

CENTER FOR Latin American Studies

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

SPRING 2004



Protesters at the WTO conference in Cancún. / Photo by AP Wide World.

Going Global

By Peter Orsi

Ernesto Zedillo, the former President of Mexico, gave a spirited defense of globalization in a speech at UC Berkeley, saying that policies such as free trade, when properly implemented, can spread democracy and fight poverty in the developing world.

“Nowadays it has become politically fashionable to point toward globalization as being the cause of all the bad things that are affecting the world,” Zedillo said, but “in some cases globalization or economic integration has nothing to do with the bad effects.”

Zedillo challenged the idea, offered by some economists, that globalization is an irreversible process driven by technological change. Globalization “is driven fundamentally by political decisions,” he said, and therefore can indeed be stopped or reversed. The question, he told an audience of some 750 spectators who packed Wheeler Auditorium, was whether rich and poor countries should engage in fostering or frustrating the trend.

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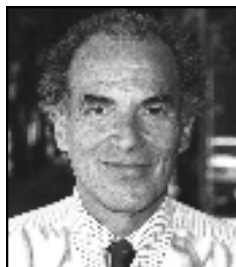
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Front cover photo

First World protectionism in the spotlight: Activists dressed as G8 leaders greedily “eat” subsidized cereal, sugar and milk outside the WTO meeting in Cancún last September.



Letter from the Chair

The topics covered in this issue range from debates over globalization to the future of Haiti. Our cover features a talk underscoring the benefits of globalization by former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo. Jorge Arrate, until recently Chile’s Ambassador to Argentina, provides a more cautious view in an exclusive interview for the newsletter done by Roberto Guareschi, who served for 13 years as executive editor of Argentina’s top daily, Clarín.

In the aftermath of the turmoil in Haiti that deposed President Aristide, CLAS organized three programs: a showing of Jonathan Demme’s documentary *The Agronomist* about the life and death of human rights activist Jean Dominique; a first hand look at events in Haiti described by Representative Maxine Waters; and a historical overview as well as contemporary analysis by Jean Casimir, Haiti’s Ambassador to the U.S. during President Aristide’s first term and now a member of the opposition.

We are pleased to feature two original

articles highlighting faculty research. Prof. Lydia Chávez writes on the contemporary situation in Cuba, in anticipation of a new book she edited for Duke University Press. Prof. Nancy Scheper-Hughes reports on the illegal trafficking in human organs involving people from Brazil, New York, South Africa and Israel. Prof. Scheper-Hughes, who has pioneered anthropological research in this area, is completing a manuscript on these themes.

This issue also features selections from the U.S.–Mexico Futures Forum, a joint endeavor of CLAS and ITAM in Mexico City. In addition to President Zedillo, we present an analysis on the current scene in Mexico by Luis de la Calle and articles covering lectures given by Sergio Aguayo and Mariclaire Acosta.

Finally, we include a Berkeley discussion with Paulo Lins, author of *City of God*, and conclude with a Pablo Neruda poem in recognition of the 100-year anniversary of the poet’s birth.

— Harley Shaiken

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Perspectives on Haiti

By Yahaira Castro



Almost everything we've been told about Haiti is a lie. That's the truth, according to Congresswoman Maxine Waters who spoke to a packed audience in the Women's Faculty Club. The congresswoman from California's 35th District painted an insider's perspective of the events that shook Haiti.

"President Aristide is a good man," said Waters. Since Aristide was flown out of Haiti and a new leader took control of the impoverished nation of eight million, Water's said the international media has bought the stories oppositional forces have spun about the twice deposed leader. Although journalists published stories accusing Aristide of corruption, she hasn't seen evidence proving he is corrupt.

"There isn't that much in Haiti to steal," she said.

Waters' recent involvement began with a phone call last December. She was on vacation in the Bahamas when a friend working with then President Aristide called to ask her why neither she nor any of the members of the U.S.

Congressional Black Caucus were attending the January bicentennial celebration. Her friend informed her there were rumors that the caucus, in the past friendly to Haiti, had abandoned President Aristide. Congresswoman Waters then did the sensible thing; she cut her vacation short and flew to Haiti.

It wasn't the first time the congresswoman had come to the president's aid. Waters was a key figure in Congressional efforts to restore President Aristide to power in 1994. Again in the late 90s, she lobbied the International Development Bank (IDB) to release \$146 million in loans to Haiti that had been allocated but never disbursed. The IDB claimed that Haiti did not meet the conditions necessary for receiving the money. Among the problems cited was a lack of appropriate personnel in certain sectors of society. Waters was working on a plan to recruit Haitian-American professionals to return home to fill some of the positions so that the money could be released.

But on this recent trip, Waters realized the

Accompanied by his wife, Mildred, and Rep. Waters (far right), President Aristide speaks to reporters after flying from Africa to Jamaica.

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The Social Cost of Globalization

By Roberto Guareschi



Photo by Kirsten Seimbruch.

Bustling Santiago de Chile has passed from brutal repression to become South America's "economic tiger."

In February 2004, Roberto Guareschi, former executive editor of Clarín, and Jorge Arrate, Ambassador of Chile to Argentina during the Lagos government, met at CLAS and in an exclusive interview discussed Chile's position within the global economy, among other topics. Selections from this interview appear below. Both Mr. Guareschi and Ambassador Arrate were visiting faculty at UC Berkeley during spring 2004.

RG: Many Chileans believe that Chile is the Latin American country which has best adapted to neoliberal globalization. Do you agree?

JA: That is not just the opinion of many Chileans but also that of the international economic establishment, including the big financial organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions. Like a good student, Chile has managed to effectively complete its mission of inserting its economy into the global economy, despite Chile's 15 million inhabitants having a

much lower per capita income than the developed nations. Chile has done this successfully, which does not mean, in my opinion, that the rest of Latin America should follow suit.

RG: Are you referring to the social cost?

JA: I am referring to the social cost. The changes were made under a dictatorship. It was Pinochet who opened the economy and, if it is possible to give Pinochet credit for anything — which is difficult for me because I find it hard to see the good in the midst of so much bad — he did open up the economy. I am not referring to his economic reforms. If you look at the figures, during the 17 years of the Pinochet regime, the average annual growth rate was 3.6 percent. There were two drops of 14 points, the first attributable to Unidad Popular, but the second came during a tremendous crisis in 1982-83. In comparison, [the coalition government] Concertación has

had a growth rate of around 6 percent during its years in government. But Pinochet did open the economy. Pinochet exposed the Chilean economy to the rigors of international liberalization before other countries. In this sense, Chile had an advantage.

RG: What, in your opinion, does Chile need to do to reduce this social cost?

JA: I think there are profound structural and cultural tendencies. From the structural point of view, income distribution has become an economic indicator that will be very difficult to change. Maybe it has always been like that, but there has not always been the current desire, interest, will or public debate to try to change it. In Chile, during the last 14 or 15 years — we have been in government for 14 years — income distribution has not moved radically or significantly. The top 10 percent still takes 41 or 42 percent of GDP. The bottom 10 percent is still getting just 1.5 and 2 percent. We have not been able to change this. But furthermore, since we have doubled the size of our economy, the absolute differentials have grown even larger, and that is a very important change. Chilean society is even more unequal. It is very, very unequal.

RG: And the cultural aspects?

JA: There are cultural phenomena which have emerged out of 17 years of dictatorship, and 13 years of consensual but strictly delimited democracy which are very complicated. For example, there is privatization, the race towards the private sector; the individualism, consumerism and excessive indebtedness of workers; the apathy expressed by the more than 80 percent of young people between 18 and 24 who do not exercise their right to vote, to universal suffrage.

RG: Let's talk about the relationship between Chile and the United States and Chile's relationship with MERCOSUR.

JA: I experienced personally the rather crucial moments of Chile's relation-

ship with MERCOSUR, which occurred when President Lagos took office. I was ambassador to Argentina, and the first MERCOSUR meeting was a few months later, in June 2000. I went to wait for Lagos at the airport. We went to his hotel, sat down and began to talk. I told him 'Here, everyone agrees that we should enter MERCOSUR. They want us to enter MERCOSUR.' Lagos has maintained a very consistent position on this, beyond the diplomatic errors that the Chilean foreign secretariat committed regarding the treaty with the U.S. He told me 'Chile must make its political project in Latin America, with MERCOSUR. This is our home. These are our principle allies, and we must build a political strategy with them.' It may be valid to ask whether it is possible to build a common political project when the economic association is not really solid. But that has been the aim of the Chilean government.

RG: Could you describe this lack of solidity?

JA: Yes. You know that before its crisis, Argentina represented just 7.8 percent of Chilean imports. So, for us, Asia, Europe and the U.S. are more important commercially than MERCOSUR. Nevertheless, Argentina and Brazil are important markets for our manufactures, that is to say, the sectors where the added value is greatest.

But, coming back to my main point, Lagos
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Despite overfishing, Chile's fishing industry remains a major source of foreign currency — for the time being.



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Hawice.

Unfinished Revolution

By Luís de la Calle and Amy Glover

In the last decade, Mexico has gone from being almost totally predictable to being unnervingly interesting. Democratic transition is no easy process and observers may mistakenly believe that in Mexico it has already been completed; far from it. The peaceful transition of power from the PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional), which governed Mexico for 70 years, to the PAN (Partido Acción Nacional) was undoubtedly a major accomplishment, but dismantling an entrenched corporatist political system with one presidential election is a tall order. This said, gone are the days when the president's power was nearly limitless and the congress rubber-stamped his wishes, and long gone are the days when the president could do no wrong in the eyes of an adoring, or often-censored, press. While the new-fangled Mexican reality may be more promising for its people in the long run, it is also more uncomfortable. Living in a fledging democracy poses new challenges and risks that have yet to fully play themselves out.

While the Mexican Revolution of the early 20th century was violent and tumultuous, it can be argued that it did little to change the underlying power structure of Mexican society. However, since the late 1980s Mexico has undergone two other quiet and intertwined revolutions: the economic opening of its economy and the democratization of its political process. These have been peaceful and slow, but they will eventually lead to a more meaningful redistribution of wealth and political power.

As a result of repeated crises, Mexico was forced to pursue a strategy of economic opening. The oil shock and subsequent debt crisis of 1982, followed by the devastating Mexico City earthquake of 1985, shook the country to its core and called into question the long-maintained status quo. The opening of the heavily subsidized and protected economy and the revision of its isolationist foreign policy did not happen overnight; it was a process that spanned over a decade and continues to this day.

The harbinger of this change was the decision to negotiate the North American Free

Trade Agreement with the United States and Canada. Instead of fearing and loathing the U.S. as it had done in the past, Mexico decided to come to grips with the existence of the U.S. and to attempt to extract benefits from its geographical proximity to the most important economy in the world. In many ways it was simply a formal recognition of the increasing interdependence of the two economies, but it



Photos courtesy of www.hechos.tv.

Recent bribery scandals, caught here on videotape, have undermined trust in the political process.

was a major step psychologically for the Mexican people. For the first time in a long time, the country began to envision itself as a protagonist in the world arena and not a victim of foreign intervention.

Ironically, NAFTA was brought to fruition under one-party rule but was crucial in initiating the democratic reforms that led to the victory of Vicente Fox in July of 2000. In many ways, the process of the negotiation generated positive political externalities in Mexico. For example, public consultations were held during the negotiation with business leaders and the public at large, and Mexican officials scaled the democratic learning curve in Washington D.C. as they lobbied for the passage of the trade agreement north of the border.

Although the popular view is that Vicente Fox's election represented a "change," it actually indicated a desire to continue along the path of economic and political opening initiated by the technocratic wing of the PRI. Unfortunately, Fox and his party, the PAN, have been unable to carry the torch of reform as adroitly as many had hoped. After three years of gridlock in the Congress and an apparent inability of the President to set clear priorities and execute policies, the country's politics now seem adrift. With the elections more than two years away, there is the distinct sensation in Mexico that the presidential term is already over.

Does this mean that the electorate will jump back into the arms of the PRI? Not necessarily. The technocratic wing of the PRI has been left essentially party-less. The writing had been on the wall since 1996, when PRI hardliners passed internal party regulations that prohibited the nomination of a presidential candidate that had not held previous political office, thereby thwarting any shot at the presidency for the majority of the technocrats who had spent most of their careers in the bureaucracy. While many within the PRI may have seen this as a victory over the technocrats, it was perhaps a pyrrhic one: Its presidential candidate was defeated in the year 2000, and since then the PRI has been unable to redefine its *raison d'être* within the new political framework.

The PRI thrived in a concessionary environment in which the benefits of power were distributed amongst various groups within

society in order to purchase their compliance. Under the new scenario of economic opening and increased political competition this *modus operandi* no longer works. Furthermore, the PRI has not been able to re-invent itself. Instead of speaking to the people, party officials are more interested in *la grilla*, or the game of politicking and jockeying for political positions.

Where does ideology fit into all of this? It doesn't. Unfortunately, the Mexican political scene has been almost devoid of substantive and ideological debate in recent years, and putting an ideological tag on the parties, though some generalities can be made, is almost useless. PRI and PRD (Partido Revolucionario Democrático) members talk vaguely about turning away from failed neoliberal policies — once again disdaining the policies pursued by the technocratic wing of the PRI — but no clear alternative is offered. It is possible, then, that the general disarray of the three main parties may open the door to new contenders that offer fresh ideas. These days the Mexican electorate is not so easily fooled and seems to be hungry for a debate on the issues.

The future of Mexico may no longer depend on the internal machinations of the PRI, but it may well be determined by what can be done to tackle structural reform both on the economic and political fronts. A key element of the needed political reform is an overhaul of the laws that regulate political parties.

Recent political scandals reveal the debilitated state of the rules and regulations pertaining to political parties and their financing and have made the electorate more cynical than ever. In some ways, however, the recent set of scandals has a silver lining: the public is now clamoring for the needed reforms. Re-election, party financing, the registration of new political parties, the use of public funds for electoral purposes and rules related to party alliances are just some of the issues that need to be carefully examined. Of these, re-election at all levels — with the notable exception of the presidency — is by far the highest priority. Without it, it will be nearly impossible to create accountability, to give voters the opportunity to reward and punish politicians, to force politicians to represent the interests of their districts rather than their own, to loosen the grip of the party apparatus on decision-

Cuba: Are Eyeglasses Enough?

By Lydia Chávez

Is it possible that the secret of Fidel Castro's endurance comes down to standard issue eyeglasses? Can such a fragile accessory sustain or threaten Latin American governments?

I have been following Cuba for two decades. Twice I led a group of students from the University of California at Berkeley, learning how to report foreign affairs. The first such trip, in 1992, produced a magazine, *The Pacific*. It captured the island's early struggle to survive the end of Soviet subsidies and trade. The second, in 2001, became the basis for a book, portraying Cuba's venture into a sort of Never, Never Land between communism and capitalism. For more than a decade, from the time Castro legalized trading in U.S. dollars in 1993, the island has drifted between two opposing economic systems.

My own interest in Cuba began in Central America in 1983 when, at the height of U.S. involvement there, I reported on El Salvador for *The New York Times*. No matter how savage the Salvadoran forces — the massacre

of thousands of its own citizens, including an archbishop, priests and labor leaders, or the murder of American nuns and aid workers — the Reagan Administration supported the government. It was determined that El Salvador not become another Cuba — a situation that, in Washington's eyes, had already occurred in nearby Nicaragua under the Sandinistas.

The American government spent more than a billion dollars to save El Salvador from this fate, and nearly as much to reverse the Sandinista Revolution. Covering Central America and seeing what the U.S. government tried so hard and paid so handsomely to avert, I had to wonder: How bad was Cuba?

When I left the *Times* and began teaching at Berkeley in 1990, I decided to find out. I was late. By 1992, the Cuban Revolution's golden years — or at least what people there referred to as the consummate revolutionary experience — were long gone. The island's Soviet benefactor no longer existed. It no longer had partners willing to buy its over-priced sugar or

La Habana shines in the Caribbean sun.



Photo courtesy of Beatriz Manz.



Photo courtesy of Beatriz Manz.

its market-priced grapefruit. And those ready to sell Cuba the oil, wheat and rice the island needed to feed its 11 million residents wanted hard cash.

Hal Klepak, a professor of Latin American History and International Relations at the Royal Military College in Kingston, Canada, tallied up the damage in a 2000 report for the Canadian Foundation for the Americas. “In 1988, the USSR imported 63 percent of Cuba’s sugar, 73 percent of its nickel, 95 percent of its citrus products and 100 percent of its electrical exports. At the same time, Moscow sold the island 98 percent of its fuel and 90 percent of its machinery and other equipment imports and the Comecon countries accounted overall for 87 percent of Cuba’s foreign transactions. By 1992 Havana found these arrangements had gone...”

So had everything else. Havana in 1992 existed in an odd, becalmed quiet. No gasoline meant no traffic. No trading partners meant no food. No movement or trade meant no trash; the city looked as if it had been picked clean. From the outside, stores appeared closed, but in fact clerks stood in the dark behind nearly empty counters. Everywhere, Cubans waited — at bus stops, in front of bare government stalls or in front of Coppelia, the

downtown ice cream store that my father and I saw open only once during our week-long visit. Stories circulated about the ways in which Cubans subsisted. A Cuban steak? The fried skin of one of the grapefruits that used to be exported to the Soviet bloc. Breakfast? A couple of tablespoons of sugar.

In the daily scenes of deprivation, one luxury stood out: eyeglasses. In all my time in Latin America, I had never seen poor children wear glasses. Someone, somewhere was taking care that children with bad eyesight could see. In the context of Latin America, the eyeglasses were a miracle. I began to think that Castro could not be written off so easily. Conversations with Cubans confirmed this. The fear and visceral hate rampant in El Salvador and Chile in the 1980s simply didn’t exist in the Cuba of 1992. Castro and Cubans shared something absent elsewhere in Latin America: goodwill. If medicine was no longer available, doctors and nurses stood by to do what they could. Even in crisis, Cuban citizens lived longer and stayed in school more hours than nearly all of their Latin American contemporaries. It seemed unlikely that Cubans would rise up against someone who provided.

And yet, there was something missing that made Cuba feel disappointing. On the same

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Even Fidel Castro is unable to hold back globalization: Retail chains such as Benetton are now a fixture in the Cuban capital.

Prospects for Human Rights in Mexico

By Michelle Johnson

Historically Mexico has been an active promoter of human rights within the international arena. In 1917, Mexico was one of the first countries in North America to constitutionally enshrine social rights for its citizenry. Yet at the national level, the Mexican criminal justice system routinely fails to provide justice to victims of violent crime and human rights abuses. According to Mariclaire Acosta, former subsecretary for Human Rights and Democracy in Mexico, other problems include abusive treatment by law enforcement officials and widespread failure to hold officials responsible for human rights violations. “Human rights only flourish in democracies. We have to ask, is Mexico a truly democratic country?” she asked. As Acosta assessed Mexico’s political transition, she described the history of Mexico’s human rights movement, the current social and political climate for human rights and recent initiatives advanced by Fox, which have opened windows of opportunity for progress on the country’s human rights agenda.

The Human Rights Movement

The human rights movement in Mexico developed in the mid-1980s in response to an era of state terror, which included the massacres of student protesters in 1968 and 1971 and the torture, execution and disappearance of hundreds of armed insurgents and alleged sympathizers during the campaign against leftists. By the 1990s a host of organizations, largely academic and legal in nature, had developed to address these abuses. These groups were instrumental in developing literature and curricula on human rights issues but did little to create the political groundswell necessary for institutional implementation. The labor side accord of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) of 1997 brought human rights to the forefront. In response to international pressure, the Salinas administration surprised the human rights community by appointing an ombudsman to

the state level National Human Rights Commission, which had the effect of legitimizing human rights concerns.

However, the failure of these efforts to integrate human rights throughout the judicial system has left the existing pattern of human rights abuses, particularly impunity for crimes, unmodified. The receipt of more than 800 petitions from Mexican nationals by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) led President Vicente Fox to make a strong commitment to human rights upon taking office. However, half-way through his term, Fox has failed to deliver on promises that had raised the hopes of the human rights community during his transition to power.

Fox’s Human Rights Initiatives

In 2001, Fox established a special prosecutor’s office to investigate and prosecute past acts of political violence. He created a high office in the Ministry of the Interior in response to the still unresolved death of a human rights activist, Digna Ochoa, and later nominated a special prosecutor to investigate the unsolved murders of women and girls in Ciudad Juárez. The creation of the office in the Ministry of the Interior led to the development of an intersecretarial mechanism to carry out the human rights agenda by bringing together civil society, the military, the Ministry of Health and other parties.

Central to the administration’s efforts was a two-pronged foreign policy strategy developed by former foreign minister Jorge Castañeda. The strategy harnessed Mexico’s 23 trade agreements as institutional mechanisms to address human rights and brought resources to bear through Castañeda’s announcement to the international community that Mexico required cooperation to deal with its human rights situation. He extended an open invitation to all bodies to visit Mexico. This unprecedented effort had a tremendous effect on human rights communities internationally. Within

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The Devil Is in the Details: Fox and the PRI

By Simeon Tegel



Photo by AP Wide World.

With the euphoria of the historic 2000 presidential elections spent, Mexicans continue to face a major challenge: extending the democratic reforms of the electoral system to all of their nation's social and political institutions. However, there remain major structural impediments to the broadening of Mexico's transition.

During his CLAS talk, Sergio Aguayo, one of Mexico's leading commentators on democratization and human rights, argued that many of these problems result from the relative strengths of the three main political parties. The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) might have lost the presidency, but it remains a formidable presence throughout the republic — especially in government bureaucracies — with an unrivalled national capacity to organize and mobilize. Fox has also

faced resistance from Mexico's private sector, with many actors reluctant to cede status and interests acquired under the PRI, when big business and government often shared intimate and corrupt relationships. Finally, Fox has faced a hostile international environment post-September 11, above all for his vaunted migration pact with the United States.

Nevertheless, Fox and his team also committed a series of avoidable “childish mistakes.”

After dividing the cabinet into three policy groups — social, economic and security — Fox named three commissioners to act as intermediaries with his office. This was a major blunder because the commissioners lacked not only political clout, but also legal status under Mexican law. The result was to increase the already existing disorder among cabinet

The Mexican media in transition: Workers at the newspaper Excelsior protest its sale after falling credibility and circulation.

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Prospects for Human Rights in Mexico

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two years, 12 rapporteur visits to Mexico had created a momentum that galvanized civil society. The Mexican government soon became versed in speaking about human rights issues with other countries.

As part of a Technical Cooperation Agreement, the UNHCHR in 2002 produced a comprehensive report that documented ongoing human rights problems and provided detailed recommendations for addressing them. The Fox administration has since committed itself to developing a national human rights program based on the report's recommendations.

The Future of Human Rights and Democracy in Mexico

The UN process has started to bring in domestic and international stakeholders.

However, while these developments are encouraging, Acosta foresees a turbulent future for democracy and human rights in Mexico. The human rights problem is twofold: a lack of political participation on the part of the people and a lack of agreement on human rights among the political elite. Acosta explained how in a stagnant economy with high income disparity, Mexico's social conditions create a context where citizens must prioritize their basic human needs over democratic political participation.

In recent years the quality of health and social services has declined, leading to increased legal and illegal labor migration to the U.S. along with concomitant increases in financial remittances to Mexico. Increased violence, drug-trafficking and organized crime have led to an epidemic of public insecurity that has been met by an incapable security apparatus. Civil society, once mobilized to promote democratic elections, is now weak and fragmented without a common cause around which to organize. At the same time, an authoritarian mindset continues to pervade Mexican institutions despite Fox's free and fair election. In essence, the powers that have a hold on today's state apparatus were designed for another, nondemocratic regime.

Fox recently announced reforms last week based on UNHCHR's diagnostic results: a bill to overhaul the justice and public security systems. However, the fate of this bill is unclear, as Fox's party, the PAN (Partido de Acción Nacional) has no legislative majority. It will, however, be part of an agenda that will hopefully create some new spaces for consensus and restructuring along democratic lines.

In closing, Acosta responded to several questions about her role in the human rights movement in Mexico over time. As an active member of civil society she founded several human rights organizations. The last organization she founded spearheaded the movement that shifted the human rights dialogue from the domestic to the international sphere by bringing Mexico's foreign policy

A demonstrator carries a cross in a Mexico City protest against government inaction over the hundreds of murders of young women in Ciudad Juárez.

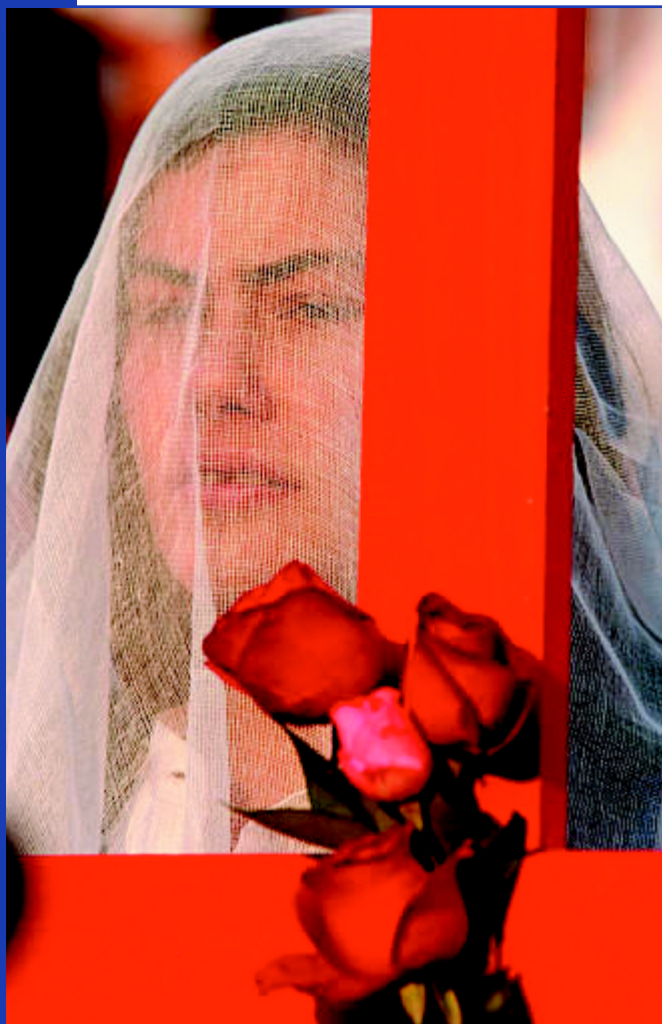


Photo by AP Wide World.

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The Devil Is in the Details

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members whose lack of discipline was given free rein by Fox's decision to delegate responsibility.

Despite declaring that the first 100 days of his administration would see landmark changes, Fox delayed for more than a year on the pivotal question of how to deal with the PRI. By the end of 2001, when he decided to negotiate with the party en bloc, Priistas had realized they might actually be able to weather a PAN presidency. This poor timing, Aguayo suggested, compounded Fox's failure to widen internal party splits by negotiating with different PRI factions or throwing down the gauntlet and launching a raft of criminal prosecutions against PRI figures.

Now, after three years of stasis, Fox has lost credibility among the electorate. In February 2001, 64 percent thought Fox had control of events. Last February just 28 percent thought that. "Mexicans still like Vicente Fox," said Aguayo, "but they don't respect Vicente Fox."

The result has been a geographical and social "atomization of power." With three years to go until the next president takes office, the executive branch has lost its way while both the legislature and the judiciary remain in need of significant reform. Meanwhile, the decentralization of power, through the massive redistribution of federal fiscal revenues to state governments, has been premature; although the national government was ready for the change, no structural reforms had been implemented at the local level to prepare them to administer the new funds in an accountable way. The power of local bosses has thus increased, reviving Mexico's tradition of *caciquismo*.

Lavish state funding for political parties, originally designed in the 1990s to even the playing field for opposition candidates, has encouraged professional political participation by opportunists rather than idealists. In last year's midterm elections, the 11 registered parties shared federal funds totaling an estimated \$450 million. That sum is due to double in 2006. It is also supplemented by corporate donors who often expect the favor to be returned once a candidate or party is in

office. "It is absolutely ridiculous and provokes corruption," said Aguayo. "The vote in Mexico is the most expensive in the world."

The Mexican electronic media, concentrated in the hands of a small number of owners, are also still coming to grips with their role in the transition. Some 70 percent of the federal funds handed out for last year's midterm elections found its way into the pockets of radio and television companies as advertising revenues. Yet some broadcasters still openly insist on payment for airing interviews with political candidates. Poverty and low levels of education among many Mexicans also mean that working class voters routinely expect gifts in return for their ballots. The result is the "low professional capacity" of many elected servants.

However, there are grounds for optimism. Those who fought for change with such determination down the years are still present and active. External factors also impede a return to the bad ways of the past. NAFTA has bound Mexico closer than ever to its northern neighbor. Another important trade treaty, with the European Union, came into effect in July 2000. Crucially, this one contained a democratic clause, the first ever, conditioning Mexico's commerce with Europe on its domestic record on issues such as human rights and electoral fairness.

The next resident of Los Pinos, whoever he or she turns out to be, will need a strategy for tackling these structural impediments to a modern, entrenched and accountable system of democracy, Aguayo concluded. The question for those with a stake in the success of Mexico's transition is not how to win elections but how to change the formal and informal rules of the democratic game.

Sergio Aguayo is Professor of History at the Colegio de México and a founding member of the Mexican Academy of Human Rights. He spoke at CLAS on April 13.

Simeon Tegel is a graduate student in the Latin American Studies program.

The Cutting Edge: Trans-Atlantic Transplants

By Nancy Scheper-Hughes

Lucille Hubbard is a tiny woman (she lost four inches from osteoporosis, she explains), and she is out of breath climbing to the top floor of the tiny Brooklyn bed-sitter apartment she shares with her disabled partner, Abe, of many years. Lucille (not her real name) is African-American, poor and dependent on Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). After leaving the West Indies for New York City she made her living caring for people in need, but before she reached her 30th birthday she learned that she herself was seriously disabled, suffering from

untreated hypertension and kidney disease. Her clinic physician at Down State Medical Center told Lucille that she needed a transplant or she would die. Her voice breaks in the telling: “I went through so much in my life, this seemed like the last straw.”

After several frustrating years waiting for UNOS (the United Network of Organ Sharing) to throw Lucille the lifeline she needed — a dead man or woman’s kidney, and with her fragile health rapidly waning, Lucille considered the unthinkable: an illegal transplant abroad relying on a paid living kidney donor. Through

her well-connected in-laws Lucille was put in touch with a syndicate of Israeli-led organs traffickers, part of a worldwide network stretching from China to South Africa. The “brokers” first suggested a transplant tour to Turkey or Romania, but the price of the pre-arranged “transplant tour” was an astronomical \$180,000 and Lucille feared that she might reject an organ purchased from an Eastern European or Turkish peasant. She needed a cheaper alternative and an organ from a person biologically “closer” to herself. After weeks of anxious waiting Lucille got the call she was hoping for — a willing kidney seller had been found in Brazil: a strong, healthy, Afro-Brazilian man. The downside was that the double surgeries could not take place in that country. Both Lucille and her donor would have to travel half-way around the world to South Africa where “special arrangements” had been made through a private transplant clinic in a “five star” hospital in the beautiful, tropical city of Durban. Respecting Lucille’s dire condition and her precarious economic straits, the pre-arranged package deal was a real bargain in the world of transplant tourism: \$65,000 which included the \$6,000 promised to a stranger who, like Lucille, was desperate enough in

Alberty Alfonso da Silva with the letter he received from the U.S. and the scar he received from the operation to remove his kidney.

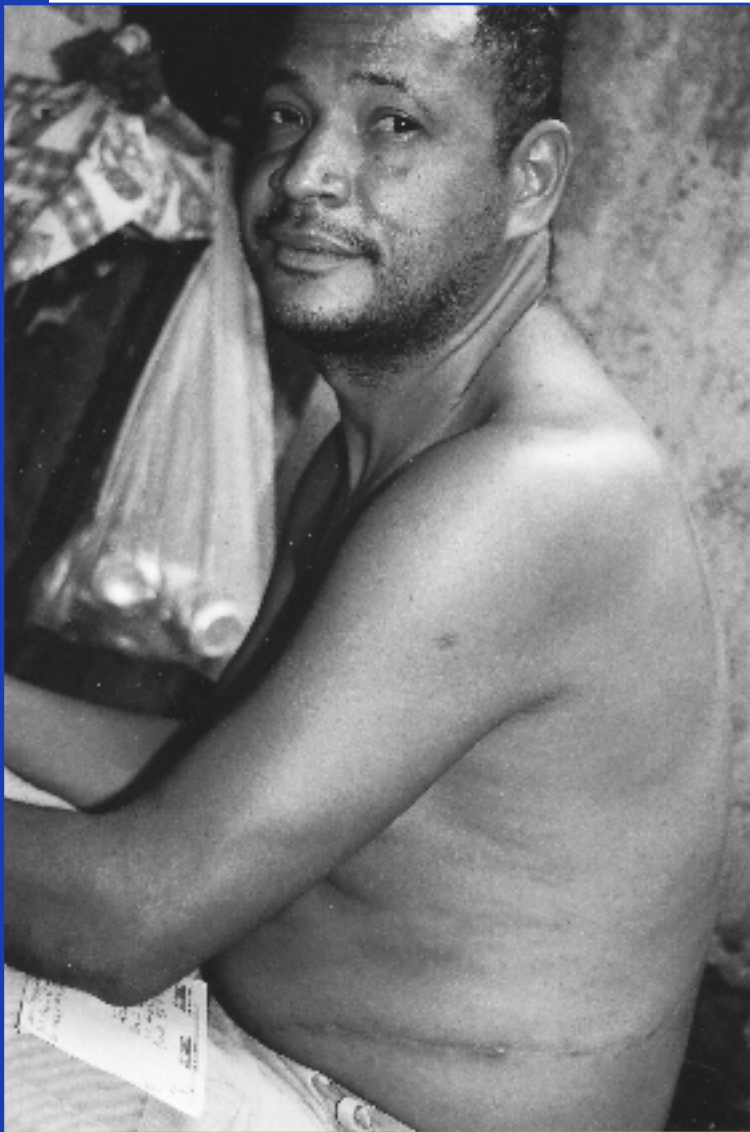


Photo courtesy of Nancy Scheper-Hughes.

his own way to go along with the strange proposition.

Family and friends (including members of Lucille's Seventh Day Adventist Church) helped raise the money.

Blood was drawn in New York City and Recife, Brazil for cross-matching, contracts were signed, affidavits witnessed, and Lucille and her husband were briefed on what they must do and say when they arrived in South Africa and when Lucille checked into St. Augustine's Hospital. She would have to pretend that the impoverished stranger, dressed in a royal blue polyester running suit borrowed from his friends, and with whom she could not communicate, was her first cousin. "I'm a poor, God-fearing woman," Lucille said, her voice choking with emotion. "I didn't want to lie and I never wanted to hurt anyone else. I just wanted a few more years to live." Luckily (she thought) the South African doctors and surgeons were so busy and officious they didn't have time to ask her too many questions and the whole operation took a matter of days.

When she returned to NYC with her new Brazilian kidney Lucille encountered the first of several unanticipated aftershocks. At first Medicaid refused to pay for her expensive regime of antirejection medication. Medicaid officials wanted proof of her transplant; they demanded to see her medical work-up and hospital discharge records. But Lucille had checked out of the transplant clinic at St. Augustine's Hospital with nothing but her small suitcase of clothes, a few inexpensive souvenirs and a warning from the hospital that she must not disclose what had transpired. Lucille, her donor and their surgeons had broken the law. Similar to U.S. law, South Africa's National Organ Transplant Act (NOTA), prohibits the buying or selling of organs, tissues and other body parts. Moreover, in signing a false affidavit stating that her donor, a man she had never met, was her blood relative who was giving her a precious part of himself for love alone (or "altruism" in medical jargon). Lucille was guilty under South African law of fraud and conspiracy to commit a crime. Additionally, in traveling with a tourist visa when the intention was to engage in an illegal activity, Lucille and her donor were both guilty of another crime, visa fraud.

But Lucille's greatest fear was not of being found out but rather not getting the medications she needed: "After all we had gone through to get it I was terrified of rejecting my

new kidney." She contacted the doctors in Durban and they faxed back a minimalist discharge report stating that Lucille received a kidney transplant at the Netcare clinic in St. Augustine's hospital on August 1, 2003. Lucille got her drugs, at least temporarily.

Her second aftershock was worse. It came when she and Abe opened The New York Times on the morning of December 8, 2003 and saw a photo of two young Brazilian men, their heads bowed, and a headline that read: "14 Arrested in the Sale of Organs for Transplant."

"Put yourself in my shoes," said Alberty Alfonso da Silva, a 38 "or so" year old semi-literate Brazilian laborer from the slum of Areas near Recife's international airport. Despite his reputation as a notorious *mulherao* (ladies' man) and being the father of several children by a few different women, Alberty is anything but a deadbeat dad. After he tucks his children to sleep on a piece of foam on the floor of his mud shack, Alberty steps outside into the garbage-strewn and sewage-leaking front yard where he stretches out to sleep under the stars. Alberty is a dreamer, and during those long wet summer nights he dreamed of finding a way out of the *favela* and a better way of making a living than hauling vegetable and fruit crates on his back in the local open air market.

Alberty came up hard as a child. His mother was forced into sex work to feed her 11 children, and as a small child Alberty knew both hunger and humiliation: "My mother had to sell her own flesh to keep us alive, but her sacrifice made us all into outcasts. I never forgot it, and I didn't want my own children to suffer the way I had." So when he first heard rumors circulating in the bars and market stalls of Areas that you could sign up to sell a kidney for \$10,000, Alberty sought out the organs brokers, a retired and alcoholic military police captain, Ivan Bonéfacio, and his sidekick, a lean and nasty little guy with a thick accent named "Gaddy."

"We thought that this Gaddy [Gadalya Tauber, a retired 67-year-old Israeli defense force policeman] was a German," said Alberty who remembered years back when many Germans came to vacation on the beautiful beaches of Boa Viagem. We were surprised to learn he was from Israel and that most of us would be donating to Israeli patients. "Can it work that way?" Alberty asked Captain Ivan, who assured him that there would be no problem because "under the skin all men are brothers."

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The Cutting Edge

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Ivan first offered Alberty \$10,000 (payable after the surgery with \$200 in cash up front). Alberty would get a free trip to South Africa, be kept in a good hotel, receive the best medical care at a private, luxury hospital and might even get to do a little touring afterwards, go on a safari, who knows? All this just for giving away a kidney you didn't need anyway.

"Ivan told me that only one kidney works while the other one sleeps. The doctors would take out my sleepy kidney and leave me with the good one. So I said, 'OK, I'm in. Sign me up.'"

"Sign me up too," said Rogerio Bezerra da Silva, 35, an unemployed jack of all trades and his brother Ricardo, age, 25, a water vender on the beach, as the two men sat in front of a makeshift bar playing dominoes.

By the time Alberty's blood was tested at a local clinic in Recife and his passport and visa procured by Gaddy, the payment for a fresh kidney had decreased to just \$6,000. Competition among "wait-listed" kidney sellers was so keen that the organs brokers could afford to be choosy, selecting only those with type O blood which is common among NE Brazilians, making them universal donors. Between May and November 2003 more than a hundred people from the outskirts of Recife had signed up to sell a spare part; thirty four of them, including Alberty, completed the trip. By the time he returned — and with poor people lining up in queues to sell — the price paid for a kidney had fallen to just \$1,000. Still they were willing to go.

Then, just as suddenly as it began, the kidney express derailed. In early November the South African police got a call at their central station in Johannesburg. Two men, both Israeli, had been picked up at the international airport, the older one accusing the younger man of stealing \$18,000. There was something about a kidney. By the end of the day the police had proof of what they had suspected for several months — foreigners were being trafficked in and out of some of South Africa's finest private hospitals, one group to sell, the other group to buy transplantable kidneys. In this case, Slomo Zohr, a married man with young children from a seaport town south of Tel Aviv, answered an ad in his local newspaper soliciting kidney sellers. Slomo had just lost his small fruit juice business, "Just Juice," and he quickly agreed to

travel to South Africa and donate a kidney for \$20,000 (white kidneys from first world donors command a better price than slum kidneys from black people in the third world). His wife traveled with him.

Once in Durban and after learning what was entailed — a major operation that would be followed by weeks of pain — Slomo began to get cold feet. But there was no wiggle room. The South African handlers reminded Slomo that "a deal was a deal," and he had to give up a kidney or pay a stiff penalty, his expenses plus those of his recipient who had come all the way from Israel, like himself, to have the transplant. Seeing no way out Shlomo agreed and the night before the surgery his wife was paid \$18,000. But while Shlomo was waiting to be anesthetized and rolled into the operating theatre of St. Augustine's Hospital, he realized that he could not go through with it. He acted on impulse and grabbed his clothes, ran down a back stairwell, called his wife on his cell phone and told her to meet up with him at the international airport.

By late November 14 people were arrested in a concerted police sting in South Africa and Brazil. They included the Israeli and Brazilian organs brokers, a nephrologist, lab technician, an Israeli kidney buyer, and two Brazilian kidney sellers: Rogerio and his baby brother. "Our dream of using our pooled kidney money to open a little car repair stand in our neighborhood went up in smoke." Today, the two men are not only poorer than when they started, they are the butt of jokes in Areas. Taunts of: "Where's your cars? Where's your kidneys?" follow them everywhere in Areas.

Authorities in both countries are very angry, Brazilians over the exploitation of their most vulnerable citizens and South Africans over the corruption within their country's world-famous hospitals and the transplant profession itself. "Look how they lied," Captain Louis Helberg, the head of the South African police's criminal investigative team, said. Helberg and his team had stormed St. Augustine's Hospital and confiscated medical records from Netcare's transplant clinic there, and they also raided the home of the South African Blood Service, carrying off the blood and tissue cross-matching records used to

facilitate the illegal transplants. Going over the records in the barnlike reception area of the Commercial Crime Unit where boxes of files are stacked in cartons of the floor, the reserved and proud Afrikaner cop read incredulously:

“August 1, 2003. **Recipient:** Lucille Hubbard (New York City) age 48. **Donor:** Alberty Alfonso da Silva (Brazil), age 38. *Living-related donor.*”

“Do you think the transplant team really believed that a barefoot Brazilian was actually related to a wealthy New Yorker? These doctors turned everybody into family members — yah! One big, sick unhappy family,” he said disgustedly. “I am not going to rest until every one of the surgeons, nephrologists, nurses, transplant coordinators, insurance company managers, HMO administrators and their international brokers are arrested and charged with organized crime and racketeering. They are a bunch of criminals!”

Sitting on a broken stool in his mud hut, Alberty was more temperate and philosophical about the arrests of some of his kidney seller friends. He, too, had been detained by Brazilian police on his return and made to give a deposition at the Assembleia Legislativa in downtown Recife, the first time he was ever the center of such public attention. But at least the Brazilian police could not confiscate his money. There wasn't any left. As soon as he returned from Durban and paid off some of his debts and shared his illicit earnings with his children's mothers, Alberty was left with only

with some spare change jingling in his pockets. Today he has nothing to show for his transplant caper except a stamp in his passport and a large disfiguring scar. “Nothing at all?” I asked again. Well, Alberty admitted, there was a new pair of running shoes and a nice suit jacket which he purchased at Recife's main shopping center. Both have come in handy now that he has to show up in court so often.

“I'd like to apologize,” Alberty said, “but I don't know for what. I didn't even know it was a big crime to sell something that belonged to you.”

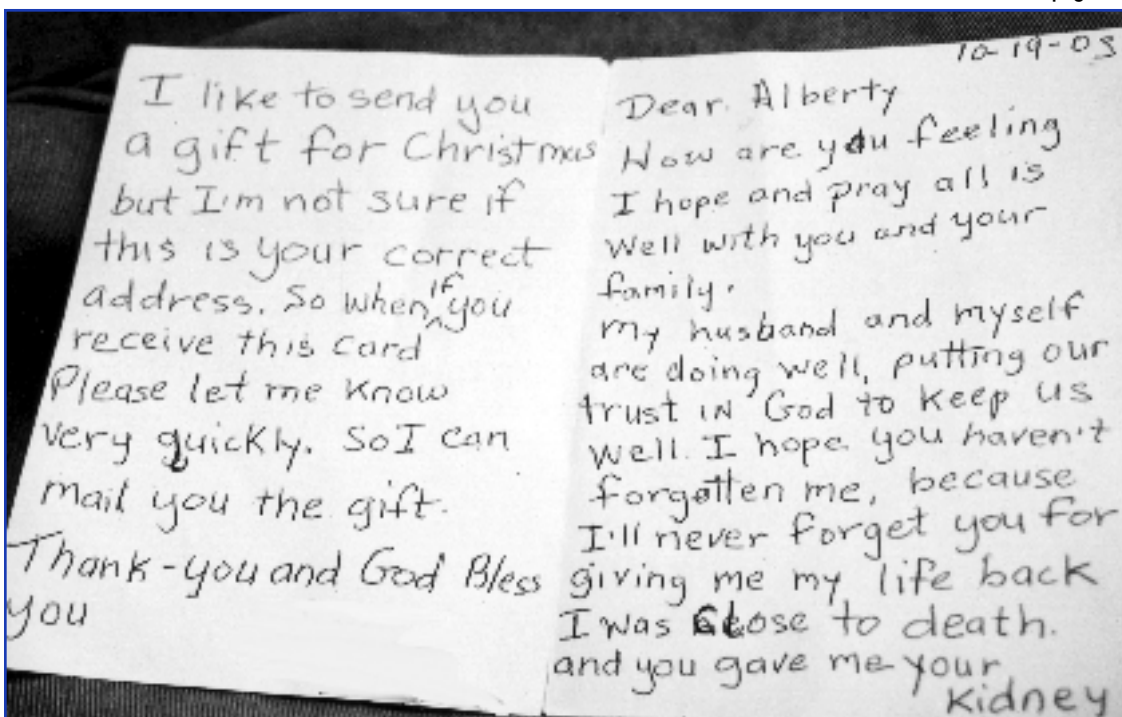
“Do you regret what you did?”

Alberty thought a moment before he answered: “No, I don't. And I would do it all over again. It was a real adventure.”

Alberty got up to find his passport which he kept carefully wrapped up in a piece of clear plastic inside a used coffee can. Da Silva was issued his passport (with the help of Gaddy) on Feb. 23, 2003. His entry into South Africa was stamped on July 21, 2003 and his return to Brazil on August 12, 2003. Alberty spent just three weeks in South Africa. He spent 10 days waiting around inside a secret safe house near the ocean front of Durban. “It wasn't half as nice as I had hoped,” he said. (Indeed, the flat was a dingy little suite of dark rooms facing an interior courtyard of a large and ugly high rise building just a few blocks away from the luxurious Holiday Inn where the kidney buyers, including Lucille and her partner, were kept). Worse, Alberty's overly cautious (as he saw it) local South African handlers would not let him

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The letter Lucille, the recipient of Alberty's kidney, wrote to thank him for giving her another chance at life.



Buscando Vida: Haitian Migration to the Dominican Republic

By Sang Lee

Haitian immigrants have long toiled on the margins of the Dominican economy. Today, an estimated one million Haitians live and work in the Dominican Republic, making up over 10 percent of that nation's population. In their roles as agricultural workers on rural sugar plantations and in the informal sector in the cities, Haitian immigrants have a significant effect on the Dominican economy as well as its society and culture.

Haitian migration to the Dominican Republic is a case of people from the margins of one developing country moving to the margins of another. The porous borders, lack of human rights protections, high poverty rate and rapid urbanization in the receiving country creates a

dynamic distinctly different than “poor country” to “rich country” migration. Why would people from one poor country move to be poor and vulnerable in another poor country? During interviews conducted by the author in the summer of 2003, many Haitians responded that they came “*buscando vida*” (looking for a life). In spite of the difficulties, the Dominican Republic offers increased economic opportunities, better infrastructure and transportation and relative political stability. Its proximity to Haiti allows for a low cost of migration, in comparison to other parts of the Caribbean or the United States. However, all those interviewed stated that if they had the opportunity to immigrate elsewhere, they would.

Rural Migration

Since the sugar industry took hold in the late 1800s, sugar harvesting has always carried the stigma of being work performed by migrant labor. Initially, workers from the greater Caribbean region were imported to meet the labor demands of this fast-growing industry. By the 1930s, declining wages, the passage of an immigration policy restricting nonwhite immigration from off the island and multiple failures to incorporate Dominicans into the plantation labor force resulted in a labor pool largely consisting of Haitians. A bilateral agreement between the Haitian and Dominican government formally maintained the flow of Haitians until 1986. Today sugar harvesting is considered Haitian work.

During the last century, barracks built to house workers on the sugar plantations evolved into communities called *bateys*, many with their own schools, churches and organizations. There are currently over 400 *bateys* in the Dominican Republic, with populations ranging from 50 to 2,000 inhabitants. Strategically located in the midst of vast stretches of sugar cane to prevent the escape of laborers, these Haitian ghettos remain some of the most impoverished areas in the country.

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The town center of Batey Guasumita. Conditions are appalling, but migrants still prefer to stay here rather than return to Haiti.



Photo courtesy of Sang Lee.

Cidade de Deus

City of God

“Listen man, I smoke, I snort . . . I’ve robbed, I’ve killed . . . I ain’t no kid,” declares one of the young *favelados* in the award-winning film *City of God*. The film exposes the underworld of the child-gangsters who live in the most dangerous slum in Rio de Janeiro, Cidade de Deus, where violence escalated beyond comprehensible proportions has become all too banal. The story is told through the lens of the film’s main character, Buscapé (Rocket), a young photographer. But the true protagonist of the story is the place itself: Cidade de Deus, a real place with real stories. Brazilian writer, Paulo Lins can attest to that.

The film was adapted from the best-selling novel written in 1997 by Mr. Lins, who currently holds the Mario De Andrade Chair in Brazilian Culture at the Center for Latin American Studies at UC Berkeley. Mr. Lins, a son of the *favela*, based his novel on 10 years of research and more than 30 years of life experience in the Cidade de Deus housing project. In February 2004, he addressed a

standing-room-only crowd and spoke about his life experiences and the making of the film then took questions from the audience. A selection from the questions and answers appears below.

Q: My question is about the Buscapé (Rocket) character. In the movie, Buscapé is able to use photography to stay out of crime, and it is in photography that he comes into his own. How did you come up with the idea of using photography to rescue Buscapé?

A: There is social stratification in the favelas. From a Marxist perspective, at the top of the pyramid are the city employees that are able to hold jobs and, as a result, keep their families organized. Buscapé fits into this category. Next are workers who specialize in a variety of trades that are also able to keep their families organized. At the base of the pyramid are people that are not employed, that do not work, that survive through temporary, low-

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Transcending the favela, Rocket begins his photographic career.



Photo courtesy of Fernando Mierelles.

Cidade de Deus

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Photo by Dionícia Ramos.

Paulo Lins pauses on the Berkeley campus on the way to his talk.

skill jobs. Generally they are alcoholics, illiterates, who cannot find work outside the favela.

In the film, Buscapé's brother is a criminal. In the book, he is not. This was an adaptation. There exist [in the favelas] the necessary-excluded and the unnecessary-excluded. The necessary ones are bus drivers, maids, and those that work in service for the middle-class. Then there are the unnecessary-excluded. The unnecessary-excluded turn to crime.

I was just thinking about drug trafficking and what was said earlier: that drug traffic has increased crime in Brazil during the last eight years. Imagine that there were no sellers and buyers of drugs. What would these people do?

When Michael Jackson went to film a video clip directed by Spike Lee on the hill of Santa Marta, they had to pay a large sum to the leader of the favela in order to film there. Spike Lee gave an interview at Ipanema beach and said that he paid Marcinho VP, the slum leader, with pleasure. This was published in newspapers all over the world.

There is a difference between São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In Rio de Janeiro, due to the hilly geography, the poor look down on the rich from above. In São Paulo, as in the

majority of other world cities, the poor live 30-40 kilometers outside the city. Marcinho VP said that, if he felt like it, he could kill a police officer everyday, aiming down from above with an imported gun. Angered by this, the police decided to invade the favela. Two hundred police officers invaded the hill, and drug trafficking was paralyzed. There was no money, since there was no way to sell drugs. And people from the favela began to rob nearby neighborhoods. As a result, the Governor decided to pull out the police: The favela was liberated.

Q: I have read about a rap artist who talked about the impact of the movie on the residents of City of God and the other favelas in Brazil. I would like to know what you think about this. According to this artist, the movie had a negative impact for the people who live in the slum.

A: I think that is ridiculous. Blacks and Indians are already so marginalized, that there is no way a movie can make them more marginalized. I think this is a reality that has reached unbearable levels that should be discussed. My primary intention was to stir up

a debate. Many people today are fighting for improvements in Cidade de Deus, because this slum appeared in the movie and in the book. In Brazil there are 600 favelas. I ask myself, "Is it necessary to write a book and make a movie for each one in order for there to be improvements?" The movie is not about Cidade de Deus. It is about Brazil. And this reality does not exist only in Brazil. It exists all over the world. It is a result of international financial politics. It occurs in Guatemala, in Nicaragua, in Central America, in Eastern Europe, in Iraq.

Q: I would like to know how you were involved in the movie, in the script and production. Are you satisfied with the outcome? What did you think of the story the film told in comparison to your book? Did you like the adaptation of the book to the movie?

A: When I saw the fourth version of the script I was worried. I thought: They messed up my book. I gave some suggestions, and after that I did not want to know more about it. But it took five years to complete the script, and during this time I became a script writer. I began to work on the script, and then I came to like it.

When I went to the film set, there were always many children, and they were always

messing around. I am rowdy too, but I was working on the film. Sometimes the director kicked me off the set, because I was causing trouble. Other times he asked for my help. But, I am not listed in the credits. I helped on a few things as a friend. What I don't like in the film is the character of Dadinho, who is Ze Pequeno as a child. It seemed that he was born evil. In the book he is not like this. There were various circumstances that caused him to end up this way. I fought quite a bit with the director over this. Aside from that, however, I love it.

Q: I am a journalist from Virginia. When I left the film, I felt like I saw where I live. I'm from a city with a major drug problem. We were almost the murder capital of the United States for several years running. It could have been Richmond, Virginia. I'm sure that you must be getting this reaction. Because these are universal experiences that I saw in that film. But I don't think that movie will ever play in Richmond, Virginia. I'm just glad I'm here in California to see it. But I think that it needs to be seen across this country so that people can talk about these issues and our children.

A: Obrigado.

Translated by Nyedja Marinho.

Despite its breathtaking beauty, life in Rio is not so magical for most favelados.



Photo courtesy of Fernando Mierelles.

Buscando Vida

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Batey residents of all ages face a future with few choices. Children of Haitian descent born in the Dominican Republic are routinely denied birth certificates. Without documentation, these Dominico-Haitians cannot attend school beyond the fourth grade, seek employment in the formal sector or own property. They are also vulnerable to deportation, in spite of the fact that many have never been to Haiti and have little or no social connections there. Long-term residents face other limitations. Although nearly all the *viejos* (older migrants) interviewed originally intended to work for a short period of time and return to Haiti, many stated that it was not economically possible to make the trip back. “I thought that I would get paid lots of money and be able to return home in a year. When the harvest came there was not enough money, so I waited for the next harvest, then the next, and the years went by...” For this man, 52 years went by waiting for the next harvest.

When the sugar plantations were nationalized in 1966, the Dominican State Sugar Consortium (CEA) was formed to manage sugar harvesting and production. However, by 1996 declining sugar prices, a decrease in yield and lack of technological improvements led to the closing of many plantations. The privatization of all state owned plantations in 2000 led to even more closings, and currently over half of the sugar plantations are out of production. This has a number of implications for bateys: The people are left without jobs; social services are no longer provided by the CEA; and a great deal of land that had been used for household consumption was lost. “*No hay nada aqui, ni para comer*” (There is nothing here, not even food) is a common complaint among residents. Few families can count on steady part- or full-time employment. All of the families interviewed were *chiripiando* — seeking day labor in other rural areas. While all of the interviewees stated that everyone in the family ate at least once a day, they also asserted that hunger was prevalent in the town.

In the early 1990s the Dominican government came under harsh criticism for human and labor rights violations regarding the living and working conditions on sugar plantations.

The government’s reaction to the criticism was not to better the situation in the bateys, but to deport thousands of Haitians and Dominico-Haitians. Today, one could make the claim that the Dominican government is no longer committing labor or human rights violations because there is a complete absence of the state in these areas, and no work is hired out by the state. However, the question remains: What will happen to the estimated 300,000 people living in the bateys who no longer have access to what was considered “slave labor”? Will these communities be economically strangled out of these areas? How long will this process take?

Urban Migrants

Haitians living and working in Dominican cities come from and live in a different reality than their rural counterparts. They tend to be recent migrants; most arrived in the Dominican Republic within the last ten years and still have strong family and social ties in Haiti. Many urban migrants send remittances, return home to visit and even spend part of the year working in Haiti. Most are from rural areas and now live in the urban slums of Santo Domingo, working or trying to find work in jobs such as construction and street vending. Interviews with 14 Haitian migrants living in Cristo Rey, a neighborhood in the National District, confirmed that certain jobs in Santo Domingo’s informal sector are now dominated by Haitians. In the cities, Haitians, whether they are documented or undocumented, skilled or unskilled, literate or illiterate, have few economic opportunities. They are limited to certain sectors of the informal economy with very little room for lateral or vertical economic mobility.

Although many recent immigrants enter the Dominican Republic legally, for most, visa and passport renewals are cost-prohibitive. A two-month visa to the Dominican Republic costs \$50 and a one-year work visa costs \$150.

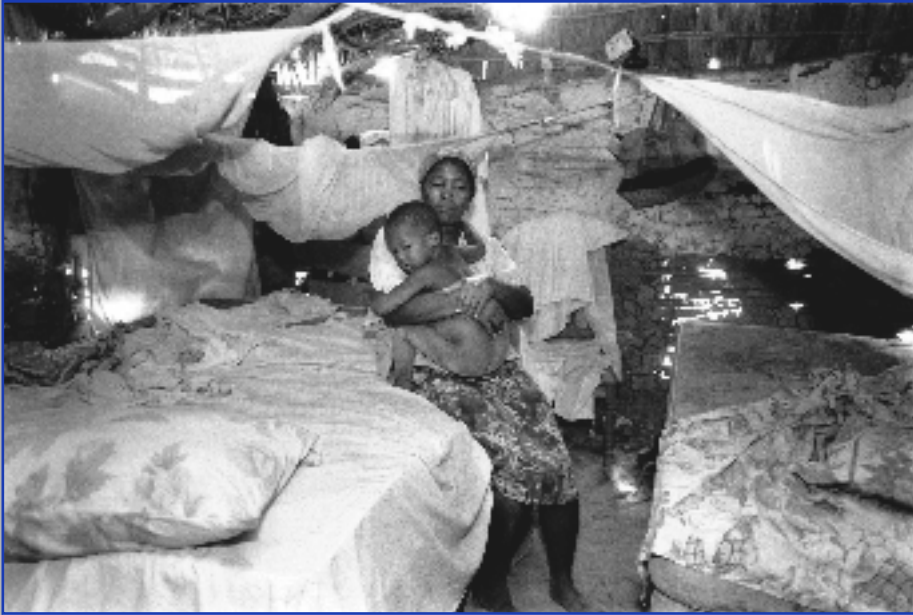
For Haitians, whose average annual per capita income is about \$350 dollars, it is difficult if not impossible to save enough money to immigrate legally. An alternative is to use a *buscone* (a guide who helps one cross the

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Life in the Batey

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TINO SORIANO

Award-winning photojournalist Tino Soriano captures the lives of Haitian immigrants living and working in the *bateys*, the communities of sugar plantation workers, in the Dominican Republic.



A woman holds her son in a typical batey home.



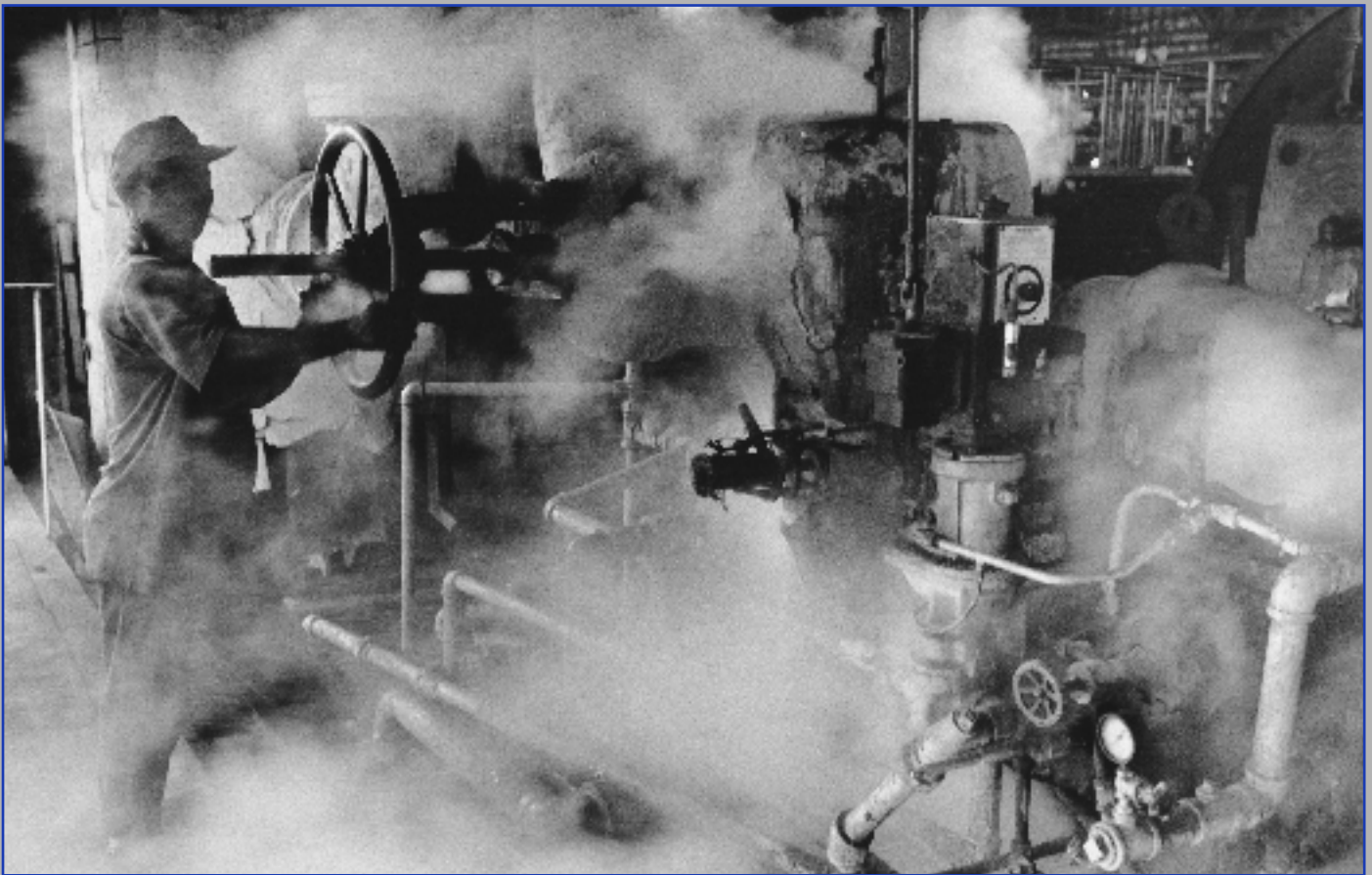
A train loaded with cut sugar cane departs for the sugar factory in Barahona.



A family watches as sugar cane burns in the distance.



Workers cut and remove the charred remains of sugar cane.



Interior of a sugar factory in Barahona.



A man sits on bags of sugar ready to be shipped.

Buscando Vida

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border), which costs only \$20-30. Many use buscones to cross into the Dominican Republic through the mountains, walking a considerable distance to find transportation into Santo Domingo.

In a conversation with a group of five returned migrants in a rural community near Saint Marc, Haiti, one man described his first border crossing experience. After walking for nearly 24 hours, the man and his buscone came to a Haitian house on the Dominican side of the border where they could rest. Later they got on a bus and headed into Santo Domingo. Although the buscone promised him a home where he could stay, he was brought instead to a construction area. At the work site, more than 10 men were sleeping, lying on sheets of cardboard on the floor of the half-erected building. The other migrants listening to this man's story laughed and joked about how common it is for rural Haitians "who don't know any better" to trust the buscone.

Many of the returned migrants interviewed in Haiti had been deported. Most were working to save money to return to the Dominican Republic. They had all been deported without due process: picked up on the street by the immigration police, held in jail for less than two days and bused across the border in the southern town of Jímaní. Deportation is a concern for all Haitians living and working in Santo Domingo. While in the past there were only sporadic incidences of deportation, during the last four years repatriation raids have intensified in neighborhoods with high concentrations of Haitians.

The past two years have seen destabilizing events in both the Dominican Republic and Haiti. A \$2.2 billion embezzlement scandal in the summer of 2003 shook the Dominican economy to its core. Within a few months, the peso lost half its value and there were dramatic increases in food, transportation and fuel prices. Inflation has hovered near 50 percent for the past year, and the unemployment rate has topped 15 percent.

In Haiti, the controversial resignation of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and ongoing political instability will lead to a surge of refugees entering the Dominican Republic. With a contentious Dominican presidential

election coming up in May, it is questionable how the economic and political situation in both countries will affect Haitians already in the Dominican Republic and those who wish to enter. The current Dominican president Hipólito Mejía, declared that the Dominican Republic will not receive refugees and has increased the military presence on the border. However, Haitian labor in the Dominican Republic in both rural agriculture and urban construction comprises more than 30 percent of the GDP, so restricting immigration could have serious implications for these sectors.

The historical and current relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic have been characterized as a violent cockfight by Michele Wucker, an American writer who studies the Caribbean. Underlying this metaphor is the notion that the two countries are in a struggle to control the island and that the people share a hatred for each other that is deeply entrenched in differences of culture, religion and politics. Anthropology professor Samuel Martínez uses a more suitable metaphor to describe the migrant situation. He describes it as:

. . . a game of cat-and-mouse [rather] than a cockfight, the struggle is one in which only one party bears deadly weapons and only the survival of the weaker party is at risk. Yet in this game the point is not to eliminate the mouse but to prolong its pursuit indefinitely. Doing away with the mouse would be counterproductive to the cat's larger ends, for a dead mouse would leave the cat with no one to blame for things going wrong in the house and no spectacle of pursuit with which to divert the attention of the residents from the dwindling stocks in the larder.

While it is true that racism, discrimination and a lack of sensitivity to differences exist, the true conflict is between migrants and the economic power holders who directly benefit from the denial of social and economic rights to secure a low wage labor pool.

Sang Lee is a graduate student in the Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management.

Going Global

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Zedillo said that in his view, only rich countries stand to benefit from halting such policies as trade liberalization. “Anyone interested in prosperity in the developing world should not be happy to see deglobalization,” he said. Globalization “can be a very powerful force for good,” he added, noting that since 1980 some two dozen developing nations have posted economic growth rates that are twice those of rich countries, lifting “millions of people” out of poverty.

The problem thus far, Zedillo said, is partly that wealthier nations, including the United States, Japan and European countries, have not lowered trade barriers enough to allow globalization policies to flourish. The former president blamed rich countries’ failure to accommodate the agenda of developing nations, such as a refusal to lower agricultural subsidies or open their markets further, for frustrating globalization’s positive impact. These actions, he said, caused talks to collapse at last September’s World Trade Organization meeting in Cancún. Rather than protesting globalization itself, Zedillo suggested,

advocates of the developing world should be demanding greater participation in the economic benefits of free trade and in democratic institutions.

Zedillo called the United States’ and Europe’s agricultural policies “absurd, obscene and ridiculous,” and said they run against the best interests of their own citizens. “One-half of the [EU] budget is channeled to finance agricultural subsidies,” he said. “Europeans are paying many times more for agricultural products than [they would] if the markets were open.”

Zedillo also challenged a recent report that globalization may have spurred an up-tick in child labor in poor countries. “Child labor is fundamentally caused by poverty,” he said. “If globalization is used to fight poverty, then it can be a tool to fight child labor.”

Globalization can also be a tool with which to protect the environment, he said. “Yale economists have found ... if you have the right environmental policies along with economic growth, it can improve the environment.”

The trend has its downside, Zedillo conceded. Having “a market economy and

President Zedillo, accompanied by Chancellor Robert M. Berdahl (right) and Harley Shaiken, mingles with the audience after his talk at UC Berkeley.



Photo by Stefan Cohen.

democracy does not necessarily mean people are empowered to take part in the market or political process.” The main challenge, he said, is in regions where the market economy has not been allowed to penetrate. In the case of Latin America, he called for “faster economic growth with social policies that empower people to participate in the benefits of economic growth. We need more not less globalization to improve income distribution in Latin America.”

Though heavy on abstract globalization policy, Zedillo’s address was light on specific remedies for its failures. Rather, he issued a broad challenge to the developing world “to do what it takes to make [globalization] deliver on its promises.”

The former president also suggested that the United States should look to globalization as a way to combat terrorism. “The increasing polarization between the haves and the have-nots of the world,” he said, “implies a very severe security problem.” It would be “cheaper and more effective to open markets to developing countries, foster economic cooperation and allow developing countries to participate in the global economy,” he said, than to spend more on weapons. A deglobalized world would increase the poverty and isolation of developing countries. “If that happens, then we are going to be living in a much more dangerous and a less just world than the one we live in today.”

Terrorism’s roots stem from more than economics, Zedillo said, but “the masterminds of terrorism find more fertile ground for their projects when there’s no hope, when there’s no security, when there’s no opportunity.”

Before Zedillo began his address, Chancellor Robert Berdahl presented him with the Berkeley Medal, which Berdahl described as the highest honor the university can award. UC Berkeley gives the medal to “distinguished individuals whose contributions illustrate the ideals of the university,” the chancellor said, singling out the former president for his role in the historic 2000 elections in Mexico — in which Zedillo’s own Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) lost the presidency after 71 years in power. “Much good has come from the restoration of competitive elections,” Berdahl added.

During the question and answer session,



Photo by Stefan Cohen.

Zedillo argued that globalization policies instituted during his tenure as president have had a positive effect on the PRI and democracy in Mexico. “Open economies tend to have more open political systems.” In Mexico, he said, open market policies “led to democratic stability.”

Zedillo also praised the Bush administration’s recent initiative to offer amnesty to some immigrant workers in the United States. “Recognizing that this economy needs migrant workers is a step in the right direction,” he said.

Ernesto Zedillo was President of Mexico from December 1994 to December 2000. He gave a speech for CLAS on February 13, 2004.

Peter Orsi is a student in the Graduate School of Journalism.

President Zedillo and his wife, Nilda Patricia Velasco de Zedillo, walk near Berkeley’s campus.

Uncovering the Scandal of Impunity in Guatemala

By Susie Hicks

For Francisco Goldman, the most powerful memory of the murder trial was the voice of a young woman echoing “*Culpable! Culpable!*” (“Guilty! Guilty!”) at 7:00 a.m. in a packed courtroom in Guatemala City. After a long night of deliberation, three army officers and a priest had just been found guilty of the killing of Archbishop Juan Gerardi, one of Guatemala’s most prominent human rights activists. Despite the appeals that would follow, the conviction and sentencing of the four to jail terms of between 20 and 30 years was an almost unprecedented challenge to the impunity that has for decades shielded perpetrators of political violence in Guatemala.

In 1998, activists, human rights workers and students of recent Guatemalan history recognized the murder as a political assassination. Helen Mack, sister of the slain Guatemalan anthropologist Myrna Mack, believed that the same soldiers might be responsible for both killings. A small team of human rights investigators, knowing that the

army was responsible and that a police investigation would fail, took on the enormous task of proving the army was behind the killing.

Archbishop Gerardi’s highly publicized murder took place in April 1998, just two days after the Diocese released an exhaustive report on human rights abuses. The content of the Recovery of Historical Memory Project (REMHI) study was powerful. It directly implicated the military in 90 percent of the civilian deaths during the Guatemalan civil war (the UN report, or CEH, would later raise this figure to 93 percent). Fifty-two thousand of the estimated 200,000 civilian victims of the violence were named in four exhaustively researched volumes. The REMHI report was the first to outline the structure, function and strategies used by the military during the 1980s, the period of Guatemala’s most intense violence.

The publication of REMHI threatened the amnesty that both the armed forces and the guerrillas had given themselves in the 1996

Mourners gathered at the home of Bishop Gerardi days after his assassination in 1998.



Photo courtesy of Piet van Lier/Peace Brigades International.

Peace Accords that ended the civil war. Because the report incorporated thousands of interviews from witnesses and victims of the genocidal violence in the countryside during the civil war, it presented evidence of “crimes against humanity,” for which amnesty is not possible. Archbishop Gerardi, who had commissioned the project, represented the wing of the Catholic Church that sought to actively intervene in political violence and repression in Guatemala. The Church had worked to defend human rights in many areas during the conflict and facilitated organization against the military government.

Goldman, who has been covering the investigation of Gerardi’s murder since 1998, admits that as a journalist he was first drawn to the case by the scandal and sensationalism surrounding it. The slaying of the archbishop, just two days after the release of REMHI, was rumored to be the result of a lover’s dispute between Gerardi and another man. But despite the smears, Goldman would find himself writing not about a domestic row but about the structure of power and violence in postwar Guatemala and the ways in which individuals — homeless men and taxi drivers, human rights activists and military commanders — were drawn into a politically-charged murder case. It was “the old Guatemalan story, but this time I would be getting deeper into it than I ever had before,” said Goldman.

Reporting on the investigation, Goldman was amazed by the tenacity of the three students working on the case. These investigators from The Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala (ODHAG), despite scant resources and danger to their lives, were able to “single-handedly carry on the murder investigation against all odds.” He outlined three major barriers to the investigation: the lack of forensic evidence due to mishandling of the crime scene, rumors transmitted by the Guatemala City press and the constant threat of violence against witnesses, judges, prosecutors and investigators.

Because of the lack of forensic evidence, the prosecution was forced to rely almost entirely on personal testimony, and in Guatemala, witnesses in human rights cases are likely to be intimidated or killed before they can testify. This case was no different. Several potential witnesses were murdered and others were forced into exile during the trial.

In his talk Goldman connected military impunity, media sensationalism and political

violence. “Impunity gives free run to the imagination,” Goldman said. He labeled the coverage of the murder an “extraordinary piece of political murder theater.” The military’s strategy, according to Goldman, was to create a circus after the report came out, distracting the spotlight from the powerful message of the human rights report.

The Church, in Goldman’s view, had made one big mistake: Archbishop Gerardi, the Church’s most important human rights activist in Guatemala, was allowed to live in a house with Father Orantes, a priest who in many ways embodied the reactionary wing of the Guatemalan Church. The Church had left him “incredibly exposed” by housing him with a conservative priest with ties to powerful gangs in Guatemala City.

A number of journalists continue to promote the rumor of a domestic dispute leading to murder. A Spanish forensic expert called in to examine photographs of the Archbishop’s battered skull testified that the cause of death was, in fact, Orantes’ dog. U.S. experts called in for the exhumation later concluded that the injuries were caused by a metal pipe. Despite the recent convictions, Goldman concluded, the majority of people in Guatemala City probably still believe the “dog bite” scenario. Part of the reason may be continuing public distrust of the judicial system in Guatemala and the work of the investigators and lawyers. “So much of the work of the peace process is a set of ideals and laws, things that need to be put into practice. Unfortunately, they were unable to in a country so damaged by violence. The press and everyone else couldn’t let go of their cynicism,” Goldman concluded. The Gerardi ruling is still in jeopardy; the final appeal by the defendants is expected in March or April. If impunity is not firmly dismantled in Guatemala, it will continue to protect the guilty and promote an environment of frustration, fear and violence. Nevertheless, Goldman celebrated the Gerardi decision as an unlikely victory driven by a few dedicated individuals and vigorously supported by the work of the human rights community.

[Francisco Goldman is a writer who has been reporting on the Gerardi case since 1998. He gave a presentation at CLAS on February 23.](#)

[Susie Hicks is a student in the Graduate Program in Latin American Studies.](#)

Perspectives on Haiti

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Representative Maxine Waters raises questions about events in Haiti at UC Berkeley.

Photo by Dioncia Ramos.



political situation was about to break once more.

The international media “simply have not been writing the real facts about what was happening,” she said. “As a matter of fact, it was disseminating misinformation.” One example was a New York Times article on the number of people who celebrated the bicentennial. The renowned newspaper asserted that 10,000 people participated, while a more accurate account of 400,000 appeared in the Miami Herald. She said the numbers are important because a majority of the country’s people weren’t involved in the coup. In fact, the opposition’s rallies, which were portrayed in the media as a “huge outpouring of people,” numbered only about 5,000.

Misinformation contributed to Aristide’s political demise. Calling themselves the Group of 184, the oppositional force is led by factory owner, André “Andy” Apaid, Jr., an American citizen with ties to the repressive Duvalier regime. The group accused Aristide of corruption and sought his removal. Representative Waters met with them and concluded that Apaid chafed under Aristide’s mandates which included paying taxes and raising the minimum wage. However, reporters neglected this part of the story. A full

and accurate account could have galvanized the international community to come to Aristide’s aid.

In the months that followed, she watched as President Aristide lost control. At first, Waters said the president issued the group permits to march, even as they accused him of taking away their democratic rights. Soon, the group’s use of violent tactics attracted enough attention that domestic and international intermediaries tried to negotiate with the two sides. However, the opposition rejected every proposal. Only the president’s ouster would be accepted.

From home, the congresswoman tried getting the Bush administration to help the burdened Aristide. She, along with 19 members of the Black Caucus, met with Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. They were told, however, that the U.S. was looking for a political resolution to the crisis; they would not intervene militarily.

Waters recounted a comment Rice made saying Aristide had lost his right to govern. “He’s a democratically elected president,” said Waters to the audience in dismay.

Shortly after that, the phone rang once more.

“Well, they did it,” said Mildred Aristide, the president’s wife, in a phone call. The coup d’etat is complete.... We are in the Central African Republic.” She told Waters that they were being well treated but weren’t allowed to leave the palace. In talks with Colin Powell, Waters said the Secretary of State disputed the couple’s claims. According to him, the U.S. didn’t request the African country to hold the couple there against their will, and as such, they were free to leave. Nearly two weeks later the Aristides, who lacked both money and transportation, were still stranded in Africa.

“Let’s go get ’em,” Waters told Aristide’s lawyer.

Forty hours later, the congresswoman flew into the Central African Republic (CAR) with an envoy which included Sharon Hay-Webster, a parliamentarian from Jamaica, the country that was persuaded to take the deposed president. They arrived late in the evening and were met by gunmen who took them to the presidential palace. Once there, they were told they couldn’t speak to the president of CAR because he was busy preparing for the one year anniversary celebration of the coup d’etat that established his government. They’d have to stay overnight. With some cajoling, and finally a threat reminding her hosts that her stay would be seen in the U.S. Congress as a forced one, she and the Aristides were allowed to leave for Jamaica.

Now, the Aristides must wait. Waters hopes that since the South African elections have passed, that government can be persuaded to accept the exiled president. According to her, the Bush administration is angry that Aristide is currently so close to Haiti, where he may be able to influence the country’s politics.

And while CARICOM, the union of Caribbean nations, has proclaimed support for the beleaguered nation, she said the United States’ influence on these developing countries may be the reason none of them took a strong stand against U.S. actions in Haiti. She pointed out that Jamaica took a risk in offering refuge to Aristide, given that country’s astronomical foreign debt. She also said that Aristide has received death threats, and she fears for his life if he stays in the Western Hemisphere.

“I don’t know where this is all going to go,” she concluded about Haiti’s future.

Gang leaders have infiltrated the government and are wreaking havoc and misery

outside the capital. In Cap-Haitien, they’re holding trials and pursuing members of Aristide’s political party, Lavalas. The country’s new leader, Gerard Latortue, has alienated CARICOM. The U.S. promised \$9 million in aid, but according to Waters, that’s far less than Haitians living on the island need. For example, about 60 to 70 percent of the population does not have potable water. Whatever happens politically, Waters said, the Haitian people desperately need an investment in a water system.

“Haiti is the world’s stepchild,” she said. “It dared to gain its freedom and even ask for reparations.”

Waters concluded the evening with several challenges. To rectify the wrongs other journalists made in reporting about the country’s political demise, she said a team of reporters should commit to spending extended periods in Haiti and coming back with accurate stories. This political coup also raises questions about the international and domestic connections of the business elite, which seems happy to maintain the status quo.

The congresswoman also called for an investigation into the Bush administration’s actions. About 20,000 AK-47s made it to Haiti and into rebel hands despite a U.S. ban on weapons into the country. It’s likely the guns came through the Dominican Republic, and some say, are connected to the U.S. However, an investigation is unlikely with a Republican-controlled house. A tribunal court, which oppositional forces say they want for Aristide, may be the answer as long as it is open and not corruptible. It could clear Aristide’s name from unjust accusations.

Finally, she challenged audience members to act.

“(I) learned coming out of the Haiti experience that we don’t recognize the awesome power of this country,” she said. “As citizens we need to take control of this government.”

Maxine Waters represents California’s 35th District in the United States Congress and is the former Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Yahaira Castro is a student in the Graduate School of Journalism.

Cuba: Are Eyeglasses Enough?

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trip, I also met intellectuals and ordinary Cubans who craved information and a connection with the world beyond their island. Cubans had long lived with censored newspapers, magazines and television programs. Maybe that had worked when they could read or hear about the country's exploits in Central America and Africa or win a trip to one of the Soviet bloc countries. Those days, however, were gone. Cubans could only look inward. What they saw was a country with Soviet-bloc drabness and Third World scarcities.

Cuba's plight touched off a wave of prophecy by journalists and academics. "It is only a matter of time before Cuban communism collapses," wrote one in *Foreign Affairs*. Another began his piece, in *Newsweek*, "Fidel Castro is doomed."

Walking around Havana, talking to Cubans, I didn't see it that way. So when I returned to the island a few months later with my students to produce an issue of the magazine, *The Pacific*, devoted to Cuba, I asked them to focus on what was actually happening on the ground. "If express mail is any barometer, Cuba is alive with business interest," wrote Lee Romney, one of my students. Romney noted that a new courier service provided for DHL had expanded 300 percent in sales with "mail going mostly to Mexico, Italy and Spain."

It wasn't only business that Cuba was trying; it was a country ready to attempt anything to stay afloat. Cubans talked of deals with Brazil, Spain and Mexico. On the island, government workers were sent to the countryside to work in food brigades, scientists practiced new biotechnology techniques at a state-of-the-art Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology and urban gardens sprang up throughout Havana. We visited workers in the field, scientists in their labs and Cubans working the soil with small hand shovels. In 1992, these had yet to produce much food or currency — but they were more than empty rhetoric. And at the same time, an earlier gamble was paying off. Nearly 400,000 tourists arrived in 1992 to vacation at the new resorts in Varadero.

But in Havana, goods were scarce. "Everyone smokes in Cuba, but nobody has any matches," joked one security guard.

Humor would not sustain even the most dedicated revolutionary for long. Julio Carranzas, a Cuban economist, says that Castro knew well in 1990 that any goodwill would vanish if severe shortages created inflation, panic and violence. So, to plug inflationary pressure and prevent hoarding, the government froze prices and imposed rationing; to avoid mass unemployment, it "promised to send money to the government enterprises" so that workers could keep their jobs even though little could be done without fuel. "Where did we find the money," Carranzas asks rhetorically when I visit him in 2004. "We printed it."

The final element of the plan, Carranzas says, was to give Cubans a sense that they shared the pain equally. The crisis got a name in early 1990: The Special Period. By the time we arrived in 1992, freshly painted slogans, Socialism or Death, were ubiquitous. That bought Castro time to see if any of his schemes were signs of life or panic.

If the United States tried to push Cuba toward the cliff with the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, others ignored it and tried trade. And why not? With an embargo that excluded Americans, Cuba was a businessman's paradise. "Many small and medium-sized enterprises that would not dare compete against the United States could compete here," says Jorge Mario Sánchez-Egozcue, a researcher at the Center of U.S. Studies at the University of Havana in 2004. And Cuba had an urgent need for everything that could be sold: wheat and rice to feed its citizens and everything from furniture to bottled water to supply the tourist industry.

Panic was averted, but in 1992 new problems, including prostitution and inflation, emerged. Cubans could subsist on their pesos a month, but just barely. In 1990, the slogan "Socialism or Death" might have sounded defiant; by 1993 it merely sounded hopeless. But Castro wasn't ready to give up. Imagine, if you will, a young, handsome Castro leading a failed attempt in Santiago to overtake the Moncada Barracks in 1953. He's arrested, jailed, but becomes a hero after delivering a speech that details his vision and proclaiming "History Will Absolve Me." Now fast-forward forty years to the anniversary of the Moncada

attack. Castro is 66 years old. His country is bankrupt. The U.S. Government hates him. The Miami exile community hates him. But, who cares? They have something he wants: dollars. And, he's willing to reverse decades of revolutionary rhetoric to get them. Cubans, he announces on the 40th anniversary of Moncada, can hold, receive and welcome dollars. If Marx rolled over in his grave, the immediate impact must have absolved Castro of any self-doubt. Remittances from abroad jumped from \$43 million in 1992 to \$470 million by 1994 and by the end of the decade reached more than \$700 million, Lorena Barberia, wrote in an MIT working paper.

Castro also began to shed other hallmarks of a communist state. Soviet-style state farms were converted into cooperatives. Farmers markets, where some products could be sold at market prices, opened, and some areas of self-employment were allowed. New tax laws went on the books. Some of the free services such as sporting events and medical prescriptions were eliminated or the subsidies were reduced. Finally, in the summer of 1994, came the ultimate concession. With Cubans setting sail illegally for Miami, a skirmish between police and some of the *balseros* — so-called because of the rafts they left on — triggered a riot. After visiting the site, Castro threw up his

hands. “What does it matter to us if they want to go?” he asked. With that one question, he signaled a new policy. Within days, thousands more pushed their rafts out to the sea.

Castro's safety valve — letting the unhappy depart — became President Clinton's nightmare. It looked like the 1980 Mariel boatlift that ended with some 125,000 Cuban refugees in Florida. U.S. officials ran to the negotiating table. In exchange for a new immigration deal to permit 20,000 Cubans a year to enter legally, Castro promised to clamp down on those who tried to float to freedom. By the time that happened in September 1994, 33,000 Cubans, maybe those who most wanted to leave and were thereby most likely to create trouble at home, were gone.

On the island, the tension subsided and life began to improve. From here, journalists and others stopped predicting the end. Cuba, the most distant of the Soviet satellites, was the only one to survive. This was the country that my class and I visited in 2001. It seemed both remarkably resilient — and ineffably sad; not unlike the melodies from the Buena Vista Social Club that we heard replayed nearly everywhere we visited on the island. When I returned in 2004, it was still very much caught between Castro's dream and its limits.

“This is the land of magical realism,” a

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Photo courtesy of Beatriz Manz.

Camilo Cienfuegos and Che Guevara at the Museo de la Revolución.

Cuba: Are Eyeglasses Enough?

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man named Fernando told Juliana Barbassa, one of my students. “Incredible things happen every day so that people can go on. People invent.” Invention is necessary because Cubans earn salaries in pesos but depend on dollars from abroad or earned on the island to buy anything more than the basic staples. And invention pays off. After the economy bottomed out in 1994, all of that earlier activity — sending workers to the countryside to plant beets, planting urban gardens, breaking up the state farms and investing in tourism — began to bear impressive fruit. Some 26,000 urban gardens produced more than a half million tons of organic fruits and vegetables. The number of tourists had quadrupled. New trading partners were found. They didn’t entirely replace the Soviet bloc, but they did permit some economic growth.

Havana was a changed city. Traffic and entrepreneurs jammed the streets selling cigars, guided tours or rooms. The restoration of Old Havana and its stunning examples of baroque, neo-Gothic and neoclassical architecture went on with a vengeance. On Sundays farmers sold truckloads of produce and thick slices of pork to make and sell sandwiches. At one of dozens of workshops, artists sold their work. “Anything for a dollar,” proclaimed one collage.

Anything but pure capitalism, that is. While there are joint ventures with plenty of foreign investors, Cuba remains a tightly centralized economy — albeit one that carefully invests most of its money in sectors that produce foreign exchange. Cigars, for example, are in. Sugar is out. It’s no longer cost-effective, so in 2002 and 2003, the government shut down 72 of the country’s 156 mills. The workers have been sent back to school or to work in the ever-expanding citrus groves.

And, Cuba’s biggest enemy is also its newest trading partner. The U.S. embargo has been partially lifted to favor American products. Cubans can’t sell anything here but, since 2001, U.S. companies have been able to export food and some agricultural products. Agricultural experts reached \$256 million for 2003, according to C. Parr Rosson, III, the director of the Center for North American Studies at Texas A&M University.

As they have since 1993, Cubans still live between two worlds, and more than 10 years

adrift has taken its toll. Castro’s irrational clampdowns and the race for dollars have produced a collective exhaustion. It’s tiring dodging the tax collector, police or neighborhood spies to earn the dollars needed to live. It’s wearing to obey the rules of who can buy a car or travel abroad; and Cubans say it’s undermining to earn pesos that mean less than the dollars of a government for so long portrayed as the enemy. If the burden of the crisis was shared somewhat fairly in 1992, that’s no longer true. Those without dollars can readily see the benefits derived by those who have greenbacks. With their new jeans and stylish jewelry some Cubans look no different than those shopping in Miami. While others — many of them AfroCubanos — appear to shop only in peso stores.

The national exhaustion has left Cubans without a lot of hope that their 77-year-old dictator will be able to take them into the 21st century. But still, it’s unlikely Cubans will turn him out before he dies. Instead of unrest, there is a kind of paralysis — borne from a mix of loyalty, fear and indoctrination — as they grudgingly wait for him to die. Castro’s government may be the ultimate example of what comes around goes around. His survival may boil down to those eyeglasses that stood out on my first visit.

Unlike so many elected governments in Latin America, Castro has actually provided his constituents with public services, and he has done so without earning a reputation for corruption. “His leadership also helped Cuba forge a strong sense of peoplehood and solidarity,” Jorge I. Domínguez, a professor of international affairs at Harvard, wrote in *The New York Times* in 2003. “Cuban schoolchildren are among the world’s best performers, with Cuban fourth graders outscoring all Latin American students in mathematics tests. And the rate of infant mortality is lower in Havana than in Washington.” All of that is hard to ignore. Even World Bank president James D. Wolfensohn acknowledged in 2001 that Cuba had done a “great job” on education and health care.

Unlike the Eastern bloc residents who rose up against corrupt political leaders and some Latin Americans who have done so more recently in Bolivia, Argentina and Ecuador, Cubans get something from their government.

And, unlike other Latin American leaders who live the life of the rich and famous, Cuban officials do not flaunt lavish lifestyles. Among Latin American countries, only Chile and Uruguay rate better than Cuba in Transparency International's corruption index. In 2003, the Cuban government began reinvesting some of the tourist dollars in upgrading schools that deteriorated in the years following the loss of Soviet aid. "Cubans are still endeared by that," says one Canadian resident.

But are eyeglasses enough?

The final paradox of Cuba is that life there might look good compared to elsewhere in Latin America, but Cubans, rarely compare their country to Latin America. All that education raised expectations. Cubans talk about Madrid, Paris, New York. Listen to the educated professional with a wife and two children. He takes a breath when he recalls his trip to Spain. "It's hard to explain how I felt when I went there," he says. "It wasn't like another world or another planet. It was like

another galaxy." With family in Spain, he could emigrate, but he doesn't consider the option seriously. "This is where I want to live, but 5 percent of the way things are run has got to change. They blame everything on the embargo. We have a self-imposed embargo. We limit ourselves."

And if the strongest image from my first trip was the child with eyeglasses, the most lasting from my visit in January, 2004 was this: At a rehearsal studio a young Cuban ballet dancer turns through the air, pivoting as though some invisible power has unfurled him in an arc. Then, without pause, he leaps once, twice, and I gasp at the height of his grandes jetés and then gasp again because the room is too small and his pointed toe is heading right for a barre. It's Cuba — a country that dazzles and disappoints, where one finds miracles and monsters, but no easy answers.

Lydia Chávez is a professor in the Graduate School of Journalism at UC Berkeley.

Newly restored buildings stand side-by-side with dilapidated relics.



Photo courtesy of Beatriz Manz.

Can Chile Stay in the Race?

By Kirsten Sehnbruch

Despite Chile's reputation as the "tiger economy" of South America, the country is actually in no position to be internationally competitive, according to Senator Fernando Flores Labra, who represents Chile's Tarapacá region and belongs to the Party for Democracy (PPD), a member of the governing coalition. In a talk at CLAS, he blamed Chile's lack of readiness on the absence of a development strategy and the insular nature of its business elite.

Senator Flores suggested that under the current government of President Ricardo Lagos, Chile has completed a phase in its history by showing that the country can be ruled by a Socialist government without falling into a state of economic chaos such as that preceding the military coup in 1973, which overthrew the government of President Salvador Allende.

In the last 14 years, during which Chile has been ruled by a democratic coalition government, the Concertación por la Democracia, the global economy has undergone a process of integration, a process in which Chile has participated. Free trade agreements have been signed with the European Union, the U.S. and, most recently, South Korea. But despite its integration into the global economy, its economic growth and

its institutional stability, Senator Flores emphasized the problems that remain unresolved for Chile. Among the most pressing of these is the systemic inequality that has not improved despite Chile's positive economic performance, an inequality expressed in monetary terms, but also in other areas, such as education.

Senator Flores distinguished between inequality and poverty: Poverty decreases with economic growth while income inequality does not. Furthermore, inequality is inevitable in a capitalist system. The question is how to address this issue and avoid social injustice. The senator considered that the answer lies in effective welfare economics and in giving people from low-income groups access to high quality education.

But Senator Flores highlighted the country's lack of preparation for competing successfully in a globalized economy as the biggest challenge facing Chile today. According to the senator, the Chilean business elite do not understand the processes of international business. In particular, Chile is not participating in the global process of outsourcing, which has occurred in many countries and industrial sectors. Its software industry, for example, is

Chile's President Lagos attempts a delicate balancing act between economic integration and alleviating social injustice.



Photo courtesy of Kirsten Sehnbruch.

shrinking because it does not have the technological capacity to take on large multinational software projects.

The main reason for Chile's lack of competitiveness, he said, is its lack of business and economic development strategy, especially if compared to countries as diverse as Singapore, New Zealand or Finland, where the state has fostered investment in specific sectors, allowing the countries to grow successfully despite primary resource-based economies. In Chile, however, there is no link between research and investment, and development strategy is not even part of the political debate.

Senator Flores contended that if Chile focuses only on exporting raw materials, such as those produced by the mining, forestry, fishing and agricultural sectors, it will not generate dignified work for its labor force. Part of the problem is that there is no culture of venture capital in Chile. The existing small businesses are a way of disguising unemployment. They do not compare, for example, to the start-up operations that exist in developed countries.

The senator argued that any Chilean development strategy would have to be global. Mexico and Brazil, which have large regional markets, can afford a different strategy, but Chile, due to its size, has to specialize in niche markets and be export oriented. Understanding marketing processes is key to the development of successful export strategies because in today's economies it is necessary to promote brands, not simply a product. In order to make the most of Chile's opportunities, Senator Flores suggested that there should be an alliance between government agencies and business interests. Under its current constitution, a legacy of the military dictatorship of General Pinochet, Chilean government institutions are not permitted to invest in business activities to foment economic activity. However, governments of other countries are permitted to do so and thus generate strategic alliances for development as well as providing venture capital funding for such projects. This has been a particularly common practice in East Asian countries, such as Singapore and Taiwan.

Asked about Chile's vote against the U.S. military intervention in Iraq in the United Nations Security Council, the senator answered that this corresponded first to a

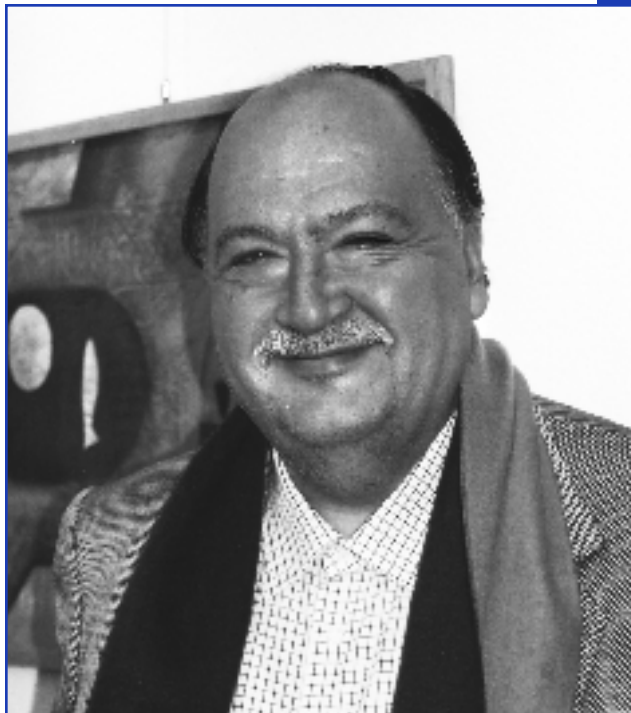


Photo by Dlenicia Ramos.

conviction on the part of President Lagos that there was no strong and clear case for intervention, and that second, Chile was backed in its resistance by the United Kingdom, which at the last minute swung in favor of the U.S. motion. Chile worked very closely with Mexico on the Iraq issue. Going against the U.S. on this matter was a momentous decision for both countries since their opposition risked triggering negative trade consequences. The senator also mentioned that President Lagos was backed by all the political parties in Chile.

In response to a question about the impact of the recent commemorations in Chile of the 30th anniversary of the coup against President Allende's democratically-elected government, the senator said that the people for whom September 11th was an important date are now in the minority, as most Chileans were born after the coup. There is more interest in the future than in the past. In addition, Senator Flores explained that young Chileans participated very little in the political process and criticized the fact that schools have not educated the young as to the importance of political participation.

Senator Fernando Flores Labra represents Chile's Tarapacá region. He gave a talk at CLAS on February 17.

Kirsten Sehnbruch is a visiting scholar at CLAS.

Senator Flores called on his government to set forth a development strategy.

La memoria pantalla: The Spectacle Continues

By Sarah Moody



Photo © David Burnett (Contact Press Images).

Daniel Cespedes, one of the thousands of suspected leftists arrested in the aftermath of Pinochet's coup, is brought to the National Stadium for detention.

Thirty years after the military coup that abruptly replaced Salvador Allende's social democracy with a repressive dictatorship, the news media finally flooded Chilean airwaves with images of the overthrow. But those long-delayed pictures of the dead president, of streets thronged with demonstrators and of victims of the military apparatus came too late, said Chilean writer Diamela Eltit. Too late and too light.

Television stations competed to broadcast the most spectacular images in commemoration of the coup's 30th anniversary, creating a carnival of images, a veritable tourist's highway to the past. But Eltit would argue that this should not be taken as a sufficient handling of past national traumas. The three decade delay served to distance viewers from these images and robbed them of their original efficacy: black and white, they seemed fuzzy, oversaturated and strangely arrhythmic to today's viewers. In the

end, the excessive accumulation served to obscure rather than reveal the past. Chileans, said Eltit, could not see past the filter, the opaque surface of the *pantalla* or screen.

Today's mass media is characterized by the white-out effect of rapidly changing images with frequent cuts that constantly move on to the next polished sound bite. In contrast, the black and white images of the 1970s now appear strangely slow, dense and alienating. The jarring effect that is produced by this contrast is Eltit's doorway to a critique of Chile's national memory — or lack thereof. The problem of memory, she maintains, must be approached with an unrelenting eye toward the speed and density of presentation.

Eltit described a strange historical continuity in the white-out effect of Chilean culture, which she defined as intentional, the result of a desire for silence that takes on a multilateral and sinister character. More concretely it is the

result of economic interests, political forces and the market-oriented aesthetic of the television industry that have all cooperated to effectively censor representations of the past. Anecdotes devoid of critical details proliferate and have effectively removed political questions from circulation. In this way the exaggerated and weighty silence that characterized life under dictatorship is mirrored in today's overabundance of images: Both techniques are stupefying and serve to empty the public space of real political debate, as well as to limit representations of the past.

Eltit criticized two types of images propagated during the anniversary. The first was the bombing of the Moneda presidential palace, Chile's symbolic center of government and nation, during the coup. "The coming bloodshed does not burst forth in the documentaries," she asserted, rather "the wound appears as narration of the wound in the survivors." This focus avoids an essential issue by leaving the dead, those unable to narrate, out of the camera's frame. Similarly, with regard to the fleeting shots of political prisoners in the National Stadium, which became a concentration camp during the dictatorship, Eltit suggested we pause in the prisoners' absolute precariousness rather than quickly pass them over. "The face of that exact prisoner who, behind the bleachers, shows an opaque shine of stupor in his gaze" must be isolated and projected until the explosion of his gaze "repeats the drama in the stadium, the suffering in the stands, the ignominy of a multitude of confiscated bodies in a sports enclosure of the State." What is needed is an insistence on the singularity of the trauma, not its conversion into just one more facile episode among so many sit-coms or dramas on so many channels.

In the last analysis, Eltit sees the effect of thirty years of national coaching by the dictatorship in the streets of Santiago today. The history and habit of silence has trained correct citizens to accept their unstable working conditions and hurry obediently about their errands. The role of the citizen

today is to act as spectator in his or her own society, to be a passive and uncritical voyeur of the mass media images. A conformist apathy hovers over the populace as the media's empty scandals — scandalously empty — provide the citizen-turned-voyeur with the only outlet for passionate explosions. Eltit insisted that something else is necessary, something that pays real attention to the past and to alternative, smaller-scale viewpoints.

Eltit's writing can be understood as an aesthetic alternative to the spectacle that she criticizes. More powerful than any solutions she could prescribe, her novels offer a daring example of that microvision that she suggests is so necessary.

Chilean writer Diamela Eltit is the author of nine novels. She is currently the Latin American Writer in Residence at CLAS, co-sponsored with the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

Sarah Moody is a graduate student in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

A child lights candles outside the National Stadium where hundreds of dissidents were killed in the first days after the coup.



Photo by AP Wide World.

Prospects for Human Rights in Mexico

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strategy to the international community. She reported that her governmental experiences included moments that were both the most traumatic and exciting in her career. Her decision to join a right-wing government resulted in a high level of distrust where she encountered resistance at many levels though she was given a great deal of space for her work. In general, she felt that people with a civil society background have a hard time advancing the human rights agenda because they are neither part of the “old boys’ networks” of political parties nor part of the bureaucracy.

Acosta also responded to a question concerning the upcoming trial of former federal security chief Miguel Nazar Haro who was arrested in Mexico City to face charges for his alleged participation in the 1975 forced disappearance of a member of a leftist guerrilla

organization. Acosta was not optimistic about the trial given that Nazar is still politically well connected. Further, his son, who operates one of the most important private security companies for the transportation industry in Mexico, will be carrying his defense. For this reason, Acosta emphasized that the trial must become an international issue. Human Rights Watch will be covering these events.

Mariclaire Acosta was subsecretary for Human Rights and Democracy in the Secretariat of Foreign Relations Office in Mexico. She spoke at CLAS on March 18, 2004.

Michelle Johnson is a doctoral student in the School of Social Welfare.

Unfinished Revolution

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making and to reduce the constant politicking from mayors, deputies, senators and governors who are constantly positioning themselves for their next career move.

Unfortunately, all the proposed amendments to electoral laws, including one presented by President Fox, fail to consider re-election as a possibility. In their view, going against the revolutionary cry of “*sufragio efectivo, no reelección*,” will debilitate party structures and prove too controversial. Mexico needs to take on the taboo of re-election — which is a vestige of the *caudillo* era in which leaders came to power and never wanted to leave.

Mexico’s modern and democratic nation needs re-election in order to obtain effective suffrage.

Mexico’s political transformation, then, remains a work in progress. Despite the doomsday scenarios of several years ago that foretold chaos and disaster for Mexico in the absence of centralized, one-party rule, Mexico has not buckled under the pressure of political

uncertainty. In fact, political scandals that had formerly rocked the financial markets now tend to cause a ripple instead of a tidal wave. This said, the disarray of the three major political parties and the disenchantment of the electorate give pause. The run-up to the 2006 presidential election will not settle the already turbid political waters, but promise to continue shaking them up.

Luis de la Calle is the former Undersecretary for International Trade Negotiations in Mexico’s Ministry of the Economy. He is currently the managing director of Public Strategies de México, a consulting practice focused on the impact of public opinion on corporate decision-making.

Amy Glover is an account executive dedicated to project development and management for Public Strategies de México.

The Social Costs of Globalization

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then told me ‘I agree totally. I want to do that. The problem is what to do with the tariffs?’ Chile had at that time [a tariff of] 9 percent and had just approved a law to unilaterally reduce this by one percentage point each year, on average, to arrive at 6 percent, which is where we are now. But MERCOSUR was in double digits, 12 to 14 percent... Either Chile would have to raise its tariffs, which would have been impossible for Chile, or MERCOSUR would have to reduce its tariffs, which would have been impossible for MERCOSUR. The Brazilians said ironically at that meeting that they did not know if Chile wanted to join MERCOSUR or for MERCOSUR to join Chile.

It was not possible in that, firstly, there was no equivalence in tariff policy. Secondly, there was no coordination of macroeconomic policies. Brazil was devaluing. Argentina was desperate because its companies were fleeing to Brazil. Its products could not compete in Brazil; on the contrary, Argentina was filling up with Brazilian products.

RG: And then came the Argentine devaluation...

JA: Exactly. For Chile, which is a very orderly country, moving closer to these giants, which were suddenly devaluing by 200 or 300 percent, appeared very complicated. In addition, Chile had been pursuing an accord with the U.S. since the beginning of the 1990s — ten years of negotiations. Each administration in Chile arrived with the conviction that it would be able to pull off the free trade pact with the U.S. But no. They were unable to until Clinton, at the end of his administration, signed the accord. But this opened a wound in MERCOSUR, which Chile tried to explain.

The point is that Chile is the only country that had ten years of economic liberalization when the others were barely starting to head down that path. And in Chile it was not possible to abandon that track without great social cost. Chile was not able to do it and has had to pursue bilateralism, which means treaties with the U.S., with the European Union and with South Korea.

RG: Finally, Jorge, how do you see the situation in South America? Symptoms of serious social unrest are starting to appear..

JA: Here’s an anecdote: A while ago a Swedish friend, who is a great political scientist and a great academic, visited Chile. When we told him that in Chile a candidate of the right had emerged who was advocating social programs, the guy said ‘Well, that just shows the failure of neoliberalism because for the right, for neoliberalism, it would not be necessary to do anything. When the right is worried about social matters, it is because it concedes that the natural law of the market does not solve them.’

I believe this is the moment we are experiencing in Latin America. Now we see more clearly than ever that those who have governed with this idea of the naturalization of the social — the law of the market as a natural law — have built tremendously unequal societies. This is the case with Menem in Argentina, and also the case of our democratic transition in Chile, successful in so many ways but critical in so many others. Of course, Chile today has a per capita income that is double what it was. But the absolute inequalities are much greater. How are people reacting in the face of these very evident inequalities, above all when the poverty lines are so elemental?

We have reduced the number of poor by between 20 and 40 percent. But that only means that many who were just under the poverty line are now just above it. It’s not that we have transformed them into people with a good standard of living, right? I think that the failure of neoliberal orthodoxies has already been understood in Latin America.

I see that represented in the new politics of Kirchner in Argentina, of Lula in Brazil, also Chávez, who is another type of phenomenon, in Venezuela. From what I read in the papers, there are very good chances for the victories of Tabaré in Uruguay and Alan García in Peru. So there is another pattern in Latin America. There is a new equation which is not revolutionary but revolves around possible, gradual change towards another combination of the state and the market than that which was predicated by neoliberalism and which managed to impose itself on Chile.

The Cutting Edge

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go outside the safe house without them at his side. He was monitored every minute, and though he was a big tough guy from a Brazilian slum, he believed the brokers who told him that Durban was very dangerous and he needed “protection” all the time. Alberty was relieved to move from the dark flat into the hospital where he spent only three days, followed by another dreary week “recuperating” at the safe house. Still, Alberty fondly remembers his escapade: “I traveled and saw things I had never seen before. I ate new foods so rich they made me sick.”

Sure, he said, he got frightened when he learned that the operation was a “big deal,” and he wanted to come home as quickly as possible. “But now that I’m back, I’m sorry I didn’t ask for more time in that hospital room that I shared with just one other person. There were clean sheets, hot showers, lots of food and a color TV. I even went down to the hospital courtyard and bought myself a cappuccino. *Puxa!* (Wow!) I really felt like a big tourist. The only thing I really regret, Nanci, is this trouble I got myself into with the law. So I am hoping to go to America, to *Nova Yorke*, where my wealthy *patroa* (boss), Lucille, can maybe find me a job. I saved her life; I hope she can rescue me now.”

Alberty asked if he could dictate a letter to Lucille, and I agreed to serve as his scribe and translator:

RECIFE Feb. 18, 2004

“Dear Lucille,

I hope that you are happy and safe among your family. I am here rooting for your happiness. I am well, and my life is normal despite the disruptions caused by this donation of my kidney. I am trying to get out of these present difficulties as best as I can.

My greatest happiness is to know that you are well. I hope that one day we will see each other again now that we are one. I miss you, and when I see you again we will share a meal together. I will never forget the short time we spent together.

If I had it to do all over again, I would do it. I believe that by the grace of God I will be reunited with you. We will blow out the torch of the Statue of Liberty together. We will walk hand in hand through the forest of Central Park like two children without a care in the world.

May God be with you and may you have health and peace for you and your husband.

Please write back to me.

Alberty Jose da Silva

And what if you don’t hear back from her? I asked. “Well, I just have to live with that. I am not a selfish, greedy person. I pay no attention to material things. When I die they can take everything from me — my cornea, my bones, my heart, my liver — whatever they need. I’ll be dead anyway. Yes, I’ll even put that in my will,” Alberty said. And I believe him.

Lucille was happy to learn from me that Alberty was safe and neither in pain nor ill after parting with his kidney. “I pray for him every day,” she said. She was sick with worry about his run-in with Brazilian authorities. Lucille’s partner, a fragile man with multiple physical disabilities, turned his sad eyes toward me as we sat in a close circle in their combined living-cooking-dining space: “I thought that this was the best thing I had ever done in my life, to help another person. I didn’t know; I really didn’t know it was such a bad thing to do.” Taking his hand, I reassured Abe as best I could.

“I just wish I could do something more for Alberty,” Lucille added. She wanted to get a small amount of cash to him for his children. “But you must let him know that I am not a rich American but just a poor, sick woman who couldn’t save her life in any other way. I hope he will forgive me for the trouble I brought him.”

I told Lucille that she needn’t worry. Alberty is a survivor. His latest plan is to run for local political office in his slum, capitalizing on his five minutes of fame. “I will run for town council, and I already have my political slogan” he told me grinning broadly: “*Rim por Rim — Vota en Mim!*” (Kidney for Kidney — Vote for Me).

I couldn’t resist offering another alternative: “Vote for me! I gave my kidney to an American, but I’ll give Brazilians my heart.”

Nancy Scheper-Hughes is Professor of Anthropology at UC Berkeley.

The Future of Haitian Democracy

By Adam Raney



Photo courtesy of Tino Soriano.

In a rapid-fire speech that covered more than 200 years of history, Jean Casimir, the former Haitian ambassador to the United States, analyzed how Haiti can pull itself out of its current political and economic crisis. He focused on the importance of returning to the 19th century style of democracy that governed Haiti between 1804 and 1915, a time during which regional leaders shared power through transparent negotiations with Parliament in Port-au-Prince.

Although the former ambassador acknowledged that there were many generals who led the country from 1804-1915, he maintained that a healthy democracy was in place throughout this extensive period. This was the golden age of Haitian democracy — an era of innovation — which ended in 1915

when the United States sent in the Marines and took over Haiti’s administration.

During the 19th century, “parliament was where you negotiated power,” Casimir explained. Negotiation was fundamental, since the country was ruled by regional strongmen. This was not yet a fully developed form of representative democracy, but it was a good foundation for Haiti to build on at that time.

Casimir suggested that Haitians look to their past for their democratic future. In his judgement, Haiti today must look within the country for answers instead of looking for outside investment. On this matter, he had harsh words for Aristide whom he believes led the country into the worst political crisis in its history.

Once a supporter and Aristide government

continued on next page

The Future of Haitian Democracy

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official, Casimir has become not only an outspoken critic but an important member of the democratic opposition. While at Berkeley, he compared Aristide's version of populism to clientelism, a system in which Aristide provided political or economic favors for groups who supported him at the ballot box or with force on the street.

Casimir also accused the exiled president of controlling the media and ignoring the opposition. Aristide's primary concern during his exile in the U.S. after the 1991 coup was negotiating with foreign powers and investors while paying little attention to Haitian groups.

Perhaps the strongest indictment of Aristide made by Casimir was that Aristide was worse for Haiti than the Duvaliers, the infamous father and son dictators who led the country from 1957-86. "Even Duvalier had a proposal; Aristide was going nowhere," Casimir said. These are strong words considering that the

Duvaliers are accused of tens of thousands of politically motivated killings throughout their 29 years of rule.

Casimir admits that it will be very tough for Haiti to overcome its current situation and successfully build a healthy democracy and vibrant economy. For decades, Haiti has been the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Almost half of the population is unemployed and about 80 percent live in poverty. In addition Haiti leads the Americas in AIDS, malnutrition and infant mortality. There is still widespread unrest throughout the country; many Haitians walk the streets of towns and cities armed for protection and/or attack, as political power is often possessed by those with the arms to seize it.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to Casimir's point of view is the current president's lack of legitimacy. President Boniface Alexandre came to power following the exile of Aristide, who left the country on Feb. 29, 2004. It is still unclear whether Aristide chose to leave of his own volition or was forced out. Much of the Haitian government's legitimacy depends on how the current leaders and the U.S. are perceived to be acting and in whose best interests.

Still, Casimir is hopeful that positive change is possible.

He suggested that if Haiti focused on educating its people with virtual universities and new styles of education that a new generation of leaders could take the country forward into the 21st century.

[Jean Casimir \(left\) was the Haitian Ambassador to the United States from 1991-97. He spoke at Berkeley on April 19 at an event co-sponsored by CLAS and the Department of Ethnic Studies.](#)

[Adam Raney is a graduate student in the joint Latin American Studies and Journalism Program.](#)

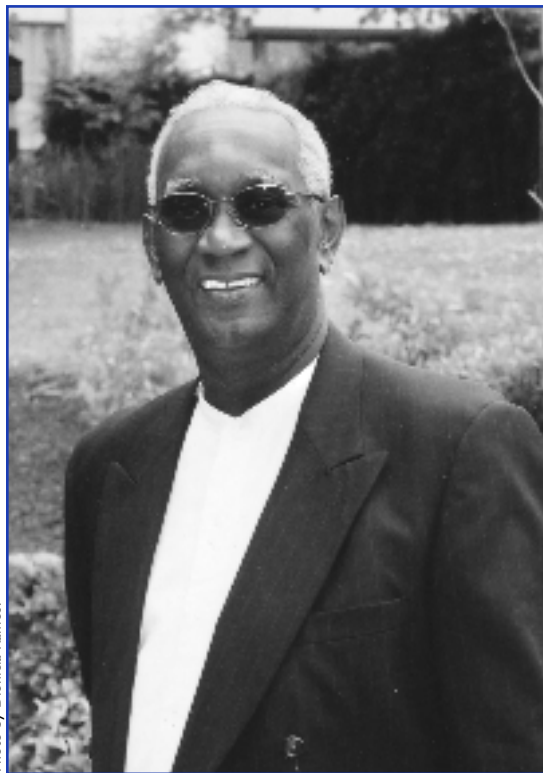


Photo by Dionicia Ramos.

Pablo Neruda: 100 Years

1904-2004

I WILL RETURN

*Some other time, man or woman, traveler,
later, when I am not alive,
look here, look for me
between stone and ocean,
in the light storming
through the foam.
Look here, look for me,
for here I will return, without saying a thing,
Without a voice, without mouth, pure,
here I will return to the churning
of the water, of
its unbroken heart,
here, I will be discovered and lost:
here, I will, perhaps, be stone and silence.*

YO VOLVERÉ

*Alguna vez, hombre o mujer, viajero,
después, cuando no viva,
aquí buscad, buscadme
entre piedra y océano,
a la luz proceleria
de la espuma.
Aquí buscad, buscadme,
porque aquí volveré sin decir nada,
sin voz, sin boca, puro,
aquí volveré a ser el movimiento
del agua, de
su corazón salvaje,
aquí estaré perdido y encontrado:
aquí seré tal vez piedra y silencio.*

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Photo: "Isla Negra" by Teresa Stojkov.



Haitian children play on a cart loaded with sugar cane in the Dominican Republic.
Photograph by Tino Soriano.

Please visit our Web site for analyses of all CLAS events.

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