the end of the 1970s. To that end, the plan provided for the expansion of obligatory schooling, an increase in the number of places available in primary education and the establishment of a specialized agency for adult literacy training.

The data of tables 5 and 6 show that the rates of illiteracy did go down by the end of the decade, but a significant proportion of people still lack education. The progress achieved has been slow and there are no good prospects of the problem being solved, since the phenomenon does not affect only the older population (in which case it would merely reflect the remnants of a previous deficiency) but all ages, including young people who come under the present educational system. In other words, the percentages indicate that illiteracy is not being stopped at its origin.

What is most outstanding in the tables referred to is the enormous disparity between regions. In a previous study (Madeira, 1985a), it was shown that 50% of Brazilian illiterates between 15 and 24 years of age live in rural areas in the North-East, and that the differences between literacy rates in urban and rural areas of Brazil continue to be great. If the group between 15 and 24 years of age, whose levels of education tend to be higher, is considered, it may be seen that illiteracy in cities during the period from 1976 to 1982 tended to stabilize at 7.5% for men and 6.5% for women: in rural areas, the corresponding percentages are approximately 30% and 23%.

Another two indicators of educational failure that are frequent in Latin America —school drop-outs and repetition of grades— are also important in Brazil. Of 100 children who enrolled in the first grade of primary school in 1972, only eight were enrolled in the final year of secondary school in 1983. It is also estimated that Brazilian children take an average of 12 years to finish primary school, although it has an eight-year programme.

In spite of these pessimistic indicators, tables 5 and 6 clearly suggest that the schooling of Brazilian children and youth increased considerably over the past decade, particularly in the *young worker* population and in the *group that combines school and work on a daily basis*.

The data also show that during the decade schooling became a more important credential,

Table 5

**BRAZIL: DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SCHOOLING, 1970-1980**

Years of schooling	Girls				Adolescents				Young women				Total			
	1970		1980		1970		1980		1970		1980		1970		1980	
	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP
<b>Brazil</b>																
1 - 4	58.3	54.7	58.0	59.7	52.6	41.5	38.8	37.8	38.9	42.6	30.8	43.9	39.7	42.3	38.8	48.0
5 - 8	10.5	14.9	20.4	16.5	18.9	22.4	34.4	33.3	16.1	12.1	23.5	19.6	14.2	12.1	16.1	15.6
9 - 11	0.2	0.2	-	-	5.7	8.1	15.4	11.7	9.3	5.6	26.9	11.4	6.5	3.3	14.0	5.4
12 or more	-	-	-	-	2.2	1.2	0.9	0.5	18.2	4.4	10.4	3.8	11.4	1.7	7.4	1.2
No schooling	31.0	30.2	21.6	23.9	20.6	26.7	10.5	16.6	17.4	35.2	8.4	21.1	28.2	40.5	23.6	29.7
<b>São Paulo</b>																
1 - 4	77.5	65.7	61.8	65.8	65.5	46.2	34.6	30.2	52.6	58.1	32.5	47.5	53.8	53.6	42.0	53.2
5 - 8	13.0	25.6	31.3	26.6	17.2	25.3	42.0	43.8	10.9	7.8	25.5	24.5	9.0	10.8	19.5	19.5
9 - 11	0.2	0.3	-	-	6.9	15.9	18.3	19.7	10.0	7.5	24.3	12.7	6.9	5.0	13.9	7.1
12 or more	-	-	-	-	2.1	3.0	1.1	0.9	17.5	8.9	13.3	6.7	13.3	8.4	9.2	2.1
No schooling	9.3	8.3	6.9	7.5	8.2	9.5	4.0	5.3	9.0	17.6	4.3	8.7	17.0	27.2	15.3	17.9
<b>Pernambuco</b>																
1 - 4	32.5	42.7	45.0	53.2	34.7	33.1	36.5	34.1	27.1	29.6	26.1	33.4	26.7	30.2	30.8	38.5
5 - 8	4.8	10.4	8.7	11.6	14.7	23.1	23.2	30.2	16.2	13.7	19.1	18.3	12.2	11.2	11.2	13.7
9 - 11	-	-	-	-	3.3	5.0	12.0	9.8	7.1	4.8	27.6	12.6	4.4	2.3	11.8	5.1
12 or more	-	-	-	-	1.8	0.7	0.6	0.3	16.5	3.5	8.4	3.3	10.0	1.3	6.3	0.9
No schooling	62.6	46.8	46.3	35.2	45.5	38.1	27.7	25.5	33.1	48.2	18.1	32.3	46.6	54.8	39.9	41.8

Source: 1970 and 1980 Censuses.

Table 6

**BRAZIL: DISTRIBUTION OF MALES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE  
POPULATION, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SCHOOLING, 1970-1980**

Years of schooling	Boys				Adolescents				Young men				Total			
	1970		1980		1970		1980		1970		1980		1970		1980	
	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP	In EAP	Not in EAP
<b>Brazil</b>																
1 - 4	41.0	53.8	49.5	58.5	45.1	39.7	39.6	34.6	44.1	36.0	40.6	31.9	43.6	46.2	45.4	48.0
5 - 8	8.8	13.8	16.8	13.4	16.7	26.4	18.9	34.9	14.0	14.4	22.6	18.6	11.0	16.5	14.7	19.4
9 - 11	0.1	-	-	-	4.5	8.7	9.1	11.7	6.7	10.0	15.2	18.8	4.3	3.5	8.0	5.1
12 or more	-	-	-	-	0.6	1.4	0.3	0.5	5.2	13.4	4.4	11.0	5.0	1.9	4.9	1.4
No schooling	50.0	32.2	33.7	28.1	33.0	23.8	20.1	18.2	29.9	26.0	17.1	19.5	36.0	31.7	26.4	26.0
<b>São Paulo</b>																
1 - 4	69.4	66.5	59.6	69.0	61.4	40.3	36.4	24.3	59.4	37.5	41.8	25.4	57.8	54.6	50.0	52.9
5 - 8	19.2	24.5	32.6	21.7	21.3	32.8	44.9	47.3	11.5	10.2	27.7	18.2	8.0	22.5	19.4	26.4
9 - 11	0.4	0.3	-	-	7.4	21.2	13.1	22.0	9.3	13.5	17.6	25.3	6.2	5.6	9.9	7.6
12 or more	-	-	-	-	1.1	2.6	0.5	0.9	8.1	28.6	6.6	23.3	7.9	3.7	7.2	2.6
No schooling	11.0	8.7	7.8	9.3	8.8	0.8	5.1	5.3	11.7	10.0	6.3	7.7	20.0	13.5	13.5	10.4
<b>Pernambuco</b>																
1 - 4	19.7	39.8	31.0	49.5	27.9	36.9	33.0	20.8	29.1	26.2	32.1	24.4	28.3	34.5	33.6	41.0
5 - 8	2.5	8.9	4.7	8.8	11.4	24.8	18.4	30.4	13.4	16.7	18.3	19.1	9.4	13.7	10.6	15.8
9 - 11	-	-	-	-	1.9	5.1	5.4	9.0	4.5	8.6	13.8	18.7	2.8	2.4	6.4	4.3
12 or more	-	-	-	-	0.3	-	0.2	0.4	3.6	9.3	3.2	8.2	3.5	1.3	3.4	1.0
No schooling	77.8	51.2	64.3	41.7	58.4	-	42.9	28.2	49.3	39.1	32.6	29.5	55.9	48.1	46.3	37.9

Source: 1970 and 1980 Censuses.

since the educational levels of children, adolescents and youth in the economically active population (EAP) are higher than the levels of those outside of the EAP. This finding is particularly true of São Paulo. This fact, suggested by the overall figures, was verified in a study with more qualitative methodology applied in the low-income sectors of São Paulo (Madeira, 1985a).

Interviews with young people between 14 and 20 years of age in peripheral areas of São Paulo showed that families, as well as adolescents and young people themselves, made enormous sacrifices, including not only daily physical efforts, such as fewer hours of sleep and lack of time even to eat, but also going without some consumer goods or postponing their purchase in order to complete eighth grade. The interest in completing at least basic education is also the reason for frequently returning to school, in spite of having to repeat grades or of interruptions for many different reasons.

The very fact of working increases the efforts made by the young person and his family for him to remain in school. The content of the education itself is less important within this attitude than the awareness that the requirements for admitting workers to even unskilled positions in the different sectors of the economy increase as access to the education system expands; this was evident in the experiences of the young people interviewed.

The importance of the level of schooling as a credential was confirmed and extended through the statements of employers. Spindel (1985) found that the employers from large and medium-sized companies who were interviewed considered schooling as the most important factor in selecting adolescents. They are not particularly interested in the specific knowledge acquired in the educational system, but rather in the "habit of obedience to certain norms and patterns of more or less standard behaviour, which provide the businessman with a certain assurance of being able to foresee what the reactions of the minor will be to conditions of discipline and work" (Spindel, 1985).

The visible change in the educational levels of the young working population in Brazil is already evident among children. For the country as a whole, 9.0% of the children who worked in

1970 had finished the fifth grade. By 1980, this proportion had risen to 16.8%; the proportion of children with this educational level outside of the labour market remained unchanged. Furthermore, the proportion of child workers with no schooling decreased substantially. Naturally, the effect of the increased expansion of school attendance is most notable in São Paulo, where no less than 32.5% of the children who worked in 1980 had already finished fourth grade.

Among adolescents, differences are even more notable and an increase in secondary education among working adolescents may be observed.

The second trend suggested by the overall data—the combination of school and work—may be examined better by comparing the situation in São Paulo with that in Pernambuco.

Everything indicates that legally obligatory education has only become a reality for the low-income sectors in the city of São Paulo, and it is evident that the proportion of young people who have finished their basic education is much greater there. In 1980, this level was reached by 25.3% of the young men in São Paulo; in contrast, the percentage in Pernambuco was approximately 18.7%. The same was true among young women. Since the expansion of schooling beyond the first four years of basic education is quite recent and only took place in the 1970s, however, it is more notable among adolescents. In 1970, only 21.3% of the male adolescents in the labour market in São Paulo had gone beyond the first four years of basic education. Ten years later, this percentage had more than doubled. The trend is even stronger among female adolescents: in 1970, only 17.2% of those who worked had completed primary education, while in 1980 the percentage was 42.0%, nearly equal to that of the male adolescents. Among those not included in the EAP, the growth was also significant, although smaller.

In Pernambuco, the trends were somewhat different, not only because of the lower levels of education, but also because of less intense growth. In 1970, only 11.4% of the male adolescents who worked had an educational level above fifth grade. Ten years later, this percentage had increased to 18.4%. No



indication of greater participation of female adolescents in the labour force was observed. In contrast to what occurred in São Paulo, the proportion of those who completed primary education but are outside of the labour market is much greater.

In summary, São Paulo not only offers more job opportunities to adolescents of both sexes, but also greater opportunities for extending their education.

The data also indicate that delays in completing education are quite generalized, which brings up the question of the relation between school attendance and work. In examining this question, the qualitative survey was enlightening. It showed that schooling alone cannot be considered a factor in keeping young people out of the labour market. On the contrary, both activities are usually complementary in the metropolitan area of São Paulo: that is, work encourages staying in school. In this survey, an analysis of the reasons for interrupting studies showed that the need to work was less important than difficulties in access to school life — "schooling was taking too long", "no school was available", "the school was full" — or situations linked to the structure of teaching as regards organization, content and teaching techniques. By the time that young people reach the age of 15, they are usually behind the corresponding school level, which underlines the importance of night school and supplementary courses. The data are quite clear: the establishment of night schools and supplementary courses is the most effective manner of making it possible to reconcile school with work and, through such courses, the schooling of young people is becoming more democratic. Almost half the young people in the city of São Paulo study after 6:00 p.m., although only 80% of them are available for work (employed or unemployed). The statements of families confirmed that the possibility of studying is always closely linked to that of

working. School and work appeared to be so closely interrelated that it was difficult for young people (and also the family) to decide which was more important. Sometimes, the young person's income was insufficient to cover all school expenses and the family had to contribute as well. In other cases, the young person supported himself, almost always paid for his schooling and also contributed to the family income from his wages. At all events, wages facilitated remaining in school.

With regard to the average income according to the different levels of education, the first factor that should be noted is not only the clear positive link between number of years of study and wages, but also the existence of very sharp separations according to years of study. Thus, there is a great difference in wages between those without education and those that have attended primary school; the distinction is not so clear, however, in the case of those who have studied past fourth grade. The greatest wage differences occur between secondary and higher education. These differences are more important for the total population than for the young population, however, and also more important for men than for women.

Although wage levels, measured in terms of average minimum wages, increased over the past ten years, the increase occurred particularly at the upper educational levels, especially at the secondary level and above, which is also indicative of the income concentration process that occurred during that period of time.

Wage disparities between men and women, which become more pronounced as they move up the scale in level of education, are a widely recognized factor, but are nevertheless surprising. In 1980, the average wage for men with full secondary education was equivalent to almost ten minimum wages, while for women of the same level it was equivalent to only four minimum wages.

## IV

## The family and young people: conflict and solidarity

All of the changes referred to may be expected to have an enormous impact on family organization and its socializing role. The monetization of the economy and the possibility of the different members of the family working certainly break with the old structure centralized in the head of the family, whose power is now also questioned by the greater schooling of children; it is common for illiterate parents to live with children who have reached the level of secondary education.

Basically, the following questions arise: What is the capacity of parents to understand the new representations that have emerged from a different form and organization of family income? What is their reaction to women working and to the new image of motherhood that such work implies? How do parents react to their daughters performing paid jobs, their consequent independence and even the generalized use of contraceptives? Finally, what are the new forms of management and expression of authority in the family?

Although little systematic study has been done in this regard, the existing broad generalizations always hint at the existence of enormous conflict between generations, which is seen as partially responsible for the growth of juvenile delinquency and the spread of drugs among the young people of Latin America.

Although this is not the appropriate place for such observations, it should be remembered that family studies have not so far given prominence to this problem. The family has only recently reappeared as an object of study through two lines of academic concern: studies of the family survival strategies of low-income groups and studies on the situation of women. Both approaches have ended up stressing the aspects of harmony and solidarity in the idea of the family, bearing in mind the common objective of its members, which is to achieve family well-being.

Although the assumed solidarity and harmony is being questioned, even within these

same approaches, it is interesting to point out that the topic of the family, when viewed from the standpoint of young people, immediately brings up the question of conflict. The set of studies conducted by ECLAC in relation to the International Youth Year provides a clear and vivid example.

In short, we know that both conflict and solidarity exist in families and that, depending on the social actor taken as the point of reference, each of these factors tend to assume different importance. What it is desired to stress most in this study, however, is how, through the combination or interplay of solidarity and conflict, and even through a kind of play of counterpoint, it becomes possible for young people to reach social levels above the average level of their social group of origin and, in this manner, to enjoy "youth identity" more intensely. This process can be observed in Brazil in part of the population of the low-income sectors, particularly in São Paulo, if we look at the information provided by population censuses, the National Home Sample Survey (PNAD) and the case studies on the integration of work and school in the life of young people in low-income sectors of São Paulo.

Such information reveals the inverse relationship between rates of participation and the level of family income, which is exactly what would be expected. At the same time, however, it may be seen that in groups with a reasonable family income, there is a significant proportion of adolescents and young people who work. It is therefore erroneous to assume that poverty and the need to maintain a minimum standard of living are what prompt young people and especially adolescents, to seek paid jobs. Hence, the expression "survival strategies" really ought to be changed to "family life-style strategies", thus covering a phenomenon that affects not only the most impoverished sectors, but all segments and social groups.

There is another inaccurate assumption, which is that the family forces the young person

to work, either because of objective material problems or the conviction that work is the "school of life" or an important socialization process for the future worker. This form of considering a young person's work ignores the outlook of the specific "young" social actor. For someone whose "autonomy is only relative" and who wants to increase it, working and receiving wages can only mean greater freedom. Other authors have already observed this outlook, but have done so exclusively in relation to young people in the middle sectors of the population. Bourdieu, however, also detects this phenomenon in the worker population and notes that it is not only a Latin American phenomenon. He states that "one of the reasons why young people in low-income groups wish to begin working very soon is the desire to become an adult as soon as possible, with the economic power that that implies: having the money to consolidate their position in relation to their friends and girlfriends and, consequently, to be recognized as a man by themselves and others" (Bourdieu, 1983). At least three investigations conducted in Brazil clearly underline the sense of freedom involved in young people's decision to work. Being free means having greater independence in taking decisions relating to their lives, especially as regards consumption and remaining in school (Gouveia, 1982; Spindel, 1985; Madeira, 1985b).

Talks with young people show that the consumption typical of this age group, such as clothing (designer jeans, shorts, tennis shoes, and so forth), free time and audio equipment (tape recorders, cassettes, weekend dances), are a permanent point of discussion and controversy at home. A young person who works increases his power and ensures his privileges within the family. Finally, the need to display visible signs of belonging to the category of youth—especially the signs publicized by the mass media—is one of the key points of friction with the family and a source of intense and violent conflicts. Consumer pressures among young people are a generalized phenomenon in Latin America and the mass media tend to offer an integrated set of symbols and representations of what it is to be young.

In this regard, it may be appropriate to note the specific characteristics of the situation in

Brazil. The first characteristic is that many young people are able to convert their aspirations into actual consumption because they find a job. This is so true that an increase in the consumption of goods directed towards low-income young people has been registered in recent years. The proportion of records and cassettes of Brazilian pop music sold rose from 63% in 1977 to 69.9% in 1980, while the share of international pop music fell from 35.4% to 28.9% during the same period of time (Micelli, 1983). As regards clothing, a survey conducted in São Paulo clearly shows that the largest percentage (59%) of those who stated that they intended to buy clothing in the near future were young people between 15 and 29 years of age. The proportion of those who intended to buy clothing was greater among the lower-income sectors. (The greatest interest was in purchasing street clothes, which play a role in social identity (*Revista Novidades da Moda*, No. 202, June 1976. Regular survey conducted in São Paulo by public opinion research organizations).)

At the same time, young people's consumption reflects two other characteristics of the decade. The first is the expansion of the system of buying on credit. The second is the astounding advance of telecommunications in Brazil. In 1975, television reached 40% of the urban population; today, it reaches 75% of the same population. In rural areas, three of every 20 homes had television sets. The progress of the electronics industry in Brazil was the result of enormous investments in telecommunications by the authoritarian government of 1964, with a view to national integration. Micelli (1983) suggests that television consumption in Brazil is closely linked to the educational capital of its public. "The brutal fact of the widespread illiteracy that persists in Brazilian society is a decisive factor in the tremendous penetration of television in the country." He considers television as a kind of parallel and integrating teaching system: "Although the industrial consumer society is heavily concentrated in the South-East and Southern regions of Brazil, as exhaustively shown by the data available on the regional distribution of most cultural goods, and income disparities between regions and social groups persist, the Brazilian cultural industry is contributing decisively to the process of unifying

the market for cultural goods by acting as a parallel teaching system and by exposing subordinate social sectors to broadcasts and messages that, to a certain extent, break down their original language, values and meanings".

The possibility of studying is also closely linked to the possibility of working and, in this sense, it is usually considered a type of consumption by young people. Going to school and having a student credential are characteristics of "modern" young people. Bourdieu makes the following observation: "Being a student involves a number of situations that together make up the school scene: carrying books tied with a cord, sitting on motorcycles to attract girls, meeting friends of both sexes outside of work and, at home, being excused from doing household chores because of study" (Bourdieu, 1983).

The paradox in all this is that young people receive low wages, which do not provide them with this independence unless the family assumes part of the cost of their reproduction: that is, unless they are still accepted as family members and dependants. Although there is conflict and tension, young people are consequently fully aware of the advantages of shared living. In spite of constant threats about leaving home by all members of the family, they generally remain, since pooling income and combining housework with paid jobs is the only way it is possible to maintain a certain level of consumption and quality of life.

Up to this point, reference to interest in working has only been made from the standpoint of young people. The family, however, shares this interest, either for purely economic reasons, because work is considered an exercise in discipline for character training, or for a combination of such reasons. The family's desire for their children to participate in the labour force may be noted in their efforts to place them in some paid job and in the privileges they are granted at home.

From the considerations on relations between young people and their families, it is interesting to suggest that an in-depth study be conducted on the existence of a phenomenon that, to a certain extent, would contribute to forming a more favoured stratum among low-income sectors. Spindel (1985) found that

"formal" jobs are generally held by young people whose families belong to segments of the working class whose level of employment or of income provided them with access to information on such job vacancies. The same was found to be true in another study (Madeira, 1985b). Sons are frequently found to be working with their fathers and daughters, with their mothers.

Spindel (1985) investigated the topic on the basis of responses on the criteria that employers use to contact young people who could be selected and on the manner in which minors gain information on job vacancies. "More than 50% of large and medium-sized companies state that the minors they hired were contacted through information obtained from their own workers; approximately 65% of the minors responded that they had obtained their job, thanks to the indications of relatives or friends. Even among minors who were in their second job, 70% of them had obtained it in an informal manner, within their circle of relatives and acquaintances, which reinforces the idea of involvement of family and friends in determining the degree of participation of its members in the labour market."

In other words, some families with low incomes, but a certain reserve of "material and cultural goods" (especially work skills and a certain level of schooling), were able to benefit from the increase in formal jobs produced during this period of time by placing some of their members in such jobs, thus providing them with certain social mobility, measured on the basis of the level of family income. In contrast, in the case of groups that are near levels of "critical poverty", with sporadic or temporary jobs, the possibility of incorporating other members always refers to the same type of work and does not bring about any effective improvement in the quality of life.

In conclusion, it may be stated that some adolescents and young people of the so-called low-income sectors have begun to gain access to better-paying jobs, to greater permanence in school and to the mass media. They have thus also gained access to "adolescence" or "youth", understood as intermediate or temporary categories in which they are neither children nor adults and a certain degree of irresponsibility is tolerated.

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## The missing future: colombian youth

*Rodrigo Parra Sandoval\**

The exhaustion of the modernization model, the acute crisis affecting the family and the shortcomings of political and educational institutions place Colombian young people in a state of isolation characterized, in the author's view, by few opportunities of political participation, a future of unemployment or underemployment, poor-quality education which inspires no enthusiasm and guarantees neither employment or social mobility, and a society without a clear model of a future with a place in it for young people. Young people are also faced with a chaos of values generated not only by the very rapid succession of three social situations (rural society, modern society and model-less society) but also by the emergence of forms of organization connected with that succession, such as the black economy, the economic organization of drug-trafficking or dependence on drugs, corruption in the world of finance and administration, and the consumerist visions offered by the mass communication media.

This produces a feeling of economic and cultural exclusion, a devaluation of the concept of youth derived from the modernization model, and a dangerous proximity to a situation of social breakdown. The fact that these circumstances make it difficult to conceive of a personal or group future and plan a career is what constitutes the missing future of today's youth.

The author analyses these general features in greater detail in three areas: work, political participation and migration.

\*With the collaboration of Bernardo Jaramillo. The author is a consultant to ECLAC's Social Development Division. This is a summary and updated version of the book of the same title published by the author in Bogotá in 1985.

## I

### Youth and development

From the sociological standpoint, youth is seen as a variable phenomenon which can exist, not exist, or take different forms, as if it was a society, or different aspects of the same society, or different groups within a society at a given moment. Youth is a cultural concept of historical origin which can have a high and a low point. In the case of Colombia, the concept of youth is of fairly recent origin, concurrent with other concepts related to the form of urban industrial development, such as "modernization" or "social mobility", "urbanism", "marginality", "enterprise" or "entrepreneur". All these concepts had the same historical genesis and have developed along similar lines, although with their own peculiar characteristics.

The concept of youth derived from the urban industrial model of development is based on a transformation of the existing relationships between the family and work as they affect the process of socialization. This transformation is produced when socialization is entrusted to an education system conceived as a means of training manpower for the new model of urban life, for jobs which require a certain degree of specialized secondary qualifications, or for higher posts requiring university qualifications. In the years immediately preceding the institution of the modernization model, education was restricted to a very small group, and even primary education was extremely limited: for example, in 1940 in Colombia there were only 2 990 university students; in 1980 180 000 students graduated from higher education.

Before the adoption of the modernization model, the relationship between the family and work was virtually direct for the majority of Colombians: people worked in the family or moved on from the family to work without intermediate stages. This meant that youth, if it existed, was very short and only very small groups enjoyed an extensive and significant intermediate period. This situation changed with the expansion of education and the

programmes of educational democratization. However, the expansion of schooling and the consequent redistribution of youth did not affect all the groups equally: for most of the peasant groups youth could end at the age of 10, when the child moved on from the family and few years of school to work, but for urban middle- and upper-class groups youth could easily last until the age of 20 or 25.

These changes are associated both with the rapid expansion of the modernization model and with its short duration (about two and a half decades), as well as with its early decline. Colombia's modernization process has been extremely rapid, and although it has begun to lose momentum very quickly, it has produced very significant changes and a state of confusion about a suddenly uncertain future. It must be remembered that Colombia, a rural society organized on the basis of the low-productivity farm, with an embryonic manufacturing industry, with 71% of its population living in rural areas and with 87% in towns of less than 200 000 inhabitants in 1938, switched to an urban economy with a high proportion of tertiary employment and 61% of its population living in towns in 1973, while the number of inhabitants tripled in those 35 years: from 8.7 to 25.5 million.

Apart from the problems of the differential distribution of young people among groups, especially between peasants or rural inhabitants, urban marginal and urban middle and upper classes, from the 1970s there has been a general abrupt devaluation of the concept of youth as the modernization model begins to run down. At the same time, the family, especially the peasant and marginal urban family but also the integrated urban family, has lost much of its capacity to provide social training for the new generations, and the world of work is finding it difficult to provide jobs for young people. Education, meanwhile, has been eroded as a bridge between family and work; it has become stratified, differentiated and devalued and its standards have been lowered, and to some extent it is having a marginalizing effect.

This is taking place against the background of a failure to find a new model of society and development to replace or re-invigorate the urban industrial model. No clear tendency or

way forward can be discerned, either for the social institutions which deal more directly with youth, such as family, school and work, or for society as a whole. These factors help to deny youth a future and make it difficult to think in terms of a realistic plan or of an "attainable utopia".

A number of circumstances have converged to create this situation, and its understanding requires a brief account of its component elements. The first point to be made, of course, concerns the speed of the modernization process, which began in the 1950s in a rural society and transformed it in less than three decades into a basically urban and industrial society. However, the very speed of the process prevented it from settling down and produced a diversity of cultures and differences of regional development co-existing together and forming a network of inequalities, especially with respect to the transition from personal experience of the world as a community, typical of rural society, to the idea of nationhood and to an understanding of man in the international context. Subsequently, in the third decade of the process of industrial modernization, acute symptoms of its exhaustion began to appear, underlining the lack of a new model to take the place of the model which established modernization.

The former process can be described in the following way, in terms of the different spheres of the social structure and of its most important consequences for today's youth in Colombia:

a) Demographic change, expressed in high birth rates in past decades, resulted by the end of the 1970s and in the 1980s in a large contingent of young people in the population. This happened at the very moment when the modernization model was beginning to run down and high rates of unemployment and underemployment were emerging.

b) That moment also saw the convergence of a number of elements which can be described as an acute inter-generational crisis, especially with respect to the family's role as a social conditioner of young people. This crisis or decline in contact and in the transmission of the cultural foundations of society from one generation to another was influenced by the following factors: the difference in education which made the parents less able to give the

children guidance in their school work and help them to understand social phenomena, a capacity which is concerned with the habits of analysis and the handling of the information furnished by the school system; the impaired capacity of the parents to understand the urban and cosmopolitan world of modernized Colombian society, due to their rural or semi-rural roots and their children's greater experience of urban life; the decline in the prestige attached to the parents' occupations, or its complete disappearance in a largely urban economy; the inter-generational conflict of values concerning the prestige of the new occupations; the lower level of social training of young people by their parents, especially in the low and marginal strata, owing to the fact that the wives go out to work, and the consequent loss of contact between parents and children; the emergence of new forms of family organization in the young generation which is beginning to marry, and the value conflicts which these new forms generate both between generations and between the sexes, owing to the collision between the survival of attitudes to the marriage relationship rooted in rural or pre-modern society and the economic requirements or needs of a married couple living in an urban society in which the modernization model is beginning to run down. (In this connection, it must be pointed out that organizational adaptations of family life or cohabitation are emerging, somewhat in the form of clans, and are helping to create new forms of solidarity.)

c) The pre-modernization forms of membership of political parties have been replaced, as a result of opposition generated largely by the National Front, by a clientelistic form of organization linked with the expansion of the economic power of the State and the bureaucracy. The majority of the population, especially the young population, has ceased to participate at all in the political process and has a feeling of impotence and disinvolvement in political matters. This situation has been brought about by the lack of modern political parties to encourage participation on the basis of programmes for society. Appeals for them to join a party do not impress young people who have not grown up in that habit, and the country's political life has been ruptured, with

the party apparatuses operating in ways which have no real attraction for young people and very little connection with the realities of the country's situation.

d) The expansion of the school system, which during the modernization process meant extending education beyond the élites, also led to the exclusion of a large part of the population, further weakening the position of those at the bottom of the ladder in a modern urban world. At the same time, as the modernization model began to run down, there was an accentuation of the stratification of educational institutions and programmes or curricula, which also meant discrimination against those not studying in "suitable" institutions or programmes. The concept of social mobility was struck a heavy blow by the modernization crisis, which eroded the relationship between education and work and between education and income. This situation can be seen very clearly in the programmes of secondary technical education and in some higher-education programmes. The point is that the policy of educational diversification is no longer consistent with the development model, or rather that it is moving into crisis in conjunction with the exhaustion of the modernization model. The same thing is happening with the education policies based on theories of human resources or human capital. The relationship between education and work is weakening and becoming a source of frustrated aspirations.

On the other hand, as education has become universal, its quality has deteriorated, and education policies of the modern pedagogical type have been replaced in practice by the drive for policies that produce jobs, with harmful consequences for the quality of education. Instead of a person who participates, criticizes and creates, the system is forming a person with an authoritarian concept of society. Young people are being educated to perform certain specific tasks and not to be able to understand a social, scientific or humanistic whole. The teaching relationship, conditioned by the need to create jobs, is producing a dogmatic view of knowledge and impeding the development of a scientific outlook. But, above all, education in Colombia is now out of touch with the country's new situation. In view of the increase in



unemployment and underemployment among educated people, the most important function which the expansion of education or increase in the number of years of schooling is beginning to perform is to hold a large proportion of the young population back from the work market for a longer time.

e) State services or private initiatives are very limited in terms of medical assistance for

young people, leisure programmes or organized activities which encourage solidarity and a feeling of belonging.

Three aspects of the situation of Colombian youth, showing both its relationship to the missing future and the forms of its participation and exclusion, will now be described: work, political participation and migration.

## II

### Youth and the world of work

An analysis will be made of four aspects of the connection of youth with the world of work: the proportion of young people in the economically active population, the distribution of employed persons by economic sector, youth unemployment, and the relationship between education and unemployment.

#### 1. *Young people in the economically active population*

At the beginning of the 1970s the proportion of young people in the economically active population (EAP) was 28.4%; at the mid-point of the decade it was 36%; and in 1980 it was 40.7% (DANE, 1981).

The differences in the proportion of young people in the EAP, i.e., in the urban and rural and male and female EAP, are extremely interesting: there are more women than men in both 1971 and 1981 and in both the urban and the rural EAP. Furthermore, the proportion of young people in the urban EAP was greater at both dates, with the exception of the number of men in 1971, which was lower than the number of men in the rural EAP. The upward trend in the proportion of young people in the EAP, especially the urban EAP, is also well-documented; the rural EAP remains practically the same, especially in the case of women.

The general trend, therefore, is for the proportion of young people in the EAP, specifically the urban EAP, to increase, since, as

has been pointed out, their share in the rural EAP tends to remain static. The educational characteristics of the EAP for 1980 also illustrate the enormous differences between town and countryside. In the rural areas 62.1% of the total EAP has primary education, 9.1% secondary, and 0.3% university, whereas the education levels of the urban EAP are 42.9% with primary, 39.4% with secondary and 13.5% with university education. These proportions also apply to the young EAP, although in the towns there is a higher proportion of young people with secondary education (48.3%).

The employment rates of active young people are considerably lower than the national rates and lower still in the rural sector. In 1980 employment in urban and rural areas tends towards parity, with the exception of the employment of young people aged 15 to 19, which declines between the two dates in town and countryside, but still with lower participation in the towns. The urban statistics available for the country's seven main towns may be overestimating the youth employment rates, for they do not include large groups of young people in small towns and in some provincial capitals, where one of the main problems is unemployment.

The wage levels of young people with jobs in 1980 show that 37% received less than the minimum wage, 32% the minimum wage, and 31% more than the minimum. The high proportion of young people with wages below

the legal minimum is due to the large number of minors in the work market and to their comparatively low education levels, which limit their access to higher rates of pay.

With respect to the definition of youth, either as an age group or as a period of life occurring between family and school training and entry into the adult world (taking this to mean the world of work), a distinction can be made between rural youth and urban youth, in terms of their different forms of involvement in the work market. The structural heterogeneity characteristic of the country's economic development has produced discrimination in access to basic services, especially education, which affects young people in large groups of the population. This discrimination takes the form of enormous differences in the number of years of schooling, which works to the detriment of rural and marginal groups in particular, for they have to enter the world of work at an early stage in order to help solve the problems of the survival of their families, threatened as they are by the low level of incomes. The young EAP must therefore be described as part of the working-age population in every youth age group from the age of 12. In 1971 48.3% of the rural working-age population was included in the active population. The individual rates for the young population were 20.2% for those aged 12 to 14, 42.2% for the 15-19 group, and 54.8% for those aged 20 to 24. The differences between the sexes were also considerable, with a larger proportion of men in the 12-24 age group. The urban areas had a similar proportion of young people in the EAP, but the differences between the age groups, especially in those under 19, illustrate the profound inequality in the socio-economic structure between town and countryside.

Given the enormous expansion of the education system in recent decades, it might have been expected that there would be a sizeable reduction in the young population in the workforce. In 1980, however, although the specific proportions of young people in the EAP declined for urban areas, rural youth increased its share in the 15-24 group and saw its share decline only in the 12-14 group, from 20.2% in 1971 to 17.9% in 1981. The number of people aged 10 to 12 in the labour force, not identified in the 1971 survey, amounted to 8% in 1981.

These figures clearly show the gradual deterioration in living standards, especially in urban areas, and the internal inefficiency of the education system. The data on the inactive population underline the magnitude of the loss of youth as a period of life. The proportions of young people in the category of students or household workers by age group are as follows: 12-14: 94.4% students, 1.5% household workers; 15-19: 81.7% students, 10.3% household workers; 20-29: 31.2% students, 58.1% household workers.

## *2. Youth employment by production sector*

Comparison of the employment structures by sector of activity between 1971 and 1980 for the 15-29 and over-40 age groups in rural and urban areas produces the following conclusions:

a) The fundamental trend is not a greater differentiation but a greater similarity between the jobs held by young people and those held by the generation of the "parents". In 1971 there were several notable differences which had tended to disappear by 1980. In 1971 the difference between young people and adults engaged in agricultural work in the employment structure of the towns was 12.8%; in 1980 it was only 1.4%, with the adults predominating in both cases. Urban growth has meant that employment in the towns is becoming more urban and less rural in nature. On the other hand, the difference between the age groups, which had been 7.3% in favour of the parents in the trade sector in 1971, was only 2.3% in 1980; in the services sector, where the difference had been 12.6% in favour of youth in 1971, it was only 3.2% in 1980. The differences in the other sectors remain practically the same or show only very small changes. All this seems to indicate that the differences in employment by sector found in the 1970s were connected with the period of transition in which the large groups of young people produced by the "population explosion" began to appear on the scene and take their places, in that period of modernizing development, in sectors capable of generating jobs particularly suitable for young people on the lowest rungs of the ladder or in certain areas of the informal economy. In this case, it is particularly clear that the agriculture sector

drives out young people and the services sector draws them in. Subsequently, with the change in the situation of demographic transition, and particularly with the exhaustion of the modernization model of development, these differences in the work sectors between young people and adults diminish almost to the vanishing point. This seems to suggest that the creation of jobs for young people in specific sectors, as happened in other Latin American societies (Durstun and Rosenbluth, 1983), is a phenomenon which belongs to the specific point of development and subsequently disappears; in Colombia's case, this phenomenon occurred between the 1960s and the 1970s and the move towards homogeneity has already begun.

However, another dimension of the evolution of employment in Colombia in the past decade must be born in mind: the growth of the informal urban sector. According to data from the National Planning Department (DNP), the informal urban sector accounts for 45.6% of the employed population, including workers in industrial undertakings with fewer than 10 workers, own-account workers, unpaid family helpers, and domestic service.

The growth in the economically active population is not absorbed by the modern sector of the economy; consequently, the informal sector becomes the alternative for the unsatisfied demand for employment in the modern sector, and it tends to increase as a result of the crisis in that sector. The DNP figures indicate that 43.7% of the employment generated in the country's towns between 1974 and 1978 was in the informal sector. The fact that the greatest incidence of informal employment is found in services must cast a doubt on the enormous importance attributed, as a modernizing influence, to the phenomena of tertiarization which emerged with the urban industrial model. In fact, side by side with a modern tertiary sector represented by the State and the financial institutions and employing more adults than young people, there co-exists a traditional tertiary sector, better described as underemployment, which at present absorbs the greater part of the population which does not obtain formal employment. Proof of this is provided by the increase in the number of young

people in the employment category of own-account workers between 1971 and 1980, from 8.9 to 14.3%.

b) With respect to the rural employment structure in 1971 (no comparable information is available for 1980), the differences between ages or generations are less than in the towns, and the only ones worth mentioning are a difference of 5.2% in agricultural or primary employment in favour of adults, and of 4.3% in services in favour of young people. This seems to suggest that the intersectoral changes were much sharper in the towns than in the countryside; this is logical in view of the nature of modernizing development. However, this conclusion would have to be checked against the 1980 rural employment structure.

### 3. Youth unemployment

The rates of youth unemployment are always higher than the adult ones, and the differences between the national rates and those of the youth groups almost double between 1971 and 1980. On the other hand, a comparison of the specific national unemployment rates for town and countryside and by sex gives the following results: a) the urban youth rates are double the urban national rates for men; b) the rates for young urban women are higher than the totals for urban women, but the gap is smaller than for men; c) the rural youth unemployment rates (men and women) are higher than those for rural adults and they also tend towards double the total national youth rates; d) urban youth unemployment was very high in 1971 (17.7 and 18.1% for men and women respectively) and it declined slightly in 1980 to 13.2 and 16.9%. Rural youth unemployment, in contrast, has increased, and although the male rate is relatively low (3.6 and 5.1% in 1971 and 1980), the female rate is extremely high (18.1 and 24.1% for those two years).

The underemployment rates are also higher for young people than for the population as a whole, especially for men; young women follow the trend of the total female population. Young men have rates of 21.4% for the 15-19 age group and 20.2% for the 20-29 group, whereas the rate for the population as a whole is 17.3%. The same trends are found for both visible and invisible underemployment.

A comparison of the evolution of the unemployment structure among young people and adults indicates very clear trends. In 1976 the 12-29 age group accounted for 75.8% of total unemployment in the country; in 1980 that proportion had increased to 81.2%. Adult employment increased in the same period, indicating the difficulty which young people have in finding work, for the new jobs are almost always filled by adults. In addition, the low rates of pay disappoint the expectations created by education, with the result that large groups of young people abandon the structure of formal employment and try to find other kinds of work. In 1980 80.2% of the high rate of underemployment (15.4%) is due to low incomes and 11.6% to underutilization. The young population also spends the highest average amounts of time seeking work. In 1980 42.7% of unemployed persons aged 15 to 19 and 37.6% aged 20 to 29 spent more than four months seeking work.

#### 4. *Education and unemployment*

The relationship between more education, better jobs and higher pay postulated by the modernization model of development has lost much of its force in Colombia. The expansion of education and the crisis in industry have brought about a number of changes in the social significance of education. Although the sectors which plan education still see it primarily in terms of human capital and economic productivity, and as a guarantee of a job, everything seems to indicate that this economic function of education was peculiar to a specific point in development through modernization and that its direction is beginning to change.

In 1964, the high point in the development of the urban industrial model, the positive relationship between education level and job was very clear. The higher unemployment rate affected mainly the illiterate population

(23.7%); the population with secondary education had a rate of 13.5% and university graduates one of 10.8%. However, a study on employment and university education carried out in the National Association of Financial Institutes (ANIF) indicates that between 1976 and 1978 the relationship between unemployment and education level did not follow the same trend. On the contrary, the lowest unemployment rates were found among people with no education at all or only primary education (5.2 and 7.9% respectively). In second place were those who had university or other higher education (8.3 and 9.5%), while the highest unemployment rates were found amongst those with academic secondary education (12.6%) and technical secondary education (21.0%). The high rate of unemployment among specialist technicians is particularly noteworthy as an indicator of the exhaustion of the urban industrial model (Chiappe and Toro, 1978).

The low rate of unemployment among professionals in recent years conceals a growing problem of underemployment affecting mainly professionals from the low and middle strata educated at universities other than the élite ones. The main features of professional underemployment are a shift to branches of activity other than the one in which the person is qualified, movement within the occupational category itself, and an increase in temporary work, especially in community, social and personal services.

In 1980 the unemployment rates were higher in the towns and much higher for women than for men. The highest rates were still found among persons with secondary education. The 1981-1983 figures show remarkable differences in the unemployment rates for different towns. The unemployment rates for persons with higher education, 11.3% of the overall total and 14.7% in the case of women, can be considered very high.

### III

## Political participation

Political participation is one of the areas in which it can be seen with greatest clarity that the concept of youth, accepted and extolled in theory, lacks real meaning in practice. The first indicator of this is the almost total lack of studies on political life among young people, on their participation, their leadership, their values and attitudes, and the lack of programmes to ensure their involvement in the country's political life. We will now discuss, on the basis of partial information from various general studies on politics, three central aspects of the political life of Colombian youth: a) their voting; b) their membership of political parties, and c) their political education.

All the electoral studies carried out in the country affirm that abstention from voting by young people is very widespread and much greater, moreover, than among adults. For example, in the 1968 elections in Cali abstention by young people aged 21 to 25 amounted to 74% (McCamat and others, 1968). This same trend can be seen in Bogotá in the 1972 and 1974 elections (Losada and Murillo, 1973; Murillo and Williams, 1975; Losada and Williams, 1972). In 1978 the national abstention rate among young people aged 18 to 20 was 75% and in 1980 82% of young people aged 18 to 24 did not vote (Losada, 1981). A study carried out by the ANIF Social Group tried to establish the causes of this behaviour and it was found that only 19.3% of young people aged 18 to 24 abstained because they rejected the social system; 50.3% did so out of indifference to politics. At the same time, 40% of young people said that the country's problems were purely political, while 68.3% showed profound ignorance of the local and national organization of politics (ANIF, 1981). Another piece of research carried out by the Department of Political Science of the University of the Andes shows that young people have a poor image of the country's political institutions. In fact, only 2.5% thought that election results represented the opinion of the majority of the electorate, while 89.1% gave

a negative opinion of members of parliament, using such terms as "dishonest", "inefficient" and "unproductive" (Latorre and Murillo, 1982).

Women's participation in politics, according to a study by Patricia Pinzón de Lewin of electoral data for the period 1958-1974 indicates the following conclusions: women take part in politics less than men; they vote less often, participate less in political or party organizations, and their involvement tends to be greater among adults and women of the top social class. This phenomenon appears to be very similar for both sexes, but it affects women much more (Pinzón de Lewin and Rothlisberger, 1977). Some figures may give a clearer idea of this: in the 1974 elections the total rate of male abstention was 24.3% and female 45.7%, whereas in the case of women aged 21 to 24 abstention amounted to 67%, a proportion which declines with age to a level of 31% for women aged 45 to 49.

On the other hand, membership of or identification with a political party follow clear lines when age is compared with the nature of the party: 44.8% of young people aged 18 to 24 say they belong to one of the traditional Colombian political parties (liberal and conservative), whereas 82.2% of persons aged 45 to 64 say this. Of persons aged 18 to 24 4.3% identify with opposition parties, and 1.9% do this in the 45-54 age group. However, the really significant thing is the high proportion of young people (48.8%) who do not identify with any party; in contrast, only 15.5% of the adult group (45 to 64) do not claim to belong to a party (ANIF, 1981). According to this same study, young people aged 18 to 24 take almost no part in associations of various kinds, devote little time to radio, television and newspapers, and even less time, in these media, to news or other programmes that may be considered political.

In a study carried out among university students, 22% claimed no party identification, and 90% took no part in any grouping or party. These figures are very significant when it is

remembered that among Colombian young people the university is the place which has most fostered political participation of various kinds, especially among the groups of the Left. We thus have a picture in which young people do not believe in and do not take part in the traditional political parties and where there are no other political groupings, party or otherwise, to fill this gap. There is also a very high level of ignorance about the national political system on the part of young people (Latorre and Murillo, 1982).

The voting behaviour of young people is, however, only an expression of formal participation in the country's democratic life. Their marked abstentionism, their lack of interest and their ignorance of the national political system have more profound causes rooted in social phenomena of the greatest importance for the definition of the role of youth and for the consideration of youth in terms of an integrated or marginal human group in Colombian life. We will now discuss briefly some of the most important factors affecting the political participation of young people.

a) The changes in the family, which occurred in conjunction with industrialization and with the heavy waves of migration from the countryside to the town and between regions, have produced effects of rootlessness and loss of party-political identification traditionally linked with ecological bases and family traditions. The generation gap between the parents, who experienced the effervescent effects of the social model based on industrialization and urbanization of the economy, and the children, who are now growing up in a situation in which there is no clear model or national social objective, manifests itself clearly in the lack of interest shown by the new generations in the traditional political modes. A number of studies demonstrate this: university students, 90% of whom are not active in any party, say that 87% of their parents do belong to the traditional liberal and conservative parties (Latorre and Murillo, 1982). On the other hand, the study on the political participation of women mentioned above shows that abstention among women heads of households (42%) and wives (45%) is lower than among daughters (51%) or other female relatives in the family (54%) (Pinzón de

Lewin and Rothlisberger, 1977). Although the family background might encourage, as has traditionally been the case in Colombia, a pattern of voting and political identification, the changes which the family has undergone during the country's historical development have created a very significant generation gap in the political participation of parents and children. The family has lost much of its capacity to provide education in political life and transmit a concept of society acceptable to the new generations.

b) At least one study shows that there is no association between education and exercise of the right to vote (Pinzón de Lewin and Rothlisberger, 1977). This fact throws much light on the nature of education. The political education imparted by the school, it would seem, does not lead to participation on election days. It is very possible that the authoritarian nature of the social and teaching relationships in the classroom and the institutional government of the schools generate apathy and scepticism about society and the real possibilities of action within it. It is also very probable that the notion of society transmitted through the subject-matter of social sciences fosters political apathy because it is out of touch with the realities of the students' lives. This certainly emerges more clearly with respect to the teaching of history in terms of heroic figures, whose value system and world view have little to do with the problems of young people in contemporary society.

Even the university student movements which were all the rage in the 1960s and the first part of the 1970s, now do little more than form small parties of the Left of no attraction for young people, or groups which take the guerilla route. In general terms, great political apathy has developed among university students (Leal, 1982).

c) The traditional political parties have not formulated stable and durable programmes for youth, although they do assert the importance of this population group, especially at election time. Some parties of the Left have devised this kind of programme, but as they have little access to the machinery of the State, these programmes remain little more than proselytizing exhortations. Account must also be taken of the de-politicizing effect of the National Front, one of whose political goals was to reduce the

acrimonious political atmosphere surrounding the traditional parties which had led to violence (Guzmán and others, 1962). The Colombian political parties are only organized to any great extent at election time and they do not offer a permanent sphere of action in which young people can take part, develop as leaders and involve themselves in a more organized manner. In other democracies the political parties are the prime exponents of the function of political-education institutions, but this is not the case in Colombia, and young people do not have a very clear idea of what their role in a political party might be, not only with respect to a concept of power within society and the formulation of plans and programmes which define a clear and attractive party line, but also with respect to

their involvement in the parties, apart from their temporary role as agitators at election time.

The low level of participation of Colombian youth in politics seems to be determined by two types of factor and their interrelationship. The first is the lack of a national goal, of a purpose investing the action of the State and the political parties with meaning and within which young people can see themselves as an integral part; and the lack of a plan to define the direction in which society is headed, similar to the concept of industrialization, urbanization and modernization in the 1950s and 1960s. The second factor is the consequent loss of educational power by the social institutions which exist for this purpose, such as the family, the school and the political party.

## IV

### Migration

Several analysts have described migration in Colombia as a form of economic exile (Cardona and others, 1980). In order to clarify the true meaning of this notion of economic exile, distinctions have to be made between three types of migration. Internal migration, firstly, is basically population movements among regions and from the countryside to the town. It reflects the very frequent changes in the country's development poles and it cannot strictly be termed exile if migration caused by violence in its various forms is excluded. A second type is migration to neighbouring countries, especially Venezuela, Ecuador and Panama, where larger and better-paid work markets have at times existed. This kind of migration has many seasonal aspects and does, in any event, imply a return to Colombia. A third type of migration has traditionally occurred to the United States and it is of a more permanent nature.

It is of interest in this study to examine the two types of migration to foreign countries, for they act as an escape valve for employment problems and, in some cases, they represent a search for broader cultural horizons. Colombia

has not always been an exporter of population; on the contrary, 30 years ago people migrated to Colombia from Venezuela and Ecuador. Today this process has undergone a dramatic reversal, and only the crisis in the oil economies of Venezuela and Ecuador has produced any reduction in the numbers of migrants.

Contrary to what might be thought, it is not unemployed Colombians who migrate to Venezuela, but manual workers, day labourers and low-income white-collar workers, mostly young people under 30. As many as 75% of the migrants were born into urban families or had migrated much earlier to the big towns. Forty per cent of them have completed primary education, 10% are illiterate and 50% have secondary education. Of the latter, 40% have studied in the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), an official institute for the training of skilled manual workers. This indicates that there has been abundant migration of young people to Venezuela and that at least two big groups can be identified in this migratory flow. The first is made up of typical urban-marginal young people, possibly from families which have

migrated from the countryside to the town, very possibly with incomplete primary education or illiterate; they are the most exploited people in Venezuela, especially in farm work or in the less desirable jobs in the towns (Gómez and Díaz, 1983). A second group of young people seems to migrate to Venezuela on better terms, having acquired greater work experience in Colombia, secondary education and, in at least half the cases, a decent level of specialized technical training.

Perhaps the factor which best defines migration to neighbouring countries, which are also developing countries, as distinct from other forms of foreign migration by Colombians, is the strong likelihood of return. In other words, it is a question of temporary migration, for various lengths of time, depending on the nature of the employment in Venezuela, but with the great majority of the migrants returning to their place of origin. Moreover, the idea of return is an element which defines the project from its very conception. For it is not, generally speaking families which migrate, but individuals who, in 80% of the cases, have a house with basic services in Colombia, periodically send part of their earnings home, and on their return bring with them small amounts of capital which they invest in the improvement of their homes, meeting their families' health and education deficits and setting up workshops or neighbourhood stores.

Studies on migration of Colombians to Panama, Ecuador and, in particular, Venezuela indicate that migration to neighbouring countries acts as a means of cutting the Gordian knots of unemployment, underemployment and low wages formed by the type of development Colombia has experienced. In this sense, migration represents a temporary form of economic exile, used primarily by groups of marginal, manual and other workers whose family incomes are insufficient and have to be supplemented by surpluses from wages earned in stronger currencies abroad.

Juvenile work in the domestic market has been the mechanism for making good the shortfall in wages for the maintenance of the labour force, and migration to neighbouring countries is another form of youth employment; in a way, migration is also an example of how the

age of youth is cut short among the bottom population groups.

A decision to migrate on the part of a young Colombian is influenced by four factors related to the country's structural impoverishment: unemployment and underemployment, low wages, the need to supplement the family income to improve living standards, especially with respect to housing, health and education, and the need to enter the informal economy as a means of creating more stable mechanisms for producing income to maintain the standard of living. Joining the informal economy is necessarily an alternative not only for young people moving within the circle of unemployment and underemployment or of typically marginal occupations, but also for those such as skilled manual workers who have been trained to work at the heart of the economy, owing to the growing industrial unemployment and the low wages resulting from the industrial crisis.

The migration of young people to work in neighbouring countries is therefore an example of the twofold way in which society marginalizes its youth: by obliging them to work during the period defined as youth, thus depriving them of the right to youth and, on the other hand and paradoxically, by denying them paid work and thus driving them into the ranks of adult structural marginality.

Between 1951 and 1977 27.5% of the South Americans admitted as immigrants into the United States were Colombians. But this migration has not been constant over time; of all the immigrants into the United States since 1936, between 1936 and 1945 only 1.3% were from Colombia, and between 1946 and 1955 the figure was 6%; but between 1956 and 1965 it was 34.7%, and in the following decade 58%. This means that between 1956 and 1977 92.7% of Colombian migrants were legal migrants to the United States. This of course does not take into account the rapid growth in illegal immigrants (Cardona, 1980). Of this migratory flow over the last two decades, 49% were young people aged 10 to 29. If the number of children under 10 is included, the total amounts to 68.4% of the migrants.

The migration of Colombians to the United States is very different in kind from the



migration to neighbouring countries. Perhaps the main common denominators are the high proportion of young people and the fact that the migrants are seeking solutions to the economic and cultural problems facing them in their own country. The occupational and educational characteristics of the migrants are very different. Sixty-one per cent are under 14, housewives, students or retired persons. Among the migrants who work, the largest category is made up of professional and similar persons (8%), followed by craftsmen (6.9%), office workers (6.5%), and skilled manual workers (6.2%). The smallest groups seem to be made up of the least qualified workers: domestic staff, service workers, sales persons, unskilled manual workers (Cardona, 1980). Some 14.5% of the immigrants into the United States have either complete or incomplete primary education; 43.5% have complete or incomplete secondary schooling, 29.1% have studied at the university level, and 2.9% have postgraduate qualifications. On the other hand, the general trend is for families to migrate, rather than individuals, and for the notion of return to give rise to conflict; although return is desired and talked about, it is rarely achieved, and the migration usually becomes permanent.

A distinction must be made between two types of migration of young people to the United

States. The first wave was made up basically of professional people seeking better work opportunities and it was called the "brain drain". It usually consisted of non-marginal young people, and this situation was and remains the subject of a number of studies and plans for return sponsored by the Colombian Government. The second wave of migrants included, in addition to persons with university and technical qualifications, families and a large group of young people not educated to the same level as the first group. They include the illegal immigrants into the United States, with groups from the middle class, the lower-middle class and some of working-class extraction, but hardly marginal in their Colombian origins. Rather than marginality, the direct motives for migration seem to be low wages, underemployment and the lack of opportunities for economic and cultural progress. Where the "brain drain" is concerned, attention must be drawn to the unemployment among professionals in Colombia caused by the limitations of the domestic work market. That might explain this marked characteristic of Colombian society, especially among health professionals (24.5%), engineers (13.3%), teachers (13.8%), technicians (17.6%), and auditors and accountants (9.5%) during the period from 1954 to 1976 (Cardona, 1980).

## V

### Youth and education

Young people in Colombia will suffer the fate suffered by Colombian society in its future. Most of the circumstances described in this paper affect society as a whole and are not peculiar to youth, but they do form a framework outside of which the youth problem could not be understood. Attention must be drawn, however, to a general factor of prime importance which does directly affect young people and their integration in society and which can be worked at with the specific purpose of furnishing an effective tool for improving youth's capacity to

participate and its role as agent and protagonist of social change: this is education.

If present-day education in Colombia is to be thought of as a means of bringing about significant and beneficial changes, the following points, among others, must be taken into consideration:

a) The clearest fact in the present relationship between education and society in Colombia is the lack of connection between the two. With modernization, education acquired and economic significance which it did not have

before, a connection with production and work and an identification with productivity, improvement of personal incomes and development. This was why so much importance was given to the economic part of education and to this social function and its planning. With the arrival of the crisis of the modernization model, however, education is beginning to lose a large part of its predominantly economic function. This fact must therefore be taken into account and a new assessment made of the other functions of education which, without disappearing during the peak period of modernization, had been relegated to the background. These functions include all those affecting quality, not in terms of school output but in terms of capacity to inculcate an understanding of the world, of society and of the individual. It is of greatest importance, with respect both to education planning and to the image which young and adult Colombians have of education, to balance the idea that education is a passport to work, high incomes and social mobility with the notion that it is a way of seeking knowledge to increase individual and social growth, and a means of increasing a person's knowledge of his own community and society so that he can participate in them more effectively and play a role in their government and in the form that government takes.

b) All this means reconsidering the usefulness of continuing to define Colombian education in terms of extreme diversification at both secondary and higher levels, which in practical terms creates careers and specialities as a response to changes in demand. In this system, education has been transformed into an instrument in the service of demand and it has ended up by training "technologists" who are incapable of seeing things in the round. An extremely compartmentalized outlook has thus been created which sets the school and the world in opposition to each other, or at least has turned the school's back to the world. This essentially utilitarian orientation has tended to produce dogmatic and authoritarian people with essentially partial and specialized knowledge; they are unaware of the many different and complementary forms of knowledge or of the insufficiency of any particular area of knowledge, and they are incapable of thinking scientifically.

The point of this kind of education policy is to train people for a static society, for a model of society in which the most important changes are variations in the demand for a certain type of human resources.

c) It is therefore useful to consider the possibilities of education focussed on the problems of quality and not on responses to the immediate needs in human resources. This means education for a changing society, for a model-less society, education which produces a person who can cope with any kind of future and not a person trained for only one kind of society, a person capable of thinking scientifically and not crushed under the weight of specific information which does not help him to understand the changing and surprising world around him, a person who can cope imaginatively with a society in crisis, who can function in a world of contradictory values, and not a person programmed to view life in only one way. In other words, a person who has been prepared to participate in a changing democratic society.

d) This kind of person is not being produced by today's school system in Colombia --as a result of the policy of specialized education focussed on employment and of the social organization of school institutions. The present tendency in Colombia's schools is not to teach people to think but to store largely irrelevant information. They are not taught to relate theory to practice, to apply theories to the solution of the problems facing young people, or to create knowledge. The Colombian school tends to deaden rather than stimulate the imagination. It is thus generating low-grade cultural growth which then produces a low-grade democracy.

Above all, however, the Colombian school is training people for a form of society and a specific type of development which are already in crisis; and this very fact exacerbates the crisis affecting young people and society itself, for education does not function as a useful and valid tool for coping with the future. In many cases, as this paper has shown, it does not even perform this function for the present.

e) A change in education of the kind described necessarily implies social training: a special emphasis on ensuring that the students learn to study their society, to see it as it really is,

to criticize it and to participate in its future and in the moulding of its social characteristics. Education must be seen as a means of participation in democracy and in the country's political life and not as a factor of marginalization, exclusion and stratification. Such a change of outlook, together with a sharp improvement in quality and in the access to

education of the groups which are at present outside the system, of the marginal urban and peasant groups, is an essential tool of integration through the participation of Colombian young people, and it represents the best available means of offering them a future which they will themselves help to shape.

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## Chilean youth and social exclusion

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Young people in Chile have seen a sharp increase in their participation and their chances of involvement in the social roles shaped during the postwar period of expansion. The rapid urbanization, the great expansion of education systems, the extension of the political rights of citizenship, and the growing absorption of skilled and unskilled manpower by the modern production and services sectors were some of the factors which mobilized young people and turned them into some of the most committed agents of development and modernization; since development and modernization were also the axes of consensus among almost all the social and political protagonists, youth became, almost inadvertently, one of the central agents in the system. One of the most graphic instances of this was the remarkable political and cultural influence exercised by the student movements towards the end of the 1960s.

However, a new phenomenon has emerged in Chile's social development in the past decade—social exclusion, which affects the structure of society itself, and thus all the social categories and agents, but whose deepest and broadest effects are probably on youth. "Exclusion" means the process of structural change by which various social groups which in the immediate past had occupied stable institutionalized positions in the social system, or could have firm expectations of places in it, have been dismissed from these positions or find their access to them persistently blocked.

For this very reason youth was one of the main victims of the crisis, redefinition and distortion of the modernization processes: it can be said that in the past decade this exclusion has affected Chilean young people almost to the same extent that they had attained central positions in the system in the two previous decades.

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## I

### Crisis of growth and economic participation

Young people in Chile today represent an extensive social sector with a high level of education—almost three times higher than the average level of their parents' generation—and with already remote migratory antecedents; they would seem to be in the optimum position to take charge of the complex tasks required by urban life, social modernization and political and economic development. In fact, one of the main goals of the expansion of the school system over the past quarter of a century was to involve youth in the development process.

It cannot be denied that the education system<sup>1</sup> showed remarkable efficiency in absorbing the whole of the young generation, leaving many elitist barriers in its wake. The latest census figures show clearly the decline in the rates of economic participation by young people due to the expansion of education: the labour supply of young people aged 15 to 19 fell nationally from 42.2% in 1960 to 30.7% in 1970, and it fell in absolute terms as well. This drop was sharpest in the urban areas (from 38.8% to 27.2%), the very areas which benefitted most from the growth in education; and it was much sharper for men, whose rate fell from 61.7% to 45.3% over the period. Employment of young people aged 20 to 24 also declined between these dates, although certainly to a lesser extent. In this case the drop in the rate of participation was found only in the urban areas and again mainly among men (who benefitted most from the expansion of higher-education opportunities).

However, for education to have been able to discharge effectively the role assigned to it, there would have to have been, in step with the expansion of schooling, a comparable expansion of the modern sectors of production, trade and services, which were the ones expected to absorb the better-qualified labour. When this did not happen, there was a resumption of the declining trend in the proportion of youth in the labour force. In fact, the projections indicated that the proportion of young people aged 14 to 19 was to

continue declining in the coming decades as a result of the extension of schooling, while the proportion of active persons in the 20-24 age group was to increase only as a result of a larger entry of women into the labour markets. But, despite the expansion of education, the pressure of young people on the labour markets did not decline by the expected amounts.

Several studies have referred to the irregularity of Chile's economic growth as an explanation of the behaviour of the rate of participation. Cáceres (1981) pointed out for example that the economic activity of the 15-19 age group fell sharply in the years of greatest expansion of education (1968-1973), but then increased during the acute recession of 1975-

1976. Rosales (1979) had earlier studied the cyclical trend in the rate of secondary participation of women, discovering that women's participation in the bottom strata fell during the 1975 crisis (especially in the over-20 and under-45 age groups), while in the top strata this participation reached its lowest level for the whole of the period studied (1957-1977). This fact also helps to explain why the expected increase in women's participation has not occurred, at least not so far.

This thesis emphasizes the cyclical behaviour of the work participation of the secondary labour force: in conditions of economic crisis (with high levels of unemployment and a decline in personal

Table 1

**CHILE: YOUNG POPULATION AGED 15-24, BY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND  
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, 1960, 1970, 1980**

	Years	Attending		Not attending	
		Thousands of persons	Percentages	Thousands of persons	Percentages
<b>Aged 15 - 24</b>					
Active	1960	12.2	0.9	663.6	50.2
	1970	28.2	1.7	663.4	39.9
	1980	116.1	4.8	824.5	33.8
Inactive	1960	276.8	20.9	369.8	28.0
	1970	502.0	30.2	468.6	28.2
	1980	1 040.1	42.6	460.0	18.9
<b>Aged 15 - 19</b>					
Active	1960	8.1	1.1	303.8	41.8
	1970	12.5	1.4	253.2	27.9
	1980	61.7	4.5	239.7	17.6
Inactive	1960	243.2	33.5	171.1	23.6
	1970	426.2	46.9	217.3	23.9
	1980	876.0	64.1	188.7	13.8
<b>Aged 20 - 24</b>					
Active	1960	4.1	0.7	359.8	60.3
	1970	15.7	2.1	410.1	54.5
	1980	54.5	5.1	584.8	54.4
Inactive	1960	33.6	5.6	198.7	33.3
	1970	75.7	10.1	251.3	33.4
	1980	164.1	15.3	271.3	25.3

*Source:* National Statistical Institute (INE). For 1960 and 1970: national population and housing censuses. For 1980: National employment survey.

incomes) the secondary work force, mainly young people and women, tends to join the labour markets. In conditions of stability and economic prosperity it reverts to inactivity. Cáceres adds that this situation occurs predominantly in the bottom strata, while the secondary labour force of the top strata (especially women) tends, in contrast, to withdraw from work activity in periods of crisis. In the bottom urban strata, however, unemployment of the head of the household or reduction of the family income prompt young people and women to seek work.

The majority of these studies suppose that the oscillations in the participation rates correspond merely to short-term cycles of expansion or recession within a general downward trend caused mainly by the expansion of education. Careful analysis of the data from censuses and national household surveys on work activity and school attendance indicates, however, that in the past decade there has been a change of *structure*, and with it new trends in the distribution of young people by work activity and school attendance (table 1).

The main point about the change in the trends over the past decade is the clear relative decline in young people who do not attend school and are inactive, which indicates an accelerated incorporation in activity (usually not accompanied by effective employment). When the effective distribution of young people by activity and attendance in 1980 is compared with the distribution which would have been produced if the trends of the previous decade had been maintained, it can be concluded, firstly, that the "real" decline in inactivity is the most important change that has occurred, and that it can be estimated at 212 800 persons. Secondly, that the increase in attendance is noticeably slower than the increase in activity. Thirdly, that two-thirds of the additional increase in attendance is attributable to the increase in the group of *active* attenders, and finally that two-thirds of the reduction in the group of inactive persons who do not attend school is attributable to their assumption of activity without school attendance (table 2).

These characteristics are typical of periods of economic crisis, when there is a mass assumption of activity by the so-called

"secondary labour force". In this case the group which provides the most newly active persons is made up mainly of women aged 15 to 19 from the lowest educational levels. However, there is also some doubt about the truly "secondary" nature of this young labour force. The year of reference (1980) cannot be considered typical of a short-term recession: on the contrary, according to official estimates, in the period 1976-1980 the product grew at rates above or close to 8% a year, and only two years later a sharp recessionary cycle began. There is much more justification for a hypothesis which associates such trends with a *style of growth* which, even in its best moments, maintained unemployment at double the historical rates and the real wages of the employed labour force at significantly lower levels than those of the previous decade. Since for a long time heads of household have been faced with unemployment or low wages, a reversal has begun in the downward trend of the participation rates, starting with the "weakest link" in the household: those members whose assumption of activity means lower short- and long-term costs ("inactive/not attending"). This assumption of activity can undergo small or even substantial changes in step with economic cycles, but it is determined mainly by the general economic framework in which these changes occur and, in particular, by the permanent level of opportunities of work and income which this framework offers the heads of households of the less-favoured strata of society.

Table 2

CHILE: DIFFERENCES IN THE HISTORICAL TRENDS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE, 1980

	Thousands of young people aged 15 to 24	
	Attending	Not attending
Active	51.2	161.6
Inactive	22.0	-234.8

*Source:* Calculations on the basis of data from the National Statistical Institute (INE): national population and housing censuses, 1960 and 1970, and regional employment survey, 1980.

## II

## Occupational exclusion

The greatest inconsistency of the promise of modernization has occurred, without doubt, in the area of employment. The conjunction of an increasing incorporation of youth groups in economic activity (despite the continued expansion of education) with the inability of the economy to generate, and even maintain, certain historical levels of employment produced a phenomenon of acute occupational exclusion which had a particularly severe effect on the new generations. Waged or established job opportunities declined sharply, as did the proportion and number of young people who managed to find work.

Exclusion is different from occupational "marginality" as described in the 1960s: marginality has a very different starting point, for it generally concerns migrants from the countryside with little schooling who have not become integrated in the urban world. The term "exclusion" refers, in contrast, to the state of occupational marginality which affects a large contingent of population which formerly had access to established urban jobs, or was acquiring such access, and moreover was mobilized socially and culturally in that direction. It thus describes the process of reversal both in the employment structure in the past decade and in the processes of social integration which had begun earlier. Exclusion must also be distinguished from mere statistical unemployment. Occupational exclusion does not arise exclusively either from changes in the labour supply (demographic pressure or incorporation of the secondary labour force in periods of crisis) or from conditions of recession, although both these factors must be taken into account. It has its origin in changes in the structure of employment (industrial crisis, reduction of public employment, etc.) and, therefore, in the patterns of development which reduce and impair the economy's capacity to generate established jobs: it is a question of the structural processes which establish and increase the mass of unemployed, underemployed and poor urban dwellers.

The origin of the occupational exclusion of young people lies mainly in the decline in manual work, in particular in manufacturing industry. In the past decade the contribution of industry to the product and to employment fell visibly as a result of the policies of external openness and liberalization of the labour market. There was a collapse in the support of the former processes of modernization and the exports-substitution industry based on State backing and protection, with alarming consequences for employment.

This situation can be seen in table 3. The proportion of workers —waged manual

Table 3

CHILE: RELATIVE PROPORTION OF NON-AGRICULTURAL MANUAL JOBS AND INDUSTRIAL MANUAL JOBS IN YOUTH GROUPS AND IN THE TOTAL EMPLOYED EAP, 1971, 1980, 1982

	Years	Young people (15-24)	Total
Manual workers in total of employed persons	1971	37.3	31.2
	1980	26.3	22.7
	1982	17.5	19.1
Productive sector manual workers in total of employed persons	1971	27.0	23.1
	1980	14.6	14.2
	1982	9.5	10.7
Productive sector manual workers in total of manual workers	1971	72.6	74.0
	1980	55.6	62.8
	1982	54.3	56.2
Industrial manual workers in total of manual workers	1971	56.3	50.5
	1980	38.6	40.6
	1982	35.8	39.2

Source: Martínez and León, (1984).

workers— fell sharply throughout the decade: at the beginning of the decade some 40% of employed young people were manual workers. In 1980 only one-quarter of them were still manual workers, and that proportion declined even more in the subsequent years of crisis. The proportion of manual workers in the total of occupied persons had thus taken a dizzying plunge. The decline in manual work was especially significant in the productive sectors (industry, construction, transport and mining). At the end of the decade the number of young manual workers in productive sectors had fallen to half of the figure for the decade's beginning (barely 15% of employed persons in 1980, as against 27% in 1971). At the same time there was a change in the internal composition of manual employment: it became tertiarized and this meant deteriorations in working conditions, income levels, stability and the opportunities for young people to join trade unions. Moreover, the reduction in productive manual employment was concentrated in manufacturing industry. Whereas earlier manual employment was

basically industrial (about 60% of manual workers were in industry), the proportion of industrial workers in manual employment at the end of the decade had fallen to below 40%. Lastly, the numerical superiority of young manual workers also disappeared, especially in the productive sectors; there occurred an ageing of the working population, an unmistakable sign of the difficulties encountered by young people in finding work in this sector.

Additional information about these processes is given in table 4, which indicates the numbers and participation of manual workers in the young non-agricultural economically active population. These data show in greater detail the magnitude of the reduction in productive manual jobs and the influence of the industrial depression on that reduction.

As we see, industrial manual workers accounted for 24% of the young non-agricultural EAP in 1971 (approximately 140 000 young workers in industry). In 1980 this proportion had fallen to only 9.5% (some 75 000 industrial workers). These declines occurred in traditional

Table 4

CHILE: PROPORTION OF MANUAL WORKERS AND CRAFTSMEN IN THE NON-AGRICULTURAL YOUNG EAP (AGED 15-24), 1971, 1980, 1982

	1971		1980		1982	
	Per-centages	Thousands of persons	Per-centages	Thousands of persons	Per-centages	Thousands of persons
Traditional industrial workers	14.7	84.4	6.2	49.7	4.1	33.7
Modern industrial workers	9.2	52.9	2.8	21.9	1.4	11.1
Strategic sector workers (excluding copper)	0.5	2.8	0.5	4.1	0.1	1.0
Construction workers	5.5	31.5	3.1	24.4	1.6	13.1
Waged workers in mining	1.0	6.2	1.0	8.1	0.4	3.2
Waged workers in transport	5.0	29.1	2.6	21.0	1.6	13.2
Productive sector workers	35.9	206.9	16.2	129.2	9.2	75.3
Trade and services workers	11.7	67.5	13.9	110.8	10.5	86.5
Craftsmen	4.7	27.0	4.1	32.5	2.9	24.2
<b>Total manual workers and craftsmen</b>	<b>52.3</b>	<b>301.4</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>272.5</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>186.0</b>
<b>Total non-agricultural EAP (15-24)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>575.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>798.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>822.5</b>

Source: Martínez and León (1984), on the basis of INE figures.



industry (foodstuffs, beverages, tobacco, textiles, clothing, etc.) and, above all, in modern substitution industry (timber, chemical products, rubber and plastic, cement, etc.). In both sectors young manual workers were found in industry. Manual jobs were maintained only in strategic industries and mining, but in both they represented a very insignificant proportion of the young proletariat. The crisis was concentrated in the substitution industry, which in the space of a decade shed some 65 000 jobs previously held by young people. There were also declines in the sectors of construction (despite the fact that at the end of the decade this sector experienced a favourable period) and transport, which together represented a reduction of approximately 15 000 productive jobs.

The expansion of manual activities in the tertiary sector does not succeed in countering the sharp decline in industrial employment. The increases in manual workers in trade and services and in the crafts are insufficient to compensate for the decline in productive manual jobs. Manual workers in the non-productive sectors increase their share in young non-agricultural EAP from 11.7% to 13.9%, while craftsmen decline from 4.7% to 4.1% between the beginning and end of the decade. Craft jobs, moreover, had always been occupied mainly by adults, owing to the skills and capital required; they therefore represent a very difficult employment alternative for young people excluded from industry.

The crisis in manual employment had a clear effect on the increase in "excluded" young people —defined as those who remain unemployed, or in government minimum employment programmes, or in domestic service, or own-account workers in marginal trade and services. These doubled their share in young non-agricultural EAP from 23.3% to 45.5% between 1971 and 1980 —an absolute increase of 230 000 young people. The decade of the 1970s closed, in fact, with 363 000 excluded young people, and it had begun with only 134 400.

First among the traditional categories of occupational marginality is domestic employment, which has tended to stabilize in the past decade: its relative weight is maintained at

approximately 11% of the young EAP, although in absolute terms this means an increase of almost 23 000 persons.

Here it is important to note the development of domestic employment, which historically had shown a sustained reduction in its share of the young EAP. The figures of the University of Chile indicate that between 1960 and 1970 domestic service declined from 27.9% to 21.9% in the 15-19 age group and from 20.2% to 15% in the 20-24 age group. In the past decade, in contrast, the proportion of domestic servants practically stabilized itself, with rates of 20.7% and 13.2% respectively in the two age groups. A study by Heskia (1980) calculates the proportion of domestic employment in the employed young EAP for the period 1957-1979. According to her figures, throughout this period female domestic servants accounted for an average of 26% of female jobs in the 14-19 age group and approximately 15% in the 20-25 age group. Heskia's series indicates a decline (not always continuous) in the proportion of female domestic servants in the two groups, which reaches its lowest point in 1974 with proportions of 13.1% and 4.7% respectively, and then climbs from the 1975 crisis to reach, in the remaining years, the level of the historical average indicated above. Rosales reaches a similar conclusion.

The reduction in domestic employment has been explained by a decline in work activity on the part of young women and by the extension of schooling and the higher level of education which these women enjoy. As has been pointed out, the crisis pushes up the rate of participation of young women from the low strata, who again enter domestic service. The lack of diversification of female employment in these strata —accentuated by the reduction in the proportion of female manual workers, also detected by Rosales— feeds this trend in female employment.

With respect to the remaining categories of occupational marginality, mention must be made of the increase in "marginal traders" who grow from 2.3% to 3.1% in the period (more than 10 000 young people engage in this activity). The proliferation of street traders is a characteristic of the employment crisis, especially in the big towns. Much more

important, however, is the institution of the PEM (Programa de Empleo Mínimo — Minimum Employment Programme) which covered almost 50 000 young people in 1980 and accounted for 12.9% of the young EAP. The PEM was set up during the 1975 crisis as a way of absorbing the effects of the generalized unemployment. The programme was maintained after the crisis, however, fluctuating between 120 000 and 180 000 persons (until it was again expanded in the present recession) and it took in an increasing number of jobless young people and women. In 1980 young people made up 54.9% of the programme.

In all marginal jobs at present account for less than half of occupational exclusion. Whereas in 1971 one-third of excluded persons were unemployed, in 1980 unemployment affected some 53.4% of them. In the past decade the number of unemployed has tripled: from 48 100 to 193 800 young people, and from 8.3% to 24.3% of the young EAP (table 5). Open unemployment has thus been the predominant form taken by the jobs crisis in these years.

In the last quarter of a century the development of this phenomenon has been fairly clear. Three phases are usually distinguished. The phase of the 1960s was

characterized by relatively low unemployment rates; the period 1970-1973 was marked by large-scale jobs policies which brought unemployment down to its historically lowest levels; and the last phase produced an explosive increase in unemployment, even outstripping the periods of recession. The evolution of employment among young people follows this same trajectory, as can be seen from the graph, in accordance with the unemployment series for Greater Santiago produced by the University of Chile.

According to these data, unemployment shows an average of 36.7% in the 14-19 age group and 23.2% in the 20-24 age group in the period 1974-1982, thus doubling the historical averages registered in previous years. Unemployment increases sharply in times of crisis, but it has never truly decreased; even in periods of economic "prosperity" open unemployment stayed at about 25% of the young labour force (always, of course, with different rates according to age). Even when the periods of crisis are not taken into account, some 200 000 young people regularly remained out of work in those years.

These trends find their culmination in the recession currently affecting the Chilean

Table 5

CHILE: OCCUPATIONAL COMPOSITION OF EXCLUDED YOUTH, 1971, 1980, 1982<sup>a</sup>

Occupational stratum	1971		1980		1982	
	Thousands of persons	Per-centages	Thousands of persons	Per-centages	Thousands of persons	Per-centages
Domestic employment	66.5	49.5	89.1	24.5	70.05	14.5
Marginal employment in trade and services	19.8	14.7	33.2	9.1	27.9	5.7
PEM-POJH <sup>b</sup>	-	-	46.9	12.9	98.7	20.3
Unemployed and first-time job seekers	48.1	35.8	193.8	53.4	288.6	59.4
Total excluded	134.4	100.0	363.0	100.0	485.7	100.0
Excluded young people in non-agricultural EAP		23.3		45.5		59.1

Source: Martínez and León (1984).

<sup>a</sup>Young people aged 15 to 24.

<sup>b</sup>PEM: *Programa de Empleo Mínimo* (Minimum Employment Programme).

<sup>c</sup>POJH: *Programa Ocupacional para Jefes de Hogar* (Work Programme for Heads of Household).

economy (table 5). Exclusion reaches alarming proportions: it increases from 45.5% of the young EAP in 1980 (363 000 young people, as we have seen) to 59.1% in 1982 (485 700 young people). At the same time, the reduction in manual and non-manual jobs reaches 100 000 in the short space of two years: the employment figures are 432 000 in 1980 (54.5% of the young non-agricultural EAP) and 335 400 in 1982 (only 41.9%). The crisis can thus be seen as a real jobs disaster suddenly striking approximately 25% of the young people who had found some employment in the already harsh conditions prevailing at the end of the decade.

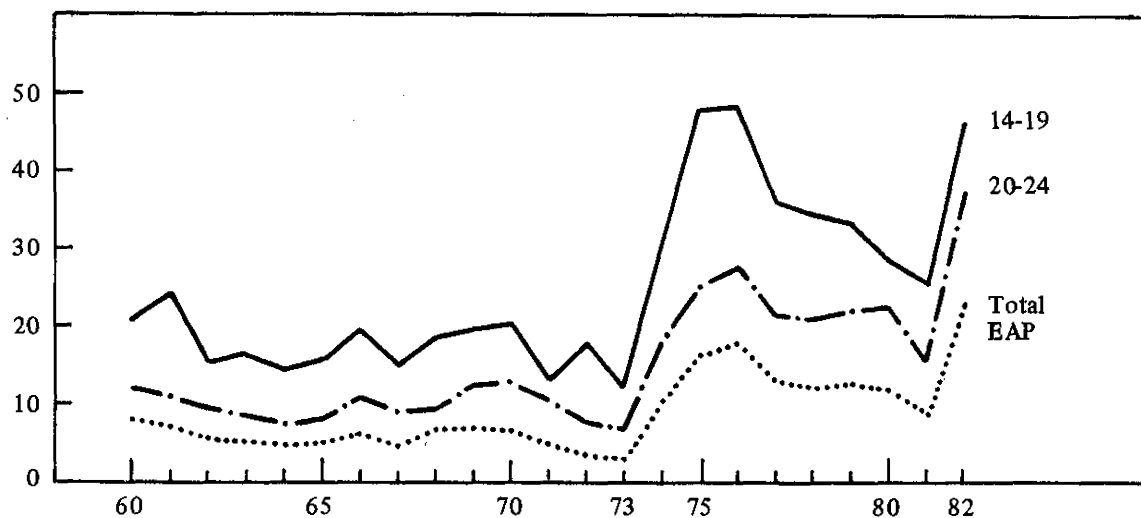
The crisis causes a great reduction in the number of manual workers in productive sectors; among young people there is a spectacular reduction of 40.7% (among adults it is 29.9%). In this case, the crisis affects manual employment in manufacturing industry (including the strategic sectors), which is reduced to an insignificant level (5.6% of the total EAP, i.e., 45 000 young people), manual employment in construction (which in 1982 is only 1.6% of the EAP, i.e., 13 000 young people), and manual employment in transport and mining. The productive sectors shed more than 50 000 young manual workers (one half of total

redundancies) and these sectors account for only 9.2% of the young EAP. Manual workers in non-productive sectors and craftsmen also show declines, although not as pronounced as the previous ones, which confirms that the crisis severely depresses the "real" sector of the economy.

It is obvious that the crisis exacerbates exclusion. Here too the predominant form of exclusion is open unemployment (which affects almost 60% of the excluded young people and accounts for one half of total exclusion). Youth unemployment increases from 193 800 to 288 600 (i.e., from 24.3% in 1980 to 35.1% in 1982). However, on this occasion unemployment also has a serious effect on adults: in the over-24 EAP unemployment increases from 184 600 to 430 500 (from 8 to 18.2% between these years), and the participation of young people also declines (from 51.2% to 40.1%). This means that, in real terms, the crisis has affected the adult world more severely. The magnitude of adult unemployment at a time when the PEM was absorbing large numbers of young people and women prompted the establishment of the POJH (Programa Ocupacional para Jefes de Hogar —Work Programme for Heads of Household— which

Figure 1

GREATER SANTIAGO: EVOLUTION OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATES OF YOUTH GROUPS AND TOTAL LABOUR FORCE, 1960-1982



Source: Employment and unemployment survey by the University of Chile (June of each year).

was inaugurated with a subsidy which doubled the PEM) in October 1982; this is not reflected in the figures of the National Statistical Institute. Between 1980 and 1982 the participation of young people in the PEM continued to increase, reaching approximately 40% of the programme in the latter year; it had doubled from 46 900 to 98 700 young people.

It can thus be said, in general terms, that the evolution of employment among young people has followed a sharp incline: during the 1960s the expansion of schooling was accompanied by occupational mobility expressed notably in the reduction of the "excluded", i.e., in low unemployment rates and a reduction in marginal jobs, as well as in the vitality of manual employment and the expansion of middle-range waged employment. Social modernization based on industry and the State collapsed in the following decade; this was brought about by the demographic pressure of youth groups on the

work markets, by the slowdown in the decline in the participation rates (despite the increase in the supply of education) and, above all, by the marked process of de-industrialization. All these factors, operating in acute recessions, applied the brakes sharply to the modernization process. Exclusion subsequently increased, especially in the form of open unemployment and underemployment, but also in the interruption in the decline of marginal jobs; the employment of young people was confined essentially to a segment which had managed to complete its schooling, and sometimes obtain higher education and could secure middle-range employment in the tertiary sector. This sector is probably the only area in which there are still some traces of the modernization process which enthused Chilean society a quarter of a century ago. The present crisis is the culmination of this process of exclusion and it has affected young Chileans in particular.

### III

## Other dimensions of exclusion

Employment problems are not the only manifestation of exclusion. Mention must also be made in this connection of the processes which have affected the working-class family and of the exclusion from housing experienced by young people from that class. Observations made on the basis of a recent survey (Valenzuela, 1984) indicate that the nuclearization of the working-class family has come to a standstill or gone into reverse: extended families are reappearing and the size of households is increasing, because young people cannot set up independent households (table 6). These observations indicate in fact that the average number of persons per household is now 6.6, as against 5.6 twenty years ago according to DESAL figures; the proportion of extended families is in excess of 50% of the households interviewed, and in these households the commonest arrangement is for married children to be accommodated in their parents' homes. In the

sample, 54.2% of the young married couples live with their parents or parents-in-law, and a further 20.6% have joint occupancy (sharing accommodation but not incomes with another household).

This inability of young people to obtain their own housing and thus organize stable families stems both from the free-market policies which substantially reduced the construction of low-cost housing and from the employment crisis described above, which prevents them from securing stable incomes sufficient for the establishment of new households. The annual average of housing starts declined from 52 000 units in 1971-1973 (in the previous five-year period it was about 40 000) to 30 000 units in 1973-1982. In addition, the proportion of housing starts in the public sector, which was formerly above 50%, declined to 19.5% in the latter period. The upward trend in housing construction was

Table 6  
SANTIAGO: FAMILY STRUCTURE IN THE WORKING-CLASS STRATUM BY  
HOUSING TYPE AND LOCATION

	Districts			Three- district average	Young people	
	San Gregorio	Lo Hermida	Herminda de la Victoria		Single	Married
Nuclear simple	33.3	44.6	33.0	37.2	46.8	-
Nuclear with young married	1.4	6.9	5.8	4.7	-	24.2
Nuclear joint occup.	6.1	8.9	13.1	9.8	7.1	20.0
Extended w/ other relative	9.5	8.9	11.8	10.2	13.0	-
Extended w/ cousins	10.9	2.5	11.8	8.2	10.3	-
Extended w/ married siblings	25.2	14.9	7.7	14.7	17.7	-
Extended w/ young married	6.8	6.4	10.0	7.9	-	35.0
Extended w/ both	4.1	3.0	3.2	3.3	-	19.2
Extended w/ other married couple	2.7	4.0	4.5	3.9	5.3	1.6

Source: Valenzuela, (1984).

interrupted in the latter years, and most building starts were in the private sector, which produced in accordance with market demands. It is estimated that the housing deficit may have increased by 300 000 units in the past decade, so that the total deficit would be in the order of 850 000 dwellings (Rodríguez, 1984).

These restrictions on access to low-cost housing explain the cohabitation of families in already precarious households. This causes enormous upsets: in general terms, family cohesion and the stability of young marriages are weakened. It has also been suggested that the housing deficit is connected with the increase in the numbers of young unmarried mothers and abortions. However that may be, the pressure for housing has increased strongly; it is calculated that between 135 000 and 200 000 families live in joint occupancies in Santiago, which represents a suppressed demand for building sites in the order of 4 000 to 6 000 hectares. The magnitude of the land-seizure movements is evidence of the size of this demand.

Exclusion from employment and exclusion from housing are classical symptoms of urban marginality. In both cases, as has been pointed out, these kinds of exclusion primarily affect young people. It is important to add, however, that working class youth is largely excluded from

participation. The survey mentioned above indicates that some 70% of young people lack organized activities, except in sports clubs (which attract mainly men). The rate of trade-union membership is virtually nil (1.1%), as is participation in neighbourhood organizations (0.5%). The organization indices for young people are held up only by their participation in religious organizations (11% of young people) and in parochial groups (10.8%) (table 7).

Table 7  
SANTIAGO: LEVEL OF SOCIAL  
ORGANIZATION AMONG YOUNG  
PEOPLE IN THE WORKING-  
CLASS STRATUM

Districts	Not organ- ized	Poor organi- zation <sup>a</sup>	Average organi- zation <sup>b</sup>	Good organi- zation <sup>c</sup>
San Gregorio	45.6	36.1	8.8	9.5
Lo Hermida	38.6	38.1	16.3	6.9
Pudahuel	44.8	25.8	12.7	16.7

Source: Valenzuela, (1984).

<sup>a</sup>Includes sports clubs.

<sup>b</sup>Includes neighborhood organizations, trade unions, cultural and youth centres.

<sup>c</sup>Includes Christian communities.

Political and corporative participation is ruled out by political authoritarianism and unemployment, and it is only partially offset by community participation through the churches, which have been one of the main refuges in the crisis.

In short, the involvement of young people in the world of social institutions is limited to the

school. Apart from this, they are completely cut off from organized society and especially from the State, which—in the circumstances which we have described—seems to them to be an almost exclusively penal instrument.

## IV

### Differences among an excluded youth

It is sufficiently well established that age differences used not to have great importance in the lower strata of the population, given the early entry into work and marriage. But the expansion of education in recent decades began to give strength to the traditional concept of youth as "a period of transition". Paradoxically, this educational effect has led in recent years to exclusion from employment and housing, which has prolonged the "age of youth" in the lower strata. The generalized unemployment and underemployment affecting young people and the difficulties they encounter in setting up their own households are processes which delay their entry into the adult world. The notion of "youth" in this sense is also encouraged by the almost exclusively urban origins of the new generations (unlike the earlier generations of migrants) and by the exposure of young people to urban mass culture. The expansion of education, the impossibility of securing economic independence and a separate home, the urban origins and the numbers and concentration of young people in the same situation are all factors which gather excluded young people into a separate social group within the world or urban marginality.

In these conditions of exclusion and alienation urban working-class youth shows the characteristics of disordered behaviour, with little apparent cultural cohesion, which have been associated with the breakdown of standards (Valenzuela, 1984). All the processes which contribute to the formation of marginal youth

groups tend in this direction: work alienation and instability, fragmentation and breakdown of family cohesion, political exclusion and social disorganization. All the processes of exclusion from organized society (the world of social institutions) have been at the same time processes of disintegration of collective life and solidarity.

These non-organized young people show symptoms of withdrawal (drugs) and rebellion (revolt) which are consistent with a more serious breakdown of standards. In contrast, among organized young people (usually in Christian organizations) the symptoms of refuge and radical mobilization indicate the way to reduce this breakdown of standards. The symptoms of withdrawal and refuge prevail in periods of economic stability among non-organized and organized young people respectively; the symptoms of rebellion and mobilization occur in periods of crisis, also for each group respectively. The first case is dominated by the many forms of reaction and defence against marginality; in the second case, possibilities arise for widespread social confrontation. In the period preceding the crisis, in fact, young people from the working-class strata exhibited two clear characteristics: the spread of the use of drugs and the emergence of grassroots working-class Catholic movements.

Drug use has been associated mainly with the search for immediate pleasure (Lailhacar, 1982). This includes behaviour connected with eroticism, music and recreation.

Experimentation with drugs, in fact, has an almost exclusively escapist purpose: immediate gratification and sense of disassociation which provide a respite, even if only a fleeting one, from the realities of space and time, and an escape from the hardships of life. Drug use is not a culturally unifying experience, nor is it a community activity. The hippie aspect of drug use has disappeared. The sexual conduct of marginal young people characterized by lack of inhibitions and prejudices and by a basic instability is another aspect of this kind of search for immediate pleasure.

On the other hand, a reaction against this disintegration (and the spread of disordered behaviour) has emerged in the community refuge. Some authors have argued that the flourishing of grassroots church organizations in working-class areas has indeed been a response to the fragmentation effects of the market and State exclusion. A connection with the old pentecostal movements has also been established, and it is pointed out that these organizations act in exactly the same way as the pentecostal communities described by Lalive (1969) in Chile: "they reduce social rootlessness by restoring the primary group, formed around a network of affective relationships and shared values". Pentecostalism was, in fact, the counterpart of the model of working-class integration. "The expansion of pentecostalism is concurrent with the period of internal migrations (roughly the decade of the 1930s) which also coincides with the decline of rural society and the beginnings of industrialization. This typical phenomenon of transition causes dislocations among the working masses. Lalive discovers, moreover, that pentecostalism takes root precisely in the marginal categories of a society in flux, in the urban peripheries and the rural frontier zones where the property structure breaks down most sharply. In general terms, while socialism grows as a working-class

ideology, pentecostalism develops among the uprooted marginal masses (who take refuge in a traditional value system and cut themselves off culturally from urban society)" (Valenzuela 1984).

Although the grassroots church organizations propound a different theology from that of the traditional pentecostal communities, they are still expressing a reaction against a similar situation: the termination of the working-class mode or model of integration (waged work, trade-unionism, access to political representation in the State). In these circumstances both church and pentecostal grassroots organizations reestablish a community ideology (mutual help, co-operation, solidarity, human rights) and they invoke, lastly, the need to restore collective solidarity and dignity.

The crisis has created a new situation in which urban working-class youth has an important role to play. Given the closing-off of the normal channels of social integration, as well as the channels of political expression and opinion, urban working-class young people, severely stricken by the effects of the crisis take up a kind of social action unforeseen either in the political organization of the State or by the political groupings which oppose that organization. This emerges as urban protest, which takes the place of protest at the place of work or study. This kind of protest can be described as "disordered rebellion". On the one hand, it is not connected with political institutions or groupings, for it does not seem to be concerned with claims for restitution; on the other hand, given the closing-off of the channels of participation, it creates extremely aggressive forms of struggle.

There is no doubt that the political radicalism of marginal youth stems from the conditions described and it raises new questions about the future of this generation.

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## The political radicalization of working-class youth in Peru

*Julio Cotler\**

Over the past 25 years Peru has undergone a substantial change in its social structure which has stimulated the political radicalization of the working classes and of their young people in particular.

During the 1960s and up to the mid-1970s the urban working classes, whose numbers were boosted by internal migrations, enjoyed a degree of upward mobility accompanied by a much greater increase in their expectations of better jobs, incomes, education and political participation. However, the somewhat closed nature of the political régimes of the time blocked the political aspirations of these classes and provoked the first wave of radicalization.

The situation changed from the mid-1970s. On the one hand, the continued expansion of education fuelled expectations, and the content of education fostered radicalization even more. On the other hand, economic conditions deteriorated and the obstacles to full political participation remained in place. In these circumstances, which affect young people in particular, violent and inorganic confrontation becomes a normal feature of political conflicts.

The author argues that an examination of these phenomena, which have taken a particularly intense form in Peru, can also be very useful for other countries of the region whose political processes seem to be headed in the same direction.

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## Introduction

It is commonly recognized that in the past 25 years Peru has undergone major changes in its social structure. In explanation or description of these changes, reference is usually made to the demographic transformation brought about by migration and urbanization, to alterations in the production and employment structure, which have strengthened capitalism and extended it to rural areas, and to the expansion of the education system and the mass communication media, which in conjunction with the earlier processes have contributed to a major shift in life styles and in the types and levels of social aspiration. To all this must be added the striking institutional reforms introduced by the former military régime which dismantled the anachronistic oligarchical system and led to a considerable expansion of the functions of the State and of its sphere of action.

It is less common, in this connection, to draw attention to the political and cultural changes in Peruvian society in this period and, in particular, to the change in the political identity of the urban working classes in general,<sup>1</sup> and of their young people in particular. There is varied and very clear evidence of the radicalization of the working classes and their young people. First, there are the results of the election of representatives to the Constituent Assembly in 1978, of the President and members of parliament in 1980, and of mayors in 1981 and 1983. On all these occasions the Leftist groupings, which were divided in the first three cases and united in the last, won the support of about a third of the electorate, an unusual event in Latin America.

Although the analyses of these elections are not conclusive, they do indicate a close correlation between the working-class vote, together with that of the inhabitants of the marginal urban districts ("young towns"), and

<sup>1</sup>The working classes are defined in terms of their jobs; they thus include manual workers, non-professional independent workers, and white-collar workers without managerial power.

the vote of the Marxist groupings of the Left, especially in Lima, which contains a third of the total electorate. This correlation also seems to exist between the urban population and these political organizations in the southern mountains, the so-called "*mancha india*" (native patch) (Roncagliolo, 1980; Tuesta Soldevilla, 1983 and 1985).

The latest general elections, in April 1985, in which the APRA and its young candidate won an overwhelming victory, followed by the candidate of the Izquierda Unida, saw a massive shift to the APRA of the working-class, which had previously voted for the "traditional" parties. Some 80% of the electorate, therefore, supported nationalist, popular and democratic formulas proposing major changes in the country's social and political structure and aimed at the nationalization and democratization of society and politics. These results have reduced the representation of the ruling classes and created an unprecedented situation full of hopes and fears for the country's future development.

The second piece of evidence of the radicalization of the working classes is the apparent consolidation of the General Confederation of Workers of Peru, which, although indeed controlled by the Communist party, has also seen the development of "class" trade unionism in the working-class and public-employee strata. At the same time, the level of demands from the various associations in the working-class districts is fuelling the mobilization and radicalization of the urban working classes as a whole.

Lastly, the existence since 1980 of "Sendero Luminoso" and its apparent influence with some working-class sectors, despite the military coups and the political defeat inflicted by the massive turn-out of voters in April 1985, is the clearest evidence of the widespread radicalization and violence of Peruvian society.

In this shift towards radicalization of the political scene and political identity in Peru, which is redefining the working classes, working-class youth seems to have played a crucial role: it took a decisive part in the organization and control of this process from its

beginnings in the universities, trade unions and political parties, in the associations in the working-class districts and in Christian organizations and centres. This might explain, for example, the establishment in the Partido Aprista, after the crisis following the death of Haya de la Torre, of a new set of leaders who managed to reorganize this grouping and go over the heads of the old powers established by the historical leader. This new generation of leaders reformulated the party's policies and its relations with society and succeeded in creating a new image which produced the popular support and the decisive electoral triumph of April 1985.

Something similar happened in the Izquierda Unida, which had been established by former university students and working-class leaders trained in the vigorous popular mobilization against the military régime of the past decade.

Lastly, Sendero Luminoso was certainly influential among certain youth sectors and played an important role in the recruitment of women in these sectors.

The factors underlying the radicalization and the violence of working-class youth and its influence on the working classes, especially in the towns, are of more than academic interest: they affect the lives and human rights of all Peruvians. The purpose of the attempt to understand these factors, even only tentatively, is to find alternative formulas which can channel the participation of working-class youth and its radicalism towards a popular consensus to form the basis of development and democracy in Peru.

In turn, since the case of Peru seems to be an extreme one in the South American sphere, this tentative understanding ought to be able to make a useful contribution to the consideration of the present or potential problems of other countries in the region.

We will first discuss the demographic, educational and economic changes of the last two decades and their effects on the condition of youth, and then these changes will be related to the political and cultural experience of the working classes and young people during this period.

## I

## Youth and the demographic, educational and economic changes

The demographic changes resulting from migration and urbanization in the last two decades meant that young people —i.e., people aged 15 to 24, according to the common convention— increased from 18 to 20% of the population between the censuses of 1961 and 1981. In this same period the numbers of young people in the urban areas jumped from 51 to 70%, while the country's urban population increased from 47 to 65%. In addition, whereas in 1961 22% of all young people in Peru lived in Lima, a prime example of a metropolitan centre, that proportion had increased to 31% in 1981.

Accordingly, while in 1961 the great majority of urban youth was of provincial and rural origin, 20 years later the majority was made up of persons born in the towns: the first urban generation.

In other words, the young population not only increased as a relative proportion of the country's total population, but also showed a

considerable increase as a proportion of the urban population. Young people could thus take a more active part in the country's modernization and, accordingly, in the break-up of the traditional order.

This latter assertion is supported, for example, by the spectacular changes in the educational profile of the population of Peru during the last two decades. Firstly, there was a sharp increase in literacy among the population as a whole and especially among young people, both urban and rural. In both cases, the population aged 15 to 24 achieved higher levels of literacy than the whole of the urban or rural population. As is to be expected, the urban population has a greater proportion of literates than the rural. However, in general terms, the differences are not as marked as might be expected in view of the well-known backwardness of other public services in the Peruvian countryside (table 1).

Table 1

### PERU: ILLITERACY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE, BY URBAN AND RURAL AREA, 1961-1981 (Percentages)

Age group	Literate			Illiterate			Not specified			Total		
	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981
<b>National</b>												
15 - 24	71.8	85.9	92.8	28.2 <sup>a</sup>	13.2	6.9	-	0.9	0.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
25 - 29	65.9	77.4	89.3	34.1 <sup>a</sup>	21.7	10.4	-	-	0.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total population <sup>b</sup>	58.6	67.0	78.4	41.4 <sup>a</sup>	31.6	21.1	-	1.3	0.5	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Urban</b>												
15 - 24	89.1	95.6	97.6	10.9 <sup>a</sup>	4.4	2.1	-	-	0.2	100.0	100.0	100.0
25 - 29	85.9	91.5	96.3	14.1 <sup>a</sup>	8.5	3.4	-	-	0.2	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total population <sup>b</sup>	79.8	82.6	88.5	20.2 <sup>a</sup>	17.4	11.1	-	-	0.4	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Rural</b>												
15 - 24	53.5	68.9	81.3	46.5	31.1	18.1	-	-	0.6	100.0	100.0	100.0
25 - 29	46.1	54.5	71.5	53.9	45.5	27.9	-	-	0.5	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total population <sup>b</sup>	38.9	45.5	58.5	61.1	54.5	40.6	-	-	0.9	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National censuses of 1961, 1972 and 1981.

<sup>a</sup>Includes persons who did not declare their state of literacy.

<sup>b</sup>Total population aged 5 and over, except for 1961 when it is 6 and over.

Secondly, the change in the educational profile can be seen in the differing participation at the three educational levels. Here, the following points must be made:

a) There was a sharp decline in the numbers of people with no education at all, a decline associated with the increase in literacy.

b) The participation of the total population at the primary level increased as a result of the inclusion of the rural population in the education process. At the same time, there was a decline in the participation of the urban population at this level, especially in the case of young people, which now increased its representation at the secondary and higher levels (table 2).

It is very probable that, as was pointed out in another study (Alberti and Cotler, 1977), young people from rural origins migrate to the towns when they acquire a certain level of education no longer in keeping with the degree of economic and social development of their place of origin.

c) However, as can be seen from the data in tables 3 and 4, the participation of women in the education system is still lower than that of men, and there are far more urban than rural women involved. The disparity is even greater when the education level of urban young women is compared with the total female level and with the level of young women in the same age group in rural areas.

d) This educational development which, as has been seen, is a feature of the young population has contributed to the considerable expansion of university education. Whereas in 1960 there were 30 000 university students, 10 years later there were 109 000 and in 1982 the figure had grown to 305 000 (National Statistical Institute, 1983). Men made up 63% of this total.

In the majority of the countries of Latin America one in 10 young people were at university at the beginning of the present decade (ECLAC, 1983) but in Peru only 6.8% of young people were in higher education; however, in Metropolitan Lima the figure was 16.5%.

Urban and educational conditioning seems to have contributed to the great exposure of young people, especially in Metropolitan Lima and the country's larger towns, to the modern communication media, a situation which leads to

new aspirations and life styles and to new kinds of social and political behaviour based on growing expectations of social mobility and social change.

In employment terms, 50% of Peru's young people held waged jobs in 1972, as either manual or white-collar workers. This proportion declined in 1981, especially among the rural population (table 5), owing to the austerity policy pursued during that period.

In conjunction with the decline in waged work among the young population, there was an increase in the numbers of independent workers. This increase was found both in the towns and in the countryside, where independent work had always predominated because of the economic and social backwardness. The growth in own-account work among young people is especially relevant when it is remembered that, nationally and as a proportion of the total employed EAP, this category declined slightly between the two intercensal periods.

However, despite the relative decline in the proportion of waged young people in the EAP, their numbers in the categories of manual and white-collar workers remain higher than in the EAP as a whole. In fact, as can also be seen in table 5, in 1972 50.7% of employed young people had this kind of job, as against 44.4% of the total EAP; in 1981 the figures were 47.4 and 43.1% respectively. It can thus be concluded that there is a higher proportion of waged workers among young people than in the total EAP.

For the same reason, and despite the increase in independent workers among young people, the proportion of these workers remains lower than in the total EAP, or in the urban or rural EAP.

Lastly, the proportion of unpaid family workers is higher among young people than in the total EAP. Although it is an established fact that these unpaid workers have an important role in producing the family income in the working classes, it must be pointed out that in rural areas more than a fifth of the total population work in the family setting, a phenomenon connected with the importance of independent workers in the countryside.

Important changes can be seen in the type of activity of young people in Lima, for in the last two decades their representation in the

Table 2  
 PERU: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15 TO 24, BY EDUCATION LEVEL, 1961-1981  
 (Percentages)

Education level	National						Urban						Rural					
	15 - 24			Total national population <sup>a</sup>			15 - 24			Total urban population <sup>a</sup>			15 - 24			Total rural population <sup>a</sup>		
	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981	1961	1972	1981
None	28.2	12.0	6.3	45.8	30.2	16.9	11.4	4.2	1.8	27.0	16.8	7.7	46.0	27.4	15.5	63.0	50.7	32.6
Preschool and primary	53.3	48.5	37.0	43.0	51.2	52.5	56.7	41.2	24.3	54.1	54.8	48.3	49.7	62.6	62.3	32.8	45.7	55.9
Secondary	15.5	34.3	46.8	7.8	14.8	23.1	27.6	47.3	59.7	14.8	22.6	32.1	2.7	9.0	18.6	1.3	2.8	6.7
University	1.0	3.7	5.5	0.9	2.5	4.5	1.8	5.4	7.8	1.9	4.0	6.6	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.3
Non-university higher	0.9	0.4	3.7	0.6	0.4	2.3	1.6	0.6	5.2	1.2	0.7	3.3	0.1	0.1	0.4	-	0.1	0.2
Not specified	1.1	1.1	0.7	1.9	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.1	2.0	1.4	0.6	2.7	2.8	0.5	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: National censuses of 1961, 1972 and 1981.

<sup>a</sup>Aged 5 and over, except for 1961 when it is 4 and over.

Table 3

## PERU: URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION, BY EDUCATION LEVEL AND SEX, 1981

(Percentages)

Education level	Total urban population		Total rural population		Total national population <sup>a</sup>	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
None	5.2	10.1	22.6	42.5	11.1	21.9
Preprimary <sup>b</sup>	47.1	49.5	64.5	47.1	53.0	46.5
Secondary	34.5	29.6	9.1	4.2	25.8	22.0
Non-university higher	3.4	3.3	0.3	0.2	2.3	2.4
University	8.3	4.9	0.4	0.2	5.6	3.5
Not specified	1.4	2.5	2.8	5.5	1.9	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Absolute numbers (thousands)	4 790	4 864	2 469	2 445	7 008	7 260

Source: INE, national census. Unpublished tabulations.

<sup>a</sup>Population aged 5 and over.<sup>b</sup>Includes normal basic and work.

Table 4

PERU: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15 TO 24, BY EDUCATION LEVEL AND SEX  
IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, 1981

(Percentages)

Education level	Population			Urban			Rural		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
None	2.9	8.6	6.3	1.0	2.5	1.8	7.5	23.7	15.5
Preprimary	34.0	37.0	37.0	20.8	27.6	24.3	65.3	59.3	62.3
Secondary	51.7	43.5	46.8	63.5	56.3	59.7	24.4	12.6	18.6
Non-university higher	3.4	4.0	5.5	4.8	5.6	7.8	0.4	0.4	0.5
University	6.4	4.8	3.7	8.7	6.7	5.2	0.5	0.5	0.4
Not specified	1.4	1.9	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.7	1.7	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Absolute numbers (thousands)	1 722	1 743	3 466	1 205	1 239	2 444	516	504.2	1 020

Source: INE, 1981 census. Unpublished tabulations.

Table 5

**PERU: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15 TO 24, BY JOB CATEGORY IN URBAN  
AND RURAL AREAS, 1972-1981**

(Percentages)

Job category	1972						1981					
	Young people			EAP <sup>a</sup>			Young people			EAP <sup>a</sup>		
	National	Urban	Rural	National	Urban	Rural	National	Urban	Rural	National	Urban	Rural
Manual	29.0	31.2	25.4	24.4	27.9	19.2	26.8	30.3	20.1	22.4	26.3	15.3
White-collar	21.7	31.8	4.6	20.0	30.7	3.7	20.6	30.0	3.0	20.7	30.6	2.4
Independent	27.5	17.8	43.8	42.6	30.2	61.6	32.2	22.9	49.7	41.9	31.0	62.1
Employer	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	1.1	1.4	0.5
Unpaid family member	10.3	3.0	22.5	6.2	1.9	12.6	8.9	2.1	21.7	6.3	1.6	15.2
Household worker	8.2	12.3	1.3	4.4	6.8	0.8	6.5	9.2	1.4	3.7	5.2	1.0
Not specified	3.0	3.6	2.0	1.7	1.9	1.3	4.5	4.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: National censuses of 1961 and 1981.

<sup>a</sup>Total employed economically active population aged 6 and over.

economically active population has declined considerably. Whereas in 1961 54 out of every 100 young people were in the employed EAP, 20 years later the ratio had declined to 35 in every 100, a reduction of 18.6%. This change was much more marked than the change in the total EAP (aged over six) which fell from 44.4 to 39.1%, a decline of 5.7%. This situation is no doubt due to the fact that the expansion of education among young people has helped to delay their assumption of productive activity.

In accordance with the pattern observed earlier in youth employment at the national level, the majority of the young people living in Lima are waged (manual, white-collar and household), workers while only 10% are independent workers (table 6).

However, the young people of Lima have higher rates of total unemployment and underemployment than the EAP as a whole. Thus, half of the young people are underemployed, the majority of them with low incomes, in contrast to the situation in the total EAP (table 7).

Where incomes are concerned, the young people in the EAP are found mostly at the lowest

Table 6

**METROPOLITAN LIMA: YOUNG PEOPLE  
AGED 15 TO 24, BY JOB CATEGORIES, 1984**

(Percentages)

	Young people	Working-class EAP	Percentage of young people in job category
White-collar	28.2	30.68	27.5
Manual	25.9	25.82	30.0
Independent	10.1	26.33	11.5
Householder worker	19.1	9.64	59.0
Unpaid family member	8.7	4.53	57.7
Trainee	8.0	3.00	79.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>29.9</b>

Source: Ministry of Labour, 1984 household survey. Unpublished tabulations.



Table 7

**METROPOLITAN LIMA: EMPLOYMENT  
LEVELS OF THE 15 - 24 EAP, 1982**

(Percentages)

	15 - 24	Total EAP
Total unemployment	14.1	6.6
Underemployment	49.3	28.0
In income	47.2	24.0
In time	2.1	4.0
Adequate employment	36.6	65.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Ministry of Labour, 1982 household survey.

levels. In 1984 in Metropolitan Lima almost half of the young people had incomes below or roughly equal to the legal minimum wage, but this was the case for only 34% of the total of Lima's working classes (table 8). However, the young migrants had lower incomes than the Lima-born residents; almost 60% of them earned less than the minimum wage or similar amounts, as against 40% of the young people born in the city (table 9).

To sum up, although youth has the highest education levels in the population, especially in

Table 8

**METROPOLITAN LIMA: INCOMES, 1984**

(Percentages)

Incomes	Young people 15 - 24	Working-class EAP
None	22.5	13.0
Below minimum <sup>a</sup>	40.1	26.7
About minimum	9.1	7.7
Above minimum	14.3	16.5
Over 350 000 soles	13.9	36.1
Total	100.0	100.0
Absolute numbers	480.1	1 363.1

Source: Ministry of Labour, 1984 household survey. Unpublished tabulations.

<sup>a</sup>Minimum wage at the time of the survey: 195 000 soles.

Metropolitan Lima, the young people of both sexes belonging to the urban working classes earn the lowest incomes, despite working the longest hours in the most difficult conditions. This means that young people of both sexes are the most numerous group in the lowest income strata of the working classes of Lima (Galín, Carrión and Castillo, 1984).

Table 9

**METROPOLITAN LIMA: INCOMES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGE 15 TO 24,  
BY MIGRANT STATUS, 1984**

(Percentages)

	Young people				Working-class EAP			
	Lima-born	Coast	Mountain	Jungle	Lima-born	Coast	Mountain	Jungle
Without income	24.5	19.4	21.0	15.4	15.8	10.3	11.5	10.1
Below minimum <sup>a</sup>	31.9	53.0	50.7	46.8	23.0	25.2	30.7	33.9
About minimum	9.6	5.8	9.6	9.6	7.8	5.7	8.3	9.5
Above minimum	17.7	8.0	8.8	22.0	16.8	15.2	17.1	15.6
Over 350 000 soles	16.3	13.8	9.8	6.2	36.6	43.6	32.4	30.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Ministry of Labour, 1984 household survey. Unpublished tabulations.

<sup>a</sup>Minimum wage at the time of the survey: 195 000 soles.

## II

### The political and cultural experience of the working classes and young people

These contradictory and conflicting characteristics of young people are not exclusive to Peru and seem to represent a universal Latin American experience (ECLAC, 1983; PREALC, 1980). However, working-class youth seems to play a very decisive role in the political development of the working classes and society as a whole.

This first generation with urban and educational experience has a high rate of participation in the various organizational forms which have grown up with the changes in the social structure since the "Velasco" period. Through this participation young people would have been able to gain a sense of integration as a generation group and a social class capable of overcoming the ethnic and social fragmentation of earlier generations, and this would have represented a significant advance in national integration. Through this participation in various bodies and organizations, working-class youth has instead developed radicalized and violent activities which are decisive in determining the social and political attitudes and behaviour of the urban working classes.

During the 1950s and 1960s, a large body of working-class young people in Lima, native-born and migrants, set up households, built their homes, established the "marginal" districts in which they lived, changing the city's existing pattern in the process, and obtained paid work in the new production structure which was developing. Then, as time passed, a sector of them joined the so-called "informal" market, as a result of the low wages paid elsewhere, the savings made by the domestic unit and also their aspiration for social mobility (Gonzales, 1984; Verdara, 1985; Herrera, 1985).

This move gave the embryonic working classes a feeling of security and competence in their efforts to continue improving their living standards, seeing their children as the ones who would achieve the longed-for social mobility. As they followed this course of action, however,

these classes, and especially the Andean migrants, encountered much difficulty, deceit, contempt and violence, mostly on the part of employers and government agents (Degregori, Blondet and Lynch, 1984).

In response to these traumatic experiences, the new urban working classes took up anew the anti-oligarchic struggle started by Haya de la Torre and Mariátegui. They learned to organize themselves in defence of their homes and their districts, their incomes and jobs, and their education and health. Moreover, the young migrants from the mountains, whose socio-cultural universe had been thrown out of joint, also had to learn to organize themselves in ethnic and regional terms, in order to be able to adapt to and master the new city conditions, defending, strengthening and renewing their ethnic identity and resuming the "*mancha india*" tradition of peasant resistance (Golte and Adams, 1984).

This organizational apprenticeship marked an important advance in the identification of individual and family interests with the collective interest, and it influenced the development of the self-identity of these working classes through opposition to those who rejected them. This social innovation marked out the course, in a decisive manner, of the future political development of these classes and thus of the country as well.

Accordingly, when these mobilized sectors, most of them recent arrivals in urban and national life, sought to persuade the State to recognize their civil rights and thus to allocate them their fair share of resources and social opportunities, the response was violent rejection, humiliation and daily insult. This strengthened the perception that "master Government" was not only remote and alien to them, but also the enemy of the popular classes and that it existed only to represent and protect the powerful. For this same reason, daily experience seemed to suggest to them, quite

apart from the community tradition, that the power of the State could be fought only through the determined organization of working-class resistance, and they were strengthened in their conviction that only through confrontation could they achieve their goals; this was the source of the "class" outlook which their organizations acquired.

Against this background, "democracy" was seen as nothing more than a fiction, a formality, which served only those with access to "power". The exclusion of working-class interests from representation in the State was a denial of political pluralism. In addition, it impeded the establishment of legitimate institutional mechanisms in which different social actors and political bodies could reach compromises leading to the redistribution of resources and opportunities and fostering the national integration of social classes (Cotler, 1981).

However, against this background, fraught with hostility and confrontation, in which the popular political culture was marked by violence and the rapid break-up of the traditional mechanisms of patron-client rule, the working-class sectors did manage to win ground during the 1960s. The political parties had to include some of the working-class claims in legislation and they passed measures of assistance to ensure the continued dependence of the working classes. Education, employment and public services were expanded, in some cases considerably, and this bolstered the organized demands of these classes. For example, the movements centered on the demand for "structural changes" to democratize and nationalize society, politics and culture, became the axis of the social and political struggle of the working classes.

It was in these circumstances that the armed-forces Government made its revolution, designed to respond to the popular demands and to usher in the country's economic and social modernization. While on the one hand the Government brought about a dramatic expansion of the social participation of the working classes (recognition of trade unions, establishment of work communes, educational reform, etc.), on the other hand, owing to its military outlook, the Government denied the possibility of political participation to the

supposed beneficiaries and presumed objects of its reforms (Cotler, 1985). It was around this dichotomy—fed by radical talk on the part of the Government intellectuals—that a rapid and increasing radicalization of working-class organizations developed, especially in the towns, sealing the birth and destiny of General Velasco's revolution.

Young people played a decisive role in this organizational and political development of the urban working classes, for it had a particularly acute awareness of the situation, and for two reasons. Firstly, the expansion of the education system to the youth sectors was accompanied by radicalization, in the anti-oligarchic tradition, of the content of education and of the teaching staff. Secondly, a young working class had been formed which had a higher level of education than the older generations and was concentrated in the most dynamic industries and remote from the old "Aprista" trade-union tradition. Both youth groups, student and worker, promoted and directed intense and relatively successful popular movements.

The decision by the leader of the APRA to keep his party off the political scene, and by the Communist Party to give its "critical support" to the military Government created favourable conditions for the radical preaching and other activities of the many Leftist groups—led by young students, professionals and workers, many of them the children of migrants—to take root in key sectors of society and production, creating the "class" current in the trade unions, in the popular organizations in the working-class districts, and in the student and peasant federations which were independent of the Government.

It was against this background that General Velasco opted for an economic policy of distribution and foreign debt. This policy marked the beginning of the economic crisis and it failed to control the new radicalized currents in society. His successor confronted the crisis and the new social dynamics by blocking the existing forms of participation, many of them developed in the previous period, and thus provoked even more discontent and opposition. The lack of institutional mechanisms for political negotiation was exacerbated by the growing deterioration in living standards which

heightened social and political tensions. This, in fact, was the reason for the success of the national strikes in 1977 and 1978 which were a milestone in the country's modern history and consolidated the political radicalism of youth and of the working classes in general.

It can thus be said that from the 1960s arose the first wave of youth radicalization, which was associated with the social changes initiated in that decade and was then catalyzed by the political block of the 1970s. The mid-1970s saw the emergence of a second wave of youth radicalization—superimposed on the first one—when the paths of occupational and income mobility were being closed off, together with those of social organization, and at a time when an unprecedented openness was gaining ground in politics.

Although the first radical wave seems to have been characterized by a high level of institutional participation on the part of working-class youth and by the rationality of the demands and the chosen means of action, the second, in contrast, blocked economically and socially, seems to combine inorganic and violent forms of expression—individual and collective—with marked electoral preferences for the *Izquierda Unida* and the *APRA*.

The opening-up of politics and the restoration of the representative system in 1980 helped to some extent to calm the belligerent spirits in society and politics, a fact which the Leftists were slow to understand. Belaúnde's overwhelming victory was part of this process, for he displayed a pluralist image, unlike his rivals: society saw in him the political institutionalization of collective negotiation in which there would be a legitimate place for working-class representatives and their demands for improved living conditions and social mobility. The democratic promise of the 1980s thus seemed to initiate the coming-together of the State and the working classes.

However, the Government took a different line from the outset: on the one hand, it brought in the policy of economic austerity recommended by the IMF and, on the other, it sought a "social pact" to establish consensus as a standard political practice. Nevertheless, the contradictions produced by these policies limited the possibilities of the "Tripartita". For as the

crisis worsened, earnings declined; at the same time, job losses multiplied and wages fell, while casual work and subcontracting increased, as did own-account activities.

On the other hand, the supply of university places did not grow in step with the demand, and the education and production structures also contributed to the tightness of the jobs market, which was unable to absorb the young people emerging from colleges and universities. This led to a general feeling of frustration and rejection of the social order and its State guarantor.

In addition, the Government became increasingly resistant to the wishes of public opinion and to the establishment of machinery for negotiation and agreement which might have produced consensus formulas.

Thus, a State ill-disposed towards the working classes, and youth sectors which had little but aspired to much created a situation in which none of these actors was in a position to view its interests in collective terms. The "other side" seemed to be not a rival but an enemy; negotiation was synonymous with surrender, betrayal and defeat. In other words, political relations were seen in military terms, as a continuation of or substitute for war.

In these circumstances, paradoxically, trade unionism declined (Balbi and Parodi, 1984; Parodi, 1985), partly as a result of its failure to become more representative of the casual workers, mainly young people, and it remained a body for protection of workers with regular jobs, particularly in big companies. This held back the numbers of young people from the working classes joining trade unions and reduced the unions' capacity to act as a rallying point for this social group.

The lack of youth participation in the organized levels of the economy and society has coincided with the failure of the political parties to devise structures capable of providing training, from the organizational and ideological standpoint, for the working classes in general and their young people in particular. Thus, the weakness and inefficiency of the machinery for negotiation of the increasing popular and youth demands, with respect to society, politics and the State, open the way to options of political and individual violence. Political violence seems still

to stem from the anti-oligarchic tradition which supposes that force is the only means of wresting from the State the concession of civil rights.

The radicalization of the urban working classes and the decisive role of young people can be seen at the lower levels of the Izquierda Unida and the APRA, which go much further than the stated positions of their leaders. This situation has also seen the rise of Sendero Luminoso. The steady decline in the living standards of the working classes and the manifest ineffectiveness of the political system and its parties and of "class" trade unionism have been matched by the growth of Sendero Luminoso and of its importance on the political scene. This movement has become a focus of attention and a magnet for the urban working classes and, in particular, the youth sectors, including those active in the Izquierda Unida and the APRA.

Accordingly, whereas the first wave of youth radicalization seems to have led primarily to the radicalization of the working classes as a whole, the second wave, because of its inorganic nature, has remained relatively separate from the rest of the working classes and would appear

to incline towards Sendero Luminoso. This body, by denying the political régime any validity and committing acts of unprecedented savagery, seems to express a feeling held by large sections of working class youth, who see violence as the only solution to the obstinacy of a political régime dominated by "the old". This trend may be an indication of fresh political swings in the future and of a series of changes of political identity among young people.

It may therefore be concluded that the substantial decline in living standards and the denial of any prospect of mobility, added to the unwillingness of the political system to build institutions capable of producing consensus on the distribution of resources and social opportunities for the working classes and their young people, have accentuated social perceptions and attitudes of enmity confrontation and harassment which lead to individual and collective violence. This situation explains the attraction of any ideology which justifies the inevitability of this kind of behaviour.

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## Youth and unemployment in Montevideo

*Rubén Katzman\**

The crisis unleashed in 1981 has had a considerable effect on the work situation of young people and has exacerbated factors which had emerged before that time. The first discernible consequence is that young people are pushed towards the work market and this increases their participation rates. This widespread phenomenon is of great importance even in the case of women, who disregard traditional discriminatory obstacles and seek jobs. However, the supply of jobs has not met expectations, and there has been a sizeable rise in youth unemployment, in particular among first-time job seekers. The number of students also increases, because it is assumed that formal education remains an important asset in the search for work; similarly, there is an increase in the proportion of students trying to find work.

These unfavourable circumstances, in turn, have far-reaching and diverse consequences. The author emphasizes the importance acquired by emigration to other countries as a means of trying to fulfill aspirations which the home country cannot satisfy; this process, which has gained great force, removes from the country the young sap which is an essential ingredient in the transformation of the development pattern which lies at the root of the problems described.

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## Introduction

An analysis of the situation of young people in Uruguay must begin by acknowledging certain basic features of the country's economic and socio-demographic structure.

Firstly, since the mid-1950s Uruguay has sought in vain for a development model which can adequately combine its natural and human resources and take the place of the "imports substitution" model. One manifestation of the economy's stagnation since that time has been the weak growth in the per capita gross domestic product which, except in the period 1975-1980, has been below the average for the countries of Latin America.

Secondly, the ageing of the population must be taken into consideration. In 1985 the proportion of young people in the region's total working-age population was 35%; in Uruguay it was only 23.1%. At the same time, the country had the highest proportion of persons aged over 65 in Latin America. In 1980 this group represented about a fifth of the country's total population. This figure contrasted strongly with the regional average, which was less than one in 10 at that date. The marked increase in the numbers of adults, a reflection of a sustained weakness in Uruguay's demographic growth, reduced the opportunities for young people to take on responsible roles and thus for society to acquire a potential for innovative change.

Thirdly, the country's social development clearly outstripped its economic development. The increasing imbalance between these two dimensions was reflected, in particular, in the sustained expansion of education despite the stagnation of the production apparatus (Taglioretti, 1977), generating aspirations which could not be satisfied by finding a suitable place in the work structure.

Fourthly, as a consequence of the interweaving of the three factors mentioned above, the 1960s saw the start of a gradual acceleration of the rate of emigration to other countries, and it is estimated that, between 1963 and 1975, some 218 000 persons left the country—approximately 8% of Uruguay's total population (Wonsewer and Teja, 1983). Half of these emigrants were under 25 years old (DGEC,

1983). It is very probable that the emigrants were precisely the best educated and most enterprising young people, which implies a

significant and selective loss of the country's human resources and, therefore, a major reduction in the potential for change.

## I

### Youth participation in the Montevideo work market

#### 1. *Its relative weight*

The data on the structure of the economically active population in Montevideo show that between 1970 and 1984 the relative weight of young people increased from 20% to 21.6%. The evolution of this growth was different for men and women. The number of young men in the labour force was 13.3% and 13.2% in 1972 and 1973 respectively, and it fell to 12.3% in 1974-1975, certainly as a result of the strong current of emigration in those years. The number then rose again to 13.3% in 1977 and 1978, only to decline from 1981 to below the 1970 level (12.1%). The number of employed young women also rose up to 1977 (9.9%). Their relative weight then fell, more slowly than for men, but without reaching the levels of the first years in the series. In 1983 and 1984 it resumed its increase, achieving a relative participation (9.5%) higher than the 1970 rate (7.3%).

The most remarkable thing about this whole period is the deluge of women entering the work market. In 1984 almost 43% of workers were women, in strong contrast with the 31% at the beginning of the 1970s. Although this massive break-out into economic activity was made up primarily of women over 25, young women also increased their market share. As has been pointed out, in 1970 they made up 7.3% of the labour force as against 9.5% in 1984.

The relative ground gained by women was ground lost by men. Adult males were the largest group in 1970 (56.5%), but by 1984 they accounted for only 45.2% of the EAP. In the same period young men reduced their participation from 12.7% to 12.1%.

The large fluctuations in the relative weight of the groups reflected different forms of

household and individual organization generated by the economic and political vicissitudes.

#### 2. *The participation rates*

In a description of the relative weight of young people in the labour force attention must be drawn to a dynamic growth rate of any one of the categories (adult women in this case), which can distort the overall picture. Table 1 shows, in fact, that for both sexes and in all age ranges the adjusted participation rate<sup>1</sup> increased between the beginning and end of the period in question. There was also a rise in the rate for adults aged 25 to 54, whose relative weight—as has been pointed out—had declined. The rate for this group had been very close to 100% in 1973 (94.8%), and it had risen to 97.2% in 1984.

The participation of Montevideo's young people fell into step with this general trend. Its rate showed a sustained increase from 40.3% in 1973 to 58.9% in 1984 for both sexes: for young women it rose from 30.3% in 1973 to 50.6% in 1984; and for young men from 58.2% to 67.6% for the same years. In other words, at the end of this period somewhat more than two in three young men and one in two young women were active.

Although these figures are remarkable, there is perhaps an even more extraordinary fact, which reflects both the seriousness of the crisis affecting the population of Montevideo and the work market's possible degree of

<sup>1</sup>Active persons as a percentage of the total population for the age range and sex.

Table 1

## MONTEVIDEO: ADJUSTED ANNUAL PARTICIPATION RATES, BY AGE AND SEX

Age group	1973 <sup>a</sup>	1974/ 1975	1976	1977 <sup>a</sup>	1978	1979	1981 <sup>c</sup>	1982	1983	1984
<b>Total women</b>	28.0	30.4	35.9	37.8	36.0	36.6	41.8	42.0	43.3	44.8
14 - 24	30.3	34.8	44.8	47.5	44.4	44.6	48.1	47.2	49.0	50.6
14 - 19	17.9	24.2	31.4	32.3	30.4	31.7	31.7	28.8	30.9	30.9
20 - 24	48.5	50.5	62.5	64.9	62.5	63.0	66.4	68.4	69.1	71.9
25 - 54	38.7	42.6	49.7	51.8	51.8	52.2	57.1	58.3	61.5	63.8
55 - 64	12.8	13.9	19.3	20.8	18.1	20.5	25.1	24.6	24.9	28.0
65 and over	2.4	3.3	3.6	4.7	4.0	3.6	6.1	6.7	5.6	6.2
<b>Total men</b>	72.4	71.2	73.8	74.5	73.1	72.3	75.2	75.0	74.3	74.9
14 - 24	58.2	57.0	63.0	67.9	66.6	66.2	68.4	66.6	67.0	67.6
14 - 19	41.0	41.3	44.1	51.1	48.8	49.3	50.0	48.2	46.4	48.0
20 - 24	86.4	84.3	89.1	90.6	89.7	89.8	90.4	88.9	90.0	89.8
25 - 54	94.8	95.0	96.8	96.6	96.4	96.2	95.9	96.6	96.9	97.2
55 - 64	58.6	61.0	67.8	70.2	67.0	65.5	67.9	68.8	68.3	69.7
65 and over	17.9	18.2	19.9	17.3	16.3	16.4	20.6	22.7	18.5	21.3
<b>Total both sexes</b>	48.2	48.7	52.9	54.2	52.9	53.0	56.7	56.9	57.2	57.8
14 - 24	40.3	45.5	53.7	55.3	54.9	54.9	57.8	56.7	57.8	58.9
14 - 19	29.7	32.7	37.7	39.1	39.1	39.8	40.7	38.5	38.4	39.4
20 - 24	66.8	66.0	75.4	76.9	75.5	75.9	77.6	78.3	79.2	80.5
25 - 54	64.0	65.7	70.1	71.2	71.6	71.9	74.7	75.5	77.6	78.8
55 - 64	33.2	35.0	40.9	42.3	38.8	39.8	44.4	44.3	44.3	46.2
65 and over	8.5	9.4	9.9	9.7	8.8	8.6	11.7	13.1	10.6	12.0

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the General Statistical and Census Office (DGEC).

<sup>a</sup>First six months.

<sup>b</sup>August 1974 to February 1975.

<sup>c</sup>Second six months.

openness towards young people: this is the increase in the participation rates of adult women (aged 25 to 54) and of older adults (aged 55 to 64). The first group increased between 1973 and 1984 from 38.7% to 63.8%, i.e., by almost 65%, an increase which explains its present relative weight in the EAP. The second group increased from 33.2% in 1973 to 46.2% in 1984, with sharp growth in both female and male rates.

It is important to point out that the participation rates of the young age groups diverge clearly from the urban averages for Latin America. In this period Montevideo had an average rate of over 50%, with a much higher proportion of active young people than the urban sectors in the other countries of the region (about 40%).

It must also be emphasized that, in the case of Uruguay's urban areas, the CELADE forecasts indicated rates below 50% for young people. This makes it clear that the effects of the economic and political changes altered youth participation in employment more than might have been expected in the light of demographic patterns and the "normal" evolution of the country's social structures.

The work market was taking in formerly marginal sectors of Montevideo's population. This was true, primarily, of adult women, but it also held good for young people and older adults. It is important to underline the consequent extension of the active cycle. In the case of older adults (aged 55 to 64), there was very probably a resumption of activity by a number of retired persons or pensioners or a postponement of



retirement, helping to block both upward mobility in the jobs hierarchy and the incorporation of first-time job seekers, with a consequent reduction in the job opportunities of young people.

### *3. Possible causes of the evolution of the youth participation rates in Montevideo*

The variation in the youth participation rates can be attributed to a combination of structural trends and transient situations. The structural trends included the expansion of education and the growth in women's participation. The transient situations included economic expansion or recession and their effects on personal living standards. We shall now consider briefly the relative significance of these factors for Uruguay.

The expansion of the education system and the subsequent increase in school attendance are often invoked as a cause of the declining trends in the participation of adolescents (aged 15 to 19) in economic activity in other countries of Latin America. The underlying assumption is of a degree of incompatibility between the productive role and the student role. Between 1981 and 1984 Montevideo saw a sharp increase in the proportion of students, among both adolescents and young adults and for both sexes. At the same time, as can be seen from table 1, there was a slight decline in the participation rates of these groups, which seems to support the initial argument.

However, other data give rise to doubts: they indicate that in the same period there was an increase in active students, whose proportion among male adolescents rose from 20% to 27%, and among females of the same age from 12% to about 15%, with similar trends among young people aged 20 to 24. When the distribution by work situation is examined more closely, however, it can be seen that in all the age and sex subgroups there is a fall in the proportion of effectively employed students, and that what actually produced the increase in their participation rates was the growth in the proportion of unemployed persons and first-time job seekers. In short, the larger numbers of students in the work market in 1984 was due to a

greater proportion of students in each sex and age group and to a more vigorous search for work, rather than to effective employment.

The degree of compatibility of the roles of student and worker must be considered in the light of the extent to which the content of education is adjusted to the market demand, of the pressures on young people to produce income, and of the degree of flexibility in response to these two roles displayed by the educational institutions and the businesses which employ students.

The greater the adjustment of the educational to the production system, the greater the possibility of using work training as an investment in the future performance of jobs. But even if there is little adjustment, the mere fact of participation in the market is positive, for it produces greater awareness of the rules governing the market's operation and greater familiarity with the patterns of labour relations.

In view of the profound and prolonged deterioration of the living standards of Montevideo's population, it is reasonable to suppose that there were strong pressures on young people to contribute to the family budget. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that students should continue to seek work even when the market picture is discouraging and that they should remain on the lookout over long periods for any job possibility. If they find a job, they must decide whether to continue the dual role of student and worker, and this depends to a large extent of the flexibility of the education system and the relative advantages and disadvantages on the situation. Uruguay's education system is in fact very relaxed, with minimum requirements for entry and attendance, special timetables for workers and a fairly broad network of accessible study centres. In assessing the advantages and disadvantages, it must be born in mind that attendance at an education institution may result—depending on prevailing economic and social conditions—in a better use of free time, in terms of better job opportunities in the future and increased opportunities for social and leisure activities and meeting persons of the opposite sex. There are also a number of material advantages: for example, Montevideo provides a low-cost travel pass for students and access to services and

various recreation facilities at preferential rates. All this ought to encourage people, especially the unemployed, to continue their studies. When the job picture is very discouraging and there is therefore no great expectation of success in the search for work, young people can find an advantageous temporary refuge in education institutions.

On the other hand, the main disadvantage of early entry into the world of work is without doubt the restriction that this places on study and on the range of education options which the young worker can consider, given the little time available.

Lastly, there is an increase in the numbers of adolescent and young adult males who are not studying, working or seeking a job. These of course are young people who have become discouraged by the fruitless search for work. Society ought to give these groups particular attention and monitor changes in their situation carefully, for prolonged idleness can lead to a degree of social marginality which is difficult to overcome.

As has been pointed out, another of the factors relating to structural trends which can explain the increase in the youth rates is the growth in women's participation, particularly between the ages of 20 and 24.

The structural trends usually associated with this phenomenon are the changes in demographic patterns—decline in the birth rate, changes in the marriage rates and in the age of marriage—the increasing cultural effects of greater equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and the availability of services and technology which reduce or facilitate household tasks.

As was pointed out above, in the 1970s women's participation increased in Montevideo at a remarkable rate. The acceleration of this rate of change is in fact what makes one doubt that it is a response only to the structural changes described above, which usually produce their effects slowly and over long periods. This doubt is also fuelled by the fact that all the other age groups showed increases, although smaller ones, in their participation rates.

Both the rate of increase in youth activity and the widespread nature of the phenomenon, as well as the characteristics of the country's

socioeconomic situation already described, seem instead to point to the operation of two causal factors in the growth in the participation rates of young women: on the one hand, the deterioration during the period in question in general personal living standards and, on the other hand, the changes in cultural patterns with respect to the role of women in the family and in society.

It can be argued that the general increase in the participation rates reflect a massive flow of household members into activities which generate income. The effects of the fall in real wages in the second half of the 1970s, which worsened in the early years of the next decade, seem to have prompted previously inactive people to make up for the decline in family incomes by working themselves.

Any interpretation of the fluctuations in the rates in the 1970s and in part of the 1980s must take into account the development of the product as well as the changes in real wages, and it must be born in mind in particular that in the second half of the 1970s low real wages were accompanied by high rates of product growth, a situation which fostered increased employment.

With regard to the changes in cultural patterns, it is important to remember the low proportion of men in Montevideo (87 men for every 100 women, according to the 1985 census), a proportion which is even smaller in some of the middle-age ranges. This strengthens the trend for women to abandon their traditional role as housewives and to seek greater future independence. The incorporation of women in the work market seems irreversible, for the decline in family incomes has legitimized their entry into the world of work and broken down the social obstacles to the free expression of women's aspiration for greater and increasing independence. This point will be taken up again.

#### 4. Youth unemployment

##### a) *The proportion of young people in total unemployment*

Young people account for some 20% of the total labour force and 50% of the unemployment total. These proportions have not changed greatly since 1970; however, from 1975 a decline

is apparent in the proportion of unemployed among young people, largely as a result of a steady increase among adult women. This latter group increased from 19.5% to 31.5% of the unemployment total between 1970 and 1984. The marked increase in the participation of adult women seems therefore to have been matched by an increase in the obstacles to their effective incorporation in the employment structure.

In the case of young males, there was a significant decline in their relative share in total unemployment between 1970 and 1984: almost 10 percentage points. It would be naive to think that from 1970 the market situation for these young men improved much more than for the other groups. Perhaps, paradoxically, the opposite happened. As was pointed out in the introduction, in Uruguayan society in recent decades emigration has been a means of channelling abroad the excess of youth pressure on the work market, and this was encouraged by the fall in wages and a political climate which discouraged any kind of participation by society in the search for solutions to the economic and social problems. The decline referred to above must be seen in this context, and it must be born in mind that emigration affected primarily the young male groups, and that it was very considerable in the mid-1970s, coinciding with the most pronounced drop in the relative weight of young men in total unemployment.

With respect to young women, it is of interest to note that their share in unemployment reached its highest levels at the time of greatest economic activity in the period (second half of the 1970s), when the general unemployment rates were showing a downward trend. One possible interpretation is that the increase in activity occurred without a corresponding increase in real wages and that it therefore remained necessary for young women to supplement the household income by working; they were encouraged to do so even more by the growth in job opportunities. It is also important to remember the effect of the changes in cultural patterns described above. In any event, the desire for participation stimulated in this way was greater than the market could absorb, and this produced an increase in the relative share of young women in unemployment.

#### b) *Evolution of the youth unemployment rates*

Between 1970 and 1984 the rates of open unemployment reflected the uncertainties of economic activity: they reached a maximum in 1976 and then declined up to 1981; from that year, driven by the crisis, they climbed to levels not previously observed in the period.

The rates for young men and women show trends similar to the general ones but at significantly higher levels. It must be emphasized, confirming what has already been said, that the rates for young women were not significantly different from the rates for men of the same age up to the mid-1970s. From that point the differences are big and in 1984 the gap is almost 12 percentage points.

This growth in unemployment among active women aged 14 to 24 indicates that they are exercising persistent pressure, which is increasing but relatively ineffective, for incorporation and a degree of job stability. In the first half of the 1970s there was approximately one unemployed young woman for every five employed, but in the second half of the decade the ratio changed to one in four and, finally, from 1983, to one in three: there was a great reluctance on the part of young women to yield to discouragement, despite the steady frustration of their job expectations. This picture is confirmed by an examination of the behaviour of the rates for female first-time job seekers: they tripled between 1981 and 1984 from 7.8 to 21.0.

The lower the age, the more serious the situation. Throughout the period from 1981 to 1984, the number of female adolescents (aged 14 to 19) seeking work for the first time exceeded the number of females unemployed. In 1984 some 40% of the female adolescents with previous work experience and wishing to work failed to find jobs.

Young adult women (aged 20 to 24) seemed to take a similar direction, for the numbers of first-time job seekers increased over the period much more than the unemployment rate.

Throughout this period the unemployment rates for male adolescents were lower than for females, and there were more unemployed males than first-time job seekers up to the last half of 1983. In 1984 the situation was reversed and the

relative weight of the two groups of unemployed males fell into line with the situation of female adolescents.

Lastly, in the second half of 1984 there was also a sharp increase in the number of young male adults seeking work for the first time, accompanied by a relative decline in the unemployment rate.

To sum up, analysis of the available information indicates a work market increasingly inaccessible to young people. This block, which for female adolescents was a persistent feature of the work situation, gradually spread to other youth groups as the crisis worsened.

### c) *Youth unemployment and education*

So far, young people have been discussed as if they constituted a homogeneous category and their members were all equally affected by the ups and downs of the economic situation. A distinction has only been made between young people attending and not attending education establishments, without defining different levels, merely for the purpose of examining the compatibility of the productive role and the student role and putting forward some ideas about the role of education in a crisis situation.

However, it is clear that the possibilities of participation in the work market and the specific forms of this participation varied according to the young people's education levels. For young people, given their scant work experience, education level is a good indication of qualification; at the same time, it is an indirect pointer to the social stratum of the homes from which they come.

With a view to isolating the effect of young people's education efforts on their position in the work market, we have excluded from this analysis those who were attending a teaching institution at the time of the survey.

The most general conclusion which can be drawn from the survey data is that the higher the education level, the greater the rate of participation and the lower the unemployment rate, and that these trends have been strengthened by the economic crisis. Furthermore, among both men and women, but particularly among women, educational

attainments imply not only a better chance of stable employment but also greater opportunities of actually finding work.

What is even more important, analysis of the connection between education and employment confirms the difference between men and women in terms of the obstacles to their entry into the market. When all young people are classified by sex and education level and this is compared with their unemployment rates in 1984, we obtain the results shown in table 2.

Table 2 illustrates the considerable discrimination exercised against women by the mechanisms of access to the work market. The table also shows that one of the effects of the crisis was to accentuate the existing discrimination even further, including the "putting in their place" of women with high

Table 2

### MONTEVIDEO: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN THE 14-24 EAP

(Percentages)

	Category by sex and education level	
	1981	1984
Women with primary education	19.8	41.4
Women with some secondary education	15.6	35.8
Women with technical education <sup>a</sup>	15.2	26.4
Women with full secondary or with university education	9.0	20.9
Men with primary education	12.9	19.8
Men with technical education <sup>a</sup>	10.4	15.6
Men with full secondary or with university education	11.7	13.4
Men with some secondary education	9.2	12.7

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of figures from the General Statistical and Census Office (DGEC).

<sup>a</sup>Universidad del Trabajo del Uruguay.

levels of education; in 1984 the unemployment rates for such women were somewhat higher than those for men with lower education levels.

An assessment of this discriminatory effect of the work market must also take into account the fact that in each of the education levels studied women receive lower remuneration than men. However, as has been seen, even the lower cost of female labour is insufficient to improve their work situation.

d) *Reaction of young men and women to the jobs shortage*

It must be pointed out that, unlike the young men, the women in this age group do not seem to be discouraged by the lack of job opportunities; quite to the contrary: their participation rates increase with the crisis, in conjunction with an increase in the rates of first-time job seekers. This shows clearly the different behaviour of the two sexes. Faced with a profound deterioration in the work situation, a segment of the male labour force, whatever its level of education, withdraws from the work market and the group's participation rate then declines. The women, in contrast, respond with increased participation in a less favourable market than the one available to men.

The reasons for this difference in the behaviour of the sexes are not clear. There is certainly no justification for asserting that the reluctance of young women to withdraw from the market is due to their greater commitment to the survival strategies of the households most seriously affected by the crisis. What is more, the data from the 1985 household survey show an increase in women's participation rates, even when at the same time there is a clear increase in

wages and family incomes. This indicates that, although the decline in the family income might at the time have triggered the influx of women onto the work market, other forces subsequently emerged to consolidate the process.

A more interesting explanation seems to lie in the changes in the cultural patterns which determine women's behaviour. Firstly, the traditional standards governing the essentially domestic nature of women's activity have been eroded by the combined effect of cultural, social and economic changes. Secondly, the predominantly male emigration has produced a numerical imbalance between the sexes and has made marriage more difficult: a new demographic situation has thus arisen which makes it more difficult to maintain the traditional female role and obliges women to seek economic independence. Lastly, mainly as a result of the persistence of certain traditional patterns in Montevidean society, the opportunities for social intercourse are fewer for young women who do not work. For example, young men meet their peers in the street, café and club and at the sporting events which they attend as players or spectators; women, in contrast, find strict cultural restrictions on their contacts with other women and with men outside their places of education and work. In short, in these circumstances women who do not attend teaching institutions appear to have a triple motivation for seeking work: helping in the effort to increase the family income; the desire for increased autonomy and independence, related to demographic changes and constantly fed by new images of the role of women in society; and access to places where they can have stable relationships with their peers and possibly find a partner.

## II

### The employment of young people

As in other Latin American cities, the majority of the young people and adults who work in Montevideo do so as employees in the private or public sectors. But in recent years, coinciding with the arrival of the crisis, there has been a

significant increase in own-account workers and in unpaid family workers. In fact, between the second halves of 1981 and 1984 non-waged workers increased from 23% to 26% of the labour force.

The changes in the relative proportion of waged workers have kept in step with the shifts in the economy. One of the effects of the more dynamic economic growth in the second half of the 1970s was an increase in the proportion of young and adult labour working as employees. When the effects of the crisis began to be felt in 1981, the trend was reversed and expressed itself in a greater relative proportion of own-account workers and unpaid family workers in both groups.

A more detailed examination of changes in the distribution of young people by job category indicates a significant increase in the proportion of young workers in the public sector during the 1970s. This increase was matched by a decline in own-account workers and unpaid family workers. In contrast, among adult workers there was a sizeable increase in the proportion of private waged workers at the expense of the other categories, mainly the category of public waged workers.

A first reaction to these data is that, as a result of the economic recovery, the application of political and ideological criteria in the recruitment and replacement of State workers, and the increase in recruitment to the armed forces and forces of public order, there was a displacement of adults to the private sector and of young people to the public sector. When the first symptoms of the crisis appeared, these processes changed direction: own-account work and unpaid family work increased.

The crisis also affected the relative absorption capacity of the various sectors of activity. On the one hand, there were considerable cutbacks in jobs in the production of goods (agriculture, industry and construction), in services such as water, gas and electricity, and in establishments engaged primarily in the provision of services to business. The transfer of workers was primarily to trade and social and personal services.

### 1. *The young men*

As was pointed out above, between 1981 and 1984 young men reduced their participation in economic activity, from 12.3% to 10.6% of the total labour force already incorporated in the

market.<sup>2</sup> This reduction was matched by a decline in the group's weight in the total of waged public and private workers resulting from the transfer of its members to own-account work or unpaid family work. On the other hand, in both 1981 and 1984 young people were over-represented among private waged workers in industry, trade, construction and productive services (banking, insurance, real estate, business services) and among waged public workers in construction and transport. These sectors are not all of equal relative importance for the employment of active young men. For example, in 1981 young men accounted for 30% of waged public workers in construction, a much higher proportion than their share in the total labour force, which was 12.3%. However, against this figure it must be remembered that public employment in construction had a very low weight (0.4%) in the total of young male employment. The case of private waged workers in trade and industry is different; although the over-representation of young people seemed smaller, these jobs absorbed 23.9% and 30.9%, respectively of the total of active young men. When the degree of over-representation in each job category is compared with the category's relative share of total employment in each sex and age group (table 3), it is possible to forecast the effects which would be produced by a policy of sectoral reactivation to increase the capacity to absorb young workers in each type of employment.

The degree of over-representation of men aged 14 to 24 in the various categories undergoes a significant change in 1984. In 1981 there were few young men among the unpaid family workers, but in 1984 five out of the eight categories with youth over-representation were made up of these workers. From another angle, this indicates that the increasing restriction of access to the work markets caused by the crisis has shifted young people to the more marginal sectors of the production structure, such as small family businesses. This fact must be assessed, however, in the light of the overall employment picture, which indicates a continuing decline in the proportion provided by such businesses. The

<sup>2</sup>These data do not include first-time job seekers.

Table 3  
**MONTEVIDEO: MAIN JOB CATEGORIES IN WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE ARE OVER-REPRESENTED<sup>a</sup>**  
*(Percentages)*

Second half of 1981			Second half of 1984		
Category	Percentage of total youth employment	Percentage of category total	Category	Percentage of total youth employment	Percentage of category total
Industry private waged	30.9	17.5	<b>Men 14 - 24</b>		
Trade private waged	23.9	19.2	Industry private waged	23.1	14.4
Construction private waged	6.1	19.5	Trade private waged	21.4	21.7
Transport public waged	4.5	22.1	Transport unpaid family	4.7	17.8
Construction public waged	0.4	30.0	Construction private waged	4.7	18.3
			Trade unpaid family	2.8	17.2
			Social and personal services unpaid family	1.2	22.5
			Industry unpaid family	0.9	28.0
			Construction unpaid family	0.5	28.6
			<b>Women 14 - 24</b>		
Social and personal services private waged	23.6	15.6	Social and personal services private waged	26.7	12.7
Banking, insurance, etc. private waged	5.1	14.2	Industry private waged	21.5	9.7
Trade public waged	0.6	18.1	Trade private waged	20.4	15.2
			Trade unpaid family	2.6	11.5
			Social and personal services unpaid family	0.7	10.0

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official figures.

<sup>a</sup>Classified according to the relative share of the categories in the active total in each subgroup of the young EAP.

case of waged workers in private industry and trade is different; 1984 saw a drop in the proportion of young people employed in industry, and this category in turn experienced a sharp decline in its relative capacity to absorb males aged 14 to 24, but both branches continued to have the greatest concentrations of persons in this age and sex group, so that it can be asserted that any increase in economic activity in industry and trade will have immediate repercussions on the job opportunities of young men.

## 2. *The young women*

As a general observation it can be said that the employment of young women in the production structure is more concentrated than for men of the same age.

In 1981 waged jobs in trade and in social, personal and productive services in the private sector were the largest categories in which young women were over-represented. They were also

concentrated in public jobs in trade, but this category represented a very small proportion of the total. Although the situation did not change much in 1984, it is interesting to note a decline in the proportion of young women in each of the categories mentioned above, accompanied by an increase in the contribution of each of these categories to the total employment of young women. This fact probably reflects the tertiarization of the whole economy between 1981 and 1984. Another novelty in the latter year was the increase in the relative participation of young women in the categories of unpaid family workers in the tertiary sector.

Unfortunately, no information is available to enable us to follow the evolution of female domestic employees over this period, for they certainly represent one of the most important employment categories for this group.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Not until June 1985 did Uruguay's household survey begin to classify as active persons female domestic employees in private households.

## III

### Final considerations

The profound and prolonged deterioration in personal living standards in Montevideo has produced a massive influx of family members onto the work market. Young people have made a substantial contribution to this flow: their participation rates have risen above the normal levels for their coevals in other Latin American countries, to higher levels too than those projected for Uruguay's urban areas on the basis of previous performance.

But this desire for participation has not found a positive echo in the market. Apart from the period of expansion in the second half of the 1970s, the rates of youth unemployment stayed at very high levels, largely as a result of the crisis which struck in 1981. It is important to remember that the problem of youth

unemployment in Montevideo, although subject to short-term influences, does have genuinely structural characteristics.

In any description of the youth employment situation attention must be drawn to the increasing numbers waiting at the gates of the job market, as reflected in the sustained increase in the number of first-time job seekers.

The sharp increase in participation rates, especially among young people, was matched by the increase in the numbers of persons seeking work for the first time.

In the period of crisis there was an increase in the proportion of young people attending education institutions and in the proportion of active students. Analysis of the data shows that, strictly speaking, the proportion of effectively



employed students has declined and that of unemployed students or students seeking work for the first time has increased. The teaching institutions remain the main channel for the development of strategies for stable employment in the production system, for they expand the range of options and also offer possibilities of access to certain services and an appropriate framework for socializing with peer groups.

The young people who have managed to find a place in the employment structure have done so in the categories of waged workers in industry, trade and social and personal services. During the period of economic reactivation in the second half of the 1970s there was a shift towards public employment, possibly as a result, on the one hand, of the gaps left by adults dismissed for political reasons or drawn away by the dynamic growth of the private sector and, on the other hand, of the expansion of the armed forces. Once the crisis had arrived, both young people and adults—but primarily young people—were pushed towards marginal positions in the production structure and there was an increase in the numbers of young people among own-account workers and unpaid family workers.

The migration of young people to other countries has been a central feature of the backcloth on which are projected the vicissitudes of these groups. This migration has been essentially of active male young people. In some years, for example between 1974 and 1975, the scale of this phenomenon was reflected in a sharp drop in the relative weight of young people in the total unemployment figure.

The country's demographic structure is another important feature of this backcloth. In Latin America as a whole more than one in three persons of active age is young, but in Uruguay the ratio is less than one in four. The country's present demographic patterns, in particular the persistence of the causes of selective emigration, do not hold out hope of great changes in this situation.

The deterioration of personal living standards seems to have affected certain socio-

demographic patterns among young people. This can be seen in the decline in the marriage rates of men and women. It has also become more difficult to set up an independent household and, consequently, there has been an increase in the number of couples who have to live with parents. This seems to be the cause of the decline of the proportion of married young men who are also heads of family. If these trends continue, it will be necessary to investigate their effects on the birth rate by delaying the production of children and on the participation of women in the work market as a result of the increased time which that delay makes available.

Lastly, perhaps the most remarkable feature of youth employment in the past decade has been the sharp increase in the rates of female participation. Despite the discrimination in the work market, the increasing difficulty of finding effective employment, and the consistently lower wages than those paid to men, women have not been discouraged in their growing desire to work. It might be suggested as a hypothesis that this situation has been brought about, on the one hand, by the crisis which legitimized women's exit from the household and entry into the work market and, on the other hand, by the predominantly male emigration and the consequent decline in the proportion of men in the population of Montevideo, which consolidated the trend for greater female independence and the erosion of their traditional domestic role, and, lastly, by the limited opportunities for social intercourse available to young women in Montevidean society (in comparison with men of the same age) which makes the work place into a favourable location for stable contacts with peer groups and for finding a partner. Observation of the actual situation shows that these mechanisms do indeed explain the recent dynamic increase in the participation of women in Montevideo, and certain new elements can now be added to the traditional explanation of the factors determining the incorporation of women in the work market, including the demographic and cultural factors which strengthen or weaken the secularization of female roles.

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## Youth in the English-speaking Caribbean: the high cost of dependent development

*Meryl James-Bryan\**

In the 1960s, the young people of the English-speaking Caribbean countries were witnesses to some of the most radical changes that were to take place in them, especially the transition from colonial status to independence, which was to bring about irreversible changes in the course of those nations and the lives of their inhabitants. Young people were told that they would not lose in the process. Indeed, Dr. Eric Williams—founding statesman of Trinidad and Tobago and one of the best-known leaders of that time—said that children held the future in their bookbags.

This article examines the effects of those changes on the young people of the English-speaking Caribbean in the 1980s. It begins by looking at some aspects of the social and cultural structure which turn around the notion of dependent development and form the backcloth for youth problems and, in that connection, examines some of the anthropological theories which serve as the conceptual framework for analysing those problems. It then goes on to see how such problems are expressed in the fields of employment, tourism, education, health, housing and the family, young women, and culture.

In the conclusions, emphasis is placed on the need to undertake a broad study of young people in each of the countries of the subregion in order to examine their difficulties and concrete needs. Such a study could bring out the frustration, discouragement and disorientation of young people and the urgent need to apply corrective measures and put into effect programmes aimed at solving those problems.

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## Introduction

For nearly all of the English-speaking Caribbean countries the 1960s represented not only an eclipse of the colonial era but also the challenge of building a nation. In light of this new challenge, various development strategies were explored and instituted, all with the goal of redirecting and/or charting new paths of social, economic and political development. The success of each strategy depended ultimately on the ability to abandon or minimize dependence on metropolitan countries, while increasing State autonomy and self-reliance. The crucial question for each of these new nation-States became that of gaining adequate power and control over their internal affairs in order to pursue and achieve clearly defined objectives for national development.

History has registered the constitutional decolonization and advancement towards autonomy and self-reliance in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, Antigua-Barbuda, Jamaica and Saint Christopher-Nevis have all achieved constitutional independence, with Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago subsequently moving towards the achievement of republican status. The other nation-States—Montserrat, the Cayman Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the British Virgin Islands—remain colonies of Britain.

A recurrent question for all of these newly independent territories, however, centres on the reality and effectiveness of the process of decolonization. To what extent are autonomy, self-reliance and self-direction—the catch words of independence—merely constitutional, representing neither the political, economic, social and cultural self-control that the concept implies? The question becomes more relevant in assessing the state of youth in the contemporary Caribbean, for certainly the direction of a country's youth is a useful and accurate measure of the effectiveness of strategies of self-reliance, autonomy and independence.

It is within this framework that the plight of today's youth in the English-speaking Caribbean must be viewed, particularly with respect to issues such as national identity, cultural alienation and cultural imperialism, which this paper cites as some of the fundamental issues beneath the obvious challenges being experienced by Caribbean youth. For it is important in the decolonization and development process to focus not only on economic and political considerations, as most of the English-speaking Caribbean has done, but also on cultural considerations, since the most forceful domination of the Caribbean existed not only in the economic and political spheres, but in the cultural domain too. In fact, it is in the cultural sphere that opposition to ideological domination has traditionally surfaced, and continues to surface, in the culture of the Caribbean working class. This paper hypothesizes that despite constitutional decolonization, and despite the economic and political reforms accomplished in the post-colonial period, the Caribbean remains dogged by economic dependence on the metropolitan countries, and plagued with a deeply-rooted cultural and psychological colonization that forms the basis for the crisis of today's youth.

This approach —without in any way belittling the repercussions of economic forces on the development of young people—considers culture to be fundamental for their social and psychological development, especially in the transition from colonialism to independence and in the immediate post-colonial phase of nation building. Culture is perceived as a body of socially acquired values, meanings, beliefs and ideas that serve society as behavioural guides and models (Mintz and Price, 1976). It is through culture, as collective practice or practical activity, that a society interprets its experience, directs its actions and defines its very existence: a process through which the stability, cohesion and continuity of the entire group are ensured. For the Martiniquan psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, "a national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence. A national culture in underdeveloped countries should therefore take

its place at the very heart of the struggle for freedom which these countries are carrying on" (1963). Culture thus assumes the monumental task of forming and projecting an ideology that shapes national consciousness: a task which it was never assigned in the post-colonial English-speaking Caribbean.

For the purpose of this study, the United Nations chronological definition of youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 is used. However, because of the analytical framework employed, it is important to view this group not merely as a chronological category but also as a socioeconomic group within a historical and political context. In those nations which have attained independence, young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are among the first generation to be raised in decolonized societies. They are, then, the products of the immediate post-colonial experience, representing the harvest of the first post-colonial ruling élites. As such, they mirror the failures and successes of that generation and become a significant variable in analysing the effectiveness of approaches and strategies for national development.

This study takes full cognizance of the role of women as preservers and transmitters of culture, since women—in their roles as mothers, nurturers, and often *de facto* heads of households—play a key role in the child-rearing function and in the socialization of young people. It is to women that the major task falls of ensuring the regeneration and continuance of the group, and youth inherits the responsibility of effecting this regeneration and continuance. Thus, women as transmitters, and youth as recipients of what Edward Brathwaite (1970) describes as one's *Nam*,<sup>1</sup> or submerged cultural reality and identity, assume an even more important role in ensuring the appropriateness and immortality of a cultural ideology that forms the basis for the survival and sustenance of the group.

<sup>1</sup>*Nam* is a word/concept developed by Edward Brathwaite. *Nam* is man spelled backwards, i.e. man in disguise. It is the state of the African under the pressure of slavery; man generally under pressure/oppression, disguised/submerged in order to survive.

To summarize, this paper posits the importance of cultural decolonization in the process of nation building and hypothesizes that the fundamental disorientation and alienation of youth in the English-speaking Caribbean is rooted in the institutional flimsiness and superficial planning in the area of cultural development. In fact, the paper supports the view that the development process is itself a cultural process, the reinforcement of which must be viewed as a developmental imperative along with attention to population matters, health, education, agriculture, the transfer of technology, etc. (Nettleford, 1979), "for each

society relies first on its own strengths and resources and defines its personalized vision of the future" (Raymont, 1977). This essay further submits that women and youth, because of their importance in assuring the regeneration and stability of any society, have a leadership role to play in the area of culture and national development in post-colonial societies. It is a role which they have not been allowed to play, because both groups have historically been sidelined as mere understudies and supporting characters to those perceived as the main actors and guardians of the society —adult males.

## I

### Social and cultural framework

The Caribbean as a region can be viewed as a culture area, that is to say, a distinctive geographical region sharing a distinctive distribution of culture traits. While the cultural sphere has been regarded widely as having the most power over the lives of those enslaved and indentured in the Caribbean, it has received the least attention from Caribbean scholars, governments, policy-planners and decision-makers. Yet it is the cultural process—which is not exclusive of economic activities and modes of production—that was considered the most threatening during the period of enslavement and European colonial rule. In fact, the use of culture to "de-self" the enslaved became a key means of sustaining the image of European superiority and maintaining control in the post-Emancipation period (Hart, 1980).

The practice of carefully nurturing a sense of inferiority was as deep-rooted as it was pervasive. Neither religion, education, politics nor economic affairs, escaped its continuing vise. Nowhere are its dangerous, destabilizing effects more clearly visible than in today's Caribbean youth. It is for this reason that the plight of youth in the English-speaking Caribbean represents a damning commentary on the

effectiveness of post-colonial development strategies and the local ruling élites, for Caribbean youth lack the cultural ammunition necessary to battle with the hegemonic culture within their own societies and the persistent external threats of cultural imperialism. "To fight for national culture", says Fanon, "means in the first place to fight for the liberation of the nation, that material keystone which makes the building of a culture possible" (1963). It is a fight that must be led and directed from an institutional level, and must be multi-disciplined in its breadth. It is in this area that post-colonial development strategies—in spite of successes and advances in some areas—have failed most noticeably. When examined closely, the area of culture remains a significant *locus* of internal and external domination and control.

The many theories on the English-speaking Caribbean reflect the historical complexity of the region. One of the oldest economic theories, the thesis of the plantation society (Best, 1968; Beckford, 1972), has equal relevance in anthropological analyses of these highly stratified societies. Based on the Latin American dependency theory, it identifies the plantation system as the core institution of the social order

of the pre-Emancipation Caribbean, stressing its pervasive influence —particularly with regard to intra/extra-territorial relationships— and the structural dependency which, the theory concludes, lingers in the midst of apparent change. Offshoots of this structural dependency are hierarchical class relations; unstable family organization; the low level of community organization; rigid patterns of stratification; a generally brittle social order; and an Eurocentric intelligentsia (Wagley, 1957).

The theory is one of disintegration and disorganization. According to Beckford's position, the only real change effected since Emancipation has been a minimal and individualized mobility for black people. Thus, inherent in the theory is the notion of structural continuity in change, which alludes to the inability of Caribbean societies to reach beneath mere cosmetic changes for a complete re-examination of existing social structures and to embrace the obligations and responsibilities of the post-colonial era to create new solutions to specific challenges rooted in the pre-independence history. While the plantation society theory has indeed been argued as outmoded (Craig, 1982), its concepts of a continued structural dependency and the plantation as the one rallying point of a fragile unit are particularly relevant and instructive for the approach this paper takes with regard to the cultural alienation and disorientation of youth.

Perhaps the most popular theory of Caribbean societies is the Plural Society thesis developed by M.G. Smith (1965), which stresses differentiation and separateness on a cultural, social and/or racial basis and the maintenance of parallel but not overlapping institutions. The theory uses a conflict model of society, with the use of force viewed as the only means of assuring cohesion and order. It characterizes a society comprised of diverse peoples with a lack of social will, who "mix but do not mingle". The theory has been severely criticized, especially on the grounds of its emphasis on the divisive elements of Caribbean society and its neglect of the more unifying elements. Still, it holds particular relevance for multi-ethnic societies like Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana and, to a lesser extent, Jamaica.

In using this theory to analyse various aspects of Caribbean societies, Lloyd Braithwaite (1970) argues that although these societies are culturally heterogeneous, they operate on a common scale of values inherited from the colonial rule. That common value, however, on which falls the task of integrating the society, is ethnic superiority and inferiority. Thus, it is the acceptance of the social superiority of "whiteness" and things European (values reinforced by a local Eurocentric élite) that legitimizes the system of inequality. And Braithwaite points out, "the hostility to anything of African origin is so strong that it is difficult for anything that is recognized as African to persist". Despite its many failings, the theory throws some light on the continuing negation and devaluation of African cultural traditions in the English-speaking Caribbean, in spite of the region's overwhelming majority of people of African descent. The negative impact of this continued derogation of a significant element in the Caribbean culture complex on the cultural confidence of Caribbean youth is a major concern of this study.

Both of these models have been updated by the theory of "cultural dualism" which has its intellectual roots in the work of Melville Herskovits (1941) on the interplay of African and European elements in West Indian culture, itself rooted in E.B. DuBois' "double consciousness" analysis of Black American society. It is a simultaneous carrying of two traditions, one African, the other European, which Herskovits described as "socialized ambivalence" and which Roy S. Bryce-LaPorte (1970) identified as a form of "biculturalism" in religious beliefs and practices. What emerges is the competing and contrasting relationship between African-derived cultural conditioning and symbolisms and the European colonial tradition, which results in a duality of cultural orientations as exemplified in language (creole and standard English), social codes, behaviour, attitudes and religion. The duality is manifested in attempts to weave these two contradictory cultural strands into an integrated whole: an inherently confusing process, aggravated by the moral and cultural inferiority assigned to everything African, which remains a legacy from the period of colonialism.

In a work aptly titled "Crab Antics" (1973), Peter Wilson uses a model of cultural dualism to analyse English-speaking Providencia, a tiny island in the southwest Caribbean, where patterns of social interaction are paralleled to the desperate struggling of crabs in a barrel, each pulling the other down in frantic efforts to step on each other to get to and remain on the top. Wilson embodies the egalitarian/hierarchical contradiction in two conflicting values: "respectability", rooted in the old colonial order and "English culture", with a drive towards stratification and inequality, and "reputation", grounded in an intrinsic moral self-worth, with a drive toward equality. "Reputation" amounts to an indigenous response to "respectability", which is perceived as a representation of the imposed alien structure of domination. "Reputation" stresses "the equality of human inequalities, whereas respectability seeks to rank them". Wilson sees "crab antics" as the persistent dialectical relationship between these two antithetical value systems, and proposes the model as having analytical applicability for all English-speaking Caribbean societies.

There are other studies which deal with this duality of values in Caribbean society (Makiesky-Barrow, 1976; Diane Austin, 1983). Austin incorporates both themes of ideological domination and cultural opposition within a single analytical perspective, viewing both conflicting ideas as one continuous process, which she claims reflects a situation of "conflict contained by domination" wherein the stability of the English-speaking Caribbean lies. This analysis advances the view of local "creole" élites as continuing to perpetuate an ideology that promotes not value integration and equality, but domination and stratification. For historical sociologist Gordon Lewis (1968) political and ideological structures of the colonial period are simply carried over into the post-colonial society:

"Social bullying and economic intimidation are pretty much the order of the day in the life of the masses... Nor does the political fact of independence...necessarily change the social system. It merely transfers its control from the metropolitan masters to the local ruling groups. And because these groups

understand the majority better than did the expatriate officials they might be able, indeed, to tighten up the psychological screws that hold the majority in their prison."

It is in the hands of these cultural, economic and political brokers that the future of Caribbean youth has been entrusted, and it is on their shoulders that the responsibility for the ideological conflict and disenchantment of Caribbean youth must weigh.

All of these theories point to race, class, culture and ideology as inescapable dimensions of Caribbean social reality. Given the foregoing reference to the importance of the cultural process in the national development and reconstruction of post-colonial societies, it is important to view development strategies, particularly with respect to young people, within these contrasting principles of social organization and culture, for it is this irreconcilable duality that underlies the fundamental problems of cultural alienation, disorientation and displacement that form the backdrop for the myriad challenges of youth in the English-speaking Caribbean. The problems of Caribbean young people hinge on a cultural dependence that is in turn linked to the continuing economic dependence, dictated by the terms of international trade and the penetration of foreign capital.

Perhaps the most vexing aspect of this theory of cultural dualism is not the blending of these two opposing cultural streams—one European, the other African—but the continued (conscious and subconscious) perception of the inherent superiority of European cultural elements and the worthlessness and inferiority of African cultural traditions. The perceived superiority of the former has now been extended to include North American cultural influences, the United States having assumed increased visibility and control over the English-speaking Caribbean. In essence, the result is a total confidence in and thirst for external and foreign ideas and attitudes, and an accompanying derogation and devaluation of everything internal and indigenous. Continued ignorance of Africa and its rich history and culture translates into the persistent denial and degradation of the



African element of the Caribbean culture and a dangerous readiness to accept any and every foreign loophole by way of escaping the truth and reality of a national self-identity, for a true national self-identity rests inescapably on recognition of and reconciliation with the African component of the indigenous culture.

The emergence of a "creole" culture in these Caribbean nation-States does not completely address the problem. While creolization admits, encourages and acknowledges the blending of the two cultural streams, it tacitly embraces a European bias that still positions African cultural traditions as minority influences within the total culture complex. In its inherent glorification of European concepts, creole culture —albeit subtly— at worst negated, and at best minimized the contributions of both African and Indian culture. In countries such as Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana which have large East Indian populations, East Indian culture has merged with the African-derived culture: a natural progression, since both groups, as enslaved and indentured "foreigners", represented the dispossessed and oppressed, and have to a large extent remained at the base of a pyramidal structure that placed Europeans and European-looking people at the top and the "high coloureds" in the middle —a space they now share with post-colonial occupational élites of African, Indian and mixed descent.

East Indians, however, have been able to negotiate a completely different relationship with their new environment. Because of the different conditions under which they were brought to the Caribbean, they were able to exercise a "cultural persistence" which fuelled the cultural confidence to protect them from the psychological trauma and rootlessness of a desecrated and fragmented culture. In his study of East Indians in Trinidad, Klass (1961) documents the ability of villagers to reconstitute social institutions which functioned as mechanisms for the transmission of their culture

and the maintenance of community cohesiveness. Africans, on the contrary, had little alternative but to adapt their culture to the new environment through a syncretic process, and it is this hybrid culture that still thrives in the English-speaking Caribbean, despite the attempts of the metropolitan ruling powers (with the active participation of local "creole" élites) to exorcise it. While contemporary post-colonial élites have not succeeded in ignoring this syncretic culture that is grounded in African retentions and reinterpretations, they have continued to vest cultural differences with an economic, social and political significance that condemns practitioners of Africanized/folk culture to low socioeconomic status.

It is impossible, then, to examine the situation of youth in the English-speaking Caribbean without looking at the influence of this cultural process on the development strategies that emerged in the post-colonial experience, the continued cultural and psychological insecurity and economic dependence which give birth to these strategies, and the "crab antics" which they encourage. The dismantling of colonial rule raised urgent demands not merely for national reconstruction but also for creative national reconstruction... that is to say, an analysis of the situation in terms of the needs and priorities of the indigenous population. It called for thorough self-analysis in order to address the challenge of national building. It also called for a complete overhauling of systems which were designed by the colonial powers for their enrichment and glorification. The recognition and acceptance of this task of creative reconstruction can come only with the confrontation, recognition, and acceptance of the collective selves that have been so carefully ensconced and subjugated under irrelevant foreign ideas which continue to generate the national confusion so clearly reflected in the current situation of Caribbean youth.

## II

## Socioeconomic aspects

Previous studies of youth in the Caribbean have pointed to the relation between the rapid expansion of the region's youth population and the growth of the global youth population. According to a recent United Nations analysis of population trends in the Caribbean, the population of the entire region grew at an annual average rate of 1.4% during the period 1980-1984: a figure that reflects a downward trend from the annual rate of 2.1% reported during the 1970s (United Nations, 1986). In actual numbers this means that between 1970 and 1983 the Caribbean population rose from about 25 to 30 million. Despite this slackening trend and its lower level than the corresponding world growth rate of 1.8% the population growth rate remains high. During the same period 1970-1973 the growth rate for the United States was 1.1% while for Western Europe it was only 0.4% (Nelson, 1986).

This declining trend, however, was not true for all of the Caribbean nation-States. Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Christopher-Nevis reflected it, but Belize and Guyana continued to show a significantly high growth rate of over 2.4%. The declining growth rate was mainly associated with effective birth control programmes in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. Even so, the Caribbean area remains one of the most densely populated in the world, and its youth population hovers around 20% of the entire population, except for Montserrat, where it amounts to only 5.5%.

The challenges of today's Caribbean youth far surpass the rate of its population expansion, and demand urgent attention and increased action from local, national and international organizations and agencies. Perhaps the most dramatic and telling indicator of the plight of youth in the Caribbean is the increasing number of young vagrants on the streets of the Caribbean, a situation which has reached panic proportions in Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana. In

Trinidad,<sup>2</sup> an alarming majority of these young vagrants are of African descent: a fact which again raises questions and concerns about the effects of race on post-colonial youth and demands in-depth study if its negative impact is to be understood and erased. Vanquished by negative prospects for the future and governments which seem to view young people as part of the problem rather than part of the solution, these young displaced persons take to the streets, daring society to see in their hopelessness the reflection of unsuccessful development policies.

Reference has already been made in this article to the problem of the precarious nature in real terms of the Caribbean countries' independence, analysed especially at the cultural level.

Persistent economic dependence is easier to measure. Beckford (1972) elaborated on the all-pervasiveness of the plantation system and its ability to generate and sustain a persistent underdevelopment that has continued in the post-Independence era: foreign trade and aid; imported consumption and production patterns; tourism; gross inequities in the distribution of income and wealth; expatriate ownership and control of business enterprises; foreign owned and controlled banking and financial systems; repatriation of profits...all in a mad rush towards modernization and development, without much thought on the net loss to the population and to youth in particular. In spite of the alleged success of such economic programmes in the Caribbean, the overall results are high rates of unemployment and underemployment; severe

<sup>2</sup>Tobago, which has remained a more rural environment than its urbanized sister island, Trinidad, is remarkably free of vagrants. In fact, the island's only vagrant is reputed to have come from Trinidad. Redfield's ideal type dichotomy of folk and urban societies—the most rural being the most folk, and the most urban being more prone to "disorganization", secularization and individualization—applies here.

underutilization of the labour force; heightened frustration; increased social and economic marginalization of youth, and cultural alienation.

Faced with this situation, and despite restrictive measures adopted by the United States, Canada and England to stem the human flow from the Caribbean, an increasing number of young people opt for the one proven escape hatch: emigration. In so doing, they aggravate the brain drain to which the Caribbean has been subjected historically. The salient point is that policies and programmes of Caribbean governments still represent the practice of a development closely linked to and consequently directed by its relationship with the metropolis. It is this fundamental truth that underlies the continued disorganization of Caribbean societies. It is the effects of this process, which dependency theorists term "dependent development", that are so clearly discernible in this first post-colonial generation.

### 1. *Unemployment and under-employment*

Among the causes of unemployment and underemployment, so widely documented by economists and other experts, which are worth mentioning in view of their drastic effect on today's growing population are: rapidly expanding population; high growth rate of the labour force; the increasing rate of female participation in the labour force; the drift of the population from rural to urban areas, resulting in a conversion of rural underemployment to urban unemployment; the importation of labour-saving, modern technology from developed countries, particularly in manufacturing activities; the concentration on introduction of capital-intensive technology, instead of labour-saving technology. Trinidad and Tobago during its 1973-1983 period of oil wealth presents an instructive case study; the unbalanced mix of education and training, often producing inappropriate mixtures and levels of skills contrary to those needed in the labour market (Demas, 1977).

Another factor of particular relevance for the English-speaking Caribbean is the

perception of the superiority and higher status of the "collar and tie" job, a direct hold-over from the period of colonial rule. Policies and programmes that emphasize industrialization and modernization, to the detriment of agriculture have simply validated and reinforced this perception, while condemning the population to near-starvation and high-priced imported food and at the same time promoting consumption patterns that encourage tastes for imported foods and devalorize indigenous foods and tastes.

The problem of unemployment and underemployment, a major concern and priority of most developing countries, represents a traumatic and frustrating experience for adults but it is an even more shattering and devastating reality for young people entering the job market, because while for adults unemployment means unequal access to participating in the production, income and wealth of the society—a psychologically and emotionally damaging experience in itself—for youth it is a shocking introduction to the real world that could irrevocably tinge their relationship to their environment and their community and negatively direct the course of young impressionable lives. Lowered self-esteem, diminished self-worth, anger, anxiety, confusion, frustration, lack of direction, purposelessness and disenchantment summarize the experience of Caribbean youth on their first introduction to the job market.

The problem is severe. Data for Trinidad and Tobago—the Caribbean nation which enjoys the highest standard of living—show an overall unemployment rate of 15% in 1985. Unemployment for the 15 to 19 age group stands at 37% of the total work force, while the unemployment rate for the 20 to 24 age group is 25%. The 25 to 34 age group, however, shows a rate of 13%: a figure more in line with the overall rate. For all age groups the unemployment rate for females is considerably higher than that for males. This is particularly so in the 15 to 19 age group, where male unemployment is 35% and female unemployment 43%: a figure almost treble the overall female unemployment rate of 17%. These figures all represent an increase over the 1984 unemployment rates (table 1).

Table 1  
**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO:  
 UNEMPLOYMENT RATES  
 BY AGE AND SEX,  
 1984-1985**

Age group	Date	Both sexes (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
All ages	30/6/84	13	12	15
	31/12/84	14	12	17
	30/6/85	15	15	17
15-19	30/6/84	31	29	37
	31/12/84	35	32	42
	30/6/85	37	35	43
20-24	30/6/84	21	19	23
	31/12/84	22	21	23
	30/6/85	25	25	24
25-34	30/6/84	11	11	11
	31/12/84	12	11	14
	30/6/85	13	12	14

*Source:* Central Statistical Office, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, *Vital Statistics Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1986.

Although it was not possible to obtain current data for all the other Caribbean nations, table 2 details the unemployment rates by age group for the period 1980 to 1982 for some countries. In every country listed, the unemployment rate in the 15 to 19 age group was considerably higher than the rate in the 20 to 24 age group, and in Barbados, Belize, Montserrat and Saint Christopher-Nevis it was almost three times as high as the already high rate for that group.

The high unemployment rate among the 15 to 24 age group is connected with a regional educational system that subordinates vocational and technical skills to academic curricula, and hence provides little education and training for non "collar and tie" jobs. But to fully understand the enormous psychological impact of unemployment and underemployment in the Caribbean, it is important to view occupation as

Table 2  
**SELECTED CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES:  
 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES  
 BY AGE GROUPS, 1980-1982**

Country	Unemployment rate	
	15-19 yrs.	20-24 yrs.
Barbados	40.9	14.7
Belize	13.9	5.2
British Virgin Islands	16.8	7.7
Dominica	55.7	23.8
Grenada	55.8	26.4
Guyana	55.5	22.7
Montserrat	32.7	11.5
Saint Christopher/Nevis	36.9	14.8
Saint Lucia	52.5	21.8
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	58.2	24.2
Turks and Caicos Islands	28.2	20.2

*Source:* *Vital Statistics Bulletin*, *op. cit.*

the major status symbol that it represents in the region, and a sphere in which the competition of the opposing ideologies, group solidarity and the drive for status is best observed. Placed within a historical-cultural context, employment in the English-speaking Caribbean becomes much more than a means for taking care of basic individual and family needs. It is not only a major channel for improving one's standard of living but also, like education, is perceived as a key factor in throwing off the residues of enslavement and indentureship and ridding oneself of the inferiority and low social status that has been historically synonymous with racial identity and economic dependence.

In his study, "Social Stratification in Trinidad", Lloyd Braithwaite (1975) documents the "fundamental change in the self-assertion of the lower classes" provided by employment opportunities during the establishment of American bases in Trinidad. According to Braithwaite, it is difficult to exaggerate the degree of personal dignity which came to the working class as a result of full employment. Thus, employment is perceived as a major element in social mobility, and a principal status

marker. Within the context of Wilson's "crab antics" model outlined in an earlier section, employment assumes a significant role in the long climb upwards. Emphasis on individual needs over community good has remained as a structural continuity from the pre-Independence period, and it is in attitudes towards work that this is clearly discernible. Particularistic ties of kinship, friendship, "contact" and political patronage have served to reinforce colonial values of individualism and "oneupmanship", and have served to vivify social and economic stratification at the expense of the harmony and progress of egalitarian societies. Occupation is viewed, not as an opportunity to make a valuable contribution to society, but as a means of reaping the social rewards and high status that accompany the acquisition of material goods that testify to material success. In other words, the concept of nation-building as a motive for occupational participation remains noticeably absent.

The rapid growth of State and local intervention in the economy, and the nationalization of formerly exclusive holdings of the metropolis are two of the bolder attempts of Caribbean countries to control their economies. Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have made some headway in this attempt at economic decolonization. Still, there are fundamental attitudinal changes towards this new ownership which have not been effected, and they continue to haunt the self-realization of young people and thwart their level of participation in society.

It is in this vicious cycle that Caribbean youth have been trapped. Those who are uneducated and/or improperly trained for the job market are invariably those who possess neither the social skills nor economic and political power to elicit favours and patronage from the society's power brokers. Educated youth, on the other hand—particularly youth who have graduated from foreign universities—are perceived as threats by the more mature professionals who very often hold years of first-hand experience, but no university training. These young people suffer the brunt of the resentment of the older folks who, caught up in their own frustrations and insecurities, see young professionals as wanting too much, and "having things too easy". These young people become the unwilling

victims of the "crab antics" jockeying, and often become unsuspecting targets of vicious competition, pettiness and rivalry. Instead of freely allowing young people the benefit of their knowledge and experience, and encouraging their contribution and participation, many of these adult professionals prefer to block the progress of youth, thus adding to the latter's disenchantment and frustration with society. Competition for work, graft, "contacts", favours and patronage assume greater prominence in the quest for employment than qualifications, capability, and the desire and ability to contribute. The link between race, class, colour, and gender and access to economic power further complicates this scenario, leaving open invitations to black low-income youth to embark on a life of crime, and exposing young women—particularly single mothers—to sexual exploitation. Research of the 28 companies trading on the Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange point to a system of interlocking directorates as a mechanism for the concentration of wealth, power and privileges, together with a monopoly of information by a few (Parris, 1984). The research also found the corporate élite in Trinidad and Tobago, though multi-ethnic, to be dominated by those of Caucasian extraction. There is no reference to female representation among the group. In addition, the symbolism of the "collar and tie" job as representing social and economic superiority continues to limit the desires of youth to explore employment opportunities and pursue academic and professional interests in non "collar and tie" areas. This negative perception of non "collar and tie" work most severely affects the economy and the employment prospects of youth in agriculture, where the number of workers as a percentage of the total labour force is very low: 14.5% in Barbados, 17.1% in Jamaica, and 14.8% in Trinidad and Tobago in 1985. This low level of agricultural participation continues to exist in these Caribbean countries where unemployment rates for young people between the ages of 20 and 24 remain alarmingly high.

As economic forecasts for the Caribbean become more discouraging, population seem to have become even more creative than their governments in seeking solutions for economic

problems. There exists an underground economy or "parallel market" system, to which primarily women and young people have resorted in order to stave off poverty and starvation. Petty trade, mainly in foodstuffs, clothing, and motor car parts, has become a prime source of income for both of these groups. This trading has even become internationalized, as Guyanese exchange gold and diamonds for valuable market commodities from Trinidad and Tobago; Trinidadians purchase clothing from Curacao, Panama and Miami, and Jamaicans, restricted by foreign currency regulations, exchange rum, liqueurs and cigars for items of high value on the Jamaican market. One has only to walk down the main streets of Port of Spain to see the number of youths hawking clothing, shoes, cassettes and other imported goods on the sidewalks, to grasp the importance of this phenomenon to the survival of the unemployed.

## 2. *The effects of tourism*

Tourist arrivals in the Caribbean amounted to some six million people in 1982. Excluding Cuba, gross tourism receipts were estimated at about US\$ 3.6 billion (Blommestein, 1985). Regional tourism responded strongly to the upturn in the economy in 1984, and all destinations except Grenada received increases in visitor arrivals (ECLAC, 1985). Given the concentration on export promotion to offset foreign exchange shortages, further emphasis on tourism can be expected. The Nassau Understanding with respect to tourism recommends that the region "pursue vigorously the preservation and maintenance of existing tourist attractions and the development and diversification of new tourist attractions so as to increase the attractiveness of Caribbean holidays and hence to induce increased visitor traffic and/or length of stay and/or tourism expenditures" (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 1984). Even Trinidad and Tobago, which because of its oil and natural gas resources has traditionally maintained a policy of cautious distance from tourism, has now embarked upon a tourism thrust.

The economic benefits that can be derived from tourism are significant. In 1985 Barbados,

with a total of 304 000 arrivals, received US\$ 207 million; the Bahamas, US\$ 669 million from 1 121 000 tourists; Antigua, US\$ 50 million from 87 000 visitors; Jamaica, US\$ 388 million from 408 000 arrivals; while Trinidad and Tobago's 200 000 tourist arrivals represented a contribution of US\$ 163 million to the economy (*Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics*, 1985 Supplement). The potential for a negative social impact of large tourist inflows on these Caribbean countries with small populations must not be overshadowed by the attractiveness of tourism-generated foreign exchange earnings, however. With a population of only 120 000 Saint Lucia hosted 70 000 tourists in 1985, and although its tourism income amounted to US\$ 30 million, the impact of a tourist population that amounts to more than 50% of the population in one year is cause for concern. Since women and youth represent the largest segment of the unemployed labour force, it is they who remain a captive source for tourism-related employment and they are the groups most likely to be affected by the negative elements that often accompany tourism. Drug trafficking and drug abuse, organized crime, male and female prostitution and its accompanying sexually-related diseases are some of the more visible negative effects of tourism among young people in the Bahamas and Barbados. More subtle but perhaps more lasting and psychologically damaging is the role of tourism in aggravating the process of cultural alienation among Caribbean youth.

Economists, sociologists and anthropologists have long weighed the socioeconomic benefits against the socio-cultural impact of tourism. The latter two groups of specialists have been more concerned with the view of tourism as something that underscores the social and cultural differences between tourists and hosts, than its effect on the creation of new employment opportunities and the tendency of a thriving tourist industry to stem migration trends, particularly among the unemployed and underemployed women and youth in economically marginal areas. Despite these gains, its opponents argue, tourism fosters dependency rather than development, replicating forms of domination and structural underdevelopment that amount to neo-

colonialism, since the tourist industry depends heavily on foreign capital (Cohen, 1984). In addition, in societies like the Caribbean which have recent histories of enslavement and colonial rule, where the local populations are of predominantly African origin, and where the tourist population is likely to be North American and European, tourism runs the risk of recreating and reinforcing impressions of black servitude and white superiority and generating or aggravating disharmonious relations.

In spite of these disadvantages, tourism represents a ready market for cultural products. It could inspire the growth and development of an indigenous culture, while creating stimulation and a source of pride for young people, by promoting the production of cultural items which continue to suffer tremendous neglect and cooptation by the middle class in the post-independence period. This, however, in no way relieves Caribbean governments of the obligation of formulating cultural policies and establishing relevant cultural institutions that will serve as ideological groundings for young impressionable minds, on whom will fall the responsibility of continuing the challenge of national development. In fact, a reliance of economic development on tourism increases the urgency of this task, since because of its innate function of culture carrying, tourism exposes young people to different cultures in a process that could further aggravate cultural disorientation and alienation. In fact, it is only such government action that could offset the danger of diluting, commoditizing and exploiting local culture for the benefit of tourists, and the commercialization of authentic arts, rituals and customs—usually the domain of the lower economic groups—by local élites, who are normally in the forefront of tourist ventures.

### 3. Education

Independence in the English-speaking Caribbean ushered in an era that re-emphasized the importance of education, an importance held back during the colonial period, when education was synonymous with the middle and upper socioeconomic classes. The colonial perception

that educated locals might not be in their best interests placed education out of the reach of the masses. In addition, the dearth of educational institutions and the relatively high cost impeded mass access to education. Increased primary education and free secondary education thus became a national priority for these post-colonial societies. Impressively low illiteracy rates reflect the emphasis on education in the English-speaking Caribbean. Around 1982, the lowest illiteracy rate in the subregion was 0.7% in Barbados, while the highest illiteracy rates were 18.3% for Saint Lucia, and 11.3% for Antigua and Barbuda. Even lower illiteracy rates are registered for young people between the ages of 15 to 24. However, such low rates may not necessarily reflect the increasing production of functional illiterates, or the existence of educational curricula that are not effectively synchronized with the realities of Caribbean development.

According to the 1980 Population and Housing Census for Trinidad and Tobago, "the proportion of non-achievers, i.e., persons without an examination certificate, is 52.4%" of the country's adult population. The figure represents a disturbing 392 033 persons aged 20 and over who left school without visible proof of ever having attended. In addition, the data show that 34 251 persons 15 years of age and over have less than a primary level of education, or no education at all. While that figure is a considerable improvement over the figure of 54 126 twenty years earlier, it still does not augur well for an independent nation that was told its children held its future in their bookbags.

Education, like occupation, has historically been viewed as a means for achieving social mobility. In fact, it is viewed as the key means of occupational mobility, primarily through the civil service. Consequently, the process of acquiring a good education envelops students from a very young age in fierce competition and rivalry. It not only applies extreme pressure to compete early in their lives, but provides early socialization into the "crab antics" dynamics and, according to Austin (1983), institutional endorsement that inequality is due to differential ability and intelligence endowment. Although free secondary education for these societies was instituted on the attainment of Independence,

the competition to gain admittance to the élite secondary schools remained. Failure to gain entrance to the élite or quality secondary schools meant placement in a "Comprehensive School", structured to provide a mix of academic and technical training. But associated with these schools is a stigma of social and intellectual inferiority which students carry into their working lives. Youth also have access to Polytechnic Institutes or specialized schools for secretarial skills, hotel management, etc. Still, higher academic training remains the ideal. The regional network of higher education in the form of the University of the West Indies has permitted access to higher education within the region. However, the perception of the automatic inferiority of any regional institution resulted in a tendency to place a higher value on qualifications obtained from foreign (particularly British) universities. Later, expansion of the University's curriculum, introduction of new diploma and degree programmes, and the establishment of two new campuses stimulated heightened confidence and increased enrolment.

The University's three campuses are based at Mona, Jamaica (established in 1948); St. Augustine, Trinidad (established in 1960); and the 1963 Cave Hill, Barbados campus. Individual campus registration figures for 1981-1982 put student enrolment at 4 892; 3 124 and 1 566 respectively. The territories without a campus are: Antigua, Bahamas, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis, Anguilla, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent. Guyana, once a fully participating territory, has since established its own professional faculties. One programme in Hotel Management is conducted in the Bahamas, but the Bahamas is not considered a campus territory (CRESALC/UNESCO:1985). While the total number of male registrants has traditionally been higher than female entrants, the gap has been narrowing. The 1984 student enrolment figures indicate a trend of significantly higher representation of women, particularly in the faculties of Arts and General Studies and Law.

Ironically, the concept of free secondary education has given birth to two extreme attitudes. One group has taken full advantage of

the benefits, skillfully utilizing their education for individual, social, occupational and economic upward mobility. The other group views education as a "freeness", and this notion seems to mature into an excessive reliance and expectation of hand-outs. It is this mentality that provides the catalyst for corruption, bribery and political patronage. Neither group appears to be able to see the connection between free education and the quest for national freedom, equality and development for which the system was designed. There are very few people in the middle realm between these two extremes who view education as the basis for the self-transformation and societal change necessary for creative reconstruction. In fact, highly represented in this middle realm are "returning nationals" with foreign education and experience and an eagerness to "make a contribution". These are quickly frustrated and disillusioned on entering or attempting to enter the workplace: the arena in which positive development policies and programmes should be consolidated and activated, but which instead remains a hotbed of competition, rivalry, intimidation and petty jealousy, more a testimony to "crab antics" than to social co-operation as a basis for national success and achievement. A significantly high percentage of these returning nationals are forced to return to "the cold".

The role of education, not only as it affects employment but as a pivotal force in the psychological transformation of newly independent countries, cannot be overestimated. Its function of instilling in young minds more relevant ideas, values and attitudes as prerequisites for new societies is an imperative for Caribbean governments. It is through the education process that young people can be socialized into more egalitarian societies, provided there exists the economic, political and cultural will to do so. The bridge between education and employment is a crucial one for Caribbean youth. It is in this transitional phase that the direction of young people—and by extension their societies—is determined. It is this period that provides the most serious choices for Caribbean youth as they battle with the frustrations of unemployment, feelings of uselessness, lack of self-confidence, diminished



self-worth and lack of self-esteem. The current restructuring of the University of the West Indies to emphasize territorial rather than regional input, the creation of Trinidad and Tobago's National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), and the proliferation of extramural and adult education programmes point to attempts to seriously address continuing educational challenges. Still, the third-level sector shows a dramatic decrease in enrolment: a situation which demands urgent attention, as it relates directly to the employability of youth. In addition, there remains a need to become more creative in the use of the educational process to help in the task of societal transformation and to undo some of the deep-rooted damage effected via education during the colonial period.

#### 4. *Health*

Drug and alcohol addiction represent the most serious health problem of Caribbean youth. The most striking change during the 1980s has been the explosive increase of cocaine use in the Caribbean, especially in the Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica. This increase has reached epidemic proportions in the past three years, particularly in the first two countries (CARICOM Secretariat, 1985). Perhaps the problem of youth and drug addiction can be more accurately viewed within an older context: that of the high incidence of alcoholism among the adult population. Alcohol is still the largest drug problem of the region, causing a heavy drain on the economies of these countries. In Trinidad and Tobago, where the oil wealth of the 1970s precipitated a national "spree", it has been estimated that health costs due to alcohol are TT\$ 80 million, and the cost in terms of lost productivity about TT\$ 100 million (Beaubrun, 1984).

According to the drug rehabilitation counsellors in Trinidad and Tobago, research has revealed that nearly 100% of those treated started with alcohol and graduated to harder drugs, depending on availability and cost. Experts in the field have also been able to further distinguish patterns of drug abuse among youth and adults, pointing to alcoholics as older and

employed, with increased cocaine dabbling and some cases of serious users among upper income groups. Drug addiction for youth, too, has a class differentiation, positioning middle and upper-middle-income youth as users of cocaine and LSD, and lower-income youth largely as pushers of cocaine and LSD, but users of marijuana. In Trinidad and Tobago, a further ethnic distinction is emerging, indicating a preference for alcohol among East Indians, while other ethnic groups suffer addiction to harder drugs. The salient point, however, is that an overwhelming majority of youth involved in drugs, whether as pushers or users, are unemployed.

Analysis of data obtained from a volunteer, non-residential drug counselling centre, based on information obtained from 84 patients during the period November 1985 to April 1986, paints a demographic portrait of the typical drug addict as between 14 and 44 years old; single (58.3%); unemployed (45.2%); male (90.5%), and predominantly of African descent (53.6%). East Indians represented 16.7% of the counselling centre's population, while 27.3% were of mixed ancestry. Only 9.5% of the population being treated were women. Of those seeking counselling, 82.1% were addicted to cocaine, but may have begun with milder drugs; 8.3% were addicted to marijuana, and 4.8% to alcohol. The youngest ages given for the introduction to drug use were age 8 for alcohol, age 9 for marijuana, and age 12 for cocaine. Of those receiving counselling, 95.2% claimed the problem was their own, while 10.7% admitted it was a family problem. Only four students (4.8%) were among the group; 27.3% in it were skilled and employed, and 19% unskilled but employed.

The link between education, unemployment and drug addiction is direct and inescapable. Young people either take full advantage of educational opportunities, cope successfully with the battery of examinations and go on to attend university, or they become overwhelmed by the process and drop out of the system very early. Given the high unemployment rates, however, for both groups the end of the line is a void that often becomes the beginning of flirtation with drugs and continues into serious addiction. In 1985 a nation-wide survey of drug use was carried out by Dr. Lennox Bernard of the

University of the West Indies. The sample comprised over three thousand students up to the age of 20 years, young people in youth camps and reform schools, and unemployed youths aged 14-20. Preliminary findings indicated that 16 was the decisive age at which drugs, including alcohol, were most frequently used. Among the reasons reported for drug use were: peer pressure; curiosity; search for happiness; need to stay calm; pressure at home; loneliness; school work; and performance at sport. There was also the startling revelation that drug abuse was highest among adolescents from stable homes with two-parent families.

The gravity of drug abuse in the Caribbean is cause for alarm, not only because of its destructive influence on youth, but because of its potential for destroying the entire society through its real threat of producing a whole generation of aimless, wasted and unproductive young people. The scourge affects more men than women, but the threat of prostitution, venereal disease, and pregnancies leading to drug-addicted babies presents even more dangerous complications for young women. The convenient location of the English-speaking Caribbean between the United States and South America makes it an easy transshipment point for drug trafficking. Its topography, the comparatively lax penalties for drug offences, the low price of cocaine, the purity of available high-quality cocaine from Colombia, the high prevalence of "freebasing", the availability of the more potent cocaine preprocessed as "rocks", and the new coca paste which is even more potent than freebased cocaine are some of the other explanations given for the rapid increase in drug abuse in the Caribbean.

Informal case histories for Trinidad and Tobago document: 1) the consumption of alcohol by future drug addicts from as early as eight years old; 2) the startling number of teenage drug addicts who were introduced to drugs by their parents; 3) the availability of "soft" and "hard" drugs from pushers in schools; 4) the connection between the adoption of North American habits and behaviour and drug abuse; 5) for the Bahamas, Bermuda and Barbados, the link between increased drug addiction and the influx of North American tourism, prostitution, gambling and organized

crime; and 6) the spread of drug abuse by locals returning from extended sojourns in the United States and England.

In a more general sense, health problems affecting Caribbean youth are in keeping with some of the major problems in health care generally: environmental pollution, impure water supplies, unsanitary facilities, lack of health care servicing of rural areas, and inadequate health services and antiquated health equipment, resulting in a lack of confidence in health care. For young women, teenage pregnancies present a continuing challenge which will be more closely examined later. The most recent health concern for the Entire Caribbean is the dreaded Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), particularly in those countries which have large homosexual populations or which, because of tourism, attract among their tourists a large number of homosexuals. The fear of the disease in Trinidad and Tobago has stimulated a new trend towards sexual caution among youth, which will hopefully trigger a decline in the number of teenage pregnancies.

### 5. *Housing*

The nub of the housing problem for young people is tied to problems of inadequate education, unemployment, difficulties in communicating with parents, rural-urban migration in search of employment, and drug addiction. According to one social worker in Trinidad and Tobago, "some children simply should not be living with their parents". In fact, the lack of quarter-way and half-way housing for young addicts in drug rehabilitation and counselling programmes presents a vicious return cycle to the same environment and problems which encouraged drug addiction in the first place. Some young people end up on the streets, as reflected in the alarming increase in the number of young vagrants.

Two other economically-related factors have also contributed to the housing difficulties of young people. For Trinidad and Tobago, the large number of foreign consultants —the beneficiaries of government-to-government

contracts during the decade of the oil boom—fuelled an artificial hike in rents to capitalize on the high salaries and housing allowances given to these foreign experts. The influx of tourists has caused similar rapid increases in the price of land in tourist havens like Barbados, the Bahamas, and Jamaica. Attempts at controlling and even rolling back rents have been made in Trinidad and Tobago, but this action still has not brought prices within the range of unemployed and underemployed youths, and this further contributes to feelings of inadequacy, insecurity and uncertainty about the future.

### 6. *The family*

The vast literature on family structure in the English-speaking Caribbean points to the centrality of women in their roles as mothers. As major (and often the only) income-producers in the household, low-income women are often *de facto* heads of households which, because of the economic marginality of low-income men, become matrifocal and matricentric. Although legal marital union might be considered the social ideal, low-income women opt for a number of adaptive strategies in order to cope with their socioeconomic realities.

Recent controversies over analyses of West Indian families put forward two possibilities. One is that the black low-income family is a variant of elite family structure, representing a response to the economic inability of often unemployed and underemployed lower-income men to perform their expected family responsibilities. The other, as an example of Herskovitsian reinterpretation, is that the female-headed, matrifocal household is an essentially different type of family organization, based on separate principles and cultural values retained from West African culture. This latter notion brings to the forefront the strength and support that comes from the extended family, opportunities for cultural transmission in the "grandmother family" and the significance of collateral kinship...concepts which are seldom considered in analysing lower-income families in the English-speaking Caribbean.

The salient points of both arguments are the economic marginality which robs low-income

men of their status-defining functions, and the existence of a male-dominated structure which remains insensitive to the economic importance of women and ignorant and/or unsympathetic to the extent to which the stability of the entire society depend on her. Full comprehension of this fact would demand more serious attention to the employment and training of women, who in most of the English-speaking Caribbean register almost double the unemployment figure for unemployed males. In such a line of thinking, urgent importance also attaches to the establishment of day-care centres and other facilities that provide support for working mothers.

East Indian family organization shows a different structural formation and continuity. A significant majority of East Indian children grow up in male-headed households, in contrast with the patterns cited for the low-income Afro-Caribbean family. Another major difference between these two family systems is the age and conditions under which cohabitation and marriage are institutionalized. Customary law prescribes a much earlier age for both sexes for East Indians, while among Afro-Caribbeans, the ideal and modal age of marriage and cohabitation is much higher. This difference has significant effects on the organization of family life, indicating a paternity that is relatively more fixed for the East Indian family. Although these unions appear to be longer lasting than for the Afro-Caribbean families, more pronounced family stability and security are not necessarily indicated, for the presence of a father figure does not necessarily imply harmony and stability in a family. In fact, many father-centred homes spanning the race/class spectrum are plagued with wife and child abuse, incest, alcoholism and other deviant behaviour that would certainly be more injurious to the positive development of a child than a matrifocal home, or one in which the father plays a peripheral role. Research cited in an earlier section of this paper reported that drug abuse was found to be highest among adolescents from stable homes with two-parent families, indicating a fundamental breakdown in family life that is not restricted to female-centred homes.

The importance of family stability in shaping the lives of youth warrants a closer look

at the influence of race, class, culture and economic power on Caribbean family structure. Perhaps what is needed is a change of focus from the "problems" or "disorganized" low-income families to a clearer view of the practical strategies used by these economically disadvantaged groups in order to organize their survival and continuity. Such an approach could lead governments to recognize the economic importance of women and accelerate measures to support and facilitate their economic autonomy. Useful, too, as a strategy for effecting a more stable and secure society, would be an analysis of the flexibility, adaptability and creativity of lower-income strategies for the sharing and maximizing of resources, usually centred around indigenous economic traditions such as *sou-sou* —the pooling and rotating of scarce resources— and *gayap* —co-operative, self-help, collective labour— and of ways in which these traditional strategies might serve as models for more relevant economic development policies in the English-speaking Caribbean.

### 7. Young women

Young women in the English-speaking Caribbean remain the group most affected by all the dysfunctional aspects of the overall society. Rampant unemployment, inadequate educational preparation, a dearth of post-educational skills training, competition with men in a male-oriented labour market, social customs and attitudes that —under the pretence of the protection of women— serve to limit and discourage full participation in the society's development, early pregnancies that impose the overwhelming responsibility of single parenthood in societies that lack the infrastructural systems to assist young unwed mothers and women as heads of households, all combine to make young Caribbean women the sector with the least alternatives and opportunities for improving their life chances.

The harsh reality of the situation faced by young women can be evidenced by the countless reports of demands for sexual favours in order to obtain and retain employment. Another indication is the "new" immigration of the

1970s, which differed from older patterns in that men were overwhelmingly outnumbered by women, who often left behind established households, husbands and children (Burgess and James-Gray, 1981).

The growing prevalence of drug abuse in the Caribbean presents specific problems for young women. In Trinidad and Tobago, where drug abuse has reached near-epidemic proportions, informal research reveals an increasing number of young women who resort to prostitution in exchange for drugs. In fact, case histories document an ever-larger number of cases of women who are deliberately introduced to drugs in order that they might be forced into prostitution. In the Bahamas and Barbados, the rise in prostitution has been linked to the influence of tourism. Young women from Guyana, Colombia and the Dominican Republic represent a rich source of prostitution "finds" for male-dominated international prostitution rings. In Grenada prostitution has allegedly mushroomed, and in Bermuda high rates of illegitimacy have been attributed to the "holiday atmosphere" generated by large-scale tourism, specifically the conspicuous consumption of alcohol by tourists (Manning, 1979).

An increasing challenge for young Caribbean women is that of teenage pregnancy, which the data show is disproportionately prevalent among low-income families. Teenage pregnancy is simultaneously a product of social circumstances and a contribution to those circumstances, since it helps to perpetuate the limited life chances of this group and hampers the marital, social and emotional growth of both mother and child, while presenting a physical risk for both of them. Recent data show that for every Caribbean country, teenage pregnancies were higher thirty years ago than they are today. Still, adolescent fertility rates continue to be in the excess of 100 per 1 000 in most Caribbean countries. Thus, during 1980, these rates were as high as 120 in Guyana, 125 in Grenada, 133 in Jamaica, 143 in St. Kitts-Nevis, 157 in St. Lucia, and 164 in St. Vincent. In Trinidad and Tobago, the figure declined from 148 per 1 000 in 1950, to 85 per 1 000 in 1980 (Jagdeo, 1984). The data show that 60% of all first births in several Caribbean countries occur to teenagers, and 50% of these are to women 17 years old and under: an

age group that is most susceptible to such reproductive dangers as prolonged labour, other obstetrical complications and premature babies.

#### 8. *Culture and identity of young people*

The cultural scenario that Caribbean youth have inherited, the main features of which were summarized in this study in the section on the social and cultural framework, is characterized by psychological, cultural and economic dependence, and has spawned a crop of "Afro-Saxons" who still rely on external sources for defining and legitimatizing their identity. Lacking the self-confidence to acknowledge and appreciate their own art, culture, beliefs and approaches to life, young people—with tacit agreement and subtle direction from their leaders—have turned outside for self-acknowledgement, self-definition, and self-validation. Their heroes are Michael Jackson, Prince, and Madonna; culinary tastes are geared to pizzas and a range of North American fast foods. Musical preferences—aided and abetted by radio stations which minimize the playing of local music—have little to do either lyrically or musically with the rhythms and concerns of their native countries. The fashion influence is direct, immediate and unadulterated. In the humid 90 degrees-in-the-shade heat of their tropical climes, youth can be seen sporting leather jackets, woollen sweaters, and knee-high leather boots suitable for North American winters.

Harmless though they might seem, these signals are mere outward manifestations of a deeper eradication and contempt of self, history and culture. This process has brought about a cultural alienation that has invited and feted the lack of commitment and confidence youth show in the development of these Caribbean societies which so desperately need the inputs and participation of their youth. These young people cannot be blamed entirely, since their involvement has neither been aggressively sought, nor dutifully encouraged as an imperative of the development process. Because they have not been presented with their own heroes, a recognition and appreciation of their own culture and history and a validation of their existence, they have sought their cultural

moorings in other harbours. A most confusing and discouraging feature for populations which comprise large percentages of visibly African-derived peoples, is the persistent correlation between recognition of and adherence to indigenous African-derived cultural traditions (particularly in the religious sphere, the area in which African retentions have been proven to be the least diluted) and poverty, dispossession and low socioeconomic status. For culture has been so vested with economic, social and political significance that European cultural influences have remained synonymous with high status and the association of African-derived culture with low social and economic status has persisted.

Cultural dependency and economic dependency are so mutually reinforcing that to minimize or ignore the centrality of the cultural dynamic in the development process, as most of the English-speaking Caribbean countries have done, is to have made a false start. Some of the larger Caribbean nations have made commendable attempts at integrating the dynamics of politics, culture and economics. Guyana's policies of self-reliance have dictated experimentation and discovery of an entire range of indigenous foods, and encouraged the development of an exciting range of products in pottery, wood, textiles, etc. Very early in its post-colonial history, Jamaica developed and implemented a fully spelled-out cultural policy. Consequently, Jamaica can easily be considered the English-speaking Caribbean country with the most highly evolved sense of nationalism, this in spite of the tremendous political, social and economic challenges which that country is continuing to experience. Even though Jamaica—particularly because of its proximity to the United States—is also exposed to real threats of cultural imperialism, it remains well-grounded in its indigenous culture and traditions, with a highly advanced industry of cultural products.

A cultural policy for Trinidad and Tobago has still not been well articulated. Hence the full birth of a true national identity and culture has been aborted. Lacking is the cultural will for seeking viable solutions to unemployment through the establishment of industries based on indigenous art forms: steelband factories, recording industries, food processing, etc., or for capitalizing on expanding markets for medicinal

teas, herbs and aromatic spices. These and other opportunities have been doomed to remain mere talking points as young people become unemployed and addicted to alien cultural values. The creation of training schools in the arts is another vehicle for both reinforcing an indigenous culture and providing solutions to severe economic problems. Such culturally-focussed projects could generate self-employment for artists, wood carvers, steelband tuners, etc. Local furniture industries could employ and train youth, not only in their creative development, but in managing and marketing functions. While there are some token ventures in some of these areas, there does not exist the aggressive thrust needed to stimulate the development and successful implementation of old ideas or to inspire more creative innovations.

The role of the media in preserving and promoting a national culture and identity and in defending national and regional cultural and political sovereignty cannot be overemphasized. The media's impact on the minds of young nationals bears a tremendous responsibility and obligation in the shaping and directing of attitudes, tastes and priorities. Yet the media in the English-speaking Caribbean figure among the most serious adversaries to the forging of a national culture and a regional identity. Even more dangerous than the irrelevant and counter-productive images forced on the minds of the young is the repeated failure to provide outlets for self-expression, creativity and, by extension, self-validation. This stifles the energy and forces that fuel this process of self-validation. Instead of employing young people in the creation of products that reflect their own environment and life experiences for local education and entertainment, a steady diet of canned foreign productions is forced into the consciousness of unsuspecting Caribbean youth. Ironically, while Afro-Americans reject the inanity of television

programmes which neither reflect, project nor seriously address their lifestyles, and while both black and white Americans protest against the gruesome violence entering their homes under the guise of entertainment, Caribbean youth, through their State-owned media, are readily exposed to these negative influences.

The danger of television lies in the very nature of the medium, which, in its projection of exact images, leaves little room for imagination. Consequently, Caribbean youth are more familiar with affairs in New York, Los Angeles and Dallas than with the festivals, customs and endangered traditions of their own countries. Television advertising, both local and foreign, continues to project beauty standards that, at best, are at variance with the physical composition of the populace and, at worst, perpetuate the racist perceptions of the colonial period. Sophisticated communications technology which now enables Caribbean countries to receive American television stations directly is a serious threat to the ability of Caribbean youth to shape their own views of their world and of themselves.

It is in this environment that young people in the English-speaking Caribbean struggle for self-identity, which they were led to believe would emerge with independence, and a national culture and identity which, through its priority attention to nation-building, would re-establish new attitudes to work, race, class, religion, beauty, etc. Pursuit of this aim should, out of necessity and commitment, unite the talents of all citizens and, by design, ensure total participation and integration of the nation's youth in the express purpose of utilizing all its human resources. It is this right which young people were led to believe was theirs, and which now appears to have been abrogated by the myopic vision of their elders.

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## Thinking about youth

*Carlos Martínez Moreno*

In addition to the works of a more specialized kind which ECLAC's Social Development Division has produced in connection with International Youth Year, there are others which examine the reality of youth from a global standpoint. One such is this article, in which the author, a distinguished Uruguayan intellectual who died recently, puts together some thoughts which reveal certain hidden facets of that reality. The sections presented here are only a few parts of a larger work and may be seen as a modest tribute to his memory.

The article begins with a consideration of university youth, its attitudes and its almost always critical and non-conformist role, and it then moves to the usually impenetrable topic of the languages of young people and their significance as a means of communication with the rest of society. It then takes up the topic of the relationship of young people with politics, which leads to a discussion of indifference and rebellion as typical forms of youth conduct. Then, in the section entitled "Outline of the anomalous", the author reflects on juvenile drug addiction and delinquency and then deals with some of the beliefs and forms of organization of today's young people, especially those which have emerged in the trade-union and political fields which, in conjunction with the universities, contain the seeds of a positive change in the direction of Latin American societies. The final section is intended to underline the decisive role of education in the development of youth.

## I

### University youth

The universities were always centres for the dissemination of culture in Latin America. They were so from the colonial days and they have served as focal points of knowledge, bases for the extension of culture and distinguished homes for the families of political liberalism: San Marcos in Lima, San Carlos in Guatemala, Córdoba in Argentina. Through all the changing times they have held prestige and suffered persecution, in settings which have not ceased to be elitist (the dream of a university for the masses is still an unrealized and disturbing dream in Latin America). In Ecuador, one in six young people is illiterate and one in six young people attends university. Of course, the university as an institution is not responsible for this polarization; but it would be just as untrue to assert that it has always been able to avoid polarization and fulfill an historic role as a balance and fountain-head. In a world fraught with every kind of violent feeling and cruelty that would be to have asked the impossible of it, and of course it has not been achieved.

University reform has been a rich, complex and difficult process in Latin America. And the political events of the expression of the civic sentiments of the student body and of the affirmation of an independent outlook have militated—in different ways—for a radical separation of the programmes and government of the university, setting them apart from the institutional centres of government power; and these events have been reproduced time and again, with a rich multiplicity of content and certainly of intention. The universities of Latin America—a sector small in size but determinedly active in the continent's urban settings—already have their history and their martyrs and their victories. The first and most famous victory was the reform of the University of Córdoba, Argentina, in 1918: this became a kind of model for successive movements, even though today, as is natural, it has been left behind somewhat (but not forgotten) by the passage of time. Exactly half a century passed



between the Córdoba reform and the killing of hundreds of young demonstrators in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City in 1968; this event has passed into history linked with the Indian and more usual name of the site, which is Tlatelolco. The tragedy of Tlatelolco is still an unstaunchable wound in Mexico's public life and in the relations between the political authorities and the universities. The rebellion of French young people and students which spread from Nanterre to Paris and was much more famous than Tlatelolco in the global context caused only one student casualty in a remarkably rash episode. De Gaulle could witness, expectant, undaunted and majestic, the unfolding of the beautiful poetic slogans of the French 68, "power to the imagination" and so many others sprayed on walls in the Sorbonne, and in the suburbs and the provinces; and he could wait until the first crack appeared in the movement (the famous alliance of "workers and students, united and onwards") before moving against it with all the weight of his prestige and smashing it down. The French 68 has often been compared with the much bloodier days of the Commune in 1878. Thiers is a tiny figure beside Charles De Gaulle, and the adolescent Arthur Rimbaud was a protagonist much more bruised by the events than the autumnal Sartre; the approximate historical accounts have something inevitably contingent about them and they measure the differences with greater clarity than the possible similarities. The "workers and students" slogan has been invoked on many other occasions; in Uruguay's struggle for the university law in 1958 it was one of the reasons, after some ninety-odd years of continuous Colorado rule, for the first rotation of the country's traditional political parties in power. But in actual fact this was more the result of the proselytizing imagination of the student and political leaders than the fruit of a profound conviction on the part of the workers. It is a refrain shouted by young students when they demonstrate and collect funds to help the workers in their labour disputes, but it does not issue with the same fervour from the mouths of the genuine workers, to whom the students still seem marked with the stigma of an incurable elitist paternalism. It belongs to the realm of desiderative formulas rather than to that of social reality.

It would not be right to interpret these remarks as criticism of the student movement, branding it as chimerical and schizophrenic, not even in those societies which —under pressure of constant frustration— seem to urge young people towards chimerical and schizophrenic behaviour, not to mention the fiercest resentment. No. With all the defects and uncertainties inherent in its search for self-identity and growth over the harshest of terrains and beset by the most pressing needs for action, the university —through the efforts of its young people and indeed of its teachers— has been the most constant, at times the only source of living culture in our societies. For decades the upper class has taken refuge in anachronistic reading-matter which gives it an air of staleness which may perhaps pass for restraint and elegance; and as it sinks in the waters of a crisis which has shaken its foundations and eroded its buttresses, it has been neither dramatic nor tragic, but frivolous; it has abandoned itself to spas and travel and circulated among mansions on the point of collapse, distracting itself with best sellers of compelling vulgarity which have served to pass the time but offer neither enlightenment or drama. Anyone writing a paper on the libraries of the oligarchy in the past two centuries will find a pathetic picture of wasting vitality, of the decline of the spiritual reproductivity of a class. The already antiquated library of leather-bound classics and esteemed French works from the days when it aspired to be seen as a cultivated rather than a merely mannered class has given way to paperback trash bought in the supermarkets of its travels, travels which 80 years ago were made by boat and to Paris but today are made by jumbo to Miami or Disneyland.

In the absence of a tradition of solid institutions, with an original structure, independent and genuinely creative, the universities have had a role which has often taken them far beyond the bounds of teaching and which they have had to perform and play out in the realms of culture. They have thus taken on a central function in an institutionalized culture which in Latin America has had a much broader and less stratified and academic range than in the big European universities founded in the Middle Ages, the bearers of a fundamental continuity

down the centuries (from the thirteenth century to today). And as the universities have been the breeding grounds for the anxieties of youth, especially in the middle and upper classes, through them young people have acquired a cultural protagonism which they have been able to develop only on a more limited and partial scale in other institutions, from clubs to the liberal athenaeums so fashionable among the American intelligentsia of the nineteenth century. In the history of education, artistic creation and political thought, the universities have had their broadest field of action in Latin America. And the young people, who since 1918 up to the present have waged a tireless struggle for a share in the government of the universities, with upheavals which have spread to embrace the whole of civil life and have even affected the very social peace of our republics, obtain in that field an experience of participation which they have not always found in the paths of political life within the structures of the parties and the framework of the State.

In the developed societies the culture and the establishment stand as allies, unshaken by the upheavals of the most critical of transitory periods. And in contrast, given the traditional role of the universities in Latin America as rebels, protesters, objectors and non-conformists, culture and establishment have come to represent antagonistic values in the new world. As a result of this contradiction, young

people have acquired the role of more overt protagonists within a whole society in the throes of development and exposed to a larger number of crises of growth, as has been the case of Latin American society.

The proletarian class has waged an obsessional struggle for its existence, literally excluded from the benefits of culture and the leisure of reading. It has been the middle class, given its most dashing expression by the universities, which has maintained the life and dissemination of a culture for which, by the way, neither the State nor the upper classes ever wanted to assume responsibility.

When we see the encouraging signs and symptoms of a new lifestyle in the trade unions and the other spheres in which young people are now imposing their own youthful stamp, which for years had seemed lost in stagnation and obsolescence or cast off once and for all, it is proper to ask whether—in times not necessarily more sombre than the past which are now emerging in embryonic form—this cause of giving a new reason for faith and existence to young people will find the universities, in good time, no longer so alone and isolated in their boldness as they have been up till now. From the trade unions and the classrooms are springing the shoots of a new and uncertain—at times even shaky—kind of hope. Time and events will tell whether it is possible to await this hope while still remaining young.

## II

### The language of young people

People are sometimes amazed at the limited vocabulary of young people's speech, at the broad and empty areas of silence in which their words fall with constant unspoken appeals to the listener's imagination. Borges commented once that the "you know?", the refusal to State one's meaning taking the form of a proposal to the other person that he should explain or guess at everything for himself, was the most typical

manifestation of the conversational impoverishment of the River Plate region. But very similar comments can be found in Mexico City, offered as criticism of what was called there, in the slang of the city's young people, the language of the *onda* (wave). Young people talk, in fact, with the support of the crutch of a wealth of clichés, stereotypes and stray coinages of unknown origin and familiar effect.

Of course, all this depends initially on the cultural levels of the young person concerned, be he an illiterate from the countryside or a university student from the town. But it is not unusual for the countryman to use the lively expressiveness of earthy language, the proven effectiveness as means of expression of idioms and proverbs and colourful phrases which do not have to be thought up because they are indelibly recorded and form part of a folk culture. The anthropologist Lombardi Satriani has recorded sayings —sometimes in dialect— of an unfailing expressiveness among Italians in the south of the peninsular (Sicilians, Calabrians, etc.) from very direct, basic and unliterary cultural strata. All of us, given a little patience and listening, can acquire a similar way of talking. And in contrast, it is possible to find young university people who express themselves sullenly, with no apparent interest in being understood, with a vocabulary sometimes as crude and limited, if not as inexpressive, as that of an illiterate.

Linguists usually argue that in the case of young people this fact implies an act or gesture of mistrust of language, of the expressive values accepted by the majority of people. The young person who deliberately speaks badly and does not do so (or does not think he does so) out of lack of culture or mere shyness is often rebelling against language as a weapon of control, an instrument which invests some with power over others. In the age and status war, in which we are all suspected of using our gifts with an eye to power and aggression and with the intention of dominating or imposing ourselves on others, a young person who is reluctant to take the opportunities of expression offered by language is mistrustful of communication itself and of the yokes and servitudes which may derive from it. Especially when he comes from a very inarticulated and uncultured background, without skills or power, he is certainly trying to ensure the inviolability of his world or the world of his values, to which he is bound; and he does not want that world to be questioned by others, especially older, more cultivated, gifted or powerful people.

Quite apart from this element of being an adjunct to poverty (as it might be put in forensic language), when the young person prefers to use speech in such a way that he cannot be reached

through it, there is certainly an intention to play down the emphatic and criticize the overstated or the gushing as being immodest or intrusive. The teacher who, after fighting against his pupils' dumbness or unsociable verbal poverty, gains their confidence and manages to "make them talk" —and the expression is hateful, for it evokes the determination of the interrogators at police stations or in the "cells" of the Investigation Department— is usually astonished to find that once its enveloping cloak of apparent sullenness is removed, this language proves to be, as an expression of thought, much more versatile and rich than he had previously been disposed to believe. This fact is usually attributed to the intergenerational age gap and the differences in the respective situations, rather than to differences of cultural level. However, it is sometimes the least cultivated person, the one who has least education and attracts least attention, who in fact expresses himself in the richest and most fluent vein and with least restraint or ambiguity, as far as his ability permits. The least smart, the least wary, the most open and ingenuous, the one with the coarsest and most basic reactions is often the most eloquent, for he has never thought of using language as a defence system to shelter or hide behind. And, except in areas where it is obviously impossible for him to express himself because of inadequacies of vocabulary, the frankest person is usually the most eloquent and wordy. A dose of shyness or indifference about expressing oneself usually lies behind the silence of young people, or in more extreme cases, which psychiatrists usually describe as symptoms of moral insensitivity or anaesthesia, behind the absolute vacuity or neutrality of feeling which is the attitude of the speaker to the impression that he may provoke in the listener.

In the slang or jargon (what the grammarians call thieves' cant) of the urban criminal world —and the criminals are not exclusively or predominantly young but they do include young people— the cryptic effect of the modes of speech is due to the use of a language of the persecuted and hunted, a language of the malefactor hounded and oppressed by the authorities. This language changes its skin every so often, as a fugitive's dodge, to escape, to make himself unintelligible to the investigator and

thus to evade him. Becco has written about this many times, and Gobello has edited several dictionaries of thieves' slang. And in the speech of our big and chaotic cities literature is usually expressed in similar modes, although perhaps not with similar intentions (for outside the criminal sphere language is used for communication and not for concealment). Perhaps the key lies in the fact that it is an attempt to communicate with some but not with all. In a novel which had a great success some five years ago in Mexico —written by a young poet, homosexual and drug addict, Luiz Zapata— the language is so impenetrably cryptic that when the critics asked for the keys to its understanding, the author himself answered that it was "the language of the Sanborns of the Colonia Roma" of those days. In other words, to understand properly the story of *Adonis García, el Vampiro de la Colonia Roma* (1979) one was required to be up in the jargon spoken in one of the many cafés or meeting places in the city at a given period. The text of another young Mexican story-teller, Castañeda by name, requires an understanding of the slang used by political

criminals in one of the prisons, in which the author had been held for a while. It would not therefore be going too far to say that the language of young people is segmented or split up into hundreds or thousands of slangs (for there are also the languages of the universities, the factories, sports, the jet set, etc.). This diversity of modes, forms or styles of communication indicates or suggests a panorama of neurotic fragmentation, of non-communication, the isolation or shipwreck of youth in a fearsome and largely unknown sea (fearsome because unknown, unknown because fearsome). When it is remembered that there are more than three thousand recorded languages and dialects spoken in Latin America, in addition to many unrecorded in dictionaries and not accepted by the academics, it can be seen that in this chaos the possibility of communicating with a young person, as a claim to be communicating with all young people, simply does not exist —it is a chimera. In our need to transmit a message to the youth of Latin America —potentially to all young people— we must not lose sight of this unavoidable reef.

### III

## Young people and politics

Is it true that today's young people are indifferent to politics and show no interest in knowing about politics and even less in being involved in it? The observer hears this said very often, at the same time as he thinks he is witnessing evidence of the opposite.

Leaving aside the usual reservations (there are many kinds of young person, depending on the setting in which he has grown up and been trained, on the education he has received, on his occupation or lack of occupation in the environment in which he moves), it is very important in this case, more so than with other topics, to agree on the meaning of the terms —on the language.

It has been said that a young person is by definition a *parricide*. In other words, he has the feeling of having been deceived and cheated, caught unawares in his original innocence and made to accept outmoded or discredited values, he is wary and mistrustful and refuses to accept the standards and categories extolled or revered by his parents' generation. This kind of allegorical or symbolic parricide is found in literature, in music, in hobbies and amusements and also, of course, in politics.

But this is not just a generational reflex. Too many upheavals and too many injustices, too much suffering and too many great historical frauds have taken place for this disappointment

and withdrawal of young people not to be entirely credible and justified with a vengeance. A young person lives, beset by impulses that are both uncontrollable and sincere, between commitment and non-commitment, between what he believes in and what he denies, between the extremes to which he gives the support of an ardent faith and those which he rejects with no less fervour. In this pendulum movement the young person is largely explained. Firstly, it is characteristic of youth to form these opinions primarily from the standpoint of moral reproach, of ethical authority and censoriousness. A State or a situation or a society declined or collapsed or was smashed at a given moment, at a point which it is thought can be accurately defined. The young person sets out to find those responsible for this disaster among its claimed victims. Zavalita in Vargas Llosa's *Conversación en la catedral* expresses his inner defeat by subsuming it in the misfortunes of Peru under the Odría dictatorship. But young people feel no sympathy for the Zavalitas, nor are they inclined to believe them; the person with most to complain about can be, in his way, a culprit, an accomplice or abettor. His discouragement or cowardice may have caused many disasters. Young people do not believe in the beaten, although they can extoll martyrs: Zavalita is not a legitimate object of commiseration, but Che Guevara is exalted by young people as a hero or martyr. There is no contradiction here. There is a kind of charisma of death which gives this kind of authenticated hero a unique place in the pure devotion of the young. The defeated hero has fewer niches now than formerly, now that experience has shown that Cuba and Algeria and Viet Nam were possible and that it was feasible to begin to build something on these stones. But begin to build what and how?

A young person commits himself to what he believes in, but he repudiates with equal thoroughness what he does not believe in. In Spain it is usual to talk of "pass-ism" as an attitude found primarily among young people. They revise retrospectively the history which they were unable to experience and, as a result of this analysis, they say: "if this is democracy (or if this republicanism, etc.), then I pass", as if they were handling counters in a game. This is called

"pass-ism" —a state of mind and a mental attitude: wash your hands of what you do not believe, mark out positions and then proclaim your opposition to anything that might have some claim to your acceptance. It is a strange ideology (it would be better to call it the mould of a debunking ideology) of apathy and alienation.

A young person feels a need for absolutes and in his search for them he is willing to sacrifice the blessing of life itself. In this search the possible counts for little and is sacrificed on the altars of the absolute. In his need for absolutes a young person usually reads offbeat and revolutionary thinkers, such as Marcuse. And in this same need he will enlist as a guerrilla and in direct actions, which are less suspected of compromises, impurities and deceits than formal political action—even when this action is taken by the Left.

In a situation fuelled originally by youthful enthusiasm for the person and Bolivian crusade of Che Guevara—a romantic episode crowned by extremes of martyrology that can stir the imagination and arouse young people to action—the preaching of the French ideologist Régis Debray (today an adviser in the Government of Francois Mitterand) had a passing but intense vogue among young people through his treatise *Revolution in the Revolution*. That this pamphlet should have been issued from the official Cuban printing office shows how two clearly separate tracks can come together at one point and become blurred. That point, clearly, is now past; but it has certainly left its imprint on the outlook of people who were young in the 1960s. At that time those young people experienced, fleetingly but passionately, the incarnation of the absolute in themselves; and they took the absolute to its utter limits.

This demarcation and this gap mean condemnation and dismissal of the traditional structures, and of everyone who wants to make the young person into a *client*, a passive or recruited follower, a number to be counted but not to be taken seriously.

In this sense, obedience to a monolithic party discipline, for example, disgusts young people; it hardly ever earns their blind acceptance and often meets with their suspicion. The old image of the traditional political club ("*el club*", as it has

been called) has now been irremediably discredited. But it is not politics itself that is discredited, rather the way of making politics. It was sufficient, for example, in Uruguay in 1971 that these ossified and worm-ridden forms should be replaced by others stemming spontaneously from the working-class movements for it to be realized that it was not that young people wanted to stay out of politics but rather that, up to then, they had not been given the means of joining in. Given the complex cogwork of State control in today's world, the political club may well be an unavoidable evil in the relationship between citizens and institutions. Aldo Solari once demonstrated this clearly in an article published in the Gazette of the University of Montevideo under the title *Réquiem por la izquierda* (Requiem for the Left). But although the club may be inevitable, the young prefer to ignore it, distance themselves from it and express their moral repugnance of it and absolute indifference to it. It might be acceptable to defeated and mendicant spirits which have no difficulty in submitting in exchange for the advantage which they expect to gain from their dependence. The young person —youth is an age of the spirit and the mind as well as a biological age— does not want to deliver himself up to anyone, at any price. If later, as he grows older, his whole political outlook changes, then he may think differently. But at that moment he will have ceased to be young.

Today's young person has a very clear memory of the punishment he received for his practical jokes and harmless digs. And he gains a kind of elemental wisdom from the memory of his setbacks, drawing on the experience of all those times he has been cheated. It is also true that young people often get involved in desperate adventures in the knowledge of what they are, with a kind of blunt indifference to risk and death. Even allowing that the murder of thousands of disappeared persons in Argentina may have other explanations much less redeeming for the murderers than the explanation of a supposed masochism on the part of revolutionary youth in Argentina in the 1970s and 1980s, it cannot be denied that some senseless and preposterous adventures under arms imply a kind of romantic suicide wish, of

the kind which shaped the tragic destiny of the "Montoneros" and led to the torture and crimes which they then suffered.

After the flood tides of history come the ebbs, after the *corsi* the *recorsi*. Disillusioned and deceived by an overly ambitious plan which excludes, rejects or exterminates them, young people have recently begun to put their constructive energy into projects concerned with what is decently possible, bringing to them many acts of individual bravery which can achieve them a place closer to the great ideological explosions of history. This has included the self-management enterprises and the experiments with agrarian and urban co-operatives in Latin America. They have been fed by a community outlook, anarchic in spirit, which mistrusts the panaceas offered by the State and limits itself to seeking a more modest immediate and attainable salvation, safe from the deceitful wholesale promises of the leviathan of this century, the State. Co-operativism, in places where there exists a minimum of social homogeneity to make it viable, has written pages and fought battles which are not to be disdained in these times.

Some of this has produced, without doubt, a new configuration on the Left, far removed from what has come to be called "traditional communism". A kind of grassroots communism, acrat or libertarian, in which can also be seen a survival of some of the theories of Trotsky. These forms of grassroots communism, often nationalist, acrat or libertarian (acrat without any dogma from the Second International, in a way acrat without knowing it, just as Monsieur Jourdain spoke prose in *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*), are the ones which inform the mixture of theory and practice of direct action, for example in the E.R.P. in Argentina or the M.L.N. in Uruguay. These are youth movements, sometimes drawn from the Marxist ranks, sometimes from the nationalist, with a clear residue of disillusionment in both cases, and with a coincidence of views which might have been seen as diametrically opposed a few years ago. In no way are we talking about groups which embrace masses of young people or which can speak for the characteristic and definitive feelings of youth in any of the known cases. They are apt to deviate towards terrorism or to live the terrorist life by preference, as in the case of the

Baader-Meinhof gang; and in many ways they show clear symptoms of mental disorder in their adoption of absolutist or radical attitudes similar to the ones which once defined the nihilists under Tsarism or the anarchists at the time of the assassinations or the fanatical gangs of Muslims or Jews today (mortal and irreconcilable hostility is no obstacle to similarity or even copying).

These groups, made up of young people, are also led by young people (Daniel Cohn Bendit,

Rudy Dutschke or Red Rudy, Andreas Baader and Ursula Meinhof, the IRA bosses, etc.). The same principle of homogeneity contrasting with the senility of the established political leaderships operated in Sierra Maestra. These young people are not of course all young people or even, numerically, a very large proportion of young people. But in some areas they have played the game for everyone and played it for all its worth, and their claim to represent everyone cannot be denied.

## IV

### Indifference and rebellion

It is not true, therefore, that young people have indifference as a general or dominant characteristic, and indeed it would be absurd to try to examine them in such terms. But a gallery of youth would not be complete without a portrait of the indifferent. Indifference can be confused with taciturnity or insanity and with gratuitousness and amorality. They are perfectly discernible background features but, in reality as in art, they can occur in areas of rich, complex and indeed rough graining.

The indifferent ones, who provided the title for one of the novels of Alberto Moravia, attract much attention among young people, who are dominated in many cases by the *angst* of originality, by the neurotic anxiety of singularity which can also lead to heroism, crime, vice or suicide. We are all familiar with this character in literature: he is the perpetrator of the gratuitous act in Gide and he is Meersault in Camus's *The Outsider*. He is Eladio Linacero in Onetti's *El Pozo*, which introduced in 1939 a kind of moral indifference which some people attached to our urban lifestyle in Latin America and which actually has more to do with Céline than with the Montevideo or Buenos Aires of the 1940s.

But we are not talking about the indifferent as a character but as a living creature found among our young people. We are not talking about Meersault, who kills the Arab because the

sun at the beach bothers him, but about the juvenile delinquent in Montevideo who, behind the wheel of a stolen car, knocks down and kills a fireman just to hear the noise his helmet makes as it hits the ground; we are talking about the Algerian girl Albertine Sarrazin, handed over to adoptive parents who do not understand her and launched on her own adolescent initiative into prostitution, assault, robbery, prison, love and finally death—a route covered in only 29 years of life, leaving us three autobiographical novels, testimonials of an unmistakable narrative talent and moral (or amoral) tone. We are talking about heroes or antiheroes like Elvis Presley, young and drug-addicted and adored by young people who would like to be like these myths; all within a kind of strange, strident and ambiguous juvenile communion; we are talking about John Lennon, the most talented of the Beatles, who was murdered by one of his fans, one of his admirers, in a destructive impulse of the most equivocal of cults, an Erostratus who wants to become one with his idol through the bond of his crime, in an act of consubstantiation and empathy, of superimposition of identities. The malefactor, the homosexual and the drug addict are not merely types invented by the creative urge, but creatures—victims, victimizers and witnesses—of flesh and bone, living in a time when all their voices are raised as

one because they think there may be a place where they will find the truth of so much suffering or any truth which may have something to say and reasons to be heard. It is the mood of the times, that is what it is called.

The Greeks believed that the chosen ones of the gods died young. But neither Raymond Radiguet nor Alain Fournier nor, before them and more important than them, Arthur Rimbaud thought themselves chosen ones of the gods, yet all three of them—the first two in the 1914 War and the third in the torture of a martyrdom which he carried in his own devastated centre and which led him to write *Une saison en enfer* before he was 18 and to keep silent for the next 20 years, until the mutilation of his body and his horrible death in a Marseilles hospital—were consumed in the flower of their youth and at dizzying speed. The violence inherent in their destinies was to bring them to the scaffold, for having raped women in the case of Chessman or for having stolen a rubber band in childhood like the deserter in Enzensberger's story.

There is a pathos of violence which these young people inflict on others or suffer themselves but which is—in all cases—equally gratuitous and liberating and inexorable and tragic. This violence is often the other face of true violence, its dynamic alternative or its all-consuming apotheosis.

When the behaviour of young people is viewed from outside, it sometimes seems to take the form of hysterical violence, when they applaud, when they sing, when they are amused or even when they are only laughing. But we rarely stop to think that this daily violence might be the purgation of a sick world (of a sick body) infected with inequality, injustice and hypocrisy, crippled by this ossified and counterfeit system which seeks shelter (or protection) in institutional stagnation. And just as the worst form of terrorism is State terrorism, the worst form of violence is perhaps not the violence inflicted by young people on society but that which society inflicts on the young. Some of this is found in the metaphor of society as a carnivorous flower in the delightful anonymous fable of the French May 68. Young people who usually seem to us to be gratuitously and unexpectedly violent are often perhaps only

turning back the violence with which society batters them, with which it rejects them, and with which it coerces them.

They flaunt their protest and their rebellion in the face of this violence. The rebellion, the non-conformity, their protests, the deceptions that insult them, their deception, their failure: their disillusionment. Disillusionment, that demythologizing word (or debunking, which is the same thing). Psychologists call adolescence the age of rebellion, the age of protest and also the age of vulgarity. It is the age when every man symbolically kills his father, the age of parricide, of the definition of sexual identity and, by sublimation, of the assumption of spiritual independence, of personal identity and sometimes of artistic creation. It is the age at which so many young people (especially in the towns) buy and decorate those horrible jackets, covered with slogans, which they display with the pride of self-worship and innocence, of arrogance and rejection. 'What is refined about bad taste is the aristocratic pleasure of giving offence', Baudelaire once said. It is out of this kind of feeling that they wear these jackets, in a perhaps multivalent and equivocal gesture: or as an exercise in deception about themselves (first supposition), or to make people laugh at their own ridiculous and helpless situation, or to express through black humour their own loneliness and non-belonging, their lack of supports in life.

Adolfo Bioy Casares wrote some years ago a short and memorable fantasy, one of the most melancholy and caustic novels ever conceived about the everyday urban life of one of our Latin American cities, in this case Buenos Aires. The book was called *Diario de la guerra del cerdo* (Diary of the Pig's War) and the horror invented in it concerned the ineluctable and mysterious slaughter, decreed and executed by young people against the old, in the suburbs of the city. It was a kind of dramatic illustration of the law of those days, implemented in the night on the street corners of the suburbs. The unbearable and insidious evil which this fantasy expressed, with a rhythm like that of a secret and slow-moving trial by ordeal, was assuredly heralding other misfortunes, concerning which there is no proof that they were inflicted by the old on the young, but they were inflicted by somebody on the



young, with a violence and lack of discrimination and a frenzy which Bioy's cautious, mature and civilized work could not have foreseen. The disappeared persons of Argentina, the thousands of young dead of Argentina are a response by life to art, to paraphrase Wilde. Bioy Casares could never have imagined it.

The upsets of recent years in Latin America (revolution in Cuba, urban or rural guerrilla warfare in other countries) have opened the way to generation gaps and break-downs in the lives of family groups, to the extent that it is possible to talk without exaggeration of an allegory of *filicide*, with equal justification as in the case of the parricide discussed above. And psychologists, essayists, analysts and psychotherapists have found in this situation a rich vein of human reactions relating to problems of cohabitation between spouses, conflicts in the relations between parents and children, etc. The reactions of the parents to the behaviour and decisions of their children, to

their acts and decisions of a political nature, range from the extremes of the blindest and most painful disapproval, incomprehension and rejection to the most rigid emotional forms of sublimation and surrender and total unconditional acceptance, with all the consequences which these two states of mind produce.

In the case of young people who adopt radical political attitudes —sometimes these social groups remain in their usual places of residence, sometimes they have had to go into exile as a result of persecution— they usually exhibit the symbolic features of *filicide*, such as the excessive exaltation of the importance of the young in the relations of the family group. The allegory of Saturn devouring his children, painted by Goya, and the inverse but equally macabre allegory of young people killing their parents illustrate with horrifying effect the processes of self-identity of thousands of young people at this time in the life of Latin America.

## V

### Outline of the anomalous

There is little to tell about the virtuous young person, or his story is boring and unexciting for the reader. But contemplation of the abysses of vice —to put it melodramatically, in the style of the supposition itself— is much more interesting and will clearly attract more readers. This is how the notion has spread among imaginative and unthinking people that young people are particularly depraved or perverse, particularly cruel, particularly sadistic. Nobody tells the story of respectable women, as Amado Nervo would say. That story simply does not exist.

The generic term "malefactor" is sometimes used to describe people who live close or adjacent to the criminal zones, from vagrancy and begging to illicit trafficking even when not directly criminal; however, since we have all had the importance of drug addiction hammered home to us, it occupies centre stage.

The young drug addict is a symptom of a genuine social problem and he should not simply be lumped together with other miscreants, even though frequently, out of the necessity created by his addiction and the compelling drive to obtain the means of procuring the drug, he may commit criminal acts: he robs to buy it, he assaults to buy it, and he kills for it, or perhaps merely engages in dealing as a means of financing his vice and his dependence. Criminologists and toxicologists distinguish between the venial and relatively harmless forms (such as smoking marihuana) and the destructive and hard forms (such as the taking of heroin, the cruelest and most expensive drug); in the long term, and especially for the young, both habits begin to erode, damage and destroy the personality and even life. The young drug addict, unless he recovers on his own account or receives treatment, will eventually be lost. And his

parasitism and dependence, his tyrannical and vicious subjugation can drive him into other forms of misdemeanour and crime. Although marihuana and poppies are grown openly in the fields—not to mention the hidden corners of the cities—the consumption of the drug is not a problem for rural youth, except for those who are involved in its production, who in any case are few in numbers. It is, however, a problem for vast sectors of urban youth, including young people in the universities and from the upper classes. Through imitation, through social contamination, and also through forms of neurosis or unbalance which city life generates in many young people, it is in the urban areas that the concern over drugs takes on the dimensions of an alarming problem. People who study these facts scientifically point to the effects of other causes (problems ranging from the family situation to the actual mental make-up of the subject) and to the elements of novelty, imitation and snobbery in the formulation of many habits which subsequently cannot be eradicated.

In many instances there is clearly an initial element of protest, rebellion and self-assertion, in this case through the adoption of a misguided practice. The young person who smokes marihuana is seeking not only a fleeting refuge in his tiny beatific paradise but also means of communion and sociability, paradoxically in an oasis of shared isolation in company. Young people form alliances and create bonds—with which they know they are separating themselves, in an insidious way, from other young people and investing themselves with the prestigious aura of "the damned"—when they get together to share out the cost and divide up a pile of marihuana cigarettes. And the sublimation of this status of excluded, proscribed and damned persons, which heightens and stimulates the fantasies of many young minds, prompts them to proclaim on the walls of the universities and sometimes to scribble—in negation—on the edges of political posters which speak of other revolutions, "Marihuana rules!" or "Pot rules!", to use their term.

In many cases of juvenile drug-taking there are radical problems of loneliness, of a thirst for communication accompanied by an inability to communicate, in a society which has failed to

create myths, at least in the eyes of the young; this gives them a feeling of anxiety, of being shut in by an enveloping mist from which there is absolutely no way out.

All this often takes place within the framework of a related mythology. Marihuana is smoked in conjunction with the reading—among initiates—of usually bad and immature poetry written by themselves, or very often submerged in a sea of music—usually rock—in the gloomy and deafening setting of a discoteque or, more cheaply and modestly, with the ears glued to a juke box. In such cases the act of drug-taking is merely part of a rite, a detail of an exclusive and possibly aggressive cult which, in its purest form, is solipsistic, segregating and silent. This cult also has its gods, who participate or have participated in the whole paraphernalia of this kind of religion.

Not all young people, or even a majority of them, take drugs. The evil is found most frequently in the towns and, paradoxically, in social strata which have a decent level of education and even enjoy relatively sophisticated cultural standards. In the socially and economically poorest classes the practice is found less often, although the regrettable evil of its "democratization" must be closely watched: in addition to being less destructive, marihuana is also more easily obtainable than other drugs, and in the universities, which in some towns are tending to become mass environments, it is the most widespread. Accordingly, drug addiction among the poor (who sniff glue and get high on the vapour) could give cause for concern if it were to increase. In any case, all these practices call for education measures directed at young people and designed to speak to them persuasively and truthfully, without giving rise to fears and moral stigma, without treating these practices as Satanic acts, which has proved counter-productive, not to say useless.

So-called juvenile delinquency has brought forth from the experts hundreds of meditations and thousands of pages. One of the theories no longer discussed today is that this is a question of criminality of external rather than internal cause. In other words, the effect of the environmental factors and the disorderly conduct which they prompt in young people prevail over the motivations, impulses and

stimuluses found in the subject's own psychological make-up. Lombroso's speculations about the born or atavistic criminal are today undergoing thorough revision, although they are not entirely discredited. In any event, in this intractable sphere we must still think in terms of sanatoriums and hospitals or shelters rather than of prison or reformatory. We are dealing with sick people and in some cases with mad people, and not with persons guided by their own free will (and this notion of pure free will is dangerous and inconsistent in many cases) and therefore responsible for their actions. In the cases which, for the sake of simplicity, may be called normal, a young person's delinquency seems to be influenced much more by forces external to himself than by internal ones. The external is more decisive, stronger and intractable than the internal in the case of a young person who is still not fully formed but is exposed to the influence of so many distorting impulses.

Despite this, there is no discussion in our countries—in the majority of cases—of any other more practical expedient than court proceedings and imprisonment; as if these evils were caused by too much freedom and must be opposed, dialectically, by the barriers of prison. Prisons in Latin America and throughout the world are horrible places. And in the case of many occasional or accidental delinquents, juveniles or even adults, they function merely as a segregated depository, if they are to be measured by the notion of confinement; and as emporiums of crime, if they are to be measured in terms of the development of many criminal careers which originate and are acquired and consolidated in the vices, experience and knowledge furnished by the first spell of imprisonment. Criminal statistics show this in the high recidivism rate. For this very reason, many criminologists are in favour of replacing short terms of imprisonment, especially for first offences, with other treatment.

But society reacts to its anxiety and its perception of the need for social protection. And in its own expression of this anxiety and in the opinions of its press and the statements of its parliamentarians society calls for heavier sentences and more draconian severity in prison

conditions, every time it is stirred up by the evidence of a crime (or a crime wave). It would be too much trouble to go to the causes. The first and most elemental of the forms of social peace is rooted in the locking-away of the guilty: the longer the term, the better; and it then turns out that the period of imprisonment serves as a launching pad to a criminal career for people who have erred only once. Popular sentiment feels that if there is crime—and a society cannot be without it, as Durkheim said—"the Criminal Code is to blame", because of its leniency or mildness; the Criminal Code and the law, because of the opportunities which, according to this flight of the popular imagination, any flexibility or liberality of treatment gives the criminal to repeat his offence. It is an immovable, ignorant and primitive mental fixation, which does not yield to proof to the contrary or to the statistical numbers or to the arguments for sentencing to suit the individual. Increasingly harsh prisons, prisons in perpetuity, are demanded by popular sentiment, so that people can feel that they are protected and can immediately stop thinking about the matter.

It is paradoxical that this ignorant belief in the beneficial effects of prison is found among the least favoured masses of the population, who ought logically to be the ones to have least faith in prison and should feel that it had been imposed on their lives as a concrete and sombre threat, as they are the ones most exposed to its rigours. The poor and lowly have an irrational sense of seeking their own security—in the midst of their deprivation and poverty—in the punishment and repression of others. Many people *believe* in prisons, seeing them as existing to guard us against other people, without noticing that throughout history prisons have always been overflowing with inmates from the working classes, who are the members of society least capable of avoiding, when the time comes, these most indiscriminate, disturbing and unjust forms of oppression.

This whole outlook is mistaken in practically all circumstances, but it is much more so in the case of juvenile delinquency. Mariano Ruiz Funes once asserted that the child was a pre-social and amoral being. And this description can often be applied to adolescents and young

people, even though strictly speaking they have ceased —biologically— to be children. In some of our countries the press and careless thinkers once invented an ineffable expression: they spoke of “infanto-juvenile” delinquents (after some years this term ceased to be used, and nobody claimed paternity for it, but the laws —meanwhile— had been enacted). Periodically the need is urged to lower the legal age-limit from which the perpetrator of an act can be held responsible and brought before the court. The rehabilitation of minors in reformatories convinces nobody; nor does the State, compelled to consider other needs and theories of security, have the money to spend on correctional institutions, on experiments with treatment in the family and other measures which the

scientists invent but which have no effect at all in persuading the ignorant. To lower the age of criminal responsibility means to advance the clock for many potential but preventable careers of crime which are nurtured in the prisons. But there is a conditioned social reflex, even among the humblest people, which feels that it is only possible to breathe and rest easily if other humble people are under arrest. And in recent years, with the vogue for the militarist doctrine of national security, the planning, equipping and building of more and more prisons has been raised to the status of official policy. The fact that these new, harsh and more rigorous prisons are intended for political prisoners, including large numbers of young people, offers an increasingly gloomy prospect.

## VI

### How young people organize themselves and what they believe in

How do young people come together and what do they believe in? In whom do they believe and how do they relate to each other, what do they talk about, what do they write, what do they read, what do they do in their free time, and how do they amuse themselves?

We have been sketching in some of the features of all these topics in the foregoing pages. But some conclusions must be drawn, amidst the disorder inherent in a largely spontaneous and, in tribute to the nature of the subject, always free meditation.

There are some healthy patterns to be discerned and affirmed. Alfred Sauvy spoke some time ago about “*la montée des jeunes*”, the ascent of the young. Although he was commenting mainly on certain demographic arguments and figures on the average age of the population —figures which differ in degree for youth from country to country in Latin America but are predominantly high and vigorous (Sauvy was talking about France in the post-war

period)— the ascent of the young in the age table has social and political implications of the greatest importance.

One in five of the inhabitants of Latin America is young, and this fact has very obvious implications for the future and the present which must be taken conscientiously into account in our final recommendations, when we reach the point of summation. But, meanwhile, what are these young people like (not just how many are they), how do they behave, in whom do they believe, what do they believe, how do they relax at leisure, what do they chat about, what do they write about, what things do they read about with greatest concern and deepest interest?

We have referred to a young and distinct style which the young —when they have the culture level and the education that will secure them a hearing— try to affix as the stamp of their specific presence. Youth is a topic which passes with age, as the sceptics sarcastically put it. They have seen pass by, they say, generation

after generation of young people whose purpose was invariably to change the world. But then these young people have matured and then they have aged and have yielded to the so-called dictates of a more realistic, resigned and melancholy prudence. And the world has changed too, but for reasons of its own needs not for reasons connected at various times with the needs of these successive generations of the young. Every age has the vanity and the conceit—the mistaken egocentrism, we might say—that it is a different age, in which the masters of the world toy with the option of unleashing the forces of the atom with such unscrupulous cruelty, might actually be that age of crucial decision which so many earlier ages, in their time, have thought themselves to be. Let us look, then, at the young, in this antechamber of our promised extermination. Their placement, tragic perhaps, does not suffice to make them better or worse. But let us agree that it does help to present them as qualitatively different.

There are signs of this change, moreover, and they are not necessarily of such catastrophic origins or such negative import. By an easily explained paradox, recent sufferings and hardships have produced some satisfactory fruit. This is true, as we have already said, of the new outlook of young trade unionists in Latin America. While the stagnation and ossification in official favour have perpetuated aged trade-union leaders in power and temporarily closed the door on new ones, those other spheres in which trade unionism has been tempered in the fires of rejection, trials, reverses and persecution have responded with young leaders, just as political and working-class as the older ones but more flexible and independent and with a more perceptive and less routine sense of the value of labour discipline. The style of these new leaders is easily distinguished from the rigid party stance and actually owes much to the traditional working-class leaders of a few decades ago, times of comparatively greater prosperity.

Similar things are beginning to happen in the leadership of the political parties struggling to overcome the disaster of decades of military dictatorship in several countries of Latin America. This necessary renovation of the political ranks is propelling into the institutions and government of our countries students of the

social scene such as Dante Caputo and of science as Dr. Manuel Sadowski in Argentina or legislators with qualifications from other fields, such as the distinguished Brazilian essayist and sociologist Fernando Enrique Cardoso; all this helps to counteract the effects of the many disastrous years and can strengthen the faith of our young people, who have been so discouraged by the repeated evidence of the true worth of politics in our republics. And a very similar change of outlook seems to be emerging among student leaders.

Not all the leaders coming forward from the ranks of the political opposition are obviously young at this stage of the process of transformation in America. But the renewal taking place in Argentina and Brazil is indicative of a novel and healthy reaction, and similar developments can be expected, in the more or less short term, in other countries such as Uruguay, Venezuela and Peru.

The words *message and commitment*, all the rage a few years ago, are today semantically threadbare and must be replaced, for it is the words themselves and not the ideas they stand for which have grown old. Under these and other names the "grassroots Christian communities" operating in Brazil with the approval of the Church and with the protection of its prestige, and the so-called "*comités de base*" (grassroots committees) which have taken the place of the party clubs (and rehabilitated their tarnished image, in Uruguay in 1971) can be suitable places for young people to meet, without monitors of any kind, in the same way as they meet in student clubs and workers' or professional groups, or even at sports and cultural centres, which were under suspicion in the times of persecution but now, in comparatively calmer times, can begin to revalidate their existence.

Young people have torn off many straitjackets in recent years and they have slipped out of others, almost without the adults noticing. Institutions such as writers' workshops and arts-appreciation courses exist discreetly, one might say almost stealthily, and they sometimes start up in private homes made available for this purpose. Opportunities for young people to discuss with each other their experiences and reading, not to mention the first

fruits of their own writing or of their apprenticeships in music and painting, can come up anywhere and their spontaneity and lack of organization may be only apparent; such opportunities help the young to be themselves, far from the protective concern of adults and the oppressive eye of the harsher régimes. Here too there is no need to advance the clocks. A new generation flourishes and develops from the moment when it finds its own place and persuades everyone else of the necessity of its existence, like the branches in the structure of a tree. Pindaro said that the generations of men are as the generations of leaves. A young person can come to exist naturally (and without affectation) as a *naif* and he can follow his path from innocence, gaucheness and imitation and from the sway of his peer groups. The arts schools (literature, painting, engraving, music) are not bad in themselves; they could become sterile, however, if they fall into affectation and lose their former authenticity and originality in the snares set by an increasingly cunning officialdom.

What do young people read and what do they write? Mainly poetry, say their teachers and the experts. Not because the genre seems to them easier, although up to a point it is, and perhaps in a sense it is the most unrewarding as well: in view of the number of people who feel called to write poetry, it must be the place in which there will be fewest of the chosen. A middling storyteller or a plodding essayist may feel called to fulfil a function, to occupy a space, and may consider himself legitimized by this requirement. A poor poet is a superfluous item in society and if a young person he will be haunted by the phantoms of creative idleness, frustration and failure. If there are more poets than novelists and playwrights, it is due mainly to the fact that a young person who launches himself into the adventure of his first attempts at writing feels himself watched, hemmed in and actually haunted by thoughts of uncertainty and death. And the commitment to poetic creation, although qualitatively the most intense and demanding, has the advantage of confronting the briefest and most clear-cut challenges, the nearest terminal landmarks. When he discovers the essential inadequacy and disappointments of these beguiling spells, he has often advanced so

far that the feeling of discouragement does not stop him from continuing: he is at the point of no return, like an aircraft taking off. The alternative is revolution: and revolution is as rare, if not rarer, in a youth or in a mature person as it is in a society.

And meanwhile, like actors about to go on stage, young people prepare themselves by reading and writing (or painting and, as in all vocations, censuring, belittling and destroying). Every generation feels itself naturally called upon to say what has never been said before and in a way in which it has never been said before. Paradoxically, it starts by trying to say it in derivative and imitative ways. For the youth of Latin America in the 1940s it was Lorca-ism, in the 1960s it was Neruda-ism; later César Vallejo came to fame, like a timeless peak in his sly capacity for skeletal nakedness, suffering and asceticism. For the moment, the space of this generational succession, which Julián Marías has shown to occur at intervals of 15 years, has seemed occupied by big dominant names, as big and as dominant as the ones mentioned above. But greater patience and thoroughness then reveal the names of the avanguard, who are actually the ones who first take up the baton and then pass it on to others. They are the ones who stitch together the continuity of the years which underlies all the surface games.

Young people surrender devotedly to a fashion, such as the fashion for protest songs; and governments usually play their necessary card in this game by prohibiting it. The protest song is a gesture of refusal to be strangled and it expresses an uncontrollable and torrential current, in which transience, repetition and staleness count for nothing. In the critical times in which it appears, the protest song has an almost insurrectional force in the mouths of the young, like *La carmagnole* or the *Internationale* in their time. A protest song which has become routine or academic or has found official favour is a contradiction in itself. But experience shows that these contradictions are not impossible and that, when the weave is reversed, they can regain all their significance.

Like the underground satire and the Russian *samizdat* of today, the protest song has been a means of reacting against a suffocating atmosphere, and against conformity and the

official writ of irreversible and irresistible opinion sought by the authoritarian régimes. The anonymous emergence of the epic lays in the Middle Ages was often not very different in its origins.

A protest song takes the road of dissidence and tries to make it into a militant passion. Among all the mode of conscientious objection and the opportunities for developing a feeling of popular rebellion, the so-called protest song is the one preferred by the young; this is easy to understand in view of its emotional and conceptual content, which is translated into the simplest and most accessible terms, and of its aura of communicating a message and the facile infectiousness of its verbal and melodic forms,

all of which implies factors working as inducements to expression of a need for communication felt almost to be a matter of life and death in the harshest and most repressive times. Once a society has reverted to more liberal modes of expression, the protest song has served its purpose and can give way to other folk forms. But it will not thereby cease to exist, although it may assume in its renovated form a quality of more joyful exaltation and a less belligerent and disputatious tone, as has happened in Spain today. In the hardest and most repressive times the people will find a way and a method of expressing many of its truths and it will listen to the true exemplars of its history, that same history which it disregards in happier times.

## VII

### The education of young people

*Participation, development and peace* declare the placards about youth and the goals of its mobilization. Participation and development and participation in development are actually two minimum and fundamental objectives. Unless there is greater participation by young people in the life of our societies, little or nothing will be achieved in the way of effective social progress. It is certainly into these moulds that the contents must be poured. Because to make young people participate more means in turn providing them with better employment prospects than at present and, to that end, bringing into general use education practices and systems that will facilitate the attainment of these goals of greater integration. At the very heart of any policy designed to achieve the greater participation of young people in the life of our society lies the need to equip them better, to make them better skilled and to encourage their own real competitiveness. And this means making our education systems universal, truly so and not just in words, so that they reach the greatest numbers in all areas (rural and urban),

without their expansion being achieved at the price of reducing the standards and requirement. The introduction of a genuine revolution in education systems thus lies at the root of all possible achievements. In the case of secondary education the requirement of total universality is linked with a sound, real and not unrealistic principle of the obligatory status of education. This implies a State policy which, without prejudice to the choices available to the student and the responsible members of his family who are inseparable from his upbringing —his parents— places in the State's hands the implementation of a policy which attacks the problem of drop-outs at its roots, for this is the reason why courses are not completed, the bases are not established and, in a well-intentioned social education, the costs of the system increase and it falls victim to the waste that goes hand in hand with its ineffectiveness, so that in the end it fails in its purposes and in the very truth of its social philosophy and technical content.

The effective universalization of secondary education is indissolubly linked with the realism

of its plans and its degree of feasibility and with the need for it to be used to achieve what society wants and specifies, once it has been determined what society wants, how it wants it and why and within what limits it specifies this want. In an interlinked social system, an education policy which does not take into account the employment prospects offered by society to young people serves only to waste the time of young people; it will come to grief in calculations about the duration and cost of courses and will generate frustration after having called for the effort to be made.

And in higher education this realistic attitude to social possibilities and factors and to the levels of employment that society can provide must be the cornerstone of a serious education policy, well thought-out and carried through to completion: to train an excess of anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists for a society which then lacks any possibility of giving them jobs is to indulge in what Alejandro Alvarez once called, in an inimitable expression, "manuscript progress". It would be the same as pouring experts in librarianship into a society in which there were no books.

This unflinching realism —realism about the content of education and its natural uses in society— is an essential element. In the liberal European tradition (more specifically the French tradition) of our higher education, devised for another society, the evils of an artificial encyclopaedism have been cultivated to excess, without any possible correlation with the actual situation. In fact, this disproportion and excess, with a low real rate of return, has created the excessive cost and duration of education, together with the drop-outs (everything is connected), the failings of a State system of social planning, and the disorientation, uncertainty and failures in the careers and lives of many young people. To want to create humanists and professionals at the same time and virtually in a single system and with one and the same education plan inevitably means not creating either acceptable humanists or good professionals and leads to the collapse of the system at unsupportable levels of expenditure. To get to the heart of the matter in an attempt to clarify the aims and objectives is absolutely the

first priority —the task of establishing the cornerstones and pillars of an education system. If this system is ill founded, all the rest will fall, with all the eminent dangers to society and to the individual lives of hundreds, of thousands of young people which that error of forecasting and calculation will entail.

In plain language, then, greater participation and greater development —greater participation in development— means more effective and universal education systems rooted in the most realistic social ground, with a clear understanding of the social factors which have condemned to chaos so many generous but utopian, chimerical and unrealistic education policies.

The other goal, the third and last one stated on the placards, is so basic and convincing that its five letters spell out the progress or the destruction of the world, the fuller attainment of the social objectives or, in its grossest form, the end and ruin of everything: it is stated in the word *peace*. It is the main word with which young people can declare themselves to be in credit, for —having advanced less far than the adults and the old along the path of life— they are the ones with the widest margin of natural credit with which to continue living.

Lasting peace, a basic condition of any progress, is determined by the extent to which confrontation between the two superpowers can be avoided. Because if in the situation created by their atomic weapons that confrontation should take place, the next war will have to be fought by mankind with flint axes, as somebody put it. Assuming that there will still be some representatives of mankind left on the planet to do so.

Up to now, in the preparations and the strategies (deterrent ones, let us hope) and in the pretences of this long cold war, stoked up at the experimental level but played down in other fields, all the protagonists other than the two actors cast in the leading roles have no other task than merely to listen and look on. And all the discussions in international conferences and organs, apart from the mouthing of obstacles, vetoes and prohibitions, more verbal than actual, are designed to prevent the simple real possibility of a threat of this kind materializing.



And there are no other guarantees except those based on the wisdom of the contestants and on the calculation that each of them must have made concerning the minimum booty that will

fall to them in the end of the world. *Peace* is not therefore merely an anxiety of youth. Peace is nothing more and nothing less than the sole option of survival left to the world.

## Working-class youth and anomy

Javier Martínez

Eduardo Valenzuela\*

The authors set themselves the difficult task of presenting some ideas to facilitate an understanding of the immense variety of typical forms of youth behaviour in Latin America in recent decades. Their first approach is to indicate two historical points characterized by a prevalence of different social models —comprehensive modernization and technocratic growth— within which different kinds of youth behaviour manifest themselves.

In the first model, the most striking forms of behaviour emerge when the comprehensive modernization project runs into crisis and arouses contrary reactions such as chronic withdrawal and political radicalization. In the second, the central axes, which determine the different attitudes of young people are their perceptions as to whether they are included in or excluded from the benefits of growth and the state of crisis or expansion of this growth.

On these two axes the authors construct their basic typology, which covers behaviour ranging from individual to collective mobility and passing through various forms of social maladjustment and rejection. As a theoretical substratum of their typology they emphasize certain central concepts such as integration, anomy and alternativivity, which are developed in the main part of the article.

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## I

### The idea of "comprehensive modernization"

The numerous sociological papers on youth in Latin America published in recent decades have focused their analysis on two terms descriptive of the attitudes, perceptions, values and behaviour of young people: rebellion and conformism. While these terms were suggested by the resounding influence of the student movements of the 1960s, it is nonetheless true that they reflected a well as growing consensus in the region about the "social modernization" project under way since the end of the Second World War and a perception of social change as a transition from a traditional to a modern society. From the Second World War to the end of the 1960s the consensus about development helped to define, on the basis of the "traditionalism-modernism" axis, the majority of the cultural conflicts of Latin American societies. Young people's rebelliousness or conformism were defined with reference to the traditional society, its oligarchic decision-making structures, its narrow standards and values, its lack of dynamism and its extreme inequality.

Against this image of traditional society, the modernization project was seen as an attempt to advance *simultaneously* towards economic growth, greater fairness in the distribution of its fruits, and the participation and integration of the social sectors hitherto excluded from collective life (the peasants and the marginal urban groups). This simultaneous progress in these three directions seemed, moreover, to be required and facilitated by the processes of secularization —i.e. by the introduction of principles and mechanisms of the formal rationalization of collective life (which in turn were fostered by the expansion of education and the mass communication media, the growth of domestic markets and urbanization). The image of a "virtuous circle" of development, to the extent that it was opposed to the perception of the stagnation of traditional society, gained ground rapidly, and the values of modernization

became the guiding principles of the actions of the majority of the elites.

The predominance of this model of "comprehensive modernization" as the cultural orientation of the social protagonists was felt with particular force among young people. On the one hand, as is obvious, it offered a future of much richer opportunity than did a static society. In addition, since social conditioning in the traditional values was much more deeply rooted among adults, the struggle for modernization took on an important generational aspect. On the other hand, youth was the sector of society which experienced most directly the processes of change: the migrations from urban to rural areas, the expansion and changes in education, and the growth of industrial employment were for the most part processes which affected young people directly.

After a first and relatively successful stage, the concept of development as the simultaneous attainment of the goals of growth, equity and participation ran into serious obstacles. Although Latin American development has followed a very uneven pattern, it can be asserted as a general rule that the dynamics of economic growth (and of industrial growth in particular) was somewhat insufficient in relation to the expectations which had been created. In many cases this led to an element of radicalization in the demand for modernization, which then became identified with a demand for revolutionary change of the capitalist order. In

other cases, the idea that the process should be simultaneous tended to be abandoned and priority was given to some of the goals, at the cost of postponing others (the choice was often for economic growth, sacrificing the goals of equity and participation).

This conflict about the course which the modernization process should follow was not unconnected, from the beginning of the 1960s, with the East-West tensions which emerged in the region as a result of events in Cuba. Accordingly, the region was faced with two main comprehensive "models" of change: the socialist model, which was being established in the continent for the first time, and the liberal model of the Alianza para el Progreso (which in many cases was adopted as a reaction against the increasing ideological influence of the other model). Latin American societies were thus forced to define their options *within* the modernization model, and even the most traditional elites were to be persuaded that there must be a significant structural change. The "consensus" for modernization was very plausible, and the social groups which participated in the process already had demands from an earlier period which were now expressed in radicalism or in authoritarian approaches. For this reason, a description of youth conduct and movements of the time must take into account both the central dilemma of traditionalism or modernization and the subsequent course of the process of change.

## II

### Conflicts within "modernization"

Only in the second stage of the modernization process, when the point of reference had ceased to be the traditional society and had moved on to become, in contrast, that of an insufficiently dynamic development, did the activities of the various social groups—including the youth movements—take on a new character. The resistance to modernization, which in the first

stage had been conservative in outlook, then expressed itself—already *from within* the modernization model—as a demand for economic growth which sacrificed the elements of equity and participation, formerly considered essential to the idea of development: in other words, in an authoritarian approach. The element of anomic withdrawal from the

modernization model, which had been expressed in the first stage mainly in the form of sectarian approaches, now tended —especially in the countries in which the secularization process was most heterogeneous and broad sectors were excluded from participation and the benefits of growth— to manifest itself in a fundamentalist outlook. And the strictly modernizing approach, which in the first stage had expressed itself homogeneously in terms of collective mobility and had embraced the most diverse ideological visions, now emerged in parties under the banner of political radicalism: although this remained throughout the period the predominant orientation of the youth movements in the majority of Latin America, there is no doubt that it already had a more limited appeal and was becoming profoundly ideologized, especially among student movements.

A cause and effect of this change in the nature of activities was that the concept of development had ceased to have —owing to the dynamic insufficiencies of the growth process itself— a common and shared significance for the various social sectors. The idea of the “virtuous circle” of social and economic development was being replaced by “technocratic” and “populist” models which supposed the existence of a conflict, in the short term at least, between growth and equity, which meant that priority must be given to one of these elements at the expense of the other.

Even at the risk of excessive simplification of the region’s development, some of the cultural guidelines for action characteristic of the “populist” and “technocratic” scenarios can be indicated as keys to the understanding of the youth movements of the past decade. (Of course, these keys have to be recut in the analysis of each national case.)

In fact, in both the “populist” and the “technocratic” model can be seen a broad range of unsatisfied expectations of the development process on the part of the social protagonists, as a result either of the process’s dynamic insufficiency of the clear disparity in the distribution of its fruits. However, in neither case is the central key to understanding concerned with the “traditional versus modern

society” dilemma, but rather with the “inclusion” or “exclusion” of the participants *in* modern society. Whereas the “populist” models tend to create in the middle and upper strata the perception of slowness in incorporation in modern life when their situation is compared with that of their counterparts in other nations, the “technocratic” models —whose predominance has been characteristic of the past decade in Latin America— produce a situation in which the majority groups in the population are perceived as fundamentally excluded from the benefits of growth, and they see the society of which they are part as *split*, in dichotomic terms.

It has already been argued that, when the models which give priority to participation and equity over the goal of economic growth predominate, the main guidelines for action tend to be those of authoritarianism or political radicalism, in so far as it is possible to detect certain fundamental features in the less secularized social sectors. The situation is a little more complicated in the societies in which the model of growth without participation prevails: it is important to distinguish in this case between the behaviour patterns characteristic of periods of expansion (when they occur) within the framework of this model and those which tend to surface in times of crisis; in other words, times in which the lack of participation and the unequal forms of distribution of income amount to a slow rate of economic growth or even negative growth.

In periods of expansion two types of society seem to develop within a single nation. On the one hand, the sector *included* in the process of economic growth which is taking place seems to be affected by the traditional problems of integration and dislocation which accompany modernization. Since collective forms of participation are heavily penalized, *individual mobility* becomes the key to the system and it is encouraged by reward. On the other hand, the dislocation of the normal situation emerges in various forms of passive *withdrawal*, in which compulsive pleasure-seeking predominates (alcoholism, drugs, pornography, etc.), often compensating for the low level of satisfaction provided by the institutionalized behaviour favoured by the system.

At the same time, however, the nature of economic growth constantly extends the segment of the population *excluded* from the normal life—institutionalized or tolerated—of the system. To the extent that the fragmentation characteristic of the formal rationalization of economic life prevails, together with the penalization of collective forms of participation, so the "dark side" of society tends towards various kinds of *criminal* activity or towards the recreation of the *community* based on alternative values, depending on the degree to which the internalization of the goals of success set by the system has been achieved among the various excluded social groups. In both cases, however, these are secularized social groups which, far from feeling nostalgia for a former traditional order, aspire either to achieve full integration in modern society or to correct a deviation in that society's development.

Given these elements of dispersal, the periods of crisis in the growth pattern open the way to collective behaviour of great significance. The included segment of modern society displays abundantly the *mass culture* (collective counterpart of integration through individual mobility) which seeks to incorporate the segments of the population whose dislocation takes the form of increasing *apathy* towards the material and symbolic satisfactions which the system provides. In the large excluded sector, on the other hand, the rejection of institutionalized procedures takes the form of mass expression of anomic *revolt*, for the assertion of alternative values implies the increasing *organic mobilization* of various sectors of the population.

Of course this set of guidelines for action can have differing degrees of force, depending on the specific characteristics of the society in question. Where the economic growth has been strongly dynamic and has been facilitated by the availability of special sources of external funds, it is probable that the patterns of exclusion themselves are of little relevance to the forms of individual mobility and withdrawal, or that the

tension between apathy and mass culture emerges as a normal problem of the legitimation of the existing institutional order. The forms of anomy, on the other hand, can differ in degree and quality—leading, for example, to various forms of "alienation"—if an exclusive economic scheme is superimposed on a political system which has long inflicted exclusion from decision-making on broad masses of the population.

The tensions within the excluded segment in the technocratic schemes can also vary greatly according to the relative degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity of the preceding social structures: while grouping or mobilization on the basis of alternative values can be the dominant patterns of action in relatively homogeneous societies, the anomic ingredients of crime or revolt can be decisive in societies which already had great structural heterogeneity or divisions in the civic and political culture at the beginning of the technocratic experiments.

It must be specially emphasized that the various patterns of action described above can be, and often are, present simultaneously in a given society and within a single social sector, such as marginal urban youth. Sometimes the development schemes affect only superficially the guidelines for action which have come into being in different contexts and they remain in force in the actors who are their typical supporters or who contributed to their formation in the past. Social action operates within a complex framework of feelings, among which those deliberately promoted by a given social order are often only the tip of the iceberg.

For this reason, the concepts described above must be seen as mere methodological guidelines, whose value should be reassessed in each case in the light of its relationship with the existing data. In any event, since they are put forward as keys to the interpretation of behaviour, outlooks and attitudes on the part of popular urban youth in the framework of the recent development of Latin America, it is necessary to dwell briefly on each of them, in order to break them down into their constituent elements.

### III

## Intregation

The concept of integration is one of the most widely used—and debated—in modern sociology. At the theoretical level it expresses, on the one hand, the functional equilibrium of a social system (cultural and normative consistency of the systems of roles and functions) and, on the other hand, the correspondence between the institutionalized role expectations and the structures of personal motivations, i.e. the proper internalization of the socially established behaviour patterns. Disintegration or anomy arise from structural disorders (objective anomy) or from defective internalization of the prevailing standards and values (subjective anomy).

The concepts of integration and anomy are based on a premise: that modern societies should be considered as functionally different and self-regulated systems. On the one hand, these are complex systems which allow a great diversity of roles (by extension and development of the social division of labour) and great individualization (by extension of the chosen sphere of action). In this sense they exceed the limits of the community usually called traditional, whose nexus is founded on primary relations (as opposed to functional relations) and on uniform or ascriptive acceptance by individuals of the group's standards and values.

The mechanisms of integration in very different (so-called modern) systems are not the same as the nexus which predominates in the community. These are formal interconnected mechanisms which seek the attainment of certain ends in a given social structure; for example, the integration of individual and society through motivational adaptation to the institutionalized expectations of social role. The balance between standards and motivations is achieved "spontaneously". The standards define the possibilities of action and at the same time the corresponding sanctions. Individuals rationally oriented towards gratification will behave in accordance with these standards and will thus avoid sanction. This is the same principle as underlies the behaviour of

individuals in the market: gaining maximum benefit. The development of a purely formal rationality leads in one case to macroeconomic equilibrium, in others to social integration. Of course, both equilibrium and integration are limited concepts without empirical verification, as has been established and emphasized many times. However, it is of interest to consider the following problem: this principle of integration of the system or the market resulting from formal rationality constitutes an integration mechanism different from the community mechanism, since it does not require a value to legitimize and guide the actions of individuals or to ensure their acceptance of the system. In fact, this is a *formal* mechanism of integration based solely on the "rationally" oriented behaviour of individuals with respect to their own advantage, and it requires nothing more than this behaviour. This is Weber's celebrated distinction between action in accordance with purposes (society) or —Parson's scheme— between traditional and modern action.

This latter distinction has been widely applied in Latin American sociology, which defines our stage of development as a transitional situation between a traditional society which is fading away and a modern one which is trying to establish itself. In fact, it is assumed that modernization is synonymous with progress and freedom: on the one hand, diversification and increasing complexity of the social system (extension, urbanization, industrialization); on the other, a breakaway from ascriptive modes of living (servitude, etc.), and human emancipation. In this scheme, the traditional community has been dislocated. Modernization requires a completely different principle of integration, no longer based on primary relations or on values external to the system (such as religious absolutism, charismatic leadership, etc.). Modernization implies a natural tendency towards the secularization of values and the extension of a logic of "formal rationalities." A concept which clearly combines these two terms is the concept of *mobility*.

Through it the balance between greater gratification and normative adaptation is fully achieved. This is why the study of integrated behaviour nearly always comes down to an investigation of social mobility.

The conditions of mobility are twofold: a) they imply the existence of individuals rationally oriented towards obtaining greater benefits, i.e. individuals who have duly internalized the "modern" patterns and standards of social action; b) they also imply a social *structure* capable of providing opportunities for mobility (gratification) for all who have sufficient qualification and ability. The concept of integration, therefore, embraces these two aspects: the existence of a relatively open structure of opportunities and of individuals culturally motivated to demand benefits. Hence the concept of mobility is neutral towards values: it does not imply any pre-established value, nor does it impose any belief in the "goodness" of any given ends or means; it implies rather the increased value of certain ends, a relatively high degree of freedom of choice and effectiveness of the institutional means available for their attainment. Of course, these conditions obtain to very different degrees in the various social structures; moreover, attitudes towards mobility vary greatly between social groupings.

The studies on mobility make a clear distinction between structural and subjective mobility. In one case it is a question of determining the quantitative range and the characteristics of the processes of mobility in a given structure; in the other, it is the attitudes towards mobility displayed by the social actors. This latter type of study was singularly important during the 1960s, when it was a question of calculating the magnitude and the degree of cultural integration of migrants in modern urban society, specifically by means of surveys. The attitudes towards mobility were used as an indicator of secularization. An important study of this type is the one carried out by Gurrieri (1971) among marginal young people in Greater Santiago, in which the basic measurements were concerned with the level and nature of their aspirations and with the means considered legitimate and effective in the attainment of these aspirations. Gurrieri managed to determine, on the one hand, a level

of aspirations similar to the pattern of the urban middle class and, on the other, a particular faith in education (over and above the traditional means) as an instrument of social ascent. Both these characteristics were strongly indicative of the powerful aspiration of a generation for the modern patterns, in contrast with the apathetic and fatalistic outlook attributed to the traditional migrant.

Another decisive measurement in this connection—one still in current use—is of the subjective perception of the system of social stratification. Dichotomic perceptions (rich-poor, upper class-lower class) are usually indicative of a closed social system which blocks opportunities of ascent; on the other hand, trichotomic perceptions (upper-middle-lower class) express an open society. In this study Gurrieri found precisely these trichotomic perceptions. A third and last indicator which must be mentioned is concerned with existing perceptions about the possibilities of intergenerational mobility. References to a better future than that of their parents were a consistent sign of the historical optimism of the 1960s generation, as can be seen, for example, in the study on young people in El Salvador by E. Torres Rivas (1971). Among today's young people in Chile, in contrast, the perception has changed: their future is assumed to be worse than their parents' was—a dramatic expression of the collapse of the expectations of progress and development which had been aroused even when these expectations are still being promoted by society.

Identification of the real opportunities of mobility and the subjective perception of these opportunities is a fundamental question, especially for studies on youth. Mobility is the main component of integration in modern societies: it represents the effectiveness and the extent of the secularization of values and of formal rationality.

The question of integration has moreover acquired a new dimension: mass culture. Mass culture (especially the penetration of the modern communication media) has been seen as reinforcing the motivations for personal mobility through the well-known "demonstration effect". The promotion of

certain life styles, the encouragement of consumption and the pressure for success foster the quest for mobility in accordance with socially established patterns. Mass culture is also spectacle, celebration, recreation—in other words, consumption. In all cases it is important to underline that mass culture is usually considered to be ethically a vacuum. Whether it is an incentive in the quest for gratification, or gratification in itself, it is a mechanism which reinforces integration in a *formal* order of maximization of benefits. Mass culture does not set up values in preference to the predominance of formal rationality, rather it represents rationality collectively. This lack of ethical weight in the culture of the communication media is a factor which must be taken into account. In fact, their capacity to induce conformist and apparently integrated behaviour is often overestimated. Nevertheless, this penetration always proves weak and spurious unless it is accompanied by real opportunities of social mobility. This is confirmed by the rebellion of young people in Uruguay or Chile who has been exposed for years to an almost exclusively commercial culture whose impact is easily verifiable. The opposite can also happen: when there are greater expectations of social advancement, criticism of the mass culture is usually more highly developed, as commonly happens in students' movements. Thus, the relations between attitudes towards individual mobility and integration within a mass culture do not necessarily correspond. Errors are frequently made when the two things are

identified with each other. It appears that individual attitudes are decisive in the study of integrated behaviour.

All the same, it is important to assess the effective impact of mass culture on the formation of young peoples' attitudes and guidelines for action, and especially their attitudes towards conformism or integration through social mobility. These matters are usually investigated by studying the exposure to the communication media or the volume and nature of cultural consumption, as well as the association of these factors with the tastes, aspirations and identification models of the person interviewed (desired life style, persons admired, etc.).

These aspects of the research often take the form of data which have their own innate heuristic capacity, going far beyond the problem of their correspondence or non-correspondence with the "models" proposed by the mass culture. Where musical tastes are concerned, for example, the liking for "heavy rock" found among broad segments of young people and the rejection—for example—of folk music or the romantic ballad can give important clues to the interpretation of the feelings and attitudes of young people, even if all these types of music are equally promoted (or, alternatively, disregarded) by the mass communication media and the culture industry. Moreover, precisely because of the "formal" nature of mass culture, there is no substitute for research into the substantive content of tastes, aspirations and identification models.

## IV

### Anomy

As has been pointed out, anomy always implies some degree of disintegration, either cultural or normative. This concept is intended to describe all the social situations in which, for whatever reason, there is no proper conformity between the subjects and the role expectations assigned to

them in their functions. This "short-circuit" is caused by inconsistencies or contradictions in the role patterns or structures (objective anomy) or by a lack of correspondence between these patterns and the structure of the subjects' motivations (subjective anomy).



Perhaps the best-known statement on anomy is the one by Merton (1964) who defines it as the disassociation of cultural standards and objectives from the socially structured capacity of individuals in the group to work in accordance with them. The root cause of anomy lies in the conflict between the cultural goals and the possibility of using institutionalized means to attain them. Merton's typology of anomic behaviour is based on the various combinations of acceptance and rejection on the part of the subjects of the socially approved goals and means. For example, "innovation" usually means internalization of the cultural objectives combined with the use of illegitimate means of attaining them (this usually involves criminal behaviour). "Withdrawal" or "apathy", on the other hand, express a certain indifference or disdain for the institutionally established ends and means. "Rebellion" also expresses this comprehensive rejection of society's cultural goals, but it is distinguished from withdrawal, in which this rejection is made in the name of new or different values. Lastly, "ritualism" is the reverse of innovation: it implies attachment to the means but indifference to the ends (conduct traditionally associated with the bureaucrat). Merton's typology asserts therefore that all societies institutionalize certain values (in this case clearly the quest for success) and legitimize certain means of attaining them, while sanctioning others. The fundamental imbalance occurs when the opportunities of mobility are reduced or when there is excessive pressure for success, and individuals tend to bypass the institutionally accepted means. For Merton, the principal anomic type is innovation: North American society is usually described, in fact—with reason or not—as a definitely and homogeneously secularized society.

In Latin American sociology, however, anomy has almost always been studied in terms of the withdrawal type. As has been pointed out, the interest lies in the processes of transition and specifically in the potential for social anomy among migrants from rural origins who have no opportunities to integrate easily in urban society. Germani (1968) made a close study of this process of transition from the countryside to the town according to a scheme of transition of traditional structures towards modern ones:

starting from an original state of (traditional) integration there develops a breakdown or disintegration and dislocation, in the pre-existing structure of roles and values. The response to this dislocation can take two forms: withdrawal or a disposition for psychological mobilization, to use the author's terms. Psychological mobilization could be defined as an active propensity to re-establish the balance between the psychological and the other normative or ambient level (or levels); withdrawal, on the other hand, implies varying degrees of apathy or resistance to the new structure of norms and values. The first process (psychological mobilization) leads to integration; the second to anomy. Anomic withdrawal can be seen, in turn, as apathy ("lack of participation"), according to the well-known DESAL (1970) definition of urban marginality, or as restoration and predominance of the traditional values. This is the line taken in some studies, such as the one by the Belgian sociologist C. Lalive (1968) on pentecostalism in Chile. According to this author, the pentecostal community, which grows up in these very frontier zones in the towns (especially among non-proletarianized workers, i.e., migrants who have not found industrial jobs), amounts to recreation of the traditional community based on primary relations and shared religious values. Lalive gave his study of Chilean pentecostalism the suggestive title of "El refugio de las masas" (The Refuge of the Masses), indicating withdrawal from the modern world caused by the uprooting of masses who were both rural and marginalized. Let us repeat, then, that anomic situations were viewed as part of these transition processes, i.e. of the collapse of traditional structures and lack of access to modernization. The aforementioned study by Gurrieri on attitudes towards social mobility among marginal young people has been repeated several times (including several works by DESAL itself) among adult migrants, in an attempt to identify accurately the potential anomy implicit in social marginality.

The subject of anomy, however, has been restated in new terms during the past decade. The breakdown of what may be called the culture and standards of traditional society has been a relatively universal and established process and

the difficulties of incorporation in the modern world persist and in many cases have become worse. The experience of the past decade shows the emergence of vast and growing areas of non-traditional marginality. It is usually a question of course, of marginal urban youth, exposed on the one hand to intensive secularization (through educational advances, extension and penetration of the modern communication media, and the experience of urbanization itself) and, on the other hand, to relatively intense and prolonged exclusion from the mechanisms of mobility and integration (mainly in the areas of employment, housing, and social and political participation). The anomic effects of the transition, which earlier had originated in the disintegration of traditional structures, have now become the anomic effects of the crisis (through a process of failed modernization). The so-called developmental frustration emerges in full flower, producing exceptionally intense anomic situations: recently many authors have attached more importance to the theme of rebellion.

Let us mention some of the indicators of objective anomie which are found everywhere in current studies on marginal youth: cultural disintegration of the working-class family (especially as a result of the spurious recomposition of the extended family, the loss of internal solidarity, and the decline of paternal authority); frustration of mobility through education (pointless schooling); de-industrialization and marginality in employment (especially informal and own-account work, which prevents among other things the association of interests); and political exclusion (which usually implies denial of the right to vote and various forms of repression). All these indicators appear to a greater or lesser extent in the picture of normative disintegration (fragmentation), exclusion from organized society (and re-emergence of a dichotomous perception of society based on the included-excluded axis), erosion or loss of confidence in the opportunities for social mobility, and uncertainty about the future (or "future crisis", as it has been called in several works on the young people of today).

The modernization crisis produces, then, an anomic effect which can be defined more appropriately in Durkheim's sense. Durkheim

uses the concept of anomie in its etymological sense, as the absence of norms and standards of value, as the alienation and separation of the individual from society, which leads in his restricted view to the loss of meaning in life (i.e. to suicide). Of course, these processes of disintegration are of variable intensity, but they do express in many cases the states of frustration, loss of confidence, aggressiveness and fragmentation which are typical of many sectors of Latin American youth today.

Anomie cannot be defined, however, as a limited concept, i.e., as suicide. We have already mentioned several kinds of anomic behaviour recorded empirically in recent research on young people. This behaviour includes withdrawal and apathy, innovation (crime, in Merton's sense) and revolt, the general definitions of which have been given above. It is important to note the existence of new forms of anomic withdrawal distinct from the traditional attitudes of apathy and fatalism (passive conformism). The spread of the use of drugs among marginal youth has been classified recently as behaviour of this type. For some authors, drug dependency and drug use and abuse is no longer a group practice as it was in the past (associated with the hippie movement) and has become a culturally less solid and less collective experience. Drugs have recovered their exclusively escapist effect: a refuge in immediate gratification from the hardships of life. They are a particular form of escape from the real world, but no longer in the name of a distinct ethic, as in the case of the hippies, but as a reaction to personal frustration. This is a practice, then, which does not achieve group consistency (alternativity) but which is certainly far removed from the imperatives of the normative order (for it replaces individual effort with pleasure).

Other authors (e.g., Valenzuela, 1984) have also studied specific forms of anomic rebellion, such as the revolt of Chilean youth against that country's military régime. It is argued that rebellion is originally inorganic and aggressive: an expression of the destructured groups in Chilean society (especially of the young people affected by the rates of open unemployment, or minimum employment, which are over 70% among marginal groups) in the form of uncontrolled revolt. At some levels the national

protests in Chile (which have extended to the peripheral districts with great repressive intensity) have produced a poorly organized youth which recognizes no specific leaders in the political opposition and has emerged as a force of negation and attack on social institutions. This has been called anomic rebellion (or revolt), which is different from the meaning Merton attaches to the concept of rebellion. In

fact, Merton includes here the concept of structured rebellion in the name of an alternative ethic which can be the vehicle of a very strict set of standards. But what characterizes revolt is its inorganic nature and aggressiveness, the lack of positive basic principles and any reference to alternative social projects, largely a reflection of the acute anomic tensions affecting marginal youth.

## V

### Alternativity

Integrational and anomic behaviour does not cover the whole field of youth action. We have kept the term "alternativity" to describe all behaviour which shows a certain level of rejection or organized resistance to the established cultural models. We are not referring to the level of corporative organization or association of interests (for example, participation in trade unions or politics), but still to the field of value standards.

In the discussion of the analytical framework of integrational behaviour we referred to the predominance and extension of formal rationality (and we specifically proposed giving emphasis to the study of personal mobility). In a study of "alternative" behaviour, account must be taken of the actions performed in accordance with values, which suggest feelings which escape the logic of the maximization of benefits and acquire, for that very reason, a collective and alternative dimension. Given the dominance of modernization, which is always seen as a formal system of exchange (market) and regulation (order), the social groups give preference to and

demand value standards. This arises from inclusion in the modernization processes (the traditional criticism levelled by student movements against the culture of success and personal advancement) or from exclusion and the need to re-establish feelings of collective identity: in both cases, a central role is given to action in accordance with values. A prime example in recent years has been the defence of human rights as a reaction against the purely formal imperatives of maintenance and perpetuation of the State. Another example is the response of the community to the extension and development of the relations of the market. In one case, human rights are given preference over the principle of security; in the other, co-operation and the restoration of the sense of community and solidarity are preferred to the competition and logic of private exchange. In both cases, recognition is given to values which stand outside the institutional logic, i.e. separate from the purely formal operation of power and the market.

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## Youth as a social movement in Latin America

*Enzo Faletto\**

In this article the author depicts in general terms the main directions taken by youth social movements in the history of Latin America in this century. He begins by sketching in the student, military and political movements in and around the 1920s, when youth played a leading role, in university reform for example, together with some of the main doctrines, such as anti-oligarchism, Latin Americanism and the concepts of people and nation.

From 1930 important changes occur in the organization and attitudes of young people: the youth sections of the political parties gain in importance, the university students become professionalized, and the values of modernization and development are enhanced. In the beginning the focus is on the conflict between the traditional and the modern; then it moves on to the form which modernization should take and the manner of attaining it. In some countries this latter aspect of the conflict acquires great virulence and polarization, the tragic culmination of which is the starting point for the 1980s. In his concluding paragraphs the author asks some of the questions implicit in the present situation concerning the attitudes of young people, in terms of their links with work, education, family and politics, the possibilities of participation or exclusion, and the reactions which all this may provoke.

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*"Dependent societies are societies of words, in which the intellectual has the biggest of the roles. Sometimes they speak on behalf of the peasant and working-class masses who have no part in political life; but the most characteristic feature of these societies is that the intellectuals, and more specifically the universities, act for and by themselves, like a mass protagonist pursuing his own policy. The university reform movement of Córdoba in Argentina and its effects in Peru, Chile and many other Latin American countries established the role of the intellectuals at mid-century. At the time of writing, after the crushing of the revolutionary intellectuals in Brazil in 1968-1970, of the Uruguayan Tupamaros from 1970, and of the Chileans in 1973, we are witnessing the last battle fought by those radicalized intellectuals, the battle of the Argentine Montoneros. In the very country where it won its first great victory the era of this populist "intelligentsia" is coming to an end."*

*Alain Touraine, Les sociétés dépendantes,  
Ed. J. Duculot, Paris, 1976.*

Touraine's text quoted in the epigraph emphasizes a number of details rarely noted in connection with the significance of the youth movement —specifically student and university— in Latin America. It is usual to refer to its function as a political protagonist, whose relevance is recognized by society, and its capacity to speak on behalf of others, setting itself up as a kind of group or sector above the classes. It can also be shown that the historical period in which it gains importance begins approximately in 1920, coinciding in a number of countries with the so-called crisis of the oligarchy, and that it reaches its end in the first half of the 1960s, coinciding with the end of the populist era. During this specific period it is argued that the function of youth was perhaps similar to that of the Russian "intelligentsia" of the 19th century; the same term is even used to refer to it.

This comparison with the Russian populist "intelligentsia" is extraordinarily seductive, partly because the Latin American young people themselves in the early days of their activities recognized its influence —largely through literature— and also because of certain similarities in some of the structural features of the societies in which the two movements operated, especially with respect to the nature

and role of the various social classes. Although it would be of interest to dwell on the analysis of the social preconditions for the existence of these Latin American "intelligentsias", and to explore the reasons for their decline, the purpose of this paper is rather to highlight the content of their ideologies, or what might be called the formulation of their social projects, because this is primarily what made them into social movements. To this end, we have selected certain historical factors of particular relevance in the constitution of the social projects for which "youth" saw itself as the vehicle.

The "Córdoba Reform" (1918) is usually taken as the key date in the emergence of a youth ideology. It is of interest to note that, although the keynote was given by the student movement, other specifically military movements between 1910 and 1930 claimed the character and status of youth. There were, for example, the "lieutenants' revolution" in Brazil (1924) and at approximately the same time the so-called "military youth movement" in Chile.

The *leitmotiv* of both movements was conflict with the oligarchy; this is an important fact, for the course of Latin American populism is set by confrontation with the oligarchy and the intention to establish a politico-social order to take the place of oligarchic rule. This anti-oligarchic movement was not confined to youth; there were a number of political movements in and around the 1920s which took this line. These movements are often identified with the so-called irruption of the middle sectors: the first *alessandrismo* in Chile, *irigoyenismo* in Argentina, *battleismo* in Uruguay, the various elements of the Mexican revolution until they were consolidated by Obregón in 1920, and many other similar cases in different Latin American countries.

The youth movement took part in these events, but it did not wish to see itself merely as an expression of the demands of the middle sectors. Young people preferred to conceive of themselves —like their Russian fellows— as an "intelligentsia", i.e., "people who think for themselves" and do not represent any specific social interest. It may be noted in passing that the concept of being a group located above the interests of particular sectors is a feature which

the student movement shared with the military youth movement.

In the ambiguous and in some cases remote attitude of young people towards the demands put to the oligarchies by the middle sectors may be found perhaps part of the explanation for the sometimes clear division between youth, populism and a more liberal concept of politics. The young people were to some extent attracted to liberalism, taking this word in its broadest sense; however, they frequently saw it as a creed concerned only with political institutions and lacking any other content, and they therefore distanced themselves from pure liberalism. Nor should the tragic significance of the First World War be forgotten, for it was seen as the ruination of the values of European liberalism.

On the other hand, the student youth movement had to cope not only with the crisis of oligarchic rule but also with a working-class movement which in many cases had a strong influence on anarchic thinking, to which the student movement was not averse either. This fact is mentioned because it helped to ensure that the oligarchy was confronted not through conflict with the middle class but in terms of a conflict between oligarchy and people, a characteristic theme of populism's political outlook.

The youth movement of the time had three central interrelated axes which had a strong influence on the shaping of its ideology as well as far-reaching immediate and subsequent effects. These focuses are the concept of Latin America and Latin Americanism and the ideas of people and nation.

In a way, the "Latin Americanism" of the young people was connected with the confrontation with the oligarchy. The oligarchy was described as displaying a certain cosmopolitanism, in the sense of identification with things European. The European model of civilization began to fall into disfavour from the time of the First World War. There then arose an ideology which, seeing that civilization in crisis, indicated a new role for America. Thus, the students of Córdoba were saying to the students of Argentina and America: "...the new incipient cycle of civilization will have its roots in America because irresistible historical factors

so decree, and it requires a total reversal of human values and a clear lead for spiritual forces, in concert with a broad democracy, without dogmas or prejudices".

It is of interest to mention two significant facts. The first is that the "American conscience" was formed in exile, and the second is that this conscience was born through literature. The Argentine Manuel Ugarte wrote the following: "We discovered two truths: first that our production was joined within a single literature; second that as individuals we belonged to a single nationality, taking a panoramic view of Iberoamerica from Europe. Amado Nervo was Mexican, Rubén Darío Nicaraguan, Chocano was born in Peru, Vargas Vila in Colombia, Gómez Carvallo in Guatemala and we in Argentina; but a connection, a likeness, a purpose identified us all. More important than the language was the situation, and more than the situation was the will to give shape in the kingdom of the mind to what we deliberately designated our great fatherland".

From that moment this Latin Americanist ideology was to develop in several ways. On the one hand, there was a search for the "authenticity and identity" of things Latin American; on the other, there was anti-imperialism, embryonic at that time but later decisive in youth ideology.

The concepts of nation and people conflicted with the values implicit in the idea of nation-oligarchy. The people was presented as a model for the formation of the new values of the nation; it was set up almost as the historic form of an ideal nationhood, and it was often in literature that this purpose appeared with greatest clarity. From this standpoint, the people possesses a number of ethical qualities—solidarity, honesty—which enable it to raise the nation up again from the corruption of the oligarchy. The people is seen as the vehicle of two fundamental goals in the shaping of the new nation: the concepts of justice and socialism. It was also thought that its traditional forms of organization were prototypes of socialism; hence the whole concept of Latin American indigenism.

It was necessary to achieve the political unity of the nation, whose weakness had been brought

out by the crisis of the oligarchy, through a vigorous popular consensus. This led, paradoxically, to an overstatement of the purely ideological value of the notion of people. According to this view, the concept of people had an almost purely political significance: it was identified with and subsumed in the concept of nation and it had value only in terms of the nation. Here too we find part of the explanation for the subsequent overvaluation of the notion of State, for while the people is the foundation of the nation and is made up of various groups with different interests, the State is what constitutes in practice the national unity.

The 1929 crisis was the decisive influence in the next decade. As many writers have pointed out, in addition to its economic effects, it meant that in the sphere of ideology liberalism was viewed with even greater disfavour than before. There were some paradoxical elements in this dissatisfaction with liberalism: it was found among conservatives as well as innovators. The decade of the 1930s was one of strong politicization, which meant to some extent that the independence of youth was less important than the global political option. The youth problem was subsumed in political policies; this period saw the emergence of the "party youth sections". In some cases, indeed, the youth movements became parties.

It must also be noted that, since 1930 and with much greater intensity since the Second World War, the majority of the Latin American countries have undergone structural transformations which, in conjunction with urbanization and industrialization, have altered the composition of the social classes and groups, as well as their weight and significance. To some extent the students, while still seeing themselves as the "revolutionary intelligentsia" mobilizing the people, tended also to see themselves in the role of promoters of the process of transformation and development. In a way, they were the vehicles of the new science and the new technology. There certainly was an ideology of development, supported by some social and political sectors, but it was often formulated, elaborated and promulgated by the university intellectuals.

The widely-welcomed policy of modernization meant that the whole of society



conceived a new role for the university, which was no longer seen merely as a revolutionary focus. The awareness grew that a modern State requires higher education and that new intellectuals, scientists and professionals had to be created. They were to come from the social sector of the middle groups, who thus acquired a privileged position. The State, the economy and society needed these new intellectuals and professionals and they would need them even more in the future; the old generations were inadequate, for they had adjusted poorly to the requirements of modernization. In this situation young people felt that they had room and that their future was open and promising.

In a way this was the beginning of the period of the "professionalization" of the universities (although, of course, in our type of society the professionals still retain certain broader intellectual characteristics). It was the universities which disseminated the new values of modernization and development, formulated them in terms of a reasonably effective ideology, and succeeded in creating a collective image of themselves, one of the main features of which was the existence of a promising future founded on the potential wealth of each of the region's countries.

This emphasis on the future and on the creative nature of science and technology meant that the intellectuals of development, and with them several young university people, had begun to discover that neither traditional cultural values nor popular values could provide a firm foundation for future policies. This marked a divergence from the "populists" of the 1920s and 1930s who thought that they had found in the people the model of the nation. There was assuredly a degree of looking "outwards" which, while it did not mean the loss of "Latin Americanism", did imply a change of tone, and it was not unusual for the region to be described in terms of underdevelopment.

Although the universities never became totally professionalized, encyclopaedism, dilettantism and rhetoric began to be seen as undesirable and in conflict with the policy of specialization. The great theme was progress, and science and technology were the means for achieving it. It must be stressed that democracy was also believed to be the necessary political

framework for the attainment of that goal, and that the values of progress and democracy were interrelated and mutually supportive.

The ideology of development was preached among university youth and spread from it. Development was seen as an urgent political necessity that no government could disregard. This ideology was also established as a base for the launching of social criticism, more particularly against the traditional society and its representatives, who were accused of acting as a brake on the longed-for development.

Although the idea of the revolutionary alliance of "intellectuals, artists, students and workers" had not yet emerged with such great force, the ideology of development sought to become a national creed capable of inspiring both the elite and the masses. The use of these terms is already significant in itself.

In the 1960s modernization was already in many places no longer merely an aspiration but a real and functioning process. The conflicts which arose from that moment were connected to a large extent with the contradictions of modernization itself. The traditional form of conflicts in the past started from the contradiction between the traditional and the modern; what was now being discussed was the direction to be taken by modernization and the changes needed for its attainment. In short, there was agreement about the need to modernize and eliminate the obstacles of the traditional structures, but there was also a big debate about the forms of modernization. The topic most expressive of the agreements, disputes and confusion was agrarian reform.

The option for the development route, of course, did not amount merely to an ideological discussion. The Cuban revolution was a concrete experience; there were other options, such as those advocated by the *Alianza para el Progreso*. All this had a strong impact on youth; this is not surprising, since, after all, the debate was about the possibilities of the future.

While it is true that the old traditional structure was rejected and there was disagreement about the future, it must not be forgotten that the biggest problems lay in the present. The difficulties were evident in the student world. For some, secondary and higher education was still a route for ascent and

mobility; this was not always the case for others. Some placed their hopes in a modernization which could give them a place as technicians and professionals; others were realizing that job opportunities were beginning to decline.

In the universities the problem took the form of a debate between "modernization" and "reform". The goals of modernization were primarily to adapt the universities to the purposes of development, especially with respect to assimilation and the creation of science and technology. Changes were also encouraged in the university structures—departmentalization, hours of work, and ratio of teaching to research—with a view to producing a more dynamic structure. The key words in this operation were efficiency and rationalization.

The advocates of reform did not avoid the topics of modernization, but they placed greater emphasis on democratization in the search for a university community and, primarily, on the themes of the social function of the university. It is interesting that the words solidarity and justice kept cropping up, used not only in relation to the disadvantaged and against traditional society, but also as a rejection of the competitive, individualist and professionalizing outlook of the modern university. The demand for justice was also a rejection of the form taken by development.

In this context, the student movement was strongly influenced by the general political changes taking place in Latin America in those years. The tendency to take matters to extremes had its effects in the debate about modernization and reform. For some, the "bourgeois and reactionary" university could have no better fate than to be destroyed; for others, the university, "a launching pad for chaos and communism", should be taken under control and heavily purged.

The repercussions of this conflict on society are well documented and the often tragic results have been repeatedly discussed. However, it is useful to return to the paragraph from Alain Touraine which served as the starting point for this paper: according to him, the 1970s saw the last battles fought by young radicalized intellectuals. If this were so, what might be foreseen for the present decade?

One of the points of greatest current concern is to identify the role that young people can play in the consolidation or defence of a stable democratic order in the region and in the present situation of crisis. This concern is accentuated by the clear influence of the crisis on the conduct of young people: the possible effects of such phenomena as exclusion from the world of work or intellectual idleness are of undeniable importance in this conduct. We must also wonder about the extent to which the future behaviour of young people will be expressed in the form of a youth movement.

As we have seen, the group which appeared as representative of youth was, generally speaking, the student movement. Today it is difficult to believe that the differences of social class or stratum will be erased or disappear in the formation of a single youth movement, but it is possible to conceive of the formulation of a youth identity on the basis of specific problems: an identity in terms of the stratum to which the student belongs and in relation to the existing social institutions. Of course there are young peasants, young workers and young students; the important thing is to determine, how a young person establishes his relationship with the status of peasant, worker or student.

In Latin America there have not only been changes within each social group but also in the relationships between the different groups and strata. The crisis of the industrialization model can also be seen as the crisis of the relationship between the different social groups of which it is comprised. Accordingly, what is taking place is a process of de-structuring which implies a break with the old identities, something which is also happening in the political and cultural fields.

In addition to the transformations described above, account must also be taken of the changes in the relationship which young people establish with the basic social institutions, such as school, family, and work. In this connection, two facts can be stressed which affect young people from the various social strata; firstly, the existence of a certain kind of exclusion and, secondly, the fact that young people are making demands which these institutions, as they exist today, are generally unable to satisfy. Attendance at school, for example—or even at university—does not necessarily mean inclusion in the sphere of the

culture or the professions. And in some areas of education there are signs of material and spiritual privation affecting the condition of youth. Because of the crisis, it is often impossible to break away from the family; this leads to conflicts because it affects young people's need for independence. As far as work is concerned, the crisis clearly accentuates exclusion; inclusion is often only partial or intermittent.

Since these three institutions—work, school and family—all foster socialization, it is reasonable to think that the difficulty of integration will have the foreseeable result, in a specific way for each stratum, of a crisis of identity and to some extent an anti-institutional attitude. The question is whether we are not witnessing the birth of what might be called a "consciousness of exclusion" in which a state of conflict is established with all the political and institutional elements which define this exclusion. This separation from institutions may lead to the development of a kind of behaviour characterized by passivity or withdrawal or, on the contrary, to a demand for "everything and now". Clearly, this kind of attitude will have a definite influence on the stability and continuity of democracy.

It is clear that a crisis such as the present one indicates a certain crisis of identity for young people, but it also implies a profound uncertainty about the future. It is possible therefore that young people may be trying to establish a kind of adolescent subculture almost as a definitive identity, when by definition youth is something transitory and a starting-point more than a destination.

It is true that some of the problems described here affect youth in particular, but they are assuredly problems of the whole of society as well. The crisis now affecting the majority of the Latin American countries implies options and conflicts. These take the form, in the various social groups and sectors, of conflicts of specific interests; among young people, in contrast, they tend to emerge primarily as disputes and conflicts about direction. As we have seen, in generic terms the traditional conflict in Latin America has been between the progressive and the traditional, in all their different forms. However, can it be asserted today that this is still the focus of the conflict? Many people doubt it

and tend to see this focus in terms of exclusion-inclusion.<sup>1</sup> The attitudes which emerge would tend, according to this view, to depend on which of these two sectors the persons concerned belong to.

The "included" often show tendencies towards individual mobility or passive conformism; the "excluded" show forms of anomie and deviant behaviour or, at times, a strong tendency to emphasize elements of community solidarity, although often with attitudes of opposition to institutions, or at least of remoteness from them. In a difficult economic context it is understandable that young people should reject a politico-institutional system which they see as purely formal, but there is also the possibility of the regenerative participation of young people in the institutions. It is impossible to predict which tendency will prevail, for there are many factors which will determine whether apathy and rejection or, on the contrary, participation will win the day; all we can do is to suggest some of the elements which influence the choice.

In Latin America young manual workers and young people from the working-class strata in general have tended to behave as representatives of their class rather than as young people as such. Nevertheless, the participation of young people in the trade-union movement, for example, may indicate renovation. There are differences between young and old manual workers; the education gaps are often large, and their social experience is also different.

It cannot be denied that students—especially university students—have traditionally played an important role and they show a stronger tendency to define themselves as young people. However, the role of the students had much to do with the symbolic value attached to the university in our countries, for it was one of the obligatory reference points of national life, and this situation has now begun to change. The increased access to the university has meant a loss by the students of the status of a privileged elite. In the Latin American experience the

<sup>1</sup> See the article by J. Martínez and E. Valenzuela on *Juventud popular y anomia* in this same issue.

university has played the role of "society's thinker"; today there are other bodies which also perform this function. To some extent the university has ceased to be the preferred forum of the debate, and this has affected the role of the student movement. There is probably a dual movement; a stronger youth identity in areas where it has traditionally been weak, and less influence, although still an important one, attached to what used to be the youth movement *par excellence*.

Many other changes could be mentioned, but it is better to return to the focus of the present concerns. Since young people are to a certain extent social protagonists, the question is how can the problem of democracy be restated, even

in unfavourable circumstances. A democratic system, in addition to what it implies as an institutional form, is a recognition of the interplay between possible and diverse options. Here youth has a key role: it might say to itself that it is for youth to determine what are to be the differences from what exists at present. The purpose of democratization—from the youth standpoint—is not only to increase the opportunities of involvement in what already exists, but also to open the way to new options and modes of establishing the social relationship. Leaving aside a kind of youth Messianism, youth's proposal would have to be susceptible of formulation as a proposal for society.



## University youth as social protagonist in Latin America

*Henry Kirsch*

In the last years of the 1960s it was common practice for students of social conditions in Latin America to present university youth as one of the key agents in the processes of change. The story of its demands and the results of its actions since the Córdoba movement form a very important element in the region's socio-political history. However, the systematic study of the condition of the university student movement has not been brought up to date and its role in the processes of change in the region is one of the least known areas of social analysis. And this is why at the present time, given the dizzying transformation of socio-economic and political structures which the region has undergone, it may be wondered to what extent such a capacity and potential exist.

Against this background, the article interprets Latin America's present crisis as a failure of hegemony and stresses the importance of the search for social agents to be the driving force of collective action in the future. It then examines some broad aspects of university youth: its social integration in the process of social change in the region, including the impact of the crisis on the employment of university graduates; the capacity of the intellectual to perform the role of intermediary between political leaders, State techno-bureaucrats and civil society in general; and, lastly, the possible modes of expression and the alliances available to university youth as it faces up to the challenge of the crisis.

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## I

### Today's crisis in Latin America: failure of hegemony and search for social agents to be the driving forces of collective action

The present crisis in Latin America is making it increasingly clear that its causes lie not only in external factors but also in other internal factors characteristic of a dependent capitalist type of development. The economic problems and indeed the socio-political contradictions inherent in such development have made it impossible to form a relatively stable social alliance capable of promoting development with equity and participation. The present time has been posited as one in which the old ruling groups and sectors are beginning to fall apart from within and at the same time are losing their legitimacy as society's ruling strata, without, so far, the necessary conditions emerging among the other groups for them to constitute an option. It has thus become current to speak of the lack of vision about the direction of change or the lack of specific development options which are both viable and desirable. In other words, the search for greater effective participation, for a broader democratization, in societies which are confronted at the same time with an economic crisis of unprecedented magnitude, has become increasingly associated with a feeling of exasperation with the present and with a desire to break free from today's oppressive conditions, rather than with a precise picture of a projected future.

To some extent, the situation in a large part of the region, making allowances for the diversity of national situations, might be defined in terms of different degrees of failure, according to the variety of situations found in the traditional, historical or structural categories, in the task of establishing and maintaining the hegemony needed to direct and control the different national development processes. To

put it another way, the bloc holding political power lacks the necessary leadership capacity to solve the problems of the community and exercise its controlling function, and the acceptance of its writ has declined to the point where it is no longer sufficient to ensure the united functioning of this historical bloc (Broccoli, 1977).

This idea of the constitutional failure of hegemony has been described differently by Brunner (1983) as what occurs at a moment in history when "A politico-cultural constellation loses its capacity to produce: i) the legitimacy required by the system of distribution of the means of cultural production; ii) the legitimacy required by the system of integration in the symbolic market". In the first of these cases, he is referring to a crisis of symbolic control in which the ruling class is deprived of its supremacy in the cultural field. This is a crisis of intellectual and moral authority which does not necessarily mean that this class ceases to occupy a dominant position. In the second case, the crisis of integration can occur as a result of significant changes in some of the fundamental factors which govern the production and consumption of the goods of the symbolic market. Such changes include many of the fundamental transformations which Latin American society has undergone at whirlwind speed during the last three decades. It is worth mentioning some of them: the expansion of the modern tertiary sector; the urbanization of the population; industrialization; the emergence of a massive critical capacity among the middle-range groups as a result of the expansion of higher education; the expansion of primary and secondary education, in conjunction with the urban literacy campaigns; the spread of the mass communication media in rural and urban areas; the displacement of the family as the central agent of social training, and others.

Many recent studies have argued that the present economic crisis has brought into the open the crises in the various social systems whose effects have been felt since a much earlier period. It must then be asked—assuming that the continuation of the current model with slight modifications is not an adequate response—as to how to formulate new visions of development that will lead to democratic and stable societies

and facilitate the integration of the large majorities of society at the same time as mastering the current economic situation.

This search implies an urgent need to identify the various groups, classes or movements in civil society which might provide the support for these new visions and leaders and for the political-social and economic-social process essential to the formulation and application of alternative policies.

In the last years of the 1960s it was common practice for students of social conditions in Latin America to present university youth as one of the key social agents in the processes of change. Today, given the dizzying transformation of socioeconomic and political structures which the region has undergone, it may be wondered to what degree such a potential capacity exists. It is true that the student movement organized the participation of young people not only in the universities but in society as well. The story of its demands and of the results of its action since the Córdoba movement are of great importance in the region's socio-political history. Significant differences of tone are found in the societies of individual countries and at different times, especially in view of the very long time which the profound transformation of the socioeconomic and political structures of the region has taken. The actions of university youth were important events in the past and they have shown great versatility, both in their subject-matter and in their forms of expression. However, the systematic study of the condition of the university student movement has not been brought up to date, and its role in the region's processes of change is one of the least known areas of social analysis.

There are both historical indications and concrete recent demonstrations in several countries of the effective capacity and remarkable potential of certain sectors of university youth, in specific conditions, to emerge as significant political and social protagonists. This paper does not seek to deal with this expectation in detail or to analyse it in various national and institutional situations, but rather to offer from this starting point some thoughts which may serve as a frame of reference for more detailed consideration at the

national level through study of specific cases. Four broad aspects of university youth will be discussed: the social integration of university youth in the context of the process of social transformation in the region; the effects of the crisis on the employment situation of university

youth and the relationship between it, the intellectuals and social change; and, lastly, the possible modes of expression and alliances available to university youth as it faces up to the challenge of the current crisis both in social and political matters and in economic affairs.

## II

### The social integration of university youth

With respect to the specific problem of the social integration of university students, there are several axes on which the analysis must be centered.

Firstly, there is the magnitude of the increase in the numbers of university graduates and the speed at which this increase came about. For example, in the space of the 20 years from 1960 to 1980, the number of young people with 13 or more years of education increased by three times in Brazil, nine times in Chile, almost 10 times in Panama, and 17 times in Peru. In the large majority of the countries of the region around 1980 more than 10% of the young people in the 20-24 age group were taking higher education courses, and in a large number of the countries (about a third) there was one student for every five or six young people aged 20 to 24. In countries such as Ecuador and Peru university students are as numerous as industrial manual workers. There are other equally eloquent figures: between five and six million students graduating from university in the region; two thousand university faculties in Brazil; and 170 university centres in Colombia. The number of women involved in this process is also remarkable; the increase in the number of women graduates was such that in about 1980 roughly two in five university students were young women.

It is useful to give closer attention to the figures on this vast expansion of higher education, for a more detailed analysis of them reveals internal disparities both between

countries and within the structure of higher education in each country. For example, it has recently been pointed out that: "the highest level of tertiary education is found in Ecuador, with one graduate for every three young people; the countries with one or more graduates for every five young people are, in descending order, Costa Rica, Argentina, Panama and Venezuela, while Cuba and Peru have almost that ratio; with one or more for every eight there are Uruguay, Nicaragua, Mexico and Chile; with one for every 10, Brazil and Colombia; the other countries have lower ratios. It is difficult to establish a link between university education and structural characteristics; the concept and quality of university education differ from country to country and within each country; the selection capacity of pre-university education also varies; the priority which the middle classes attach to higher education seems to be universal, but in some cases the power systems have responded positively to the demands, and in others they have upgraded the standard of education or, more simply, have established selective entry" (Rama, 1984).

The situation is certainly very complicated, especially in the light of the high degree of exclusion of marginal urban and rural youth found in a large number of countries, which leads to segmentation in education and social polarization of sizeable youth sectors (table 1; ECLAC, 1983; Kirsch, 1984). However, any study of the social integration of university youth must take into account the quantitative changes, for



Table 1

## ILLITERACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA

	Gross rate of schooling up to 1980 <sup>a</sup>		Illiterates pop. 15 and over (percentages)		Illiterates 15-24 years
	Universities and similar	Tertiary level	1950	1980	1970
<b>Rapid modernization countries</b>					
Argentina	18.0	22.2	13.6	6.7	4.2
Chile	10.9	13.2	19.8	7.5	4.7
Uruguay	16.1	16.1 <sup>b</sup>	9.5(1963)	6.1(1975)	...
Costa Rica	21.5	25.8	20.6	7.0	5.2
Cuba	19.5	19.5	22.1	3.9	...
Panama	22.2	22.2	30.0	15.3	12.4
Venezuela	17.9	20.2	50.5	17.7	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>19.7<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>7.7</b>
<b>Big countries with rapid and unbalanced modernization</b>					
Brazil	11.7	11.7	50.5	26.0	24.5
Mexico	12.2	14.0	43.2	16.0	16.4
Colombia	10.5	10.9	37.7	13.7	11.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>12.3<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>Medium-sized and small countries with partial modernization</b>					
Ecuador	36.6	36.6	44.3	18.7	14.2
Paraguay	6.7	6.8	34.2	14.3	9.6
Peru	15.4	19.2 <sup>b</sup>	38.9(1961)	18.5	13.5
Dominican Republic	7.5	7.5	57.1	26.4	21.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>19.9<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>14.6</b>
<b>Countries with incipient modernization</b>					
Bolivia	9.3	9.3	67.9	36.7	17.3
El Salvador	2.9	3.9 <sup>d</sup>	60.6	35.3	28.8
Guatemala	6.7	7.2	70.7	47.3	45.4
Haiti	0.8	0.8 <sup>b</sup>	89.5	71.3	...
Honduras	7.6	8.2	64.8	31.4	27.1
Nicaragua	13.7	14.1	61.6	33.5	35.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.6<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>65.1</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>30.7</b>

Source: Germán W. Rama, *La evolución social de América Latina, 1950-1980: transición y cambio estructural*, document presented to the seminar on development options in Latin America organized by the University of the Andes and the Joint Study Programme on the International Relations of Latin America (RIAL), Cali, August 1984.

<sup>a</sup>Calculated as the ratio of graduates to the population aged 20 to 24.

<sup>b</sup>These countries were excluded to establish the averages of the country categories.

<sup>c</sup>Simple arithmetical averages.

<sup>d</sup>In 1979 the figures for El Salvador were 7.4 and 8.1 per cent respectively.

they indicate an important qualitative change: the formerly élite levels have been transformed into mass levels. In view of the importance of the student movement in the past and the social changes which occurred at these times of crisis, it is necessary to determine in what terms university students can be seen as potential human resources with an innovative cultural capacity whose participation would have implications for the strengthening or establishment of democracy and the formation of alliances to co-ordinate the general interests of the various groups.

In Latin America the concrete expressions of this potential will be determined to a large extent by the relative importance of various other factors determining the integration of university graduates in society. Traditionally, it has been thought that there is a direct and positive correlation between the socio-political participation of university youth and the proportion of university students in the young population and in the total population. The prevailing assumption has been that the importance of young people from the universities as a collective social agent increases in direct proportion to their relative increase in the two population groups mentioned above. However, the evidence shows that the situation is much more complicated and diversified. The quantitative expansion of upper education has taken place in conjunction with all the other social changes mentioned earlier and with other political and cultural changes which have altered the participation parameters of all the social sectors. It is therefore important to take into account factors such as the consolidation of the political parties as focuses of the political struggle in some cases, the emergence of authoritarian rule and the restoration of democracy in others, the development of new axes of creativity and innovation in knowledge and culture (from enterprises themselves down to non-formal activity), and the "merchandizing" of cultural processes, etc. (Rama and Faletto, 1984). This set of factors calls for a relocation of the conditions and forms of participation by young people from the universities in the disposition of the region's political protagonists. This need appears even more urgent when the many internal changes in

higher education are also taken into consideration.

In some countries the increase in the number of university graduates indicates a remarkable process of democratization which, however, does not extend beyond the lower sectors of the middle classes, since social selection takes place at the lower levels of the education system. From the socio-political standpoint, this marks the beginning of a new relationship between the middle classes, the higher education system and the power structure (Rama and others, 1984).

This process is also linked with a change in the concept of the university. On the one hand, the expansion of university education and the consequent production of professionals on a large scale, unmatched by growth in jobs requiring university qualifications, have led to a professional proletarianization which is proceeding apace in many countries. On the other hand, after the attempts to modernize the universities in the 1960s through the inclusion of technical courses and changes in existing courses in accordance with the higher education models of the countries of the north, courses have steadily become more differentiated and specialized. Furthermore, from the beginning of the 1970s up to the present, the university expansion has been accompanied by a great proliferation of tertiary institutions of various kinds, such as professional institutes, academies and technical education centres.

This has frequently meant the acquisition of increasingly specialized knowledge, in particular on the part of the broadest and lowest segments of the middle classes. These people, with their educational credentials, make demands on and offer criticism of the prevailing social order, which is incapable of satisfying their expectations of mobility, job status and incomes.

The increase in the numbers of graduates and the changes in the social origins of the university population promoted a qualitative differentiation among the intellectual strata, which will assuredly have other roles and positions in the various future political situations. This raises the question of the role of universities in developing ideologies and legitimizing society's value system.

These processes led to the familiar phenomenon of segmentation and

establishment of hierarchies in higher education. Education has ceased to be an agent of cultural and social homogenization; education differs according to the type of establishment in which it is provided, and the top groups will thus have the distinctive value of their knowledge restored, pulling rank on the educational qualifications acquired by the great majority. In some countries this phenomenon has emerged in a higher-education system characterized by specialization and ranking of universities, by increasing privatization of the more prestigious higher courses and by the transfer of more specialized and strategic training for the perpetuation of the existing social order to academic centres and other extra-university bodies, which have some of the most effective mechanisms of selection for élite positions. There is therefore an increasing elitist trend in a small university sector which is gradually

gaining in independence and a parallel devaluation of higher education for the masses, with a clear decline in their functional importance and social prestige (ECLAC, 1983; Rodríguez, 1978; Parra, 1985; PIIIE, 1984).

Nevertheless, despite these contradictions and the consequent accentuation of the concentration of incomes, it cannot be denied that in step with the expansion of access to higher education there have been profound changes in the system of job stratification, especially in certain cases in connection with the expansion of the modern tertiary sector and of State services in particular. It was primarily in the periods of economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s that the process of social mobility permitted the incorporation of a large number of persons in the middle and upper parts of the pyramid, as a result of the expansion and specialization of the corresponding jobs.

### III

## Effects of the crisis on the employment of university graduates

In many senses it can be seen that the crisis of the 1980s is bringing into the open the unresolved contradictions and shortcomings of the post-war style of development. With respect to university students and their job expectations, it is clear that the social groups which recently acquired higher education are being passed over in the work markets, as the process of their incorporation in higher-ranking jobs has run out of steam.

The problems of the employment of young people with higher education, as in the case of their social integration and, as we shall see, their socio-political role, are extremely complex ones. The difficulties of finding work do not affect all the graduates from universities and other tertiary institutions in the same way: there is an internal differentiation among these young people, who generally come from the middle and

upper strata of society. Those from the middle strata who manage to find work in the most dynamic centres of the expanding tertiary sector acquire levels of income and status which assimilate them to the top strata of society. In contrast, other young people from some of the middle sectors are obliged to accept lower-status jobs. Given the abundance of the labour supply and the increasing tightness of the work market, there is a continual increase in the educational qualifications for jobs which do not in fact require them, such as some administrative or even manual jobs. Young people with university training, especially those from mass education institutions, have been compelled to compete in segments of the work market traditionally reserved for persons with secondary education, without succeeding thereby in reducing the alarming rates of open unemployment among

Table 2

**CHILE, PANAMA: OPEN UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN THE POPULATION AGED 15  
TO 24, BY EDUCATION LEVEL AND SEX, 1960, 1970 AND 1980**

	1960			1970			1980		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
<b>CHILE</b>									
Educational level									
0 - 3	4.6	5.5	1.8	1.3	1.6	0.4	13.5	13.6	12.8
4 - 6	5.9	7.0	3.0	1.6	1.9	0.8	14.2	15.5	10.3
7 - 9	8.9	8.5	10.2	2.8	2.8	2.8	19.9	21.1	16.4
10 and over	10.4	10.9	9.4	6.1	7.0	4.7	25.3	24.8	26.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>PANAMA</b>									
Educational level									
0 - 3	1.7	1.4	3.9	4.3	2.8	10.5	10.5	6.9	24.4
4 - 6	7.4	6.8	9.0	9.8	7.0	16.3	11.1	10.6	12.9
7 - 9	12.3	10.1	15.8	15.4	15.5	23.7	16.7	14.9	21.0
10 and over	10.6	9.0	12.1	9.6	8.5	10.8	19.2	18.6	19.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>18.4</b>

Source: CEPAL, *Situación y perspectivas de la juventud en América Latina*, (E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.2), 1983.

young people with higher education, particularly women. Table 2 presents, by way of example, the figures for two countries of the region.

The dramatic reduction in the job options of a large part of the present university generation, when added to the abrupt frustration of the aspirations of other youth sectors, heralds fresh tensions and problems for university students.

In view of the historic activities of Latin American student movements in the vanguard of social change, especially in exceptional times, and given the spreading doubts about the real value of the existing models and the uncertainty about the future, this sector might be one of the key social agents in the identification of new policies.

## IV

### University youth, the intellectuals and the process of social change

As has been pointed out, there is general agreement about the historical importance of student movements as agents of cultural and university change, as forums for the selection of society's élites and contra-élites, or as forces which combine with broader political

movements. Students have taken an active part in social and political events; they have been the bearers of social change, and they have performed as political actors (ECLAC, 1983; Forrachi, 1972; Montiel, 1984). At the present time certain student groups constitute a kind of

ideological conscience of society, just as, despite the differences, intellectuals have been in other cultures and societies.

This has a special connection with the importance of the creative power of the intellectuals in the various university faculties, in particular in the social sciences and in literature, art and teacher-training courses, a power which can be measured by its capacity to intervene with the techno-bureaucratic political leaders and in the various strata of society.<sup>1</sup>

It must be remembered that the harsh criticism of the ideology of the technocratic-society model began and developed in step with the importance acquired in the universities by social science studies. The scientific analysis of the social situation highlighted the ambiguities of social goals, the contradictory principles, the rigidity of the stratification, the concentration of income, and the power relationships and the way they work in the maintenance of social structures. Both the criticisms and their political consequences became more pointed when the social science faculties focussed their attention on the dependent status of Latin America and on the analysis of social problems as the offspring of the social structure.

It is true that as a result sometimes of repression and sometimes of the process of expansion itself, the universities lost a large part of their creative capacity. However, this was taken over by academic centres and independent research and teaching institutes in economics, sociology, anthropology and political science.

It must be remembered here that persons with a background in the social sciences and other intellectual areas are prominent at the present time among the leaders of democratic political movements in several countries of the region. In the light of this fact and taking into account the expansion of university education, especially among the middle sectors, the large numbers of graduates from universities and

other forms of higher education among the young population of Latin America and the consequent massive growth of the intellectual outlook among the population, the consideration of the topic of university students now has to focus on the role of the intellectuals in the shaping of new types of society.

Three basic trends can be distinguished in the role of the intellectuals in society.<sup>2</sup> One trend is to attach greater significance to the "differential position of the intellectual in the culture"; the other emphasizes his relationship with power. The first trend takes education and employment as the framework for the analysis, the second deals basically with the function of the intellectual as producer and intermediary of ideologies and with his consequent involvement in the hegemony struggles in society. The first of these traditions has its roots in the thinking of Weber, followed by Parkin, Alwin Gouldner and Mannheim (Brunner and Flisfisch, 1983).

The second conceptual interpretation is based on the thinking of Gramsci. For him, the intellectuals perform a central function in achieving homogeneity in the social and political fields. They do not form a class but they act as intermediaries for the ruling group, both in civil society by promoting mass consensus, and in political society or the State through the State's apparatus of coercion.

In a crisis of hegemony, the ruling groups lose their leadership capacity and the subject groups succeed in criticizing the ruling culture and they seek to formulate an alternative culture in which they will obtain their own independence. In this crisis of authority, which is nothing less than a crisis of the whole State, a new power grouping is constituted which prepares what Gramsci calls a new historical bloc. The new element in the preparation of this alternative is that it is designed to put an end to exploitation, to bring the bureaucratic interest into line with the public interest, and to establish by means of a democratic option of electoral participation a pluralist interaction between civil society and the State, in order to resolve the

<sup>1</sup>It is not the intention here to obfuscate the role of intellectuals or university students in these processes by confusing their activities with those of people with the power of decision, but merely to recognize the influence exercised in the region at various historical points by those who have created and disseminated a critical awareness of society and new ideas which help to shape the future.

<sup>2</sup>There is also a third possibility, which is to consider intellectuals as a modernizing élite, e.g., Edward Shils; Parsons and John Friedman.

tensions between universalist and particularist tendencies. Here, the key role in Latin America in formulating and achieving the necessary consensus in society rests with the intellectuals. In this task great importance also attaches to certain student sectors, understood as social movements, since historically they have been very closely associated with the dissemination, the development and in some cases the elaboration of ideologies. The themes proposed by Latin American society as a whole (revolution, democracy, modernization, etc.) have always found in university youth a favourable forum for discussion and concerted action.

Touraine (1984) says of Latin America that "the production of ideologies does not take place primarily in the parties. It is consistently

associated with the universities. The first reason for this independence is the lack in recent decades of a strong and stable aristocratizing culture". This lack and its consequence are explained as follows: "in Latin America, the long cycle of conflicts preceding the State constitution and the succession of economic changes with the consequent partial or total renovation of the higher groups, prevented —with some exceptions— the persistence of a carrier group of a superior culture transmittable through the family. On the contrary, culture was a creation of the educational system, therefore theoretically accessible to all" (ECLAC, 1983). The university world is not dominated either by tradition or by a generation conflict and the search for independence by young people, but rather by producers of ideas and ideologies.

## V

### Forms of expression and alliances of youth with other forces against the present crisis and for the future

While it is true that at the present time confusion and uncertainty seem to abound and there is a general void of new and precise ideas about the future, some tentative observations can nevertheless be made about the potential role of university youth in a transition to other development styles. Recent studies of the condition of young people in Latin America agree on several basic topics which have held the attention of Latin American young people. These general problems include: the relationship with the democratic compromise, which is closely connected with an option for "alternative development"; the relationship with Latin American integration and co-operation as responses to the series of problems set by the current crisis; and the State-Nation debate at a time when it is being redefined.

In order to avoid confusion, it should be stressed that it is not a question of establishing a

directly proportional relationship between the socio-political participation of university youth and its quantitative weight in the young population and the total population. It is important to increase now the proportion of young people who can participate by reason of their higher education in the process of rationalizing modern society and can react to a language which has a greater intellectual content than "charismatic" speeches. It is also important to reiterate that the present situation is very complicated and that there are many differences between the countries of the region and within each of them. The reason for this is that the quantitative expansion of higher education has been accompanied by other profound social changes, some of which have significantly altered the structure of the socio-political participation of all the social groups. These changes include, in addition to those associated

with urbanization and the modernization of the economy and the urban socio-occupational structure, others directly related to the socio-political interaction of the university students: the organization of the means of cultural production, the evolution of the political parties and their relationships with youth, the existence and nature of the various authoritarian régimes, the different forms of democratic reconstitution, the differences in the prevailing attitude towards students' images of themselves and of society, which depend on the type of institution or faculty which they attend, etc. All this gives grounds for hope of different and dissenting modes of expression on the major topics mentioned above on the part of all the various groups which make up the generic category of "university youth", modes of expression further diversified by the particular features of each country.

This means that individual national cases must be examined if proper consideration is to be given to the topic of the role of university youth in shaping the new social organizations that will come into being after the current socio-political and economic crisis. However, for the moment, and taking duly into account the diversity of the actual situations, the possible responses of young people from the universities to the challenges of the future can be grouped around five basic positions.

The first of these may be called "particularist". It can be seen that in some specific cases certain sectors of young people from the middle class will seek, in the expansion of the role of the State as employer in the bureaucracy, an opportunity to create room for themselves and also to try to reassert their position as intermediary in political organizations, pressure groups, trade unions, etc. The ideological identification of these groups may be heterogeneous, as was the case in recent times in Argentina and Uruguay. An example has been given of the case of the identification of young people with the working-class sectors but not in specific national projects (Braslavsky, 1985; Franco, 1984).

The second position can be seen in some countries in the isolation of young people from the universities. Young people have a poor

image of the existing political parties, which in turn do not offer mechanisms of continuity (and not just for election purposes) by means of which young people can participate effectively, train for leadership positions and involve themselves in a more organic manner. As a result partly of the exhaustion of the urban industrial model and the modernization process, which had begun in several countries even before the current crisis, a feeling of political frustration will spread among university youth in some countries. The student movements which were at their peak in the 1960s and the first part of the 1970s have tended to break up into small parties of the Left or into groups which deviated towards guerrilla activity (Leal, 1981). The root causes of this phenomenon are profound and complex. In the case of Colombia, Rodrigo Parra points out that "the low level of political participation of Colombian youth seems to be determined by two types of factor and their interrelationship: the lack of a national goal, of a purpose investing the action of the State and the political parties with meaning and within which young people can see themselves as an integral part, and the lack of a plan to define the direction in which society is headed (similar to the idea of industrialization, urbanization and modernization in the 1950s and 1960s); and the consequent loss of educational power by the social institutions which exist for this purpose, such as the family, the school and the political parties" (Parra, 1985). Adopting a third posture, other groups of university students might opt for more radical methods, since they have been made more aware of the position of the working classes and other subordinate groups and are concerned about their participation in society. Their choice of an alternative style will seek to reject the completely pluralist solution and mobilize the masses to take power.

The fourth position, which is somewhat similar to the previous one, involves centres of revolutionary action in the universities during governmental crises or periods of recession, with a *sui generis* expression in countries with a high proportion of Indian population. An example of this position already exists in the form of Sendero Luminoso which had its origins among the students of the University of

Guamanga in Ayacucho, which is certainly one of the poorest Departments of Peru (Medianero, 1984) and which then went on to influence the Universities of Cuzco and Lima.

Lastly, other sectors of university youth, aware of the existing contradictions in exclusive forms of democracy, will probably try to form alliances and achieve consensus with various groups in society. Examples of such alliances with working-class or peasant sectors can be found in Central America. In other countries, the more recent tendency for proliferation of grassroots communities, co-operatives and other forms of "popular organization" may prove very significant with respect to the transformation of society. Given the state of continuous tension between civil society and the State, the groups of young university students who cherish ideas similar to the ones which Flisfisch (1983) has called "fundamental orientations" for a new democratic ideology might establish basic accords and alliances with the groups representing the mass sectors and the working class.

According to Flisfisch's outline, these alliances based on "fundamental orientations" will be formed around four ideological axes:

- "a) the idea of the dissemination and consolidation of effective practices of self-government;
- b) the idea of expansion of the areas subject to personal control;
- c) the idea of the need for fragmentation or socialization of power; and
- d) the idea of restoration (which is tantamount to improvement) to the community of personal capacities and potentials which have been lost in the interplay of social structures which have become automatized in their relations with the women and men subject to them."

This last posture available to sectors of university youth finally seems to be the only option compatible with a serious intention to direct society towards a pluralist democracy and to end the alienation which up to now has been a feature of social relations in Latin America.

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## Recent ECLAC publications

**Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1984** (LC/G.1398). Santiago, Chile: March 1986. Vol. I (685 pages) and Vol. II (216 pages).

This publication is the final, comprehensive version of the Economic Survey for 1984, which appeared during 1985 in separate booklets. It is divided into two volumes, the first dealing with Latin America and the second with the Caribbean.

The volume on Latin America has three parts. Part One contains an analysis of the overall economic evolution of the region during 1984 and examines the main trends of economic activity: growth of production; the evolution of employment and unemployment; prices and wages; changes in the external sector, and the renegotiation of the external debt. Part Two, which is much more extensive, contains a separate detailed analysis of the economic evolution of nineteen countries in the region. Part Three presents a special study on the evolution of the Uruguayan economy and economic policy during the period 1981-1984. This begins with an analysis of the way in which the external setting conditioned economic policy, with special reference to the adjustment programme applied in the two years 1983-1984; next the overall evolution of the economy is described, and finally the main macroeconomic problems facing the new authorities at the beginning of 1985 are discussed.

Volume II deals with the Caribbean economies and has two parts. In the first the international setting is considered and an analysis is made of the general features of trends in production, the external sector, inflation and unemployment in the subregion. The second part contains separate analyses of the economic evolution of fifteen Caribbean countries in 1984.

**El decenio de la mujer en el escenario latinoamericano: realidades y perspectivas** (The decade for women in the Latin American setting: realities and prospects) (LC/G.1372). Santiago, Chile: 1986. 216 pages.

The year 1985 marked the end of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, Peace which had been proclaimed at the World Conference in Mexico. Far from being exhausted, however, it may be said that the study of the subject is only just beginning. ECLAC has taken part from the beginning of the Decade in the effort to study this topic systematically in order to foster the integration of women into development. Numerous related activities have been carried out in the region in these years: projects, meetings and seminars, support for the creation of national offices, progress in government action, the emergence of numerous non-governmental organizations devoted to women's problems, the creation of new currents of public opinion, publications and, lastly, legislative changes among

which perhaps one of the most important was the entry into effect of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, supported and ratified by the majority of the countries of the region.

The subject of the situation of women in contemporary society has gained in importance. A body of theory is emerging and more is becoming known about the specific situations of women in the urban working-class strata, rural women, and women in the middle-class sectors; studies are being conducted on their insertion in the labour market, their educational situation, their forms of participation, their aspirations and needs, and finally—closely linked with the topic of youth—the subject of the situation of young women.

This study forms part of these concerns. It contains papers produced by professionals of the ECLAC Social Development Division and by experts of the region, who have approached the subject from different angles in an effort to contribute to its analysis and assess the achievements of the Decade. It also includes an extensive specialized bibliography, which will be of undoubted interest to students of these topics.

**Hacia nuevas modalidades de cooperación económica entre América Latina y el Japón** (Towards new forms of economic co-operation between Latin America and Japan) (LC/G.1354). "Cuadernos de la CEPAL" series, No. 51. Santiago, Chile: 1986. 233 pages.

For more than a quarter of a century economic relations between Latin America and Japan have been expanding without any serious setbacks. In recent years these relations have become even closer in various fields of interest to both sides. The mere continuation of past trends, however, may not guarantee the achievement of desirable objectives for the future of both parties, particularly in view of the recent problems, both internal and external, that have been besetting Latin America. This report attempts to clarify the nature of these problems with a view to suggesting possibilities for establishing new forms of mutually beneficial economic co-operation between Latin America and Japan. Despite the great geographical distance between them, Latin America is an important region for Japan, particularly in terms of its future development potential and the possible diversification of trade and other co-operative activities.

The new forms of co-operation should be sought in the light of an adequate recognition of what Latin American countries are pursuing in restructuring their economies for the future, as well as in the light of the problems originating from their past economic development. In this respect, at least two characteristics—the semi-industrialized phase they have largely reached and their rich natural resource endowments—have to be kept in mind. At the same time, Japan's capacity for co-operation must be carefully defined in consideration of its development experience and the possibility that this co-operation will bring benefits to Japan, whose phase of full industrialization makes it necessary to be able to count on diversified and assured supplies of natural resources.

The contents of this report offer promising expectations for the promotion of economic co-operation between the two parties for several reasons: the study was

carried out jointly by expert teams selected by both sides; the possibilities of new forms and fields of co-operation derived from a careful analysis spread over three years; and the research dealt with specific areas of importance rather than attempting to give superficial coverage to all aspects of the problem.

**Trade relations between Brazil and the United States** (LC/G.1357). "Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL" series, No. 52. Santiago, Chile: 1985. 148 pages (in English).

This study on trade relations between Brazil and the United States was undertaken within the framework of the IPEA-ECLAC Agreement, as part of a joint research programme. The two institutions share an interest in analysing recent trends in Brazilian exports to the industrialized countries and the relative importance of import restrictions on these trade flows.

The study is the first of a series on this topic. It focuses on conflict and consensus in the trade relations between Brazil and the United States. Chapter I provides a brief summary of the entire study. Chapter II presents a brief description of the trade policies of the United States and the role of the different government agencies. It also analyses the conflict between free trade and protectionism and its impact on the United States trade laws. Chapter III comments on recent trends in Brazilian trade policy, particularly since the inception of the export promotion programme, and explains its essential elements, considering its historical background as well as the external factors that have helped to produce changes in the orientation of Brazil's trade policy. Chapter IV presents a short review of recent trends in the bilateral trade between Brazil and the United States. It also examines the programme on the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) of the United States. Chapter V provides information on the import restrictions imposed by the United States as they affect Brazil, and calculates their trade coverage. Finally, in chapter VI, a main conclusion is drawn: the trade relations between Brazil and the United States are tense because of a combination of practical and philosophical differences; nevertheless, the efforts to solve these trade problems are being carried out in a more cordial atmosphere than at any other time during the present decade. The study concludes with a set of recommendations.

**Políticas de promoción de exportaciones en algunos países de América Latina** (Export promotion policies in some Latin American countries) (LC/G.1370). "Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL" series, No. 55. Santiago, Chile: 1985. 297 pages.

With an external debt of US\$ 360 billion, Latin America faces a difficult situation at the present time and one with serious projections for the future. The results seem to show that the era of open-trade policy has ended. The cost was extremely high, but may rise still further, in view of the fact that the region is going through an external trade cycle in which the terms of trade are deteriorating still more

severely. The fall in the prices of most export commodities and also, in some cases, in the volume of sales signifies a considerable cutback in foreign exchange for the countries. Moreover, external support available for purchasing goods and services in the international market has been appreciably reduced.

This situation is inevitably aggravated by the interest and amortization payments on the foreign debt to which the debtor nations are committed. This aspect is of great importance because in the present conditions the income from sales in the international market is barely sufficient to service the debt in the short and medium term.

In these circumstances, those responsible for economic policy in Latin America have had to adopt emergency measures mainly directed to solving immediate problems. Nonetheless, it is becoming increasingly clear that a long-term rationale must be imposed and ways must be found to stimulate inward-looking growth, while at the same time strengthening the flow of goods to international markets.

For this reason the publication under review, which forms part of the ECLAC Export Promotion and Development Project, seeks to make known the principal features of the systems of non-traditional export promotion in some Latin American countries, and is addressed to the wide range of persons and entities involved in foreign trade.

The study presents the experiences of Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Peru. Each country is given a chapter covering the evolution of the export promotion mechanisms, some results obtained, and an evaluation seeking to determine the efficacy of the system. The selection of countries aims to present a broad overview of the promotion schemes used in the region. This is why it includes some countries which have weak and incomplete systems, as well as others with a full promotional infrastructure reinforced by positive results over the years.

**Las empresas transnacionales en la Argentina** (Transnational enterprises in Argentina) (LC/G.1377). "Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL" series, No. 56. Santiago, Chile: 1986. 222 pages.

This study gives a general view of the presence and significance of transnational enterprises in Argentina in the different periods of its economic history, with special attention to recent decades.

It argues that already towards the end of the last century one of the characteristic features of the Argentine economy was the marked presence of foreign capital. Its insertion in the key activities of the agricultural exporting model (transport, services linked with foreign trade, meat packing plants, etc.) gave it a leading role in the development of the economy and at the same time a high potential for accumulation.

The gradual exhaustion of the agricultural exporting model and the first signs of a new pattern of accumulation, sustained on the basis of import substitution, went hand in hand with new types of foreign investment in which the

sectors linked with exports tend to be displaced by activities—essentially manufacturing—devoted to meeting domestic demand.

Both in the first phase of the substitution process—light industries—and in the second, when it began to include intermediate goods and consumer durables, foreign capital occupied and controlled the areas with the greatest growth potential. As under the agricultural exporting model, the foreign presence seems to have polarized towards the activities which form the dynamic nuclei of capital accumulation.

This article, which was prepared with the collaboration of the ECLAC Office in Buenos Aires, forms part of a series of studies that is being conducted by the Joint ECLAC/CTC Unit on Transnational Corporations concerning the presence and effects of transnational enterprises in the countries of the region. Similar studies relating to Chile, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador were published as Nos. 22, 31, 36 and 41, respectively, of the "Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL" series, while others are now being concluded on Colombia and Paraguay. This series is complemented by the study *Empresas transnacionales en la industria de alimentos. El caso argentino: cereales y carne* (Transnational enterprises in the food industry. The Argentine case: cereals and meat), "Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL" series, No. 29, 1983.

**El desarrollo frutícola y forestal en Chile y sus derivaciones sociales** (The development of fruit-growing and forestry in Chile and its social repercussions) (I.C/G.1378). "Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL" series, No. 57, Santiago, Chile: 1986.

In the case of Chile, as in most of the countries in this and other regions of the world, the relation between the State, agriculture and rural society has depended on the framework imposed by a style of development. The recent modernization processes and the profound changes that have occurred in the countryside are local expressions of the capitalist development model: a widespread phenomenon that goes back several decades, transcends the American continent, and continues to advance despite certain deviations, vacillations, and even setbacks. The direction taken, however, has not been exactly that proposed in the initial model. Little by little, the various national versions in general, and the Chilean in particular, have deviated from the original model of the central countries and have gradually adopted a different and dependent development style that has been called peripheral capitalism.

Within this framework, this study analyses the policies aimed at stimulating an industrial type of fruit-growing destined for export to the countries of the northern hemisphere, along with the scope of these policies, their capacity to foster the expansion of fruit-growing, and the instruments used for this purpose. It examines the changes that have occurred in the value and distribution of land, in the demand for labour and in the system of work and wages, together with the effects of seasonality on agricultural employment and the level and differentiation of wages.

Special attention is given to the producers engaged in this activity, to the conditions that led to the formation of this type of entrepreneur, and to the financial, commercial and technical mechanisms that have sustained them. Finally, the social repercussions of this form of fruit-growing development are assessed and other patterns are proposed by which the growth analysed may make a more direct contribution to the development of rural community.

**El comercio exterior de bienes de capital en América Latina** (External trade in capital goods in Latin America) (I.C/G.1371). "Cuadernos Estadísticos de la CEPAL" series, No. 11. Santiago, Chile: 1986. 288 pages.

Numerous studies have been conducted and many meetings of experts and businessmen held under the auspices of the ECLAC/UNIDO/UNDP project on the situation and prospects of supply and production of capital goods in Latin America. Before now, however, the external trade in capital goods of the countries of the region had not been expressly and systematically dealt with, among other reasons through lack of information.

The statistics on foreign trade in capital goods of metalworking origin presented in this *Cuaderno* make good this need. They have been structured in a relatively summarized form, together with some detailed tables, so as to provide a ready base of information for the study of this subject.

The data on exports and imports of these goods cover 16 Latin American countries: the 11 member countries of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the five countries of the Central American Common Market (CACM), and all these countries together. The absence of the other countries of the region from this publication is due to lack of data. It can be estimated, however, that the figures published represent over 90% of the regional total. The statistics relate to the period 1970-1982, and the goods have been selected on the basis of the criteria used in the Classification According to Use or Economic Destination (CUODE).

In the analysis of imports of capital goods according to type of product, continuous series have been used for the period 1970-1982 and two sources have been distinguished, i.e., goods coming from the world at large and those of exclusively Latin American origin. This procedure has been followed to show the evolution of extra-regional and intra-regional supply. For the analysis of exports and imports according to the nature of the goods and the area of origin or destination, specific years have been chosen. For imports the years 1970 and 1980 have been considered and for exports the years 1970, 1975, 1980 and 1982. It should be noted that, although the combination of the variables "type of product" and "area of origin or destination" implies a substantial improvement in the value of the information, it involves greater complexity in the arrangement of the data; the structural changes in this respect are relatively slow over time, and in any case can be analysed without necessarily resorting to continuous series.

Finally, the *Cuaderno* includes four annexes. The first gives the titles of the studies conducted under the

ECLAC/UNIDO/UNDP project, while the other three define the nature of the statistical information given in the second part. These annexes include a list of documents prepared under the project referred to; details of the capital goods considered in the *Cuaderno*, classified according to the Modified Standard International Trade Classification (SITC, Rev.1) and the Brussels Tariff Nomenclature (BTN); the names of the countries that compose the trade co-operation areas; and the differences between the definition of the concept of capital goods adopted in this study and that which is used in the Classification by Broad Economic Categories.

**"Entre Rieles": una experiencia interdisciplinaria en video sobre juventud popular urbana ("Railed in": an interdisciplinary experiment in video on urban lower-class youth) (LC/G.1419). "Monografias" series, No. 1. Santiago, Chile: 1986. 51 pages.**

Within the framework of the initiatives relating to the celebration of the International Youth Year, ECLAC

commissioned the preparation of a support paper for a "research in images" project carried out in Santiago, Chile during 1983 which dealt with the social behaviour of a group of young people belonging to a decaying lower-middle to low level sector.

This paper describes the stages followed in the conduct of the research, in which video was used as a recording instrument and which gave rise to a documentary video 37 minutes long entitled "Entre Rieles" (Railed in).

The document begins with a statement of the objectives of "Entre Rieles" and explains its exploratory character, determined by the tentative interdisciplinary work and the experimental use of video as a recording instrument and means of social research. There follows a presentation of the theoretical and conceptual background behind the definition of the area of study and a description of the method of approaching the place and the group of young "protagonists" of "Entre Rieles". It ends with an analysis of the method of recording and the cutting criteria employed, followed by an assessment, a diagnosis and an analysis of the projections of the experiment.

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CEPAL Review is published in Spanish and English versions three times a year.

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